



SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Q4 2024/25 (Jan 25 – Mar 25)

MILESTONES & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant communities



Good health and wellbeing



Working together improving lives

Introduction

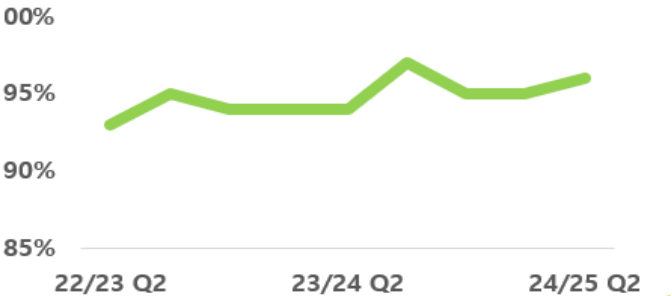


This is the Quarter 4 (January 25 – March 25) Performance Report for the 2024/25 Council Plan. It presents the Council’s progress against the Key Milestones set out for Quarter4and provides an update on the Council’s Performance Indicators. The report is structured into the 6 themes of the Council Plan.

For each theme the progress against key milestones is shown alongside the desired outcome or outcomes that it is contributing towards. Detail is then provided on the theme’s performance indicators that are noted as being particularly positive, or areas of focus for improvement. All performance indicators are then summarised in a table, with the progress of each indicator identified as either positive, neutral, focus for improvement or for information only. Further detail on each indicator can be found in the Public Performance Dashboard on our website: [Our performance as a Council: 2018-19 onwards | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](#)

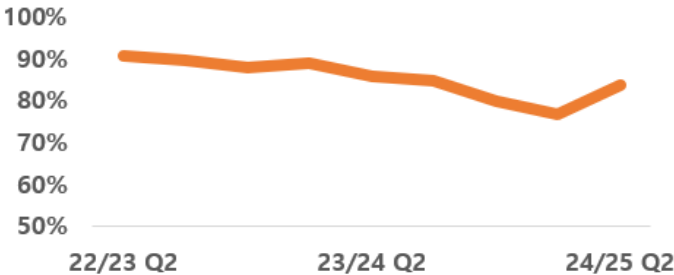
Indicators which indicate an **excellent** position are shown in charts coloured in **bright green** and show a star ★

The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days **remains consistent** and has remained **above 90%** for the last 4 financial years ★



Indicators showing a notable **reduction** in performance, or where there is a **focus for improvement** are shown in charts coloured in **orange**

The percentage of **FOI Requests Completed on Time** has increased over **Q2** but further action needs still to take place in order to meet the **target of 90%**



Performance Indicators Key

★ Excellent	There has been a notable improvement, or the data indicates an excellent position
● Positive/ Satisfactory	There has been no significant change since the previous review, and progress is positive or satisfactory
● Focus for Improvement	There has been a notable reduction in performance, or the data suggests a position that we will be focusing on for improvement
í Information only	The indicator shows data for information purposes only

Changes in this Quarter



Change of indicator name

There has been a change of name for 5 Indicators in Q4 to allow for better explanation of the data presented.

Existing Title	Proposed New Title
Council Tax Valuation List – Time Taken to add new properties to the list	Council Tax Valuation List - Percentage of New Properties added to the list within 0-3 months
Valuation Roll (Non-Domestic) – Time taken to amend the valuation roll to reflect new, altered or demolished properties	Valuation Roll (Non Domestic) – Percentage of new, altered or demolished properties amended on the valuation roll within 0-3 months
Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Maj Dev - ADJUSTED (cumulative)	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Maj Dev (cumulative)
Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (non-householder) - ADJUSTED (cumulative)	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (non-householder) (cumulative)
Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (householder) - ADJUSTED (cumulative)	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (householder) (cumulative)

These indicators can all be found in the **Working Together, Improving Lives** section of the report.

Updated performance indicator values:

There are 5 indicators where data reported in the Q2 or Q3 report has since been updated. This update has also been made in the public dashboard the annual report. The indicator is:

Clean Green Future

- Electricity Consumption (kWh) – the figure has updated from 2,972,513 to **17,012,162**
- Gas Consumption (kWh) - the figure has updated from 2,624,163 to **25,365,556**
- LPG (kWh) - the figure has updated from 37,296 to **520,666**
- Biomass (kWh) - the figure has updated from 169,216 to **1,021,407**

The status has not changed for these indicators. A quarterly figure had been reported in Q2 rather than a rolling average figure.

Good Health and Wellbeing

- Additional homes provided affordable to people in the Borders, based on our wages – the Q3 figure has been updated from 12 to **4**

The status has not changed for this indicator. There has been a change in the data that was provided for the report.

Change in data collection method:

Good Health and Wellbeing

- Number of Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) held about a child is now collected via a different method.

The change has resulted in an increase in the Q4 data increasing, however the service is satisfied that the performance remains stable and the change in reporting provides more accurate data.

Summary



Fulfilling our Potential



Work is required on increasing the proportion of all school leavers and all care experienced school leavers attaining SCQF Level 5 qualifications.

SBC is increasing the number of school leavers going on to a positive destination and a Respectful Relationships & Anti-Bullying Policy has been implemented.

Progress has been made on improving outcomes for children and young people with Additional Support Needs, developing an SBC outdoor learning strategy and increasing service delivery and resource allocation at cluster level.

Strong Inclusive Economy, Transport and Infrastructure



Progress has been made on delivering a new Events and Tourism Strategy and maximising digital investment.

SBC has been working with partners on areas such as the Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal, Active Travel Delivery Plan and the Local Employability Partnership.

Funding has been secured for the Business Case and Feasibility work for the extension of the Borders Railway from Tweedbank to Hawick and Carlisle with a senior project manager also appointed to this.

Work needs to be undertaken on implementing taxi-bus pilots across the region.

Summary



Empowered Vibrant Communities

Communities have been supported in terms of developing place plans, community-led plans, associated investment plans and asset transfers. Financial support to community councils was increased as were available resources for festivals across the region.

Work was undertaken on the delivery of more homes across the region. In addition, a review of the council's estate has been taking place along with a refresh of the SBC Website.

A number of activities have taken place to ensure a successful vote for Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) was undertaken. The MSYPs who were voted into office have been supported in their role.



Working Together, Improving Lives

SBC have undertaken process redesigns ahead of implementing digitally enabled solutions into services across the council.

The implementation of the Estate Rationalisation, Optimisation and Decarbonisation Programme (ROD) has established sound governance for review, modernisation and consolidation of SBC's estate.

External consultants have developed proposals for the financial stability of Live Borders.



Summary



Good Health and Wellbeing



SBC has undertaken work on a strategic plan for young People and adults and also a new approach for the future delivery of care at home services is being developed.

A Strategic Commissioning Board has been established and is currently covering 3 directorates with a view to covering the remaining 4 directorates with similar governance arrangements.

Performance Indicators

Of the 102 indicators presented, 58 are in a good position of which 10 are excellent. 18 are highlighted as areas of focus for improvement and there are 26 information only figures which provide context to some of the performance indicators also shown in the report.

Clean Green Future

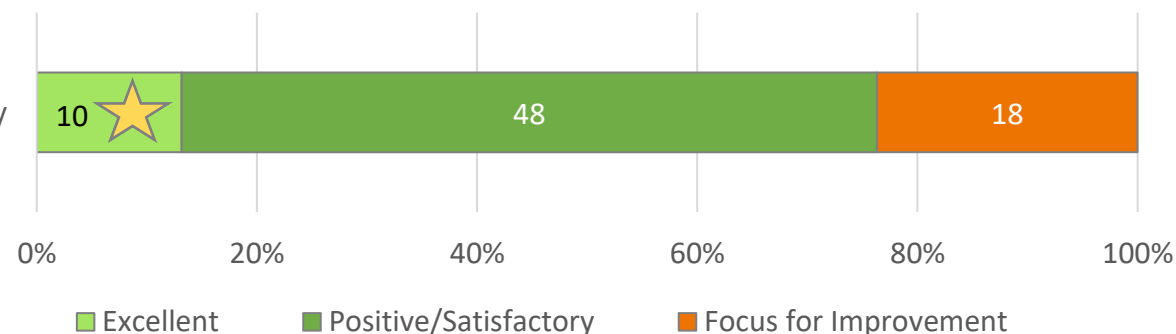


There has been progress made on Flood Prevention, wildflower sites and the reduction of greenhouse gasses.

In-cab technology for the Waste Collection Fleet is being introduced and SBC is working with partners in several areas including Net Zero, climate risk and the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

A number of Energy Efficiency Strategy Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS) have been undertaken and work continues on the Borderlands Energy Programme.

Indicator Summary



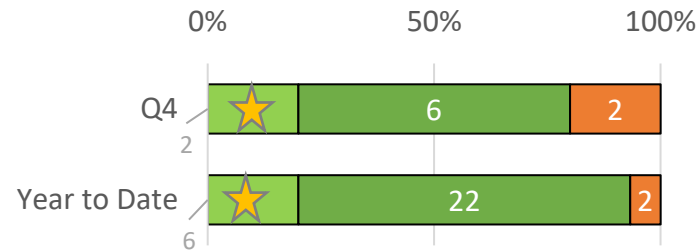
Summary of Performance Year to Date



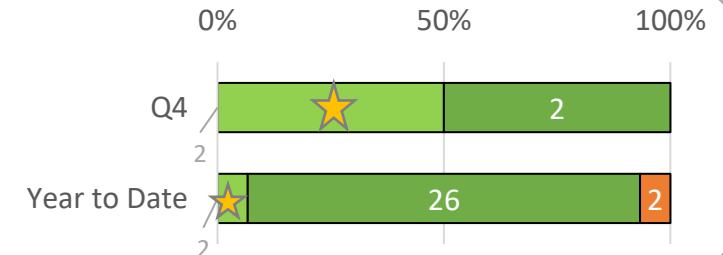
In the Summary of Performance Indicators, bright green with a star shows areas where performance has been excellent, green reflects areas that are positive/satisfactory and orange indicates performance levels that are a focus for improvement.



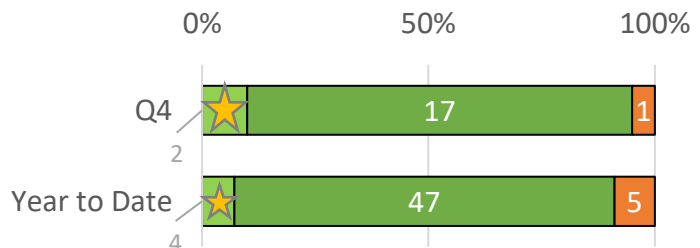
Clean, green future



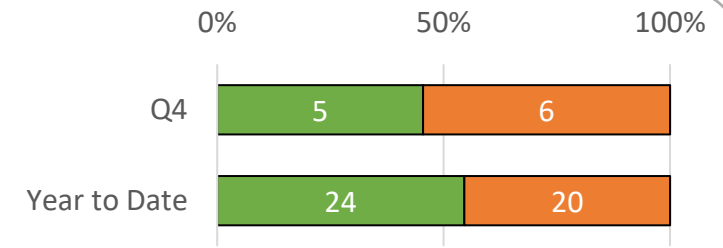
Empowered, vibrant communities



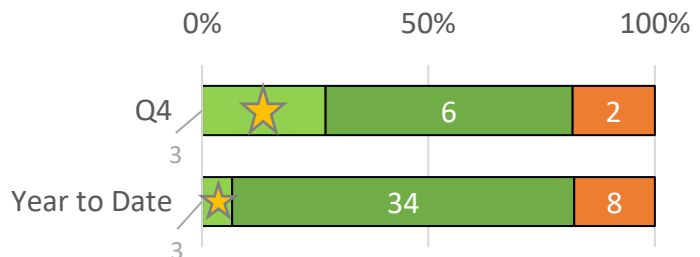
Fulfilling our potential



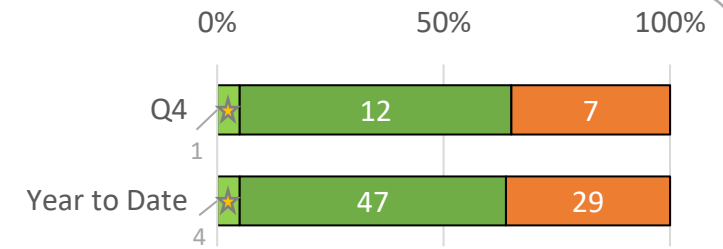
Good health and wellbeing



Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure



Working together improving lives



CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Ensure the Council is on track to meet its emissions targets comprising:

- › An organisational target of Net Zero by 2045
- › A 20% reduction in fleet fossil fuel (petrol, diesel) consumption and a 20% reduction in business mileage where employees use their own car for work by 2024-2025
- › Develop a plan to address direct emissions associated with the Council's estate by 30 November 2024

SBC's operational **carbon emissions** for 2023/24 have **increased slightly** by 1.3% on 2022/23 but **emissions** have stayed **relatively consistent** over the **last 3 years**



Further work required to **reduce key emission sources**

aggregating to inform overall emissions trajectory % subsequent progress to 2045 target



It is anticipated that **SBC's emissions** will **increase** as future mandatory reporting requires **further** emissions **sources** to be reported



Retrofitting properties of varying age, condition & energy efficiency standard is **challenging** especially in times of **financial constraint**



SBC is developing a **decarbonisation approach** for its operational estate focusing on direct emissions relating to heat



This will be developed by **June 2025** & will sit alongside SBC's **property rationalisation and optimisation programmes**

The decarbonisation approach is overseen by the **Member Officer Working Group for Estates**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to meet or exceed our targets to deliver Net Zero by 2045

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Working with Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region partners, complete a regional climate risk and opportunity assessment to include the Borders Economy and Infrastructure

Phase 1 of the regional **Climate Ready South East Scotland Project** is nearing completion



Proposals for **Phase 2** to develop regional & local priority adaption actions are **being defined**



Evidence was **gathered** of lived climate change impacts experiences



Assessments completed are:

- Economic impact assessment
- Coastal change assessments



Details for **governance** of a **regional partnership** is dependent on **additional funding**



Working on a partnership basis within the South of Scotland and within the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership, develop a South of Scotland route map to Net Zero with a focus on an initial 5-year action plan, and a complementary Scottish Borders regional approach to delivering emissions mitigation and climate-ready region

SBC set an **organisational emissions boundary** in **2023**

showed that greatest emissions were from buildings & vehicle fleet

SBC is working with partners on **regional climate resilience projects** for example: South East Scotland Regional Energy Masterplan



SBC working to **identify key priorities** within these services areas



Current focus for detailed planning is within the **Council Estates service**

Working with partners, SBC continues to **develop ClimateView IT platform capability** for **identifying & developing** Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions **mitigation** projects within the Scottish Borders



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services and infrastructure that are ready to meet the needs of our communities in the face of climate change and extreme weather events

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to meet or exceed our targets to deliver Net Zero by 2045

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Protect and increase the resilience of communities and infrastructure from climate change and extreme weather events through:

- › Delivery of flood protection and coastal change/adaptation schemes (Individual schemes are set out within the Localities Section of this Council Plan)
- › Increasing the number and supporting development of active Community Resilience Plans
- › Maximising the numbers of individuals signed up to SB Alerts

Whole Catchment flood studies for **Jedburgh & Bonchester Bridge** underway to assess and mitigate **future flood risk**



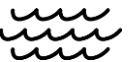
Sea wall at **Lower Burnmouth** is being **repaired** following recent storm damage



Coastal Flood Study at **Lower Burnmouth** looking at **coastal flood risk** and **impacts of climate change** along with possible mitigation options



SBC in final phase of **Coastal Change Adaptation Plan**



This details triggers & adaptive pathways for future **coastline management**

SBC publish a **Resilient Community Group newsletter** twice a year which:

- shares updated information
- ideas from groups to encourage adoption of best practice and cooperation



All groups have their **plan template** which was **updated** & re-issued in 2024



Each Autumn the **Resilient Community Group Coordinators** are invited to **training** at SBC HQ



766 new SB Alert users were **registered** during the period, driven by parent/carers communication & Storm Eowyn in January



Significant **increase** in total **registered users** of **SBC Alerts** in the Q4



18 alerts were **issued** in Q4



42 recipients rated the alerts which was an **average rating** of **4.58/5**

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services and infrastructure that are ready to meet the needs of our communities in the face of climate change and extreme weather events

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Progress 'in-cab' technology for waste services, and a trade waste database to help make better informed decisions to support more efficient and effective service delivery

Trade Waste Database went live in **April 2025** ✓

Contract documents are now **emailed to customers** & **removes the need** to send documents via **post**



New **in-cab technology** for domestic waste collecting to be set up **April/May 2025** with Domestic Collective

Expect to **go live** with Collective & In-cab in **late summer**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services and infrastructure that are ready to meet the needs of our communities in the face of climate change and extreme weather events

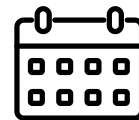
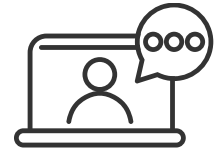
Pilot the 'Recollect' web service and app to help the public to reduce, reuse and recycle by clarifying what can be reused or recycled, while providing notifications and bin collection dates

Introduced in **June 2024** for a **1 year trial**



Allows users to:

- Search by **material type** – using the correct bin
- Get their **collection calendar**
- Sign up for **collection reminders**
- Register for **service updates** e.g. disruptions or cancellations



Good uptake by customers:

- 170,217 **views of the calendar**
- 25.5% of households have **viewed their calendar**
- 7,861 users have **printed their calendar**
- 1,238 users have **signed up to collection reminders**

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Positive behaviour change which supports sustainable use of resources and increased community resilience

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Support the development of a Scottish Borders Climate Action Network of organisations and individuals to stimulate community action on climate resilience and greenhouse gas emissions reduction

Scottish Borders Climate Action Network (**SBCAN**) is the **Climate Action Hub for the Borders**, part of a national network of Hubs funded by the **Scottish Government**



Network **supports climate action** by:

- building awareness
- supporting groups & projects
- facilitating networking
- providing training
- administering small grants

SBCAN was **established early 2024** & is supported by a **team of 3 officers**



SBCAN works across a **range** of **themes** including:

- active travel
- circular economy
- energy
- food
- health & wellbeing



SBCAN is hosted by the **Southern Uplands Partnership**



SBCAN team **works** on initiatives around **energy efficiency** & **climate resilience** with a range of **partner organisations** including:

- SBC
- NHS Borders
- SoSE



More information can be found at **SBCAN website** www.SBCAN.co.uk



Submit Borderlands Business Cases to UK and Scottish Governments to support delivery of 6 Natural Capital pilot projects which aim to demonstrate innovation in land use management in the South of Scotland

4 of the **6** pilot projects have **submitted Business Cases** to Scottish Government, with **2** of these having **gained approval**



Agri-Environment Grassland Management Project is led by SBC and is being delivered by **Butterfly Conservation** with a full-time project officer leading activity



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Positive behaviour change which supports sustainable use of resources and increased community resilience

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Protected, managed and restored environments which support the wellbeing of people and nature

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Deliver retrofit insulation and renewable heat systems to homes in the Scottish Borders under Energy Efficient Scotland Area-Based Schemes

A number of activities around **Energy Efficiency Strategy Area Based Schemes (EES:ABS)**

- **3** Borders **Pupils** attended **Changeworks** Work Experience Week in **October 2024**
- **Successful installation** of Solar photovoltaic panels to **50 households** by Union technical Services
- **Defibrillator installed** in **Eyemouth** by Union Technical Services
- **Air Source Heat Pump** installations in Hawick, Selkirk & Earlston
- **21 households** had **internal wall installations** by BCA Ltd
- **Power Washer** provided by BCA Ltd to **Selkirk Community Council**
- **Further developments** of Energy Efficiency Scotland Area Based Scheme being **considered** this year



Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (**LHEES**) was published in **June 2024**



Several **feasibility & retrofit** potential projects are **underway**



Heat Network* scoping & **prospectus** around potential developed



ECOFlex Service** was introduced in **April 2024**

- **152** eligible household declarations
- **55** Installations of renewable & insulation measures up to **Dec 24**
- **Value** of works is **£915,543.00**
- **Savings** of **£71,658.00** on Annual Fuel Bill
- Annual Carbon **Savings** of **336 tons**



* Heat Network is a heating system that links properties together from a central energy centre rather than having individual heating units in properties

** ECOFlex is the continuation of a UK Government scheme that supports vulnerable households with energy efficiency improvements for their home

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- An approach to energy in the Scottish Borders which is robust, affordable and does not contribute to climate change.

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Identify and facilitate a pilot programme of local energy investment opportunities for the Scottish Borders which can be progressed within the Borderlands Energy Masterplan

Borderlands Energy Programme is part of the **Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal**

Borderlands Energy Programme aims to:

- capitalise on the **green credentials** of the Borderlands region
- facilitate **decarbonisation**
- facilitate the creation of **new high value jobs** supporting **low carbon energy generation** and **carbon reduction schemes**



EOIs will now be **assessed** against the **Energy Programme's Investment Objectives**, e.g.:

- Creation of **Green jobs**
- Supporting **Carbon Reduction**
- Capital investments that support **delivery of Green skills**
- Reduce **Fuel Poverty**
- Enhancing **Energy Security and Resilience**
- Attract **inward investment**



Expressions of Interest ran from **November 2024 - February 2025** to allocate £29.9m capital resources for pilot projects within the Borderlands Energy Investment Programme



Projects will be **approved** by the **Borderlands Partnership Board** in **May 2025**



Projects will **start** by end of **June 2026** and will be **completed** by end **December 2029**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- An approach to energy in the Scottish Borders which is robust, affordable and does not contribute to climate change

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Establish and expand wildflower sites to enhance and increase biodiversity and help connect people with nature

Grass Management Pilot was delivered at:

- 12 sites in Berwickshire
- 7 sites in Eildon
- 7 sites in Teviot and Liddesdale

This totalled **5 Hectares (Ha)**



Since 2018 SBC has **increased** the amount of **greenspace** managed for **nature** by **49%**



SBC undertook the **recording of grassland flora species** at **11 sites** to create site baseline data



44 Hectares of **public greenspace** was managed for **local biodiversity**



At the end of the season:

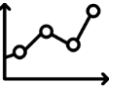
- the Pilot was **reviewed**
- stakeholders **engaged**
- new season planting **undertaken**



SBC ran a pilot **"Trees in Classrooms"** project collecting & planting acorns with **Kingsland Primary school** & **Greener Peebles**



SBC has **increased** the amount of greenspace managed for **biodiversity** by **38%** since **2023**



51 sites across the Scottish Borders were enhanced in 2024 with a variety of **wildflower mixes**, totalling just over 3Ha

"Pollinators Along The Tweed" Partnership with **Tweed Forum** & **Buglife** continued with practical works & volunteering opportunities to **create wildflower areas** at 8 sites in Tweeddale totalling 2.3 Ha



Site visits, habitat planning, ground preparations and seed sowing was completed at **6 wildflower sites in Kelso**, totalling 1.2Ha



Data being developed into a **citizen science project for school & community groups** to "adopt" a grassy area & record key indicator species throughout the seasons



SBC participated in Plantlife's **"No Mow May" campaign** across the Scottish Borders. **10 sites** were included in the campaign, totalling **1.4Ha**

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Protected, managed and restored environments which support the wellbeing of people and nature

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



Together with partners, continue to deliver against targets set out within the Scottish Borders Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-2028

Majority of actions set out in the LBAP **run until 2028** so not due for review until then



Of the **43 actions** that were due for **review** in **2023**:

- 37% are ongoing (as anticipated)
- 28% have been achieved & are being maintained
- 18% are anticipated to be removed or have no data to report
- 12% will likely be replaced/amended
- 5% have been completed



An **additional £106,000** was secured by SBC & Tweed Forum through the Competitive strand of the Nature Restoration Fund to **deliver freshwater restoration & habitat connectivity** work in the **upper Leader Water** Catchment (north of Lauder)



Between **2021** and **2024**, SBC received **£609,000** through the "Edinburgh Process" strand of the **Scottish Government Nature Restoration Fund**, which was used to support various projects which align with the LBAP

A **report** on actions due for review in 2023 will be **available** on the **SBC website** from the **end of May** at the latest



Nature Restoration Fund money was **allocated** to **projects** such as:

- habitat enhancements at Gunsknowe Loch in Tweedbank (managed by the Parks & Environment Team)
- the black grouse recovery project (led by RSPB)
- tree planting at Talla & Gameshope (Borders Forest Trust)
- control of Non-Native Invasive Species throughout the Council area (Tweed Forum)



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Protected, managed and restored environments which support the wellbeing of people and nature

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



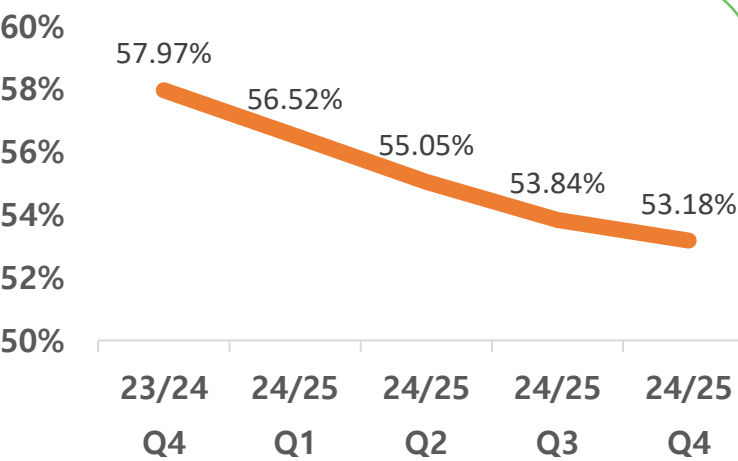
Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Waste	Annual Household Recycling Rate	53.18%	●	Quarterly
	Annual Household Waste Landfilled Rate	2.69%	●	Quarterly
	Annual Household Waste to Other Treatment	44.13%	●	Quarterly
	Annual Average Community Recycling Centre Recycling Rate	72.99%	●	Quarterly
Property	Electricity Consumption kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	16,204,620	●	6 Monthly
	Gas Consumption kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	25,189,815	●	6 Monthly
	Water Consumption m3 <i>(annual rolling)</i>	171,251	★	6 Monthly
	Oil Consumption <i>(annual rolling)</i>	3,924,664	●	6 Monthly
	LPG kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	485,655	★	6 Monthly
	Biomass kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	739,999	●	6 Monthly

CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

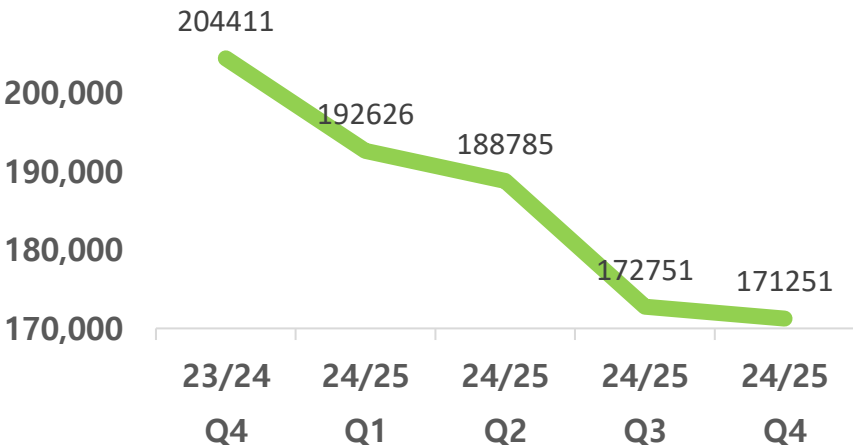
PRIORITY: Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



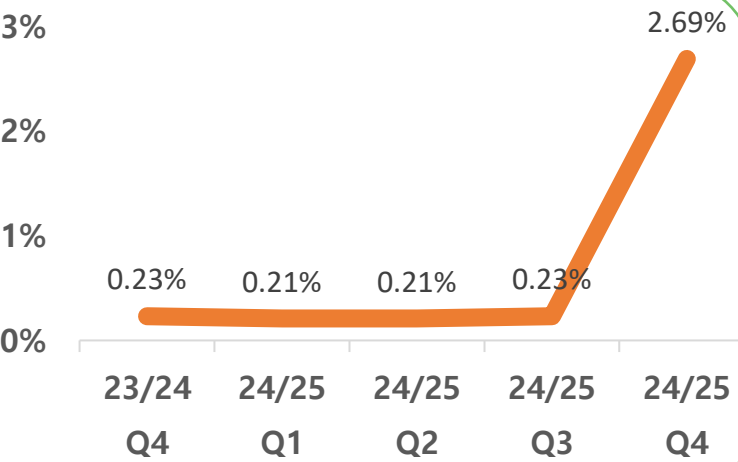
The Annual Household Recycling Rate has **reduced** in Q4 and is now a **Focus For Improvement**. This decrease had been expected due to new legislation around the change of treatment of upholstered domestic seating.



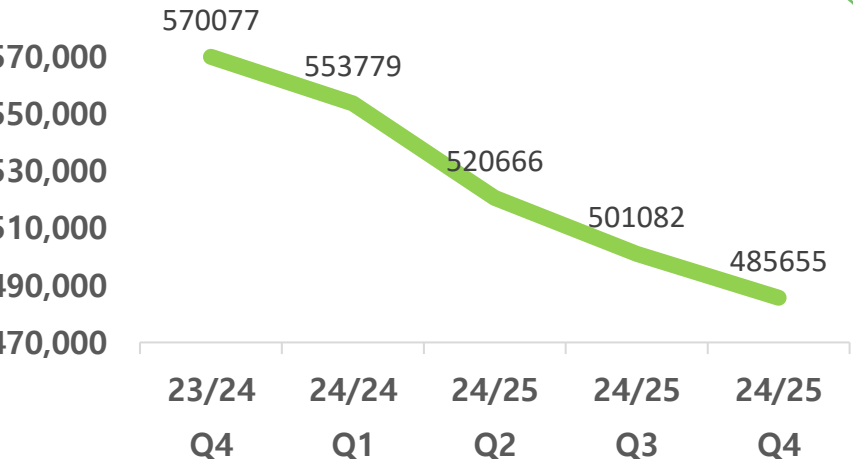
Water Consumption (m3) has **performed well** in Q4 and is marked as being in an **Excellent** position.



The Annual Household Waste Landfilled Rate has **increased** in Q4 and is now a **Focus For Improvement**. This decrease had been expected due to new legislation around the change of treatment of upholstered domestic seating.



LPG (KWh) has **performed well** in Q4 and is marked as being in an **Excellent** position.



FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



Increase the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more awards at SCQF level 5 and 6 (originally due for reporting in Quarter 3)

✓ SCQF Level 6 (Advanced Higher or equivalent)

62.8% of leavers in 2023-24 achieved one or more awards at SCQF Level 6.

This is:

- a **slight improvement** on **62.0%** in **2022-23**
- **2.7% lower** than our **virtual national comparator**



Virtual comparator is a sample group of pupils from other parts of Scotland who have similar characteristics to the young people in the school

✗ SCQF Level 5 (Higher or equivalent)

85.9% of leavers in 2023-24 achieved 1 or more awards at SCQF Level 5.

This is:

- **in line** with performance in **2022-23**
- **in line** with our **virtual national comparator**

Increase the attendance of care experienced learners in primary and secondary schools and the proportion of care experienced school leavers attaining 5 or more awards at any SCQF level (originally due for reporting in Quarter 3)

16 Care Experienced (CE) leavers in 2023-24



Of those:

- **43.8%** achieved **5 or more** awards at any level
- **43.8%** attained **at least one** SCQF Level 5 award, a **decline** from 58.3% in **2022/23**
- **None** attained SCQF **Level 6**, a **decline** from 25.0% in **2022/23**

Current tracking data shows that 72.9% of the 2024/25 cohort are on track or have already achieved Level 5, while 47.7% are on track or have achieved Level 6



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment through improved inclusion, equity and wellbeing for all children and young people

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



Sustain the percentage of school leavers entering a positive destination

97% of leavers in 2023-24 went onto a **positive destination** ✓

- **35.5%** went onto **higher education**, an **increase** from 2022-23
- **29.4%** went into **employment**, a small **decrease** from 2022-23
- **24.9%** went on **Further Education**, **similar** to 2022-23.
- **6.2%** went on **further training**, an **increase** from 2022-23



 Employment includes modern and graduate apprenticeships

Percentage of leavers is greater than SBC's national virtual comparator & the **highest for 5 years**



Partnership working & **14+ Framework** meetings **supports** young people to a **positive destination**, especially for those with barriers such as **poverty** and **ASN**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment in literacy and numeracy closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged

Implement the Respectful Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policy across all schools and settings

Respectful Relationships & Anti-bullying policy **been operational** within all Scottish Borders schools for the **past 18 months** ✓

Bullying or alleged bullying issues are **recorded** through the **Bullying & Equalities module** on **SEEMiS**



Scottish Government's **Respect For All** initiative issued **new guidance** at the end of 2024 which will require SBC to **update the policy** & the resources associated with it



Following this update, information will be **circulated to all stakeholders again**



Work has **started** & due to be **completed** by end of **May 2025**



Schools will **redo** their **statement** linked to the policy



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment through improved inclusion, equity and wellbeing for all children and young people.

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



Improve outcomes for children and young people with Additional Support Needs by reviewing our processes and systems for allocations of resources, as well as our staffing structure to maximise partnership working

The process of **auditing individual pupil need** within **SEEMiS** is being **piloted**



View to **allocating resources** to **each cluster based** on **ASN need**

SBC are exploring the concept of a **Pupil Support Team** around each cluster, to ensure that **pupil needs are anticipated and addressed at a local level**



#SBCWay for Inclusion is currently under development, focusing on **five core areas for professional learning and development:**

- Supporting Neurodivergence
- Nurture
- Anxiety
- Resilience
- Trauma, Loss and Change



SBC is **reviewing current systems & processes** used to allocate central resources, particularly for **young people with severe and complex needs**



Increased staffing has been allocated to the **Educational Psychology Service** to **strengthen capacity and improve outcomes** for children and young people with additional support needs



Formalisation of the role of **Cluster Lead Headteacher** is underway to **maximise opportunities for partnership working** across education and other services, improving both **systemic approaches & individualised family support**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment through improved inclusion, equity and wellbeing for all children and young people

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



Develop a SBC Outdoor learning Strategy to ensure that children and young people in Borders Schools benefit from a consistent and high-quality wellbeing-focused approach to outdoor play and activity

Learning for Sustainability teacher appointed in **May 2024**

An **Outdoor Learning Strategy** was identified as part of new remit



Outdoor Learning Working Group established in **September 2024**



task of drafting guidance for schools & settings on effective practice

First draft of guidance shared with wider education members in **January 2025**



Second draft of guidance shared with **quality improvement officers** for review in **March 2025**



Increase service delivery and resource allocation at cluster level to ensure that decision-making sits at the heart of the community, notably, ensure that Early Learning and Childcare is embedded into a local delivery model

Progress being made within overall cluster delivery model which sets parameters for localised delivery

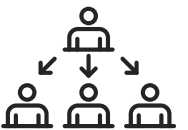


Comprehensive review of Early Years provision took place & **recommendations** for **Communities of Practice** are being **considered & implemented**



Ways to **increase** service **delivery** & **resource** allocation at **cluster** level include:

- **broadening remit** of Early Years centres within wider cluster
- **deploying** Early Years Teacher Teams using cluster-based model
- ensuring there is a **range** of Early Learning & Childcare **options** available
- for each cluster



Work will have **progressed** by **start of new academic year**, ensuring that decisions & changes are well evidenced



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment through improved inclusion, equity and wellbeing for all children and young people

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Raise attainment through improved inclusion, equity and wellbeing for all children and young people.

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Education	Average primary school attendance rate	94%	★	Quarterly
	Average secondary school attendance rate	90%	●	Quarterly
	Average primary and secondary school attendance rate	92%	★	Quarterly
	Number of Exclusion Incidents – Primary Schools	12	●	Quarterly
	How many primary school pupils were excluded?	11	●	Quarterly
	Number of Exclusion Incidents - Secondary Schools	19	●	Quarterly
	How many secondary school pupils were excluded?	19	●	Quarterly
	Number of Exclusion Incidents – Primary and Secondary Schools	31	●	Quarterly
	How many primary and secondary school pupils were excluded?	30	●	Quarterly
	Number of Schools/Nurseries inspected per Quarter	2	í	Quarterly
Modern Apprentices	New Modern Apprentices employed by SBC	14	●	Quarterly
	Current Modern Apprentices employed within SBC	25	●	Quarterly
	Modern Apprentices securing SBC employment after apprenticeship Cumulative Year to Date	16	●	Quarterly

Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement í Information only

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower communities and schools to deliver a high quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children and families



Service	Indicator	24/25	Status
Community Learning & Development	Participation – Number of Learners	562	●
	Participation - Number of learning programmes delivered	669	●
	Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Increased employability	57	●
	Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Increased health and wellbeing	187	●
	Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Increased skills	132	●
	Achievement - Number of learning programmes that lead to outcomes of: Family outcomes	99	●
	Progression - Number of learning programmes that lead to: Progression to employment, further learning, volunteering or participation in a community activity	151	●
	Progression - Number of learning programmes that lead to: Accreditation (nationally recognised)	134	●

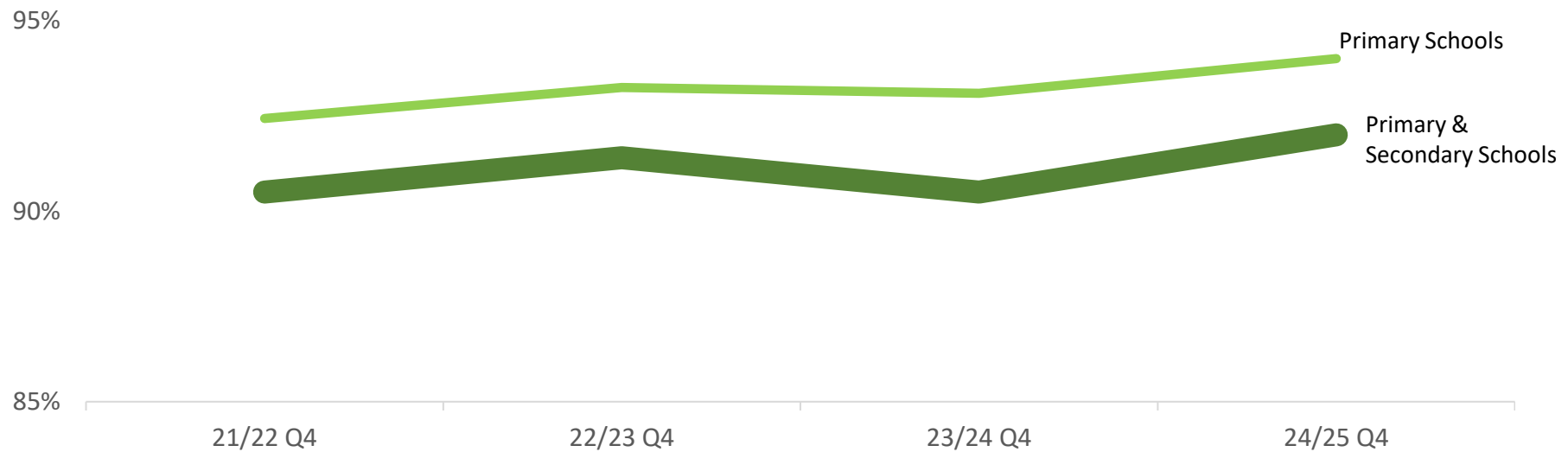
Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement ⓘ Information only

FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

PRIORITY: Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



School attendance across both Primary School and the total of Primary and Secondary schools has **increased** over the same quarter in the past 4 years. The attendance in both **Primary Schools** and **Secondary Schools** is seen as **Excellent**.



STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PRIORITY: Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy**, **Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal** and **Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



Deliver a new Events and Tourism Strategy across 2024, informed by the South of Scotland (SoS) Responsible Tourism Strategy, the SoS Cycling Strategy, and Regional Events Strategy

Our ambition is to:

- have an outstanding events portfolio with strong Scottish Borders content and a higher proportion of home-grown events
- Develop more quality events of an international and national standing
- Develop the Scottish Borders into a year-long tourism and events destination



Event impact study was completed in 2024, highlights **financial, social & community wellbeing benefits** of events in Scottish Borders

More information can be found here:

[Item No. 7 - Appendix 1 - Final Draft - Scottish Borders ESR v10 July 24.pdf](#)



Tourism products have been/are being developed, including:

- "Destination Tweed" which promotes the 113-mile River Tweed Trail
- Stranraer to Eyemouth Coast to Coast cycle route

More information can be found here: [The Kirkpatrick C2C, South of Scotland's Coast to Coast | South of Scotland - Scotland Starts Here](#)



The **South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy and Action Plan** was launched 1 year ago to create **Scotland's fastest-growing visitor economy**



SBC Events & Tourism strategy reflects the new **National Events Strategy** launched in 2024 to support a dynamic events industry

More information can be found on the Visit Scotland website: [Scotland's National Events Strategy | VisitScotland.org](#)

SBC's strategy is supported by regional Destination Marketing Organisation

SSDA Quarterly reports are published on the South of Scotland

Regional Economic Partnership site

More information can be found here: [Tourism Strategy | South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership](#)



SBC is leveraging the prestigious **Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI)** accolade recognising the Borders as a **"UCI Bike Region"**



Screen Strategy under development for possible launch in **June 2025**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- A stronger, greener, more inclusive economy, which promotes the wellbeing of our residents and revitalises our town centres, ensuring that local businesses and social enterprises thrive

STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PRIORITY: Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy**, **Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal** and **Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



Develop a Local Access and Transport Strategy and Active Travel Delivery Plan, informed by the SoS Cycling Strategy, with the overarching aspiration being a fully integrated transport system between bus, rail and other transport modes across the region, supporting integration into bus and rail

Active Travel Strategy and Delivery Plan to be taken to Council in **May** for consideration by Elected Members



The approved Strategy will then go out to **public consultation**



Local Access and Transport Strategy is the umbrella document for the **Active Travel Strategy and Delivery Plan**, a **key priority** for Scottish Government

Working with Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region, support the development of a proposal for a Regional Intelligence Hub to develop data, analytical insights and expertise to support inclusive and evidence-informed policy-making on a regional scale

The **Edinburgh & South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee** published their annual report in **June 2024**



The **Regional Economic Policy Advisory Group** recommended in December 2022 that a suite of **Regional Intelligence Hubs** should be developed and these would be closely aligned with the **Regional Prosperity Framework (RPF)**



The **University of Edinburgh & Smart Data Foundry** developed a proposition for establishing a **pilot Regional Intelligence Hub**, in consultation with the Elected Members Oversight Committee



No further progress has been noted since then, and the Regional Intelligence Hub remains an **aspirational proposal on hold**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhance digital and transport connectivity

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- A stronger, greener, more inclusive economy, which promotes the wellbeing of our residents and revitalises our town centres, ensuring that local businesses and social enterprises thrive

STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PRIORITY: Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy**, **Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal** and **Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



Promote Community Wealth Building by maximising community benefits and enabling local businesses to access the opportunities offered by the Council's procurement programme, as part of a refreshed 2024/2025 Corporate Procurement Strategy; and by pursuing community benefits opportunities arising from onshore wind in conjunction with partners

SBC aims to develop a strategic approach to community wealth building (CWB) in the Borders



In the last quarter SBC met and linked in with **Improvement Service Scotland** to get a **blueprint for developing a strategy and action plan**



SBC is linked in with the **Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES)** for local support



Next steps involve an **outline roadmap of key steps** to be taken with a **CWB oversight group**



Develop the Levelling Up Partnership, totalling £20m, in collaboration with UK and Scottish Governments to identify key investment opportunities within the region

SBC worked with UK Govt officials to carry out **stakeholder engagement across the region** to produce a **list of projects** that would provide a positive economic impact and benefits for communities



The **business case** was completed in December 2024 and **approved in January 2025**



Three investment themes were agreed:

- Underlying causes of **poor market supply**
- Addressing **inequalities**
- Improving **physical connectivity**



The **memorandum of understanding** was signed in **February 2025** for receipt of **£20m in April 2025** to deliver the agreed project list



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- A stronger, greener, more inclusive economy, which promotes the wellbeing of our residents and revitalises our town centres, ensuring that local businesses and social enterprises thrive

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Implement our Digital Strategy and action plan, in collaboration with regional partners, maximising digital investment opportunities for the Borders to include areas lacking 4G coverage and promotion of 5G in connection with the Destination Tweed project, thus supporting our ambition of becoming a Smart Rural Region

National programmes for the **Shared Rural Network** & **R100*** continue to deliver rollout of **mobile network connectivity** & **fibre broadband**



5G Innovation Region project is being delivered along a section of **Destination Tweed at Tweedsmuir** & nearing installation



This will serve as a model to understand how similar technology can be deployed across a Smart Rural Region

First round of procurement for **Project Gigabit**** was concluded in March 2025 for the Scottish Borders



Contractors **Go Fibre** estimate that **11,000 homes and businesses** across the Scottish Borders and East Lothian will benefit



*R100 (Reaching 100) is the Scottish Government's Superfast Broadband scheme

**Project Gigabit is the UK government's programme to enable hard to reach communities to access fast, reliable gigabit-capable broadband

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhance digital and transport connectivity

Continue to advocate for the electrification of the 1st stage of the Borders Railway, and develop the business case for the extension of the Railway to Hawick and Carlisle

Up to **£10 million** of **funding** awarded from UK & Scottish Governments for the **Business Case** and **Feasibility work** associated with the **extension** of the **Borders Railway** from Tweedbank to Hawick and Carlisle



A **Senior Project Manager** Has been **appointed** to lead the project



Potential electrification of the first stage has been **postponed** by Scottish Government



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhance digital and transport connectivity

STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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Implement a rural taxi-bus pilot funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund for three areas in the Scottish Borders, around Selkirk, Jedburgh and Newcastleton, to provide agile and cost-effective connections between rural areas and the identified towns

Only the **Selkirk Taxi Bus Service** has been implemented so far through the **Shared Prosperity (SP) Fund**, due to driver shortages



The **Selkirk pilot service** ran between **July 2024 and April 30, 2025**



Pilot aimed to **explore innovative transportation solutions** for rural communities where **no fixed-route bus network** exists



A Local taxi operator's business expanded to deliver local bus services under a **Special Restricted Operators Licence**



showcasing a **successful collaboration** between the Council and a local supplier

Average cost per passenger approximately £84, with **monthly operating costs** averaging £3,700



The Selkirk project **cost £35,160**, of which **£27,701 was covered** by the SP fund



The service facilitated **372 passenger journeys** up to end March 2025, generating £456 in **fares revenue** and around £200 in concessions



Regular feedback and data collection

discussions took place so the service could be refined and insights gathered for future taxi bus services.



The pilot demonstrated the **feasibility of demand-responsive transport** in rural areas, providing a **cost-effective alternative** to fixed-route bus services



The service **successfully extended beyond Lilliesleaf and Midlem** into the Ettrick Valley and to the Borders General Hospital, **improving access for rural communities**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhance digital and transport connectivity

STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

PRIORITY: Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



Continue to play a lead role in the delivery of Employability Support across the region, working with the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) to shape the delivery of support according to the needs of young people and adults across the region



SBC's Employment Service committed to the **No One Left Behind (NOLB)** vision



SBC is the **LEP lead partner** building **strong partnerships** to ensure correct provision & support is in place helping people access training, upskill and **reach their employment goals**

In 2024/25, the LEP **supported various training programmes & delivered interventions** with stakeholders using NOLB & SPF Funding



Through **individual key workers**, SBC is delivering **interventions** such as:

- Whole Family Support
- Parental Employability
- Pre-employment support
- Supported Employment
- DFN Project SEARCH
- Employability Training



LEP have held **stakeholder events** such as:

- careers fairs
- practitioner events
- training



Examples of **interventions & stakeholder-led training programmes** supported in 2024/25 by LEP include:

- **Works+** - Employability intervention in Berwickshire for 16-24s
- **ReTweed** – Skills For Work pilot course run in partnership with Borders College
- **Brothers of Charity Services Scotland** – Pre-employment Core Skills programme for adults with ASN and young people aged 16-24
- **Children First** – Family Wellbeing Programme to address the barriers families face in accessing training and employment
- **Driving Forward** – SBC-led programme aimed at families impacted by transport issues in the Scottish Borders
- **Practical training in Careers in Live Entertainment** for unemployed people of all ages, delivered by MacArts, Galashiels
- **Fully funded Construction Skills Certification Scheme training**, including official CSCS test, delivered to unemployed people of all ages by Bruce Robertson Training Ltd



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

Support young people and adults who face challenging barriers to finding and maintaining employment and reaching their full potential

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Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Major Capital Projects	RAG status is "Green"	8	●	Quarterly
	RAG status is "Amber"	4	●	Quarterly
	RAG status is "Red"	2	●	Quarterly
Working Age Population	Working age population (16 - 64) employment rate*	74.6%	ℹ	Quarterly
	Working age population (16 - 64) Claimant Count (including Universal Credit and JSA)	3.13%	ℹ	Quarterly
	Working age population (18 - 24) Claimant Count (including Universal Credit and JSA)	4.8%	ℹ	Quarterly
Customer Advice & Support - Financial Inclusion	Number of People referred in the quarter	470	★	Quarterly
	Monetary Gain for cases closed in the quarter	£1,619,315	★	Quarterly
	Cumulative Monetary Gain for cases closed in the year to date	£4,589,164	★	Quarterly
Customer Advice & Support – Housing Benefit	New Claims (Avg No. of Days to process)	22.12	●	Quarterly
	Change Events (Avg No. of Days to process)	3.12	●	Quarterly
Business Gateway	Total number of new Business Start-Ups (Business Gateway)	7	●	Quarterly
	Number of clients attending start-up workshops/seminars (Business Gateway)	152	●	Quarterly
Estates/Economic Development	Occupancy Rates of Industrial and Commercial Units	92%	●	Quarterly
Community Benefit Clauses	Total Number of Contracts Awarded with Community Benefit Clauses (CBC) included	Not reported this quarter		Annual
	Number of new Employment and Skills opportunities delivered as a result of Community Benefit Clauses (CBC)	Not reported this quarter		Annual

* Please Note that there is a lag of one Quarter for data provided for employment rates Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement ℹ Information only

STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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The following **8** Capital Projects continue on track:

- Borders Innovation Park Phase 2
- Chambers Institution Peebles
- Eyemouth Primary School
- Earlston Primary School
- Galashiels Academy
- Hawick High School
- Peebles High School
- Selkirk High School



The following **4** projects have been identified as being in the **feasibility** stage:

- Eyemouth Nursery & Family Centre
- Hawick Care Village
- Tweeddale Additional Support Needs Provision
- Lowood Masterplan



The Project Team are looking to mitigate the risks with a RAG status allowing the monitoring of Capital Projects.

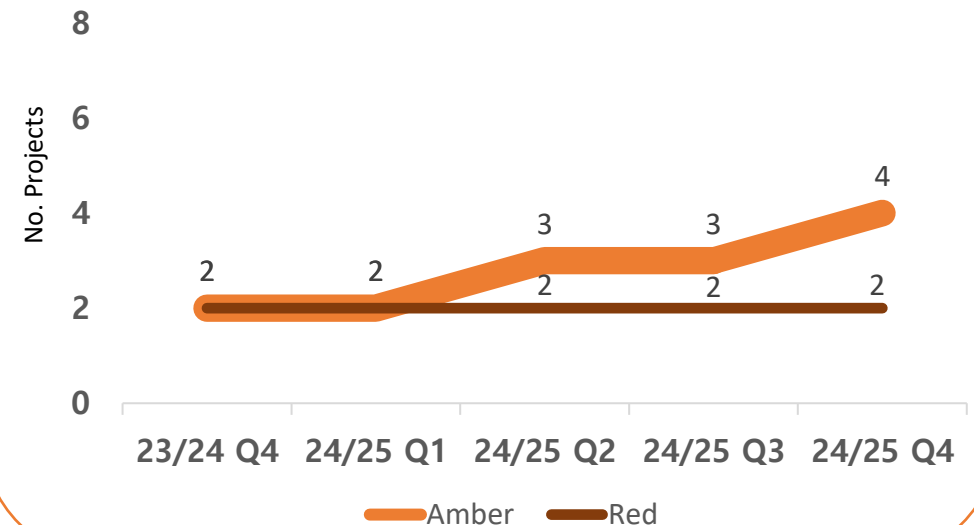
Amber Status: *Jedburgh High Street Building; Borderlands Coldstream Industrial Business Units; Tweedbank Care Village; Plant & Vehicle*

Jedburgh High Street Building design proposals are under review in consideration of 3-5 Exchange Street where works are progressing at pace. The Borderlands unit at Coldstream has been completed for some time with the exception of water connection which has been due to utility supply issues and is being managed. Officers and the Tweedbank Care Village project are working to reduce and manage outstanding issues to enable the construction to progress before the end of 2025. The Council has invested heavily in modernising its plant and fleet in recent years with further significant investment required. Fleet services and finance continue to work together on a 10-year replacement programme to ensure the Council's fleet remains fit for purpose. The delivery teams have mitigation plans in place to convert these projects to "Green" status.

Red Status: *Hawick Flood Protection; Union Chain Bridge*

Hawick Flood Protection scheme's status is being driven by its practical completion, which is in delay and the project budget position is being assessed. The Project Board is overseeing mitigation measures. Northumberland County Council are leading on the Union Chain Bridge project and officers are working with them to manage and conclude outstanding matters and reduce the risk position.

The number of **Capital Projects** with a **Red Status** has remained **static** in Q4 but those with an **Amber Status** have risen by a further one in Q4. Both continue to be a **focus for improvement**

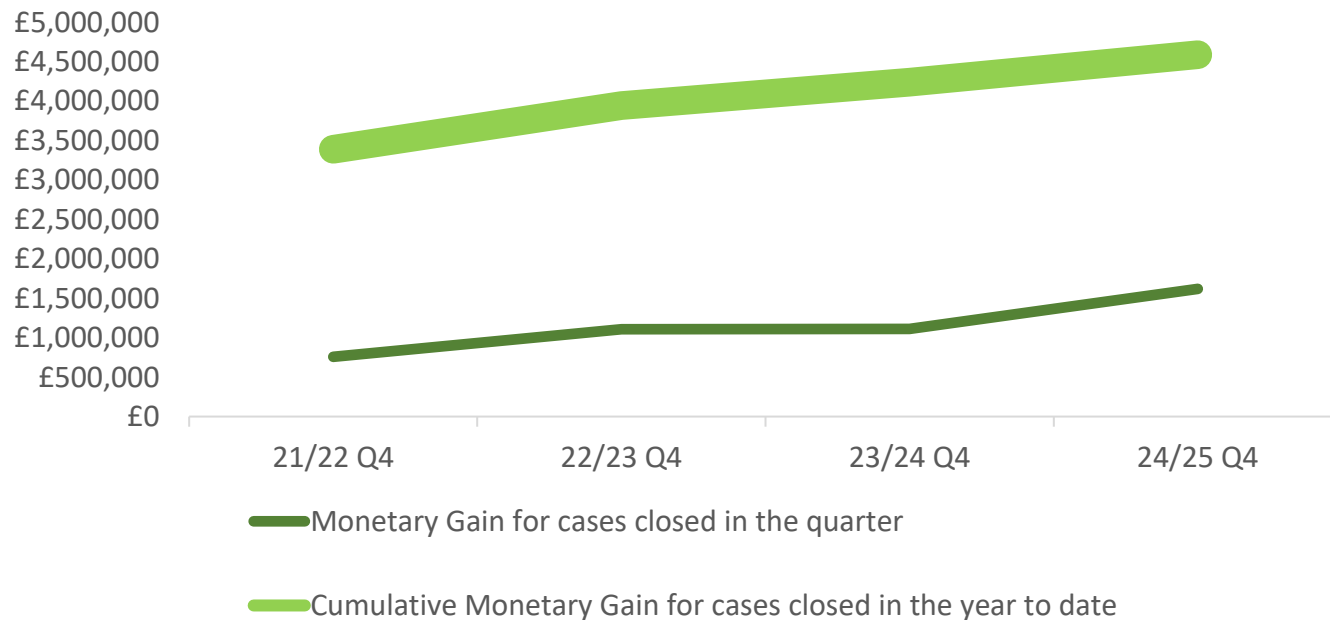


STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

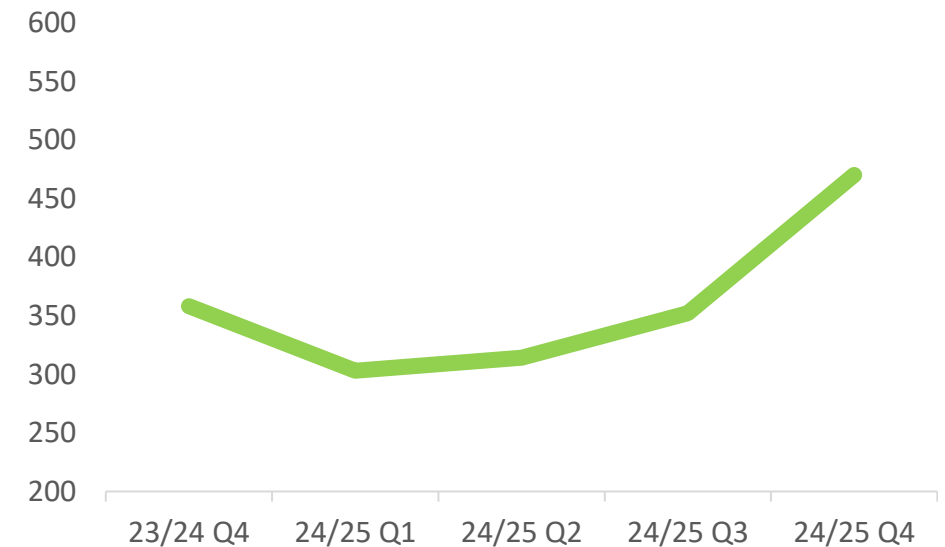
PRIORITY: Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy**, **Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal** and **Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.



Both **Monetary Gain for cases closed in the quarter** and **Cumulative Monetary Gain for cases closed in the year** have **increased** over the same quarter in the past 4 years. Both are seen **Excellent**. ★



The **Number of People referred to Financial Inclusion in the quarter** have **increased** over the past year. They are seen **Excellent**. ★



EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Support the additional 54 communities which have expressed an interest in developing place plans, to promote a partnership approach at the local level to create plans which can be endorsed and registered under planning regulations

SBC supported additional communities to **access consultant support** to develop plans, under the **Place Based Framework**



Place Plans validated and registered for:

- Hawick
- Peebles
- Coldstream
- West Linton
- Leitholm, Eccles and Birgham



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Community-led place plans across rural communities and towns to enable communities to take control of their own destinies

Review the Council's estate with a view to delivering sustainable services from the right buildings in the right places



First **annual report** to deliver the **ROD programme** (Rationalisation, Optimisation & Decarbonisation) submitted to Executive Committee in **March 2025**



Team working with departments to respond to **service needs, strategic plans** and **accommodation provision** in coming years

Services are being **co-located with other public sector organisations** where practical/ possible, to maximise use of SBC's estate



Redundant properties being **identified and disposed of** to allow investment to be concentrated on those retained



SBC is developing a **town-wide approach** to operational property assets



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Sustainable use of land and buildings

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Support communities in the Borderlands target towns of Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick and Jedburgh to develop community-led plans and associated investment plans



3 Place Plans endorsed by Council:

- Galashiels
- Hawick
- Jedburgh

Eyemouth Place Plan to be **endorsed by Council** in the new Financial Year ✓

Hawick Place Plan approved by the Borderlands Plan Programme Board **September 2024** 👍

Jedburgh & Galashiels draft Place Plans went to Borderlands Plan Programme Board in **March 2025** for approval



SBC working on **4 Borderlands Town Investment Plans** along with **Town Teams & consultants**



Refresh our website to improve communication and accessibility for the public

Website accessibility audit completed at end of January ✓

Multiple Workstreams developed & **resources allocated** to **address & fix** identified accessibility issues



Initial progress made on workstreams including:

- those relating to written content
- Images
- Tables
- embedded content
- Downloads
- various technical issues



Preparation of **updated website guidance** for **content authors**



Updated **accessibility statement** drafted to identify known issues and **improve accessibility**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Community-led place plans across rural communities and towns to enable communities to take control of their own destinies

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Modern, sustainable and simplified services that meet the needs of communities and customers

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Embed a new and improved community engagement approach which facilitates communication between local communities and the Council, encourages young people to contribute, and is inclusive of all Borderers

YELL Strategy launched, with the following actions:

Alignment of **Community Engagement** & Youth Engagement Strategies being progressed



Integration into **New School Pupil Voice Framework** being progressed



Training & **Promotion** with Area Partnerships



Strengthening of **inclusivity** & **accessibility** being progressed



Sustainable engagement & feedback loops being developed



Community Engagement Strategy approved, published & feedback sought



Community Engagement **Toolkit** developed



Engagement underway in **Burnfoot** to develop **locality plan** focused on **reducing inequalities** in the community



Community conversations being developed to provide **inclusive** ways for people to get **involved** in **decision** making processes



Engagement & locality plans for **Langlee** & **Bannerfield** being planned



YELL : Youth Engagement Listen to Learn

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhanced participation and engagement which empowers communities to shape the decisions which affect them

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Support the process of electing Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) every 2 years and support the elected MSYPs in their roles both locally and nationally thereby promoting and developing civic literacy and engagement for young people

3 current MSYPs were elected to post in December 2023 via the online voting platform

The **online voting platform** allowed for **any young person aged 12 – 25** from the Borders to vote in the election



MSYPs **visited youth projects across the Borders**, consulting young people on their current campaigns:

- Gender Based Violence
- Youth Work Provision
- Mental Health Training
- finding out the local issues



MSYPs have **attended**:

- area partnership meetings
- town planning meetings
- community conversation sessions
- the launch of the Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy (YELL)



MSYPs have **attended National SYP sittings** in Stirling & Parliament Building at Holyrood, Edinburgh.

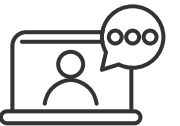


They have **met with various MSPs** & the **Presiding Officer**

MSYPs have undertaken a range of **training** to be able to complete their role as MSYPs, including the **Participative Democracy Certificate**



Current MSYPs have been **interviewed for ITV Borders** & **filmed** as part of a local UNCRC promotional video, explaining the importance of **Children's Rights** & young people having their voices heard



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhanced participation and engagement which empowers communities to shape the decisions which affect them

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

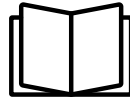
PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Implement the Scottish Borders Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028 with a view to delivering more homes, including affordable homes, in well designed, sustainable communities that increase opportunities for all, supporting personal independence, health and wellbeing, and address homelessness

SBC declared a **housing emergency** which resulted in the:

- **development** of the Housing Emergency Action Plan
- **establishment** of the Strategic Housing Forum



SBC continues to **fund** the Empty Homes Grant Scheme for the **current lifetime** of the 2023-28 Local Housing Strategy (LHS)



SBC is involved in the Regional Economic Partnership Housing Action Plan which outlines **opportunities** to **deliver more homes**



First **Strategic Housing Forum** was in **February 2025**



Working with partners, SBC has delivered **72 new affordable homes** including **4 particular-needs housing**
A total of **88 new houses in 2024/25**



Implementation of **Local Housing Strategy actions** are ongoing in 2024-25

SBC has started a programme of work with partners to **address housing need** in supported and specialist housing, and **identify need** in the next **5–10 years**



2024-25 Annual Report currently being developed



Areas of REP work include:



- finalising **Housing Prospectus** covering South of Scotland
- regional research examining **demand for key worker housing** in South of Scotland

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Sustainable use of land and buildings

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Work with communities to empower them and build local capacity in support of asset transfers when they are a viable option, and enable the delivery of person-centred services in partnership with communities

There were **conversations with 27 community bodies** in 2024/25
Of these:

2 leases have been **signed** or are in **preparation** at:

- Haylodge Depot, Peebles
- Derek Ramage Pavilion, Hawick

2 formal applications are **currently live** at:

- Stow public toilets
- School Brae toilets, Peebles

2 sales are being **progressed** at:

- Gavinton Village Hall
- East Station Office, Peebles



Asset transfer information has been **updated** on the **SBC public website**

Asset transfer process
developed & approved to
support estates rationalisation,
optimisation
& decarbonisation
strategy



Information sessions held in **Duns & St Boswells**



Information sessions run for **Community Centre Management Committees** to support SBC and Live Borders
Transformational Change programme

Community Engagement support plan developed in line with action FW5 (Develop Community Engagement Support Plan) in SBC & Live Borders **Transformational Change programme**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Sustainable use of land and buildings

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Implement the increase of £16,070 in the financial support to Community Councils to better enable them to serve their communities, and increase the resources available to festivals across the region (totalling £30,000), on an application basis, to help manage increased health and safety cost pressures in the delivery of events

This was **implemented in 2024/25 Q1** with applications submitted throughout the year

2 local **festival committees** been **awarded** additional funding of **£3,300**



63 Community Councils have drawn down the increased annual support grant, totalling **£50,314***



*3 community councils are in abeyance, as of March 2025

Establish a post to create a credit union in the Scottish Borders with the aim of providing sustainable and affordable credit to families and individuals

Caledonian Credit Union officially **launched** in the Borders in **August 2024**



Credit Union Development Worker post established **May 2024** in partnership with Caledonian Credit Union



Since the service started:

- **Loans** totalling over **£38,000** have been issued
- **Member savings** have totalled over **£6,500**
- **40** people **joined** Credit Union

Close working with:

- CABx
- Food Banks
- Churches
- Other community-based groups



Relationships developed with:

- Public sector
- Private sector
- Community sector organisations



Funding to extend post being **explored**



Organisations signing up to payroll scheme include:

- Farne Salmon
- Scottish Borders Council



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Community-led place plans across rural communities and towns to enable communities to take control of their own destinies

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

Reduce the number of children in poverty; and reduce the impact of living in poverty on families

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Communities & Partnerships -Asset Transfers	Number of Requests Received	1	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Number of Requests Agreed	0	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Number of Requests Refused	0	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
Communities & Partnerships - Participation Request	Number of Requests Received	0	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Number of Requests Agreed	0	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Number of Requests Refused	0	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
Communities & Partnerships	The number of people carrying out volunteer work with SBC	72	●	Quarterly
Neighbourhood Support Fund – Value of Funding Awarded	Total Scottish Borders	£80,307	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Berwickshire	£21,130	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Cheviot	£17,924	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Eildon	£6,500	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Teviot & Liddesdale	£22,721	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Tweeddale	£12,031	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
	Neighbourhood Small Schemes Fund – Total Value of funds awarded (cumulative)	£212,800	<i>í</i>	Quarterly
Community Resilience	SB Alert - No. of people registered	7994	●	Quarterly
	No. of Active community resilience plans	55	★	Quarterly
	No. of Progressing community resilience plans	0	★	Quarterly

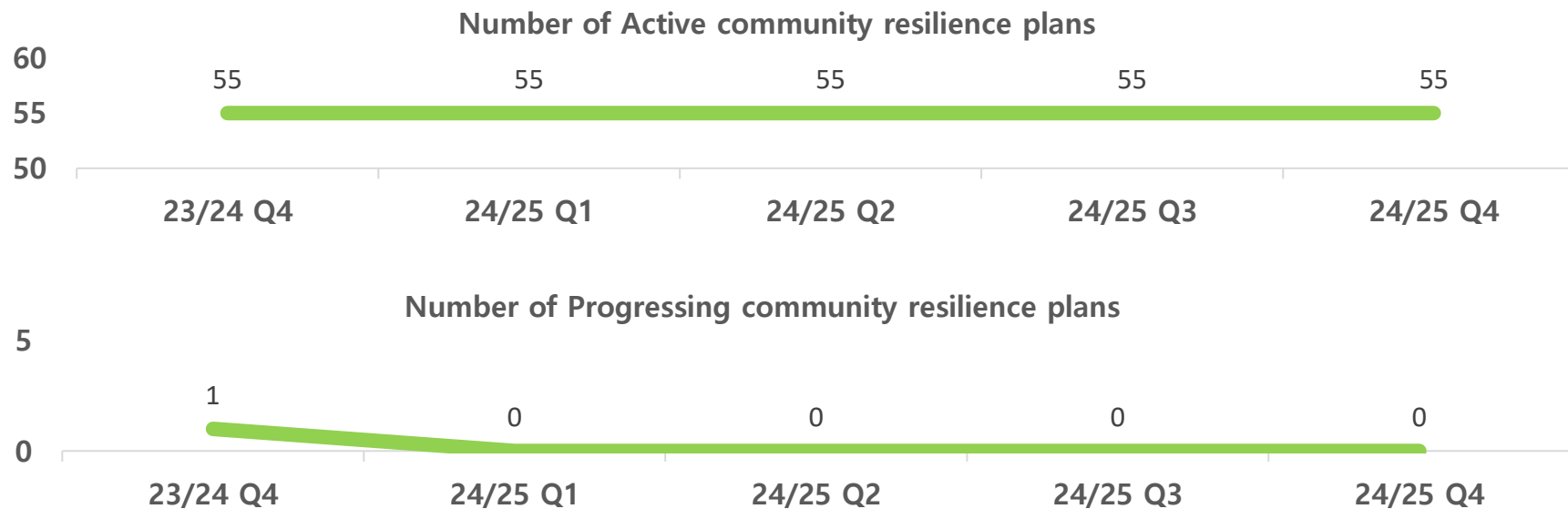
Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement *í* Information only

EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

PRIORITY: Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



The number of both **Active and Progressing community resilience plans** has **remained steady** over the past 5 quarters. This is considered to be very positive and **Excellent**



Zero is considered **Excellent** this quarter as all work has been completed and there are no outstanding plans needing addressed

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PRIORITY: Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Produce a partnership agreed Strategic Plan for young people and adults across the Borders giving a clear operational and commissioning direction to services for the next 3/5 years

Partnership working on a 3-5 year commissioning strategy

Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPPP) commissions are **under review**



Strategy will take account of:

- Children's rights
- GIRFEC
- The Promise



The **partnership** will:

- **listen** to voices of children & young people
- **engage** with children & young people in strategy preparation



Strategy will:

- set out a model of support for children and young people



Model of Support will:

- be equitable & sustainable
- meet priorities of Children and Young People's Services Plan for the Scottish Borders
- recognise that a range of services are required for children and young people to reach their full potential

Commissioning strategy will be **adopted throughout 2025/26**

GIRFEC : Getting it Right for Every Child

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed around service users' needs, focus on prevention, early intervention and minimising health inequalities

Increase capacity by adopting a new approach to care at home delivery. This includes working collaboratively with care at home providers, focusing on a person's outcomes, the use of Technology or a provider being contracted on a block basis



Work is well **underway** to **deliver** care at home services in the **future** which:

Have **improved** sustainability

Have **good coverage** across the region

Focus on **improved outcomes** for those in receipt of care



Include **innovation** and use of **technology**

Ensure good **continuity** of care

Work continues to **recruit** staff to **vacancies** across the region both in our **internal** and **external** services



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed around service users' needs, focus on prevention, early intervention and minimising health inequalities

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PRIORITY: Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Establish a corporate council commissioning framework which will ensure consistency in the approach to commissioning across all council areas and mean that services are planned and commissioned based on need and delivery of services ensures best value and better outcomes for the people using these services

A **Strategic Commissioning Board** has been **established** covering **3 directorates**:

- Health & Social Care Partnership
- Children & Education
- Resilient Communities



Paper went to CMT in **late 2024** proposing **similar governance arrangements** covering the **remaining 4 directorates** and their 3rd party spend



CMT **approved** this approach & a **second board** to be **established** to oversee 3rd party spend



The **proposals** will **achieve** savings, **address** pressures & **invest** in new services within current financial constraints



Strategic Commissioning Board will oversee **commissioning workplan** which details **commissioning priorities** for the coming year & beyond

Priorities will include:

- Continued commissioning
- De-commissioning
- Redesign
- New commissioning proposals



New draft **Commissioning Strategy** outlines commitment to key principles and how these principles will influence the approach to commissioning services

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- The right services are commissioned and developed with partners and will meet the outcomes of any future National Care Service

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PRIORITY: Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Social Work Children & Families	Looked After Children (aged 12+) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	61%	●	Quarterly
	Looked After Children (All ages) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	74%	●	Quarterly
	Number of Looked After Children (LAC)	203	●	Quarterly
	Number of Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) held about a child	186	í	Quarterly
	Number of children on Child Protection Register	47	í	Quarterly
Adult Support & Protection	Number of Concerns	105	í	Quarterly
	Number of Inquiries with Investigative Powers	71	í	Quarterly
Economic Development & Procurement	Additional homes provided affordable to people in the Borders, based on our wages	16	í	Quarterly
NHS**	Bed days associated with delayed discharges in residents aged 75+; rate per 1,000 population*	371.1	●	Quarterly
Domestic Abuse	Number of High Risk domestic abuse cases discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	57	●	Quarterly
	Number of Referrals to Domestic Abuse	112	●	Quarterly

* Please note that the data provided is derived from Board of Residence monthly figures

** There is a lag of one Quarter for data provided for NHS data

Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement í Information only

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PRIORITY: Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Safer Communities	Number of persons being monitored for Antisocial Behaviour	262	●	Quarterly
	Number of new temporary homelessness accommodation tenancies that commenced in the time period	68	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of households assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness (where contact was maintained) who secured settled accommodation in either Social Housing, Private Rented Housing or Owner/Occupied housing	89%	●	Quarterly
	Average number of days from assessment to closure for applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness	203	●	Quarterly
	Average number of days households spent in temporary accommodation during the course of their homeless assessment	137	●	Quarterly

Road Incidents

Currently vetted information from Police Scotland is only available up to the end of March 2025. Unfortunately, there were 3 fatalities as a result of road accidents in the Scottish Borders over the 3 months of Q4 2024/25. This is the same figure as for this period last year.

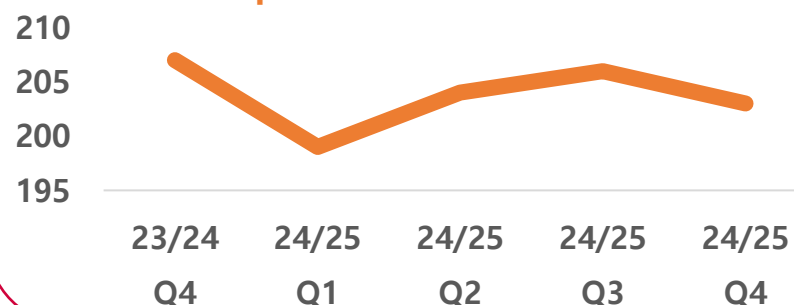
Currently vetted information from Police Scotland is only available up to the end of March 2025. There were 13 people seriously injured as a result of road accidents in the Scottish Borders over the 3 months of Q4 2024/25. This is an increase of 3 for the same period last year.

GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

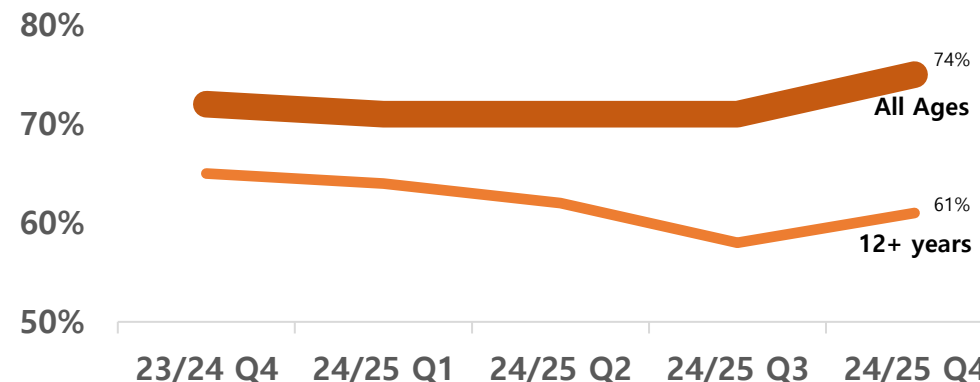
PRIORITY: Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



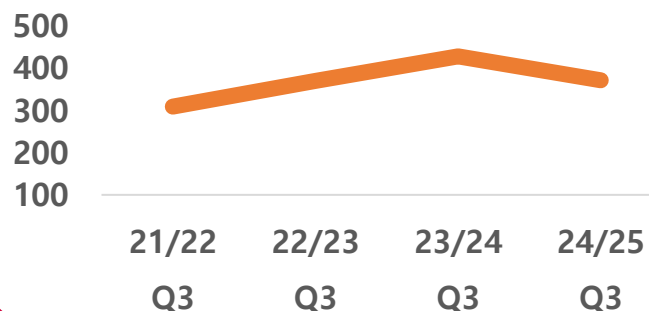
The number of **Looked After Children** has **decreased** over the past year. However, there has been a further increase in Q4 and this remains a **focus for improvement**



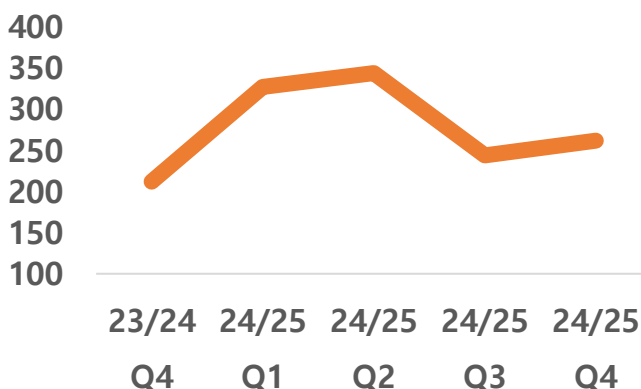
The percentage of **Looked After Children of all ages in family-based placements** and **Looked After Children aged 12+ in family-based placements** has increased since last quarter. This continues to be an area for **focus for improvement**



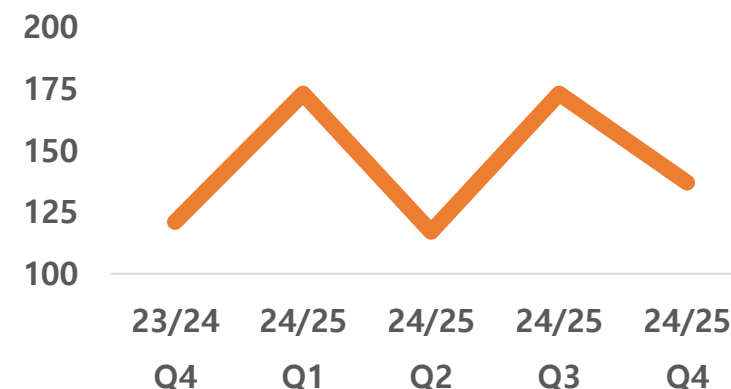
The number of bed days associated to **Delayed Discharges** have **decreased slightly** from the same quarter last year. They continue to be **focus for improvement** (NHS data)



There has been an increase in the number of people being monitored for anti-social behaviour since Q3. This is a **focus for improvement**



Despite a decrease in the Average number of days spent in temporary accommodation during a homeless assessment since the previous quarter, this remains a **focus for improvement**



WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

PRIORITY: Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



All service redesign activities will incorporate the principles set out in the new Customer Strategy and Community Engagement Strategy, so that the needs of SBC's customers are at the heart of all key service decisions and policy changes

Part of ongoing commitment to **engage** with the **public** and **staff**



A commitment to **Community Engagement** ensures the services strategic approach is informed by **lived experience**



Work continues on a **more transparent approach** to **connect** departmental outcomes with Council Plan objectives



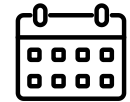
A renewed **Customer Strategy** & **Physical Activity and Sports Strategy** will be published later this year

This will give new opportunities for service improvements across the region



Complete a programme of Transformation Change in partnership with Live Borders to develop excellent services, financial sustainability and clearer strategic outcomes

External consultants **Integratis** have developed proposals for **ongoing financial sustainability** of **Live Borders** & report being taken to Council in **April 2025**



Property Repairs & Maintenance responsibility has transferred to **SBC's Estates Team**



Culture Strategy under development & final report to Council in **May 2025**



Final report of development of **Sports and Physical Activity Strategy** will also go to Council in **May 2025**



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed to meet people's needs

Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed to meet people's needs

WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

PRIORITY: Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



Redefine SBC's Transformation Programme for the next 5 years, including the development and implementation of a new Operating Model, to ensure ongoing high service standards, financial sustainability and modernisation in a rapidly changing context. This will include developing:

- a new SBC-wide strategy for commissioning services to ensure best value from all SBC spend.
- a strategy to maximise external funding opportunities for investment in the Scottish Borders.
- a review of all processes in order to streamline all SBC services towards better customer outcomes.
- a review, modernisation & consolidation of all SBC's estate to ensure financial and environmental sustainability, including clear partnership co-location options aligned with customer needs

Developed draft
**Commissioning
Strategy**



£20 million of **UK Government
funding** to be delivered in
2025/26



Implementation of **Estate Rationalisation, Optimisation and
Decarbonisation Programme (ROD)** has **established sound
governance** for review, modernisation and consolidation of SBC's estate



**Engagement
Programme** to
run from May 2025
for SBC's **future
approach to
commissioning**



New investment strategy submitted for:

- **Shared Prosperity Funding investment** in business & community projects
- **No-One Left Behind (NOLB)** funding to support local employability projects



Process redesigns completed
ahead of **digitally enabled
mobile solutions** in:

- Protective Services
- Print Services
- Children & Families Social Work



First **annual report** for
implementation of the **ROD**
programme submitted to Executive
Committee **March 2025**



SBC seeks to **streamline** key business processes as part of
Digital Transformation Programme



Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Best value is achieved across all services

WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

PRIORITY: Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Planning Permission	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Maj Dev (cumulative)	Data provided at a later date by Scottish Government. For information on Q1 and Q2 24/25 which is the latest data available, please see our Performance Dashboard		
	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (non-householder) (cumulative)			
	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (householder) (cumulative)			
	Number of Planning Applications Received	272	<i>i</i>	Quarterly
Council Tax	Council Tax – In Year Collection Level	96.12%	●	Quarterly
Property	Capital Receipts Generated	£107,250	●	Quarterly
	Properties surplus to requirements	41	<i>i</i>	Quarterly
	Properties actively being marketed	17	●	Quarterly
	Properties progressed to “under offer”	11	●	Quarterly
Complaints Handling	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one	5	●	Quarterly
	Performance against timescales: the number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as percentage of total number of stage one complaints	79.2%	●	Quarterly
	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two	35.9	●	Quarterly
	Performance against timescales: the number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as percentage of total number of stage two complaints	10%	●	Quarterly
	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	28.1	●	Quarterly
	Performance against timescales: the number of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days as a percentage of total number of escalated stage two complaints	36.4%	●	Quarterly
	Number of Complaints Closed	185	<i>i</i>	Quarterly

Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement *i* Information only

WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

PRIORITY: Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



Service	Indicator	Q4 24/25	Status	Reporting Frequency
Freedom of Information	FOI Requests Received	393	<i>i</i>	Quarterly
	Percentage of FOI Requests Completed on Time	90%	●	Quarterly
Social Media	Number of Facebook Engagements	11,730	●	Quarterly
Assessor	Council Tax Valuation List - Percentage of New Properties added to the list within 0-3 months	42.5%	●	Quarterly
	Valuation Roll (Non Domestic) – Percentage of new, altered or demolished properties amended on the valuation roll within 0-3 months	22%	●	Quarterly
HR	SBC Absence Rate – Staff	6.16%	●	Quarterly
	SBC Absence Rate – Teaching Staff	4.13%	●	Quarterly
	Staff Absence Rate (overall)	5.66%	●	Quarterly
	SBC Staff Turnover	1.8%	●	Quarterly
Payment Services	Percentage of Invoices paid within 30 days	98%	★	Quarterly
Customer Contact	Consolidated Call Numbers - HQ Switchboard, 0300, SW Duty Hub and Homelessness	37,913	●	Quarterly

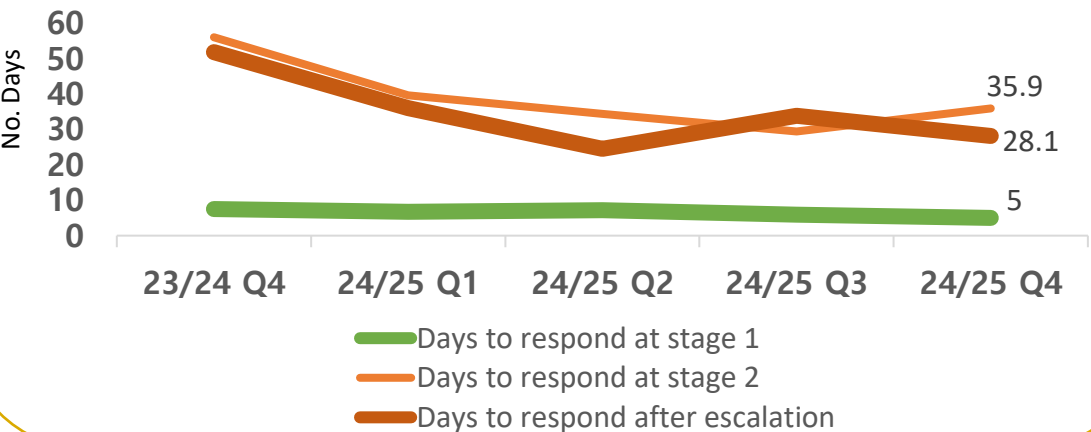
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WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

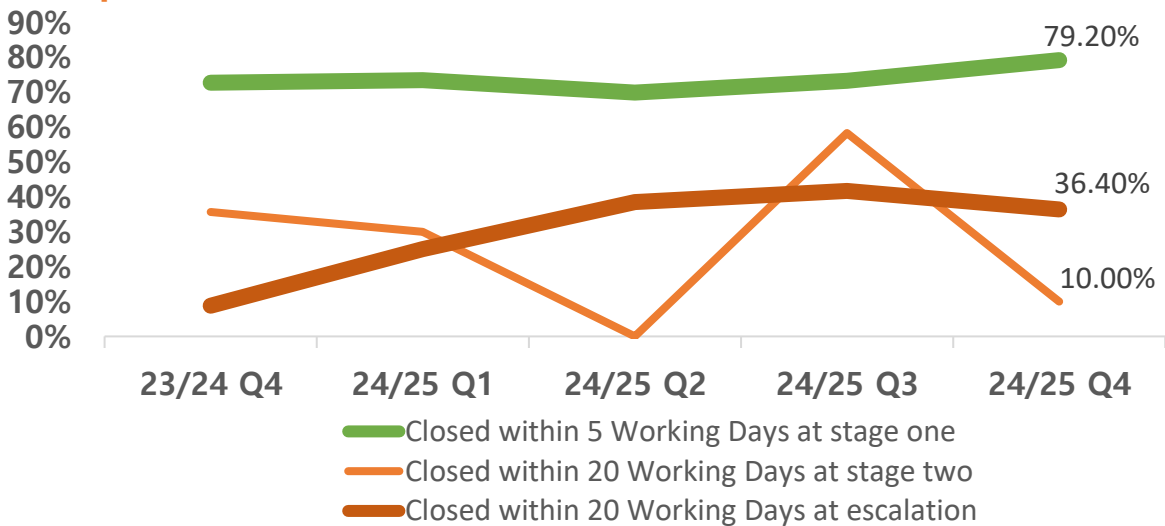
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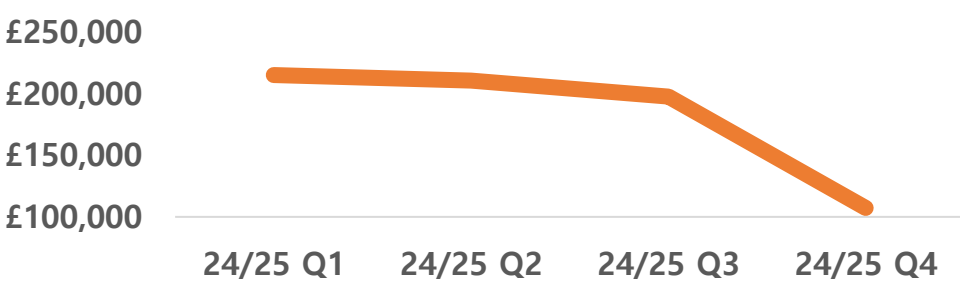
The number of days taken to respond to complaints at **stage 1** has **continued to decrease** since the previous quarter which is **positive**. The number of days taken to respond to complaints **after escalation** has also **decreased**. However, the number of days taken to respond to complaints at **stage 2** has **increased**. The **stage 1** and **escalation** PIs continue to be areas to **focus on improvement**.



The percentage of complaints closed at **stage 1** has continued to **increase**, which is **positive**. Complaints closed at both **stage 2** and **after escalation** have both **decreased** since the previous quarter and these remain a **focus for improvement**.



After a steady Q1, Q2 & Q3 a **decline** in Capital Receipts Generated can be seen in Q4 of 2024/25. This is a **focus for improvement**.



The number of complaints closed has stayed at a consistent level over the last 5 years

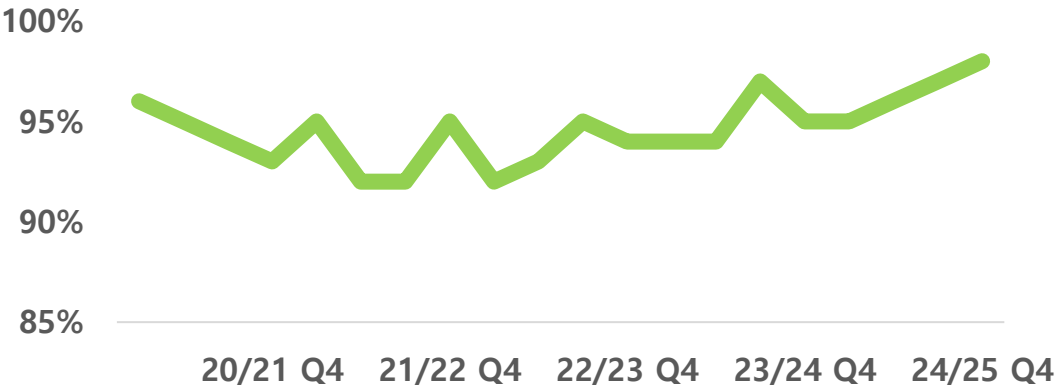


WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

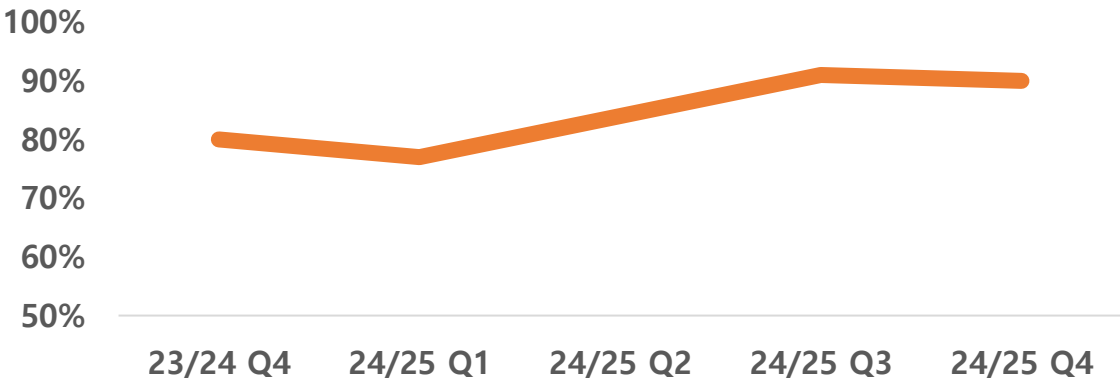
PRIORITY: Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days **remains consistent** and has remained **above 90%** for the last 5 financial years and has steadily **increased** up to **98%** for this financial year



Although the trend of **FOI Requests Completed on Time** has been increasing, there was a slight **decrease** in Q4. The indicator is a **Focus for Improvement**.



The Council Tax - In year collection level is slightly below 23/24 levels and is a **focus for improvement**. An improvement plan is in place for the coming year.

