

Supporting Statement for Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan

Prepared by: Anne Wales

Date: 26/02/2025

SBC Template | Issued June 2024 1

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Introduction

This Supporting Statement forms part of the Local Place Plan submission to Scottish Borders Council and is accompanying the Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan dated 20/01/2025.

The Community Led Plan was developed by Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Council.

Contact details

Bob Hope – Chair

Anne Wales – Community Led Plan Lead

LeitholmEcclesBirghamCC@gmail.com

Regard given to the Local Development Plan

Our plan aligns also with the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP2) 2021-2026 (Adopted on 22/08/2024). LDP2 expresses commitment to digital connectivity and an improved transport infrastructure in line with our aspirations relating to connectivity. It also foregrounds sustainability/ net zero, the promotion of health and wellbeing and the protection of the natural and built environment, all of which are themes which run through our 7 community outcomes.

Regard given to the National Planning Framework

Our overall Vision (see p.5) relates to the aspiration of NPF4 to create ‘sustainable, liveable and productive places’ (foreword). Our theme of connectivity resonates with the commitment to digital connectivity and transport infrastructure. Its concern for ‘Just Transition’ (to net zero) resonates with our theme of sustainability whilst at the same time acknowledging that ‘ environmental quality is a key asset for rural areas’, as identified in our section on the rural environment. Other outcomes within our plan relate to the commitment in NPF4 to local living, rural revitalisation, tourism, culture and creativity, as well as health and wellbeing.

The challenges acknowledged within NPF4 are those identified in our Community Led Plan including rural living consistent with climate change in areas with limited public

transport and high levels of wellbeing and quality of life but with populations with increasing numbers of older people and fewer young people. (South of Scotland Regional Priorities)

Regard given to the Locality Plan

The themes of the Berwickshire Locality Plan of economy, skills and learning; health, care and wellbeing; quality of life and environment and place are reflected within the themes of our Community Led Plan.

Reasons for amendments being sought to the Local Development Plan

The Spatial Strategy included in LDP2 focuses on 3 key areas and on the major town centres of the Scottish Borders. There is no consideration of how smaller places such as Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham might relate to this. Elsewhere, the plan recognizes the importance of improved connectivity for economic growth and yet transport infrastructure to link villages to towns seems to be lacking.

Therefore, the Local Development Plan needs to make explicit how the different aspects of the plan might work together and how smaller places and not just larger towns may benefit. Another example of this would be to look at how proposals such as our aspiration for footpaths and cycle paths linking the three villages could be incorporated as part of the Active Travel initiative. (outcome 7 Tourism and Heritage)

Community support for the Local Place Plan

The process of consultation and planning started at our meeting in Eccles on 10 August 2022. This plan reflects planning and progress since that date. The plan was created following an initial consultation with people residing in our area. A questionnaire was designed drawing on the themes of the Scottish Place Plan tool and delivered to every household in Spring 2023. The questionnaire had a 20 % response rate and the Community Led Plan was written to reflect the issues raised and the themes which emerged.

It is a living document which will be amended and updated in the light of further consultation and of changing contexts and priorities. Since the original questionnaire,

consultation on the draft plan has taken place through drop- in sessions or events such as coffee mornings or cheese and wine evenings which have generally been well attended. However, it is clear that not everyone attends social events and so the process of door- to -door consultation has taken place in Leitholm and Eccles and will shortly take place in Birgham. There has been extensive consultation with Birgham Community Development Trust, initially through a meeting exclusively on the topic of the Place Plan (06/09/2023) and thereafter as an agenda item at each monthly meeting. The Development Trust is in regular contact with the wider Birgham community and as such is aware of community needs and priorities. In Birgham, the Development Trust has additionally started the process of a questionnaire and community meeting regarding the future of the local pub. In addition, the Community Council intend to undertake consultation with those who live in the more outlying rural areas and with our young people. The latter consultation is ongoing with Kelso High School having already participated.

The governance and decision - making process is as follows – A small sub group comprised of four community councillors and representative of all three villages work on the plan, each taking responsibility for reporting back to and feeding in from their relevant village committee or group. In Leitholm this is the Village Hall Committee and in Birgham this is Birgham Community Development Trust’s meeting of Trustees. In Eccles there is no such committee but the village is small and the two councillors are in regular touch with their community. The Community Led Plan Lead reports on progress to a full meeting of the Community Council every two months in addition to individual reports from each village and surrounding area.

Evidence of compliance with Regulation 4

The proposed Local Place Plan and information notices were sent on 27/01/2025 to:

Councillors

- John Greenwell
- Donald Moffat
- Mark Rowley

Community Councils

- Greenlaw and Hume
- Ednam, Stichill and Berry Moss
- Coldstream and District
- Swinton and Ladykirk
- Gavinton, Fogo and Polwarth
 - Carham Parish Council

Appendix - Information Notices and Submission Checklist

Information notice and responses from Councillors

From: Anne Wales [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, 27 Jan 2025 at 14:19
Subject: Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan
To: John <john.greenwell@scotborders.gov.uk>, Donald Moffat <dmoffat@scotborders.gov.uk>, Mark Rowley <mark.rowley@scotborders.gov.uk>
Cc: Bob Hope [REDACTED]

Dear Councillors

We are contacting you on behalf of Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Council. . Our local community has prepared a proposed Local Place Plan – Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan 2023 – 2033

We are legally required to send each local authority Councillor for our Local Place Plan area which lies in mid Berwickshire the information below, to comply with Section 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021. This email constitutes the ‘Information Notice’ to local Councillors required by those Regulations.

1. Proposed Local Place Plan

The proposed Local Place Plan is available at [Documents & Links — LEB-CC](#)
Please click on View and Download to see the latest amended version of our plan.

2. Brief description of the content and purpose of the proposed Local Place Plan

The proposed Local Place Plan covers the area of Leitholm, Eccles, Birgham and surrounding rural areas.

The proposed Local Place Plan contains proposals relating to 7 key priorities
Connectivity (improved transport and communication (including digital)
Inclusivity (creating, maintaining and developing a social hub for each village)
Sustainability (to deliver projects for renewable energy sources in the village halls and to explore such opportunities for private dwellings)
Health and wellbeing (to address issues relating to road and pavement safety, to create warm and safe hubs for times of energy disruption and to monitor health and social care provision)
Pride of Place (maintaining and enhancing the village environments)
Rural Environment (to retain the area as prime agricultural land whilst also supporting existing battery storage developments)
Tourism and heritage (to develop the history and heritage potential of the villages and surrounding area in the context of responsible tourism)
These relate mainly to green spaces within and around the villages, the village halls in Birgham and Leitholm, proposed and existing pavements, footpaths and cycle paths, housing, historical and heritage sites and the agricultural land surrounding the villages.

The purpose of our proposed Local Place Plan is to build on identified community strengths and assets to promote a vibrant, supportive and sustainable community which is well connected, healthy and safe. We intend to draw on the plan to attract funding and to influence the next Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan.

3. Information as to how and to whom any representations on the content of the proposed Local Place Plan should be made and the date by which they should be made

If you have comments on our proposed Local Place Plan, please email them to us at

leitholmecclesbirghamcc@gmail.com

The deadline for comments is **February 24 2025**

We are sending similar Information Notices to our adjoining, active Community Councils as required by the Local Place Plan Regulations.

Please let us know if you have any queries.
Kind regards

Bob Hope Anne Wales
Chair Community Led Plan Lead

From: **Greenwell, John** <John.Greenwell@scotborders.gov.uk>
Date: Mon, 27 Jan 2025 at 17:58
Subject: [OFFICIAL] Re: Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan
To: Anne Wales [REDACTED], Moffat, Donald <dmoffat@scotborders.gov.uk>, Rowley, Mark <Mark.Rowley@scotborders.gov.uk>
Cc: Bob Hope [REDACTED]

Hi Anne/Bob

I have followed your place planning from Day one so I have no problem in endorsing your Local Place Plan

Best Wishes

John

From: **Moffat, Donald** <dmoffat@scotborders.gov.uk>
Date: Wed, 29 Jan 2025 at 12:23
Subject: [OFFICIAL] RE: Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan
To: Anne Wales [REDACTED]

Well done after all your hard work

Information Notice and Responses from Community Councils

From: **Anne Wales** [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, 27 Jan 2025 at 14:55
Subject: Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan
To: <clerk@carhamparish.org>, Coldstream Community Council secretary
<secretary.coldstreamcc@gmail.com>, <community.council@swintonvillage.co.uk>,
[REDACTED], <esbccca@gmail.com>, [REDACTED]
<greenlawhumecc@outlook.com>
Cc: Bob Hope [REDACTED]

Dear Community Councils

We are contacting you on behalf of Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Council. Our community has prepared a proposed Local Place Plan – Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan 2023 – 2033.

We are legally required to send each Community Council whose area is wholly or partly within our Local Place Plan area, or adjoins it, the information below. This is in order to comply with Section 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021. This email constitutes the 'Information Notice' to local Community Councils required by those Regulations.

This Information Notice is therefore being sent to the following Community Councils:

Gavinton, Fogo and Polwarth
Swinton and Ladykirk
Coldstream and District
Sprouston
Ednam, Stitchill and Berry Moss
Greenlaw and Hume
Carham Parish Council

1. Proposed Local Place Plan

The proposed Local Place Plan is available at [Documents & Links — LEB-CC](#)
Please click on View and Download to see the latest amended version of our Community Led Plan.

2. Brief description of the content and purpose of the proposed Local Place Plan

The proposed Local Place Plan covers the area of Leitholm, Eccles, Birgham and surrounding rural areas.

The proposed Local Place Plan contains proposals relating to 7 key priorities

Connectivity (improved transport and communication (including digital))

Inclusivity (creating, maintaining and developing a social hub for each village)

Sustainability (to deliver projects for renewable energy sources in the village halls and to explore such opportunities for private dwellings)

Health and wellbeing (to address issues relating to road and pavement safety, to create warm and safe hubs for times of energy disruption and to monitor health and social care provision)

Pride of Place (maintaining and enhancing the village environments)

Rural Environment (to retain the area as prime agricultural land whilst also supporting existing battery storage developments)

Tourism and heritage (to develop the history and heritage potential of the villages and surrounding area in the context of responsible tourism)

These relate mainly to green spaces within and around the villages, the village halls in Birgham and Leitholm, proposed and existing pavements, footpaths and cycle paths, housing, historical and heritage sites and the agricultural land surrounding the villages.

The purpose of our proposed Local Place Plan is to build on identified community strengths and assets to promote a vibrant, supportive and sustainable community which is well connected, healthy

and safe. We intend to draw on the plan to attract funding and to influence the next Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan.

3. Information as to how and to whom any representations on the content of the proposed Local Place Plan should be made and the date by which they should be made

If you have comments on our proposed Local Place Plan, please email them to us at

leitholmecclesbirghamcc@gmail.com

The deadline for comments is **February 24 2025**

We are sending similar Information Notices to our local councillors as required by the Local Place Plan Regulations.

Please let us know if you have any queries.

Kind regards

Bob Hope Anne Wales
Chair Community Led Planning Lead

From: **Admin ESBCC** <esbcc@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, 27 Jan 2025, 16:54

Subject: Re: Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham Community Led Plan

To: Anne Wales [REDACTED]

Many thanks for sharing your Annual Report and your Local Place Plan. I am heartened to see that your community engagement has been framed by the themes of the Place Standard. We have held a small number of Community Conversations around a number of the themes; your work gives us encouragement to continue. I trust that you find the work that you have done brings the support of public bodies and private enterprises to help you realise your objectives.

Kind regards

Dave Watson
Chair
Ednam, Stichill and Berry Moss Community Council

On Tue, 28 Jan 2025, 10:11 am Bob Hope, [REDACTED] wrote:
Good Morning Dave,

Thank you for your comments regarding our Place Plan. We started the process about two years ago with some enthusiasm, consultations raised the profile of the work of our community council and we were clear that the plan would guide our work into the future. This said, it was only about 6 - 9 months ago that the Scottish Government provided the stipulations needed to ensure that the Plan could be registered with and would be recognised by the local authority. The complexity of the reporting procedure, for a community council is ridiculous. What started off as a Place Plan providing the priorities and aspirations of our community in about 8 pages is now a mammoth document over 50 pages. Were it not for the skills of Anne Wales and her small team, we would have given up on this months ago.

I am aware that community councils are entitled to ask for a consultant to help them with the process and to write their Place Plan, however, at around £20k per community council I personally feel that this is very poor use of tax payers money.

At this time we see our plan as being a living document, subject to change as priorities change. As yet, we have no idea how these changes will be fed into the registered plan.

The cognisance taken of our plan is yet to be seen.

Bob Hope
Chair, Leitholm Eccles and Birgham community council

Interesting that your aspirations at the outset were almost exactly the same as ours and it is true to say that, as we have carried out our conversations, our activities and achievements have been shaped by the process. I'm not sure whether we have the capacity within our now smaller CC to take the big step that you took.

Best of luck taking it forward. Ironic that £20k would be a useful budget for a CC looking to improve aspects of life in its community.

Kind regards

Dave

From: **Chair Coldstream CC** <chair.coldstreamcc@gmail.com>
Date: Sat, 22 Feb 2025 at 12:43
Subject: Re: Leitholm Eccles and Birgham Community Council Place Plan
To: Leitholm Eccles Birgham <leitholmecclesbirghamcc@gmail.com>
Cc: <greenlawhumecc@outlook.com>, Coldstream Community Council secretary <secretary.coldstreamcc@gmail.com>, <community.council@swintonvillage.co.uk>, [REDACTED], <esbcca@gmail.com>, Anne Wales [REDACTED], Gordon Mellis [REDACTED]

Good afternoon Bob,

Thank you for sending for perusal your Community Led Plan 2023 - 2033 which was interesting reading and Coldstream & District Community Council is, of course, supportive of your key themes.

We also see these plans as an opportunity to work more closely with our neighbouring communities in the future and explore joint approaches to connectivity etc.

As part of that, we wonder if the "community benefits" from battery storage to which your plan makes frequent reference, might be shared with neighbouring communities such as Coldstream and Greenlaw, as is the case with wind farm benefits, with possibly a "Community Benefit Fund" set up to be jointly managed by local representatives?

Kind regards
Joy (Thomson)

Chair Coldstream & District Community Council

From: **Leitholm Eccles Birgham** <leitholmecclesbirghamcc@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, 25 Feb 2025 at 10:00
Subject: Re: Leitholm Eccles and Birgham Community Council Place Plan
To: Chair Coldstream CC <chair.coldstreamcc@gmail.com>

Good Morning Joy,

Thank you for your remarks regarding our Place Plan.

Regarding Community Benefits I would advise that these are not in the same scale as those for Wind Turbines. At this time Zenobe have committed to providing £25k per year and have been clear that this must be spent within our Community council area as the area which is impacted by their operations.

It is interesting that your Community Council are now looking to work more closely with us as when we reached out to both Coldstream and Greenlaw Community Councils for support in opposing the proliferation of BESS in our area, neither made any commitment. At this time we are still battling to stop BESS developments in the planning process from ruining our rural landscape. The impact on our community has been profound for most and devastating for those on the periphery of proposed sites.

This said, we would be more than happy to meet with you to discuss areas of mutual interest.

Bob Hope
Chair.

| Registration Submission Checklist | | |
|---|------------------------|------|
| | Document | Page |
| Confirmation of the community body's status | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement identifying the community body that has prepared the Local Place Plan (LPP) | CLP | 6 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of the written constitution (if applicable) | NA | |
| Contact details | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact details for the community body | SS | 3 |
| Statement of your proposals as to the development or use of land | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of the community body's proposals as to the development or use of land within the LPP area | CLP | 24 |
| Map showing proposals for development or use of land | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A map that shows the land to which the LPP relates | CLP | 7 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map(s) which identify the location of any land or building(s) referred to in the Statement or where the LPP identifies any land or building(s) that the community body considers to be of particular significance to the local area | CLP | 44 |
| | CLP | 45 |
| Evidence of compliance with Section 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 | | |
| A copy of the following should be submitted: | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of the Councillors contacted and when | SS | 6 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of community councils contacted and when* | SS | 6 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of the proposed LPP | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of the Information Notice (sent to Councillors and Community Councils) | CLP | 50 |
| Explanation of how, whilst preparing the LPP, the community body has taken into consideration other relevant plans | | |
| A statement explaining how the community body has had regard to: | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Planning Framework | CLP pp 16- | 17 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Development Plan | SS | 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locality Plans which cover the LPP area (if applicable) | SS | 3 |
| | SS | 4 |
| Reasons for amending the Local Development Plan (LDP) | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A statement outlining if, how and why the LDP should be amended as a result of the final LPP. The statement should be based on the considerations that the community body made in preparing its LPP. | SS | 4 |
| Evidence of community support | | |
| A statement setting out: | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community body's view of the level and nature of support for the LPP | CLP 18 - | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that supports this view, including a description or timeline of engagement activities and evidence gathering undertaken as part of the LPP process | CLP 35-40 & 41 - 43 | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of governance and decision-making procedure applied | SS | 5 |
| Copies of additional documents | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of/hyperlink to any document referred to with the LPP. This excludes documents which are prepared or published by SBC. | NA | |

*If your LPP area shares a border with England, please consider notifying the relevant English Parish Councils

