

local housing strategy

2017-22 CONSULTATIVE DRAFT

HOUSING STRATEGY & SERVICES
PLACE



↑ Local Housing Strategy Consultation

Welcome to this consultation document which sets out the draft vision, priorities and actions of the new Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for the Scottish Borders. The new LHS covers the period 2017-2022 and sets out our vision for housing and housing related services over the next five years.

We have developed a draft vision and priorities for action with our partners. Before the strategy is finalised, we want to make sure that local people, communities and stakeholders have their say on whether these priorities will make a positive contribution to meeting housing need in the Borders.

We would encourage and welcome your feedback and comments on the proposed vision, priorities and actions for the 2017-2022 Scottish Borders LHS.

This consultation document poses a number of questions we would like you to consider



How to use this document

The draft LHS vision and priorities for action will be subject to public consultation from early August 2016 to late October 2016.



Consultation questions are contained within the document and a questionnaire for completion is available at the end of this consultation document.



Alternatively you can complete an online questionnaire through the Council's website www.scotborders.gov.uk/consultations



Public consultation events will also be held from August to October 2016.

For details on the latest updates and events on the LHS consultation process, please visit our Facebook and Twitter pages www.facebook.com/sbcouncil and www.twitter.com/scotborders

↑ What is a Local Housing Strategy?

All Scottish local authorities are required to prepare a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) every five years, setting out a vision for the supply, quality and availability of housing in their local area. The LHS is the key planning document which sets out the range of action the Council and its partners will take to make sure this vision becomes a reality. There is a strong relationship between the LHS and the Local Development Plan (LDP). Together with the LDP, the LHS sets out the number of new homes to be delivered (by setting a housing supply target). This enables the requirements for housing land supply to be identified.

As the last LHS covered the period 2012 – 2017, the preparation of the new Local Housing Strategy (2017 – 2022) is well underway. To build up the draft strategy, the Council has been working with a wide range of partners to assess local needs, agree priorities and define ideas and solutions to deliver our shared vision for housing in the Scottish Borders.

Housing plays a vital role in meeting the needs of local people, communities and the economy. The Local Housing Strategy sets out a framework of action, investment and partnership working to deliver local priorities.

The Local Housing Strategy sets out the vision and priorities for the future of housing and all housing related services across the Scottish Borders

It considers all tenures and types of accommodation and reflects both national priorities and local needs



The purpose of the LHS is to:

- ✓ Set out a shared understanding of the need and demand for all types of housing, and for services such as housing support, both now and in the future
- ✓ Set out actions and targets to improve the standard and condition of housing
- ✓ Provide a clear strategic direction for housing investment in both new and existing housing
- ✓ Focus on the outcomes required to achieve the vision

To build the new strategy, Scottish Borders Council has engaged widely with key partners and stakeholders to:



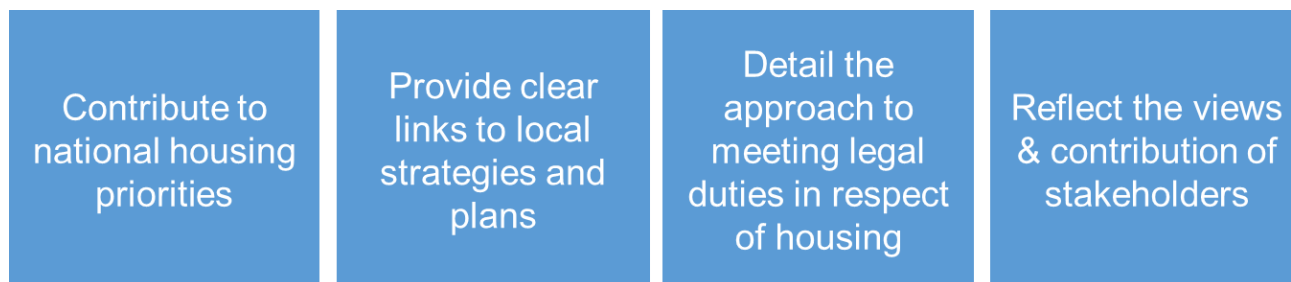
Define a vision for the housing system in the Scottish Borders

Identify the main issues facing the housing system in the Scottish Borders

Propose actions and solutions that will address these issues

↑ What does the Local Housing Strategy have to do?

The Scottish Government's LHS Guidance was prepared to help local authorities across Scotland to develop their strategies. The Guidance is clear about what an LHS needs to cover, what it should look like, and who should be involved in helping to shape it. The LHS needs to:



In terms of the national priorities, the LHS is expected to show how its actions will support and make a contribution to the Scottish Government's vision for housing that "*all people in Scotland live in high quality sustainable homes that they can afford and that meet their needs*".

The LHS must also show how it makes a contribution to the wider framework of local strategies and plans for the Scottish Borders, including the Single Outcome Agreement which outlines three major priorities to secure the future of the area, namely:

- ✓ Grow our economy;
- ✓ Reduce inequalities; and
- ✓ Maximise the impact from the low carbon agenda

Local authorities also have a number of legal duties which relate to or are affected by housing, and the LHS must be clear about how these will be met locally. This includes plans to help address homelessness, improve house condition and tackle fuel poverty.

Finally, stakeholder contribution is crucial to ensuring that the LHS truly reflects the issues affecting the housing system locally and the priorities identified to address these issues. In developing the LHS, we have consulted with stakeholders from an early stage, and want to continue to do so to make sure we get it right.

We are keen to obtain the views of local residents, communities, partners and stakeholders on the proposed vision, priorities and actions for the 2017-2022 Local Housing Strategy

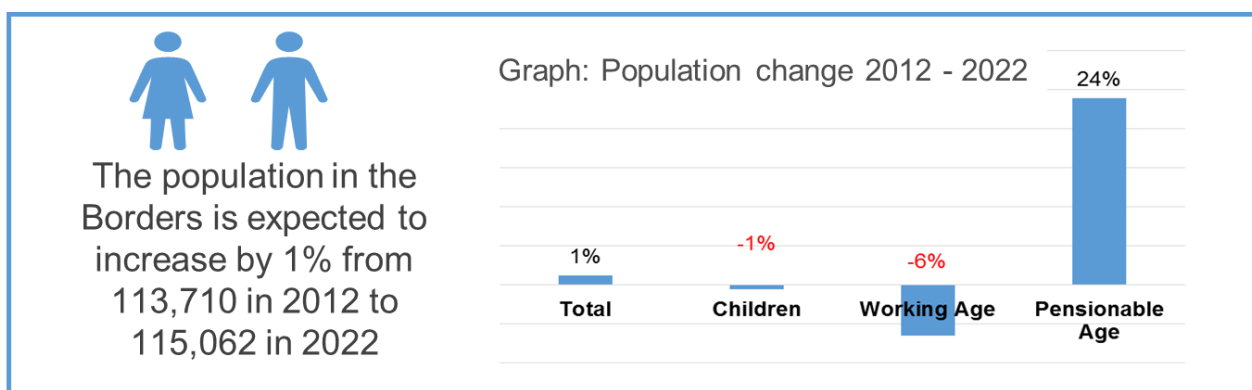


We encourage you to participate and provide your feedback and comments by completing our short online survey. The link to the survey can be found on the final page of this document

↑ What issues are affecting housing in the Scottish Borders?


The LHS must take into account the wider issues that may be affecting housing in the local area, including population and economic trends. The LHS must consider how the following important issues will affect meeting the housing vision for the Scottish Borders:

- ✓ The Scottish Borders' population is expected to remain fairly static and looks set to increase by just 1% by 2022. However the population is changing and with it housing requirements may also change
- ✓ It is estimated that the working age population could fall (-6%) and the older population could increase considerably (24%)
- ✓ Almost half (48%) of the Scottish Borders' population live in rural areas. Ensuring housing is connected to local services, jobs, transport and broadband is crucial



The projected increase in the older population in Scottish Borders (24%) is higher than the expected increase across Scotland (21%). Linked to this there could be greater demand for housing, care & support services for older people

Another important issue is the level of household incomes in the Borders, which are lower than is the case nationally. This will influence the ability of local households to afford housing costs:



The average income in the Scottish Borders is £32,785 - 5% lower than Scotland

Gross weekly pay has gradually increased in the last two decades but is 8% lower than Scotland

More low income households live in Berwickshire and Central Borders than elsewhere



Consultation question 1

What do you think are the main issues affecting housing in the Scottish Borders?

↑ What is the level of housing need in the Scottish Borders?

The LHS needs to be built on a solid evidence base, and a key part of this is producing a detailed 'Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)'. This assessment estimates the number of new households who will require housing in Scottish Borders. This is based on household projections and economic scenarios produced by the National Records of Scotland (NRS).

Using this analysis, we can calculate whether more housing will be needed in the Scottish Borders in the future to meet the needs of the population who want and need to live here. The Housing Need & Demand Assessment estimates the need for housing across all tenures. It does this by looking at the number of projected new households and the number of existing households who will need additional housing, and assesses their ability to meet local housing costs.

The HNDA is used to help with the setting of a 'Housing Supply Target' for the area, i.e. the number of new houses that require to be built in the Borders during the life of the LHS. 'SESplan' the Strategic Development Plan (produced by the South East Scotland Strategic Development Planning Authority) has used the results from the HNDA to assess the requirements for new housing across the region and in the Scottish Borders.

Scottish Borders Council worked with the Scottish Government to finalise the HNDA calculation

Based on outcomes of the HNDA, it is estimated that 348 new houses should be delivered each year in the Scottish Borders



New housing requirements (in the current proposed SESplan)



128 affordable houses per year

220 private market houses per year

This calculation is based on an economic forecast which predicts a "wider distribution of wealth across the region". This means that more high and low skilled jobs will be created, which increases activity in the economy and helps to reduce inequalities.

Whilst this target is ambitious, the Council and its regional partners believe it is achievable and will make a strong contribution to meeting housing need locally.

↑ Who did we speak with to build the LHS and why?

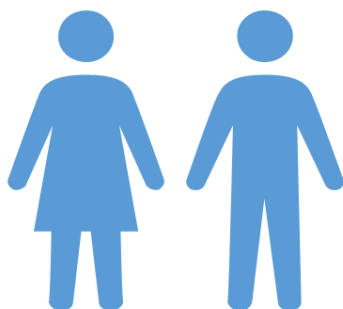
The Scottish Government's LHS Guidance says:

Scottish Government LHS Guidance:

Early engagement with partners & stakeholders is key to identifying & agreeing how to deal with the priorities identified



We wanted to engage as widely as possible to help develop the strategy, so we spoke to housing experts and a range of other stakeholders, including representatives from:



Scottish Borders Council
(inc Planning, Social Work,
& Environmental Health)
Scottish Government
Housing Associations
NHS
Citizens Advice Bureau
Community Councils

Police Scotland
Home Energy Scotland
Rural Housing Scotland
Shelter Scotland
Scotrail
Churches Housing Action
Chamber of Commerce

Working in partnership with our stakeholders and partners we have successfully drafted proposals for:



An LHS vision for housing in the Borders

LHS priorities that tackle the key issues that must be addressed

Ideas for action so that each priority is met

↑ What are our vision and priorities?

Working with partners, a draft vision for Scottish Borders Council's LHS (2017-2022) has been developed.

LHS vision & priorities

Every person in the Scottish Borders lives in a home that meets their needs



In defining this vision, partners agreed that:

- ✓ The words "lives in a home" means that everyone who wants or needs to live in the Borders is successful in accessing housing
- ✓ The words "in a home that meets their needs" will consider the amenity, locality, energy efficiency, quality and affordability of the housing available



Consultation question 2

The LHS vision needs to help us reach our ambition for housing in the Scottish Borders. Do you think that the vision is strong enough to do this?

In order to support the successful delivery of this vision, we have established the following four priorities:

The supply of housing meets the needs of our communities

More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes

Less people are affected by homelessness

More people are supported to live independently in their own homes



Consultation questions 3 & 4

Do the LHS priorities reflect the main housing problems that need to be tackled in the Scottish Borders?
Are there any other emerging priorities that are missing?

↑ **What are our ideas for action?**

In order to support the successful delivery of the LHS priorities, a number of ideas for action were identified, assessed and prioritised by the Council and its partners.

These ideas and solutions set out the action, partnership and investment needed to address the issues which lie beneath each LHS priority.



Consultation question 5

Are there any specific actions which you feel will help to support the delivery of the LHS vision and priorities?

↑ **Ideas for action under each LHS priority are set out in detail below. Please tell us what you think of the actions suggested.**

Priority 1: “The supply of housing meets the needs of our communities”

The key issues which drive the need for action in Priority 1 are as follows:

Borders’ population is expected to increase by 1% by 2022 with a projected decline in the working age population (-6%) & increase in older population (+24%)

The average income in Scottish Borders is 5% lower than Scotland (£32,785)

The average house price in Scottish Borders is £173,575, which is 7% higher than Scotland

A household would need an income of £43,000 to be able to access a mortgage valued at the average house price

Half of local households cannot afford the average market rent in Scottish Borders (£519 per month)

Housing supply targets (348 per annum) seek to increase housing delivery above currently low levels (288 in 2014)

The top 5 actions to address for priority 1: “the supply of housing meets the needs of our communities”, are:

- ✓ Work with infrastructure investment partners and national/regional construction firms to identify housing development opportunities including in/around the Borders railway corridor
- ✓ Based on a better understanding of the costs of housing construction in the Borders, find new ways of delivering more housing supply by looking at new procurement techniques, building technologies, partnership arrangements and finance models
- ✓ Support the development of a town centre living strategy
- ✓ Engage with communities across the Borders to improve our understanding of local housing aspirations and need, sharing this information with our planning partners
- ✓ Find new ways to make buying a home an attractive option for young, working age people encouraging them to come or to stay in the Scottish Borders

Other actions which were suggested for priority 1 were to create opportunities to develop and offer more mid-market housing options and to work with local construction firms to access training and employment opportunities which may boost local businesses.



Consultation questions 6 & 7

Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 1 the right ones?
Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 1 actions?

Priority 2: “More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes”

The key issues which drive the need for action in priority 2 are as follows:

9% of dwellings in Scottish Borders have the lowest energy efficiency rating

35% of Scottish Borders dwellings are off the gas grid

43% of households in the Borders are fuel poor in comparison with 36% nationally

75% of dwellings in Scottish Borders have an element of serious disrepair

Dwellings in Scottish Borders are more prone to dampness (6%) & condensation (20%) than is the case nationally (4% & 11%)

4% of dwellings in Scottish Borders do not meet minimum property standards (and are ‘Below Tolerable Standard’)

The key actions to address priority 2, “*more people live in good quality, energy efficient homes*”, are:

- ✓ Set up a home energy forum in the Scottish Borders, involving Scottish Borders Council, RSLs and Scottish Land & Estates
- ✓ Find new ways to enable Scottish Borders Council to use powers to encourage private owners and landlords to tackle property disrepair
- ✓ Raise awareness of the funding and grant schemes available to local households to tackle property disrepair, poor energy efficiency and fuel poverty
- ✓ Support and encourage private landlords to invest in property maintenance and repair

Other actions which were suggested for priority 2 were to work with RSLs and advice services to target local people in fuel poverty with information and advice on increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, maximising income levels, and how to lower home energy costs



Consultation questions 8 & 9

Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 2 the right ones?
Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 2 actions?

Priority 3: “Less people are affected by homelessness”

The key issues which drive the need for action in priority 3 are as follows:

In 2014/15, 650 homeless applications were made to SBC a 3% reduction from 2013/14

Since 2010, applications in Scotland have fallen more considerably (by 36%) than in the Borders (25%)

Scottish Borders Council delivered preventative approaches to 1,000 individuals in 2014/15

Under housing options, more households were helped to secure alternative housing in Borders (13%) than nationally (5%)

There has been an increase in the use of temporary accommodation - 40% placed in 2013/14 compared to 25% in 2010/11

The length of stay in temporary accommodation has decreased falling from 123 days in 2010/11 to 97 days in 2013/14

The top 5 actions for priority 3, “*less people are affected by homelessness*”, are:

- ✓ Improve the availability of a better range of settled (permanent) accommodation options for households who have experienced homelessness
- ✓ Review the strategy for temporary accommodation so that less time is spent by homeless households who use temporary accommodation
- ✓ Create a consistent approach to homelessness prevention across frontline services, which focuses on early action, considers all options across all tenures, enables partners to work together for the benefit of the customer and empowers customers to make decisions
- ✓ Improve our understanding of the main reasons for homelessness and unmet housing support needs across the Scottish Borders so that we can target homelessness prevention work in a more effective way
- ✓ Increase access to health and social care services for homeless people and particularly those who are vulnerable, by improving collaboration between housing, health and social work

Other actions which were suggested for priority 3 were to Increase the number of previously homeless households who enter education, training or employment.



Consultation questions 10 & 11

Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 3 the right ones?
Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 3 actions?

Priority 4: “More people are supported to live independently in their own homes”

The key issues which drive the need for action in priority 5 are as follows:

The older population in the Borders, is projected to increase by a quarter by 2022

The projected growth in the number of older people living in the Scottish Borders is likely to increase demand for specialist housing, care & support services

We need to find innovative ways to enable people to live as independently as possible in their own home – this can be a challenge in very rural areas

Evidence that the % of adults receiving personal care at home is consistently higher in the Borders than Scotland since 2010

In 2014/15, Care & Repair delivered minor adaptations to 355 households and the handyperson service completed almost 4,500 jobs

A joined up approach to supporting victims of domestic abuse has seen a 17% drop in homeless presentations due to a violent/abusive dispute at home

The top 5 actions for priority 4, “*more people are supported to live independently in their own homes*”, are:

- ✓ Improve housing’s role in locality planning so that new housing developments deliver options for a range of client groups in places which are well connected to local transport and services
- ✓ Investigate ways to offer shared ownership and equity release options to older people who need to adapt their homes in order to live independently
- ✓ Increase partnership working between RSLs and care/support providers to improve understanding of unmet need for housing and services and to share innovation in technology and design to assist independent living
- ✓ Explore the future potential of the Borders Care & Repair scheme to further provide a wider range of services which enable people to live independently
- ✓ Develop a housing strategy for older people in collaboration with partners in health and social work

Other actions which were suggested for priority 4 were to provide information and advice on the housing and support options available to a range of client groups so that early planning can take place.



Consultation questions 12 & 13

Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 4 the right ones?
Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 4 actions?

↑ Have we got it right?

We would encourage and welcome your feedback and comments on the proposed vision, priorities and actions for the 2017-2022 Scottish Borders LHS.

To have your say please complete the following survey or complete online by visiting the Council's website at:

www.scotborders.gov.uk/consultations



The consultation period ends at 5pm on 31st October 2016.

Any person who wishes to submit a consultation response should send completed forms to:

housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk or by post to:

**Housing Strategy Team: LHS Consultation Response
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters
Newtown St. Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA**

If you need any further information please contact the Housing Strategy Team on: 01896 661392.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this important consultation.

Consultation on the Scottish Borders Local Housing Strategy 2017-22

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please ensure that this form is returned with your completed survey questionnaire to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. I am responding as:

A individual

From an organisation

2. Name/Organisation

Name/Organisation Name:

Title

Mr

Ms

Mrs

Miss

Dr

Surname

Forename

3. Postal Address

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

The consultation period ends at 5pm on 31st October 2016

If you need any further information please contact the Housing Strategy Team on: 01896 661392

Scottish Borders Local Housing Strategy 2017-22

Questions on Consultation Draft

1. What do you think are the main issues affecting housing in the Scottish Borders?

2. The LHS vision needs to help us reach our ambition for housing in the Scottish Borders. Do you think that the vision is strong enough to do this?

3. Do the LHS priorities reflect the main housing problems that need to be tackled in the Scottish Borders?

4. Are there any other emerging priorities that are missing?

5. Are there any specific actions which you feel will help to support the delivery of the LHS vision and priorities?

6. Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 1 the right ones?
The supply of housing meets the needs of our communities

7. Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 1 actions?

8. Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 2 the right ones?
More people live in good quality, energy efficient homes

9. Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 2 actions?

10. Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 3 the right ones?
Less people are affected by homelessness

11. Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 3 actions?

12. Are the actions proposed for LHS Priority 4 the right ones?
More people are supported to live independently in their own homes

13. Are there any major barriers that will stop us delivering LHS Priority 4 actions?

You can get this document on tape, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

HOUSING STRATEGY TEAM

Galashiels Area Office | Paton Street | GALASHIELS | TD1 3AS

Tel: 01896 661392 | email: housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk

