

Stow & Fountainhall Community Action Plan 2023-2030

STOW FRIENDLY ACTIVE
HAPPY & HEALTHY **SAFE** PEACEFUL
CARE FOR ALL AGES & ABILITIES ENGAGED
SUCCESSFUL HIGH-WELLBEING
CARING GREAT PLACE TO LIVE SUSTAINABILITY CONNECTED EMPOWERED
HEALTHY GOOD FACILITIES
SUSTAINABLE HAPPY
VIBRANT LIVELY GROWING REAL COMMUNITY
WELCOMING ECO COMMUNITY
PROSPEROUS FOUNTAINHALL SPIRIT
ECO-FRIENDLY INCLUSIVE



In 2022 Stow Community Trust (SCT) were awarded funds to undertake a range of activities towards the development of a Community Action Plan (CAP) for Stow and Fountainhall.

The work was commissioned by Stow Community Trust and Parish Of Stow Community Council (PSCC) from funds granted by Scottish Borders Council, EDF Energy and SSE Energy Services.



Julie Nock

Southern Uplands Partnership

October 2023



southern uplands partnership
living land, living community

Special thanks to Iain Goddard for his help in formatting and editing the CAP

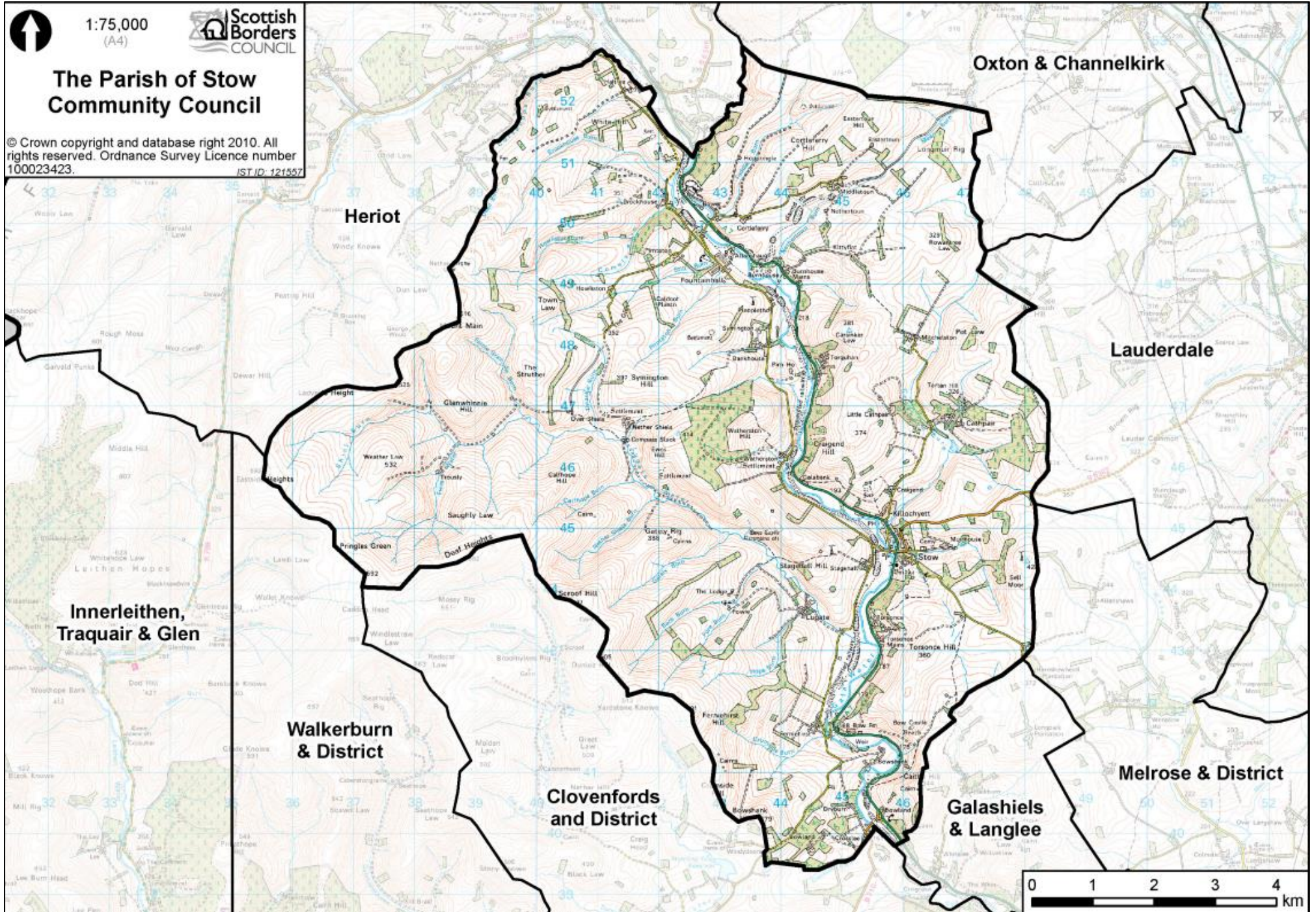


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The Parish of Stow Community Council

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1. Introducing the CAP

What is the CAP?

The Community Action Plan (CAP) is intended to strengthen the communities by increasing opportunities, unlocking potential and growing prosperity through transformative and sustainable measures, thereby creating resilience and lasting change.

How was it developed?

The CAP has been developed through an extensive community consultation process that included:

- › A community survey of current needs, following Place Standard guidelines.
- › Public meetings to present and discuss survey results in Stow and Fountainhall.
- › Community voting on a range of themes and actions and vote collation based on responses.

The CAP is 'demand led' (it contains the things people asked for) and will be delivered following the same principles to ensure that the communities of Stow and Fountainhall get the things they need. All comments were valued as part of the consultation and have helped to develop the following plan. It should be noted that some of the individual views reflected in this document haven't always recognised the work and actions that have already been taken by different community groups over the years.

The plan has been developed through an extensive and collaborative community consultation process and features a set of prioritised actions based on community responses. A wide range of local and national policies, plans and strategies were reviewed to inform the suggested actions contained within the plan.

'A great place to live, work, and play, where people of different ages and backgrounds share life together'.

Survey Respondent

'A sustainable, inclusive community with good access to amenities and connectivity to other local communities.'

Survey Respondent

This plan has been underpinned and developed through a place-based approach in order to understand the tensions, interconnections and relationships present in Stow and Fountainhall. It attempts to reflect and prioritise the needs and desires of the residents whilst highlighting the economic, infrastructure and social opportunities present.

What will it do?

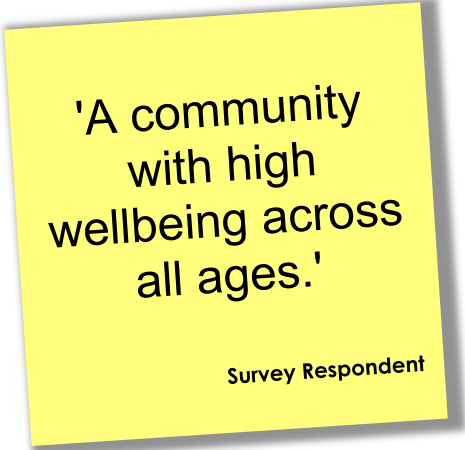
The plan has been designed as an accessible tool to help affect the changes local people would like to see. The plan will help to:

- Assist** community organisations, groups, and residents to make the most of community assets.
- Support** partner organisations and government agencies to identify community infrastructure developments and service issues.
- Provide** evidence for funders on community needs and aspirations in order to support future activities.
- Create** opportunities for local people.
- Review** assets and resources to ensure they are suitable for a changing population.
- Identify** business opportunities to ensure economic development.
- Enhance** sustainability and local efforts to mitigate climate change.
- Reflect** the collective views of local people, and their neighbours and friends.
- Develop** ideas, priorities, and initiatives.



'Thriving, active, socially-engaged, environmentally responsible, kind and supportive'.

Survey Respondent



'A community with high wellbeing across all ages.'

Survey Respondent

How and when will it be used?

The plan covers the period to 2030 and contains an ambitious range of discrete and large-scale initiatives and project ideas. It has been designed as a timeline of potential actions and projects drawn from survey responses. It is not intended as a route map to be followed step by step but rather a tool to assist the community to prioritise available resources and deliver achievable actions. Many of the suggested actions will require assistance from community organisations and groups, key partner organisations, targeted funding, the support of committed and engaged volunteers and the wider community as a whole.

The CAP should be approached as a starting point, but It will always be important to continue to provide consultation and engagement opportunities, especially around any proposed large scale infrastructure projects) and seek community buy in, to ensure that local changes are welcomed by the wider community. The CAP is a flexible document and is not intended to be followed step-by-step, but rather to be executed in the light of ever-changing community priorities and available resources. It is a starting point that will evolve and shift as the community progresses.

Who is it for?

The Community Action Plan has been designed to capture views and opinions on local issues and aspirations, to assist:

Stow Community Trust

Local Organisations


Residents

Parish of Stow Community Council

Community groups

The plan sets out a local strategy that has been designed to bring these stakeholders together to work on the shared goals of:

- › improving the local economy
- › contributing to environmental sustainability
- › improving health and wellbeing outcomes



'It would be wonderful to implement some really radical initiatives, rather than tinker around the edges.'

Survey Respondent

A summary of the plan will be produced and printed for distribution to all households in the area. This bold, exciting, innovative, plan is about and for the communities of Stow and Fountainhall. To realise its true potential it will be vital for the entire community to take ownership of the plan and to get involved in local action.

How is it structured?

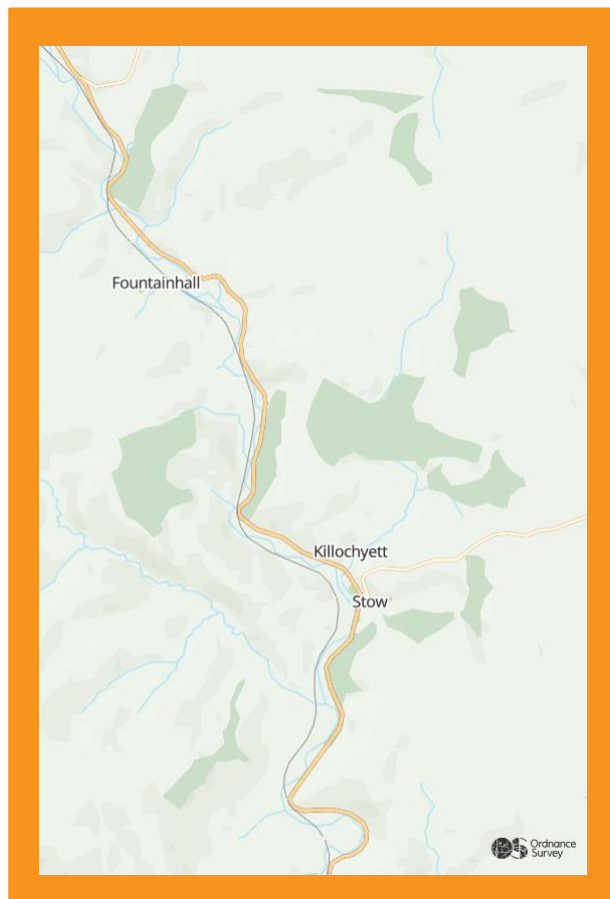
The implementation of the plan has been arranged across over four time-periods, with actions ranked within each time-period based on priority. Actions are also assigned to six common themes that emerged from the interests, ideas and needs captured in the data collected.

2. Background and Context

Location

Stow and Fountainhall are set on the Gala Water in the Scottish Borders with a distance of 4 miles between them. They are situated alongside the A7 between Galashiels (7/11 miles respectively) and Dalkeith (19/15 miles respectively). The A7 is a major road connecting Edinburgh to Carlisle.

Stow has transport links with trains to Edinburgh and Galashiels throughout the day/evening and a two hourly bus service (hourly at peak). There are no evening or night bus services. Fountainhall has access to the bus service only. There are no connections to the train station (4 miles) or bus stop (half mile).



Stow and Fountainhall (Source: OS Maps)

Population

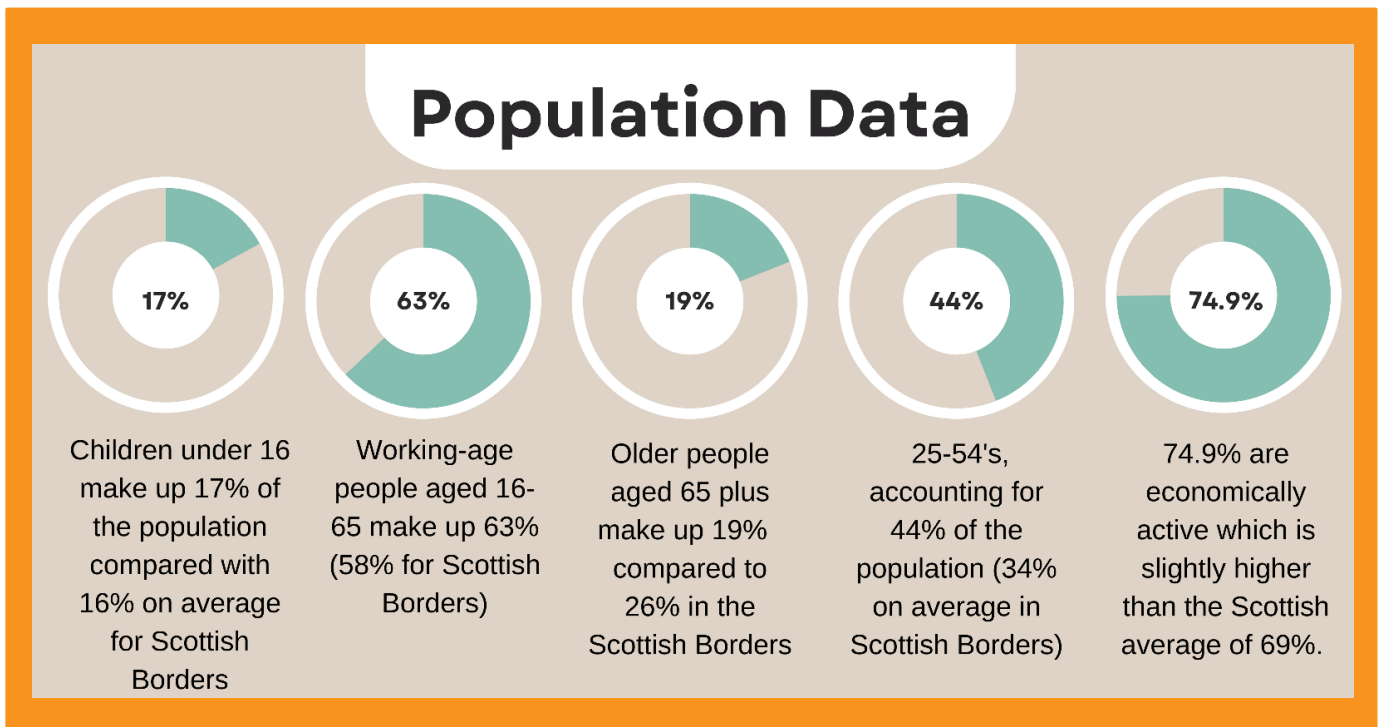
The population of the village of Stow was estimated at 718 in 2021. (National Records of Scotland (NRS) Mid-year estimates). The population of the Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Data Zone was estimated at 2,197 altogether. Best estimate for population of Fountainhall and Brockhouse calculated as 202 people. A more accurate breakdown of the settlements in this rural Data Zone will be available from the 2022 Census (data expected to be available from June 2024).

The Stow and Fountainhall communities have a slightly younger population profile than average for the Scottish Borders. Children under 16 make up 17% of the population compared with 16% on average for Scottish Borders. Working-age people aged 16-65 make up 63% (58%

'There is limited affordable housing. All houses for sale recently have sold very quickly and well above asking price. Little available for single folk and no bungalows or flats'.

Survey Respondent

for the Borders). Older people aged 65 plus make up 19% compared to 26% in the Scottish Borders. Stow has a particularly buoyant proportion of 25-54s, accounting for 44% of the population (34% on average in Scottish Borders).



Housing

According to the 2022 provisional NRS Household Estimates collected from Council Tax data, there were 327 dwellings in Stow and 977 in the Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Landward area.

There was negligible change in the number of dwellings in Stow and a 5.6% increase in the number of dwellings in Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Landward since 2021. 29% of the dwellings in Stow and 27% of the dwellings in Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Landward had single-adult Council Tax discounts. This corresponds to the proportion of single householders from the 2011 Census, showing that that the proportions of households in both neighbourhoods by household composition have remained relatively unchanged since then.

Affluence

Statistics from the Scottish Statistics Open Data Platform¹ show that the two neighbourhoods are relatively affluent, and with less Multiple Deprivation² than average. Mean house prices

¹ <https://statistics.gov.scot>

² The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is a means to assess poverty across a range of factors including: Income, Employment, Education, Skills and Training, Health and Disability, Crime, Barriers to

were an above-average £224,787 in Stow and £185,942 in Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Landward in (compared with £180,143 in Scottish Borders) in 2018.

The 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that Stow is in Deprivation Quintile 4, which is below-average for Scotland (i.e. less deprived than average for Scotland). Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Landward is in Deprivation Quintile 3, which is around average for Scotland.

The 2022 Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index shows that Stow has relatively low levels of child poverty overall and Heriot, Fountainhall and Stow Landward has average levels of child poverty by Scottish Borders standards.

Lifestyle

The following information is taken from the 2011 census. Fountainhall data is not available, therefore, the figures are based on the population of Stow:

53.3% (Scotland 45.4%), are married or in a same-sex civil partnership, 28.1% (Scotland 35.4%) are single. The remainder are separated, divorced or widowed.

74.9% are economically active which is slightly higher than the Scottish average of 69%. 39.8% are full time employees (Scotland 39.6%), 13.5% are self-employed (Scotland 7.5%), 3.3% are unemployed (4.8%), 4.7% are students (5.5%), 1.4% are long term sick or disabled (5.1%) and 15.8% are retired (14.9%).

The top occupations are: professional occupations (25.8% compared with a Scottish average of 16.8%); associate, professional and technical occupations (15.9% compared with 12.6%); and managers, directors and senior officials (11.5% compared with 8.4%).

'Elderly residents shouldn't be forced to leave because they are old and the house no longer meets their requirements, there should be a better way. A next step instead of just the care home, a bit of hope for the elderly instead of disparity, loneliness and inequality'.

Survey Respondent

'Help for younger people starting out affordable housing for young adults that have been part of this community since they were young , instead of Airbnb and massive houses with mortgages out of their reach'.

Survey Respondent

Assets

Our community has a wide range of assets which include:

- Things that you can touch and see (e.g. buildings, parks)
- Things that tie us together (e.g. community groups)
- Skills, knowledge and experience that members of the community share for the benefit of all.

'Several groups could work together to make Stow a real Heritage village'.

Survey Respondent



Community

The body of work completed and underway by the volunteers of Parish of Stow Community Council, Stow Community Trust, local groups, societies and volunteer networks is to be applauded. Parish of Stow Community Council works tirelessly on local issues such as speeding traffic, the need for public toilets, improving streets, public spaces and parks and by installing new public amenities such as the Jubilee Bench. The Station House, Cycle Hub and Pump Track projects are proof of the vision, dedication, hard work and capacity of the Stow Community Trust team and highlights their values of sustainability, economic development and community engagement. SCT, PSCC and over fifty local groups make things happen for the communities of Stow and Fountainhall and the work to date truly reflects a caring, cohesive, forward-thinking community.

Historical Sites

Our Lady's Well

- Pre-Christian site of pagan worship as recorded by the Welsh monk Nennius in 846 AD
- According to local legend, a chapel was built by King Arthur just south of Stow beside the existing well of spring water.
- The nearby Lady's Acre was the site of the wedding feast of David II (son of Robert the Bruce)



Our Lady's Well (Source: Scotland Starts Here)



Old Kirk & Graveyard (Source: Scotland Starts Here)

Old Kirk & Graveyard

- 1233, Monk Clemens was consecrated Bishop of Dunblane at Stow by Guillaume de Malveisin, Bishop of St Andrews.
- On a religious level Stow was one of the oldest and most sacred sites in the diocese. In 1242, David de Bernham, Bishop of St Andrews consecrated the new church in Stow.
- David de Bernham, who had previously been chamberlain to King Alexander II, left a written record of all the churches he consecrated. The list is in a thirteenth-century Pontifical stored in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Pack-horse Bridge

- Pack-horse bridge, site of witch burning in the 17th century. Inner wall of the Auld Kirk was used to build the bridge



Pack-Horse Bridge (Source: Wikipedia)

Bishop's Palace

- The Bishop's palace may look like a ruin but historically it is a very important building
- The Bishop of St Andrews held a manor house in Stow, the remains of which are known as the Bishop's Palace.
- In the early fourteenth century Bishop William Lambertson built an episcopal residence, which may have been an extension of the earlier structure or an entirely new building built on the same site.



Bishop's Palace (Source: Scotland Starts Here)

Community Spaces

The Station House

- Funded by a cocktail of public sector funding, the Station House was opened in September 2021
- The Station House is open for bookings for community groups, parties and meetings
- Regular Friday evening bar nights attract locals and visitors alike.



The Station House, Stow (Source: Stow Community Trust)



Stow Town Hall (Source: Scotland Starts Here)

Stow Town Hall

- Built as part of an initiative to turn Stow into a Town – built in 1857
- Building managed by Live Borders
- Host to the Stow Archive

St Mary's Parish Church

- Built in 1876. Clock was used to check the times of the trains as they went past.
- Several significant stained-glass windows – one showing King Arthur, significant in the move to promote Britishness and diminish Scottishness.



St Mary's Church (Source: Walter Baxter, Geograph)



Fountainhall Village Hall (Source: James Swinton)

Fountainhall Village Hall

- Refurbished in 2015 with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund.
- Suitable for a wide range of uses as a community and private hire venue.

*The Station House was recently beautifully restored and more projects like this should be supported (i.e., Townhall become exercising and wellbeing centre, gym, yoga, etc, kids activities)'.
Survey Respondent*

*'Working with farm owners for the mutual benefit of all parties is needed particularly to make sure that we have a shared understanding of each other's perspectives and get the balance right between access rights and responsibilities'.
Survey Respondent*

A History of Stow & Fountainhall

by Mary Craig

The first full mention of Stow is by the Welsh monk Nennius. Writing in 846, Nennius wrote about King Arthur who, two hundred years previously, had built a chapel just south of Stow in Mary's honour beside the existing well of spring water. Throughout the medieval period the Our Lady's Well at Stow was visited by a long list of royalty: King David I; King Malcolm IV; King William the Lion; King Alexander II; King Alexander III; William Wallace; Robert the Bruce; The Duke of Albany; Queen Margaret Tudor; King James V and King James VI.

The village endured the witchcraft trials, Civil War and Cromwellian Protectorate of the 17th century. By the beginning of the 18th century Stow was flourishing as the centre of farming in the Wedale Valley which was added to with developments in weaving at the end of the century. The start of the 19th century saw one mill in Stow, a second in Killochyett and an increased population. By the mid-19th century, the railway had come to the valley and Stow Town Hall was built as part of a plan to turn Stow into a 'spa town' where Victorian ladies might walk in pleasant surroundings. Although the plans fell through further developments followed with the building of a new post office and school and the village grew in size.

In the late 18th century the name Fountainhall finally appears on maps. The village was named after Sir Andrew Lauder of Fountainhall outside Pencaitland in East Lothian.

At the end of the 18th century the main road south through the Valley was what is now known as the back road. Built in 1754 it carried the Edinburgh to Carlisle coaches. Coach roads were dependent on 'smiddys' and Fountainhall was renowned as having the best smiddy in the valley. Located on the Edinburgh to Galashiels road the smiddy served all of the local farms making Fountainhall the 'farming' village of the valley as Stow was becoming the 'weaving' village of the valley. The coming of the railway in the mid-19th century however, created the Fountainhall junction with major rail routes between Edinburgh and London and more local routes between Fountainhall and Lauder.

The 20th century saw challenges and changes. Both villagers lost sons in the Great War and sons and daughter in the second world war. Stow continued to grow with several shops selling everything from baby clothes to groceries. The early 1950s saw both villages thriving as rationing stopped and communities started to expand after the war. The Beeching Reports of the early 1960s saw the railway close down. Travel throughout the valley, which had seen good interaction between communities from Heriot to Bowland, was badly affected. In the 1970's the rise of larger shops and businesses in Galashiels increased pressure on local merchants and many of the local shops closed never to re-open. International trade reduced profit margins and by the 1980s Stow Mill could no longer compete and closed its doors.

Today, although the mills have gone, the farming remains as does walking in the pleasant surroundings and visiting the old medieval history

3. Methodology

Residents were invited to fill out a Community Survey, from which ideas, issues and suggestions were extracted. These results were then presented at several rounds of drop-in events, where members of the community were invited to consult on results and provide further information.

Development of the Community Action Plan was informed The Place Standard tool. This tool was developed by the Scottish Government to enable communities to assess and then structure a plan to address areas for improvement based on structured community feedback.

Through an iterative development process, the feedback provided from the community was collated to develop the Community Action Plan as a strategic document that is cohesive, equitable and engaging.

What is the purpose of the Place Standard Tool?

The Place Standard is a simple tool to structure a conversation about a place. It helps people to think about both the physical and social aspects of places, and the important relationship between them. The tool is designed to:

- Assess the quality of new and existing places to identify where improvements may be needed.
- Bring communities and the public, sector and third sectors together to deliver high quality places.
- Ensure people's physical and social environments support good health and wellbeing.
- Promote consistency so everyone in Scotland has an equal chance of living in a good quality place.

The Place Standard tool can help you to find out what people think and feel about their place and to identify the strengths of an area. It can also highlight issues that might impact on people's health and wellbeing. The assessment can also be repeated in the future to allow comparison over time and identify any improvements.

(Source: Scottish Government - Place Standard Tool: Guidance, 2022)

Data Collection & Analysis

Phase 1- Community Survey

The research began with an initial phase of data collection aimed to capture the perspectives of a substantial proportion of the community. This took the form of a survey distributed to households across the region.

The survey design, including plans for its distribution and collation of data, was developed by a team of local representatives working with the Southern Upland Trust. The survey design was orientated around capturing three fundamental datasets:

- Perspectives on aspects of the local area were important to respondents
- Projects that respondents would like to see developed
- Place Standard scores

Thanks to the hard work of a group of local volunteers, 830 paper copies of the survey were delivered across the Parish of Stow area, accompanied by two public launch events. Stow Community Trust also promoted the survey via a social media campaign, and it was made available online.

The survey closed in August 2022.

Phase 2- Community Feedback

Following the survey, the data collected was processed in preparation of Phase 2 of the research, involving presentation of initial findings to the local community for discussion.

The data was anonymised to remove all identifying information (names, email addresses, location). It was then processed using the themes from the Place Standard tool to draw out key observations, community views, aspirations, and project ideas. These were presented publicly at eight community drop-in sessions in Stow and Fountainhall during August 2022, where attendees were asked to provide comments on the survey results and encouraged to highlight any further local initiatives or challenges.

Phase 3- Forming a Set of Proposed Initiatives

The third stage of research involved integration of feedback from the Phase 2 community drop-in sessions into the initial Phase 1 survey data. This combined dataset informed the development of six key themes tailored to specifically represent the interests and concerns of the local community. A set of proposed initiatives were then developed based on these

themes, and sorted into categories of short, medium, and long-term depending on the estimated timeframe of their delivery.

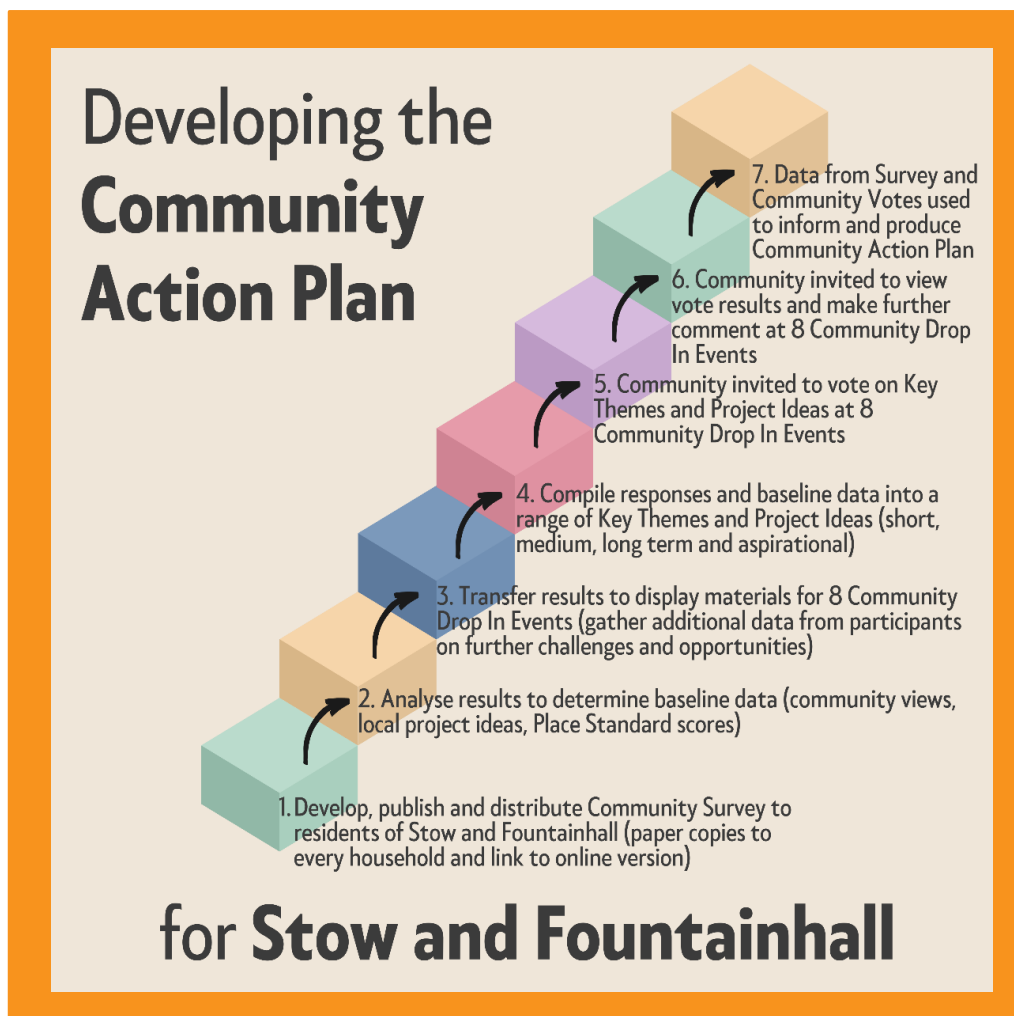
Two further rounds of public meetings were then held in November 2022 that presented these initiatives to the community. Those who attended were invited to:

- Vote on which initiatives they felt were most important.
- Give feedback on the suggested action (including the timeframe for delivery)
- Identify any specific stakeholders they felt might usefully contribute (including themselves should they wish to get involved)

Phase 4- Developing the Community Action Plan

The public votes from Phase 3 representing the initiatives that participants felt were important were counted and combined with Place Standard scores from the community survey data to produce an overall score for each proposed initiative that reflected priority. The suggested actions for each initiative were also amendments to include the feedback provided in Phase 3.

This provided the core data from which the Community Action Plan was established, as set out in Chapter Six.



4. Results

Overview of Stow and Fountainhall

Survey respondents described Stow and Fountainhall as a great place to live, raise a family in and retire to. People were proud to be resident in the area and felt there was a good mix of age groups and a great community spirit. Many mentioned the beauty of the landscape and their enjoyment of walking and cycling around Stow and Fountainhall. People were conscious of the history and heritage of the area and felt these, along with the landscape could be a real draw for tourism. They were proud of their roots and saw a bright future for both settlements. People were keen to embrace renewable technologies, desired a green future and would like to become sustainable and resilient through community ownership of assets and renewable power generation.

'A place that supports intergenerational living. A place where children are taught to support, respect, enable and encourage the older residents to prevent loneliness and isolation.'
Survey Respondent

'Our heritage buildings are really important. We need a plan for them that ensures their maintenance and develops their use for the local community.'
Survey Respondent

In Stow, people felt they were reasonably well served by amenities and services such as public transport, primary school, health centre and shop. Conversely, people in Fountainhall felt the lack of public transport options were a serious issue and feared for the future of the primary school. Concerns were raised by both communities around maintenance of street spaces, public buildings and roads with many mentioning traffic speeds and narrow pavements as areas of real worry. The population were very conscious of the need to upgrade housing and facilities in light of an aging population and climate crisis and would like to see the development of amenities and services that reflect the changing demographic such as adaptive, sustainable housing, health care and supportive services.

A Community Vision for Future Stow and Fountainhall

Residents of Stow and Fountainhall were asked to describe their community for future generations in the Community Survey.

The majority of respondents saw future Stow and Fountainhall as a vibrant, happy, healthy, safe and prosperous place containing a well-knit supportive and inclusive community with a strong sense of place. Many people imagined the communities as sustainable, environmentally friendly, empowered, dynamic and 'ahead of the crowd'. Some saw the area as modern and progressive; demonstration villages containing creative, engaged and enthusiastic populations.

'It feels that (Fountainhall) is gradually becoming more isolated and for those who don't drive or have mobility issues, this must be a huge concern!'

Survey Respondent

'A great place to live, work and play, where folk are proud of their roots.'

Survey Respondent

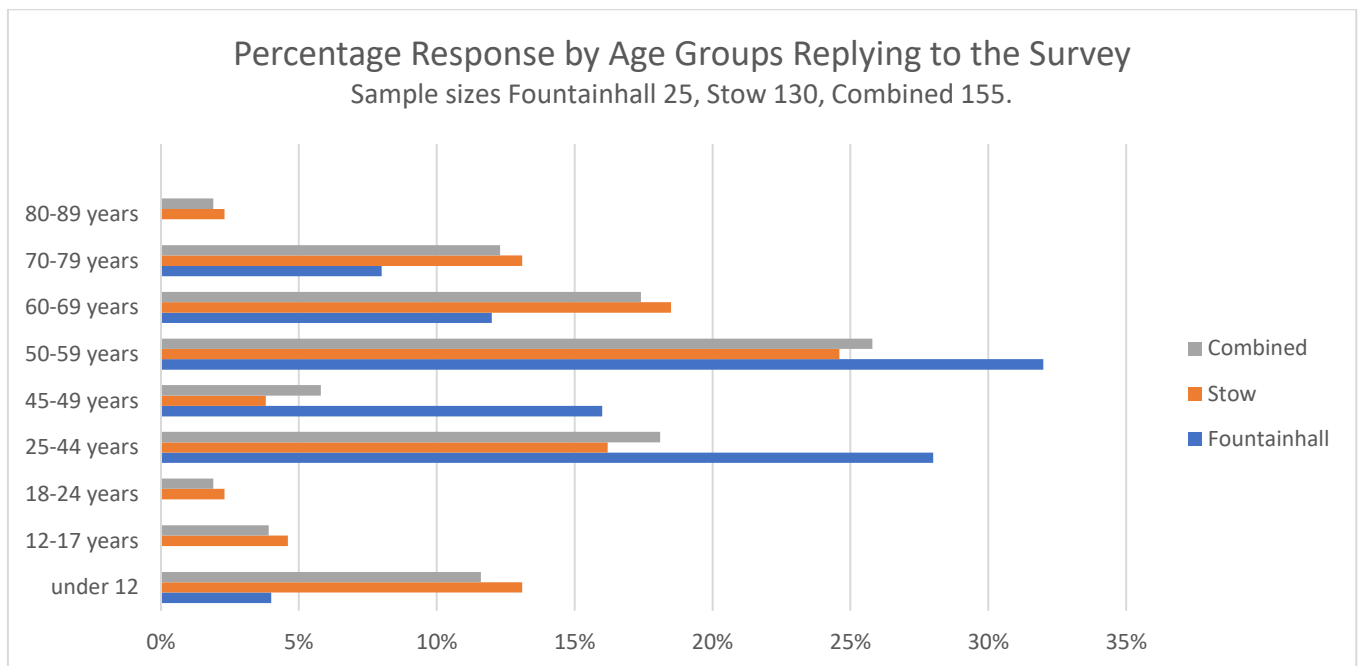
Others envisioned a community that could fully support its residents through the provision of: work and business opportunities; good access to amenities; connectivity to other communities; excellent transport links; high levels of wellbeing, and connections and interactions across all age groups. A place that listened to its residents and celebrated its people, history, wildlife and natural spaces. A tourist hot spot for eating, walking and cycling with lots to do for people of all ages.

Conversely, some felt nothing needed to change and were happy with their community as it is now, hoping it would remain quiet, welcoming, supportive and inclusive.

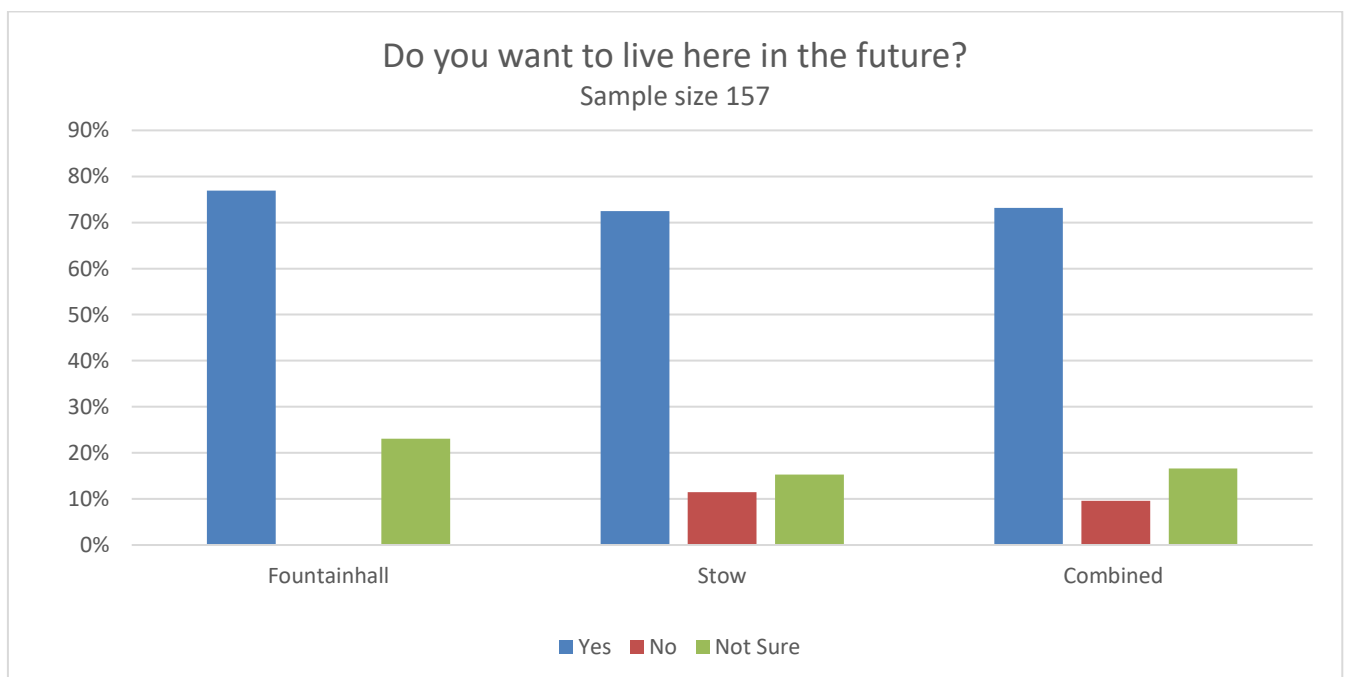
There were 162 responses to the survey (136 online, 26 paper) based on a distribution amount of 830, the response rate to the survey was 19.5% The survey contained 50 multiple choice and free text questions which generated over 4,200 comments. The average response time for online replies was 32 minutes.

Population of Stow (at time survey was issued) was recorded as 697 people, Fountainhall and Brockhouse 202 people. Based on these figures the following response rates have been calculated: Stow 136 responses or 19.5%, Fountainhall 26 responses or 12.9% People were asked to take the online survey though paper copies were supplied to ensure all members of

the community could contribute. Of those returning a paper copy 30.8% were over 50 years and 61.5% were over 70 years. Those replying to the survey ranged in ages from under 12's to 89-year-olds, with the largest proportions coming from 50–59-year-olds (26%) and 25–44-year-olds (18%) which reflects the demographic profile of the area.



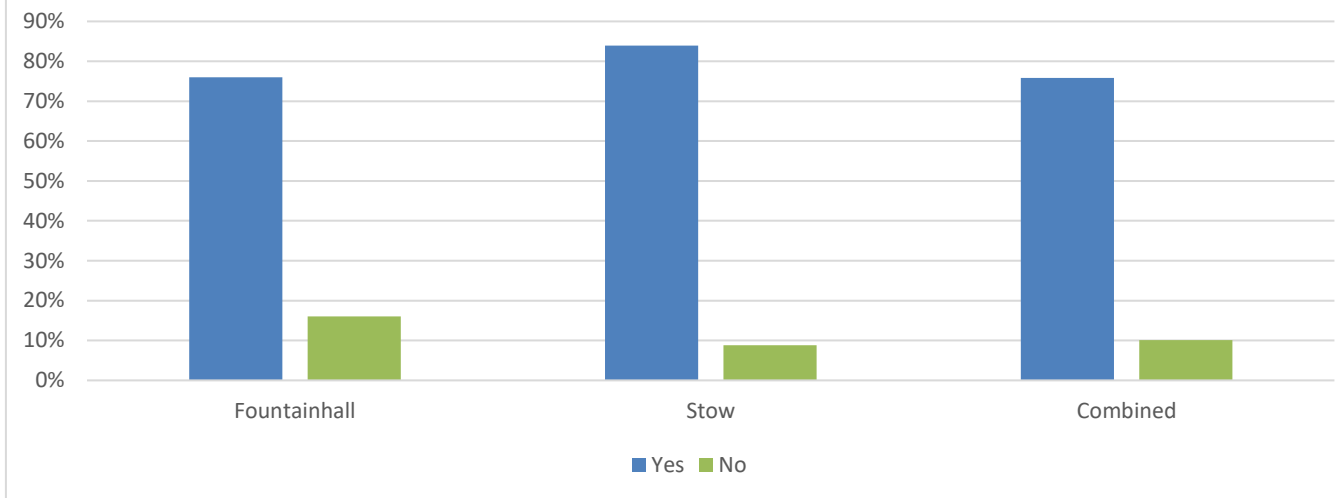
Residents were asked if they intended to stay in the area. 73.2% replied yes.



A number of tourism initiatives were proposed in the survey to generate local incomes and opportunities. 76% would like to see tourism developed.

Would you like to see the Galawater Heritage sites developed to bring more visitors to our villages?

Sample sizes Fountainhall 25, Stow 124, Combined 149

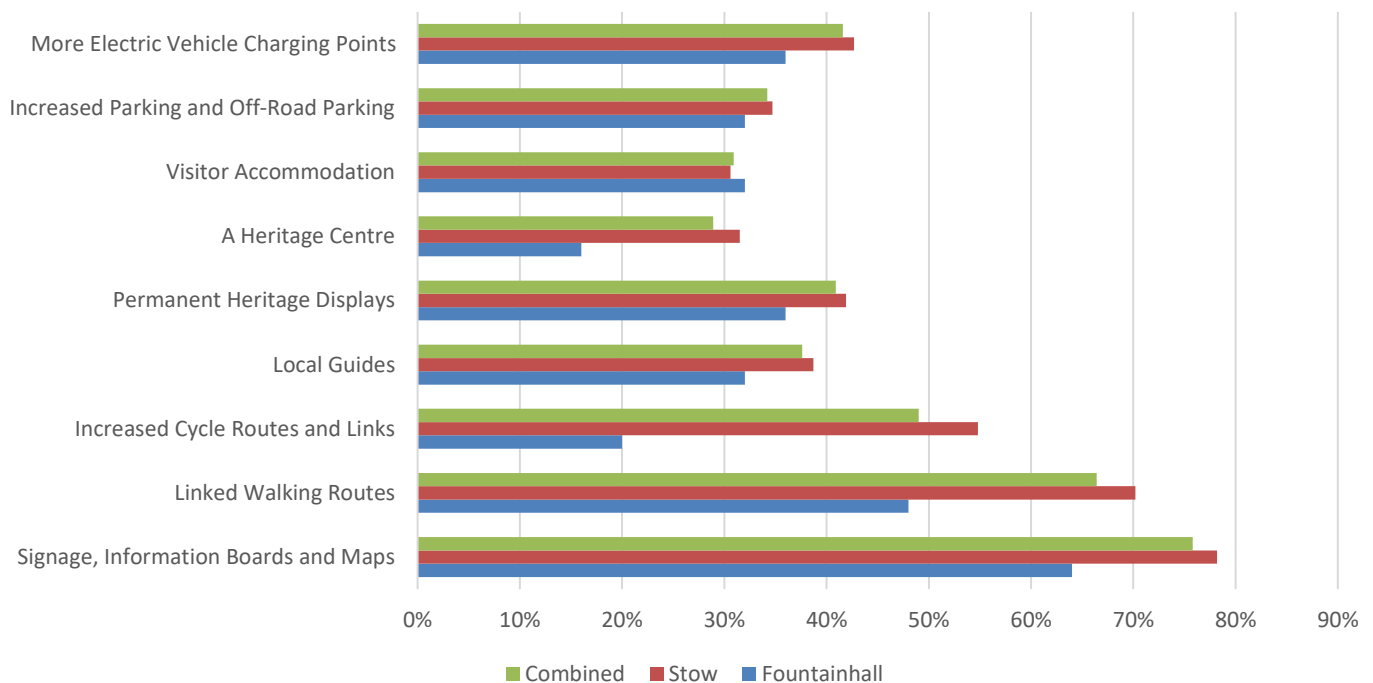


A number of measures were suggested to promote and support tourism development. Most popular were signage, information boards and maps, closely followed by linked walking routes and increased cycle routes.

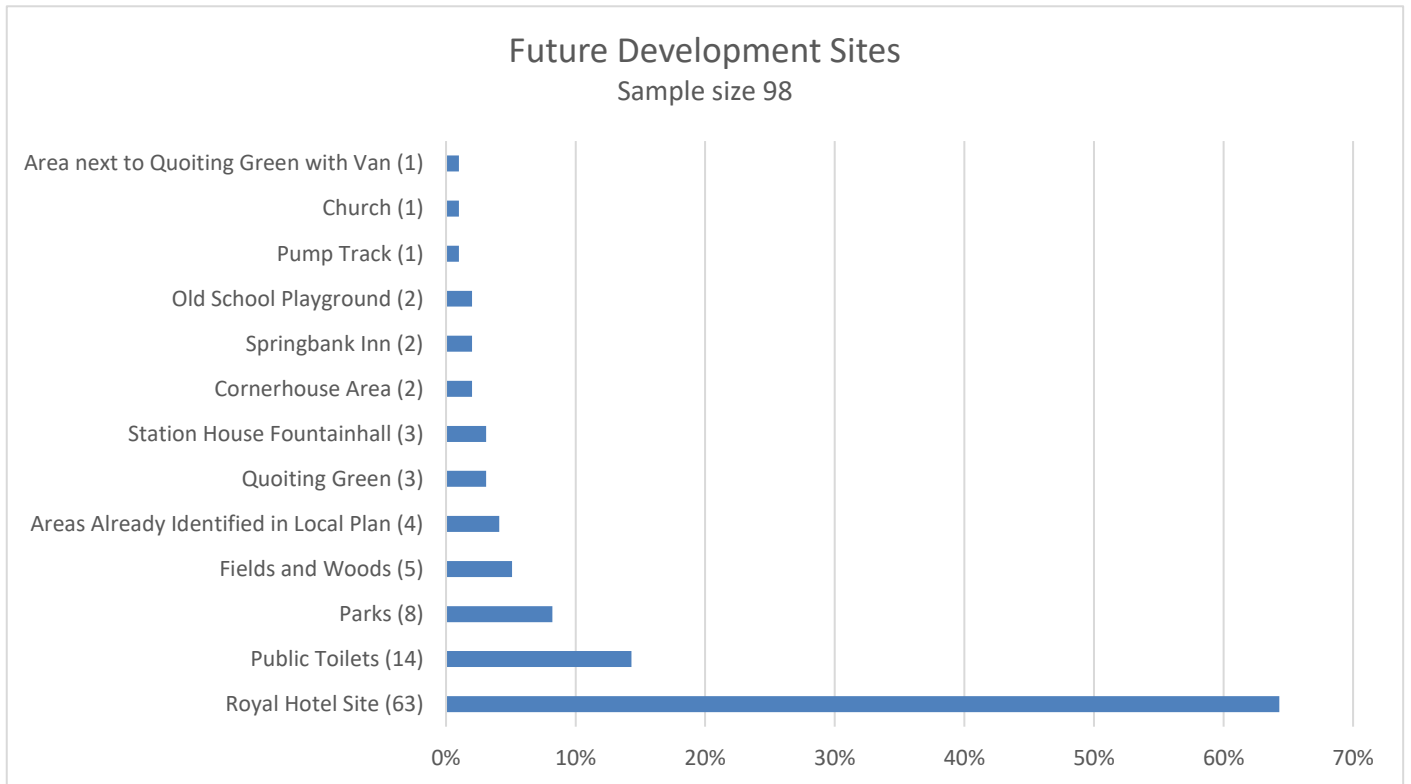
How best do we promote and support Galawater Heritage Sites?

Multiple selection allowed.

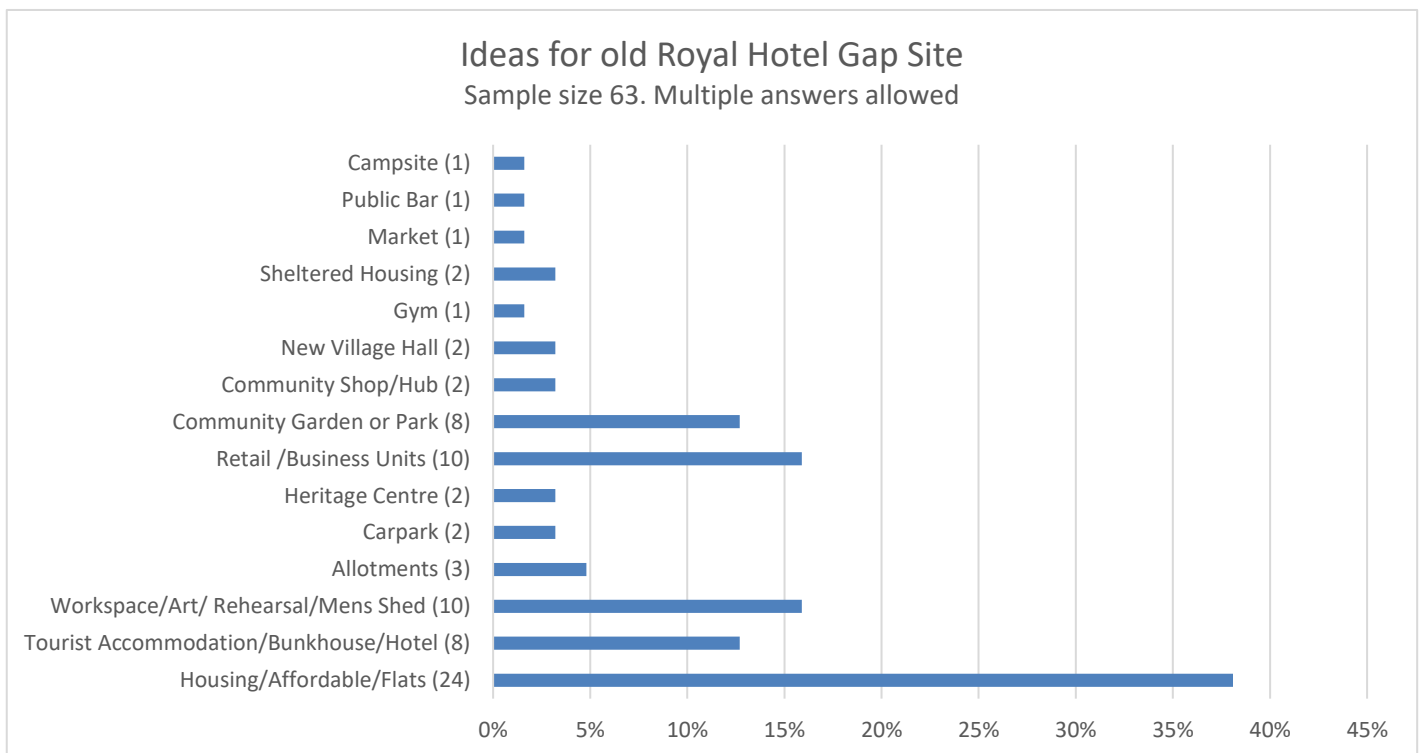
Sample sizes Fountainhall 25, Stow 124, Combined 149



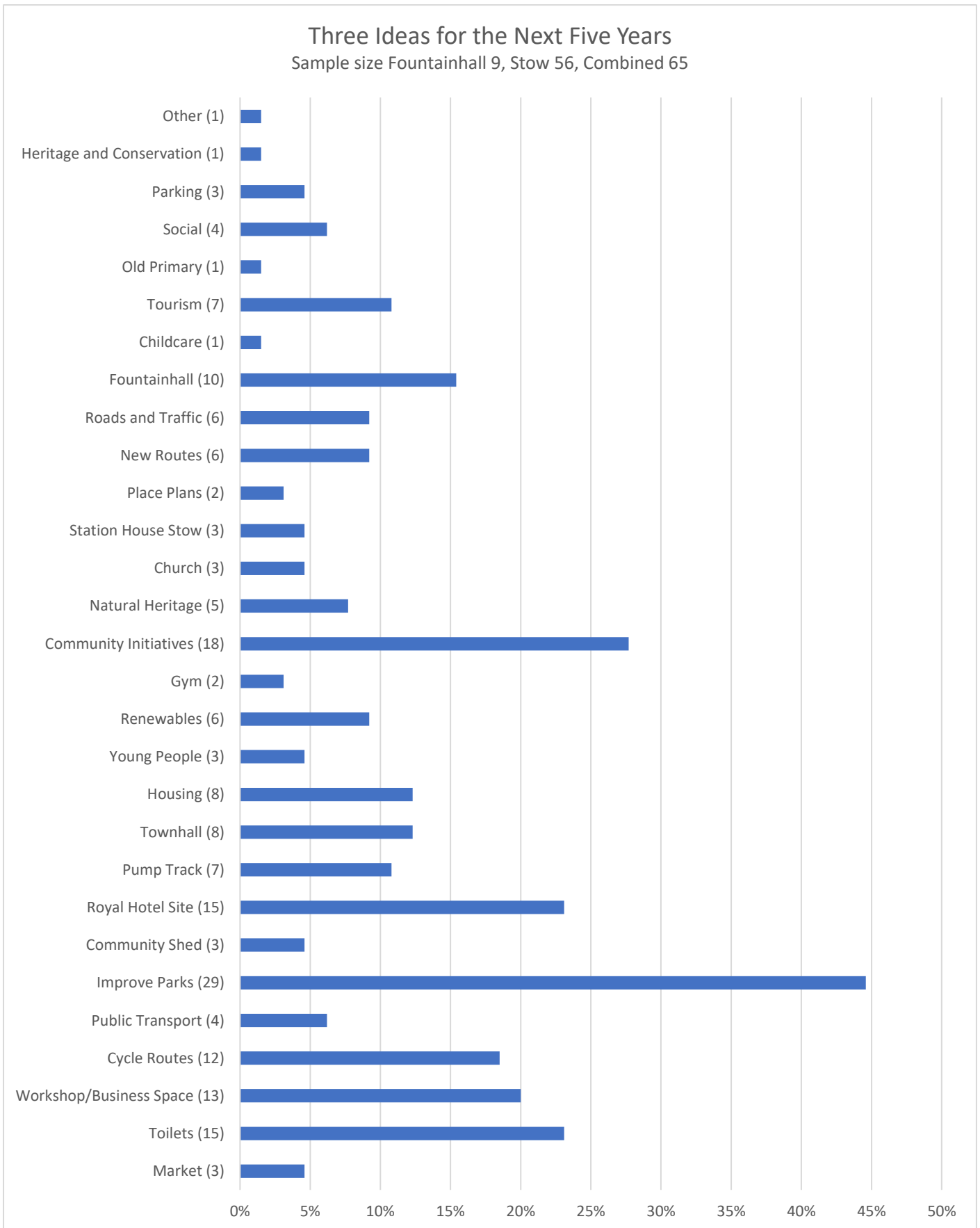
The survey asked if there were any specific pieces of land or sites the community would like to develop. There was an overwhelming response for the Royal Hotel site to be developed.



Community members suggested a range of ideas for the Royal Hotel site the most popular of which was to convert the site for housing.



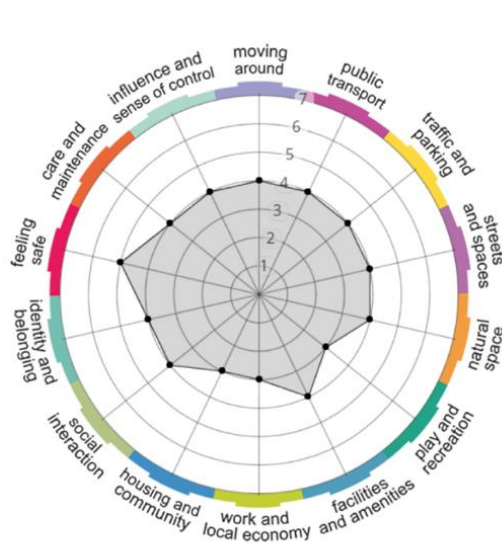
Lastly, residents were asked if there were any specific projects or initiatives they would like to see happening in the next 5 years. The largest response (46%) was for park improvements in both communities.



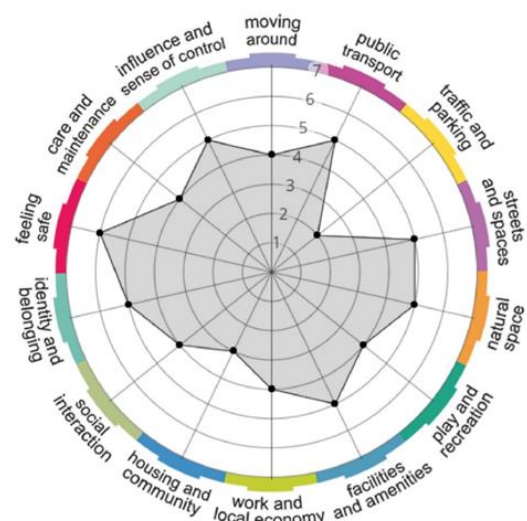
Place Standards

Fourteen Place Standard questions were included in the community survey and people were invited to rate their experience of Stow and Fountainhall across a number of topics that covered physical, social, health and environmental factors. Survey respondents scored each topic from one to seven (1 = there was a lot of room for improvement, 7= very little room for improvement) and results were plotted on the diagrams below. Subjects closer to the centre outline areas for improvement, those towards the outer edge are community strengths. There was an opportunity to add additional information in response to each question. The following charts were generated from the rating scale and all Place Standard responses were transferred along with survey responses to a master list of community comments, suggestions, issues and ideas. Five key themes (see section 3) were identified from the survey and Place Standard responses.

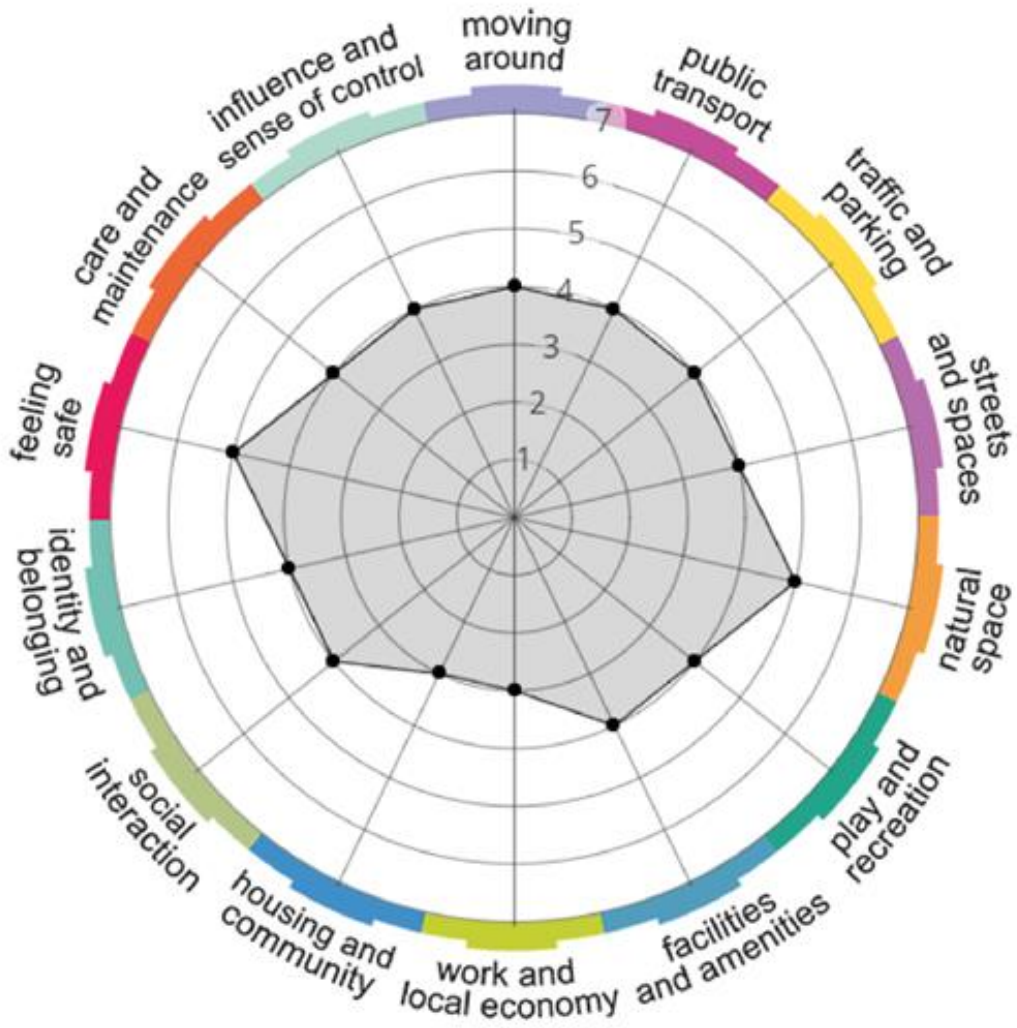
The full range of Place Standard comments will allow the community to review and adjust Place Standard scores over the coming years.



Place Standard Stow



Place Standard Fountainhall



Place Standard
Combined

5. Analysis

Five Key Themes

In order to create the Community Action Plan, the 4,200 comments from the survey were organised under a range of headings. Most of these followed Place Standard headings, with some new categories being added to capture the community focussed questions around tourism, new facilities, and existing amenities. The twenty headings were then organised into five key themes for the Community Action Plan.

Theme 1 - Taking Care of Community Assets

Outlines community comments and requests that refer to community assets, maintenance of infrastructure, and ideas for further community facilities.

Theme 2 - Getting Around

Highlights public transport issues, local parking arrangements, traffic calming measures alongside walking and cycling route suggestions and opportunities.

Theme 3 - Being a Welcoming Place for Visitors and Businesses

Identifies comments from the survey that relate to business, business premises, local employment, tourism, heritage assets, local signage and training opportunities.

Theme 4 - Promoting Wellbeing

Features comments regarding housing needs, retention of young people and childcare. It also highlights people's views on local activities, communication, and local democracy.

Theme 5 - Looking After the Environment

Encompasses community ideas and issues around recycling, renewables, food security, refuse and shared facilities.

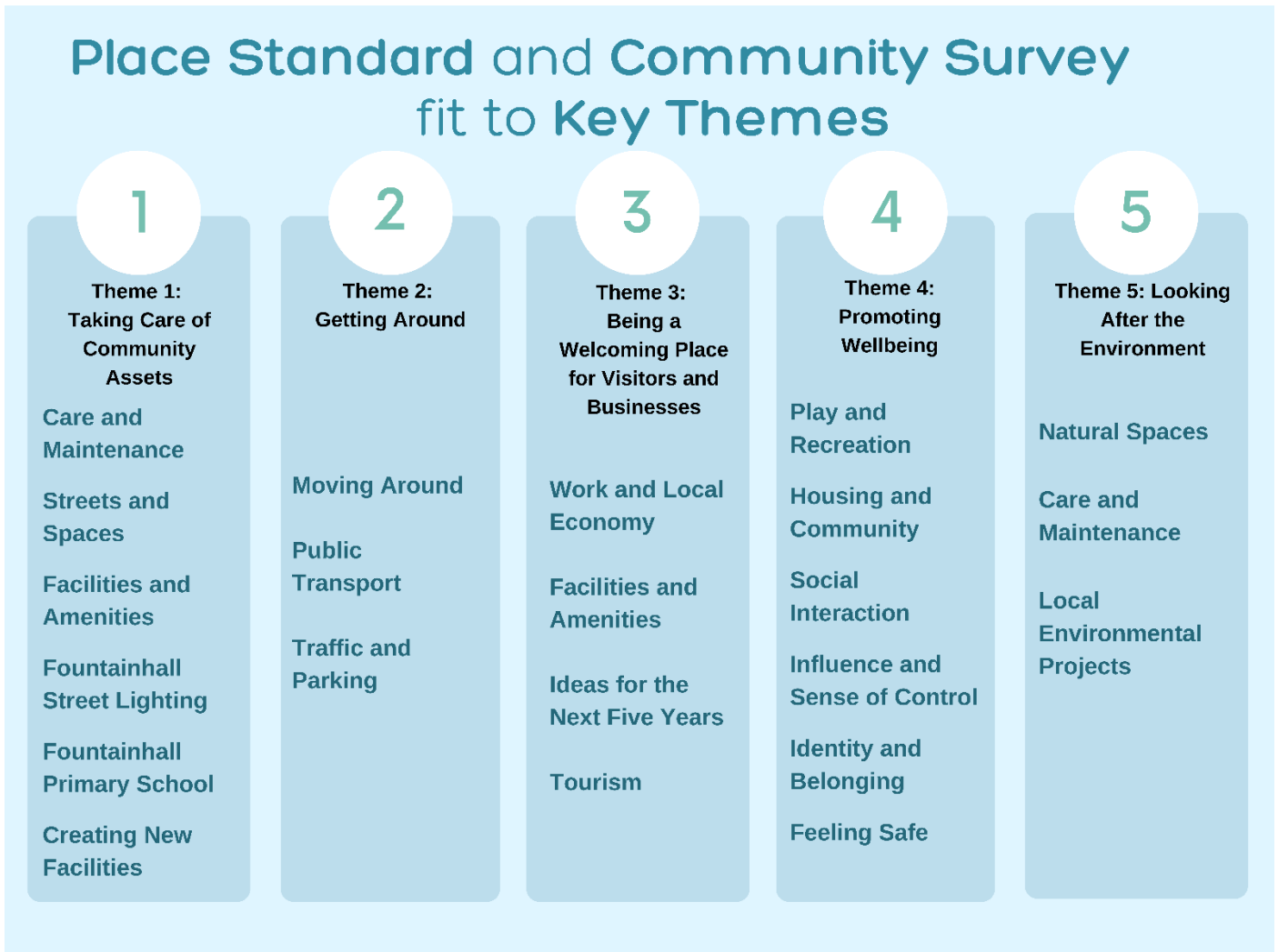
'The Parish of Stow area has around THIRTY artists and craftspeople working and making a living, some of whom have a national reputation. I think this aspect of our community should be promoted by publicising all the work that is going on.'

Survey Respondent

'Fountainhall is very neglected in terms of council services like recycling and maintenance of roads, pavements and parks.'

Survey Respondent

The table below depicts the way in which these headings have been categorised. As you will note, 'Care and Maintenance' and 'Facilities and Amenities' appear twice as these categories were split to allow comments regarding 'Taking Care of Community Assets', Being a welcoming Place for Visitors and Businesses' and 'Looking After the Environment' to be placed in the correct section of the CAP



These five key themes form the basis of the Community Action Plan. A summary of action points, issues, opportunities and community suggestions gathered via the Community Survey, Place Standard and at twenty-four Community Drop In Events have been produced for each key theme, as set out below.

An expanded summary of all comments from the Community Survey, Place Standard and Drop In Events can be found in Appendix 2 of this document.

Theme 1

Taking Care of Community Assets

ROYAL HOTEL SITE

- Huge number of suggestions for redevelopment including housing, commercial hub, car park, visitor accommodation
- People remarked on site being an eyesore, wasted space and made the village look uncared for

PUBLIC TOILETS

- High demand for public toilets
- Viewed as essential to attract tourism
- Need for community to have access to toilets for local events

PARKS

- Upgrades desired for: children's play equipment, car parking, football pavillion
- Instigate regular family events
- Need new equipment: nets, lines, goals, basketball hoops
- Provide fenced area for dogs

CHURCH

- Bell and clock tower in need of restoration
- Suggestions it be retained as a place of worship within a complex for wider community use (workshops, meeting rooms, heritage centre)

TOWN HALL

- Underused heart of community
- Modernise and upgrade facilities
- Open daily for events, classes and Archive
- Lack of care taker/expensive hire rates viewed as issues

STATION HOUSE STOW

- High praise for restoration - further community owned projects welcomed
- More pop up events and theme nights welcomed
- Tenant to be secured for day to day running

QUOITING GREEN

Site suggestions included:

- Local car parking site
- Overnight campervan site with electricity hook-ups
- Camp site with washing and cooking facilities

NEW SHARED FACILITIES

Requests for:

- community shed, local tool share, upcycling centre, allotments, community woodlands, arts and crafts centre, heritage hub

STOW MAINTENANCE

- Roads, pavements and drainage systems need attention
- Usability of pavements poor (parked cars, bins, etc.,) for parents, elderly and less able
- Increase grass cutting in parks and on single track roads
- Zebra crossing needed at garage area & more safe crossing places
- Benches for bus shelters
- Remove weeds on pavements
- Plant wild flowers on verges
- More planters
- Remove fallen timber on walking tracks
- Shipping containers need attention

FOUNTAINHALL MAINTENANCE & LOCAL CONCERNS

- Lack of street lighting
- Pavements in poor condition
- Speeding vehicles a problem
- Need safe crossing places
- Need off street parking for visitors
- Remove parking outside school
- Playpark - upgrade and reopen
- Fears around potential closure of school
- Regular programme of events to be reinstated at Village Hall
- Repurpose old Station House
- Need access to mobile shop
- Create more local groups and clubs

Encourage more use of Stow post Office rather than driving to the big stores in Galashiels; if it closed for lack of use it would be disaster for the village'.

Survey Respondent

'I've heard many reports of the Town Hall being too expensive to use'.

Survey Respondent

'Playpark at the top of Fleming Place has been neglected and has un-guarded toddler components. It should be upgraded with components for all ages (like Stow), tables and benches, trees, maybe a water feature or community garden, firepits for barbeques for the village'.

Survey Respondent

Theme 2

Getting Around

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Issues created by misaligned public transport schedules, cancellations and reduced X95 bus service
- Community transport (Pingo) & local connections needed
- Need a campaign to promote public and shared transport

PARKING

- More parking options for residents of Earlston Rd, Cockholm Cr & Mill Rd
- Area around Surgery, School and Park frequently congested
- More electric charging points required (for each street)

TRAFFIC CALMING

- Regulate speeds on A7 through infrastructure changes, technology and speed limits
- Need safe, wider, pavements and safer crossing points
- Old Stage Road traffic calming and pedestrian lane required

WALKING & CYCLING

- Install a river path to connect communities & more off road tracks
- More seating on routes & trails
- Remove fallen timber on countryside routes. Fence steep slopes above A7
- Promote active travel
- More safe walking routes needed and safe cycle links to towns
- Existing routes through livestock fields to be fenced, install usable gates and stiles
- Need better definition of routes & signage and more walking literature and maps
- Connect tracks to existing trails in other communities - Innerleithen and Southern Uplands Way

FOUNTAINHALL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- Lack of public transport - X95 service severely curtailed
- On demand services required to connect to train
- Unable to access surgery and post office without car
- Electric car chargers needed

'Yes, Stow has train, but anywhere else public transport is a disgrace. People can't even get back from the cinema or something after school. Why would a young person want to stay here. Simply nothing for them.'

Survey Respondent

'If the Scottish Government is serious about encouraging people onto public transport, they need to ensure it's provided at an acceptable level and is reliable.'

Survey Respondent

'We need a reliable means of transport. Walking the half mile to the bus stop, only for the bus not to turn up is frustrating'.

Survey Respondent

'Many pot-holes, sunken manhole covers and uneven surfaces to repair. Roads need constant attention, and some small streets are completely neglected'.

Survey Respondent

Theme 3

Being a Welcoming Place for Visitors and Businesses

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

- Lack of jobs, training and business opportunities
- Limited employment choices – cottage industry, farming, remote working
- Future opportunities were listed as tourism, hospitality and support services for the elderly

TOURISM & HERITAGE

- Development of tourist accommodation vital
- Suggestions: Royal Hotel site, off-grid eco, bothy, camping & motorhome areas with services, changing rooms for walkers and cyclists
- Promote & preserve existing sites, stage regular events (festivals, storytelling) and encourage use of train and bus services
- Develop Heritage Plan to include all sites & Heritage Archive
- Create memorial to Stow Witches & Our Lady's Well dedicated path

BUSINESS & BUSINESS SPACES

- Many small businesses have to operate from central Borders & Edinburgh due to lack of premises
- Need creation of light industry units, workshop spaces, offices, studios, shop fronts, regular market for local goods, artist & maker facilities
- Existing business spaces should be protected from conversion to housing
- Convert abandoned and disused buildings to business spaces
- Local business units need to be affordable
- Increased local services welcomed – greengrocer, butcher, hairdresser

SIGNAGE

- Refresh all interpretation boards
- Create new signage for further places of interest
- Directional signage needed on trails and paths
- Cohesive branding required for all village information

"We could do with a space where skills are shared and larger, more specialised machinery can be kept. Basically, a workshop with access for all and where classes can be held".

Survey Respondent

'Local economy needs much more focus - and variety of approaches to build resilience, i.e. increasing visitors and encouraging people on A7/bus/train to stop in Stow'.

Survey Respondent

'We have quite a wide range of public spaces in which to hold all kinds of events, and public transport. In addition, the history, landscape, and wildlife provide a wonderful setting for any event. The only thing lacking at present is sufficient accommodation'.

Survey Respondent

'There are no opportunities for work or training here, that is one of the reasons I'm thinking of leaving'.

Survey Respondent

Theme 4

Promoting Wellbeing

COMMUNICATION

- Create a directory of all local groups, clubs (inc dates, times, venues), services, businesses and yearly events
- Coordinate existing and new groups to avoid duplication and to provide opportunities for knowledge sharing/joint working

- Increase community cohesion by bringing local groups, clubs, volunteers and organisations together on a regular basis
- Create a list of responsible persons and their duties
- Better access to PSCC minutes and meeting dates

CHILDCARE

- Childcare and nursery facilities required to assist working families
- Infrequent public transport impacted access to childcare facilities in other areas
- Childcare viewed as a business opportunity for communities

HOUSING & FACILITIES

- New housing required but kept within village boundaries and at sites outlined in Local Development Plan
- Need for affordable, social, sheltered and assisted housing to retain young and elderly
- Need for flats, small homes and family accommodation
- Housing to rent or buy scarce and both highly priced
- Community housing study to be commissioned
- Fears around future socio-economic mix if house prices continued to rise
- Planned changes to EPC's could remove rental stock from market (cost to retrofit)
- Sheltered and assisted accommodation to be made available for elderly (free up housing stock)
- Derelict and unoccupied housing to be repurposed as affordable rented homes/flats
- New developments to meet Passivhaus standards

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- PSCC potential new members unsure how to sign up and would like guidance on remit of CC & elections
- Calls for regular Town Hall Forums to encourage local decision making
- Only 2 seats for Fountainhall

RETENTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

- Reliable transport, limited housing and lack of opportunities to socialise impacted young residents
- No education and training opportunities locally
- Creation of volunteer and work experience options welcomed

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- Need for more play equipment, group activities and soft play areas for under 5's
- Increase outdoor activities - after school clubs, Scouts, forest schools, activity trails, community garden activities
- Young people need a place to meet peers
- Source funds for youth worker and reinstate youth club
- Provide regular events and activities for young people - local music events, holiday clubs, classes

ACTIVITIES FOR ADULTS

- Regular classes, new clubs/groups and events requested - fitness, drama, arts and crafts, badminton, yoga, bowls, dance, dog agility. Lunch clubs, coffee mornings, local fundraising, environment group, music clubs & ceilidhs, book club, walking group, LGBTQIA+ group
- Cycle hub to provide educational opportunities
- Spaces to meet other adults requested at Station House, Cafe, Church or by fundraising for a local pub
- Sound proofed room for musicians to practice needed

'There's no consistency around providing information. Somewhere central, and a person tasked with keeping track of all the things and making sure they're publicised in all the same places would be useful.'

Survey Respondent

'Space and resources to allow an after-school club in Stow that is open for 3-year-olds. Families within the village are going to private nurseries because children can't stay beyond school hours. This then impacts on the school.'

Survey Respondent

'We need to do more for our aging population. Provide more opportunities for them to meet socially thus prevent isolation like a monthly lunch club.'

Survey Respondent

Theme 5

Looking After the Environment

RENEWABLES, SHARED FACILITIES, NATURE AND FOOD SECURITY

- Creation of community windmills and solar farms to generate local income
- Sustainable energy for community buildings, green energy collectives, district heating networks
- Increased EV charging points
- Support for residents to insulate (information on loans and incentives) and retrofit
- Dim streetlights after 1AM
- Implement community owned woodstore, recycle unwanted building materials and create shared tool store
- Promote community rewilding, 'no mow May', bee friendly gardens, hedgerows, wild flower planting and connected woodlands
- Increase food security through allotments, local growing, community orchards, rainwater harvesting, community larder, local bakery and regenerative agriculture
- Promote shop local, active travel, fair trade & reduce chemical use campaigns

LITTER AND DOG FOULING

- More refuse bins
- Community litter picking and river cleaning events
- Increased dog fouling bins, recycled bag dispensers and educational campaign to reduce incidence of dog fouling
- Parks to have areas for dog walking/dogs to be kept on leads

RECYCLING FACILITIES

- Increased facilities required and more frequent emptying of existing clothing and glass facilities to avoid build up and potential fly tipping
- Rag, food and garden waste facilities welcomed (could be locally composted)
- Increase local recycling/reuse of unwanted goods

FOUNTAINHALL REFUSE, RECYCLING AND NET ZERO

- Unable to recycle without a car - need local options
- Increase waste and dog fouling bins particularly around green spaces
- Bins not emptied enough
- Calls for community wind turbines to supply local energy needs & access to green energy collectives

We could become a real beacon for demonstrating the positive steps that could be made in a local community to reduce the causes and impacts of climate change.'

Survey Respondent

'Whatever your opinions on wind farms, communities close to them should benefit directly through a reduction in their electricity bills. Grants are welcome but do not necessarily benefit all'.

Survey Respondent

'I applaud the individuals who pick up roadside litter. The 'Give and Take' FB Site also helps people redistribute items rather than discard them '.

Survey Respondent

'There are bottle banks at Stow and Heriot, why not Fountainhall? If you don't have a car, how do you recycle bottles, which everyone agrees is important?'

Survey Respondent

Community Gratitude

The Community Survey questions were designed to capture people's views on current issues regarding infrastructure and service delivery, planning for future demographic changes, increasing business opportunities and tackling climate change at a local level. The survey aimed to discover what was missing, what wasn't working and what people really wanted to change in Stow and Fountainhall.

'Here's the thing... I love the village, it's a great place to live and I enjoy being part of what I need to be part of.'

Survey Respondent

As well as talking about things that they would like to change, residents used the opportunity to voice their gratitude for community volunteers, local event organisers, community facilities and local businesses. They expressed their pleasure in being part of a friendly, welcoming, safe and well-knit community; were proud of their community (particularly during the Covid 19 response); and believed they were fortunate to reside in such a forward-thinking, cooperative, caring and supportive place.



6. Community Action Plan

This section presents a detailed description of the action points developed from the data collected, and how, by whom, and when they could be delivered,

Capitalising on Some of Our Underpinning Strengths

Twenty-one people requested volunteering opportunities during the consultation phase and there are likely to be far more out there given the willingness of the population to respond to the Community Survey and in attending twenty-four Community Drop-In Events. One of the untapped strengths of the community is the volume of skilled professionals, managers and directors residing in the area (it's an unusual and valuable demographic); with some outreach work it may be possible to increase local capacity and gain a further set of valuable skills from this demographic.

As demonstrated by the breadth and depth of survey responses from local people, there is an enormous amount of untapped energy, desire and creativity in the wider community that can be harnessed and focussed to create a brighter future and lasting change. The plan is by, and for, the people of Stow and Fountainhall and it is hoped that this document will inspire community members to get involved in local initiatives, start new groups and projects and connect to existing networks to realise their shared vision for future Stow and Fountainhall.

'There needs to be agreement about Stow Park and who looks after what. The Play-Park is poorly maintained and irregularly mowed. It is not a nice place for kids to play in'.

Survey Respondent

'Broadband connection within Fountainhall and Stow has improved but still falls short of that in more urban areas. Full Fibre needs to be accessible in both villages and houses out with the villages'.

Survey Respondent

Timelines

Information from the five key themes; 'Taking Care of Community Assets', 'Getting Around', 'Being a Welcoming Place for Visitors and Businesses', 'Promoting Wellbeing' and 'Looking After the Environment' as outlined in Section 3 of this document, have been broken down into four timelines.

Year 1: Quick Wins – Short term achievable actions the community could undertake within six months from adoption of a Community Action Plan

Years 2-4: Achievable Opportunities – medium term actions the community could undertake within 1 to 2 years (some will require additional resources) from adoption of a Community Action Plan.

Years 5-7: Big Issues – longer term opportunities that will require additional resources such as skills, permissions, policy change, people or capital. The community could plan to achieve these within 5 to 7 years from adoption of a Community Action Plan

Years 1-7: Aspirational Large Infrastructure Projects, Community Buy Outs and New Facilities – these will require investment, land purchase, planning, etc., to implement.

Actions have been arranged into a set of tables based on these timelines (see below).

For many of the actions listed, work has already begun on implementing the ideas developed through the CAP. Each table also provides an update of the progress so far in addressing the suggested actions.

Prioritising Actions

Actions in the tables have been listed in order of priority, based on the data collected from the community survey, place standard discussions, and community vote results.

Colour coding:

Blue – topic/action request scored high in survey, place standard and community votes

Green – topic/action request scored high in 2 of 3 indicators

Yellow – topic/action request scored high in 1 of 3 indicators

Orange – topic/action request present in all three indicator lists with a medium to low score

Working Together

Each table identifies suggested actions, recommends groups and partners that could get involved, and provides an update on current project progress. The following abbreviations have been used throughout all tables:

SCT	Stow Community Trust	GS	Green Stow
PSCC	Parish of Stow Community Council	CTAG	Community Transport Action Group – to be implemented
PC	Park Committee	PTG	Pump Track Group
PS	Primary Schools	SFC	Stow Football Club
SBC	Scottish Borders Council	CoS	Church of Scotland
LC	Local Councillors	SC	Social Committee – to be implemented
LG	Local Groups	HTG	Heritage Tourism Group – to be implemented
SOSE	South of Scotland Enterprise	HES	Historic Environment Scotland
SSDA	South Scotland Destination Alliance	LB	Live Borders
SSC	Stow Sport Committee	SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
CH	Cycle Hub	TT	Think Tank – to be implemented
GWGG	Gala Water Horticultural Society		

The Action Plan is ambitious and will stretch the capacity of SCT, PSCC, community groups and volunteer networks without the right help. Therefore, before work begins, it is suggested that time is given over to sourcing funds (3-5 years) for a Development Worker to help build local capacity, support existing networks and to inspire change. It will be important to build capacity and cohesion through a rolling programme of volunteer training, cross pollination of groups and ideas and identifying future leaders. Ideally the person will have some experience of producing funding applications and have project management skills to support SCT, PSCC and all local groups to implement areas of the plan. Would be favourable to also have IT skills to support further information being hosted on SCT website from wider group activities.

Quick Wins: short-term achievable actions

Action	Potential Partners	Themes	Possible action	Updates
<p>Improve Local Communication-</p> <p>not all people able to access internet and information on social media</p>	SCT, PSCC	4- Promote wellbeing	Establish a community directory of local groups, events, businesses, community initiatives, community representatives, local services and community council meeting dates and minutes. Plan to review yearly and update. Secure funds for directory, compile information, circulate to households and host on website. Printing costs will be prohibitive to undertake yearly. Suggest attempting to funnel all traffic to website and seek volunteers to identify members of the community who have no access to internet. The short list could be issued updated lists in printed form.	<p>Oct 22 - An events calendar is now on STC website for community to add events. Community newsletter delivered to every household. A single website for all local information is being discussed by Community Council. PSCC minutes and meeting dates are available on 2 notice boards in the villages and details can be found in the newsletter.</p> <p>Sept 23 – SCT and PSCC in discussions to develop joint community website.</p>
<p>The Station House</p>	SCT	1- Taking Care of Assets 4- Promote wellbeing	Until a tenant is found to run the building as a restaurant, the space could be opened to community groups and as a private hire space. Given the lack of a pub in the village, the option of opening as a licenced premises could also be explored.	<p>Mar 23- Regular events being held at the Station House including a Friday Night Bar</p> <p>Apr 23- A Marketing Group from Stirling University have been commissioned to undertake this work. Report expected September 2023</p> <p>Sept 23- Plans developing for regular food events.</p>
<p>Dog Fouling-</p> <p>and poo bag littering are an issue.</p>	PSCC, PC, PS	4- Promote wellbeing	Public information campaign and school poster competition to reduce incidence. There were suggestions for dogs to be on leads in parks.	<p>Feb 23- Community Council have approached SBC to provide five additional bins and are awaiting a maintenance agreement</p>

<p>Social Groups & Activities for people to socialise, including for LGBTQIA+ residents</p>	<p>LG</p>	<p>4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Put a call out on social media and through newsletter to seek volunteers for a social committee to organise regular events such as concerts, ceilidhs, discos and coffee mornings</p>	
<p>Fallen Trees- blocking paths at top of Earlston Road and Beech Woods.</p>	<p>PSCC, SCT, LG</p>	<p>1-Taking Care of Assets 2- Getting Around 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Need plan for mutually beneficial solutions (landowners and community). Request a meeting with local landowners and farmers to discuss/ form action plan and enlist local groups and volunteers to assist</p>	<p>May 23 - Owner of woods at top of Earlston Road is felling and replanting fallen timber. Sept 23- All paths clear</p>
<p>Weeds – growing in pavements, under benches and around public buildings</p>	<p>SBC, PSCC, LG, GWGG, LC</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 2- Getting Around 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Develop maintenance plan with SBC, enlist local groups and volunteers to maintain streets and spaces. Feed into Pavement and Streets</p>	<p>Sept 23- First community clean-up session delivered on Townfoot</p>
<p>'No Mow May'- initiative to support biodiversity</p>	<p>SBC, PSCC, LG, GWGG, GS, LC</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Develop maintenance plan with SBC, school poster competition to encourage residents to support the initiative</p>	
<p>Wildflowers – in Old Kirk and on verges</p>	<p>GWGG, LG, PS, HES, SBC, PSCC, LG</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Bring local groups and schools together to organise community planting days of wild flowers on verges and Old Kirk. Arrange meeting with HES, SBC to outline any issues (site is a partially scheduled ancient monument) and develop maintenance plan. Feed into Interpretive Panels at Old Kirk</p>	<p>Sept 23- Consultation between development officer, council maintenance workers, and local residents to develop plan for new wildflower areas.</p>
<p>Bike Maintenance Classes</p>	<p>SCT</p>	<p>2- Getting Around 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Launch bike maintenance classes at the Stow Cycle Hub, and grow capacity to</p>	<p>Apr 23 - An initial series of classes have been delivered by the Stow Cycle Hub, and an ongoing drop-in service has been initiated.</p>

		5 – Looking After the Environment	deliver further. Advertise on social media and newsletter	
Heritage Tourism and Events- to utilise local skills and knowledge	SCT, CG, SBC	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	Bring groups together, i.e. storytellers, writers, artists, archivists, photographers, etc., with a view to developing Our Lady's Well, Stow Witches and Royal Wedding reenactments (see years 1-7). Arrange meeting with all local groups, landowners and volunteer lists to discuss an action plan. If possible, form a committee at an early stage to work on various strands. Source funds to employ a part time freelance marketing specialist to design and implement campaigns to grow local tourism with a view to making this a long-term, part-time position. Feed into Developing Destination Plan	
Mowing Around Park and Playpark – Infrequent mowing of undergrowth forcing walkers onto road	SBC, PC, LG	1- Taking Care of Assets 2 - Getting Around 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Develop maintenance plan with SBC	Apr 23- Single track roads need to be cut as undergrowth forces walkers onto road. Community Council are working with SBC to increase frequency of grass -cutting.
Mobile Shop – for Fountainhall	PSCC, LG	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	Discuss with milk delivery company and Stow Post Office to see if they would be willing to provide a range of essentials for residents of Fountainhall. Feed into Weekly Market.	
Planters & Hanging Baskets	PSCC, GWGG, LG, GS	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses	Float the idea of raising funds for planters and tree planting through dedicating or sponsoring tubs and hanging baskets. People could dedicate tubs to a particular person or historical figure and	Apr 23- An article was circulated in the newsletter outlining funds for volunteers to purchase plants and for families to sponsor a planter

		<p>4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>businesses may wish to sponsor for marketing. If successful this will become a yearly occurrence.</p> <p>Implement community fundraising initiatives for the installation and maintenance of flower tubs and baskets. The money raised, in part, being used to purchase plants, materials and planters dedicated to residents past and present. Might be a great local history project for primary schools with assistance from the Archive. Public information campaign and school poster competition. Feed into Pavements and Streets.</p>	
Tree Planting		<p>4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Public information campaign and school poster competition.</p>	
<p>Arts and Crafts Events – to showcase local makers and artists supported by local exhibitions, craft fairs, workshops, classes and demonstrations</p>	STC, CG	<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Arrange a community meeting to float idea of arts and craft open days, tours, workshops – rolling yearly programme</p> <p>Bring local artists and makers together to develop arts and crafts tours, artists doors open days, craft/art workshop sessions and market.</p>	Apr 23- New Arts and Crafts Event in planning
<p>Shipping Containers in Park are an eyesore</p>	SSC, CH, PS, LG	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Work with schools and local artists to landscape or disguise shipping containers (once permissions secured).</p> <p>Trellis and plant climbers to disguise containers</p>	<p>Apr 23- Volunteers recruited and paint purchased June 23- Containers painted</p>
<p>Environmental Group to generate ideas around climate change and support this through local funds</p>	SCT, LG	<p>4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Volunteers signed up at Community Drop In Events – put a call out on social media and through newsletter for others who may be interested in this initiative. Feed into Moving Away from Fossil Fuels</p>	Apr 23- Green Stow group reformed following inactivity during COVID.

Advertise Gala Water as a place to visit	SCT, SBC, LG	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	Support and expand events (e.g., Stowed Out). Secure funding to support marketing to attract more visitors. Feed into Developing Destination Plan	
Water Saving – devices and the use of water butts in gardens	LG, PS, GS	5 – Looking After the Environment	Public information campaign and school poster competition.	
Ethical Purchasing Campaign promoting recycled products. Aspire to be cruelty free, fair trade and chemical free	LG, PS, GS	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Public information campaign and school poster competition. Feed into Weekly Markets	
Shop Local Campaign encouraging shop to sell a wider range of local goods	GS	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Public information campaign, talk to shop about increasing range Talk to shop and milk company about a shop local campaign and liaise with social media and community newsletter representatives to promote. Feed into Weekly Markets	
Local Car Share Scheme – including shared shopping scheme.	CTAG, GS	2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Request volunteers to organise a Community Transport Action Group meeting through social media, followed by public information campaign. Bring volunteers together to form a Community Transport Action Group. The group could begin to work on car share and active travel initiatives with a view to working on the bigger community transport issues.	June 23- Local resident has been working to bring together a working group, with limited success.
Multi Court – to be made more accessible	SSC	1- Taking Care of Assets 4- Promote wellbeing	Discuss fee free use for residents, out with peak times. Request permission for making the multi-court available for free to residents over the winter. Advertise on	

			social media. Feed into Facilities for Young People	
Develop Heritage Logo	SCT	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses	Community wide competition to design a heritage logo for all community heritage assets. Feed into Developing Destination Plan	
Broadband – continues to be an issue	SCT	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	Public information campaign on OFCOM mobile and broadband checker https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/en-gb/broadband-coverage and R100 Voucher schemes https://www.scotlandsuperfast.com for those still experiencing connection issues	

Achievable Opportunities: medium-term actions

	Potential Partners	Themes	Possible action	Updates
<p>Pavements and Streets Repairs needed for bus shelters, benches and signposts.</p> <p>Narrow Pavements impinged by parked cars, uneven road and pavement surfaces. Limited availability of parking on Earlston Road, Lauder Road, outside both schools, Mill Road and Health Centre</p> <p>EV Charging Points for cars and bikes.</p> <p>Streetlights for area of road between Fountainhall and bus stop on A7, bus shelters, and Haypark</p>	SBC, LC, PSCC, SCT	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets</p> <p>2 - Getting Around</p> <p>4- Promote wellbeing</p> <p>5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Hold discussions with key partners and begin review of street furniture repairs, maintenance and improvements. Feed into Destination Development Plan. Hold discussions on local parking arrangements. Develop a plan for infrastructure improvements. Feed into Destination Development Plan.</p> <p>Cycle and EV charge points to future proof communities.</p> <p>Install street lighting for identified areas.</p> <p>Relocation of dustbin at crossing and identify further locations for new waste bins.</p> <p>Lights for Fountainhall and bus shelters. Reduce street light hours.</p> <p>Identify safer crossing places for A7 Install additional pelican crossing.</p>	<p>Apr 23 - SBC looking at streetlighting in Fountainhall</p>

<p>Loan. Reduce street lights from 1am.</p> <p>Relocate Dustbins away from main road at crossing. Increased waste bins in both communities.</p> <p>Lack of Safe Crossing Places on A7 – particularly near garage</p>				
<p>Additional Park Improvements – suggestions include Basketball Hoops, Rugby Goals, Football Nets and Lines, Cycle Track, Climbing Frames, Community Barbeque area, Activity Trail, Bandstand, Flower planting with seating, improved Playpark, off-lead dog walking area, skatepark.</p> <p>Park Activities such as Teddy Bear Picnics.</p>	<p>PC, LG, SBC, SFC</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Need an assessment of current facilities and an improvement plan. Suggest a pre planning meeting to get all parents, pupils and residents involved in the process. Plans will need to be drawn up and agreed and funds sourced. Feed into Facilities for Young People and Fountainhall Playpark</p>	
<p>Activity Classes over Winter – dancing, yoga, drama, badminton,</p>	<p>LB, PSCC, SBC, SCT, LC</p>	<p>4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Arrange a meeting to discuss a way forward with Town Hall, reviewing schedule of events and current pricing structures which were reported by many as prohibitive for community members to hire</p>	

woodcrafts, arts and crafts, lunch clubs			facilities. Get social committee involved in this action once formed. Feed into Facilities for Young People, Music Practice Spaces, Pump Track, Fountainhall School, Assessment of Facilities and Preservation of Historic Buildings.	
<p>Public Transport Links - Improve connections to Fountainhall and to Lauder.</p> <p>Shared Mobility Hub</p> <p>Hourly service for X95 buses</p>	SBC, LC, PSCC, SCT, CTAG, GS	<p>2 - Getting Around</p> <p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses</p> <p>4- Promote wellbeing</p> <p>5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Pingo bus to connect railway and X95 bus with outlying communities.</p> <p>Provide a shuttle bus to transport links for Fountainhall along Old Stage Road.</p> <p>Groups to come together to begin forming a plan for new transport services.</p> <p>Fundraising and involving transport companies at an early stage will be key. Suggest group make links to other groups in surrounding areas. Feed into Moving Away from Fossil Fuels, Developing Destination Plan and Fountainhall School.</p> <p>Location of Stow Cycle Hub and development of car share schemes from year 1 initiative may form beginnings of a shared mobility hub at Stow Station, which could connect to rail service.</p>	June 23 – X95 running hourly service during daytime
Fountainhall Playpark - upgrade and signposting	PG, PSCC, LG, SBC, PC	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets</p> <p>4- Promote wellbeing</p>	Organise community meeting with key partners, groups and community members to discuss repairs, new equipment and infrastructure improvements. Develop local action group, building on experience and advice from PC. Feed into Fountainhall School and Assessment of Facilities	
Pump Track	SSC	4- Promote wellbeing	Build pump track in Stow Park. Feed into Facilities for Young People and Additional Park Improvements	Sept 23- Plans in place and construction contractors obtained.

E-Bikes for Fountainhall	SCT, PSCC, LG, SBC, GS	2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Scope possible location, costs and volunteers to extend Stow Cycle Hub's E-bike hire scheme to Fountainhall. Contact Sustrans and Cycling UK for help, advice and possible funding. Feed into Moving Away from Fossil Fuels .	Feb 23 - E-bikes installed at Fountainhall
Moving Away from Fossil Fuels	GS, TT	4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Provide practical advice and support on insulating homes, including information on loan schemes, government incentives, etc. Contact Community Energy Scotland to start exploring ways forward.	July 23 - Green Stow have hosted a series of talks and site visits focusing on home energy saving.
Interpretative panels at Old Kirk	HES, SCT, HTG, SBC	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses	HTG to make a shortlist of information and subjects for the panels. Arrange meeting with HES, SBC to discuss the possible installation of interpretive panels and to outline any issues. HES may have funding streams to cover manufacture and installation (partially scheduled monument). Feed into Heritage Signage, Developing Destination Plan, and Preservation of Historic Buildings	
Weekly Market – in Stow	LG, SCT, HTG	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Bring groups and local businesses /producers together to discuss how this may be achieved. Scope potential sites and local producers. May need a paid coordinator to ensure smooth running. Feed into Developing Destination Plan .	

Heritage Signage	HTG SBC	2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses	Develop plan to refresh existing and install new signage that advertises local heritage assets, making use of Heritage Logo . Feed into Pavement and Streets, Preservation of Historic Buildings and Developing Destination Plan .	
Recycling Facilities – not enough glass, clothes, garden waste (particularly in Fountainhall) and no facilities for rags. Glass and clothing bins poorly maintained.	GS, SBC, PSCC, LC	5 – Looking After the Environment	Request meeting with all partners to find solutions to recycling facilities not being serviced regularly. Identify areas for new facilities. Identify a volunteer in Fountainhall who may be willing to regularly collect recycling to deposit in Stow for collection (some residents do not have access to a car).	May 23 - Green Stow working with Primary School to raise awareness of recycling facilities
Fountainhall School - ensure it stays open	PS, PSCC	1- Taking Care of Assets 4- Promote wellbeing	Bring members of community together including any Parent Teacher groups to discuss and plan a way forward. There was a suggestion that the school could be used as a nursery and for children with additional needs. Explore ideas of having after school and breakfast club facilities on site.	
River Health Check	SBC, GWGG, SEPA	1- Taking Care of Assets 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Arrange meeting with landowners and key partners to discuss river monitoring days. There may be funds to support this through carbon credit schemes. Encourage landowners to plant more native trees along the Gala Water. More hedgerows, wildflowers and native trees to encourage wildlife and connect woodlands. Feed into Developing Destination Plan	
Preservation of Historic Buildings – as well as other heritage sites.	SCT, HTG, HES	1- Taking Care of Assets	Begin initial discussions with HES and SBC about preservation and maintenance plan for all heritage assets and monuments e.g.,	

		3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses	the Old Kirk, Bishop's Palace, Packhorse Bridge, Our Lady's Well, etc., List of assets can be found in the appendices. Feed into Developing Destination Plan and Heritage Signage .	
Facilities for young people - including after school club and youth club	PSCC, PS,SCT	4- Promote wellbeing	School session with parents, teachers and young people to identify ways to support young people through clubs and community facilities. Church may have spaces – suggest initial discussion before meetings to understand options. Look into funding options to employ a part time youth worker. Arrange a meeting with partners to discuss a way forward with Town Hall schedule of events and current pricing structures which were reported by many as prohibitive for community members to hire facilities. Work with social committee to identify most popular needs of community.	
Bike stands – outside Post Office	SCT, PSCC, SBC, GS	2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment	Organise meeting with key partners and post office to discuss bike stands adjacent to shop. Feed into Destination Development Plan, EV Charging Points, and Moving Away from Fossil Fuels .	Apr 23 - Installed
Practice Space - for local musicians	SC, PS, LB, CoS	4- Promote wellbeing	Explore options for locations, including schools, church and Town Hall. Feed into Facilities for Young People and Preservation of Historical Buildings .	

<p>Developing Destination Plan - including a Community Brand</p>	<p>SCT, SSDA, SOSE, SBC</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Begin discussions with SOSE and SSDA to begin work on a Destination Development Plan for Stow and Fountainhall to encompass heritage, arts and crafts, walking, cycling, tourism facilities, signage and accommodation. Arrange meeting with key partners to discuss Destination Development Plan for Stow and Fountainhall to encompass heritage, arts and crafts, walking, cycling, tourism facilities, signage and accommodation. It may be possible to get one to one help to develop an overarching document that encompasses all aspects or grant funding for a feasibility study. Feed into Preservation of Historical Buildings, Pavements and Streets, and Heritage Signage.</p>	<p>Sept 23- new SBC Tourism Officer in position. Discussions planned with SCT for plan development.</p>
<p>Maintenance of facilities – Including Town Hall, Multi Court and Parks</p>	<p>SBC, PSCC, SCT, LB, SP</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Bring partners together to begin discussing and developing a maintenance and improvement plan for all community assets. Feed into Preservation of Historical Buildings, Developing Destination Plan, Fountainhall School, Park Improvement and Fountainhall Playpark.</p>	

Big Issues: longer-term opportunities

	Potential Partners	Themes	Possible action	Updates
<p>Reducing Traffic speeds - particularly through Stow on A7. Installation of traffic calming infrastructure and reduced speed limits. Reduced speed limits would also encourage public transport use.</p>	SBC, LC, CTAG, PSCC	<p>2 - Getting Around 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Traffic Speeds - Request a meeting with SBC roads and safety teams and partners to implement a traffic survey to determine possible steps forward to better manage traffic speeds in Stow on A7 through improved traffic calming measures (20mph, speed bumps, speed cameras), 20mph limit on back road to Fountainhall from Stow.</p> <p>Feed into Moving Away from Fossil Fuels and Pavements and Streets.</p>	<p>May 23- Community Council are working with SBC and Scottish Government on traffic calming initiatives.</p>
<p>Dedicated Cycle Routes - Lack of safe cycle path along A7 to Galashiels and Edinburgh. Few off road routes for cycling. Mountain biking routes could also be developed.</p>	SBC, LC, PSCC, SCT, CTAG	<p>2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Invite landowners to discuss access, maintenance of infrastructure and land for developments. Discussion with Sustrans in early stages recommended. Feed into Cycling and Walking Tourism</p>	
<p>Affordable Housing – to stop outward migration of young people and attract young families. Lack of eco housing, social housing, affordable rental properties, one</p>	SBC, LC, PSCC, SCT,	<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Housing Needs Survey - Begin discussions and request a local housing needs survey to include provision of changing needs (aging population will require additional services and amenities) and prioritisation of requirements. SBC's current SHIP (Strategic Housing Investment Plan) is to</p>	

<p>bedroom flats for sale and rent, sheltered housing and assisted living facilities.</p>			<p>2027. It may be useful to bring local RSL's (Eildon, Scottish Borders Housing Association) into the discussion at an early stage. Develop a strategic plan for social housing, affordable rental properties, small (1 bedroom) flats for sale and rent, sheltered housing for elderly residents and care facilities (nursing/assisted living facility). Once community begins to generate funds from various initiatives profits could be used to begin purchasing housing for development</p>	
<p>Walking Paths – not fenced through fields of stock. Popular walking routes curbed by electric fencing. More seating needed along countryside walks.</p>	<p>PSCC, LC, HTG, SCT, LC</p>	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Invite farmers and landowners to discuss access (fencing stock fields, gates), seek permissions and funds for seating. Feed into Cycling and Walking Tourism.</p>	
<p>Improving Job Opportunities- No preschool childcare provision/nursery. Lack of workshop and business units.</p>	<p>SCT, PSCC, SOSE, SSDA, SBC, PS, LC</p>	<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Arrange a meeting with all partners to discuss a way forward. Create links to wider tourism and local businesses. Talk to local businesses about possible local training and apprenticeships (perhaps a wider discussion with Borders College?). Development of local tourism initiatives may well provide further opportunities for new jobs and training opportunities. Childcare provision could be a business idea for someone locally. Discuss options with SBC around enhanced childcare provision through schools. Lack of business units were highlighted by many in the survey. Inventory of underused and abandoned buildings</p>	

			may provide options for new developments.	
Cycling and Walking Tourism	SOSE, SSDA, SCT, PSCC, SBC, LC	<p>2 - Getting Around</p> <p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses</p> <p>4- Promote wellbeing</p> <p>5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Invite farmers and landowners to discuss access, maintenance of infrastructure and land for community initiatives such as walking, cycling and MBT to connect to Innerleithen. Suggest bringing Innerleithen groups into the conversation. Mountain Bike Trails could boost local economy such as an off-road link from train station to Innerleithen.</p> <p>Design new walking routes and improved existing routes with dedicated signage and mapping. Develop routes providing access to Southern Uplands Way, Border Abbeys and Girthgate.</p>	

Aspirations: large infrastructure projects, community buy-outs and new facilities

	Potential Partners	Themes	Possible action	Updates
Royal Hotel Site – Community buy-out	SCT	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	There were many ideas for Royal Hotel redevelopment (this was the biggest ask from the community and was mentioned in almost every section of the survey) and people were keen to gain community ownership of the site. Suggest narrowing these down to a short list and request the community vote on favoured option. Visitor accommodation is vital as it underpins a range of economic development projects. Scope, cost, seek planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development.	Apr 23 – Options for the site are in development. Sept 23 – Contact made with landowners to begin negotiation of purchase.
Public toilets – reinstated or built new	STC	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	Public toilets are also vital. Can an area of the quiting green be used? As this would assist Stowed Out, it's close to park and Train Station and could help long term infrastructure if QG were outlined for further development. Tool store and workshop are outlined in community wide initiatives section. Perhaps the old public toilet site can be redeveloped to house this? Outline options and request community make a final decision. Scope, cost, seek planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development. Cleaning and maintenance has to be considered as part of the	Apr 23 - Community Council in discussion with SBC regarding upgrade or relocation of toilets

			planning process. Many public conveniences have had to close in recent years due to lack of funds.	
Town Hall – to be owned and managed by the community. Needs renovation, cheaper hire rates for locals and a caretaker. Could house a gym, heritage hub/archive, soft play area, indoor bowls, space to showcase local artists and makers	SCT	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	There were many calls in the survey for the Town Hall to be in the hands of the community. Would investigate further through community meetings, to determine if this is a genuine desire or is being suggested due to current management arrangements. If community ownership is the preferred option, the site will require extensive renovations, which will be costly. Suggest looking at the how building might be extended to make maximum use of a multi-functional space as part of a development plan for the site. In the short term, a discussion with Live Borders may alleviate some of the current issues around rental costs, local classes and events.	
Memorial to Stow Witches - near the bridge	SCT, SSDA, SBC, HTG	3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses	Community meetings to gather ideas on how the memorial to the Stow Witches should appear, where it should be situated and what infrastructure will be required. Suggest that a yearly series of events are planned to celebrate witches and witchery (storytelling, theatre, re-enactments, spooky tours, Shakespeare, book signings, costume competitions, etc.), interpretation panels, augmented reality apps (e.g. geocache of AR witches in different locations with clues to find them) and walking tour apps to offer tourism options out with festival times. Scope, cost, seek land owner and planning permission (bridge is a scheduled site- HES), compile business plan and seek funds for development of monument, infrastructure, marketing, apps and festival. Could be a combined infrastructure development project with Our Lady's Well.	

<p>Community Wide Initiatives - Including: Wood Store, Allotments (grow more food locally/utilise derelict land/surplus shared with wider community), Tool Store, Composting Facilities, Food Growing and Larder, Library, Repair Shop, Workshop spaces, Community Shed, Local upcycling centre</p>	<p>SCT, GS, LG, TT, GWGG</p>	<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Suggest bringing a range of groups together for an initial discussion around community shared resources. Allotments, community shed and tool store were very popular requests in survey and there is a need to mitigate the issues around green and food waste (see refuse sections in expanded Key Themes in appendices). Land and buildings will need to be identified (inventory of abandoned buildings) to house the various projects and permissions/guidance sought from landowners, planning and environmental health. Scope, cost, seek planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development of each initiative. List of suggested shared resources included: Wood Store, Allotments (grow more food locally, utilise derelict land, surplus shared with wider community), Tool Store, Composting Facilities, Food Growing and Community Larder, Library, Repair Shop, Workshop spaces, Community Shed, Local upcycling centre.</p>	
<p>Station House Fountainhall – accommodation for walkers, off road parking for bus stop, cafe, shop, recycling centre</p>	<p>PSCC, LC, SCT</p>	<p>2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Suggest a community meeting in Fountainhall to seek buy in and to identify community members and groups to take this forward. Residents requested community purchase and redevelopment to accommodation for walkers, off road parking for bus stop, cafe, shop, recycling centre. Register interest (community right to buy abandoned, neglected or detrimental land), scope, cost, seek planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development.</p>	
<p>Off-Road Walking and Cycling Routes. Many called for off road</p>	<p>SCT, LG</p>	<p>2 - Getting Around</p>	<p>The loss of the railway line for leisure use has removed a safe walking and cycling path from both communities. Suggest</p>	

<p>walking and cycling tracks and safe routes particularly for children. Cyclists requested a safe route to Galashiels</p>		<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>discussions with landowners, initially for a path from the Our Lady's Well to Fountainhall and at a later stage, extending the route to Galashiels. Scope, cost, seek planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development.</p>	
<p>Train Station at Fountainhall – to reopen</p>	<p>LG PSCC</p>	<p>2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Need a local group in Fountainhall to start the process. Suggest a community meeting to seek local buy in. Will be a long process to lobby for this and success not guaranteed.</p>	
<p>Our Lady's Well - and development of Heritage Hub</p>	<p>SCT</p>	<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Existing plan (Our Lady of Wedale Stow 2000) will need to be sense checked against plan for Stow Witches and perhaps combined into one project. So much you can do at this site to promote and generate income once infrastructure in place. A yearly royal wedding and procession, medieval feasts, reenactors, storytelling, royal festival, pilgrim route. Scope, cost, seek land owner and planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development of paths, bridges, links infrastructure, marketing, apps (AR and tour, history, etc.,) and events. Longer term it could be linked to Border Abbeys Way and Soutra Aisle to link medieval sites through and around Stow and central Borders. There were calls in the survey for a Heritage hub or centre with emphasis and access to the Our Lady's Well. Suggest looking at possible site options for this as part of a longer-term plan.</p>	

<p>Communal Power Sources- district heating networks and green energy collectives such as community owned wind turbines, solar farms and shared heat and power options. Community payback initiatives from windfarms so that residents benefit from cheaper energy.</p>	GS, TT	<p>4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment</p>	<p>Suggest groups reach out to communities street by street to determine interest in heat networks from homeowners. These would be preferred options for future community owned assets. Windfarm benefit of cheaper energy or community owned turbines would need to be negotiated by community before build stage.</p>	
<p>Stow Church- building renovated and developed into a Multi-functional Space</p>	SCT	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Initial discussion with CoS to gauge if they would be amenable to potential and partial change of use. Site has many advantages and repurposing part of building would assist with repairs. Church building could be renovated/developed into a multi-functional space whilst remaining as a place of worship. Could house a heritage hub linked to the Our Lady's Well, community spaces and there were suggestions for an indoor climbing wall which has great potential given that the nearest is EICA Ratho.</p>	
<p>Identify abandoned buildings – to fix or repurpose</p>	LG, GS, TT	<p>3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing</p>	<p>Think Tank project to identify abandoned and disused buildings and make an inventory. Could assist with community planning and provide future assets for development.</p>	-
<p>Quoiting Green – to be turned into a camping area with washing and cooking facilities, charged overnight parking (campervans, motorhomes) with facilities for visitors such</p>	SCT	<p>1- Taking Care of Assets 2 - Getting Around 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses</p>	<p>Hold a community meeting to discuss options for the site. Need tourism infrastructure and this site would be relatively easy and cost effective to develop. Stowed Out would also benefit from some simple infrastructure being in place. Scope, cost, seek planning permission, compile business plan and seek funds for development.</p>	

as showers and changing room, bothy/off grid accommodation for walkers and cyclists		4- Promote wellbeing 5 – Looking After the Environment		
Old Primary School	SCT	1- Taking Care of Assets 3- Welcoming Visitors & Businesses 4- Promote wellbeing	There were no firm suggestions for the old Primary School site. Could potentially house some of the Community Wide Initiatives. Suggest this is added to Think Tank inventory of abandoned buildings and disused spaces.	

7. Appendices

1. Expanded Summary of Main Issues, Ideas and Comments from the Community Survey, Place Standard and Community Drop-in Events

The following summary of all action points recorded from the community survey comprises the wider communities perception of current issues and initiatives and their views on community assets. In general, positive comments and praise have been removed in order to concentrate attention on the aspects the communities stated as needs, desires and areas requiring change. The following summary, therefore, cannot be viewed as a true reflection of survey responses. The majority of responses contained high praise for Stow Community Council, Stow Community Trust, local initiatives, volunteer networks and local businesses. It should also be noted that there was a great deal of appreciation for the landscape, nature and facilities currently on offer in Stow and Fountainhall.

Theme 1: Taking Care of Community Assets

Royal Hotel Site

The Royal Hotel site was mentioned in almost every section of the survey and there were a number of comments suggesting a community buy out of the site. People remarked on the condition of the site, labelling it 'an eyesore', 'wasted space' and felt it made Stow 'look uncared for'. There were a huge number of suggestions for its future use (sheltered housing complexes with gardens, allotments, landscaped village square for markets, park with seating, visitor's centre, heritage centre, courtyard with small orchard, wellbeing space, parking, purpose-built village hall, apartments, piazza style area for eating out with galleries and local shops, commercial hub, sustainable family house, repair shop, bunkhouse style hotel with small bar and camping ground to rear, day care facility for elderly, apartments for single people) and many calls for a workable plan to bring the site back to life and provide a valuable community asset.

Public Toilets

The majority of respondents commented on the need for public toilets (PSCC have been working on this for many years) and felt that the existing site should be repurposed (shower facilities for walkers and cyclists) and toilets relocated closer to the park. Public toilets were viewed as essential for tourists, locals and to take the strain from local businesses.

Parks

Park improvements were suggested by the community particularly around the play equipment and the way it had been designed. Parents were unable to watch younger and older children concurrently, due to the separation of equipment and a number were concerned for the safety of their children, reporting that frequent 'accidents had resulted in broken limbs.' There were calls for the small play park to be upgraded, or for change of use to a climbing space, scooter or skate park. The equipment for adults was also highlighted, and residents would like this to be repaired so it can be enjoyed once more. Residents praised the Pump Track project and looked forward to its construction phase.

Families would appreciate a regular programme of children's activities in the park such as teddy bears picnics and fun runs. Young people expressed a desire for nets to be added to the football goals, football lines, a rugby pitch, climbing frames and basketball hoops. Dog owners wished for a fenced area to allow pets to be off leads whilst others felt that dogs should not be allowed in the park as dog fouling was a danger to children playing. There were calls for increased parking spaces around the park, a bandstand for musicians, toilet facilities and a new football pavilion. New footpaths, nature trails, woodland and a small children's cycle path were also suggested. One resident wondered if the community would be willing to fundraise for an outdoor swimming pool.

Church

People commented that the church should have the bell and clock restored, retained as a place of worship and further links developed with Luwatala (Malawi). Whereas others believed it could be used as a multi-functional space, retaining a place of worship within a complex containing workshops, meeting rooms, heritage centre (with links to the Our Lady's Well) and indoor climbing wall.

Town Hall

Residents believed the Town Hall to be the heart of the community, that was greatly underused, due to cost of hire and lack of a janitor. There were calls for the Town Hall to be owned and managed by the community, modernised and upgraded through the installation of renewable energy and opened daily for classes, events and to allow visitors

access to the Archive. Respondents would like to see meeting rooms, a hub for PSCC and SCT, wellbeing centre and soft play area. There were calls for a better equipped kitchen, redecoration (internal and external), deep cleaning and for the windows to be fixed so they could be opened. A few had experienced cancellation of events as a member of staff could not be sourced by Live Borders and the lack of caretaker meant that volunteers were expected to set up, take down and close the building after use.

Station House Stow

There was high praise for the restoration of the Station House and residents would like to see further community owned developments and projects of this nature. Survey respondents expressed a desire for pop up events such as themed nights, bingo, crafts and car boot sales to be held in and around the premises once fully opened. Residents looked forward to using the Station House, particularly in the evenings, and there were calls for it to be tenanted. Some felt the vetting process appeared too onerous and suggested a lighter touch and a twelve-monthly renewable lease should be considered, to allow the premises to be used by the community to socialise.

Quoiting Green

Ideas for the Quoiting Green included a car park for locals, a camp site with washing and cooking facilities and an overnight campervan site with electricity hook-ups.

Aspirations

There were requests for a community shed, shared tool shed (rent out DIY, gardening and craft tools) and educational classes linked to these such as gardening, woodworking and crafts. Others believed the area would benefit from: an upcycling centre, new community centre, centre for arts and crafts, heritage hub with emphasis on the Our Lady's Well, allotments and community woodlands.

Maintenance

People remarked on the condition of pavements, roads and drainage systems (A7 north of Craigend Road). Requested the dustbin at the bus stop on the A7 be moved as people had to walk on the road to avoid it and that lights and benches, rather than "uncomfortable poles," be installed in bus shelters. Respondents pointed out weeds growing around benches, footpaths, tree stumps in park, public buildings and verges. Fallen timber on walking tracks made it difficult to access the countryside.

Single track roads were requested to be strimmed or mowed during summer months to allow pedestrians to walk without going on the road. There were quite a number of complaints around the infrequency of grass cutting in public spaces with many feeling that it made the

village look unkempt. People would like to see more wild flower planting on verges, Old Kirk Yard (wall to be repaired) and around playpark. There were calls for the use of glyphosate to be discontinued to avoid it running into watercourses as it was viewed as having a detrimental effect on Gala Water. Planters were also mentioned, as their lack, made Stow look 'less inviting than other villages'. One person suggested financial incentives to maintain the tubs which could come from community fundraising events. The money raised, in part, being used to purchase plants, materials and planters dedicated to residents past and present.

Residents remarked on the usability of pavements due to parked vehicles (A7 entrance to Mill Road, Station Road, Earlston Road) and bins which made it difficult for those with mobility scooters, wheelchairs and children's buggies to navigate a safe path. The problem was exacerbated in autumn and winter as footpaths were not cleared of leaves, snow and ice. One person suggested a request be made to all householders to clear the pavement outside their home to ease this. General improvements (cleaning, tidying, painting) were requested for the area around the cross roads, recycling centre, shipping containers, rear of Town Hall, the Cotland and Mill Road.

Others mentioned that the slow speed bumps by the school created more pollution from people slowing down and accelerating and that Old Stage Road, road surface had not been repaired after the railway construction lorries had left (believed funds had been put aside to complete this).

Residents would like a zebra crossing by the garage, wider pavements, off street parking (village centre, near to Mitchelston Farm for walkers) bike stands outside the café and post office, increased parking and a shared mobility hub at the station.

There were many references to abandoned and underused buildings and derelict land in private hands that residents believed could be refurbished and put to community use such as the Old Station House at Fountainhall.

Fountainhall Maintenance and Infrastructure Improvements

Lack of street lighting along the stretch outside the village leading to the A7 bus stop was raised by residents. The road was viewed as unsafe and frightening especially during the winter months. There were complaints of pavements not being cleared of fallen leaves and gritted in winter which forced people to walk on the main road. Pavements within the village were in poor condition and required repairs.

Speeding vehicles were a concern for residents and the installation of safe crossing places within the village and traffic calming measures such as a 40mph zone from the A7 to the

village boundary, and speed bumps outside the school, were requested. It was suggested that a no parking zone be installed outside the Primary School as stationary vehicles narrowed the road making it difficult for large vehicles, such as farm traffic, to pass.

Fountainhall Outdoor Spaces

There were calls for the Still Haugh play park to be upgraded and reopened to make it suitable for children of all ages or passed to the community so they may raise funds to renew the equipment. The play park at the top of Fleming Place was also highlighted as in serious need of a revamp, general maintenance (clearing nettles, etc..) and directional signage. The land opposite the school was viewed as an area for redevelopment into a natural area for children to explore by installing pathways, garden areas, wildflowers and seats.

Residents mentioned the loss of the woods just outside the village and there were calls for the area to be regenerated to increase wildlife and provide natural space for people to enjoy.

People noted the difficulties encountered when walking off road and would like to see fenced areas through stock fields for safe walking.

Fountainhall Primary School

People feared the school would be earmarked for closure as numbers are very low. They worried that the loss of the school would create wider population issues as young families would need to move away from the village. Some suggested utilising the space as a nursery and for primary children with additional needs.

Fountainhall Village Hall

Residents would like an outdoor space to be made available for the area around the village hall and for a regular programme of events to be reinstated. Many felt the hall was an underused asset.

Fountainhall Aspirations

The old Station House at Fountainhall was viewed as an asset and many would like to see it repaired and repurposed. Suggestions included: housing, tourist accommodation, tearoom, restaurant, shop, bus stop parking and recycling centre. People highlighted the aging population and the lack of facilities for them within in the village.

Residents of Fountainhall would like access to a community growing space and a multi sports court and were keen to have access to the following local interest and community groups: monthly litter pick meets, climate friendly group, sustainable cooking group, community 'wilding' support group (planting wildflowers, plants, trees to support wildlife and

local eco system) and a book group. Many would welcome a mobile shop and wondered if this may be achieved by adding further products to milk delivery vans.

Theme 2: Getting Around

Walking and Cycling

Survey participants outlined the need for more safe walking (no motor vehicle routes) between Stow, Fountainhall, Heriot, Lauder and Galashiels. Existing routes that cross fields with livestock or follow roads (Galabank and Old Stage Road) were deemed as unsafe. It was felt that this could be improved by better definition of routes with end-to-end signage, usable gates, stiles (Lauder common and Sell Moor), unlocked gates and fenced routes (fields around Stow and Fountainhall, Lauder Road, Cathpair, Weatherston Woods and the fields leading to radio mast) and the production of more walking pamphlets. Development of a river path (currently restricted due to electric fencing and lack of footbridges) was mentioned as a suitable option to connect routes and communities.

Residents requested a list of suitable gentle routes be designed and promoted along with a path around the park to enable the elderly and people with mobility problems to take a walk and have a seat. Requests for new seats on current routes included: the Old Bridge, foot of Fleming Place and bottom of Mill Road.

There were calls for the development of off-road cycle paths (including Mountain Bike Trails) and natural trails (with signposting) which would connect to other safe cycle routes in neighbouring communities. A branch route to link the Girthgate to The Southern Upland Way was suggested, as was a hill track to connect Innerleithen mountain bike and cycling facilities. It was felt that more could be done to promote cycling and active travel through increased cycling events, learning opportunities such as bike maintenance and further promotion of the Hub. Residents would like safe cycling along the A7 to Galashiels and Edinburgh through the introduction of a dedicated cycle lane.

Many mentioned the large number of trees taken down by Storm Arwen at the top of Earlston Road and requested the road edge be fenced (path had changed due to fallen timber) as it had become dangerous for children and dog owners. The beechwoods along the A7 were also highlighted as unsafe due to unfenced steep slopes. Poor drainage was raised as an issue (Earlston Road just past Allanshaw's and Old Stage Road) with the risk of ice making surfaces unsafe for walkers and cyclists.

Traffic Calming Measures, Routes and Safety

Survey respondents would like to see speeds on the A7 better regulated through the implementation of new road layouts, marking changes, infrastructure changes (inverted islands, parking spaces, planters, speed bumps or bumpy stripes) and speed-activated traffic lights. It was felt that pavements should be widened (too narrow for prams, mobility scooters, cyclists and wheelchairs.), traffic, pedestrians and cyclists segregated and that pedestrian-priority crossings be installed.

Visibility of oncoming traffic was also highlighted as a problem at crossings and many would like to see safer crossings at Craighend Road and Mill Road (install mirrors on opposite side?). Some suggested a footbridge or underpass on the A7.

Public transport users noted that it was dangerous to access public transport on the A7 and that the new crash barriers on the bend just north of Galabank hindered access to the footbridge to cross over to the back road to Watherston.

It was felt that speed limits were not being adhered to (not sufficiently enforced – installation of automated speeding fine cameras) and that some changes should be made which included: 40mph for 1 mile on either side of 20mph limit from Stow to include Torsonce and Galabank; 50mph speed limit between Galabank and Fountainhall; 40mph on back road between Stow and Fountainhall; 20mph speed limit to be extended along the approach to Earlston Road from Wooplaw direction. Some believed through traffic should be prohibited on Mill Road, restricting it to access only.

Suggestions for Old Stage Road between Stow and Fountainhall included the installation of pavements, speed bumps, cycle lane and signage (make motorists aware of other users) as the route was viewed as a significant asset for active travel.

Other suggestions included pedestrianising Church Wynd (with access for residents) and better traffic calming measures including more signage, around the school.

Parking

Residents would like more car parking options for Earlston Road, Cockholm Crescent and Mill Road with suggestions for development of Pennywhiggam Wood, field at the top of Earlston Road, the Royal Hotel site and Wedale View. It was felt that further on street parking should be discouraged and any new housing developments should avoid existing narrow roads.

On the A7, it was suggested that the incidence of motor vehicle accidents were increasing due to congestion around the garage area as people were parking on yellow lines, making it difficult for pedestrians to safely cross. Residents also commented that it was unsafe to exit their driveways to access the A7.

It was felt that there were further parking issues around the surgery, school and park area.

Respondents suggested a review of local parking arrangements for cars and cycles and would like more electric charging points for both (preferably on each street).

Public and Community Transport

Many commented on the reduction of the X95 service and unreliable train services making it difficult to connect to Edinburgh and Galashiels out with busy times. There were frequent complaints about misaligned public transport schedules and service cancellations.

A new bus service to connect Stow to Lauder was highlighted as a means to access local shopping and for residents of Lauder to access train service. There were also requests for connections to Earlston and Heriot.

There were calls for cheaper fares on both bus and train (driving to Edinburgh and parking for day cheaper than train ticket) and for a campaign championing the use of public and community transport.

There were appeals for community shared cars, car trip schemes and on demand community transport (Pingo) initiatives including a minibus service to serve Fountainhall, Lauder, Heriot and Stow which could operate at night as a taxi or private hire alongside the use of school, post office and social care vehicle.

Fountainhall Public Transport

Residents were very concerned about the lack of public transport services. The bus service had been reduced to every 2 hours during the pandemic and had not returned to an hourly service. The service starts later in the morning and terminates in the early evening making it impossible to travel without a car. There was concern for elderly and infirm residents who found it increasingly difficult to access doctors surgery, post office and shop. People requested a train station for Fountainhall or an on-demand bus service to link to Stow and Lauder. Many found it very frustrating to make their way to Stow to find the train cancelled. It was also noted that ebikes were not available in Fountainhall and had to be returned to Stow after hiring. Others commented on the lack of electric car charging facilities in the village which were ‘‘desperately needed’’.

Theme 3: Being a Welcoming Place for Visitors and Businesses

Business and Business Spaces

Residents commented on the number of residents having to access Edinburgh and central Borders for business opportunities and felt that much more could be done locally to establish

and increase business viability by creating light industry units, workshops spaces, offices, studios, shop fronts and a regular market. It was important that commercial spaces be made affordable to encourage more enterprise and that existing spaces be protected from conversion to housing. Others highlighted the abandoned buildings in the community and felt these should be purchased and repurposed to attract new business. There were calls for more environmentally friendly businesses, increased local services (vegetable shop, butcher, baker, hairdresser, homewares) and artists and maker facilities to showcase local talent.

Local Employment and Training

Respondents commented on the lack of jobs, training and business opportunities and felt that their choices were limited to cottage industries, remote working or farming. They considered their biggest future opportunities to be in local tourism initiatives, hospitality (Station House) and support services for the elderly.

Tourism

Survey respondents would like to develop tourism and the lack of visitor accommodation was viewed as the biggest obstacle. People believed it would be beneficial to develop off-grid, eco accommodation, a bothy, camping facilities, showers and cooking shelters for visitors. Others suggested overnight parking for campervans and motorhomes with waste disposal and water services, changing rooms for walkers and cyclists and development of the Royal Hotel site. The potential for a visitor economy was highlighted and people thought this may be achieved through better promotion of existing sites and facilities, increased visitor attractions, regular events and encouraging more people to stop by train and bus.

Signage

Residents commented on the need to refresh the interpretation boards and for additional signage to be installed at places of interest. Others mentioned the need for directional signage along local walks, cycle routes, entry points to both villages and cohesive branding on all village information.

Heritage

Survey respondents highlighted the need to preserve and promote the rich and varied heritage of the area for the local population and to draw in visitors. Specific suggestions were outlined for the Our Lady's Well (well-built path that is separated from the field by a fence), Stow Witches (suitably dignified memorial near the bridge), interior of the Old Kirk (more interpretative panels) and the need for a heritage plan to ensure maintenance and to create tourism experiences for visitors such as festivals, literature, storytelling and events.

Residents felt the Archive should be better promoted and open daily to allow visitors access to the wealth of documents, photos and papers.

Ideas from the community survey on Business Opportunities in Stow and Fountainhall



Theme 4: Promoting Wellbeing

Housing and Facilities

There was broad agreement from survey respondents that housing is a key factor for the villages and that any new developments need to be within village boundaries at sites outlined in the current Local Development Plan. The majority of comments stressed the need for affordable, social, sheltered and supported housing to allow young and low-income families (fewer school age children due to lack of accommodation was perceived as risk to future viability of primary schools) to move through the property market and long-term residents (young, elderly, those with health conditions and impairments) to remain in the villages. People stressed the need for varied housing types (flats, small homes and family homes rather than blocks of executive villas) within any new developments (built to passive house standards) to preserve and support a diverse population. Some noted that no new young families had purchased the houses that had been sold recently. There were calls for a community housing study to identify the changing needs of both communities.

People reported a severe lack of accommodation to rent or buy (house prices had risen dramatically, increasing Airbnb and second homes) and fear the villages may become commuter or retirement zones for the wealthy. Residents mentioned that without a healthy socio-economic mix it would become increasingly difficult to support local businesses and would lead to a loss of key services. With few or no single persons flats coming onto the rental market it was difficult to keep young residents in the village and the level of rents across all property types meant some people had to move out to find reasonably priced accommodation. Conversely, one person noted that homes for working families could possibly be considered but not at the cost of lowering local house prices or the quality of life for others.

Some were concerned that the older streets (Earlston Road in particular) were already at capacity in terms of through traffic, parking and usable pavements and should not be considered for future development. Others were worried that the level of investment required to retrofit the majority of rental stock in line with planned changes to EPC's could remove that stock from the rental market and exacerbate the already challenged market. Residents would like derelict buildings to be repurposed to provide a mix of housing types (derelict cottages at Craighend and Meikle Cathpair) and for the unoccupied houses at the Quarry to be made available as affordable rentals. Many suggested the Royal Hotel site be developed into a mix of housing (affordable flats, sheltered housing) and retail.

Respondents were concerned for elderly residents and those with health conditions or impairments, and felt provision should be made for sheltered and assisted accommodation and a nursing home (close to services and transport hubs), to enable long term residents to stay within the community. This would potentially free up housing stock in both villages and provide further scope to increase and diversify the population.

Childcare

There were calls for local childcare and nursery facilities to assist working families. People felt this could create local employment and a business opportunity. Unreliable and infrequent public transport impacted access to childcare services in Galashiels and Gorebridge making it difficult for those wishing to return to full time employment.

Retention of Young People

Residents felt there was little to retain young people as all education, training and job opportunities were in the central Borders or Midlothian. Reliable transport, lack of places to socialise and limited housing options were also viewed as major obstacles. Some believed that homeworking and home study could become an option with improved broadband speeds and that the Station House could offer collaborative spaces for young entrepreneurs. Others

believed that creating volunteer and work experience opportunities at the Cycle Hub, Community Garden and through existing businesses could increase skills and confidence.

Children's Activities

Residents raised the need for more play equipment, group activities and soft play areas for under 5's. For older children, parents believed there was a need for increased outdoor activities such as forest schools, activity trails, after school clubs, Scouts for girls and boys and 'more creative' play equipment. Some suggested creating opportunities within the community garden to teach young people about the benefits of growing fruit and vegetables through horticulture classes and that the multicourt should be free to use for children during school holidays and summer evenings.

Reinstating the youth club (used to be facilitated by parents in school building), sourcing funds for youth work and implementing regular, local events (music club) and summer holiday clubs were suggested by residents to keep young people in the villages. Sourcing an available space for teenagers to regularly meet and socialise was also viewed as an important factor.

Many complained of vandalism at the small playground, school and honesty box and felt this was being caused by older children with nothing to do.

Activities for Adults

Residents would welcome the return of regular classes (fitness, tai chi, badminton, table tennis, drama, arts, crafts, yoga, carpet bowls, dancing), clubs (pensioners lunch club, coffee mornings, local fundraising) and events (ceilidhs) in the Town Hall. Some felt the need for new groups to be formed such as for those interested in the environment, music or 'a group connecting teenagers with our elderly community would be useful for both age groups'. It was suggested that the cycle hub should undertake more education activities and workshops for the community.

Respondents felt there were not enough spaces to meet other adults (excluding other parents) and wondered if space could be made available at the Station House, Café, Church or by raising funds for a local pub to create a social space as their only evening option was the Bowling Club. There were calls for new book, poetry and LGBTQIA+ inclusive groups. Others called for dog agility and obedience classes, walking, football and rugby clubs and a sound proofed room for local musicians 'desperately looking for somewhere to practice'.

Communication

Community members would like a directory of all local groups, clubs (to include dates, times and venues), services, local officials (councillors, PSCC, SCT, other responsible persons and their duties) and businesses including a calendar of yearly fixed events to be produced digitally (single cohesive website) and in paper form for every household to access. People highlighted the need for local coordination of existing and new groups to avoid duplication and to provide opportunities for joint working, knowledge sharing and for new initiatives to be formulated. One respondent raised the idea of an 'away day' for all local volunteers, clubs and organisations to provide greater networking opportunities and increase community cohesion.

Parish of Stow Community Council

Residents requested information on the remit of the Community Council and how they could join the Community Council. Others felt there should be an election to refresh the panel and there were calls for regular 'Town Hall forums, to encourage more local participation and decision making'. There were comments regarding the availability of Community Council minutes, meeting dates and points of contact as people were not sure how to access these. Residents of Fountainhall pointed out that there were only two spaces on the Community Council panel for those residing in Fountainhall even though there are not enough people on the panel. Respondents feared that Stow and Fountainhall didn't possess a strong enough voice in local politics (part of Galashiels Ward) and was disconnected from the Borders (hangover from being part of Midlothian).

Noise Pollution

Noise pollution was reported around the area of the post office and A7 and most felt this was due to motorcycle groups speeding, revving and riding without silencers. Idling of cars outside the Post office was also highlighted as an issue which was affecting sleep and therefore wellbeing, for some residents.

Theme 5: Looking After the Environment

Renewables, Shared Facilities, Nature and Food Security

Residents felt that the creation of sustainable power sources, new infrastructure and targeted assistance could help the communities to reach net zero. Suggestions included: community windmills; solar farms (to provide power, financial stability and funding for community projects); district heating networks; sustainable energy for public buildings; green energy collectives; increased EV charging points; and insulation support (information and

incentives for homeowners and landlords to replace fossil fuel use) to include information on available loans and incentives. Others suggested street lights be dimmed or turned off after 1am to reduce overall energy consumption.

A community wood store was suggested to stop timber (used and fallen) going to landfill. Useable timber and other unwanted materials could be used by a community workshop and some felt a shared tool store could help to preserve resources. There were calls for re-wilding land, 'no mow May' campaigns, bee friendly gardens, increased deciduous woodland and hedgerows, connected woodlands, native tree planting, wildflower planting, regenerative farming practices and river water quality testing to support native species.

Respondents felt there should be increased water (water saving devices and use of butts in gardens) and food security (decreased food miles) though the creation of allotments (on waste and disused land), community orchard and a community larder (for excess garden produce and unwanted foods) to assist with the cost-of-living crisis. A community bakery, green-grocer and a shop local campaign were also suggested.

A few people felt that residents could be encouraged to reduce consumption of animal products, purchase recycled, fair trade and cruelty free products and reduce the use of chemicals in gardening and farming. It was highlighted that a local campaign promoting active travel in and around both villages could reduce local car use as would increasing the availability of local clubs, after school clubs (parents ferrying children to other towns) and events. There was high praise for Stow Primary School and their efforts to address climate issues and many commented that further events such as Disrupter Days and Farm Visits would be welcomed by residents.

Litter and Dog Fouling

There were calls for the installation of new refuse bins at both ends of Stow (A7), Craigend Road and Earleston Road. Residents would like to see regular community litter picking events (and educational campaigns) to collect refuse along roads, fields, in the park, outlying woodland areas and around the community garden.

Respondents felt that more dog fouling bins and educational campaigns to reduce incidence of dog waste, particularly around the park, play park, Old Stage Road, Wedale View, the crossing at the garage and Still Haugh were required. Many felt dogs should be kept on a lead in park areas and that poo bag dispensers (made out of used plastic bottles) should be widely available. Local farmers were concerned about dog fouling in livestock fields and felt there was a risk to livestock which could lead to financial loss.

Recycling Facilities

Respondents highlighted the need for increased facilities, more frequent emptying of clothes and glass recycling bins and that the build-up of items lead to fly tipping of other, non-recyclable items around the recycling centres. Some suggested the need for a rag collection point along with food and garden waste facilities.

The primary school was praised for its education campaigns and initiatives around recycling as was the 'items for free' Facebook page which encourages reuse.

Community members suggested that food and garden waste could be processed locally to provide compost for the whole community.

Fountainhall Refuse, Recycling and Net Zero

The majority of Fountainhall residents requested recycling facilities as it was impossible for many to recycle most items without a car. Some stated that they had no choice than to place everything in the general waste bin. Some of the items (glass and clothes) could be taken to Stow by those with a car but if residents had other items to recycle such as garden and food waste they had to make a 24-mile round trip to Galashiels. There were calls for more public refuse bins and dog poo bins particularly around the park area with some pointing out that existing bins were not emptied often enough.

Residents identified a number of net zero initiatives that would be supported locally. These included wind turbines to supply local energy needs, access to green energy collectives and recycling of food waste

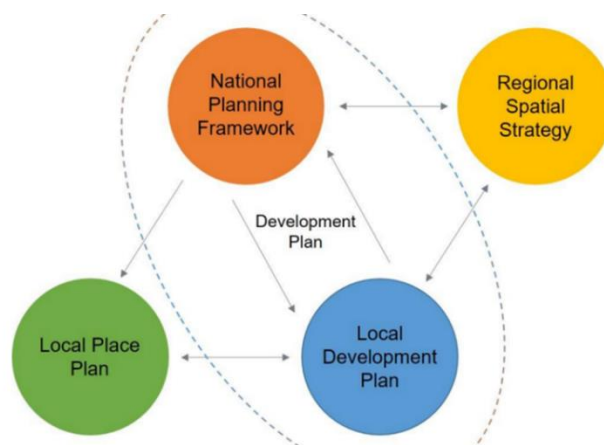


Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans

A range of policies, plans and strategies are listed below that support the actions outlined in this document. These are intended to inform and may be useful when applying for funds, engaging partners and requesting assistance from public bodies.

National Planning Framework (NPF4) is a long-term plan for Scotland. It guides spatial development, sets out national planning policies, designates national developments and highlights regional spatial priorities. Its key principles include rural revitalisation. As demonstrated in the diagram, Place Plans and Local Development plans will feed into NPF4.

<https://www.transformingplanning.scot/national-planning-framework/>



Local Place Plans are part of the Scottish Government's wider work on planning reform and implementation of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The aim is to significantly enhance engagement in development planning, effectively empowering communities to play a proactive role in defining the future of their places by setting out their proposals for the use and development of land. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/circular-1-2022-local-place-plans/>

National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) sets out the Scottish Government's priorities for Scotland's economy and the programmes, projects and actions it will lead to achieve a transformed economy. A just transition and new market opportunities will be targeted for Scotland. NSET includes nature restoration, eco-tourism, and nature-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-strategy-economic-transformation/>

The Scottish Government has passed bills and legislation to support community rights and a new Land Reform Bill is in progress '**Land Reform in a Net Zero Nation**'. The bill aims to address land ownership and use through a net zero lens and hopes to create real opportunities for rural communities. <https://consult.gov.scot/agriculture-and-rural-economy/land-reform-net-zero-scotland/>

South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy sets out a framework to grow the region's economic performance, outward profile and wealth to 2031. Priority areas include activating and empowering communities, revitalising rural communities, enhancing transport connections, investing in visitor economy infrastructure, and boosting culture and heritage assets. <https://www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/media/1701/south-of-scotland-regional-economic-strategy.pdf>

SOSE - Our Five-Year Plan 2023-28 has six key areas of strategic focus which includes activating and empowering enterprising communities, net zero and nature positive solutions. The plan sets out a range of ambitions to support communities by boosting community capacity and confidence, supporting place focussed community-led regeneration and development, embedding Community Wealth Building principles and by encouraging ambition and entrepreneurial thinking
<https://www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/media/1942/our-five-year-plan.pdf>

Local Development Plan – proposed. The proposed plan which was submitted to ministers in 2022 for examination outlines a range of measures including: business, tourism, leisure, renewables, care and nursing homes and housing.
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20051/plans_and_guidance/121/local_development_plan/2

Scottish Borders Community Plan published in 2018 by the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership sets out priorities for the region and how they will work with local communities, businesses and community groups to plan and deliver better services and improve the lives of all.
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20062/strategies_plans_and_policies/387/community_planning/2

Council Plan (2023 forward), Scottish Borders Council sets out a range of actions across 6 areas of priority. Part of the plan is to 'support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives'.
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/11335/council_plan

A **Regional Responsible Tourism Strategy** is in development. See:

<https://www.ssdalliance.com> for updates

Further useful policies, plans, strategies and resources:

Community Right to Buy <https://www.gov.scot/policies/land-reform/community-right-to-buy/>

Community Right to Buy Abandoned, Neglected or Detrimental Land (ANDL)

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/land-reform/community-right-to-buy-abandoned-neglected-or-detrimental-land/>

Borderlands Place Programme <https://www.tsdg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Place-Programme-overview-Oct-21.pdf>

Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal <https://www.borderlandsgrowth.com/>

Powering Change <https://www.southofscotlandenterprise.com/media/1227/powering-change-calling-the-south-of-scotland-to-action-final.pdf>

Scottish Borders Food Growing Strategy

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/7916/community_food_growing_strategy_2021-26

Onshore Wind Policy Statement 2022 [https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-](https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/pages/1/#:~:text=The%20Onshore%20Wind%20Policy%20Statement,an%20onshore%20wind%20sector%20deal.)

[2022/pages/1/#:~:text=The%20Onshore%20Wind%20Policy%20Statement,an%20onshore%20wind%20sector%20deal.](https://www.gov.scot/publications/onshore-wind-policy-statement-2022/pages/1/#:~:text=The%20Onshore%20Wind%20Policy%20Statement,an%20onshore%20wind%20sector%20deal.)

Place Plans <https://www.ourplace.scot/home/local-place-plans>

Scottish Borders Events Strategy

<https://scottishborders.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s67086/Item%20No.%208%20-%20Appendix%20A%20-%20Strategic%20Event%20Plan%202022%20-%202027%20Final.pdf>

Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal <https://esescityregiondeal.org.uk/>

Reducing Inequalities in Scottish Borders

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/2660/reducing_inequalities_strategic_plan

Director of Public Health Report – 2018

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/2880/director_of_public_health_report_-_2018

Health and Social Care Strategic Framework 2023-26

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20014/social_care_and_health/381/health_and_social_care_integration

Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20011/housing_and_homeless/1129/local_housing_strategy_2023-28

Local Access and Transport Strategy

https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20051/plans_and_guidance/127/transport_plans

Housing Models – Community Housing, Build to Rent, Co-housing, Community Housing, Custom Build, Self-build at scale, etc. <https://ruralhousingscotland.org/housing-options>

Zero Waste Scotland <https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk>

Our Place https://www.ourplace.scot/sites/default/files/2022-09/PSTCLDetailedOrganiserandFacilitatorGuideV1.0_0.pdf

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Report

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2022/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2022.pdf>

Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-2032

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2020/12/securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero-update-climate-change-plan-20182032/documents/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero/govscot%3Adocument/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero.pdf>

Local Energy Scotland <https://localenergy.scot/an-introduction-to-local-energy/>

Scotland's Energy Heat Map <https://heatmap.data.gov.scot/custom/heatmap/>

Climate Ready Places <https://adaptationscotland.org.uk/climatereadyplaces/>

Flood Map <https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm>

What an exciting year!

Dear Friends and Residents of Stow and Fountainhall

We are delighted to receive the 'First Community in Scotland' Net Zero Award from Scottish Government in recognition of our carbon neutral status. As you know, we reached this 2 years ago through the communities combined efforts to invest in the solar array and community turbines, retrofit all our properties to 'A', convert our vehicles to electric and build the community composting centre. We also received the 'Green Food Award' for drastically reducing our food miles which we couldn't have achieved without the help of all our locals farmers and landowners who provided the land for the orchard, green houses allotments and by converting all their farming practices to regenerative agriculture through the use of green technologies.

Earlier this year SCT purchased the 10th house from long term residents who are moving into the Stow and Fountainhall Assisted Living Centre. The staff at SFALC do an incredible job of looking after our loved ones. The centre provides jobs and training opportunities for people right across the region - no wonder they are a centre of excellence! The house will be converted to flats to increase our community portfolio of affordable, sustainable accommodation and business units.

In August the Stow Witch Festival had another record year with 20,000 visitors enjoying the weekend celebrations. The Sacred Well to Borders Abbey link which takes in a range of historic sites, has proved incredibly popular since its launch in 2040. A steady stream of walkers and pilgrims keep the staff at the heritage Centre and Wedale Tearoom really busy and numbers are reflected at the visitor accommodations

at the bothy, campsite, hotel and Fountainhall Station House. Plans are underway to create the next link to Soutra Aisle which will highlight further historic sites around Stow and Fountainhall

The Ebike Downhill attracted over 600 competitors in June when we opened the next leg of the downhill course (2 more in planning) at Windlestraw Law. We hope to make this a regular event in the 'MTB World Championships' which are held in Innerleithen annually.

Did you see the the BBC World programme? It was wonderful to see the work of all our talented artists and makers taking the international spotlight. The hour long programme is sure to have an enormous effect on all the arts and crafts programmes , tours, open doors and workshops next year.

Don't forget to pop in to the Fountainhall Station Shop and Cafe. The Christmas Market is in the car park as usual and has a huge range of fabulous gift ideas and festive goodies. It's there each weekend until Christmas Eve. Take the River Path rather than the road to enjoy the festive surprises the Primary School children have built along the route - it's amazing!

And finally...

We are delighted that Tracey and John are staying on at the Station House, Stow. Their lease was renewed just recently and we are looking forward to another 22 years of excellent food and entertainment.

Have a wonderful Christmas and happy 2046 from all the staff at the Community Newsroom

<https://stowhub.co.uk/>