

# Scottish Borders HSCP Mainstreaming Report 2023 to 2025

## Progress towards achieving the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnerships Equality Outcomes

### Equality Outcome 1 Improving access and confidence in using health and social care services.

#### Adults with Learning Disability Health Checks

Everyone with a learning disability 16 years and over is identified and offered an annual health check. Sustainable models of delivery are developed, involving local CLDN's and CTAC nurses providing annual health checks. A pilot project with CTAC in one locality is underway but it is hoped that this will be rolled out in all 11 different geographical locations in the Scottish Borders. Success will be measured by:

- a) sustainability of annual health checks for patients people with LD within the Scottish Borders,
- b) a reduction in health inequalities through early detection, education and signposting.

#### Learning Disability Service

Improvements to referral processes into the LD service – single point of access and improved quality of information shared will lead to reduced waiting times from initial referral to acceptance into the service. Referrals coming into the LD service will be of sufficient quality to enable a decision to be accepted and allocated or rejected the first time. Numbers of referrals rejected due to lack of information will be collated and appropriate support given to referrers where necessary.

#### Money Worries App

Good financial wellbeing has a positive impact on health and wellbeing which is why, after consultation the Scottish Borders coproduce a Money Worries App with Citizen's Advice Bureau, TD1 Youth Hub and Early Steps Parents Group. A total of 55 people signed up as a volunteer to test the App during the testing phase which resulted in the App being successfully launched in March 2021.

For the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 there have been a total of:

Downloads	1,288
Screen Views	4,542
Sessions	738

Research by the Money & Pensions Service evidences that, for every protected characteristic, there are differences in financial wellbeing [maps-protected-characteristics-report.pdf](#) which is why since launching the App the project team have been working in partnership with the Money & Pensions Service. This to further identify inequality and take action to address these. This resulted in a programme to train staff working in Health & Social Care settings as money guiders. This training has enabled staff to raise money as part of their holistic health and wellbeing conversations and signpost people on to quality assured support. The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership have trained a total of 31 practitioners, training headlines include:

- Experience Rating: 4.38/5
- Confidence Levels: Increased
- 31 practitioners registered
- 25 practitioners completed the foundation assessment (81%)
- 4 out of 31 practitioners progressed onto technical domains (13%)
- Practitioners have provided case studies to demonstrate the difference this has made in their service settings

#### **British Sign Language Action Plan**

In recognition of the requirements of the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 to produce local action plans, Scottish Borders HSCP has worked with Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders on the development of their local action plan and associated equality and human rights impact assessment. The local action plan identifies key actions which supports the Scottish Government's ambition for Scotland to be the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

#### **Interpretation and Translation Service**

A review of the current pathway used by staff when requesting use of the Interpretation and Translation Services managed by NHS Borders has taken place. This has resulted in the development of an online process using Microsoft Forms. The forms have been designed to capture the reasons staff are requesting the service as a way of identifying any inequality in the accessibility of service information. It will also enable the utilization by service to be monitored further supporting the identification and implementation of measures to address inequalities identified.

#### **Trauma Informed Services**

Trauma informed walkthroughs took place for staff and people with lived and living experience in relation to alcohol and drugs services. A list of improvement ideas has been generated and prioritised resulting in the development of an implementation action plan which can be evaluated and reported against. The implementation action plan is being implemented by an Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Subgroup with the aim of improving access to services.

## Equality Outcome 2 Inclusive and co-productive approach to reducing poverty and increasing equality of outcome

### Wellbeing Programme Board

In February 2024 a meeting was held to discuss wellbeing activities across the Scottish Borders as it had been recognised that there are several statutory wellbeing services being provided in silo and a joined-up approach would be more beneficial. It was agreed that by combining the good work of these services, third sector and voluntary organisations, and community networks will allow for the development of a social wellness eco-system and the decision to establish a Wellbeing Programme was taken. The Wellbeing Programme will be overseen by the cross sector Wellbeing Programme Board. The Board operates in an open and transparent manner, reporting to the Health and Social Care Partnership's Joint Executive Team and the Scottish Borders Integration Joint Board.

The Wellbeing Programme will allow the Health and Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) to collectively better:

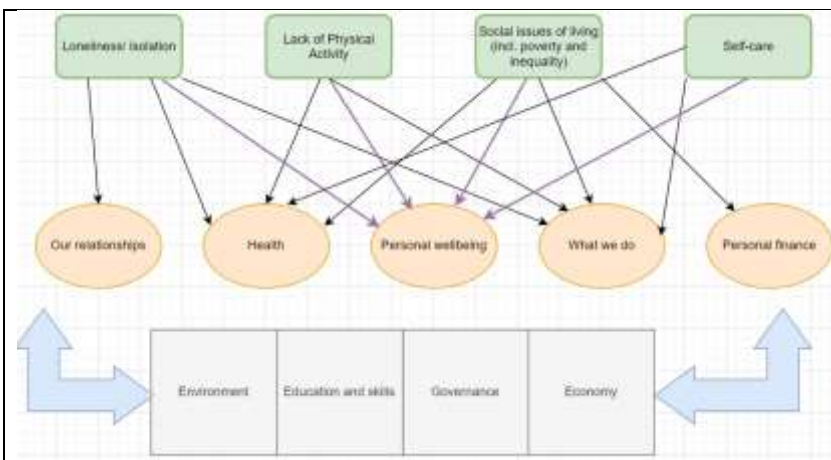
- identify gaps in services.
- support collaboration, coordination and partnership.
- support community engagement.
- support us to better plan, develop and commission services and funding allocations.
- support more efficient, effective and streamlined allocation of resources.

The priorities of the Wellbeing Programme Board are:

1. Loneliness / Isolation
2. Lack of Physical Activity
3. Social Issues of Living (including Poverty and Inequality)
4. Self-Care

For the purpose of the Wellbeing Programme, wellbeing is defined as improving the life satisfaction within the Scottish Borders, with the fundamental consideration being: "will this genuinely improve the life satisfaction of our citizens?". This includes ensuring any proposals consider both the four priorities set out for the Wellbeing Programme Board (as above) and the ten domains of national wellbeing as set out by the Office for National Statistics

The diagram below demonstrates how the ten domains of wellbeing interact with the four priorities of the Wellbeing Board.



The establishment of the Wellbeing Programme provides the forum through which to develop and deliver a series of initiatives which address the health and wellbeing inequalities identified during the development of the Integration Joint Board's Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Framework 2025 to 2029.

### Challenge Poverty Week 2024

In October 2024 the members of the Wellbeing Programme Board were presented with a suit of options to support those experience fuel poverty over Winter 2024/2025. This included the allocation of Winter Fuel Funds to the Citizen Advice Bureaus Warm and Well initiative, the establishment of a Scottish Borders Registered Social Landlords Warm Advisor Post, the allocation of additional funds to secure the Scottish Borders Council's Financial Inclusion Team until 31 March 2025 and exploratory discussions with the Third Sector Interface regarding the provision of Warm Spaces. As a result, a short life working group was established to progress the promotion of pension credit, attendance allowance and the marketing/promotion of funding sources available to support community based developments.

### Dementia Implementation Plan 2023 to 2025 - Our Dementia Plan

The Scottish Borders Dementia Strategy Group was formed to oversee the development of the Scottish Borders Dementia Strategy. The first task they undertook was the name the strategy in a way that promoted that it belonged to everyone. In February 2023 the group identified the need to undertake an Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment and asked for an introduction as how to undertake the impact assessment.

Having identified in March 2023 that the strategy in development was both proportionate and relevant to the Equality Duty the members of the cross sector Dementia Strategy Group were invited by the group chair to participate in a meeting with the Partnership's Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Strategic Lead to discuss and identify inequality in Dementia Services from an equality perspective.

The Scottish Borders Nurse Consultant/Strategic Dementia Lead began the process of organising a series of events to capture the views of communities who experience inequality. This to influence and inform the development of the strategy. Not an easy task as for many this was the first time they were being invited to influence and inform developments, not hear about the plan once developed.

This required pre meeting contact with each organisation to explain what was being done and why.

A total of 9 events were organised, the organisations/networks/forum participating are listed below:

1. Physical Disability Forum
2. RNIB - Sensory Loss – Sight
3. Borders Additional Needs Group - Neurodivergent Community
4. RNID - Sensory Loss – Hearing
5. Age and Isolation
6. Head trauma through sport
7. Authentic Voice – Gender based violence
8. Age – Early Onset Dementia
9. Race – Ukrainian Community

This particular impact assessment is a great example of intersectionality. When discussing Age it was identified that inequality arises for people aged between 50 and 66 years of age. Why? Because if diagnosed between these ages people are likely to still be in work. If employers are unaware of their duty to put reasonable adjustments into place, people could be retired on medical grounds or grounds of incapacity. It was then questioned as how this would impact on their right to employment, their right to earnings, their ability to continue with mortgage payments or rent payment. It was also recognised that a lot of existing services have been developed for older people and that younger people diagnosed with dementia may wish to continue with existing activities.

Inequality from a gender point of view was also explored. Resulting in the correlation between gender based violence – head trauma and dementia for women and sports head injury for those participating in contact sports being made.

What had been gathered both in terms of evidence and lived resulted in 18 recommendations to address the issues identified. The recommendations which came out of this impact assessment have been embedded into the implementation plan for the strategy. Which allows for progress to be monitored and reported on as well as evidencing the mainstreaming of the Equality Duty into every day practice. In adopting this approach the Dementia Strategy Group will be able to contribute to the Integration Joint Board's annual Mainstreaming Report and the bi annual report which must be published every two years.

The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership held its inaugural Equality and Human Rights Conference in June 2024. In recognition of the approach taken by Scottish Borders Nurse Consultant/Strategic Dementia Lead an invitation to deliver a workshop to peers entitled Impact Assessments – My experience was extended. The workshop was specifically designed to support peers embrace the process by demonstrating what the impact of undertaking an impact assessment has for people and how this improves their quality of life.

Since undertaking their first impact assessment Scottish Borders Nurse Consultant/Strategic Dementia Lead has continued to support the Partnership's Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Strategic Lead with many colleagues contacting her for advice and guidance. As a result, the Scottish Borders Nurse Consultant/Strategic Dementia Lead has taken on an additional role, that of an Equality and Human Rights Service Specialist for Nursing Services. In this role, the Scottish Borders Nurse Consultant/Strategic Dementia Lead has joined colleagues from other delegated services in evidencing progress in eradicating inequality in accessing and benefitting from health and social care services which are designed to improve the health and wellbeing and quality of life outcomes for the diverse communities of the Scottish Borders.

### **Health Information Point Galashiels Library**

Working jointly with Live Borders the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership launched the Health Information Point in Galashiels Library in October 2024. The aim of the initiative is to provide health information and support services to those particularly concerned about dementia. The Health Information Point serves as a resource hub offering leaflets and books on key health topics such as brain health, healthy eating, exercise and dementia care.

One of the aims of the initiative is to support people, post dementia diagnosis, to continue with existing activities. One of the ways this will be achieved is by inviting key partners from sports and cultural organisations to explore with members of the Dementia Strategy Group, the implementation of reasonable adjustments to activities which support current use, and which increase future engagement in sport and leisure activities for people with a diagnosis of dementia

## Carers Strategy

A review of the Scottish Borders Carer Strategy commenced in November 2023. During the process of undertaking the Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment it was established that Parent Carers experience inequality and meetings with Parent Carers were organised. As a result of these discussions a recommendation which developed was to set up a Parent Carer Workstream. The aims of which was to ensure that parent carers have a strong voice and to develop a pathway for post diagnostic support and to reduce stigma and discrimination current experienced.

The new Scottish Borders Parent Carer Self-Coaching Programme was launched in January 2025. This initiative has been developed in collaboration between Borders Additional Needs Group and Borders In Recovery to bring to parent carers a specifically adapted version of Borders in Recovery's highly effective self-coaching programme which meets the unique needs of parent carers. This programme is an opportunity for parent carers to develop resilience, explore transformative self-coaching techniques, and connect with others in a supportive environment. By attending, parent carers will gain practical tools to navigate challenges, enhance personal well-being, take a step on their journey to becoming peer mentor and improve their work life experience.

The Scottish Borders new Male Parent Carer Support Group was also launched in January 2025. This initiative is lead led by two dedicated male parent carer volunteers from Borders Additional Needs Group, is designed specifically for male carers. The group aims to provide a safe and supportive space for male carers to connect, share experiences, and access peer-to-peer support in a relaxed and non-judgmental environment. As well as a place of respite from caregiving responsibilities.

The Borders Regional Parent Carers of Neurodivergent Children and Young People Forum was subject to remarketing as a way of encouraging new members to become involved now that Parent Carers have been identified as a community experiencing inequality as a result of the impact assessment. The Forum serves as a collective advocacy group and a peer-to-peer support network. It is a space where Parent Carers can come together to share experiences, connect, and collaborate on local issues affecting their families. By empowering parents to voice their concerns, the Forum aims to strengthen advocacy efforts and work towards positive change for neurodivergent children and young people across the region. The agenda for the February 2025 meeting of the Forum is as follows:

- The Home Schooling Open Letter and its response
- The latest developments in the Parent Workstream
- A consultation on the Borders Additional Needs Group's new five-year strategy (2025-2030)

In attending the Forum, Parent Carers will not only shape the future support for Neurodivergent families they provide officers an additional Forum to invite to participate in future impact assessments.

The two new initiatives and the Forum were founded and coordinated by Borders Additional Needs Group (BANG). These programmes are informed by lived experience, addressing both practical and emotional needs, and long-term resilience. The participation in the Carers Strategy impact assessment has already led to a shift in

understanding the needs of parent carers, resulting in the launch of a new Parent Carer Strategy. This strategy ensures that parent carers have a direct voice in shaping services, with 12 parent carer representatives sitting within the workstream, including four from Borders Additional Needs Group. Success will be measured by the reporting of increased engagement with BANG's services, stronger peer support networks, and positive outcomes from youth- and parent-led initiatives. Additionally, tracking progress against specific goals, such as improved emotional resilience and access to resources, will help BANG ensure their work is impactful and transformative for the families they support.

Borders Carers Centre continues to work with adult carers within the council area, including being the only organisation authorised to undertake Carers Needs Assessments which are crucial for identifying carers needs and if necessary, accessing services. Measurement of this activity (which also includes feedback from carers about the impact of any help and support given by both voluntary and statutory organisations) will continue to be quantitative in terms of the numbers of carers seen and the numbers of Carers Needs Assessments undertaken (only a portion of the data collected for the IJB and the Scottish Government), and qualitative in terms of the experience of services and improvement of the general wellbeing of carers. Success will be increasing numbers of carers referred, needs identified, and Carers Needs Assessment undertaken, and carers identifying an improvement in their wellbeing.

#### **Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards**

Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership is undertaking work in line with Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards to review delivery in relation to the draft Charter of Rights for People Affected by Substance Use to review selected MAT Standards and are planning a Stigma workshop for wider services [Charter-of-Rights-Pages Digital singles.pdf](#) The success of this will be measured using feedback from Borders Engagement (Living Experience) Group and the ADP Lived Experience Forum

#### **Equity in Screening Action Plan**

An Equity in Screening Action Plan has been developed to achieve national outcomes in relation to inequalities within the Screening Programmes [Health screening: equity in screening strategy 2023 to 2026 - gov.scot](#), The plan includes scoping work with particular groups in relation to targeting messages (e.g in relation to cervical screening; breast cancer) and developing alternative formats. Update of screening by particular characteristics (where data available) with a view to addressing the experiences of lesbian and bi sexual women and the Trans and non-binary communities

#### **Care at Home – Freezer and Microwave Hire**

In February 2024 Apetito meals service notified Scottish Borders Council's Contracts Team of a change to their services. Up until then, a Meals service for people with identified needs was provided and in some cases a freezer and/or microwave was provided - with a weekly charge to the person - following financial assessment. This service ensured that frozen meals were stored and then cooked safely, if the person met criteria for assistance. Scottish Borders Council levied a charge of £1.60 p/week for Freezers and £1.29 for hire of Microwaves.



The service provider advised that the equipment provided would be retained by the customers and that if the equipment needed replaced an application could be made by an application to the Scottish Welfare fund, if the person had a qualifying benefit. Everyone who received this service did have a qualifying benefit. The costs per annum were £ 83.20 (freezer only) £ 67.08 (microwave only) £ 150.28 (both). In consultation with a disability and third sector charging forum the Council ended all charges in relation to the hire of equipment and there was only benefit to the people using this service. Many people have been paying charges for several years and this change means they will continue to access meal services but without weekly charges to pay for rental of equipment and will therefore maximise household income.

### **Respite Service – Station Court**

It was raised by Scottish Borders Council's internal charging group (staffed by officers from Adult Social Work, the Benefits Service and the Community Care Resource Team) that there had been a long standing charging discrepancy for respite beds at a disability support centre, Station Court, based in Duns. There had not been a variation in this policy since Free Personal Care for people under 65 came into existence in April 2019. Station Court was the only resource with a stand-alone charging policy and if someone was to access respite in any of the other 23 care homes in the area they would be financially assessed and be billed accordingly. The aim is to standardise policy, taking into full consideration the Community Care (personal care and nursing care) (Scotland) (amendments) No 2 regulations 2018. Also known as 'Frank's Law'. This concerns free personal care for the under 65s.

The objective is to offer respite care at Station Court with the same terms and conditions and associated costs as other resources offering similar respite facilities. For a number of years Station Court charged £15 a day for SBC residents and £54 a day for people who live elsewhere (out with Scottish Borders Council) It fails to comply with the financial safeguards, as described in Scottish Borders Council's current charging regulations.

Scottish Borders Council Internal charging group met and proposed an amendment, and this was ratified by the external forum, as described above. The use of equality legislation was to vary SBC's charging policy to bring it into line with national regulations and ensure equity in respect of charging for people with physical disabilities requiring respite care at Station Court in Duns. To eliminate discrimination for people with a disability, be charged in an equitable way and have income maximised at point of assessment.

### **Coming Home Programme**

The Coming Home Programme was established in 2023. To date there have been two active projects, one delivered 2023 to 2024 and one established in 2024 which is still active. This has led to 5 people being successfully repatriated to the Scottish Borders. Of the 5 people repatriated, three people were accommodated in out of area hospitals. In addition 3 people who would have been housed out with the Scottish Borders pre the establishment of the Coming Home Project have been accommodated and currently supported in the Scottish Borders.

### **Creating Hope Action Plan**

The Ways to be Well resource aims to help people living in the Scottish Borders to protect and improve their mental health and wellbeing. The resource has been co-produced with people with lived experience and has been updated over the last year to reflect 12 different ways to be well; Eat Well, Be Active, Sleep Well, Be Kind, Enjoy & Learn, Be Creative, Be mindful, Be Connected, Connect with Nature, Manage Money Worries, Limit Alcohol & Stop Smoking. An 'easy read version' was created and tested in community settings.

The resource offers information and to help us to look after our mental health and wellbeing, all of which are backed up by research. A full copy of the guide can be accessed via the following link: [read online HERE \(PDF\)](#)

### **The Creating Hope Awards Scheme**

The Scottish Borders Creating Hope Awards scheme was developed alongside partners and people with lived experience to allow groups and organisations in the Scottish Borders to show they are committed to being a Mentally Healthy and Suicide Safer Community. The aims of the scheme are:

- Engage local groups and organisations in promoting good health
- Nurture positive environments within communities and create hope
- Enable our local communities to have a clear understanding of suicide and its prevention and be able to respond in helpful and informed ways when support is needed
- Connect people to the information and support they need to be mentally health and suicide safer
- Recognise, support and promote mentally healthy and suicide safer communities that are caring, compassionate and inclusive

There are two awards in the scheme:

- Creating Hope Foundation Level Award
- Creating Hope Champions Award

More details about the Creating Hope Awards Scheme can be found here: [Creating Hope Awards](#)

### **Walk It**

Working in partnership with Paths for All, the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership deliver the Walk It a physical activity prevention programme that aims to:

- Work in partnership to reduce health inequalities
- Build peer support networks

- Improve the health and wellbeing of people with one or more long term health condition

Borders Wheels are funded to deliver the Walk It programme across the Scottish Borders and currently offers 48 Active Walks, led by 35 Walk Leaders, engaging 1,470 participants. Volunteer Walk Leaders are accredited to offer dementia friendly walks. An evaluation of the Walk It project has identified areas for further development which includes increasing participation for people living in areas of relative deprivation and adults aged 40-60.

Evidence based tools have been used to estimate NHS cost treatment savings over a ten-year period, this amounts to £374,796.24.

#### **Royal Environmental Institute for Health Food and Health Cooking Skills)**

The aim of the Royal Environmental Institute for Health Food and Health Cooking Skills course is to provide participants with basic cooking skills that increase knowledge, skills and confidence. The programme of courses is delivered to Community Justice Service groups, the outcomes of which are to:

- Increase basic food preparation skills
- Increase basic cooking and presentation skills
- Gain an awareness of food safety
- Gain an awareness of using safe and hygienic practices

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 5 courses were run with a total of 21 participants. After completing a minimum attendance of 6 hours participants are awarded a Royal Environmental Institute for Health Food and Health Cooking Skills certificate. The certification is intended to support employability and further career development.

**Equality Outcome 3** People at the heart of everything we do: Community engagement and empowerment across the Scottish Borders is inclusive, co-productive and fair

#### **Community Awareness**

Over the past 24 months, the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership's Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Strategic Lead has been working with the members of the Health and Social Care Partnership's Equality and Human Rights Subgroup to raise the awareness of people with lived and living experience of inequality of their right to be invited to influence and inform strategic and operational developments.

The members of the subgroup are drawn from wider networks, these are detailed below:

#### Ability Borders

Borders Additional Needs Group

Local Citizens Panels - Learning Disabled adults and their family / carers

Mental Health & Wellbeing Forum and wider lived experience network

Scottish Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

Scottish Borders LGBTQ+ Equality

Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership

The outcome of this has been the building and sustaining of relationships between staff working in services, which come under the delegated authority of the Integration Joint Board, and numerous community groups. The outcomes of this approach has been:

1. Continued willingness of people with the relevant lived experience to participate in impact assessments
2. Promotion of the recommendations developed to increase equality of opportunity for people experiencing inequality
3. Increased knowledge and understanding of the barriers faced by people who experience inequality
4. The development of a Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership's Diversity Directory

#### Diversity Directory

The Diversity Directory is produced and maintained by the Equality and Human Rights Subgroup and documents by protected characteristic and lived/living experience details of organisations who, after conversations with members of the Equality and Human Rights Subgroup, have agreed to participate in the impact assessment process by acting as a conduit to people using their services/organisations. The aim of which is to support staff contact the relevant organisations when sending invitations to participate in either impact assessments or the designing of communication/marketing/promotional materials. To date there 45 organisations listed in the Diversity Directory with more organisations expected to join in 2025. For ease of access the Diversity Directory is published on staff intranet sites.

#### National Care Service - Scottish Government Consultation Event Hawick

In direct response to an offer made by the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership to host a Scottish Borders specific event, the Scottish Government's lead for Embedding Rights and Equalities into the National Care Service Development, agreed to host a codesign event in Hawick on 26 September 2023 . The event consisted of two workshops:

1. Having my voice heard – Complaints Redress and Advocacy.
2. Realising rights and responsibilities

These workshops were organised to support the National Care Service Team meet with people with experience of accessing or delivering social care support.

The aim of the first workshop was to ask those in attendance to review what the Scottish Government had learnt from recent co-design work on complaints and independent advocacy and to start the conversation about how the issues identified could be addressed.

The aim of the second workshop was to develop a charter of rights, one that evidences what people can expect when they receive social care support in Scotland.

Invitations were coordinated by the Scottish Borders Independent Sector Lead and sent, by the Chief Officer, to people with lived experience of accessing or having difficulty accessing services and service, carers and organisations delivering services. Over 30 people attended each workshop, the largest attendance at any of the codesign events organised. The findings from the Hawick event were documented in a separate report.

#### **Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Conference 2024**

The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership held its inaugural Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Conference in June 2024. The conference was designed as a development & awareness raising event for members of the Integration Joint Board, Strategic Planning Group, the Health and Social Care Partnership's Senior Management Team, Joint Staff Forum and senior management teams.

The aims of the conference was to:

- Raise awareness of the Equality Duty, Human Rights Act 1998, the Socio Economic Duty and the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024
- Promote *the positive impact that Impact Assessments are having in relation to:*
  - Changing Cultures
  - Establishing Workstreams
  - Motivating people with lived experience to become involved in strategic and operational changes
- Engage senior managers in identifying where their services contribute to the delivery of the Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership's Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Framework.

The anticipated outcomes of the day were:

- Greater involvement of people with protected characteristics and lived experience in influencing and informing SBHSCP Policy and Practice developments
- Officers working in delegated services approach service planning from an equality and human rights dimension

- Greater understanding of the Equality Duty and other legal requirements
- Officers are fully aware of the new legal responsibility to consider the rights of the child
- All reports presented to the Joint Executive Team are accompanied by an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment
- Service Mangers routinely upload their contributions to the SBHSCP Equality Outcome and Mainstreaming Framework
- IJB continues to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Duty

In addition to presentations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Scottish Health and Social Care Partnership's journey so far in achieving compliance, officers were introduced to the requirement to report on their mainstreaming activities and the new requirements placed on them to consider the Rights of the Child when making decisions.

To support this further a number of lived experience workshops in the form of "an audience with" were run on the day. Officers and key partners on the day heard from the Scottish Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Neurodivergent Young Adults, Parent Carers, Young People and Borders LGBTQ+ Forum.

The workshops were specifically designed to support officers understand inequality and the benefit of involving people with the relevant lived and living experience.

Analysis of evaluation forms sent after the event evidenced that it was listening to the experiences of people with lived or living experience of inequality that had the most impact on the day.

#### **Local Citizen Panels**

The Scottish Borders Local Citizen Panels were reestablished in 2023. They are facilitated by Borders Care Voice and led by adults with a learning disability and their family carers. Using a collective advocacy model, they support improved co-production of health and social care. They are part of the governance structure of the Learning Disability Service.

#### **Borders Alcohol and Drugs Forum**

Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership took the decision to commission capacity to support Borders Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Lived Experience Forum and Borders Engagement Group (BEG) which is the Partnership's living experience group. Each Alcohol and Drug Partnership Board meeting receives an update on business/concerns from the Forum and Group. Supporting continued participation in the Forum and Borders Engagement Group enables the an Annual Analysis of Themes arising from Borders Engagement Group.

This change was required in recognition of the significant barriers individuals with lived experience of alcohol and drug use have faced to having their voices heard in policy and service development. The establishment of the Lived Experience Forum and the Borders Engagement Group has provided a platform for people to be involved

both locally and nationally and ensures the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) are able to hear the perspectives of those directly affected by substance use. This feedback is integrated into strategy, used to inform service design and service improvement via the undertaking of an Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment. The outcome of which is presented to the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Board. The Board is also accountable for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations which come out of an impact assessment. This approach not only evidences the Board's compliance with the Equality Duty it promotes inclusivity ensuring that services are designed to meet the diverse needs of people who experience inequality and stigma.

In addition the Lived Experience Forum and the Borders Engagement Group has significantly improved access to services for individuals affected by alcohol and drug use which includes a formal feedback process on experience of using services and initiatives. Including but not limited to the Residential Rehab Pathway, Injecting Equipment Provision Client Leaflet. As a result the Residential Rehab Pathway has seen an increase to 20 placements being approved in 23/24 compared with 5 in the previous year. Members of the forum and group have also participated in the development of the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership's Strategic Plan, the Scottish Government's Alcohol Marketing Consultation and the National Collaborative.

Communication between members of the Borders Engagement Group and staff working in delegated services, including mental health and homelessness services have improved with staff being able to respond directly to concerns raised. The direct engagement of people with lived experience ensures that issues are addressed promptly and effectively, further enhancing the accessibility and responsiveness of services.

**Equality Outcome 4** All staff fully understand their legal duties and other responsibilities in keeping people in the Scottish Borders safe and free from harm

### Human Trafficking

Following the conclusion of a 2 year pilot delivered in partnership with COSLA and the Scottish Government, Scottish Borders launched the learning from the implementation of an improved response to Human Trafficking in October 2024. The implementation of a First Responder Team, new multi-agency guidance, an e learning resource and a series of workforce development sessions was completed by a Scottish Borders Health and Social Partnership working group which included membership from local and national organisations such as TARA, Migrant Help and Just Right Scotland. A new referral pathway for Human Trafficking has now been established and the Human Trafficking Multi-Agency Guidance has been embedded into the Scottish Borders Adult Support and Protection Procedures and Child Protection Procedures. Workforce development activity included three levels of awareness raising/training delivered in person and online to enable all relevant organisations/services to develop an effective response to concerns or disclosures of human trafficking.

The online, national launch attracted over 150 delegates from across Scotland and resulted in a significant number of requests for the multi-agency guidance for adaptation in other Health and Social Care Partnership areas.

In using the information gathered by the National Crime Agency and other organisations awareness sessions were prioritised for the Alcohol and Drugs services and Border Women's Aid.

Discussions with the Scottish Government have commenced in relation to embedding a cross sector approach to eliminating human trafficking and exploitation. Locally this will be delivered via the Scottish Borders Integrated Workforce Plan. This will include exploring the establishment of an International Employers Network.

### **Gender Based Violence 16 Days of Activism**

#16DaysofAction is a world-wide movement, founded in 1991 by the Women's Global Leadership Institute, which begins on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and runs until International Human Rights Day. Supported by the Violence Against Women Partnership, it is an opportunity to encourage people across the Borders to play their part in helping to tackle violence against women and girls, as well as signposting to the advice, information and support that is available.

The Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership coproduced the Scottish Borders 16 Days of Activism 2024 programme of events which was circulated by each member of the Partnership in addition to a News release being issued, publication on the Scottish Borders Council website and a social media campaign. To support an effective social media campaign the Gender Based Violence and Public Protection webpages were updated and refreshed in partnership with organisations representing people with lived and living experience. Events in this year campaign included:

1. Reclaim the Night March – 6pm, Cornucopia, 4 Tower Dykeside, Hawick TD9 9EA
2. Women's Support Network joint workshop with Parental Employability Team to raise awareness of Commercial Sexual Exploitation.
3. Building Bridges: Commercial Sexual Exploitation online awareness session hosted by Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership and Women's Support Project. This event was open to frontline workers and support services and was of particular interest to those working in the sectors of violence against women; sexual health and relationships; addictions; mental health; housing; advice and support; criminal justice; public health; and social work. It will also provide context and focus for those in decision making roles of policy/practice.
4. "Don't be that Guy" – THAT GUY is a Police Scotland campaign which began in 2021. The campaign promotes the real difference men can make by taking a hard look at male attitudes and behaviours at home, at work and when out socialising with friends. The campaign is supported by a number of on line videos. The aims of which are to reduce rape, serious sexual assault and harassment. This is achieved by having frank conversations with men about attitudes and behaviours around women.
5. "Imagine a Scotland" a series of spotlight seminars covering, Safe and Together, Engaging with young people around online misogyny, Women's political representation, Children's voices in the court processes, Honour-based Abuse, Understanding domestic homicide, Exploring patterns and Promoting safeguarding
6. Raising awareness of the practical advice, information and emotional support available to male victims, their concerned friends, family and frontline workers.



7. Raising awareness of the disproportionate risk of experiencing domestic and other forms of abuse that disabled women face – disabled women are twice as likely to experience men's violence as non-disabled women.
8. Raising awareness that women and girls who have experienced domestic and other forms of abuse are more likely to experience poor mental health and at risk of having multiple mental health needs
9. Raising awareness of the greater economic inequality and poverty faced by women and children who experience domestic abuse and other form of abuse.
10. Raising awareness that over 50% of students have experienced sexual assault and or sexual harassment
11. Raising awareness of the additional barriers faced by women and girls living in remote or rural communities have in accessing services.

### **Forced Marriage**

Scottish Government launched new Forced Marriage Multi-agency guidance in October 2024: this is being discussed within Public Protection Committee in relation to development of local guidance for partner agencies

**Equality Outcome 5** All staff feel valued, respected and have their needs met appropriately

Returns Awaited

**Equality Outcome 6** A workforce that is reflective and representative of the communities we care for

### **Project Search**

Increased opportunities for rotations for Project Search Interns – Project Search and employability initiative for the following protected characteristics – Mental Health, Learning Disability, additional support needs and the Neurodivergent communities.

### **Experience Based Co-Design**

The Art Therapies service lead is undertaking a piece of research using Experience Based Co-Design to coproduce a training resource with people with learning disabilities. This to promote person-centred approaches within Social Care Teams. This work forms part of a professional doctorate with in the Joint Learning Disability Service and is hoped to be completed and rolled out by 2026.

Returns Awaited