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## Archaeology Scotland

# Attainment Through Archaeology and the 12 Towers of Rule

(Theme: Investment in Skills)

CRF Investment: £66,828

Match-Funding: £14,000

Website: <https://www.archaeologyscotland.org.uk/>

Twitter: @ArchScot

## What were the aims of the project

The Twelve Towers project was established to meet the needs of local community organisations, the educational and inclusion needs of young people and the needs of the heritage sites. It was identified that an archaeology project could address some of these needs. First hand engagement with their local nationally important heritage benefits participants, communities, heritage and economy.

Across these needs the project aimed to engage people with their local heritage through intergenerational workshops and a range of archaeological fieldwork along the Rule Water. A key part of this was to provide skills training and opportunities for local young people through the Attainment through Archaeology programme. This programme helps to build young people's confidence and to open their horizons and provide opportunities for them to engage and learn about their local heritage. The project aimed to deliver on these aims through the delivery of archaeological excavations, walks, attainment programmes and by assessing the need for further skills based development.



## How did your project achieve these aims?

The project set out to achieve the project aims by delivering on the following milestones. These milestones included events, workshops and reports and involved local organisations and societies, schools and businesses, community institutions. Together with bespoke workshops an excavation was undertaken at the site of the 13th Bedrule Castle. This engaged extensively with local volunteers and young people with 195 people taking part in a programme which included excavation, geophysics, survey, graveyard recording, stone carving and an illustration workshop. This was followed in November 2022 by 4 days of exploratory excavation at a late-medieval farmstead site on the slopes of Bonchester Hill with a team of 18 fantastic volunteers. As part of this excavation participants were able to take part in guided walks which took in the Iron Age settlement sites further up the hill.

Activities were rounded off in December 2022 with a guided walk which took in Fast Castle and Bedrule Castle.

## Who did your project involve?

Delivery of the project involved Archaeology Scotland staff and support from teachers and support workers and project officers when necessary. The Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park have been key partners and drivers of the project since 2020.

Local heritage and archaeology societies, such as the Hawick Archaeology Society, played an important part along with local community organisations and institutions, especially the Bedrule Village Hall and Bedrule Manse.

Local schools and skills development organisations played a crucial part in the successful delivery of the project. With Denholm Primary School, Jedburgh Grammar, Earlston Secondary School, Kelso High School, Eyemouth Secondary, Developing Young Workforce, Works+ and Borders Additional Needs Group all participating.

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

The project achieved a series of key outcomes including, excavation at Bedrule Castle and a first exploratory phase of excavation at Bonchester Townhead. Both these excavations gave 231 people direct access to the archaeological exploration of medieval and late-medieval sites. Benefits included, skills development, increased mental and physical wellbeing, improved confidence and increased awareness of these sites.

The greatest success of the project was the excellent engagement with schools and other skills development organisations. This resulted in a large number of young people in the Scottish Borders being able to gain first-hand experience of archaeology, open their horizons and learn some new skills in a new environment.



## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

COVID delays were the principal issue and the impact that had on the recruitment of participants and support organisations. Over the course of the project some challenges were encountered. One challenge around delivery of the excavation at Bedrule Castle was the management of large numbers of participants on-site at one time.

We overcame this by introducing other survey workshops and fieldwork activities on site for participants to cycle through. In addition, Archaeology Scotland would have liked to have seen even more intergenerational working. We believe that through ingraining an intergenerational approach from the project planning stage, challenges around this can be overcome in the future. It is clear that social media and engagement with local organisations, developed at Bedrule, were key in spreading greater awareness of work at Bonchester and the Bedrule guided walks but more can be done in this area.

## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

Following the completion of the project and the completion of the two innovation reports, future goals and outcomes of the project seem clear. Firstly, there is a desire from the volunteers of educational establishment partners and wider community to carry on archaeological fieldwork and skills development. Secondly, there is a need for this work to be done in the Rule Water (site survey and evaluation) identified by Roger Curtis (supported by other studies/opinions commissioned by the CSBNP).

The establishment of a working group of volunteers and additional training and equipment and tools provision is an important next step to formalise objectives. There is a great potential for further work with partners in the education sector to widen access and skills training in the heritage-based environment of the Rule Water.

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

*"I used to like history at school but we weren't taught anything about Bedrule Castle, so I didn't know anything about it. Having been there I feel I'd like to find out even more. It was hard work and my hands hurt from the digging, but it was interesting to see where the castle was and get a rough idea of what happened there." - Participant, 18, Galashiels*

*"They really loved it and were excited to be involved. When the castle was sacked in the 1500's, it had been thought that everything was removed. So, for the dig to have uncovered a part of a wall and to start to unravel the footprint of the castle is really exciting for them. Many of the young people we work with come from disadvantaged or socially excluded backgrounds." - T Pride, Works+ Project Officer*

### [12 Towers of Rule - Bing video](#)



*"Last year I had only joined the excavation team after the project had started, so it was good to be able to participate fully in all stages of the dig, from turf stripping to backfilling at the end. Having a number of Archaeology Scotland project team on site, meant that I was able to "ring the changes" by working in different trenches at different stages and with different team members and learn from them about how to excavate, what to look for and how to record what we had uncovered." - M Douglas, Volunteer*

**This project is part funded by the UK Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund**



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## **Berwickshire Housing Association**

# **Borders Employment and Advice Mentoring**

**(Theme: Supporting People into Employment)**

**CRF Investment: £221,316**

**Match-Funding: £0**

### **What were the aims of the project?**

To remove barriers to employment for unemployed tenants of the four registered social landlords which make up the Borders Housing Network (Scottish Borders, Berwickshire, Eildon and Waverley). Barriers could include lack of skills or qualifications, mental health issues, lack of work experience, digital access, financial problems, no CV and/or no cover letter writing or interview experience.

### **How did your project achieve these aims?**

Four mentors worked on a mainly face-to-face, one-to-one basis with participants to identify barriers to employment and develop a plan for addressing them. Meetings were generally carried out in the participants' homes where they felt comfortable and relaxed. After identifying barriers the mentor would work with the participant to address them. This could include drafting a CV, supplying digital equipment to allow online job searching and applying, interview preparation, online learning and counselling.

### **Who did your project involve?**

Four face-to-face mentors, an office-based mentor, a Project Lead, claims administrators and employer engagement professionals.

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

Helping 23 (mostly long-term) unemployed participants find work. Very few of these are likely to have found jobs without the project's help.

## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

The wide, rural geography combined with relatively poor public transport links greatly reduced employment options for many participants.

## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

Now that the pilot has been shown to be a huge success, an application has been made for further funding to increase the scale of the project and run it over a longer period of time. Also, the nature of the help given will continue to bear fruit for some time after the end of the project. For example, all participants now have a CV and guidance on searching and applying for jobs which was missing previously.

## Attached is a Case Study from a successful participant . . .

### Capturing Participant Stories and Experiences

#### What activities or support have you been involved recently?

BEAM project has supported me back into employment after a period of unemployment since 2017, following redundancy

#### What has changed for you as a result of the activity or support and how important are these changes, how did they make you feel?



BEAM helped me to get a temporary post as a Site Cleaner on a construction site for the return of a Train Station to Reston Village.

I feel happier as I now have a purpose to my day. Before I felt like I did nothing and had nothing to do. I now get out of the house and meet people again. It has helped me make new friends with work colleagues and the people I meet when I go out to travel to work. It helped me get back my independence again and I now have my own money to live and do things.

I also feel more confident in myself as my work colleagues and bosses tell me what a good job I have done and that they have noticed a difference to the work site, since I have been there. This makes me feel good and I take pride in the work I have been doing.



## What worked well for you?

BEAM helped me to update my CV; help me to job search online and has helped me with some courses to try and improve my IT skills and give me other employability skills.

My mentor gave me the “kick up the arse” I needed to encourage me to job search and have the confidence to do this. I did not get any encouragement before, so I had lost my confidence in looking for a job. I did not feel I had a purpose anymore.

My mentor helped me when we looked at jobs to think about which jobs would match my skills and experience but also think about how I would get there, was the job right for me to apply for. Thinking about the times of buses and the cost, would I be able to get there and would it be worth the expense. Thinking about whether I would be able to afford my bills. Looking at my budgeting.

## Did you have any barriers, challenges, if so please describe

I struggled to find a job before BEAM, I was always being rejected which would make me feel down and not know why. I was not used to having to apply for jobs using a computer, you used to get jobs by going in to employers and asking if there were jobs. The job centre did not give much help or support to me with applying for jobs online. I got no encouragement and I struggled to find jobs on my computer.



I do not drive and travel to jobs where I live is difficult – not always buses to get there or the times of buses don't match a job shifts. I had lost my confidence in looking for jobs because of all the rejections and in myself and what jobs I could do as I was always being told I did not have enough of the right experience and skills, even when it was a job that I had done before. Nobody would explain why you did not get the job. This made me feel down.

## What are your next steps, what do you hope to achieve?

This job is just temporary, so I am now looking to find a full-time permanent job. I have registered with an employment agency and been offered a job in a local factory as a cleaner when this post comes to an end.



I am also working on a Digital College course for “Retail skills and values” to help update my retail skills. I have previous retail experience, but it is from a while ago. I enjoyed this type of work and I would prefer to find a job working in a shop.



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through the UK Community Renewal Fund**



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## The Bridge

# Bridging the Gap Through Knowledge Transfer (Theme: Investment in Communities & Place)

CRF Investment: £133,006

Match-Funding: £0

Website: [www.thebridge.scot](http://www.thebridge.scot)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TheBridgeTSIBorders](https://www.facebook.com/TheBridgeTSIBorders)

## What were the aims of the project

The social and economic landscape for community enterprises with their own premises was very different after returning from Covid-19 closures; the project aimed to help them consider improvements that would support sustainable delivery options for the future to improve the lives of Borders communities.

In particular, the project was focused on helping organisations to contribute towards net Zero aims by:

- a) upgrading community premises via projects to reduce carbon emissions and maximise the benefits of renewable energy. These low/zero carbon initiatives could also be used as exemplars to encourage local residents to make changes personally.
- b) building on the greater interest in online delivery of meeting/learning activities by encouraging the development of digitally-connected community premises and showing how this might be achieved.

The difficulties of holding in-person meetings and development of alternative communication routes had also made us aware of the need to find a better way of sharing the wide range of skills and experience spread across individuals within the partner organisations, to enlarge the knowledge base and share it in new ways with the general public and with each other.

## How did your project achieve these aims?

The “Bridging the Gap through Knowledge Transfer” project aimed to share skills and experience across a number of areas:

- 1) Workshops delivered by three third sector organisations who had successfully carried out projects to improve their premises (used to provide community activities), from the perspective of energy efficiency and digital connectivity. These workshops showed others the processes they had gone through to deliver their improvements.
- 2) The offer of a free technical feasibility study for those taking part in the workshops (max 20 studies).
- 3) The resulting information on their experiences (and those of others shared during the workshops) was written up following a similar format in “How To” guides, which emphasised the practical approach of ‘learning by doing’ so they would be inspiring for others.
- 4) The creation of a series of Knowledge Bank resources developed from shared expertise, to be used by the development staff of The Bridge and BAVS in support of community capacity building during and beyond the project, and shared freely with the general public via their websites.
- 5) A plenary conference open to all who managed community buildings, with presentations on the workshops, the Scottish Borders Climate Change Route Map, and opportunities for grants from three different funders. This event was organised to maximise the opportunities for networking and sharing experiences.

## Who did your project involve?

Participation in the project was open to all third sector organisations with premises used to provide activities/ support to local individuals and communities. The project was publicised by the partner organisations via their comprehensive databases of third sector organisations in the Borders. The majority of participants were committee members of village and community halls in the Scottish Borders, who were particularly interested in the “Greening” workshops. As a result of demand, the number of workshops for this topic was doubled, and representatives from two Halls was commissioned to deliver workshops aimed at those with smaller Halls (where air-to-air heating was featured) and larger Halls (where air-to-water heating systems were explained). Community Halls were also the main participants in the workshop about becoming “Digitally Connected”.

## What has been the project’s greatest achievement so far?

A total of 49 individual community organisations took part in workshops/received links to recordings of workshops, and/or attended the plenary conference. Counting attendance at more than one learning activity (eg 2 different workshop topics) resulted in a figure of 65 organisations attending project activities. The project had a target of 20 organisations supported, which was exceeded by almost 2.5 times. Those who took part in the workshops were also eligible to sign up for a technical feasibility study – given the significant interest in “Greening your Hall”, we worked with Local Energy Scotland on a Tender Brief that would help organisations with the first step of applying for funding and a list of approved contractors. Following a tender process we commissioned 20 Energy Audit/ Decarbonisation Plans which were successfully delivered for participating organisations.



## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

We had originally aimed to deliver workshops on four different topics, however this was dependent on other local organisations who would lead on them. Approval of the project was 5 months later than stated, resulting in considerable delays to the start of the project programme. Circumstances had changed for one of the workshop delivery organisations and another then had to withdraw due to illness. At the same time, the interest received from participant organisations was focused largely on two of the original topics. We were able to source a second organisation to deliver workshops with the highest demand. This made the workshop attendance more manageable for better discussions to take place.

We also responded to requests for workshops to be delivered online, as participants were still reluctant to travel/attend meetings. This created some occasional challenges in the delivery of virtual workshops as a result of poor connectivity on some occasions (underlining the technical difficulties of a consistently good wifi/broadband connection in the Borders). Recordings were made for people unable to attend the workshops.

**By November 2022, people were happier about attending in-person events, and the Conference at Tweed Horizons was well received.**



## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

We are particularly encouraged by the interest in pursuing such projects going forwards, and our development staff stand ready to provide on-going support. The approach taken through this project has been to show that such projects can be done by a small volunteer-led organisation, that help and support is available, and that a step-by-step approach (avoiding technical jargon where possible) is the way forward.

We carried out a social media campaign over 2 weeks to promote interest in volunteering, whether in the front line or as a committee member. This was based on a series of short case studies featuring volunteers from a range of organisations and in a variety of roles. This was to stimulate interest in getting involved in the future.

We have new resources including the "How To" guides for greening a community building and developing a digitally-connected learning centre. These were sent to all participants and have been made available for download from our websites. Again, the focus is on plain English.

In addition, a range of documents for the Knowledge Bank have also been produced and these are also available on our website at [www.thebridge.scot/resources](http://www.thebridge.scot/resources)

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

*"Hearing from organisations with experience of undertaking a funded greening projects and the importance of lessons learned – gives me a good idea where to start."*

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# The Southern Uplands Partnership Services Ltd Energy Efficiency Supply Chain Development (Theme: Supporting People into Employment)

CRF Investment: £53,038

Match-Funding: £0

Website: <https://sup.org.uk/projects/scottish-borders-construction-forum/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BordersConstructionForum>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrOo3wd8zlw0R02fWCULf4g?app=desktop>

## What were the aims of the project

We sought to undertake three key activities which were considered essential to development of the construction industry supply chain for delivering on net-zero:

1. To explore the viability of establishing a local fund to pay suitable people to access training and achieve accreditation requirements. CRF funding was sought to scope out the priority training needs; identify training providers; costs, application procedures, promotional materials, monitoring etc.
2. It is clear that the scale of the work required to get homes and business properties to the appropriate energy efficiency standards is not yet fully understood. Working with partners, we sought to design materials and develop

a programme of events to increase awareness of the demand for EE services and the business opportunities that will be forthcoming and to promote the training opportunities identified.

3. Our EE businesses are mostly busy, single person businesses, too small to bid for significant contracts and reluctant to take on any additional admin. We therefore want to explore how best to encourage and support small businesses to work collaboratively to deliver larger (and more cost-effective) contracts. Such a support-body could also help to coordinate shared apprenticeships - which are seen to be an attractive prospect by many very small construction businesses.

## How did your project achieve these aims?

### The following work streams were delivered:

- A survey of the trades in the Scottish Borders to better understand their situation.
- A survey of available courses (their locations, duration and costs), accreditation routes and grants available to the sector.
- Development and circulation of promotional materials to address the findings (including a courses, accreditation routes brochures, PR plan and some sample promotional films).
- A survey of the messaging put out to schools by key stakeholders in the sector and a report on how this could be better coordinated and integrated.
- A commissioned report (CLES) on possible structures that could support local collaboration between small businesses and the development of shared apprenticeships.

## Who did your project involve?

### We worked closely with a wide range of local and national organisations including:

Scottish Borders Council; South of Scotland Enterprise; Borders College; Developing Young Workforce; Scottish Borders Construction Forum; Changeworks; Energy Skills Partnership; CITB; BE-ST; Digital Construction on a Shoestring; SP Energy Networks; Elmhurst Energy; Fuel Change; University of Edinburgh Engineering Department; Historic Environment Scotland; Eildon Enterprise; Centre for Local Economic Strategies; Scottish Government .

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

- Production of 2 really helpful guides: Energy Efficiency Training locally, Scotland Wide and Nationally with fast-track routes; Accreditation Guide for sole and small traders.
- As a result of our work, an "Insights Day" has been developed, hosted at Borders College and with input from a very wide range of industry organisations who have not tended to work together before. The event will present 16- to 24-year-olds with a picture of the wide range of opportunities that exist in the built environment sector as we move towards net zero. This will include info on training, grants, courses, careers advice etc. The event will take place on 30th November and we hope will be attended by a Scottish Minister.
- A roadshow event was trailed in Galashiels and delivered in partnership with Borders College, SP Energy Networks and Developing the Young Workforce Borders.
- An open evening event to showcase net zero training was hosted in Hawick at the STEM Hub.
- We are also proud of the fact that we now have a data base of over 650 trades – this has increased from 211 at start of project giving an increase of 216%

## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

Communication with busy small businesses is very difficult. They do not like attending meetings, they have difficulty in responding to emails or letters. They are reluctant to engage in workshops. Social media and messaging apps has been the most effective means of communication – supported by putting hard-copy materials out at building material suppliers.

## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

We see that there is a critical need to see the work continued. There is scope to establish a support organisation to support collaborative working on larger contracts. There is a need for shared apprenticeships to be developed. If funding was available, we could run a scheme to support appropriate training courses

Local construction sector businesses could/would benefit from specific and targeted business support to fully assess the appetite for business development

(growth/diversification/collaboration) and commitment to EE activity. This should be seen as a critical priority business sector and key strategic and practical support mechanisms are required from public sector partners.

This support should include: mechanism to support business collaboration, facilitate shared apprenticeship programmes, manage local training programmes, deliver specific business development support.

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

Comments from the Trades Survey – need for financial assistance - included:

*"We are too small a firm to afford to pay workers during training"*

*'I have no EPC training at all & no other training in the past 5 years, largely due to costs. I would welcome this which would benefit my business greatly.'*

Comments from those who were given direct support:

*"Without help we would have been unable to cover the training costs and could not have offered the new energy efficiency services to our customers."*

*"All the information and research you have sent out for the construction sector has helped us to plan for future business initiatives and to strengthen our small team."*

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## Newcastleton & District Community Trust

# Fit for Our Future: Holm Hill Master Plan

(Theme: Investment in Communities & Place)

CRF Investment: £83,210

Match-Funding: £6,100

## What were the aims of the project

Initially to seek further evidence to support the development of the Holm Hill Community Land buy-out, however, the storms of 2021/22 impacted on the original proposals, our revised proposals were expanded to include the wider community and addressed decarbonisation challenges given the current cost of living and energy crisis which is impacting rural communities dramatically.

## How did your project achieve these aims?

### Commissioned experts to:-

- develop forestation strategy
- incorporate active leisure assets to enhance our remote off grid tourism marketplace
- consider recent flood experiences in development planning identifying planning constraints
- created a decarbonisation interactive community model allowing each premises to be modelled providing most efficient steps to employ; retrofit buildings to deliver airtightness and adopt best energy solution to reduce carbon footprints
- delivered a report outlining the model and outcomes (commercial sensitive)

## Who did your project involve?

NDCT trustees and employees  
Consultants and experts

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

This was feasibility work; nothing has been actioned. However, our interactive database is a legacy of the project and will be used by the community and its partners to enable better informed decisions be made about investment; retrofit to properties, community energy schemes, boundaries, and barriers like the conservation status. We expect to use the models and the outputs to deliver change locally and will use this work as evidence to support proposals for change in due course.

## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

2021/22 Storm season stopped us undertaking initial studies as planned, however, in hindsight the revised approach using digital technology has not stopped us getting the right answers to our questions and we were able to undertake groundwork investigations towards the latter part of the year.

Statutory polices in relation to accessibility of data must be reviewed as this added budget and time cost to the project unnecessarily - we are a community group not a recognised statutory body, but even as a community group we are expected (and do) comply with all the requirements of GDPR. This should not have hindered us but it did. Other community groups will face similar challenges and this will stop much valued work being commissioned in the race to reach net zero targets.

## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

To work with premise owners/occupiers to update the database building a growing and more accurate picture of the community infrastructure and its weaknesses. To 'cluster' potential solutions so that retrofit investment costs can be lowered and actions made more affordable for premise owners by working together.

To work with partners to develop consumer facing tools that enable these clusters to work collaboratively by linking common details to support trade delivery from our LOCAL workforce.

Outputs will provide potential for a trade co-operative model to be created allowing for bulk purchase, deliver etc reducing cost of supply and improving efficiencies.

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

*"Climate events forced us to change course from our original approach, in hindsight the outcomes have proven to be far more valuable than had we continued as planned. Newcastleton now has a legacy from our project in the digital database and interactive dashboard, this enables us to continue learning beyond the end of the granted period and engage the wider community as things move forward. That is an asset which can only be further enhanced over time" - Greg Cuthbert, Chair NDCT*

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## Scottish Cycling

# Mountain Biking in the South of Scotland - Helping to deliver the European Capital of Mountain Biking

(Theme: Investment in Local Businesses/Investment in  
Communities & Place)

CRF Investment: £146,137

Match-Funding: £4,000

Website: <https://dmbins.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/dmbins>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/dmbins>

## What were the aims of the project

The aims of our project were to address the following:-

- Lead community trail development and stewardship
- Improve the skills gaps within MTB (Mountain Bike) industry workforce
- Increase and encourage innovation in local businesses' MTB offerings
- Promote investment
- Promote the Scottish Borders as a global MTB destination development.



## How did your project achieve these aims?

- Trail Development Co-ordinator worked with the trail association, leading regular public digs over a wider range of time slots, developing more dig leaders, increasing the tool pool to enable larger dig teams
- Regional Co-ordinator and Trail Development Co-ordinator built relationships with land managers to undertake increased stewardship of the Tweed Valley, improving or developing the trails to promote the destination
- Detailed analysis of the workforce needs of the local industry was undertaken and recommendations made to improve the skills within the workforce across the educational pathway
- DIRTT (Developing Inter European Trailbuilding Training) Volunteer Dig Leader Training, qualified Night Leaders and businesses were educated in how to tailor their services to meet the needs of mountain bikers. PHS MTB Club and BASE College Course
- Supported accommodation providers with funding to promote investment in their businesses to meet the needs of mountain bikers
- Educate and inspire businesses to further develop their offer, and products/services, and improve their marketing to sustainably grow their business through the mountain bike market.



## Who did your project involve?

Scottish Borders Council; South of Scotland Enterprise; Borders College; Developing Young Workforce; Scottish Lead by the Trail Development Co-ordinator and Regional Development Co-ordinator organisations and businesses involved were as follow:-

**Organisations:** South Of Scotland Enterprise, Scottish Borders Council, Peebles High School, Tweed Valley Trails Association (TVTA), Borders College, Forestry and Land Scotland, community organisations and charities, Edinburgh Napier University, and local cycling clubs for children and young people.

**Businesses:** Dozens of accommodation providers and hospitality businesses, Event organisers, MTB Skills and Guiding companies, and volunteer dig days for businesses

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

- 33 Inspections and 61 Digs
- Involving over 110 unique volunteers and circa 2000 hours of volunteer time
- Corporate volunteer dig days with Sustrans, Baillie Gifford, and Cut Media
- 12.5km trail developed or improved
- 32 DIRTT Dig Leaders trained over 3 courses in the Tweed Valley
- 4 Outdoor First Aid Trained and Qualified
- 16 MTB Night Leaders Trained and Qualified
- Ran a series of trail inspection and maintenance sessions with Peebles High School
- Educational session with Borders College BASE Students and Leaders
- 16 sets of MTB Light as a pool for the kid's clubs
- 10 secure bike storage grants awarded
- Land Manager Issues - Meetings with Forestry and Land Scotland, British Horse Society, and Innerleithen Community Trust
- Circa £15k spent on tools and materials to enable trail development and maintenance
- Detailed analysis of the educational pathway required to meet the skills needs of the local workforce conducted
- Over 60 businesses engaged through business development workshops
- Over 20 organisations engaged through the project



The biggest success has been the level of engagement with businesses, community groups, and volunteers over such a short amount of time. The project has been well-managed and has met nearly all its targets. The feedback across a wide range of stakeholders has been overwhelmingly positive.

## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

### Short project duration has been a significant challenge:

- Time lost to recruitment and onboarding compressing an already challenging schedule
- Project spanned the busiest period for most MTB businesses (Easter-October) so reduced availability and thus reduced interaction
- Some outputs (new businesses) was not possible to identify and support in the short timeframe
- Job security of a short contract without follow on funding resulted in loss of staff part way through delivery.

## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

Secure funding to enable both Trail Development and Regional Co-ordinator roles to build upon the work and achievements made thus far.

The Tweed Valley Trail Association (TVTA) is now in a stronger place with a quantity of qualified dig leaders and can undertake wider and more intensive stewardship of the trail network in the Tweed Valley. Utilise the momentum gathered to continue to build on the positive relationships with land managers to facilitate this.



Continue to build relationships with national/international bike businesses to support the implementation of the Mountain Bike Innovation Centre and work with local businesses to continue to see them grow, innovate, and improve their offer to visiting mountain bikers.

Using the analysis of the skills needs of the workforce, implement a range of recommendations across the educational sector.

Work with SOSE (South of Scotland Enterprise), Go Tweed Valley and Local Businesses to utilise the opportunity of the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) 2023 Cycling World Championships, both during the event and as a legacy for the Scottish Borders.

Build upon the low-cost, connected Trail Counter prototype that has been developed as part of UK CRF. Scale up deployment across Scottish Borders and work with higher education organisations to investigate sensor technologies and user differentiation capabilities.

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

*"We are getting great feedback from our guests loving the conditions of the trails in the area, as well as the good weather a lot of this good karma is down to the work of the [Tweed Valley Trails Association](#) and the volunteer days being held by them" (Cleikum Mill Lodge)*

*"Lots of work is being done maintaining and improving trails, the newer work schedules are working judging from feedback here"*

*"Improved access has also helped the [Tweed Valley Mountain Rescue Team](#) who can now wheel stretchers down the improved access to the reservoir and the 4x4 access is improved as well if needed - and I can ride my gravel bike up there easily as well -Thanks all."*

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Scottish Borders Council

## Scottish Borders Regional EV Charging Feasibility Study

(Theme: Investment in Local Businesses/Investment in Communities & Place)

CRF Investment: £183,6007

Match-Funding: £0

**Website:**[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/news/article/4275/current\\_and\\_future\\_electric\\_vehicle\\_use\\_and\\_charging\\_to\\_be\\_put\\_under\\_the\\_spotlight](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/news/article/4275/current_and_future_electric_vehicle_use_and_charging_to_be_put_under_the_spotlight)

**Facebook:**

**Twitter:**

### What were the aims of the project?

The regional approach to EV charging has been fragmented and delivered through the Local Authority, forward thinking businesses and individuals utilising Government funding to stimulate small pockets of EV vehicle use across the region. This project aimed to provide direct strategic support to all sectors across the region, which will lead on to maximising the commercial opportunities for the region and minimising the expenditure for the public sector, business, and residents.

To enable this to be a reality the Scottish Borders is starting from a very low level of provision and must undertake a comprehensive review of how demand will develop across the region, how the electricity grid can cater for the demand and the commercial models available to deliver the infrastructure equitably across the region. To deliver Net-Zero across the region there is need for an overarching strategic feasibility study that provides real opportunity for the region to deliver change and tangible benefits for our communities.

## How did your project achieve these aims?

- Baseline assessment of network capacity and areas for reinforcement.
- Baseline assessment of current EV usage and predicted growth across the region;
- Baseline of current infrastructure, residual life and charging capacity.
- Stakeholder mapping / engagement across public sector, business, leisure, tourism, 3rd sector, communities.
- Designing charging network across public sector, business, town centres, leisure, tourism, education, 3rd sector, RSL's and communities.
- Gap analysis of proposed charging network and grid capacity. Include redesign or estimates for grid reinforcement.
- Identifying joint working opportunities to create economies of scale across fleet owners.
- Identify the commercial opportunities across the region for delivery the EV charging network through private investment like SSE or BP. This will identify the gaps in network that will require community or public sector intervention.
- Areas for community or public sector intervention will have Treasury Green Book delivery assessments undertaken for further funding bids to be delivered.
- Identify supply chain opportunities across the region for education, to grow business and employment.
- Carbon reduction estimates.

## Who did your project involve?

The project was delivered by Scottish Borders Council with support from Mott Macdonald and Turner & Townsend consultancies.

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

Extensive Stakeholder engagement exercise covering the entirety of the Scottish Borders. This included 52 programmed virtual face to face workshops with relevant stakeholders, supplier workshops, development of an online consultation survey and third-party distribution of material.

Proposals under the fund were to engage in knowledge transfer activity following support with circa 552 parties. The project to date has engaged directly, and via third party distribution, approximately over 2000 parties. This breaks down to circa 350 relevant parties, that were directly engaged with, and circa 1650 parties directly engaged with via third party distribution. The true figure of those reached via social media and natural dispersion is not easily quantifiable, but is noted to be in the 000's based on social media followings.

## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

Changes in project scope because of differing future funding options for EV Charging. Future funding for the delivery of the charging infrastructure from Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) requiring minor realignment of the report outputs and addition of the development of a application submission for funding.

This also required further Market Testing / Engagement to inform SFT application and used to amend the proposed approach to procurement, to deliver the outcomes of the Feasibility Study and the SFT funding.

## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

- Following the completion of the EV Feasibility Study Report a funding application will be submitted to support the delivery of the solution
- There will then be the need to develop a procurement strategy and plan to deliver the outcomes of the SBC EVCI Strategy and Expansion Plan, SFT funding, market testing and APWG.
- Collate and develop the structure of any partnering opportunities identified throughout the procurement process.
- Acquiring the relevant legal input for the procurement and contract drafting.
- This will be supported by undertaking further Market Testing / Engagement.
- Engage with LA partners across the South of Scotland and central belt
- Drafting of contracts following agreement of procurement pathway.

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

*"The opportunity provided by the funding has enabled Scottish Borders Council to take forward the EV Charging Feasibility Study and Expansion Plan and be a leading authority in Scotland to benefit from the recently announced Transport Scotland support to attract private sector investment into the region. Without the funding we would not have achieved this position and could not have delivered the comprehensive plan for a least another 12-24 months"*  
Alex Young – Street Lighting Manager

**This project is funded by the UK Government  
through the UK Community Renewal Fund**



UK Government



## Borders College

# Scottish Borders Sustainability Academy

(Theme: Investment in Skills)

CRF Investment: £373,940

Match-Funding: £0

Website: <https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/sustainabilityacademy>

## What were the aims of the project

The Sustainability Academy project was developed to build a sustainable ecosystem of education, skills & training for work and collaboration across the Scottish Borders. The project consisted of 4 distinct areas of work.

Natural Capital Entrepreneurship & Incubator Accelerator Skills, and Green Recovery Supply Chain aimed to provide training opportunities, focussing on Natural Capital and the Green Economy. This area looked to achieve upskilling and entrepreneurial development in the Scottish Borders, and meet the needs of the long term unemployed, jobseekers, self-employed and small businesses.

Carbon Literacy for Lifelong Learning aimed to create & pilot a new carbon literacy short course that integrates the sustainable development themes of behavioural change, the circular economy, towards carbon positive living, planetary health & human wellbeing, and global citizenship.

Land Estates, Farming & Countryside Natural Capital Skills & Training Partnership looked to support local rural businesses and estates, to develop individuals to meet health and safety, legislative and environmental targets. It also looked to expanded course options eventually including biodiversity, environment and rural leadership and mentorship in a 'real' environment (ie a blended approach with a practical focus).

## How did your project achieve these aims?

In order to achieve these aims, Borders College explored a wide range of learning opportunities and determined the best courses to deliver based on the needs of the Scottish Borders community and economy. A diverse range of free online opportunities were offered to the general public and a wide-reaching marketing campaign put in place to ensure that as many people could take up this training as possible.

The college commissioned a Land Based Industries Future Skills survey to determine future course design and delivery, identify gaps in provision, assess a self-funding new model of natural capital collaboration and highlight opportunities for expansion and growth.

## Who did your project involve?

The project involved a wide range of stakeholders including Borders College, Scottish Borders Council, other education providers, local businesses and registered social landlords. The project also benefitted from the input of a new Sustainability Lead role in collaboration with the Alliance for Sustainable Leadership in Education. The College has utilised existing partnerships to inform and promote the opportunities available, for example, through the Flexible Workforce Development Fund.

All online courses were made available to the whole of the Scottish Borders community and were open to individuals and businesses. Some rural skills courses also contained a practical, hands-on element delivered by Borders College lecturers.

## What has been the project's greatest achievement so far?

A diverse range of fully funded courses was offered through the Sustainability Academy with 42 different types of opportunity on offer. There were over 570 enrolments for these courses, with some courses so popular that they ran multiple times to accommodate all applicants. Some participants attended multiple courses. The marketing strategy was incredibly successful with a reach of 360,663 people between December 2021 and June 2022, increasing to over 450,000 by the end of the project. Feedback from attendees was very positive and the courses met the needs of both individuals and employers, particularly small businesses.

The online nature of courses has made it easier for more people to attend. The biggest success of the project however is that a legacy has been achieved. The College is exploring how this suite of training can continue to be delivered via Flexible Workforce Development and other funding streams. The Land Based Skills report has led to establishing the Land Based Employers Forum.

## What has been the project's biggest challenge?

The timescales were extremely challenging. Confirmation of funding was delayed resulting initially in a reduced period of time to deliver outcomes. The extension that was granted allowed the college to take forward the plan as intended. Initial timescales also meant that marketing and promotion of courses took place over a shorter period than is optimum to ensure good uptake of courses. There have been some changes to plans and courses that have not run for this reason.

It may have been beneficial to be more targeted with our audience for some of the courses and more specific about the nature of some specialist subject areas.

Additionally, because we offered courses to everyone through online delivery, we had not gathered as much data as we would have liked in terms of the types of employers involved and the wider impact of the training for participants.



## What is the planned way forward following completion of the project?

As mentioned above the college plans to continue to run the courses that have had positive feedback and high uptake. The delivery of this will be on a course by course basis. Funding may be available for some while others will be offered to employers at cost, based on the benefits stated by previous participants. Participant feedback will be used to inform future delivery in all areas of the project as well as the wider delivery within the college. Data gathered through the Green Recovery Supply Chain scoping study and review will be used to address the skills requirements identified within the review.

The future curriculum offer has been influenced by the Land Based Industries Future Skills. Carbon Literacy will be imbedded in all curriculum areas of the Borders College.

## Any quotes from beneficiaries/participants you want to include?

*"Borders College have offered an impressive choice of courses under the Community Renewal Fund, supporting a diverse range of start-ups, SMEs, private and public sector organisations" - individual*

*"The courses are easily accessible to all; its audience has been truly diverse and inclusive with attendees from across society and geographical locations in the Borders. Courses include key topics and skills increasingly sought by organisations such as sustainability and social value, helping participants to deepen their understanding and optimise development" - individual*

*"Borders College have recognised the importance of supporting different learning needs, embracing the use of gamified and experiential to deepen participants learning experience" - individual*

*"I found the events to be valuable, fun and rewarding; the style of delivery has helped develop knowledge and skills for key areas of our business" - employer*

*"I highly recommend Borders College and look forward to participating in future learning programmes." - employer*

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