



Smailholm Place Plan

April 2025

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1. Foreword

Welcome to the Smailholm Local Place Plan, a community-driven initiative that reflects the collective vision and aspirations of our village. Smailholm, a picturesque hill-top village in the heart of the Scottish Borders, is renowned for its rich history, charming rural character, and close-knit community. With a population of just over 100, our village exemplifies the unique charm of rural Scottish settlements.

The production of the Smailholm Local Place Plan is a testament to our community's resilience and active spirit. Through extensive stakeholder engagement, we have identified key themes and projects that will guide our future development. These include enhancing our transport infrastructure, promoting sustainable energy solutions, and preserving our natural environment.

Our vision is to maintain and enhance a vibrant and inclusive community while conserving the rural character of our village. This plan is the result of collaborative efforts between the residents of Smailholm, Scottish Borders Council and other major stakeholders including the Earl of Haddington who was particularly engaged and attended many of the community meetings. It was led by the Smailholm Futures Steering Group, who received invaluable support and advice from AtkinsRéalis consultants. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed their time, ideas and enthusiasm to this process.

Together, we are building a sustainable and prosperous future for Smailholm.

We invite you to join us on this journey and look forward to your continued support and participation.

*Smailholm Futures Steering Group
Andrew, Ian, Lindsay, Susan and Yvan
February, 2025*



2. Introduction

Smailholm is a small historic village nestled in the heart of the Scottish Borders, approximately 6 miles North from Kelso, 6 miles South from Earlston and 12 miles east from Galashiels. With a population of just 111 (as of the 2022 Census), Smailholm exemplifies the charm and character of rural Scottish settlements.

Smailholm's history is deeply rooted in its natural landscape, originally comprising three distinct parts: East Third, West Third, and Overtown. Today, the East and West Thirds form our village, each maintaining its unique identity. Our Conservation Area status underscores the architectural and historical significance of Smailholm, characterised by traditional building materials and distinctive features such as whinstone and ochre-coloured sandstone construction, sash and case windows, skews, rybats and margins.

The village sits at the centre of an intensively cultivated agricultural landscape, interspersed with small patches of woodland and rocky craigs, and with unique views to Smailholm Tower and the Eildon Hills, Hume Castle and the sweep of hills down to the Tweed and up the Cheviots to the South. The mainly fertile agricultural land is farmed by the Mellerstain and Mertoun Estates and five individual working farms. All farms around Smailholm were once surrounded by extensive rows of farm cottages, many of which remain to this day, forming distinct, small communities in their own right.

This Local Place Plan aims to preserve and enhance Smailholm's unique character while addressing the challenges and opportunities faced by the community. It outlines strategies for sustainable development, conservation of heritage assets and improvement of local amenities, all while maintaining the village's cherished rural quality of life. The Local Place Plan area is marked by a red boundary line on the map in Figure 3 on page 5.



Our Local Place Area Map

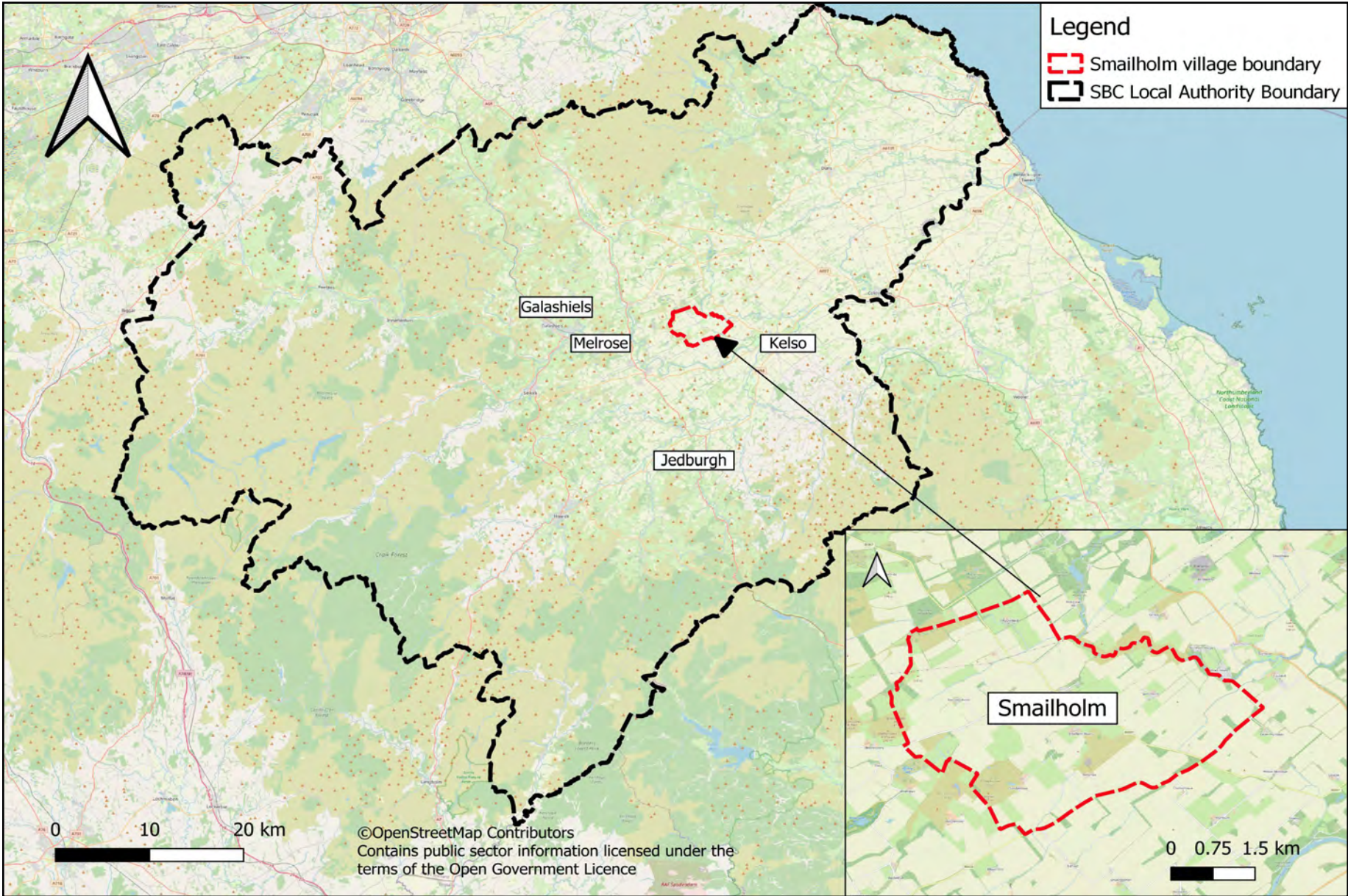


Figure 3. Smailholm Local Plan Area Map

Smailholm Today

The people living in Smailholm today make up a diverse, vibrant and connected community. Social life is centred around the Village Hall, which hosts numerous classes, social activities and events and is well attended by both the community and people from further afield.

Data from the latest census (2022) show a total population of 111, with 56% aged between 16 – 64 and 41% aged over 65. Under 18s make up 7% of the population.

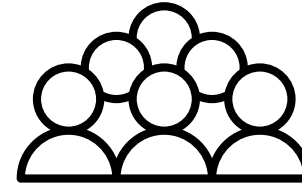
The 2020 Scottish Index of Deprivation indicates that Smailholm experiences low levels of deprivation, measured in terms of employment, income, health, skills and training.

Just under 60% of the village's population are economically active, mainly in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (11) and Human Health and Social Work (10). Other areas of employment include the Motor Trade, Accommodation, Manufacturing and Public Administration, Education, Information and Communication, Transport and Storage and Support Services.

Local businesses include an art/pottery gallery and three self-catering accommodation providers catering for overnight stays, in addition to farming, which is by far the largest industry. The village has no shops or services, and there are no schools either. The nearest shopping, services and education facilities are in the nearby towns of Kelso, Earlston, St Boswells, Gordon and Melrose.

Nine out of 10 economically active people who are not working from home commute to work driving a car or van. There is a daily morning bus service to Kelso but times are not suitable for commuters and there are no safe cycling roads into the nearest towns. As a result, no-one cycles and no-one uses public transport to travel to work. A small number (5%) walk to their local place of work.

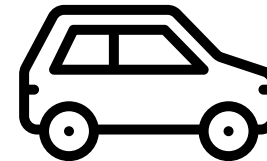
For more detailed information and data sources, see Appendix 1.



**111
people**



**60%
economically
active**



**9/10
commute to
work**

3. Smailholm Futures

Smailholm Futures is a community project, overseen by a voluntary Steering Group. The aims are to involve the entire community in shaping the future of Smailholm and its surrounding area. The project was designed in a way that gives the community the opportunity to input their ideas and concerns, and to collate those into a Village Place Plan and a Village Action Plan, in an unbiased and cohesive way.

The Steering Group has been liaising with Scottish Borders Council and brought in consultants AtkinsRéalis to ensure that the process adopted to develop the Village Place Plan is compatible with The Town and Country Planning (Local Place Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 and best practice guidelines and gives everyone in the community an opportunity to voice their ideas in a safe environment.

The Floors, Makerstoun, Nenthorn, and Smailholm Community Council will be submitting the Local Place Plan for registration on behalf of the Steering Group, which is not a constituted body. It is hoped that the Village Place Plan will be used by the Local Authority to guide future local development plans and individual planning applications.

Three of the Village Place Plan themes prioritised by local residents have been developed in further detail by the Consultants, in close collaboration with members of the community. The results of this work have been consolidated in Technical Notes appended to the Plan. The Village Plan is accompanied by a Village Action Plan, which, it is hoped, will facilitate the implementation of some of the Plan's projects, with funds and support available from the Scottish Borders Council, National Government and other funding sources.

The various stages of this consultation and development process are illustrated in Figure 5. More details about the community and engagement process as well as the detailed outcomes of the various meetings we held can be found in Appendix 2 and 3.

By addressing these needs and challenges, and capitalising on our opportunities, we aim to create a vibrant, attractive, and connected community that preserves the unique rural character of Smailholm. We invite all residents to join us in this endeavour, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and that our collective vision becomes a reality.



Figure 4. Smailholm Community Meeting

Timeline

2023



2024-2025



Figure 5. Process of community consultations leading up to the elaboration of the village plan

4. A Community Conversation

The various community consultations, started in February 2023, identified and gradually developed several key themes that reflect the collective priorities and aspirations of the residents. This section summarises those priorities and aspirations, as they emerged and developed over time. More details about the processes that led to those themes and proposals can be found in Appendix 2, as well as in the individual village meeting reports.

Initial Aspirations

Attendees of the first village meeting in February 2023 were given an opportunity to express what they particularly like about Smailholm, what they could see develop further and what they see as the main challenges and fears about the future. These were recorded on large village maps and subsequently analysed based on categories suggested by a Place Making tool. See Figure 6 for a comprehensive list of inputs provided at the launch meeting.

Locality, Setting, and Place: Residents appreciate Smailholm's visual appeal, rural location, and peaceful environment. They aspire to retain the village's rural character, reduce traffic, and improve public spaces, including outdoor spaces. Challenges include fears of over-development and the creation of large urban or holiday 'developments'. Priorities focus on developing safe walking, wheeling and cycling routes and managing local traffic levels.

People/Community: Residents particularly value the supportive and inclusive community, with a strong sense of belonging. Aspirations include attracting younger families, having affordable housing, and creating jobs. Challenges and fears include the potential closure of the village hall and an ageing population. Priorities include maintaining an open access venue.

Connectivity: The community appreciates the village's proximity to nearby towns and cities. Aspirations include improving public transport links, installing an electric car charging point, and creating active travel routes. Challenges include a lack of public transport connectivity and rising fuel costs. Priorities include road maintenance and gritting.

Economy and Social: Farming is the main economic activity, and there is a vibrant social scene. Aspirations include adding a shop, micro pub, and other social hubs, as well as achieving energy independence through renewable sources. Challenges include variable internet connections and potential large-scale industrial developments. Priorities focus on the Village Hall and creating an energy hub

Other Concerns: Residents want to be involved in decision-making and hear more diverse voices within the community. Concerns include decisions being made without resident input and not all residents being given an equal voice in the process of creating the village plan.

Assets	Opportunities
<p>Locality, Setting, and Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visually appealing, rural location with scenic views. Peaceful environment with access to the countryside. Historic village centre and community woodland. <p>People and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive and inclusive community. Active village hall with numerous events and activities. Connectivity Proximity to nearby towns like Kelso, Tweedbank, Galashiels, and Melrose. Reasonable access to Edinburgh. <p>Economic and Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farming as the main economic activity. Active social scene with ongoing village events. 	<p>Locality, Setting, and Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining rural character and reducing traffic. Improving paths. Enhancing outdoor spaces like the nature area, village pond, and community woodland. <p>People and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attracting younger families and building affordable housing. Job creation initiatives. Connectivity Improving public transport links and road maintenance. Installing electric car charging points and developing active travel routes. <p>Economic and Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing new social hubs like a shop, micro pub, visitor centre, and community hub. Promoting eco-friendly gardening and nature-friendly farming. Developing community energy schemes using renewable sources.
Needs	Challenges
<p>Locality, Setting, and Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic calming measures and safe walking, wheeling and cycling routes. Preventing unplanned development. <p>People and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An open access venue for community activities. Connectivity Better public transport connectivity. Road gritting during winter. <p>Economic and Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable internet connections. Affordable living for younger families. Energy cost management and home insulation. 	<p>Locality, Setting, and Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unplanned and over-development. Fear of large housing estates and caravan parks. <p>People and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ageing population and potential closure of the village hall. Connectivity Rising fuel costs impacting rural living. <p>Economic and Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variable internet connections. Potential industrial developments like chicken farms and wind farms. Significant changes in farming practices.

Figure 6. Assets, opportunities, needs and challenges identified at the launch meeting

Development of the main themes and possible actions

The views and aspirations of the community expressed at the launch meeting were consolidated by an extended Steering Group into 5 major, easily understood themes, namely: Paths and Routes, Transport, Community, Energy and Environment. A second meeting was then organised, where members of the community were asked to identify possible actions under each theme and comment on an emerging vision of a thriving community in a rural space.

The meeting produced a ‘brainstorm’ of possible actions:

Paths and Routes:

- Safe active travel routes
- Creating safer circular active travel routes suitable for walking, wheeling and cycling
- Disability friendly
- Active Travel Routes

Transport:

- Eden Road
- Public transport
- Traffic calming
- Electric car
- Creating a safe circular route for active travel

Environment

- Diversify rural landscape
- Nature friendly farming
- Eco-friendly gardening and outdoor spaces
- Pond and copse

Community:

- Village Hall
- Community Hub
- Shop, pub, café, gallery
- Producer markets
- Attracting young people
- Sheltered housing

Energy:

- Community energy
- Insulation
- Improve phone connections



Figure 7. Village Meeting

Developing possible actions and prioritisation

The Smailholm first 2 community consultation events aimed to identify areas of interest and possible actions. The second meeting produced a 'brainstorm' of ideas, with varying degrees of active support. These were reanalysed and prioritised at a third meeting organised by Smailholm Futures and facilitated by AtkinsRéalis, with support from the Scottish Borders Council.

This meeting's objectives were to confirm and develop the themes identified at previous engagements; present a draft vision; define the aims and project ideas for each one theme and prioritise proposed projects. At the end of the meeting, members of the community were encouraged to join technical experts provided by AtkinsRéalis in working groups to develop the priority projects (paths and routes, transport and energy).



Figure 8. Village Meeting

The meeting produced a more succinct list of actions to be considered in the village plan and village action plan:

Transport: Prioritised road safety and sustainable transport solutions. Feedback included concerns about heavy vehicle traffic, support for speed reduction measures, and suggestions for public transport improvements.

Paths and Routes: Focused on improving local paths and encouraging active travel. Feedback included positive comments on recreational opportunities, concerns about urbanisation, and suggestions for better connectivity.

Environment & Land Use: Centred on building climate resilience and protecting biodiversity. Feedback highlighted benefits of regeneration, maintenance concerns, and suggestions for environmental improvements.

Community: Focused on strengthening community cohesion and enhancing local facilities. Feedback included positive comments on existing events, concerns about sustainability of new initiatives, and the need for activities to attract young families.

Energy: Addressed improving energy efficiency and exploring renewable energy sources. Feedback was positive about insulation and renewable energy projects, with concerns about costs and applicability in older homes.

Summary of Engagement

The community engagement sessions for the Smailholm Local Place Plan have identified key assets, opportunities, needs, and challenges that shape our vision for the future. Smailholm's visually appealing rural setting, supportive community, and active social scene are among its greatest assets. Opportunities abound in valuing the village's rural character, improving connectivity, and developing new social hubs, thereby making the village an attractive, thriving and healthy place for both current and future generations.

However, the community also faces significant needs, such as better public transport connectivity, reliable internet, and affordable living for younger families. Challenges include the risk of unplanned development, an ageing population, and rising fuel costs.

By addressing these needs and challenges, and capitalising on our opportunities, we aim to create a vibrant, attractive, and connected community that preserves the unique rural character of Smailholm. We invite all residents to join us in this endeavour, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and that our collective vision becomes a reality.

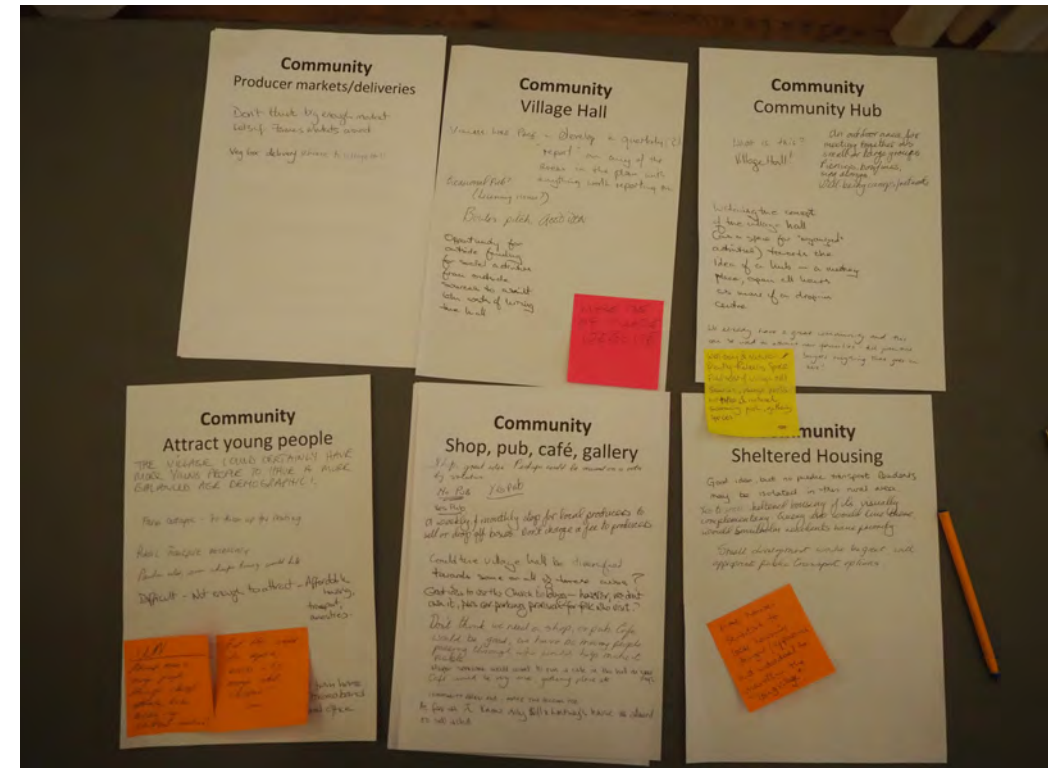


Figure 9. Community Event and Feedback

5. Vision

“Our vision for Smailholm is a vibrant, attractive, connected community, firmly rooted in the rural nature of the village”.

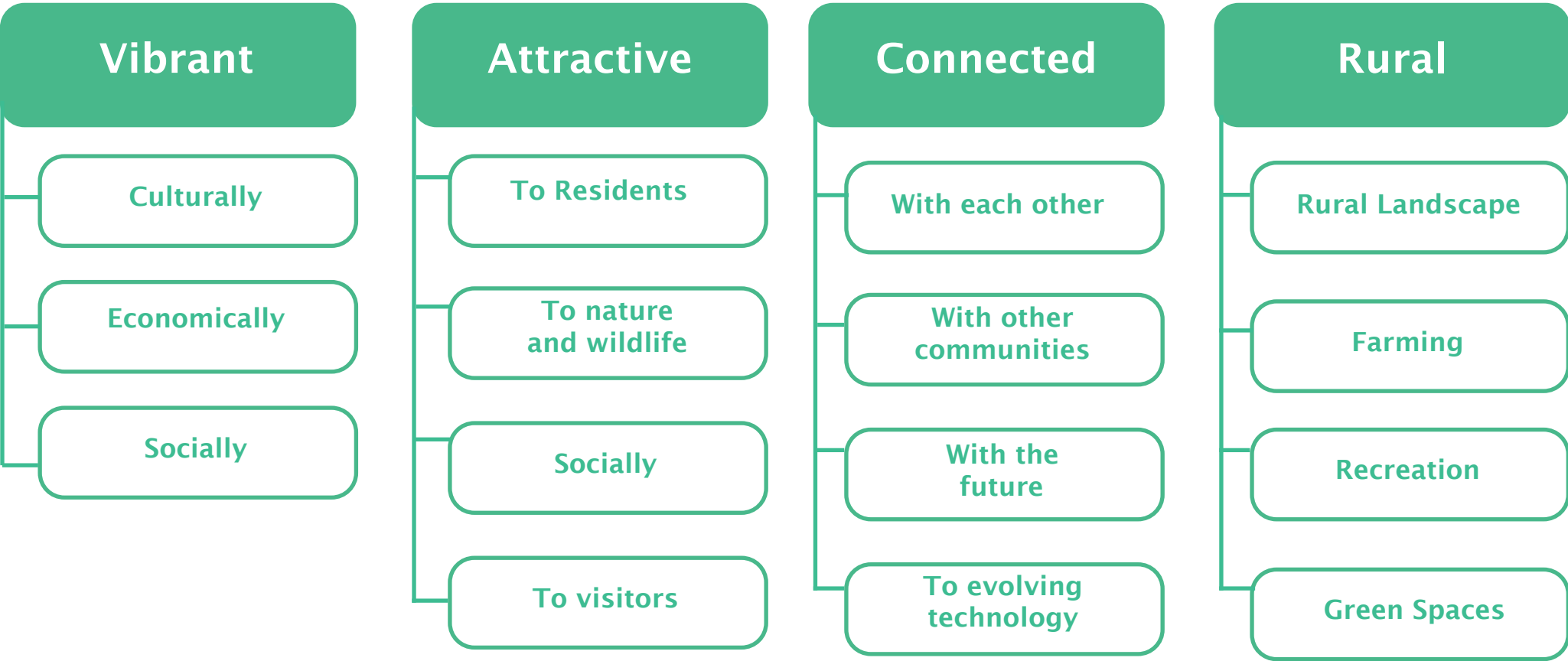


Figure 10. Our Vision for Smailholm

Themes

The community consultation for the Smailholm Local Place Plan identified five themes associated with our vision. These themes emerged from the stakeholder engagement sessions and reflect the collective aspirations of the community.

The long term aims for each one of those themes and how they relate to the vision are presented in Figure 12. For a full report on residents' thoughts, suggestions and discussions related to each one of the 5 themes, see Appendix 3.

We strongly believe that our vision and associated themes balance our Local and National Governments' drive for growth and modernisation with the preservation, and enhancement of the village's unique rural character and community spirit.

The themes can be seen on the next page.



Figure 11. Smailholm

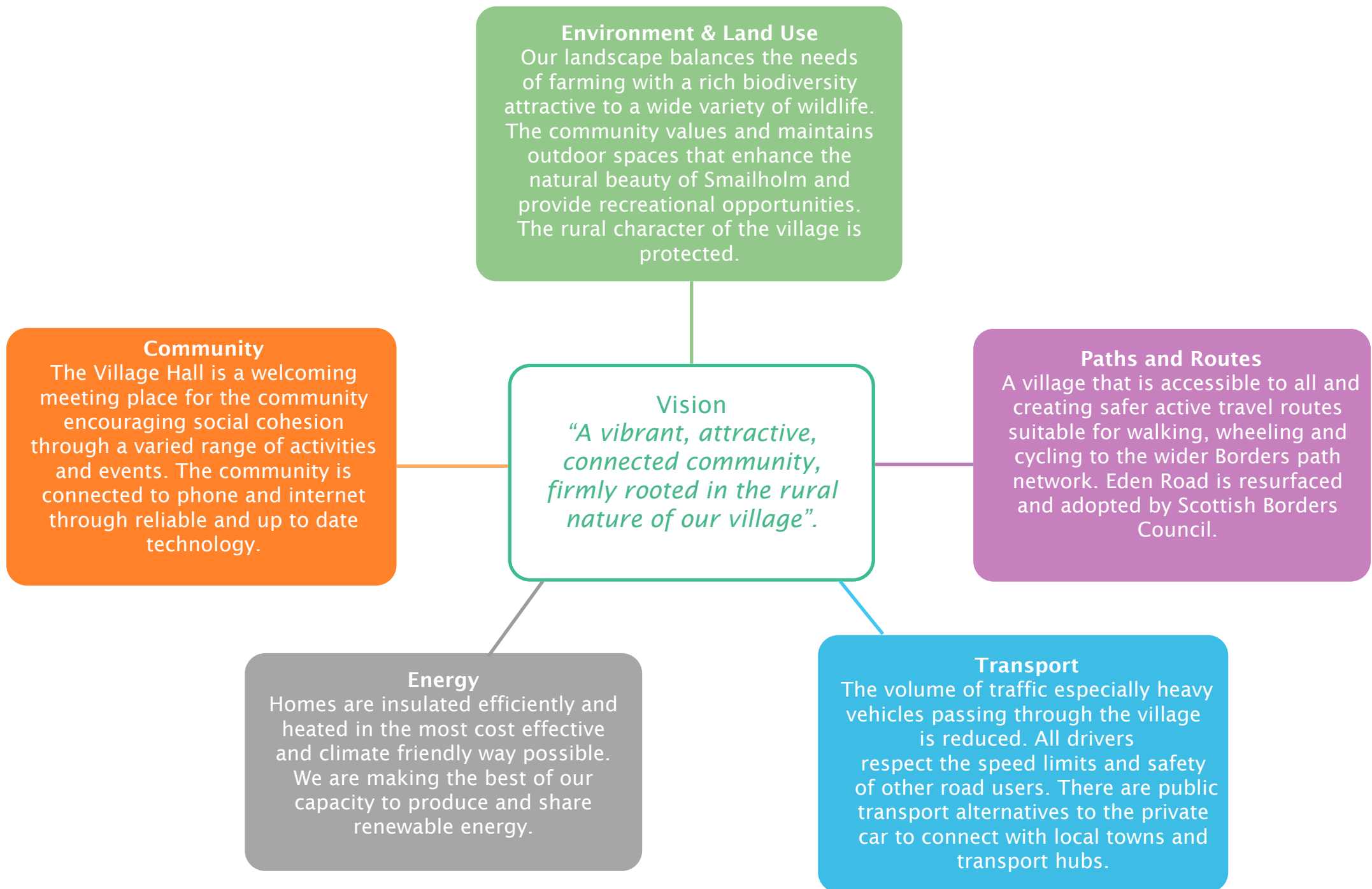


Figure 12. Place Plan themes

6. Place Plan

In this chapter, we lay out the main elements of our village plan. These are set out as 'projects' which, we believe, represent well-defined, strategic contributions towards our desired future. The description of each individual project is based on problems, thoughts and ideas for action that emerged from community consultation events. For more details about the various ideas that emerged during those village consultations, please see Appendix 3.

We considered various national and local policy frameworks, both current and under development, including the Local Development Plan, in the development of our village place plan. We have complemented the description of our main projects with a short section on the specific areas of policy that, we believe, each individual theme contributes to. For more details about the full list of national and regional policies considered, see Appendix 4.



Figure 13. Smailholm Wall-hanging

6.1 Paths and Routes ●

Our aims

- To develop safer active travel routes suitable for walking, wheeling, cycling and horse riding and connections to the wider Borders footpath network
- To ensure visitors and residents of Eden Road have safe access to the road network.

National and regional policy linkages:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4): Supports local living and active travel, enhancing connectivity and accessibility. This aligns with the principles of local living and rural revitalisation by promoting sustainable travel options
- Scotland's Climate Change Plan: Aims to reduce car use by promoting sustainable transport options like walking, wheeling and cycling, contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- SEStran 2035 Regional Transport Strategy: Addresses high car dependency and promotes active travel to improve safety and accessibility.
- Scottish Borders Local Development Plan: Supports infrastructure development to improve connectivity and accessibility within the region.



Figure 14. Aerial of Smailholm village path

Shared Access Route Project

Rationale: Throughout the consultation process, there was a strong feeling amongst residents that it isn't safe to walk between East and West Third. It was also felt that we should have better and safer 'active travel' connections to the neighbouring communities and the wider path network.

Details: The Shared Access Route project intends to develop and improve local paths and routes to encourage active travel within the village. This includes creating a safe, fully accessible, path that forms a circular route connecting East Third, West Third, and Eden Road along with the creation of a route that connects to the neighbouring town of Kelso to the Southeast. Key Features of the project include:

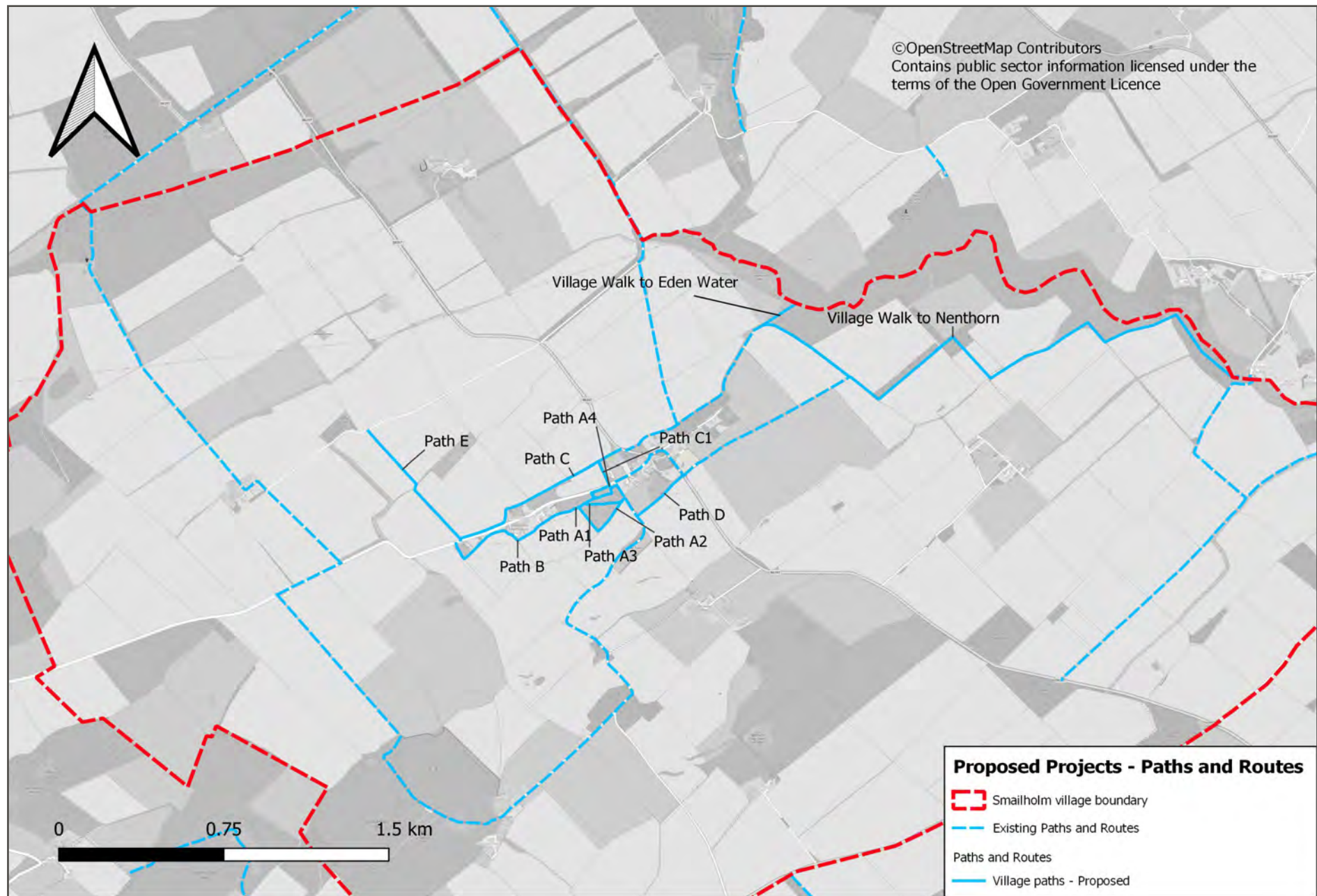
- *Shared Access Route: The paths will be designed for walking, wheeling, cycling and horse riding, ensuring they are safe and accessible for all users. Wheeling includes using any kind of wheeled mobility aid, including wheelchairs, mobility scooters, walking frames, scooting, prams or buggies (extract from upcoming Active Travel Strategy. Included is a proposal to add a section of pavement from the Gallery to Smailholm tower road.*
- *Circular Route: The path will connect key areas of the village, providing a continuous loop that enhances connectivity and accessibility.*
- *Recreational Opportunities: The paths will offer recreational benefits, allowing residents to enjoy outdoor activities, play, and leisure in a safe environment.*

- *Scenic Views: Routes will be designed to showcase the natural beauty of the village, with off-road paths that provide views of the surrounding fields and countryside.*
- *Farming friendly routes: Consolidating footpaths through neighbouring farmland to minimise possible impact from walkers on farmland and farm operations, keeping users, farm workers and livestock safe.*



Figure 15. Aerial of proposed village path extension to Eden Water

Shared Access Route Project Map



Eden Road Project

Rationale: Eden Road provides access to at least 12 properties and to the main village walk, which includes the registered Kelso Walk connecting Mellerstain and Smailholm Tower. The road is not adopted and is in a poor state of repair, making it unsafe for vehicles and other road users.

Details: The Eden Road project (Figure 17) will bring the road up to standard and enhance the area by creating a woodland walk and installing an interpretation board to provide educational and recreational benefits to the community and walkers. Key features include:

- *Road surface: resurfacing of Eden Road to the standard required for adoption by Scottish Border Council.*
- *Woodland walk: development of Scenic Woodland Walk along Eden Road offering a natural and tranquil environment for residents and walkers to enjoy.*
- *Information: installation of an interpretation board to provide information on local flora, fauna and historical significance of the area. This will enhance the educational value of the walk and promote awareness of the local environment.*



Figure 17. Eden Road, Smailholm

Proposed Eden Road Project Map

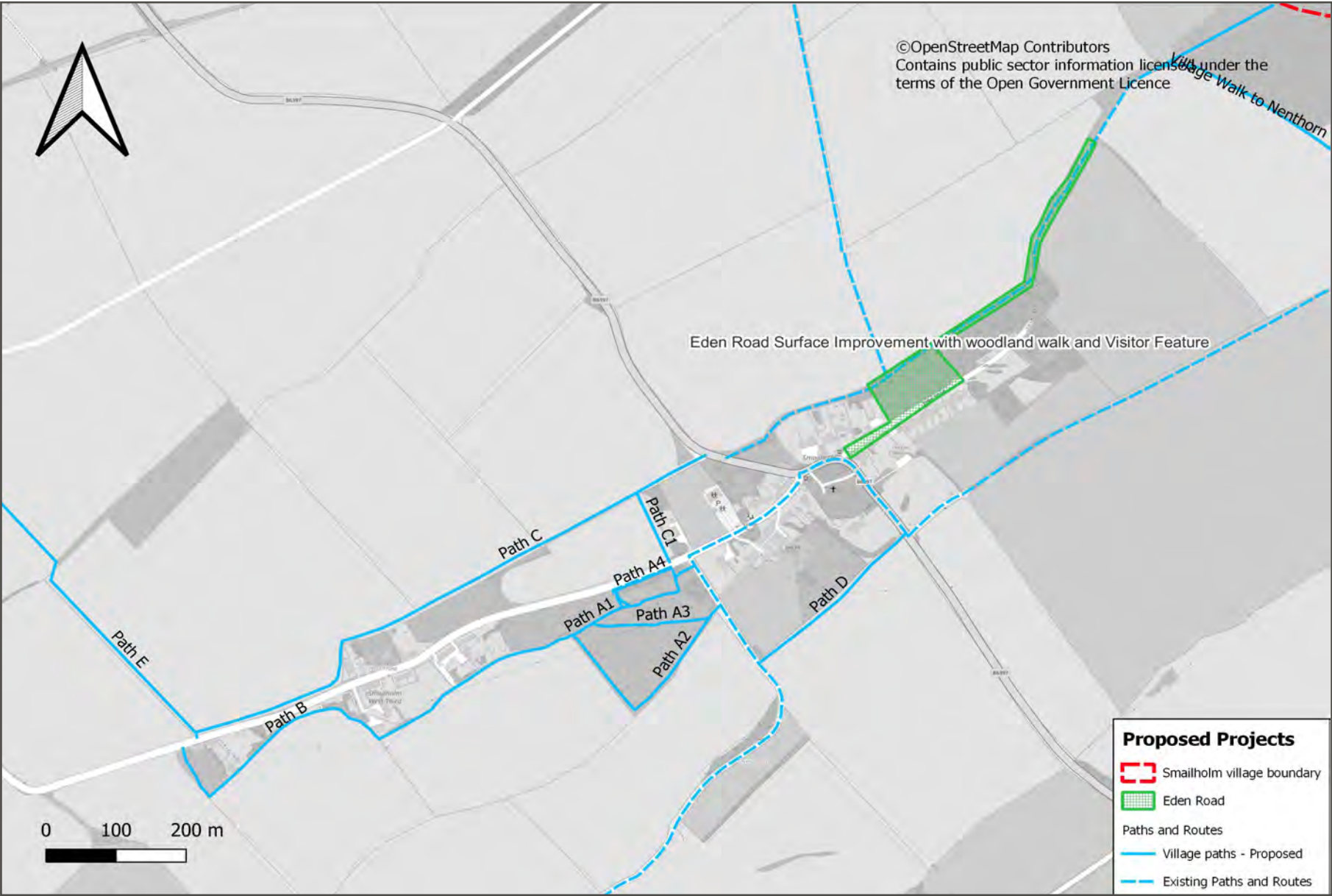


Figure 18. Proposed Eden Road Project

6.2 Transport ●

Our aims:

- To reduce the volume of traffic, especially heavy vehicles, passing through the village
- To reduce the speed of all drivers passing through the village
- To provide public transport alternatives to the private car to connect with local towns and transport hubs

National and regional policy linkages

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4): Emphasises the importance of safe and inclusive transport systems to support sustainable development
- Scotland's Climate Change Plan: Focuses on reducing transport emissions and improving road safety to meet climate targets.
- SEStran 2035 Regional Transport Strategy: Aims to enhance road safety and manage traffic flow, particularly in rural areas.
- Scottish Borders Local Development Plan: Encourages strategic growth and improved connectivity to support economic development.



Figure 19. Aerial of Smailholm

Road Safety Improvement Project

Rationale: the main roads through the village are a thoroughfare for heavy quarry vehicles and concrete mixers from the nearby Tarmac company as well as for bulky and heavy farm machinery and trailer transits connecting different parts of farm estates. This traffic has become steadily worse, with increased numbers of vehicles, increasing lorry and farm machinery sizes and weights, causing increased risks to residents and building structures, and increased noise levels, as well as damaging the road surface and verges.

The village is also a thoroughfare for commuter and other car traffic and drivers do not always respect the 40 and 20mph speed limits, endangering the lives of local residents and walkers in the absence of secure walkways.

Details: The project aims to enhance road safety by implementing measures to reduce the volume and speed of traffic passing through the village. Key Features of this project include:

- *Speed Reduction: introduction of measures to encourage adherence to the speed limits within the village.*
- *Traffic Calming: implementation of traffic calming measures to slow down vehicles.*
- *Alternative Routes: exploration of alternative routes to divert heavy traffic away from the village centre.*



Figure 20. Smailholm Transport

Current Roads

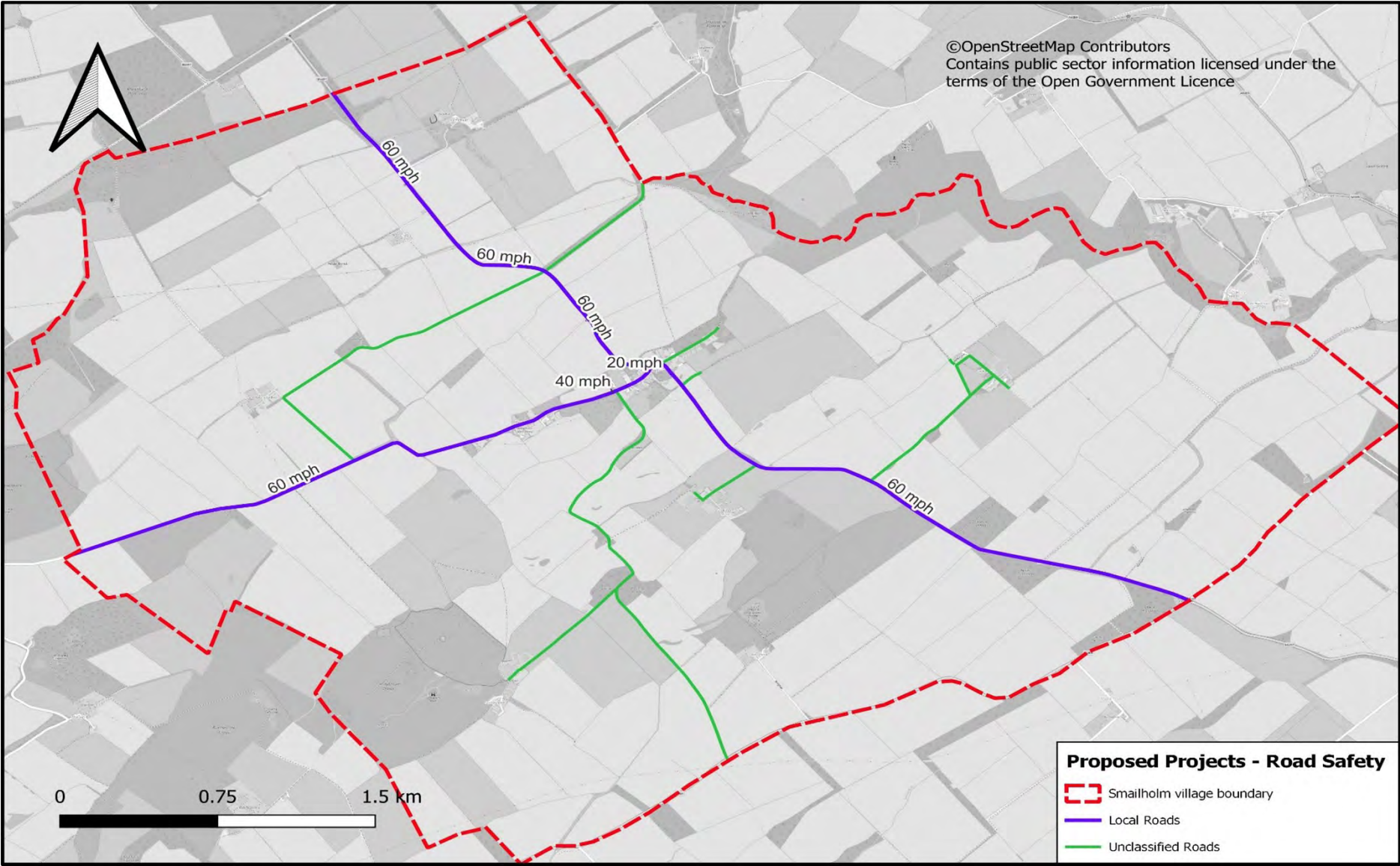


Figure 21. Smailholm Local Road Network

Road Safety Improvement - Suggestions



Figure 22. Road Safety Interventions

6.3 Environment and Land Use ●

Our aims:

- To live in a landscape that balances the needs of farming with a rich biodiversity attractive to a wide variety of wildlife.
- To value and maintain outdoor spaces that enhance the natural beauty of Smailholm and provide recreational opportunities.
- To protect the rural character of the village.

National and regional policy linkages

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4): Promotes conserving and enhancing natural assets to support biodiversity and climate resilience
- Scottish Biodiversity Strategy: Aims to protect and enhance biodiversity, with a vision for a nature-positive Scotland by 2045.
- Scottish National Adaptation Plan: Supports nature-based solutions and landscape-scale approaches to enhance resilience to climate change.
- Scottish Borders Local Development Plan: Encourages sustainable land use and conservation efforts to protect the natural environment
- Rural Land Use Framework for the South of Scotland: Provides detailed information about current and possible future land uses for the South of Scotland, taking account of food production and environmental functions of the land



Figure 23. Aerial of Village Common and Area of Set-Aside between East and West Third

Village Land Use and Nature Project

Rationale: Discussions at village meetings revealed an interest in enhancing the village biodiversity, based on past investments, ie: the village pond and adjoining set-aside land maintained by the main landowner, and making the best of other unbuilt plots across the village.

Details: the project aims to rejuvenate the pond and the surrounding natural areas to enhance their ecological value, accessibility and recreational use for the community. Key Features of this project include:

- *Village land use map: explore, with the local landowners, options for maintaining current woodlands and permanent pastures and converting under-used agricultural areas of land in the village into permanent set-asides and / or alternative land uses (housing, community use, ...) – see Figure 25.*
- *Pond Regeneration: Restoration of the pond to improve water quality, support local wildlife, and create a more attractive and functional natural feature, and landscaping and planting native species around the pond to enhance the area's aesthetic appeal and biodiversity.*
- *Accessibility Improvements: Development of paths and seating areas to make the pond accessible to all community members, including those with mobility issues.*
- *Educational Opportunities: Installation of informational signage to educate visitors about the local ecosystem, flora, and fauna.*



Figure 24. Smailholm Nature

Green spaces - Village core



Figure 25. Proposed Nature Project

Rural Landscape Project

Rationale: Smailholm village and the 5 sets of farm buildings and cottages are nestled within an outstanding rolling agricultural landscape, interspersed with small patches of woodland and rocky craigs. The village consultations revealed a strong sense of connection of villagers with the surrounding landscape, and an awareness of societal interests in achieving a balance between the food and biodiversity functions of land.

Details: this project aims to forge closer interactions between village residents, the main landowner and local farmers to develop joint actions to maintain and develop the surrounding landscape in a way that balances its primary food production functions with nature and climate. Key features of this project include:

- *Facilitating villager / farmer / landowner dialogues: to develop a mutual understanding of each other's viewpoints, approaches and needs*
- *Land use: explore land use options and village – farmer collaborations for the areas surrounding the core residential zones, including possible nature set aside zones and wildlife corridors, that prioritise the continued profitability of farming while maximising the natural functions of the land (water management, biodiversity, Carbon retention), guided by the recently proposed Rural Land Use Framework for the South of Scotland and suggested actions under the Agricultural Reform Act (Scotland).*



Figure 26. Rural Smailholm

For further details about land use in and around the village area, please see the Technical Note on Land Use, Appendix 3c.

Rural Landscape Project

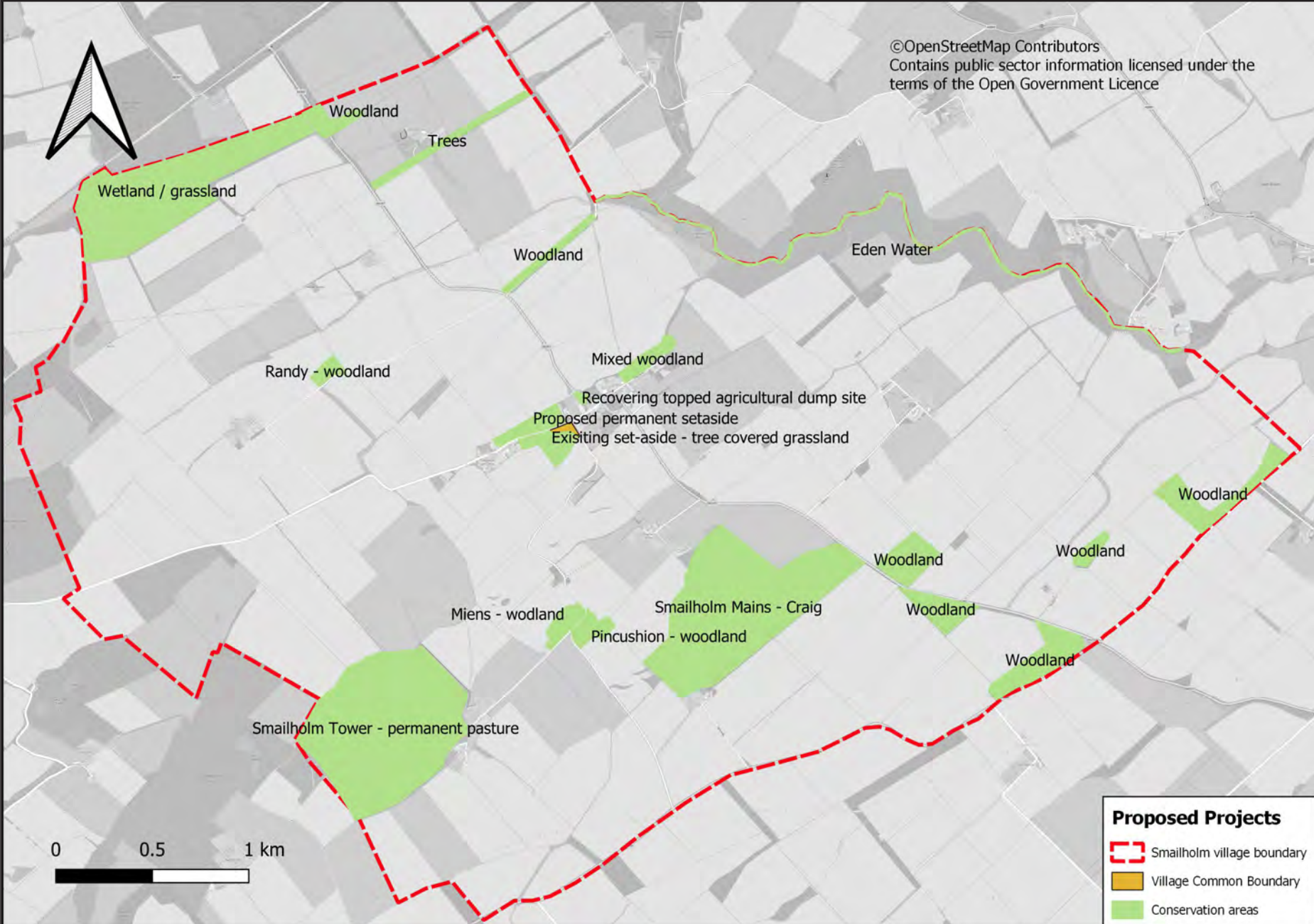


Figure 27. Rural Landscape Project

6.4 Community ●

Our aims:

- to maintain the Village Hall as a welcoming meeting place for the community, encouraging social cohesion through a varied range of activities and events
- to ensure the community is connected to phone and internet through reliable and up to date technology

National and regional policy linkages

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4): Supports local living and community empowerment, encouraging the development of community facilities
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act: Empowers communities to take control of local assets and have a say in decisions affecting them.
- Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband Programme: Aims to improve digital connectivity in rural areas, supporting economic and social development.
- Scottish Borders Community Plan: Focuses on enhancing community wellbeing and connectivity through targeted partnership actions.



Figure 28. Village Hall Cherry Blossoms

Village Hall Sustainability project

Rationale: The Village Hall, shown in Figure 30, is the hub of the community, managed by the Village Hall Committee who maintain and develop it. While the Village Hall prides itself on a very diverse and engaging programme of activities that go a long way to supporting the village strong sense of belonging and cohesion, some see scope for further developments and improvement to the building and further developing the range of services – eg: a community shop, café or workspaces.

Details: this project will explore options for further improvements to the Village Hall building, including in terms of energy efficiency and decarbonising heat and other alterations to enable an extended range of services to be delivered to the community. Key features include:

- *Identifying and implementing options for improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat generation in the village hall.*
- *Working with the Village Hall Committee to identify and implement possible infrastructure alterations to the Village Hall to enable additional services to be delivered.*



Figure 29. Village Hall Indoor Activity

Village Hall Outdoor Space Project

Rationale: In addition to possible alterations and improvements to the Village Hall building, village consultations also revealed opportunities for developing the Village Hall outdoor space.

Details: Current ideas for action are focused on creating outdoor spaces for community activities and gatherings which will make the Village Hall even more versatile and appealing to a wider range of residents and visitors. Key features include:

- *Boules Pitch: Installation of a boules pitch to provide a recreational activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Boules is a social game that encourages community interaction and outdoor activity.*
- *Picnic Areas: Creation of designated picnic areas with tables and seating to encourage outdoor dining and socialising.*
- *Gardens and Green Spaces: Development of gardens and green spaces to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Village Hall and provide a pleasant environment for relaxation and events.*
- *Multi-Use Spaces: Designing flexible outdoor spaces that can be used for various activities, such as markets, fairs, and community events.*



Figure 30. Aerial of Smailholm Village Hall

Connectivity Project

Rationale: the village has poor mobile telephone signal in many parts and internet connections to individual homes have not yet been converted to fibre-optic. With the imminent phase-out of landlines, there is a real danger that village residents will soon have less secure access to the wider community than before. This represents a significant risk to the ageing village community, given the village remoteness from local services and the not infrequent power and water supply outages. The village's outdated connectivity infrastructure also represents a missed opportunity to attracting younger people and families into the area.

Details: This project will work with relevant government departments to improve mobile connectivity and fast-speed broadband connections. Project Gigabit is a government initiative aimed at enhancing digital infrastructure, ensuring high-speed Internet access for all community members. See Appendix 3d – Community.



Figure 31. Smailholm Connectivity

6.5 Energy ●

Our aims:

- to ensure homes are insulated efficiently and heated in the most cost effective and climate friendly way possible
- to make the best of our capacity to produce and share renewable energy.

National and regional policy linkages

- Energy Efficient Scotland: Promotes energy efficiency in homes and buildings to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan: Supports the transition to renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency to meet climate targets.
- Scottish Borders Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy: Aims to improve energy efficiency and decarbonise heat supply in buildings to meet net zero targets.

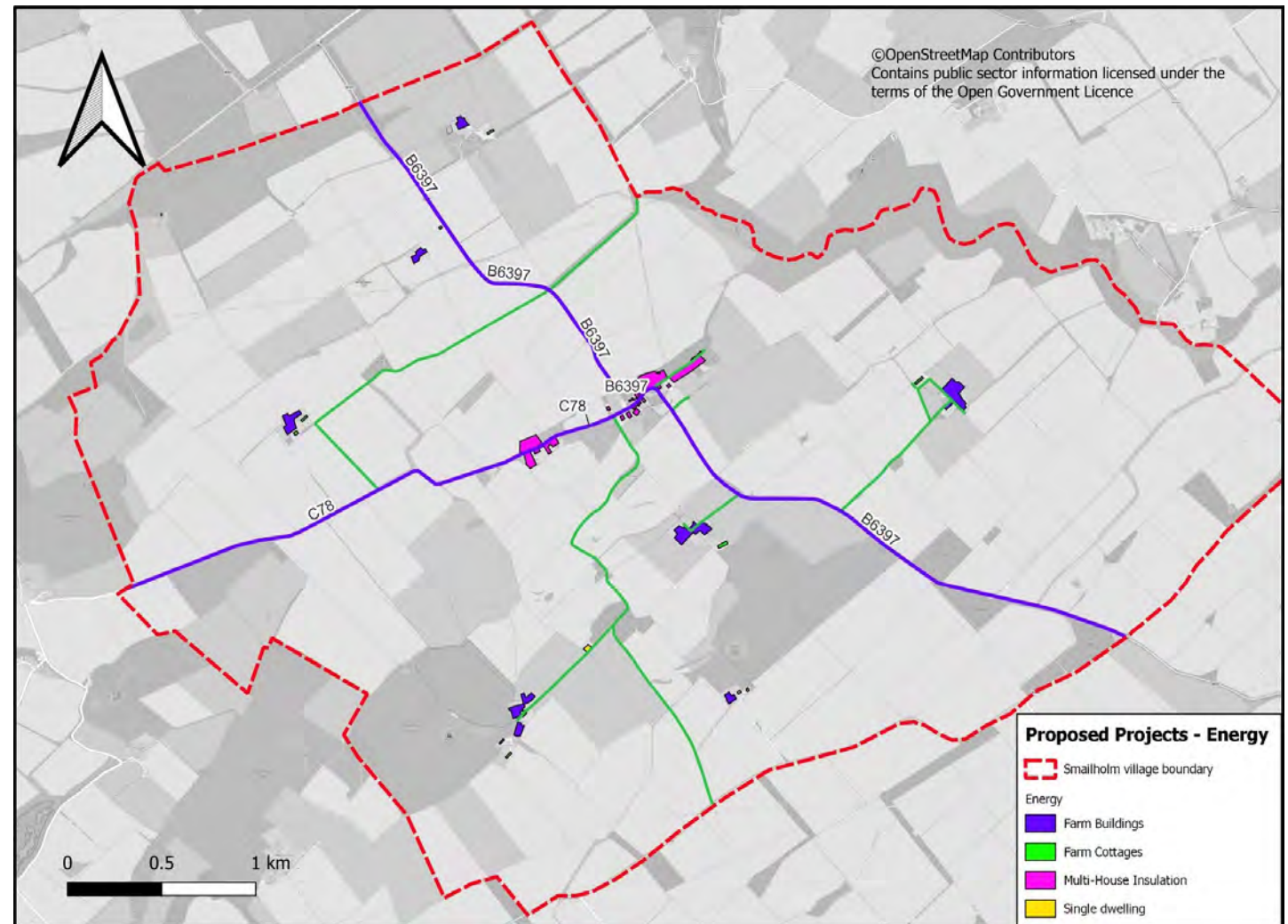


Figure 32. Location of properties targeted by the insulation, heating and energy projects

Home insulation project

Rationale: Smailholm residences are of mixed build and varying levels of insulation. This includes several Whinstone cottages and old farm buildings, probably built in the 18th – 19th Century. The remainder include houses built at various times in the 20th Century, including a row of 8 former Council houses on Eden Road. There are also a few more recent, 21st century builds scattered across the village.

Details: The project aims to help residents improve the heat efficiency of their homes, by exploring and implementing multi-house insulation solutions. This initiative seeks to reduce energy consumption, lower heating costs and enhance the comfort of residents' homes. Key Features include:

- *Energy Efficiency – awareness building: conduct heat loss surveys of individual homes, raising awareness about main areas of heat loss and potential remedial actions, and collecting data for subsequent, community wide interventions*
- *Energy Efficiency – insulation: explore and facilitate the insulation of multiple houses to enhance energy efficiency and reduce heat loss.*
- *Cost Reduction: by insulating several homes simultaneously, the project aims to lower the overall cost per house through bulk purchasing and shared labour costs.*
- *Sustainability: Promoting sustainable living by reducing the carbon footprint of the village through improved home insulation.*



Figure 33. Home insulation

Home Heating project

Rationale: Most houses have oil-fired central heating, except a few who have installed heat pumps. During village consultations, many villagers expressed concerns about the rising costs of heating and the lack of reliable information about how best to transition to less costly, renewable heat sources.

Details: The project aims to investigate and implement community-based energy schemes to provide sustainable and renewable heat solutions for the village. This initiative seeks to reduce energy costs and promote cost effective ways to facilitate the transition away from oil. Key Features include:

- *Decarbonising Heat: identify and appraise the suitability of alternative, renewable sources of heat.*
- *Cost Reduction: assess the relative merits of deploying coordinated individual home solutions and of multi-house heat projects (eg: district heating, ground sourced arrays).*



Figure 34. Home heating

Community Energy Project

Rationale: An increasing number of residents are installing solar panels and home batteries to reduce the cost of electricity and support the transition to net zero emissions. The increased array of solar panels across the village offers the possibility to create a local grid, which could smooth demand and supply peaks across households, make Smailholm more resilient to the occasional power outages occasioned by extreme weather events and reduce its dependency on the national grid. Parts of the Smailholm region experiences strong winds and there are opportunities for wind power generation, as well as for small to medium scale solar power generation, to increase the local power generating capacity and contribute to greater resilience in the system. Some farmers have expressed an interest in transitioning to zero-Carbon fuel for farm machinery.

Details: This project will explore options for reducing energy costs, promoting sustainability, and enhancing energy security for residents, through power sharing and community-based power generation schemes. Key features include:

- *Renewable Energy Sources: identifying and conducting technical and economic appraisals of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and biomass to generate power for the community.*
- *Community Energy Projects: Development of community-owned and operated energy projects that can provide local energy solutions and keep the benefits within the community.*
- *Energy Efficiency: Integration of energy efficiency measures to complement the renewable energy projects, ensuring that the community's overall energy consumption is reduced.*



Figure 35. Solar Panels, Wind Energy

7. Making it Happen

Smailholm's Place Plan sets out our vision for Smailholm over the coming 5 to 10 years. The plan also lists several possible projects, which, the local community believe could go a long way to achieving our vision.

There are 2 main channels to making those projects happen:

1. through Council planning, actions and assessments of / guidance to individual planning applications and
2. through community action.

Our plan has been elaborated and formatted in ways that make it eligible for registration as a Local Place Plan (LPP)

Some community action is already on-going, such as the steering group that led the development of this plan, the Village Hall Committee who are responsible for the social well-being of the community and a Heat Loss Survey team of volunteers; the Community Council is also very supportive

Some projects in this village plan will, no doubt, develop in similar ways as when the pond area was first developed and the village hall extension designed and built. Others, such as the paths and routes, transport and energy projects may require more than what small teams of volunteers can achieve locally and will require additional resources, know how and skills to take them forward. This will necessitate some form of collaboration with larger organisations and/or Community Development Trusts.

Most of the actions proposed in our Place plan will also require funding, which is available from several sources, official, private and funding from charities and social investors. Ideally, the community finds a way to self-finance part of the management of the process via community assets (eg: renewables) and/or community benefit shares from local industries. There are also opportunities for collaborative ventures with the Mellerstain Estate who own most of the surrounding lands.



Figure 36. Smailholm Tower

Our village Action Plan below lists each individual project and the associated actions and possible funding sources for taking them forward. This additional document benefits, in places, from pre-feasibility studies conducted by the AtkinsRéalis consultant team, which have been added to this Plan as Technical Notes.

This Action Plan, together with the Technical Notes, will hopefully inspire and assist members of the community and others to take our plan forward

8. Action Plan

Paths and Routes

Shared Access Route Project

Creation of safe paths around the village, including circular path connecting East Third, West Third and Eden Road

Aims

Develop and improve local paths and routes to encourage active travel within the village. This includes creating a safe, fully accessible, shared access route that forms a circular route connecting East Third, West Third, and Eden Road.

Circular Route: The path will connect key areas of the village, providing a continuous loop that enhances connectivity and accessibility.

Recreational Opportunities: The paths will offer recreational benefits, allowing residents to enjoy outdoor activities, play, and leisure in a safe environment.

Scenic Views: The route will be designed to showcase the natural beauty of the village, with off-road paths that provide views of the surrounding fields and countryside.

Suggested Partners

Scottish Borders Council, Sustrans Paths for All Partnership
Fieldfare trust

Suggested Funding

Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

Outputs & Outcomes

Shared Access Route: creating safer active travel routes suitable for walking, wheeling, cycling and horse riding.

Circular Route: Connects key areas of the village, enhancing connectivity and accessibility.

Recreational Opportunities: Provides safe environments for outdoor activities, play, and leisure.

Scenic Views: Off-road paths showcasing the natural beauty of the village.

Farming Friendly Routes: Consolidates footpaths through farmland to minimise impact on farm operations.

Risks & Constrains

- Landowner permission
- Concerns about the urbanisation effect of adding pavements and the potential impact on the village's rural character.
- Privacy concerns for properties near paths.
- Maintenance of the new infrastructure.
- Potential ecological issues and impacts on wildlife habitats.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage landowners around potential routes.
- Secure funding to undertake phased development of routes.
- Develop a maintenance plan to sustain activities.

Paths and Routes

Eden Road Project

Eden Road improvement with woodland walk and interpretation board

Aims

The project aims to enhance Eden Road by creating a woodland walk and installing an interpretation board to provide educational and recreational benefits to the community.

Enhance Eden Road by creating a woodland walk and installing an interpretation board to provide educational and recreational benefits to the community.

Suggested Partners

Scottish Borders Council, local community groups, environmental organisations, Sustrans, Paths for All Partnership

Suggested Funding

Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

Outputs & Outcomes

Road Surface: Resurfacing Eden Road to meet the standard required for adoption by Scottish Borders Council.

Woodland Walk: Development of a scenic woodland walk along Eden Road, offering a natural and tranquil environment for residents and walkers.

Information: Installation of an interpretation board to provide information on local flora, fauna, and historical significance, enhancing the educational value of the walk and promoting awareness of the local environment.

Risks & Constraints

- Landowner permission
- Concerns about the maintenance of the new infrastructure
- Potential impact on the natural environment
- Ensuring proper upkeep and preserving the area's natural beauty

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage landowners around potential routes.
- Engage with local community groups and environmental organisations.
- Secure funding for the project.
- Develop detailed plans for the road resurfacing and woodland walk.
- Install the interpretation board and ensure ongoing maintenance.

Transport

Road Safety Improvement Project

Introduction of measures to reduce speed of traffic through the village

Aims

Enhance road safety by implementing measures to reduce the speed of traffic passing through the village, particularly important due to heavy vehicles, including farm and quarry vehicles, that use the village roads. The aim of this work is to allow residents and visitors to get from one end of the village to the other, encouraging more people to take more physical activity and sustainable transport more often, without fear from speeding and heavy vehicles.

Traffic Calming: Implementation of village gateway measures to slow down vehicles.

Alternative Routes: Exploration of alternative routes to divert heavy traffic away from the village centre.

Suggested Partners

Scottish Borders Council

Suggested Funding

Scottish Borders Council

Outputs & Outcomes

Speed Reduction: Introduction of measures to encourage adherence to speed limits within the village and enhance perception of speed.

Traffic Calming: Implementation of village gateway measures to slow down vehicles.

Alternative Routes: Exploration of alternative routes to divert heavy traffic away from the village centre.

Risks & Constraints

- Concerns about the effectiveness of a speed reduction measures and whether they will be effective.
- Visual impact of traffic calming measures on the village's appearance.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage with Scottish Borders Council.
- Secure funding for the project.
- Develop detailed plans for speed reduction and traffic calming measures.
- Implement the measures and monitor their effectiveness.

Environment and Land Use

Village Land Use and Nature Project

Enhance the ecological value, accessibility, and recreational use of the pond and surrounding natural areas for the community.

Aims

Enhance the ecological value, accessibility, and recreational use of the pond and surrounding natural areas for the community.

Suggested Partners

Scottish Borders Council, local landowners, environmental organisations, community groups.

Suggested Funding

Nature Scotland, Paths for All Partnership, Fieldfare Trust

Outputs & Outcomes

Pond Regeneration: Restoration of the pond to improve water quality, support local wildlife, and create a more attractive and functional natural feature.

Natural Beauty Enhancement: Landscaping and planting native species around the pond to enhance the area's aesthetic appeal and biodiversity.

Accessibility Improvements: Development of paths and seating areas to make the pond accessible to all community members, including those with mobility issues.

Educational Opportunities: Installation of informational signage to educate visitors about the local ecosystem, flora, and fauna.

Village Land Use Map: Explore options with local landowners for maintaining current woodlands and permanent pastures, and converting under-used agricultural areas into permanent set-asides or alternative land uses (e.g., housing, community use).

Risks & Constraints

- Concerns about the ongoing maintenance of the pond and surrounding area to ensure it remains in good condition.
- Accessibility and safety concerns, particularly for families and individuals with disabilities.
- Potential habitat disruption during the regeneration process.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage with local landowners, environmental organisations, and community groups.
- Secure funding for the project.
- Develop detailed plans for pond regeneration, landscaping, and accessibility improvements.
- Install informational signage and ensure ongoing maintenance.

Environment and Land Use

Rural Landscape Project

Forge closer interactions between village residents, the main landowner, and local farmers to develop joint actions to maintain and develop the surrounding landscape.

Aims

Balance the primary food production functions of the land with nature and climate considerations.

Suggested Partners

Local farmers, landowners, environmental organisations, Scottish Borders Council.

Suggested Funding

Nature Scotland, Paths for All Partnership

Outputs & Outcomes

Land Use Exploration: Explore land use options and village-farmer collaborations for areas surrounding the core residential zones, including possible nature set-aside zones and wildlife corridors.

Sustainable Practices: Prioritise continued profitability of farming while maximising the natural functions of the land (water management, biodiversity, carbon retention).

Risks & Constraints

- Balancing the interests of different stakeholders (farmers, landowners, residents).
- Ensuring sustainable practices that do not negatively impact food production.
- Potential resistance to changes in land use practices.
- Potential habitat disruption during the regeneration process.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage with local farmers, landowners, and environmental organisations.
- Develop detailed plans for land use exploration and sustainable practices.
- Facilitate ongoing dialogue and collaborations between stakeholders.

Community

Village Hall Sustainability Project

Enhance the village hall's appeal and functionality to attract a broader range of community members and increase its usage for various activities and events.

Aims

Improve the village hall's facilities and outdoor area to make it more versatile and accommodating for different types of events and activities to make it more appealing to a wider range of residents and visitors and encourage more people within the village and outlying farms to take part in village events and avail of the facilities within the village hall.

Suggested Partners

Village Hall Committee, local community groups, energy efficiency experts.

Suggested Funding

Scottish Borders Council - Village Halls Funding Federation of Village Halls Grant Scheme, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)

Outputs & Outcomes

Facility Improvements: Upgrading the village hall's facilities to make it more versatile and accommodating for different types of events and activities.

Outdoor Area Utilisation: Enhancing the outdoor area of the village hall to create additional spaces for community gatherings, such as a boules pitch or picnic area.

Energy Efficiency: Identifying and implementing options for improving energy efficiency and decarbonising heat generation in the village hall.

Community Engagement: Strengthening community cohesion and engagement by making the village hall a more vibrant and inclusive space for all residents.

Risks & Constraints

- Concerns about the practicality and sustainability of new features and events.
- Questions about who would manage and run these activities and whether there is sufficient demand.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Work with the Village Hall Committee and stakeholders to test demand and viability of additional events.
- Work with the Village Hall Committee to
- identify and implement possible infrastructure alterations.
- Raise funds.
- Potentially recruit more volunteers to help manage and run additional activities.
- Secure additional funding to sustain long-term operations.

Community

Village Hall Outdoor Space Project

Utilise the outdoor area of the village hall more effectively to create additional spaces for community activities and gatherings.

Aims

Enhance the outdoor spaces of the village hall to make it more versatile and appealing to a wider range of residents and visitors and encourage more people within the village and outlying farms to take part in village events and avail of the facilities within the village hall.

Suggested Partners

Village Hall Committee, local community groups, landscape architects.

Suggested Funding

Scottish Borders Council - Village Halls Funding, Federation of Village Halls Grant Scheme, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Scottish Borders Council - Community Grants and Funding

Greenspace Scotland

NatureScot

Outputs & Outcomes

Multi-Use Spaces: Designing flexible outdoor spaces that can be used for various activities, such as markets, fairs, and community events.

Picnic Areas: Creation of designated picnic areas with tables and seating to encourage outdoor dining and socialising.

Gardens and Green Spaces: Development of gardens and green spaces to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the village hall and provide a pleasant environment for relaxation and events.

Boules Pitch: Installation of a boules pitch to provide a recreational activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Boules is a social game that encourages community interaction and outdoor activity.

Risks & Constraints

- Concerns about the maintenance of the new outdoor facilities.
- Ensuring there is enough interest and participation to justify the investment.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage with the Village Hall Committee and local community groups.
- Secure funding for the project.
- Develop detailed plans for the outdoor spaces, including the boules pitch, picnic areas, and gardens.
- Implement the plans and ensure ongoing maintenance.

Community Connectivity Project

Improve mobile connectivity and fast-speed broadband connections in the village.

Aims

Ensure the community is connected to phone and internet through reliable and up-to-date technology, especially with the imminent phase-out of landlines.

Suggested Partners

Telecommunications companies, Digital Scotland, Scottish Government

Suggested Funding

Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband Programme, Project Gigabit

Outputs & Outcomes

Mobile Connectivity: Improve mobile phone signal coverage throughout the village to ensure reliable communication.

Broadband Connections: Upgrade internet connections to fibre-optic to provide fast and reliable internet access for all residents.

Community Safety: Enhance the safety and security of residents, particularly the ageing population, by ensuring reliable communication channels.

Attracting New Residents: Improve connectivity infrastructure to attract younger people and families to the area.

Risks & Constraints

- Potential delays in infrastructure upgrades.
- Ensuring affordability and accessibility of improved services for all residents.
- Technical challenges in upgrading existing infrastructure.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Engage with telecommunications companies and Digital Scotland.
- Develop detailed plans for improving mobile connectivity and broadband connections.
- Implement the upgrades and ensure ongoing maintenance and support.

Energy

Home Insulation Project

Explore opportunities for multi-house insulation to improve energy efficiency.

Aims

Improve the energy efficiency of homes in the village to reduce long term heating costs for villagers and move away from the use of oil, by exploring and implementing multi-house insulation solutions.

Cost Reduction: By insulating several homes simultaneously, the project aims to lower the overall cost per house through bulk purchasing and shared labor costs.

Sustainability: Promoting sustainable living by reducing the carbon footprint and heating fuel use and cost of the village through improved home insulation.

Suggested Partners

Energy efficiency experts, local contractors, Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council.

Suggested Funding

Scottish Government, Scottish Borders Council, Home Energy Scotland, ECO4 Scheme

Outputs & Outcomes

Energy Efficiency: Focus on improving the insulation of multiple houses to enhance energy efficiency and reduce heat loss.

Cost Reduction: By insulating several homes simultaneously, the project aims to lower the overall cost per house through bulk purchasing and shared labour costs.

Sustainability: Promoting sustainable living by reducing the carbon footprint of the village through improved home insulation.

Risks & Constraints

- Concerns over disruption in homes of undertaking the necessary insulation works.
- Concerns about the initial cost of insulation and whether it will be affordable.
- Suitability of certain insulation methods for older homes.

Delivery & Next Steps

- Conduct heat loss surveys of individual homes.
- Liaise with residents to assess demand.
- Raise awareness about main areas of heat loss and potential remedial actions.
- Explore and facilitate the insulation of multiple houses.
- Secure funding and develop a detailed implementation plan.

Energy

Home Heating Project

Explore options for reducing energy costs, promoting sustainability, and enhancing energy security for residents, through power sharing and community-based power generation schemes.

Aims

Investigate and implement community-based energy schemes to provide sustainable and renewable heat solutions for the village. This initiative seeks to reduce energy costs and promote cost-effective ways to facilitate the transition away from oil.

Suggested Partners

Scottish Borders Council, Renewable energy companies
Environmental organisations

Suggested Funding

Government grants for renewable energy projects, Private sector investments, Environmental grants from organisations such as the Renewable Energy Association

Outputs & Outcomes

Decarbonising Heat: Identify and appraise the suitability of alternative, renewable sources of heat, such as heat pumps, solar thermal, and biomass.

Cost Reduction: Assess the relative merits of deploying coordinated individual home solutions versus multi-house heat projects (e.g., district heating, ground-sourced arrays).

Community Engagement: Conduct workshops and provide reliable information to villagers about renewable heat sources and their benefits.

Pilot Projects: Implement pilot projects to demonstrate the effectiveness of renewable heating solutions and gather data for broader implementation.

Risks & Constraints

- High initial costs of renewable heating systems and potential funding shortfalls.
- Suitability of renewable heating systems for different types of houses and existing infrastructure.
- Resistance to change and lack of awareness about the benefits of renewable heating solutions.
- Compliance with local regulations

Delivery & Next Steps

- Collaborate with Scottish Borders Council renewable energy experts, and community groups to develop a comprehensive plan.
- Identify and apply for funding opportunities to support the project.
- Create detailed plans for the implementation of renewable heating solutions, including technical assessments and cost-benefit analyses.
- Launch pilot projects to test the feasibility and effectiveness of proposed solutions.
- Continuously monitor the progress of the pilot projects and evaluate their outcomes to inform broader implementation.

Energy

Community Energy Schemes

Explore community energy schemes (heat and power) to provide sustainable and renewable energy solutions.

Aims

Investigate and implement community-based energy schemes to reduce energy costs, promote sustainability, and enhance energy security for residents.

Suggested Partners

Renewable energy experts, local contractors, Scottish Government, community groups.

Suggested Funding

Scottish Government Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES), Scottish Borders Council, SSE Renewables and Clyde Wind Farm (Scotland) Ltd, Community Energy Scotland, potential local wind farm funding.

Outputs & Outcomes

Renewable Energy Sources: Exploration of various renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass to generate heat and power for the community.

Community Energy Projects: Development of community-owned and operated energy projects that can provide local energy solutions and keep the benefits within the community.

Energy Efficiency: Integration of energy efficiency measures to complement the renewable energy projects, ensuring that the community's overall energy consumption is reduced.

Risks & Constrains

- Technical Risks - Complexity of Implementation: Installing renewable energy systems can be technically complex, requiring specialised knowledge and skills
- Integration with Existing Infrastructure: Ensuring that new systems integrate seamlessly with existing infrastructure

Delivery & Next Steps

- Identify and conduct technical and economic appraisals of renewable energy sources.
- Develop community-owned and operated energy projects.
- Secure funding and develop a detailed implementation plan.
- Integrate energy efficiency measures to complement the renewable energy projects.

Appendices

1. Contextual Information
2. Community Engagement
3. Discussions on Each Theme
 - 3a. Paths and Routes
 - 3b. Transport
 - Road Safety Technical Note
 - Quiet Lane Technical Note
 - 3c. Environment and Land Use
 - 3d. Community
 - 3e. Energy
4. Policy Context

Appendix 1: Contextual Profile

1. Smailholm Today

The latest census data, including the 2022 Scottish Census, has been analysed, using outputs for the “1930 Civil Parish area” that coincides with Smailholm’s current boundaries. This provides the most accurate assessment of Smailholm’s current population profile.

Demography

Figure 37 illustrates the total number of residents by age bracket, highlighting that Smailholm has an ageing population, with the majority (58 individuals) aged between 55 and 74. There are only 8 residents under the age of 18.

Figure 38 shows the gender distribution in Smailholm, revealing an equal split between males and females, each constituting 50% of the population.

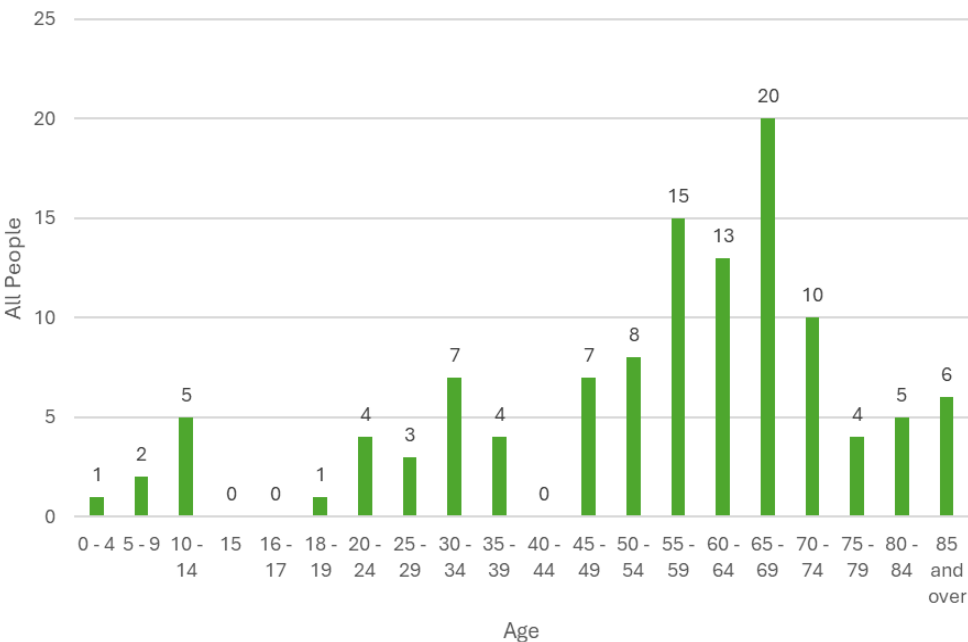


Figure 37. Smailholm Population Profile

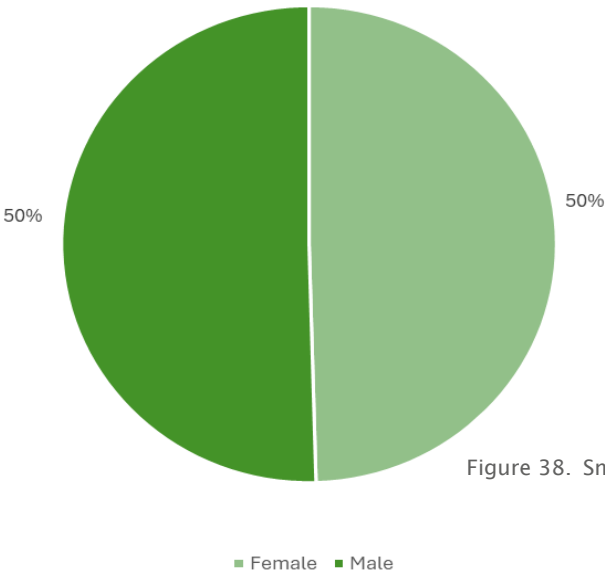


Figure 38. Smailholm Gender Split

Economic Profile

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Government’s tool to identifying those places in Scotland suffering from deprivation in terms of factors such as employment, income, health, education, skills and training, geographic access, crime, and housing and combines them into a single percentile value scored from 1-100%.

The 2020 Index below ranks electoral wards and sub-wards by percentile. It situates Smailholm in the Cheviot East Ward, which displays low levels of deprivation, overall, with relatively high incomes, employment, health, education, housing and safety rankings, but a very low ranking on geographic access.

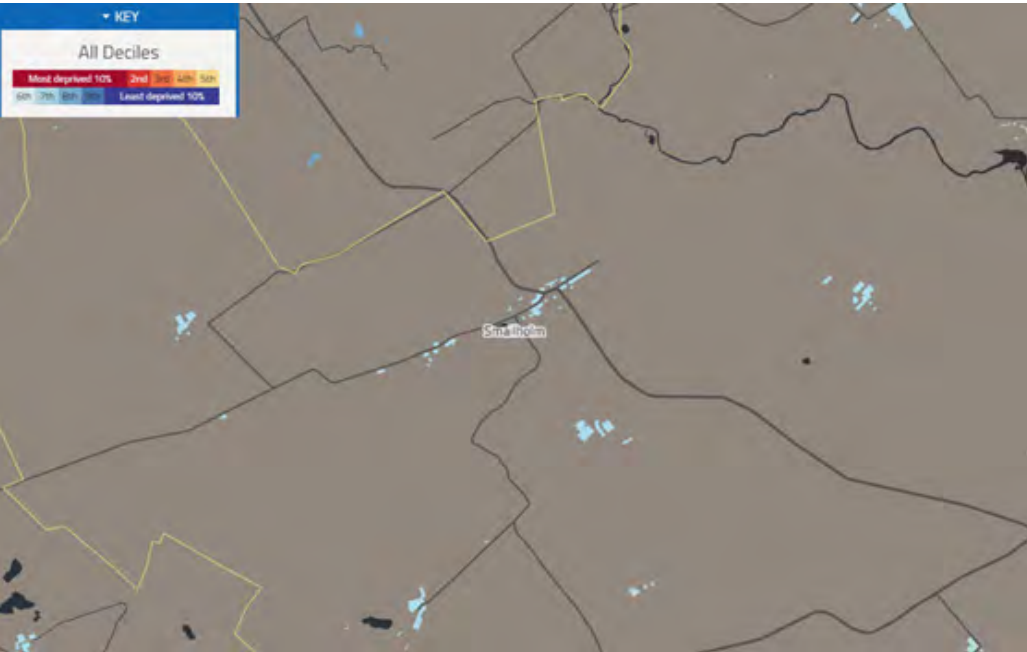


Figure 39. SIMD Data for Smailholm

Economic Activity

Figure 40 and Figure 41 provide an overview of Smailholm’s population based on economic activity and employment by industry.

The figures show that just under 60% of the village’s population are economically active, which is compatible with the age profile presented above.

When examining the industries in which the economically active population are employed, the largest single industry is Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, employing 11 individuals. This is closely followed by Human Health and Social Work Activities, which employ 10 individuals. Other industries that provide employment for multiple residents include the Motor Trade, Accommodation, Manufacturing, and Public Administration.

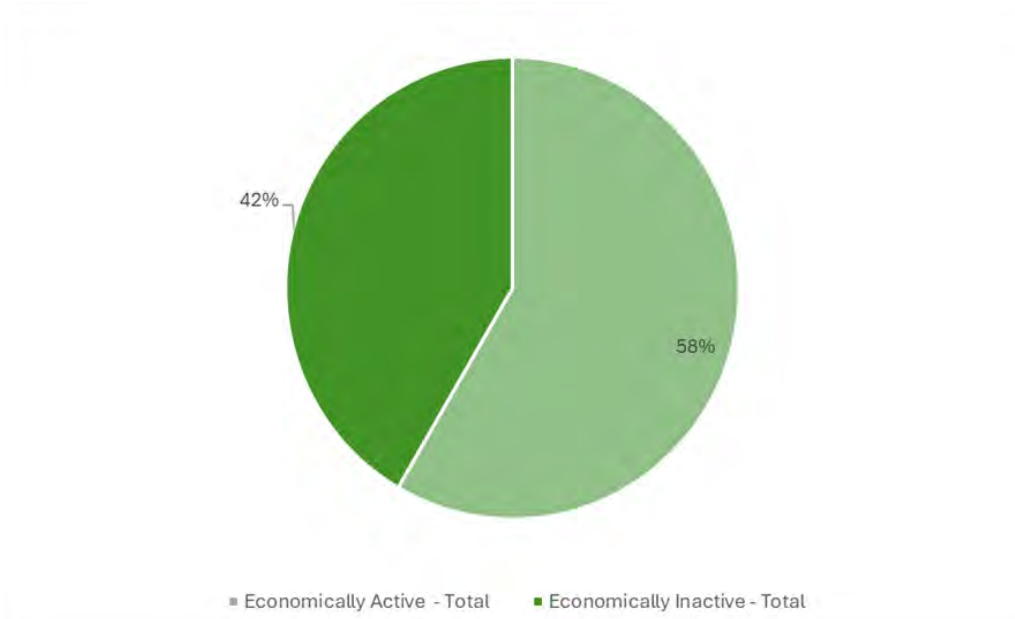


Figure 40. Smailholm - Economically Active Population



Figure 41. Smailholm Employment by Industry

How we Travel – Mode Share

Figure 42 provides a detailed breakdown of how people travel to and from Smailholm.

The data show that just over 50% of the economically active population commute to work by driving a car or van. When the 40% of the working population who work from home are excluded, the proportion of the economically active population who commute by car or van rises to 88%.

Regarding active travel modes, 5% of the economically active population walk to work, with no residents cycling as their main method of travel. Similarly, 0% of the population use public transport for commuting. This highlights the residents’ desire for improved public transport services in the village, which, at the time of publishing this report, was being addressed by a new, daily bus service into Kelso. Figure 43 illustrates the share of each means of transportation used in Smailholm, including by those who work mainly from home.

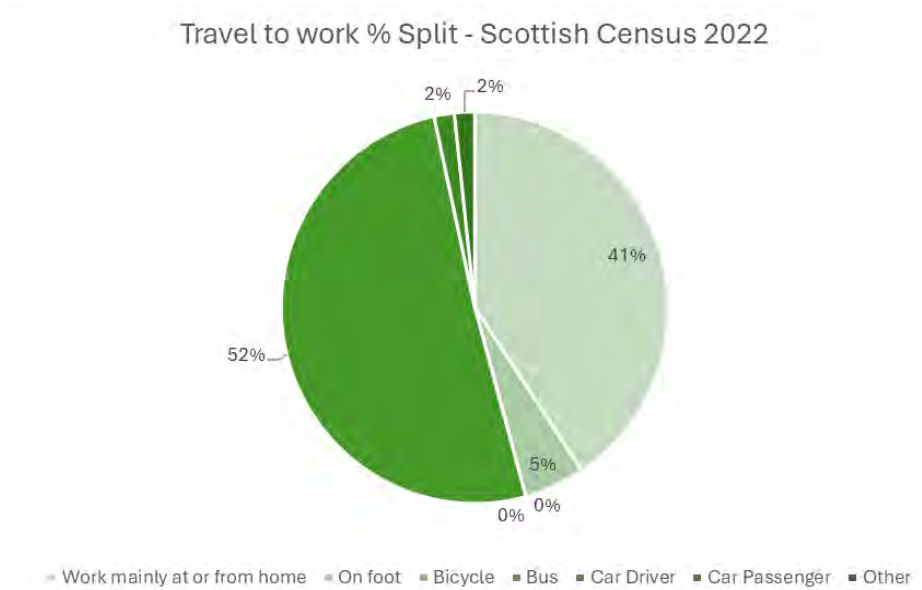


Figure 42. Method of Travel to Work Percentage Split

Mode		People	%	People	%
	Work or mainly at or from home	24	41%	Excluding work-from-home and 'other'	
	All other methods of travel	1	2%		
Active Modes	On foot	3	5%	3	9%
	Bicycle	0	0%	0	0%
Public Transport	Bus, minibus or coach	0	0%	0	0%
	By Car				
	Passenger in a car or van	1	2%	1	3%
	Driving a car or van	30	52%	30	88%
TOTAL		59	100%	34	100%

Figure 43. Method of Travel to Work - Smailholm 2022 Census

Appendix 2: Community Engagement

Technical Note - Summary of Engagement Events

Launch event

The Smailholm Futures launch event took place on 17th February 2023, following an extensive door to door awareness raising campaign. The aim of the campaign was to create enthusiasm for and engagement in the planning process, along with deriving the main issues for the community and how to take the Place Plan forward.

The meeting was very well attended with 31 people there. The attendees were asked for their opinions, aspirations, worries and priorities for the area. The results were originally analysed and reported against the Council's Place Making categories. These were subsequently organised into the following local themes by the steering group:

- **Transport,**
- **Environment,**
- **Path and Routes**
- **Energy; Community**

Second village meeting

The second consultation meeting was on the 21st April 2023, where the steering group gave feedback on the ideas that came out of the first meeting and provided a draft vision for the area. The 31 attendees had the opportunity to comment on the vision and review and develop the themes.

Following the meeting, the Steering Group recognised that not all of the community had had the opportunity to input into the process – with people from neighbouring farms and farm cottages being under-represented. Members of the Steering Group went out to meet with those residents to inform them on the outcome so far and to obtain their views. The outcomes of the meeting and this additional consultation consisted of a list of possible projects to take the vision forward.

Technical support

Following these 2 village meetings, the Steering Group recognised the need to get technical advice and support and to provide an opportunity for the community to engage directly with an independent party. This was enabled with advice and financial support from Scottish Borders Council. A short description of the service sought was put out to tender and AtkinsRéalis was appointed at the end of March 2024.

Third village meeting

Following an inception meeting in May, the consultants facilitated a third community and stakeholder consultation event with the support of Scottish Borders Council staff. This took place on 12th June 2024.

The primary objectives of this meeting were to: (a) share the consultant's interpretation of the work so far; (b) confirm and develop the themes identified in previous community engagements; (c) present a draft vision; (d) present draft aims and project ideas for community feedback; (e) prioritise the proposed projects through community input and (f) encourage community members to participate in the development and implementation of the projects through working groups.

For a full report on the session see the Consultation Report following this Technical Note.

Action groups

After the community had expressed its thoughts about which themes they wished to see developed as a matter of priority, the consultants facilitated action groups comprising of anyone who would like to be involved which was from five to seven members of the community for each of the priority themes i.e. *Paths & Routes*, *Transport* and *Energy*. Those action groups worked closely together and with the consultants to develop a range of potential projects to form the basis of the Smailholm Action Plan.

While the Action Groups developed their projects, the Steering Group met regularly to collate information from the meetings, produce a first draft land use map for consultation and work with the Consultants to produce a draft Village Place Plan and Village Action Plan for a last round of consultations with village residents and stakeholders.

Fourth village meeting

Following the completion of the Action Group work and additional work on Land Use, the consultants agreed a draft Place Plan with the Steering Group, which was submitted to the community for consultation. This happened in 3 stages. First, specific proposals were discussed with the main landowner and the farmer who would be most affected by the Plan if it were to be implemented. Secondly, via an open meeting at the village hall, where the draft plan was presented and attendees were given a chance to comment on individual projects at 5 thematic tables. The draft was subsequently shared with all households in the village and Council staff for comments using an electronic questionnaire, available on the village website, with hardcopies available on request. A final draft was then generated, which includes, where appropriate, suggestions received during the final consultation. This draft was then submitted to the Council for Registration.

Appendix 3: Discussion of Each Theme

3a: Paths and Routes

3b: Transport

3c. Environment and Land Use

3d. Community

3e. Energy

3a: Paths and Routes

Notes from the Smailholm Paths and Routes Group meeting held on August 27, 2024:

1. Attendees: names were removed to protect privacy

2. Key Discussion Points:

1. Walking Routes and Priorities:

1. **Main Priority:** Establish a walkable route to the other end of the village, ideally in a circular path without pavements, suitable for a buggy.
2. **Eden Road Improvements:** This was discussed and the group unanimously felt that the focus should be on enhancing Eden Road without adding car parking spaces.
3. **Circular Route:** Preference for a circular walking route.
4. **Priority of Reaching the West Third of the Village:** Preferably without pavements. Suggested creating a map of routes and a clear plan of action.
5. **Walking Through Fields:** Possible in the past when farmers didn't plough to the edge. Suggested a new path behind the pond and up to Randy Wood.
6. **Pavement from Pottery to Tower Road:** Discussed and concerns raised about the ownership of the verge and the safety of pavements. Suggested a short stretch of pavement from the pottery to the beginning of the tower road. Suggested that this stretch of path be a whin dust surface rather than a sealed surface.
7. **The group looked at possible connections to Kelso using the core path plan mapping.**

- Potential for links from Smailholm to Kelso map 34 [roxburgh_kelso_core_paths \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://scotborders.gov.uk/roxburgh_kelso_core_paths)

Other maps from Smailholm are as follows:

- Nether Blainslie to Lauder Map 24 [lauder_east_core_paths \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://scotborders.gov.uk/lauder_east_core_paths)
- Earlston, St Boswells, Melrose (North west of Smailholm) map 33 [melrose_core_paths \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://scotborders.gov.uk/melrose_core_paths)

CHS to send above maps to the group. It was suggested that group members pair up to make these longer walks to look at possible connections. Some of the longer routes discussed were as follows:

8. **Path to the Tweed:** Considered a larger project.
9. **Bridge at Eden Water:** Consider building a bridge to allow travel to Hundy Mundy.

2. Challenges and Considerations:

1. **Traffic and Safety:** Concerns about the speed and size of vehicles, especially on windy days and corners. Pavements might increase traffic speed and there was a feeling that they wouldn't make people any safer.
2. **Ownership Issues:** Uncertainty about who owns verges.
3. **Community Concerns:** Some residents are opposed to pavements, So there was uncertainty around the suggestion of the pavement from Gallery to Tower Road and if it would be agreeable to everyone, but it was thought that if this section has whin dust surfacing, it may be more acceptable in the rural setting.
4. **Environmental Factors:** Presence of newts and a badger set near the pond field, which may affect path planning.

3. Action Items:

1. **Group Walk:** Walk the proposed routes as a group and map them out.
2. **Land Acquisition:** Discussed the possibility of buying land next to the village hall, which is currently for sale.
3. **Traffic Management:** Ideas to reduce vehicle speed and number through the village, including painting lines similar to Sweden's approach, which is the advisory cycle lane approach SBC have offered communities across SBC.

4. Eden Road Specifics:

1. **Woodland Walk and Interpretation:** Importance of getting the council to adopt the road. Estimated cost of £75K to upgrade Eden Road.
2. **Parking Spaces:** Mixed opinions on adding parking spaces at the top of the wood. Concerns about turning Smailholm into a tourist destination.

3. Next Steps:

- **Group Walk:** Scheduled for Thursday 27th August lunchtime, 1pm – 2:30pm, meeting at Linda's place.

SMAILHOLM PATHS AND ROUTES GROUP MEETING

November 2024

Paths and Routes - Recap

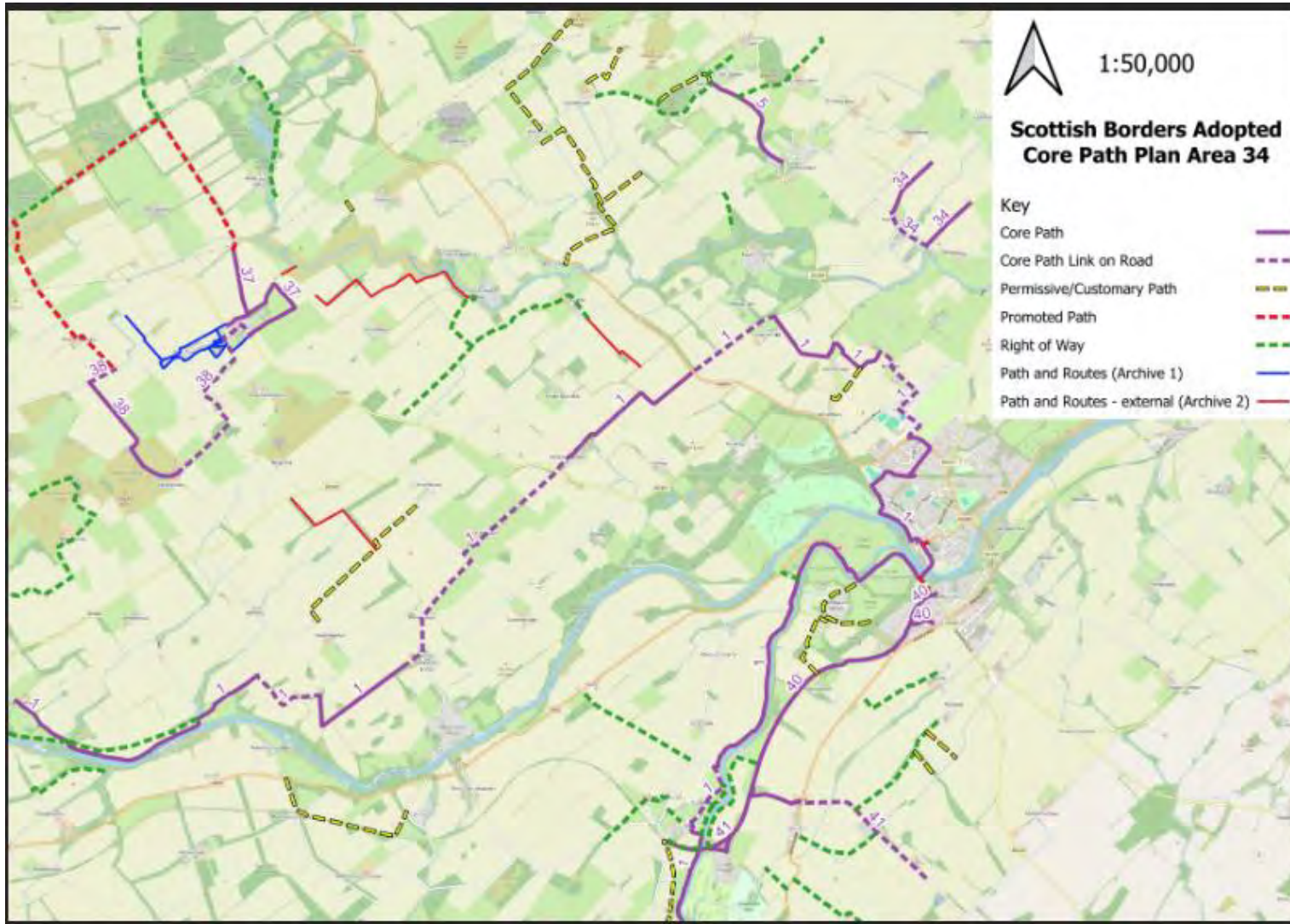
The meeting in the village hall identified a number of Paths and Routes priorities (shown below) which the community felt were important, with the 'Creation of safe multi use paths around the village, including circular path connecting East Third, West Third and Eden Road' as one of the most important issues to people, with 16 sticky dots and 'Eden Road improvement with woodland walk and interpretation board' with 10 sticky dots.

Paths and Routes	<i>Aims</i>	
	Develop and improve local paths and routes	4
	Encourage active travel through well-designed and connected paths and routes	2
	Project Ideas	
	Creation of safe multi use paths around the village, including circular path connecting East Third, West Third and Eden Road	16
	Eden Road improvement with woodland walk and interpretation board	10

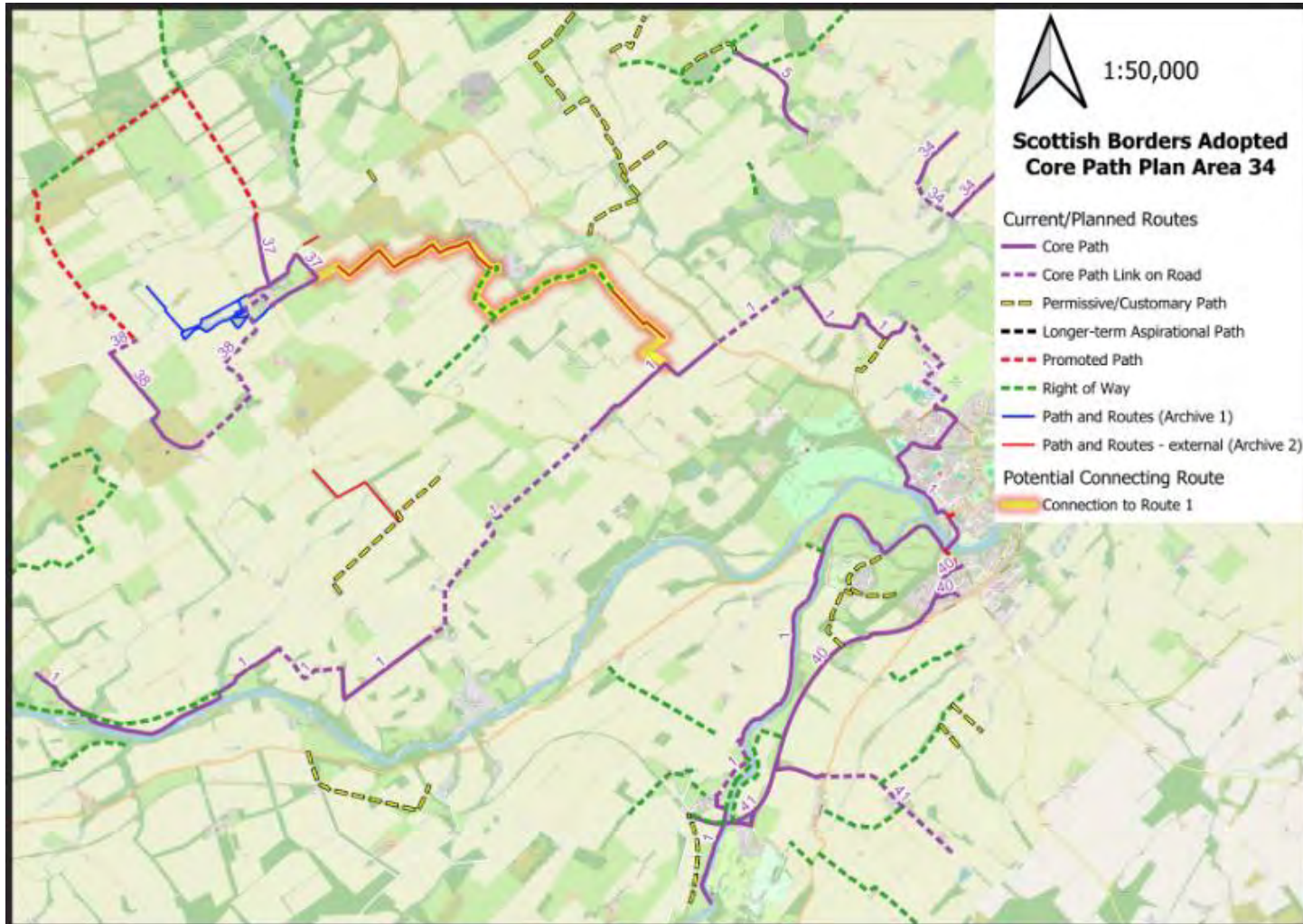
Paths and Routes

- Better Route Between East and West Third
- Improved connectivity and accessibility.
- Extension of the Current Village Path
- Reach the Eden Waters
- Linking Routes with Kelso Path Network
- Integration with existing and planned walk/cycle routes along the Tweed and beyond.
- Development of the Pond Area
- Utilise the adjoining set-aside area belonging to the Mellerstain estate.
- Creation of a Village Hub

Paths and Routes



Paths and Routes



Paths and Routes

Estimating price guide for path projects



In discussion with colleagues about path creation prices, they directed me to this document from Paths for All Partnership, available here [estimating-price-guide-for-path-projects_paths-for-all_-rev2-march-2021.pdf](#)

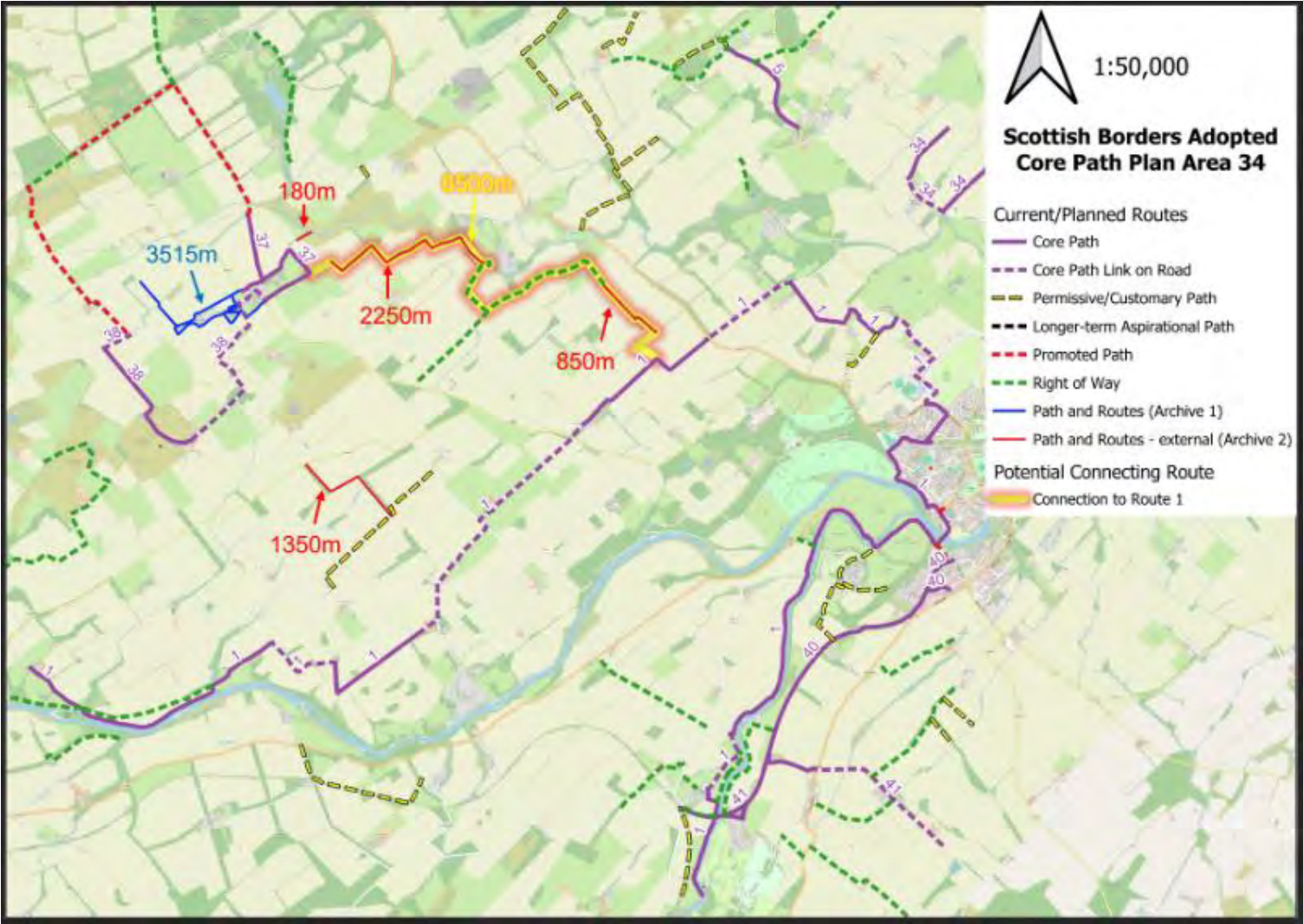
Paths and Routes – path surfacing

Estimated costs for a whinstone or granite dust path

Item	Range £	Average Cost
For NEW whinstone / granite dust path:		
Full tray with geotextile Dug at least 150mm deep and lined with geotextile Lay and compact Type 1 - 150mm deep Lay and compact whinstone or granite dust - 25mm deep	£18.00 to £22.00 per m ²	£20.00
Half tray with geotextile Dug at least 75mm deep and lined with geotextile sheet Lay and compact Type 1 - 150mm deep Lay and compact whinstone or granite dust - 25mm deep	£20.50 to £24.50 per m ²	£22.50
Half tray with geotextile and geogrid Dug at least 75mm deep Lined with geotextile sheet Geogrid placed on top of geotextile Lay and roll Type 1 - 150mm deep Lay and compact whinstone or granite dust - 25mm deep	£23.00 to £27.00 per m ²	£25.00
To UPGRADE an existing path: Vegetation scraped off and placed to side Lay and compact Type 1 or 20mm scalpings up to 75mm depth Lay and compact whinstone or granite dust - 25mm depth	£14.50 to £17.00 per m ²	£15.75

It estimates a per square metre price of between £14.50 - £27.00 per square metre on page 17, without drainage or other works or furniture. I imagine the longer distance routes might be the "to UPGRADE an existing path" from £14.50 - £17.00 per square metre and the paths around the village may be "full tray with geotextile" estimated at £18.00 - £22. per square metre.

Paths and Routes – path surfacing



	Path length	Min Sq Mtr Price	Max Sq Mt Price
Smailholm paths	3515	50967.5	59755
Kelso path	3100	44950	52700
Other path Identified on map	180	2610	3060
Other path Identified on map	1350	19575	22950

Paths and Routes – path surfacing



	Path length	Min Sq Mtr Price	Max Sq Mt Price
Smailholm paths total	3515	50967.5	59755
parts identified on map			
	664	9628	11288
	873	12658.5	14841
	114	1653	1938
	137	1986.5	2329
	702	10179	11934
	234	3393	3978
	342	4959	5814
	168	2436	2856
	281	4074.5	4777

Paths and Routes - Signage

Signage

Item	Range £	Average Cost
<i>Estimated costs for finger post wayfinding (contd.)</i>		
Steel post with finger blades 75mm diameter round hollow post, 2-4m high with top cap and base plate 1 or 2 double-sided aluminium finger blades, 190mm x 600mm White vinyl text on green background Metal fixing clamps Set in concrete 1m deep	£180.00 to £210.00 per signpost	£190.00

You can find out more information about signage in "Signage Guidance for Outdoor Access: A Guide to Good Practice":
<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/resources/resource/signage-guidance-for-outdoor-access>

		Price per sign	Max Sq Mt Price
	Decision points		
Smailholm paths total	21	210	4410
Kelso paths for new path	16	210	3360
Kelso paths for new path and existing	45	211	9495

Next Steps...

- Landowner agreement – we would always recommend landowner agreement at the earliest opportunity
- Place Plan and Action Plan possible funding identification. Their objectives and how Smailholm might meet those.
- Landowner opportunities. (whole place plan and action plan)
- Constituted body to develop funding applications (not village hall, which has a specific purpose).
- Surfacing and adoption of Eden Road. Add woodland paths at Eden Road.
- Extra colour (for council to do) from Gallery to tower road (pavement would be on south side) and south of the church to the road, (no pavement at all to the village path). Pavement or a path could be on either side of the road. Ask council about maintenance and type of path. Wider pavement from Eden road to the church.

	Path length	Min Sq Mtr Price	Max Sq Mt Price
Smailholm paths	3515	50967.5	59755
Kelso path	3100	44950	52700
Other path Identified on map	180	2610	3060
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	234	3393	3978
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signage

	Decision points	Price per sign	Max Sq Mt Price
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Smailholm paths total	21	210	4410
Kelso paths for new path	16	210	3360
Kelso paths for new path and existing	45	211	9495

3b: Transport

Notes on the Smailholm Transport Meeting 28/08/2024

Attendees: Names removed for privacy reasons

Meeting Objectives

Objectives for the Smailholm Transport Meeting

Meeting Objectives:

- **Emphasis on Safety:** A key objective was to emphasise the importance of safety, following up on previous discussions. The aim was to find solutions that would satisfy everyone, focusing on speed reduction and overall safety improvements in the village without urbanising.
- **Improved Transport Solutions:** to discuss improved ways of transport to and from the village, with a particular focus on Eden Road. The aim was to address the broader transport issues affecting Smailholm and explore potential solutions.
- **Traffic Calming Measures:** The need for traffic calming was highlighted, noting differences between East Third and West Third, particularly on Eden Road. The importance of safety was emphasised, referencing the June meeting and stressing the need for solutions that satisfy everyone.
- **Pedestrian Safety:** to discuss traffic calming measures and share feedback from pedestrians. The aim was to highlight the issues with current traffic speeds and markings, and propose potential solutions.

Traffic Calming Measures:

- The Scottish Borders Council had previously sent an email outlining several options they were willing to implement in Smailholm to help reduce traffic speeds. The following list was what was received from SBC. CHS forwarded the email to the group.

Measure
20mph Stickers for Wheelie Bins
20mph repeater roundel signs: within existing speed limit
20mph roundels: painted on road
Dragons Teeth: only on main approaches to settlement
Advisory Cycle Lanes
3/2/1 countdown signs on approach to settlement: only on main approaches to settlement
Speed Indicator Electronic Sign: where there are a concentration of pedestrians
Gateway formalising: only on main approach to settlement to create clear entry point

- The list was discussed in detail with the group agreeing with all of the measures but the dragons teeth. Dragons teeth were felt to urbanise and not be effective.
- Advisory cycle lanes, effective in reducing speed, were mentioned with examples from Duns. There was also a suggestion to change the 40 mph limit to 30 mph when entering the village from Leaderfoot.
- Community feedback included examples of formal gateways from Gattonside and Gordon reduced to one lane at the gateway seems quite effective, and the use of dragons' teeth as visual deterrents, though not aesthetically pleasing.

- Speed indicator signs were proposed for the Kelso and Earlston approaches to encourage drivers to slow down. The desired speed limit for West Third was discussed, with concerns about the implications of reducing it to 30 mph. Difficulty crossing to the graveyard was highlighted, with a suggestion for a zebra crossing, though not everyone in the group felt this would be acceptable with the flashing beacons required for zebras.
- The effectiveness of the 20 mph speed limit was discussed, with suggestions to move the limit further out (just before Lynn and Tom's) meaning people are asked to do 20mph for longer through the village, rather than break at the 20mph which they do now.
- It was felt that the reduction to 40 has already brought significant improvements to West Third and if it is reduced to 30, street lights and pavements will be installed, which the group didn't want. A view echoed at the last village meeting.
- A potential pavement from the Gallery to the tower Road in the verge with a whin dust surface, was suggested by the paths and tracks group discussion, this was met with positivity from the transport group. Though there was concern over research that cars can go faster when a pavement is installed.

Infrastructure Changes:

- The extensive tarmac area when entering Smailholm from Kelso was noted, and a proposal was made to create a layby for the bus stop to reduce reckless driving by pulling the verge out at the front of John and Marjorie's house opposite the church. (further discussion would be needed with residents on this and SBC, future bus route coming to the village discussed below).
- Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs) were suggested for all approaches to Smailholm to monitor traffic as opposed to cameras that were seen to be expensive. The ATC's are around £100 per site per week and the group felt they would be necessary at each entrance of Smailholm for a week. The group were asked to consider what they would do with the data once collected, the list above are the elements that Scottish Borders Council are prepared to implement in Smailholm.

Community Initiatives:

- Community initiatives included the mention of a community speed gun, though it was noted that it is not favoured by the police. There was also a discussion on organising community transport and improving bus services to Smailholm.

Eden Road

- Eden Road was discussed and like the paths group, it was felt that the parking element should be removed from the proposal, that there is difficulty enough for people who live there to park and a concern about inviting more people to cause traffic issues in the village. Eden Road should be limited to resurfacing works.

Farm Transport and Road Upgrades/bypass:

- there was a discussion on upgrading farm tracks within Smailholm Mains to allow farm traffic to avoid roads through the village and allow farm traffic to use the Randy between Mellerstain and Sandyknowe. It was noted that the junction with the Randy is a nightmare as it is with a blind corner and that meeting more farm traffic here would be

dangerous, in addition, though the group felt that farm traffic would still pass through the village and that the objective with this proposal would not be met and it should not be pursued.

Quarry Company Appeal:

- SBC had suggested that Stow had had positive results in appealing to the quarry company to encourage contractors to reduce speeds going through the village. There was little faith in the effectiveness of this approach but the group felt it was worth trying.

Public Transport Improvements:

- Public transport improvements were discussed, with local villages organising DRT community transport bus service to Smailholm starting soon, providing buses at least six days a week.

Conclusion:

- The meeting concluded with a focus on prioritising Eden Road resurfacing
 - An appeal to the quarry company to reduce speeds through the village
- And a prioritisation of the following from Scottish Borders Council:
- 20mph Stickers for Wheelie Bins
 - 20mph repeater roundel signs: within existing speed limit
 - 20mph roundels: painted on road
 - Advisory Cycle Lanes
 - 3/2/1 countdown signs on approach to settlement: only on main approaches to settlement
 - Speed Indicator Electronic Sign: where there are a concentration of pedestrians
 - Gateway formalising: only on main approach to settlement to create clear entry point.

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 22, 2025

Location: Smailholm

Attendees: Names removed to protect privacy

Agenda:

1. Discussion and agreement on the Road Safety and Quiet Lane technical notes.
2. Addressing pedestrian safety and traffic speed concerns.
3. Maintenance of verges and potential solutions.
4. Consideration of providing ATC (Automatic Traffic Counter) data.

Minutes:

1. Road Safety and Quiet Lane Technical Notes:

- The content of the Road Safety and Quiet Lane technical notes was discussed and agreed upon by all attendees.

2. Pedestrian Safety in Smailholm:

- It was noted that very few people walk in Smailholm.
- The current measures do not adequately address the issue of traffic speed.
- There is a strategy to create confusion among drivers to make them more aware of their actions.
- A significant number of residents avoid walking due to the high speed of traffic.

3. Maintenance of Verges:

- Verges are not well-maintained, causing pedestrians to try to make themselves as small as possible to avoid traffic.

4. ATC Data:

- It was suggested that providing ATC data would be interesting and potentially useful for addressing traffic concerns.

Action Items:

- Review and implement strategies in tech notes to address traffic speed.
- Explore options for better maintenance of verges.
- Group should consider the feasibility of providing ATC data for further analysis.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Smailholm Village Road Safety Technical Note

SUBJECT

Smailholm Village Road Safety
Technical Note

PROJECT NO.

5226731

DATE

07 January 2025

AUTHOR

Eoan McTernan - AtkinsRéalis

DISTRIBUTION

REPRESENTING

DOCUMENT REFERENCE

5226731 - Road Safety Note - V1

Document history

Revision	Purpose description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
1.0	Draft for Review	AP	EM	JPD	CHS	31 Jan 24

Client signoff

Client	Smailholm Futures				
Project	Smailholm Village Road Safety Technical Note			Project No.	5226731
Client signature / date					

TECHNICAL NOTE

1. Project background

AtkinsRéalis are working on development of Smailholm village Place Plan. Place Plan discussions with the local community have revealed a number of issues they would like to see improved in the area, three focuses of the local community are:

- **Energy**, the potential ability to generate heat and power;
- **Paths and tracks**, The ability to connect Smailholm to other places by paths and tracks so that people can travel actively to other locations without the use of a vehicle;
- **Transport** community members would like Eden Road brought up to and maintained at a standard that will reduce the number of injuries and difficulties the community has accessing homes along the road. Community members would like opportunity to travel sustainably from, in an around Smailholm, members of the community reported feeling unsafe walking on the road connecting the village due to heavy agricultural and quarry vehicles.

This technical note concerns the final point identified above in the Project background within the Transport bullets, the community feeling unsafe on roads connecting the village.

2. Introduction

The primary route through the village centre is the B6397 (1 Eden Rd - Google Maps), which includes access for large farm vehicles. Through discussions with the local community, it was identified that there were potential road safety concerns through the village centre relating to the speed and types of vehicles passing through. There is a nearby quarry which means some large quarry vehicles (CAT 777 vehicles or similar) pass through the village, as well as a number of large agricultural vehicles. Several speed management measures were proposed by the local authority to alleviate these issues. The purpose of this note is to highlight and summarise potential proposals for the purposes of presenting it to the local community representatives on a teams call in January 2025.

It should be noted that this technical note is not intended to look for the 'best' solution for safety (which might look too urban in nature), but the right solution for Smailholm. The best option from a safety perspective may require road re-design, but any option needs to consider the costs proportionate to the issues and the rural context (limiting urbanisation). Additionally, this note is intended as a brief summary of road safety, no site visit has been carried out by a Road Safety expert. It is therefore difficult to summarise safety performance from the perspective of being on site, which would provide information on the perspective of safety.

TECHNICAL NOTE

3. Current Safety Performance and Issues Identified



Figure 1 - Collision plot (QGIS plot) of Smailholm and surrounding area for between 2000 and 2023.

A snapshot of the current safety performance of in and around Smailholm village has been conducted by looking at publicly available data for traffic counts and collisions. Figure 1 shows a collision plot of Smailholm and the surrounding area between 2000 and 2023. This is a longer timeline than would normally be looked at, A summary of the collision data is as follows:

- There have been a total of 33 collisions during this 23 year timescale, with 30 being slight collisions, two being serious and one fatal.
- One collision involved a cyclist and two involved motorcycles. The rest were car or vans drivers.
- 22 collisions (66%) occurred in wet or icy conditions
- 14 collisions (42%) occurred in darkness (no lighting)

TECHNICAL NOTE

▪ **In the last 5 years of available data (2019 – 2023), there have been three collisions:**

- Two of these have been 'slight' and occurred along the B6397 to the southeast.
- One of these was 'serious' and occurred in the West Third of the village

Based on the data assessed, it is difficult to understand how many collisions near Smailholm village centre occurred as a result of speeding. It should be noted however that majority of the collisions around Smailholm have happened in the higher speed sections of road, outside of the 20mph zone within the village centre.

It is understood that the perceived speed of vehicles through the village centre feels excessive for the local community. This is most likely exacerbated by the presence of the large quarry and agricultural vehicles.

The need for traffic calming was highlighted, noting differences between East Third and West Third. The importance of safety was emphasised, referencing the 12th June meeting and stressing the need for options that satisfy everyone.

3.1 Proposed road safety options

The following have already been proposed as potential road safety options by the local authority:

1. 20mph sticker for wheelie bins
2. 20mph repeater roundel signs: within existing speed limit
3. 20mph roundel road markings
4. Dragons teeth gated entry into village
5. Advisory cycle lanes
6. 3/2/1 countdown signs on approach to village
7. Electronic speed indicator signs
8. Formalised gateway entry into the village

The options have been tabulated below in Table 1, with local resident comments from meeting minutes on 28/08/24 and additional comments from a road safety perspective.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Table 1 - Options with community comments from meeting minutes and road safety comments.

Option	Community comments	Road safety comments
20mph sticker for wheelie bins	Group agreed with the measures. No further commentary recorded in the meeting minutes.	It is unlikely that these would have a significant effect from a road safety perspective if implemented on their own. However, this is a simple solution as a reminder that can be used in conjunction with other options.
20mph repeater roundel signs: within existing speed limit	The effectiveness of the 20-mph speed limit was discussed, with suggestions to move the limit further out (just before Lynn and Tom's) meaning people are asked to do 20mph for longer through the village, rather than break at the 20mph which they do now.	Additional road signs and/or marking to inform drivers that the speed limit is 20mph will support in informing drivers to adhere to the speed limit. However, if speed limit compliance is already low, then it is unlikely to impact the speed in which vehicles are travelling through the site.
20mph roundel road markings		
Dragons teeth gated entry into village	Dragons teeth were considered to urbanise the village too much.	No further commentary provided as the community felt this option was not for Smailholm.
Advisory cycle lanes	Advisory cycle lanes, effective in reducing speed, were mentioned with examples from Duns. There was also a suggestion to change the 40 mph limit to 30 mph when entering the village from Leaderfoot.	From a road safety perspective, it is important to consider the potential road safety implications for cyclists too. The addition of an advisory cycle lane could provide the benefit of reduced speed. However, frequent use would be important. If this is not used frequently, it may be that vehicles would choose to ignore it, and it has no impact of reducing speeds. This would put users that do use it at greater risk.

TECHNICAL NOTE

3/2/1 countdown signs on approach to village	Group agreed with the measures. No further commentary recorded in the meeting minutes.	These would be used in conjunction with gateway entry.
Electronic speed indicator signs	Speed indicator signs were proposed for the Kelso and Earlston approaches to encourage drivers to slow down. The desired speed limit for West Third was discussed, with concerns about the implications of reducing it to 30 mph. Difficulty crossing to the graveyard was highlighted, with a suggestion for a zebra crossing, though not everyone in the group felt this would be acceptable with the flashing beacons required for zebras.	<p>Positioning of such signs would be important, as if they are set too far back then it is likely that, if the road feels appropriate, drivers may speed up again when driving through the village. They could have a positive impact on speeds however if positioned correctly. This may be seen as urbanising to have the greatest impact.</p> <p>These signs may be in the form of Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs (MVAS) – these are signs which flash when drivers are exceeding the limit. Variations include signs which display the exact speed drivers are travelling, with an example already installed just past Smailholm village on the C78 (C78 - Google Maps). These reduce in effectiveness over time as drivers become more aware of their location, and should be relocated to increase effectiveness. To further enhance effectiveness of such signs, enforcement could be another option. However, this would be costly.</p>
Formalised gateway entry into the village	Community feedback included examples of formal gateways from Gattonside and Gordon reduced to one lane at the gateway seems quite effective, though they use dragons' teeth as visual deterrents, and these are not considered appropriate for Smailholm.	It is expected that village gateways will have an initial positive impact. However, it is also likely that effectiveness may diminish over time. But again, it will depend on perception of road space when travelling through the village – it would need to feel like you need to travel slowly.
Bypass	A bypass has been proposed by the local community to provide large vehicles with an alternative route, avoiding the village	This was discussed at the June village meeting and August Transport meeting and it was felt that large vehicles would take the path of least resistance and not use the Bypass.

TECHNICAL NOTE

As discussed above, a bypass was proposed by the local community to provide large vehicles with an alternative route, avoiding the village. The Bypass proposal was discussed with the community at the June village meeting and August transport meeting and it was concluded that the project would likely be inherently expensive, with potential land ownership issues making the project difficult to progress. Furthermore, some in the community believe that a bypass wouldn't fix the traffic and speed issues in the village and that traffic would still use the road through the village. Therefore, other road safety opportunities that are much more cost-effective and less-urbanising should be explored. Considering the items and their commentary proposed in Table 1, the following are expected to provide the most benefits to Smailholm:

- Gateway entry into village coupled with:
 - Countdown signs on entry
- Speed indicator signs with:
 - 20mph repeaters
 - Bin stickers

These proposals can be considered as part of a package of 'physical' measures, that may only have an impact in the short term, until drivers familiarise themselves with their locations. If driving conditions through the village are perceived to be allow driving safely at faster than the speed limit, these options will reduce in effectiveness over time.

3.2 Other road safety opportunities

In addition to the proposed items discussed above, the following are considerations as potential options to take forward for Smailholm:

1. Road safety audit style review of proposals
2. Speed indicators signs – bin stickers, roundels
3. Gateway entry into village
4. Community Speed Watch scheme
5. 'Quiet lane' scheme as a potential longer term plan for the village

Option 1 – Formal road safety review

National Highways has formal road safety processes for the road network they own, which are governed by Design Manual for Road and Bridges (DMRB) documents GG 104 *Requirements for Safety Risk Assessments* and GG 119 *Road Safety Audit*. In this context, a road safety audit style approach would probably provide benefit by means of a site visit and review of the proposals, highlighting all potential road safety issues and providing recommendations for each. It would provide the most benefit as early as possible in the design proposals.

Option 2 – Speed indicators signs – Bin Stickers and Roundels

Wheelie bin sticker campaigns can be an excellent way of getting local communities involved in speed awareness and reduction initiatives.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Case Study – Gloucestershire County Council

The Gloucestershire County Council's wheelie bin sticker campaign aims to promote road safety by increasing speed awareness. Residents place stickers with speed limit messages on their wheelie bins, which are visible when the bins are out for collection. This initiative encourages community involvement, offers a cost-effective way to remind drivers of speed limits, and can be promoted through local newsletters, schools, and organisations without overly urbanising rural areas¹.

A drawback of this initiative is that it is not that effective on its own and would need incorporated into other options to maximise its benefits.



Figure 2 - Example of a Wheelie Bin System

Option 3 – Gateway Entry to Village

Village gateways are installations at the entrance of villages that use signs and road markings to create a visual impact and introduce drivers to the village. They often display the village name and may include features like yellow bars, coloured road surfaces, and dragon's teeth.

- Advantages:
 - Relatively low cost: Affordable to implement.
 - Non-disruptive: Do not interfere with buses, emergency vehicles, or cyclists.
 - Speed reduction: Some signs and lines can effectively reduce vehicle speeds by 1 to 7 mph.
 - Increased road safety: Measures that reduce speeds generally improve road safety.

¹ [Wheelie bin sticker pack of road safety messages | Highways](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE

- Disadvantages:
 - Easy to ignore: Drivers may overlook signs and lines.
 - Less effective: Not as impactful as physical measures.
 - Maintenance issues: Features like dragon's teeth wear out quickly due to constant vehicle traffic².



Figure 3 - Village Gateway Example - Paulton, Somerset

Option 4 – Community Speed Watch scheme

Community driven speed watch (community speed watch scheme) – A community driven speed watch scheme has the advantage of having a more positive impact on drivers as opposed to a traditional ‘engineered’ option. The disadvantages however are that it may be more difficult to enforce.

Case Study Example - Community Speedwatch Scheme in Wiltshire to reduce speeding and empower residents

The Community Speedwatch Scheme in Wiltshire is a pioneering initiative launched in October 2009, aimed at reducing speeding and empowering local residents. This collaborative effort between Wiltshire Council, the police, and dedicated volunteers involves community members in actively monitoring and reporting speeding vehicles. By utilising speed detection equipment and issuing warning letters to offenders, the scheme has successfully fostered a safer road environment and enhanced community engagement. This case study explores the objectives, processes, outcomes, and challenges of the scheme, highlighting its significant impact on road safety and community involvement.

² [Village Gateway - signs and lines | Traffic Choices - aiding traffic scheme decisions](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE

- **Objective:** Reduce speeding and empower residents by involving them in monitoring and reporting speeding vehicles.
- **Leadership:** Launched in October 2009, the scheme is a collaboration between Wiltshire Council, police, and local volunteers.
- **Process:** Volunteers use speed detection equipment to monitor vehicle speeds. Offenders receive warning letters from the police.
- **Outcomes:** Significant reduction in speeding incidents and increased community engagement. By 2015, 140 volunteer teams were active, contributing over 14,000 hours of service.
- **Success Indicators:** 53% reduction in speeding at monitored sites and a 35% decrease in road traffic accidents.
- **Challenges:** Managing volunteer expectations about the use of the equipment, ensuring adequate resources and support for the scheme. Police Scotland do not seem keen for civilian use of such equipment in Smailholm.

Option 5 – Localised data collection

This may come in the form of automatic traffic counts (ATC) or part of the community speed watch. Although this is not expected to have a direct impact on perception of speed and dealing with directly, it has the potential to provide the benefit of understanding, in more detail, effectiveness of measures when combined with them. This however has to be considered alongside cost.



Figure 4 - ATC Example

³ [The EVOTRAFFIC Traffic Counter - Automatic Traffic Counter - Elan City](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE

Option 6 – ‘Quiet Lane’ schemes

‘Quiet Lanes’ are roads designated by local highway authorities to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other vulnerable road users, and to offer protection from speeding traffic. Cars are not banned from Quiet Lanes and the use of Quiet Lanes is shared. Measures such as lower speed limits and discrete road signs aim to encourage drivers to slow down and be considerate to more vulnerable users who can in turn use and enjoy country lanes in greater safety, with less threat from speeding traffic⁴. As it is expected the roads are a ‘shared use’ space, it is important for drivers to feel that this is the case, as speeding traffic may result in serious collisions.

Therefore, a level of behavioural and possibly physical road layout changes may be required for this (which will also incur cost). This is probably worth considering as a more long-term plan for Smailholm and where it could be implemented. More information on quiet lanes can be found in the Campaign to Protect Rural England’s (CPRE) guide to Quiet Lanes document.

These proposed options provide a longer-term benefit by attempting to change driver behaviour and attitude when travelling through the village. It should be noted that such ‘quiet lanes’ have been proposed and undergone consultation by other local authorities, such as West Lothian Council⁵ and the case study below from Highland Council. Further work could be undertaken to determine the suitability ‘quiet lanes’ for Smailholm with an amalgamation of some of the measures above.

Case Study Example - The Glencoe Orbital Quiet Route⁶

An excellent example of best practice for quiet road implementation in Scotland can be found in the Highlands, where HITRANS (The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership) are working with the Highland Council to implement numerous Quiet Routes around the Highlands.

One such example from the Highlands is the Glencoe Orbital Quiet Route. The project notes other best practice examples of quiet routes in the UK (Clackmannanshire, West Lothian and Kent) implemented several improvements to designate quiet routes. This included measures such as gateway signage, diverted wayfinding signage, road marking improvements, warning signs and surface improvements. A separate Technical Note details The Glencoe Orbital Quiet Route in more detail, while a short summary is provided here. Figure 5 shows a current photo of the Glencoe Orbital Route and the signage implemented to make it a quiet route.

⁴ https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/quiet_lanes_1.pdf

⁵ [Quiet Roads - West Lothian Council](#)

⁶ [HITRANS - Quiet Routes](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE



Figure 5 - Glencoe Orbital Route (Credit HITRANS)

During the engagement phase of the project, the local community in Glencoe cited road safety as a key concern when walking and cycling on local roads. The case study cites slower traffic speeds as a key factor in increasing road safety.

Results of the Project so Far

The Glencoe Quiet Road project is now in the post-implementation phase which will evaluate the outcomes of the interventions and their impact on the local community. SWECO have shared initial results of the project and there is strong evidence to suggest that the implementation of had a positive impact on speeds, traffic numbers and encouraging active travel uptake. The results of the project showed:

- Traffic Speed Reduction
 - **Significant Decrease:** The 85th percentile speed of vehicles reduced by up to 16%, enhancing safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users.
- Traffic Patterns and Volume
 - **Seasonal Variations:** There were notable seasonal peaks in vehicle counts, particularly in spring, indicating increased usage during these months.

TECHNICAL NOTE

- **Increased Active Travel:** There was a marked rise in pedestrian and cyclist numbers, demonstrating the route's success in promoting active travel.
- Community Feedback
 - **Mixed Responses:** Public engagement revealed mixed feelings. Some residents felt the route was unsafe due to perceived higher speeds, while others appreciated the route and suggested improvements in signage and parking management.
 - **Community Involvement:** Feedback from residents and the Community Council was considered, with discussions on potential adjustments to the route.
- Safety Improvements
 - **Anticipated Accident Reduction:** Although new accident data is pending, the reduction in traffic speed is expected to correlate with fewer accidents, contributing to a safer road environment.
- Recommendations
 - **Retention and Further Review:** It is recommended to retain the quiet route and review new accident data in autumn 2024 to assess the long-term impact.

4. Conclusion/Summary of Options for Smailholm

After discussions with the community, it was concluded that the proposed bypass would be too expensive and potentially not utilised enough to realise its full potential, thus other options should be considered.

It may not be viable to deploy all of the potential options however, combining the short-term physical warning with a longer-term plan for behavioural change for drivers through the village is expected to increase the changes of reducing speed through the village.

Among the proposed road safety options for Smailholm Village, Quiet Lanes stand out as the most promising long-term option. By designating roads for shared use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders, and other vulnerable users, and implementing measures to slow down traffic, Quiet Lanes can significantly enhance road safety and reduce speeds. This approach not only encourages safer driving behaviour but also fosters a more considerate and engaged community, making it a highly effective long-term strategy for improving road safety in the village.

Option 5 (Quiet Lanes) should be investigated further, as they provide an opportunity to utilise existing paths/roads in rural communities to improve road safety and reduce speeds. They should also be considered alongside softer measures such as options 2 and 3 (Wheelie bin stickers and Village Gateways) as these options are relatively cost-effective to implement and are more effective when deployed alongside each other.

TECHNICAL NOTE

Quiet Lanes - Best Practice

SUBJECT	PROJECT NO.	DATE
Quiet Lanes - Best Practice and Examples Technical Note	5226731	20 November 2024
AUTHOR	DISTRIBUTION	REPRESENTING
Eoan McTernan - AtkinsRéalis		

Document history

Revision	Purpose description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
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Client signoff

Client	Smailholm Futures				
Project	Borders Place Making Projects			Project No.	5226731
Client signature / date					

TECHNICAL NOTE

Introduction

AtkinsRéalis is working with the Town Teams of Smailholm, Hawick and Jedburgh to assist them with the creation and development of the Local Place Plans and Town Investment Plans. After extensive public consultations and engagement with statutory bodies, proposals that will influence and shape the place plans have been put forward. This technical note looks to review good practice being delivered in other areas for 'Quiet Lanes' or 'Quiet Roads', which could be adopted for Smailholm to improve road safety and reduce traffic levels in the village.

1. What is a Quiet Lane?

Quiet Lanes are minor rural roads, typically C or unclassified routes, which have been designated by local highway authorities to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other vulnerable road users, and to offer protection from speeding traffic. Cars are not banned from Quiet Lanes and the use of Quiet Lanes is shared. Measures such as lower speed limits and discrete road signs aim to encourage drivers to slow down and be considerate to more vulnerable users who can in turn use and enjoy country lanes in greater safety, with less threat from speeding traffic¹. The terms Quiet Lane and Quiet Roads are used interchangeably throughout this Technical Note.



Figure 1 - Quiet Lane Signage - Sutton²

In Scotland, the main features of designated quiet roads include:

- Reduced speed limits, to either 30mph or 40mph
- Signage to remind vehicle drivers of the presence of non-motorised users on the road (NMUs)

Quiet roads will form part of a wider active travel network. A benefit of quiet roads is that they can support local economic development by attracting visitors to the local areas, another benefit is that they generally support/facilitate access to the outdoors for everyone.

¹ [quiet_lanes_1.pdf](#)

² [Quiet Lanes | Sutton Parish Council](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE

1.1 Policy and Legislative Context

In Scotland, there is a limited legislative/policy context for Quiet Lanes/Roads, however such legislation does exist in England. The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006 set out the procedures for local traffic authorities in England to designate roads as Quiet Lanes or Home Zones. The key points are:

- **Designation:** Local traffic authorities can designate minor rural roads as Quiet Lanes and residential streets as Home Zones. These designations aim to enhance the quality of life by prioritising local activities over through traffic.
- **Public Involvement:** Authorities must involve the community by holding public meetings and inviting representations from local residents and stakeholders before designating a road.
- **Use Orders:** Once designated, authorities can issue use orders to allow roads to be used for various communal, social, cultural, educational, and recreational purposes.
- **Speed Orders:** Authorities can also issue speed orders to implement measures that reduce vehicle speeds, ensuring the safety of all road users.
- **Signage:** The regulations include provisions for new traffic signs to mark the entry and exit points of Quiet Lanes and Home Zones.

These regulations help manage traffic in a way that supports safer, more pleasant environments for walking, cycling, and other activities on designated roads.

1.1.1 Examples of Quiet Roads – England

Best practice examples are plentiful in England, images of which are documented below.

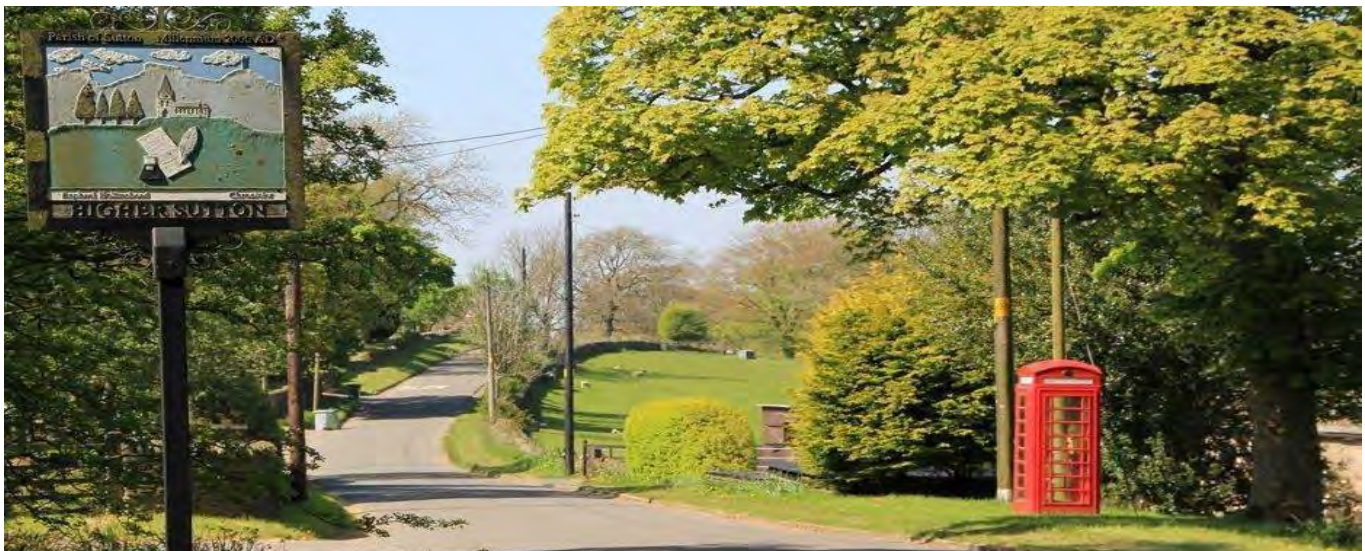


Figure 2 - Quiet Lane Best Practice Example - Sutton³

³ [Quiet Lanes | Sutton Parish Council](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE



Figure 3 - Quiet Lane Best Practice Example - Suffolk⁴

1.2 Scottish Context

In Scotland, there are best practice examples for Quiet Roads/Quiet Lane initiatives located in West Lothian, Clackmannanshire and the Highlands. West Lothian Council have several rural roads designated as potential quiet roads in their latest active travel plan. Actions West Lothian have taken to implement quiet roads include:

- **Rural Quiet Lanes Initiative** - Designating specific rural roads as quiet lanes to enhance safety for walkers, cyclists, and horse riders.
- **Community Engagement Programs** - Involving local communities in the planning and implementation of quiet lanes to ensure they meet the needs of residents.
- **Traffic Calming Measures** - Implementing traffic calming measures on designated quiet lanes to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety.
- **Signage and Wayfinding** - Installing clear signage and wayfinding markers to guide users along quiet lanes and connect them to other active travel routes.
- **Connectivity Improvements** - Enhancing connectivity between quiet lanes and existing walking and cycling infrastructure to create a comprehensive network.

⁴ [Advice for Drivers — Quiet Lanes Suffolk](#)

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Other examples of best practice regarding Quiet Roads/Lanes in Scotland can be found in The Highlands, Clackmannanshire, the Highlands, Perth and Kinross. These projects aim to create safer, more pleasant environments for non-motorised users and promote active travel in rural areas

1.2.1 Best Practice Scottish Case Study – Highlands

An excellent example of best practice for quiet road implementation in Scotland can be found in the Highlands, where HITRANS (The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership) are working with the Highland Council to implement numerous Quiet Routes around the Highlands, here is a summary of the project so far:

Introduction & Background

- The project outlines the concept of quiet routes in five locations: Glencoe Village to A82, Armadale to Tormore Forest, Inverarish to Clachan, Wick to Thurso, and Tomatin and Strathdearn. Only the first three are pilot projects.
- Quiet routes aim to encourage safe walking, cycling, and horseback activities on rural roads with low traffic and vehicle speeds, preserving natural beauty and supporting local economic development through tourism.

The Benefits of Active Travel

- Active travel includes walking, cycling, and other forms of non-motorised transport.
- Benefits include improved health and well-being, reduced pollution and emissions, decreased road congestion, and economic savings.

The Project So Far

- Each route has been assessed for suitability. Glencoe Orbital and Armadale to Tormore Forest are suitable with provisions; Inverarish to Clachan is also suitable. Tomatin and Strathdearn is unsuitable, and Wick to Thurso is not progressed.
- Public consultations and surveys have been conducted to gather feedback and inform the design.

Provisions

- Measures include signage, road markings, and speed limit reductions to ensure safety and shared use of the routes.

What Happens Next?

- Feedback from the community is encouraged to shape future designs. Surveys and contact details are provided for submitting comments⁵.

⁵ [HITRANS - Quiet Routes](#)

TECHNICAL NOTE

1.2.2 Successfully Implemented Pilot Route – The Glencoe Orbital Quiet Route

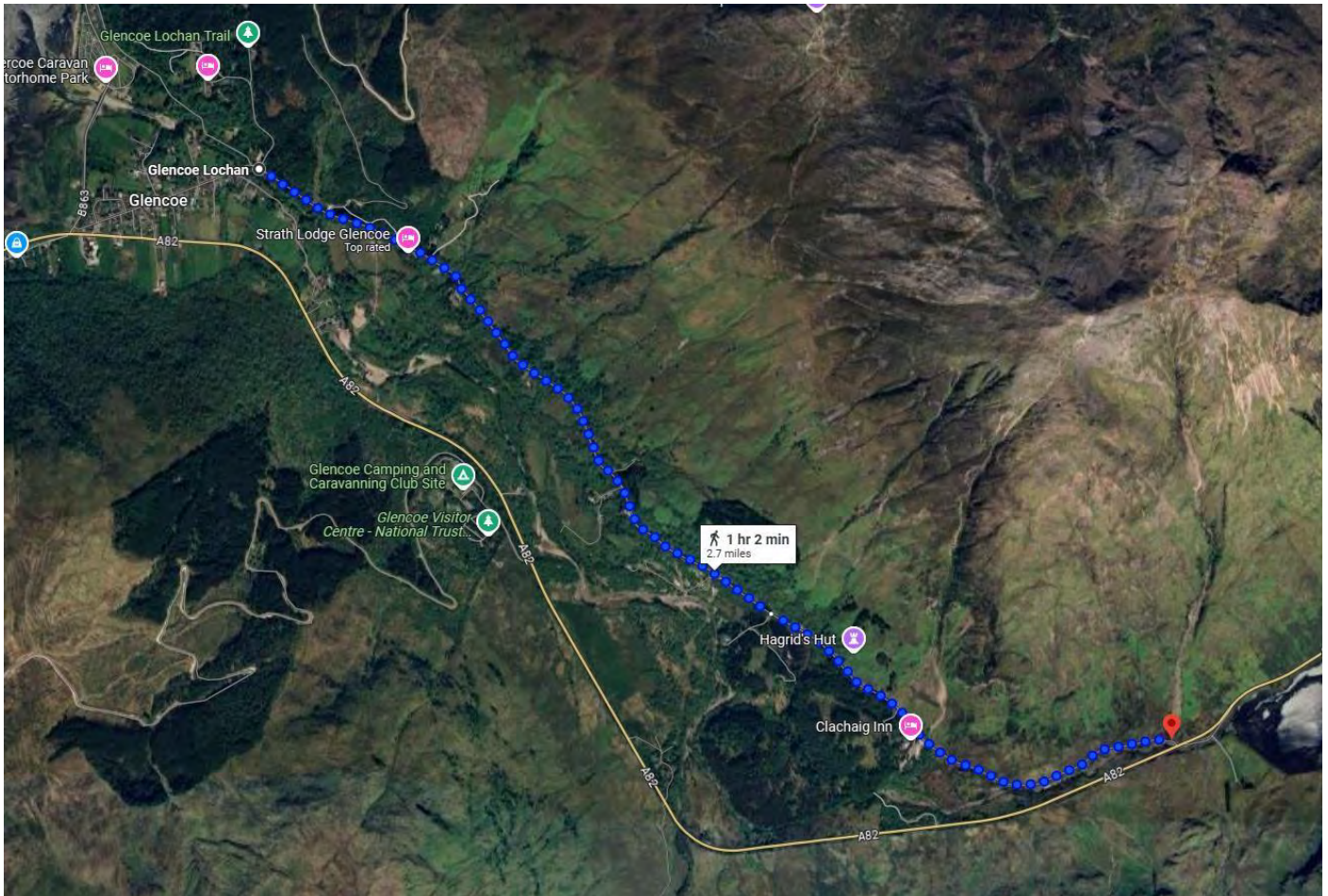


Figure 4 - Glencoe Orbital Quiet Route Aerial Map⁶

Of the three pilot projects, the Glencoe Orbital route is currently active. The route is 2.7 miles long and begins in Glencoe Village in the west, connecting to the A82 junction at Loch Achtriochtan to the east, taking around an hour to walk. Figure 4 shows the route from an aerial perspective.

The project notes other best practice examples of quiet routes in the UK (Clackmannanshire, West Lothian and Kent) implemented several improvements to designate quiet routes. This included measures such as gateway signage, diverted wayfinding signage, road marking improvements, warning signs and surface improvements. Figure 5 shows a current photo of the Glencoe Orbital Route and the signage implemented to make it a quiet route.

⁶ [Glencoe Lochan, Ballachulish to Ballachulish PH49 4HX - Google Maps](#)

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Figure 5 - Glencoe Orbital Route (Credit HITRANS)

During the engagement phase of the project, a public survey was put to the Glencoe Community Trust to start understanding the feasibility of the delivering the route and what benefits successful implementation could realise. In summary, the survey found:

- **Bicycle Access:** On average, 1.94 household members have access to a bicycle.
- **Activity Increase:** 25% of respondents reported increased walking/cycling activity compared to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- **Commute:** 16% of respondents walk to work, while the rest use cars/vans.
- **School Run:** 80% of respondents walk their children to school, with the remainder using cars/vans.
- **Shopping:** 90% travel by car/van for shopping, 5% walk, and 5% use bicycles.
- **Healthcare Access:** 30% use active travel to access healthcare services.
- **Quiet Route Usage:** 90% are very likely or likely to use a Quiet Route.
- **Safety Concerns:** 55% do not feel safe walking/cycling/horse riding on local roads.
- **Key Factor:** Slower traffic speeds are the most important factor for safety.

The survey results show that the community were very open to the idea of using a quiet route, and that there was scope to improve active travel usage within the town of Glencoe.

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The Glencoe Orbital Quiet Road also bans coaches and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) from entering, meaning that the only vehicles that can use the road are Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs), cars and motorbikes.



Figure 6 - Sign Banning Coaches and HGVs - Glencoe Orbital Quiet Road (A89 Loch Achtriochtan)

1.2.3 Initial results of Glencoe Quiet Road Pilot

The Glencoe Quiet Road project is now in the post-implementation phase which will evaluate the outcomes of the interventions and their impact on the local community. SWECO have shared initial results of the project and there is strong evidence to suggest that the implementation of had a positive impact on speeds, traffic numbers and encouraging active travel uptake. The results of the project showed:

- Traffic Speed Reduction
 - **Significant Decrease:** The 85th percentile speed of vehicles reduced by up to 16%, enhancing safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users.
- Traffic Patterns and Volume
 - **Seasonal Variations:** There were notable seasonal peaks in vehicle counts, particularly in spring, indicating increased usage during these months.
 - **Increased Active Travel:** There was a marked rise in pedestrian and cyclist numbers, demonstrating the route's success in promoting active travel.
- Community Feedback

TECHNICAL NOTE

- **Mixed Responses:** Public engagement revealed mixed feelings. Some residents felt the route was unsafe due to perceived higher speeds, while others appreciated the route and suggested improvements in signage and parking management.
- **Community Involvement:** Feedback from residents and the Community Council was considered, with discussions on potential adjustments to the route.
- Safety Improvements
 - **Anticipated Accident Reduction:** Although new accident data is pending, the reduction in traffic speed is expected to correlate with fewer accidents, contributing to a safer road environment.
- Recommendations
 - **Retention and Further Review:** It is recommended to retain the quiet route and review new accident data in autumn 2024 to assess the long-term impact.

1.2.4 Summary – What does this mean for Smailholm?

The key takeaway from this case study is that quiet routes offer a potentially great opportunity to increase active travel uptake in rural areas amongst adults and children. They appear to be a proposal that people are open to trying and could be an excellent option for Smailholm to increase active travel uptake and – given the nature of the measures implemented to designate Quiet Routes, they could increase road safety amongst all road users.

3c: Environment and Land Use

Technical Note – Land Use

Smailholm's core village and the 4 sets of farm buildings and cottages are nestled within a rolling agricultural landscape, interspersed with small patches of woodland. The way in which Smailholm's land is used is at the heart of residents' vision of a thriving and connected community in a rural landscape. The following sections provide some guiding principles for planning processes.

Village core

Figure 1 shows the current land uses within Smailholm Village. At present, most of the land in East and West Third, and along Eden Road, is residential, owner occupied, except for 3 former Council properties along Eden Road that are managed by the Borders Housing Association. There are 2 areas in East Third with planning permits for new houses that have not been taken up. A significant part of East Third has been classified as Conservation Village, due to its historic significance and attractive rural features.

While the Kirk is being converted into a private dwelling, the land around is maintained by the Council. Both the building and the land in front of the Village Hall is Community Trust Land and belongs to the Village Hall Committee **Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation** (SCIO). This land adjoins a small playground, which is managed by the Council. The land Southwest of the Village Hall, across the road, is marked as Common Land on old maps and has formerly been developed by the community into a Pond, with mixed wood and grassland. The Pond and woodland area sit next to a semi-permanent set-aside, which connects East Third with West Third, and belongs to the Mellerstain Estate. Some of the land in the North-East is woodland and mixed permanent pasture. There is also some permanent pastureland to the South and Southwest of the Kirk, which belongs to and is managed by adjacent properties.

Figure 2 shows the desired, future land use within the core Village area. The main differences between current and future land use maps include:

- a designation of the plot with planning permission for houses, West – Northwest of the Kirk, as woodland, given its history as a former dump, which makes it unsuitable for house building
- consideration for alternative use (housing, community use) of the plot with lapsed planning permission between the Village Hall and the western-most residence in East Third
- designation as permanent set-aside of the land connecting East Third with West Third. North of the Smailholm-Gattonside Road



Figure 1 – Smailholm – Current Land Use

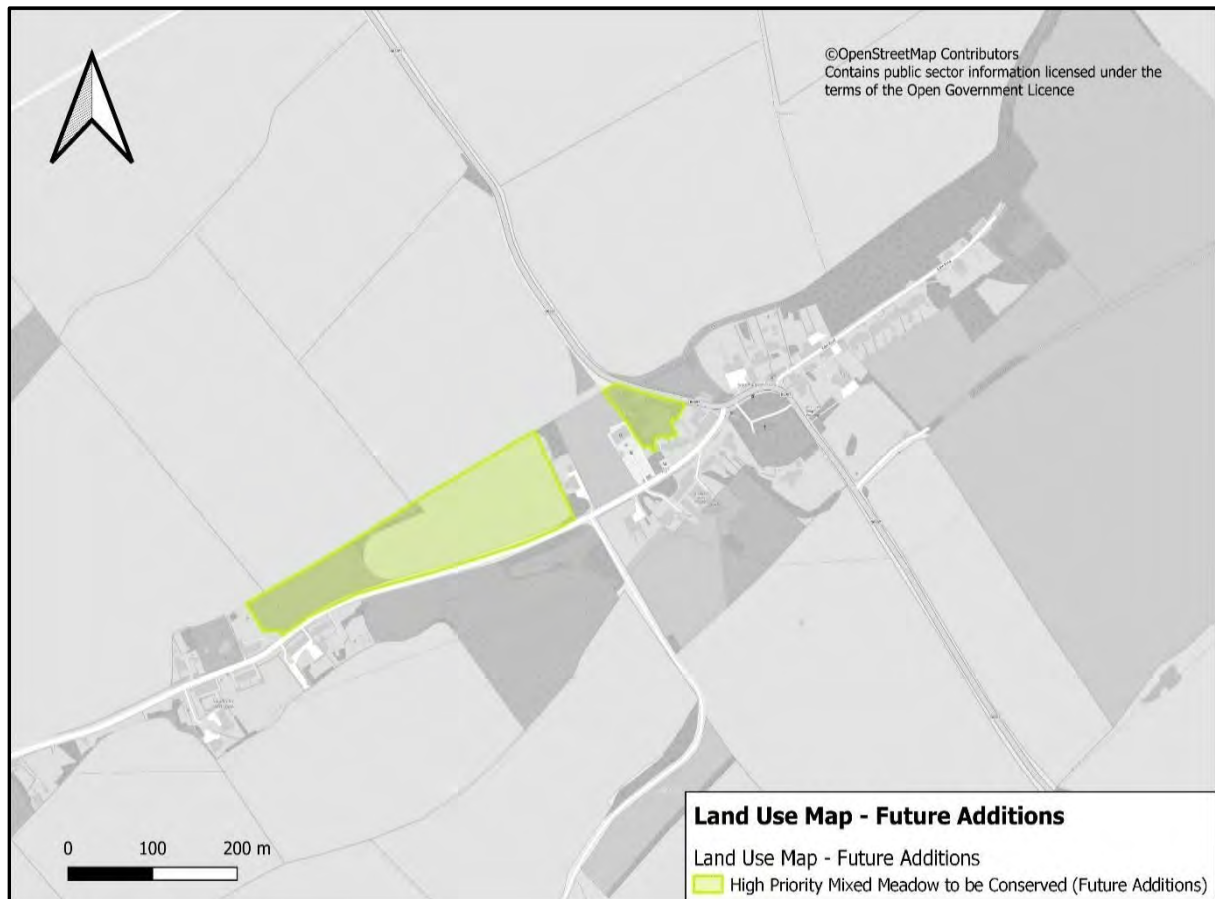


Figure 2 – Land Use – Future Additions

Surrounding agricultural area

Most of the land surrounding the village consists of gently sloping hills and low and occasionally flooded valleys on a slightly raised plateau North of Kelso. The land is fertile and supports a system of intensive, mixed farming, following a traditional crop rotation involving cereals, root and oil crops and short grass leys. The land is interspersed by several rocky Craigs at Smailholm Mains, Bettyfield and Sandyknowe. There are also a handful of small areas of woodland, namely: Miens and Pincushion Plantation and Overtown on the road to Smailholm Tower, Randy Plantation, East of New Smailholm and tree lined lanes connecting the main Earlston to Kelso Road to Mellerstain House. The land is drained by buried and open drains into the Pinch Burn in the North and into the Eden Water, which cuts a deep valley into the rolling plateau to the East.

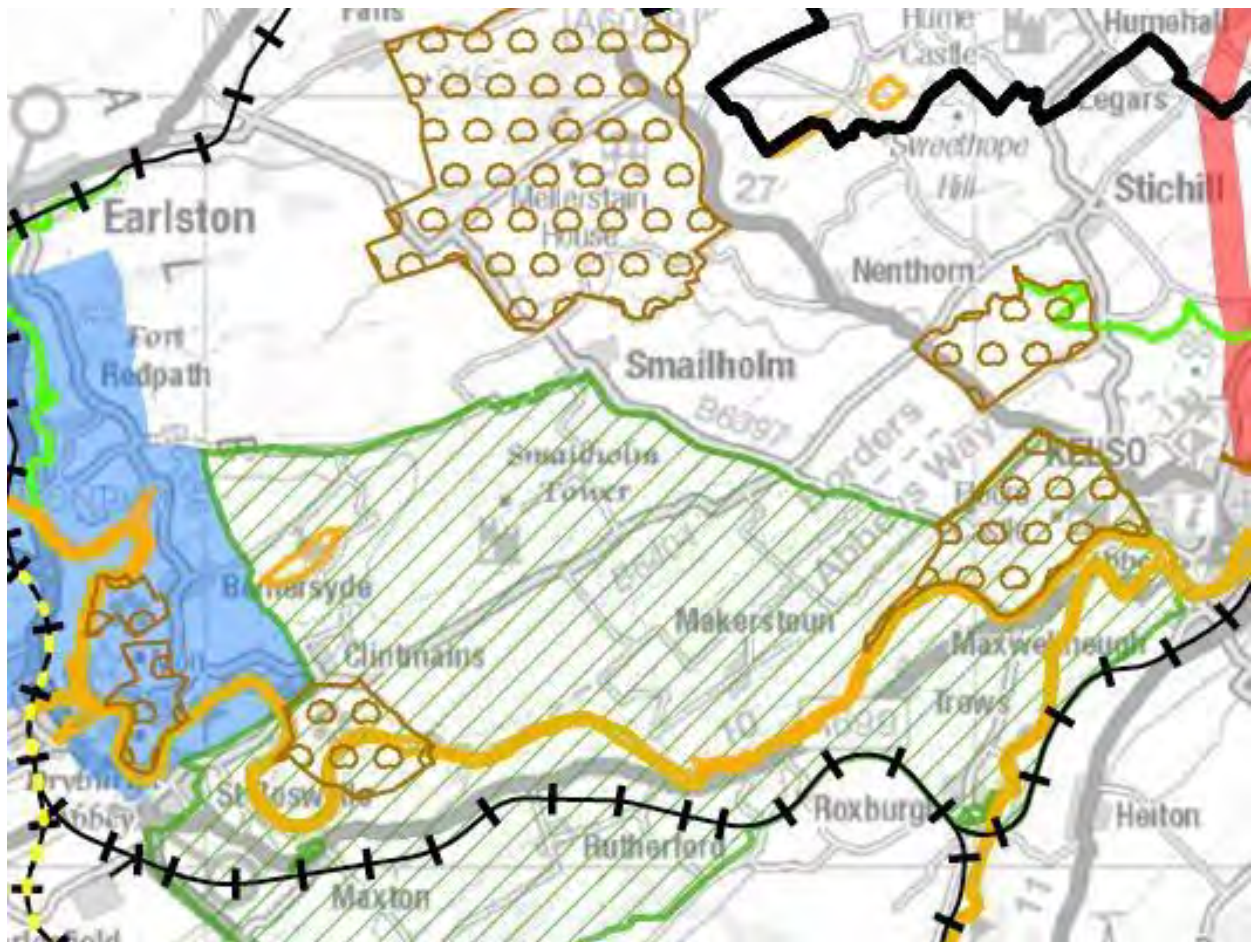


Figure 3 – Local Development Plan Policy Map

The figure above shows the section of the 2024 Scottish Borders Local Development Plan' Policy Map for the area around Smailholm. This map designates most of the land South, South-South-West and South-South-East of the village as a Special Landscape Area, due to its outstanding, sweeping views to and over the Tweed Valley towards the Cheviots to the South, its swathes of rolling hills interspersed with various Craigs of which the one supporting Smailholm Tower is the most extensive and the outstanding views of the Brotherstone and Eildon Hills to the West. The landscape attracts a steady stream of visitors and holiday makers to the area, enjoying the walks linking Smailholm Tower with Mellerstain Garden and Design Landscapes to the North.

Detailed information about current and desired land uses for the Scottish Borders have recently been compiled in a Rural Land Use Framework for the South of Scotland. This classifies most of the land surrounding the village core as Class 3.1 agricultural land, ie: a land that affords good yields for a moderate range of crops, and where short grass leys are common. This is intersected by an area of land from the North to the South-West of the area, which is mainly suited to pasture, due to drainage limitations.

Several residents have shown an interest in working with the Landowner and local farmers to explore ways to balance the food production and natural

functions of the land surrounding the village, guided by the recently approved Rural Land Use Framework for the South of Scotland. This Framework lists priority changes in the landscape that are going to be needed to address the biodiversity losses and climate change impacts affecting the nation now. The various maps that accompany the Framework mention some potential for Smailholm and surrounding areas to expand native and productive woodland, convert some pasture into silvo-pastoral systems and expand the area of improved pasture.

3d: Community

Project Gigabit

- Overview: Project Gigabit is the UK government's initiative to provide high-speed, reliable broadband across the UK, targeting areas not covered by commercial plans.
- **Scottish Government's Role:** The Scottish Government is responsible for delivering local (Type A) and regional (Type B) Project Gigabit contracts in Scotland, working closely with the UK Government.
- **Contracts:** The contracts are categorised into local (Type A), regional (Type B), and cross-regional (Type C).
- **Borders and East Lothian Contract:** A £26 million contract was awarded to GoFibre to provide gigabit-capable broadband to hard-to-reach premises in the Borders and East Lothian. GoFibre will survey the area to determine which premises will benefit from the contract.
- **Smailholm** has been included in Lot 1 of the initial bid that has gone out for procurement for the Scottish Borders area contract, this can be seen in Figure 4. Whilst this map is an early indication of the areas covered by Project Gigabit, it is expected that this will be refined and confirmed by the summer.
- Until then, a process of due diligence and market engagement will take place to confirm the unique property reference numbers (UPRNs) that will be included within the Lot 1 procurements. Upon completion of this, it will be known what specific properties in Smailholm will be beneficiaries of the Project Gigabit Lot 1.

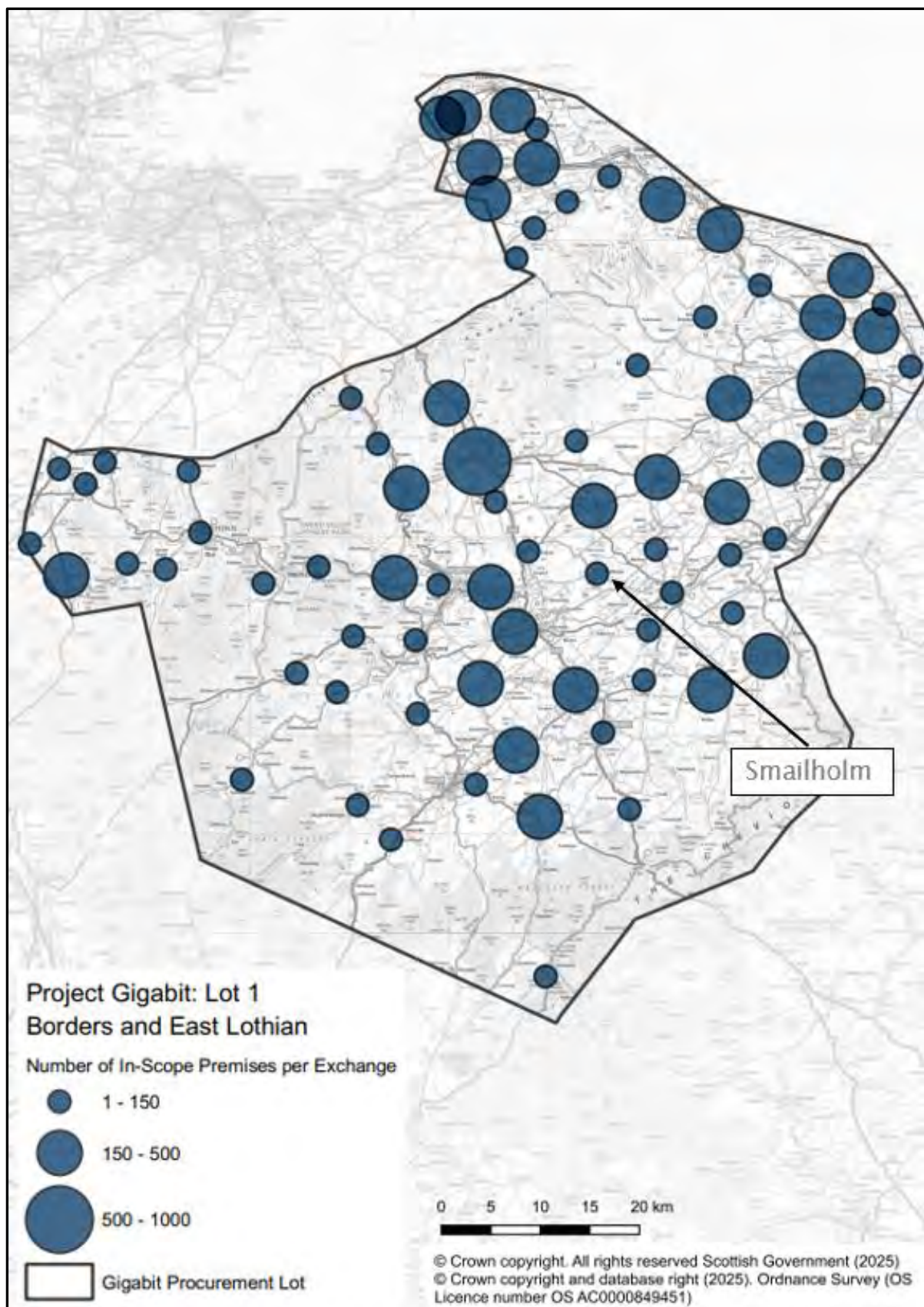


Figure 4 Project Gigabit Areas for Development

3e: Energy

Note of Smailholm Community Energy Meeting (13 Aug 2024)

Objective: To explore opportunities for heat generation, insulation, and power generation within the Smailholm community.

1. Introductions and Expectations

- **Matt Stewart** and **Clare Hamilton-Sturdy** from AtkinsRéalis facilitated the meeting.
- **Community names were removed to protect privacy**
- **Ben Hancox:** Referred to below, Not at the meeting but works for AtkinsRéalis

2. Heat Generation and Insulation

The discussion on heat generation and insulation covered several key points:

- **Property Categorisation:** The village was divided into four categories:
 - Four farms with four to five cottages each: Spotmains, Rachelfield, Smailholm Mains, Sandyknowes.
 - West Third: Modern properties.
 - East Third: Early 1900s cottages.
 - Eden Road: Row of 8 ex-council houses.
- **Insulation Levels:** Properties are at various levels of insulation.
- **District Heating:** These identified mayclusters suitable for district heating systems.
- **Heat Generation Options:** Discussed biomass, ground source heat, and waste heat from grain dryers.

3. Power Generation

The power generation segment explored various options:

- **Solar and Wind Power:** Mixed acceptability; scale is key. Smailholm is windy, and there is potential for solar panels.
- **Hydro Power:** George Investigated the Eden River for hydroelectric power but found it insufficient.
- **Energy Sharing:** Considered sharing solar capacity and using ledgers for buying and selling electricity within the community.

4. Community Management and Funding

The need for effective community management and funding was emphasised:

- **Management Structure:** Discussed the need for community management, possibly contracting out or working with the community council or third sector interface.
- **Funding Opportunities:** Identified funding sources, including Local Energy Scotland's community heat development project and other council programs.

- **Community Analytics:** SOSE to assess housing stock and provide retrofit scenarios.

5. Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging stakeholders and fostering collaboration were key themes:

- **Engage Landowners:** Importance of involving landowners, developers, and potential offtakers.
- **Pilot Projects:** Opportunities for thermal assessments and community solar initiatives.
- **Public and Private Investment:** Seeking public funding to cover research and attract private investment.

6. Technical and Economic Feasibility

The technical and economic feasibility of various options was discussed:

- **Feasibility Studies:** Conducted for biomass, ground source heat, and district heating.
- **Levelised Cost of Energy:** Analysed to determine economic viability.
- **Power Purchasing Agreements (PPA):** Explored to secure green power for the community.

7. Challenges and Considerations

Several challenges and considerations were highlighted:

- **Biomass:** Discussed its sustainability, challenges with odour, continuous supply and waste management.
- **District Heating:** Challenges with cost and distance for heat distribution.
- **Microgrid:** Considerations for ownership and maintenance of infrastructure.
- **Community Scheme Viability:** Economic viability and economies of scale for community schemes.

8. Case Study Examples

- **Wales Energy Sharing:** Discussed the example of energy sharing in Wales facilitated by Octopus Energy, where communities buy and sell electricity using ledgers.
- **West Linton Thermal Action Project:** A local community interest company in West Linton working on thermal assessments of homes to protect against heat loss.
- **Nenthorn Wind Farm:** A large wind farm in Nenthorn that is not visually disturbing, suggesting smaller versions could be linked up for community use.

G. Action Plan

An action plan was developed to move forward:

- **Long list to Shortlist Options with levelised cost:** CHS to approach Ben Hancox (AtkinsRéalis) a shortlist and provide a levelised cost of viable energy solutions.
- **Implementation Strategy:** Develop timelines, responsibilities, and funding plans.

- **Community Engagement:** Keep the community informed and involved.
- **Funding Routes:** Understand and pursue funding routes.
- **Council Facilitation:** CHS determine how the council will facilitate funding and management.
- **Community Studies:** Ben Hancox (AtkinsRéalis) to share Scotland-specific case studies and insights, and bundle up the long list to short list options and levelised cost.

1. Smailholm Energy Group Meeting Notes

Date: December 3, 2024

Attendees:

- Ben Hancox - Principal Process Engineer
- Clare Hamilton-Sturdy
- Other names were removed to protect privacy

Introduction:

- Ben Hancox introduced the meeting and outlined the roadmap for mapping assets in the Smailholm community.
- Focus on 60 houses identified as low-hanging fruit for energy improvements and potential land use.

Key Discussion Points:

1. Heat and Energy Sections:

- Emphasis on low carbon opportunities and energy generation.
- Goals to decarbonise and reduce energy costs in the village.
- Generate and make money through local energy creation

2. Energy Generation and Usage:

- Discussion on improving home insulation and exploring alternative heat sources.
- Ben presented a roadmap used with clients for green energy projects.
- Consideration of wind and solar data for cost estimation and energy options.
- Smailholm might be too exposed for wind turbines.

3. Hydrogen Production:

- Debate on the feasibility of hydrogen production for heating versus heavy vehicle use.
- Interest from local farmers in hydrogen production plants.

4. Community Involvement:

- Rankin highlighted the importance of small-scale, local energy-saving initiatives.
- Will emphasised the need for practical, small-scale projects.

5. Technical and Economic Assessments:

- Exploration of various energy sources and their economic viability.
- Consideration of subsidies and carbon credits.

6. Home Heat Insulation:

- Discussion on improving individual home insulation and shared heat options.
- Mention of ground source heat generation in Dumfries as a case study.

7. Community Management:

- Exploration of management options, including co-management with other villages.
- Potential involvement of third-sector organisations like Borders Community Action.

Next Steps:

- Ben to gather more data and focus efforts on specific projects.
- Plan to meet again to refine the scope of work and map opportunities within the community.
- Define the scope of work in steps and focus on specific energy sources like biodigesters and solar panels.

Other Elements of the Village Plan:

- **Transport Update:** Ongoing discussions.
- **Village Land Use Plan:** Led by Susan, focusing on biodiversity and sustainability.
- **Place Making Document:** Progressing with input from Andrew and Jess.

Appendix 4: Policy Context

Policy context

The Smailholm Place Plan is designed to align with a broad range of National, Regional, and Local policies that collectively support its vision for a sustainable, inclusive, and thriving community. These policies encompass various aspects such as environmental sustainability, economic development, community well-being, transport, and housing. By integrating these strategies, the Smailholm Place Plan aims to address current challenges and leverage future opportunities, ensuring a resilient and prosperous environment for all residents. The following table summarises how each policy aligns with the goals and objectives of the Smailholm Place Plan, focusing sustainability, inclusivity, and community well-being.

Title	Summary	Relevance to Smailholm Place Plan
National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)	Sets out national spatial principles, regional priorities, and national planning policy for Scotland until 2032. Focuses on sustainability, place-making, connectivity, and inclusive growth.	Supports sustainable development and connectivity, aligning with Smailholm's goals for local living and community health.
Fairer Scotland Action Plan 2016	Aims to create a fairer Scotland by 2030 through tackling poverty, improving early years provision, and supporting fair work and public services.	Enhances social equity and community participation, which are crucial for Smailholm's inclusive growth and community empowerment.
Delivering Economic Prosperity – Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation 2022	Outlines a 10-year strategy to transform Scotland's economy by 2032 through improved economic performance and reduced inequality. Focuses on innovation, productivity, net-zero transition, and inclusive growth.	Promotes economic growth and innovation, aligning with Smailholm's objectives for net-zero transition and sustainability.
Scotland's Climate Change Plan 2020	Commits to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2045 focusing on emissions reduction targets for electricity, buildings, transport, industry, waste, land use, and agriculture.	Promotes sustainable transport and reduced car dependency, aligning with Smailholm's environmental and health objectives.

Title	Summary	Relevance to Smailholm Place Plan
Active Travel Framework 2021	Aims to make walking and cycling the most popular modes of travel for short journeys by 2030. Focuses on creating people-centred communities.	Encourages active travel and improved connectivity, supporting Smailholm's vision for a healthier, more accessible community.
Let's Get Scotland Walking: The National Walking Strategy 2016-2026	Promotes walking as part of everyday travel and recreation. Aims to create a culture of walking, improve walking environments, and enable safe independent mobility.	Supports health and wellbeing through increased walking, aligning with Smailholm's goals for active lifestyles and community health.
The National Walking Strategy Action Plan 2016-2026	Highlights the benefits of increased walking opportunities for health, environment, and community. Aligns with the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework and Public Health Priorities.	Enhances walking infrastructure and promotes active travel, supporting Smailholm's health and environmental objectives.
Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (2017) (CAPS)	Aims for 10% of everyday journeys to be made by bike by 2020. Promotes cycling through infrastructure, campaigns, and community programs.	Encourages cycling as a mode of transport, aligning with Smailholm's goals for sustainable and active travel linking Smailholm to other places.
A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030	Sets out a vision for increased active travel across communities. Focuses on health, reducing inequalities, cutting emissions, and supporting economic growth.	Promotes active travel and sustainable development, aligning with Smailholm's objectives for health, environment, and economic growth.
Cleaner Air for Scotland 2: Towards a Better Place for Everyone 2021	Aims to achieve the best air quality in Europe by 2026. Integrates air quality improvements with climate change measures.	Supports improved air quality and environmental health, aligning with Smailholm's net zero goals.
National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) 2020	Forefronts sustainable transport and active travel. Aims to reduce inequalities, take climate action, deliver	Promotes sustainable transport and active travel, supporting Smailholm's objectives

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	inclusive economic growth, and improve health and wellbeing.	for connectivity and environmental sustainability.
Emerging Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) 2022	Reviews strategic transport network performance and informs transport investment for the next 20 years. Prioritises active travel and sustainable transport.	Supports transport infrastructure improvements and active travel, aligning with Smailholm's goals for connectivity and active travel.
Scottish Borders Community Plan 2023-2033	Outlines a 10-year vision and strategy for the region. Focuses on poverty, learning/skills/economy, health/wellbeing, and place/community/connectivity.	Enhances community wellbeing and connectivity, aligning with Smailholm's objectives for inclusive growth and community development.
South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy 2021	Sets out a 10-year vision for a greener, fairer, and more flourishing region. Focuses on skills, innovation, quality jobs, culture/heritage, net-zero transition, and community wealth building.	Promotes economic growth and sustainability, aligning with Smailholm's objectives for economic development and community empowerment.
Scottish Borders Joint Health Improvement Team Annual Report 2021-2022	Highlights health improvement initiatives and partnerships. Focuses on mental health, financial inclusion, child healthy weight management, and smoking cessation.	Supports health and wellbeing initiatives, aligning with Smailholm's goals for a healthier community.
SEStran 2035 Regional Transport Strategy	Provides a strategic framework for transport management and investment. Addresses issues like car dependency, safety, cycling infrastructure, and public transport.	Supports transport infrastructure improvements and active travel, aligning with Smailholm's goals for connectivity and sustainability.
Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP) 2022	Sets out land use proposals and planning policies for the next 10 years. Focuses on strategic growth areas and connectivity improvements.	Supports sustainable development and connectivity, aligning with Smailholm's objectives around the Local Place Plan.

Title	Summary	Relevance to Smailholm Place Plan
Scottish Borders Economic Strategy 2023	Outlines economic development priorities and vision for the region. Focuses on infrastructure development, business support, employment generation, and investment attraction.	Promotes economic growth and investment, aligning with Smailholm's energy and sustainability objectives.
Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal 2021	Aims to drive economic development and sustainability across the region. Focuses on improving places, enabling infrastructure, encouraging green growth, and supporting business and skills.	Supports economic development and sustainability, aligning with Smailholm's goals for inclusive growth and community development, although Smailholm cannot avail of Borderlands funding.
The South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) Digital Strategy	Aims to unlock the region's potential through digital innovation and connectivity. Focuses on connectivity, digital transformation, and innovation.	Enhances digital infrastructure and innovation, supporting Smailholm's objectives for economic development and community connectivity.
Scottish Borders Council Plan 2023	Outlines strategic context, vision, challenges, and opportunities for the region. Focuses on climate change, economic issues, social disparities, and community empowerment.	Supports sustainable development and community empowerment, aligning with Smailholm's goals for community empowerment and wellbeing.
Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028	Sets out the vision, strategy, and plans for housing in the region. Focuses on affordable housing supply, quality, and availability.	Supports housing development and community wellbeing, aligning with Smailholm's objectives for sustainable housing.
SESplan Partnership	A partnership of six Member Authorities working on strategic development planning. Focuses on maintaining an up-to-date Strategic Development Plan.	Supports regional planning and development, aligning with Smailholm's goals on land use and development planning.

Title	Summary	Relevance to Smailholm Place Plan
Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES)	Focuses on improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions in buildings. Aims to develop local strategies for heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency.	Supports energy efficiency and sustainability, aligning with Smailholm's goals for reducing carbon footprint and promoting renewable energy.
Local Place Plans in Scotland	Community-led plans introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Aim to enhance engagement in development planning and empower communities to define their future.	Empowers community participation and local development, aligning with Smailholm's objectives for community-led planning and development.
2nd Just Transition Commission Report	Emphasises investment in renewable energy sources and innovative funding models. Highlights the importance of local capacity building and job creation in the green sector.	Supports renewable energy transition and local capacity building, aligning with Smailholm's goals for sustainable energy and community employment.
The Climate Change Plan - Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-2032	Emphasises a green recovery from COVID-19 that aligns with climate goals. Sets ambitious targets to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2045.	Supports green recovery and ambitious climate targets, aligning with Smailholm's goals for sustainable development and community resilience.
Second Climate Change Adaptation Programme	Outlines Scotland's strategic approach to adapting to climate change, emphasising collaboration and integration across sectors. Focuses on community resilience, climate justice, and sustainable development.	Supports climate adaptation and resilience, aligning with Smailholm's goals for sustainable development and community preparedness.
Rural Land Use Framework for the South of Scotland:	Outlines a vision for sustainable land use to combat climate change and biodiversity loss, promoting a just transition to net zero. It emphasizes multiple benefits from land use, stakeholder engagement, and informed decision-making. The framework prioritizes native woodland creation, peatland restoration, sustainable agriculture, and renewable energy development.	Support sustainable land use practices, addresses climate change and biodiversity, and emphasises community engagement.

Title	Summary	Relevance to Smailholm Place Plan
	Implementation requires collaboration, funding, and data-driven approaches, while regular reviews and updates ensure progress and adaptability to new challenges. This framework aims to guide land use decisions in the South of Scotland to deliver environmental, social, and economic benefits.	

The policy summary table highlights that the Smailholm Place Plan aligns with various national, regional, and local strategies focusing on sustainability, community well-being, economic development, transport, climate adaptation, and housing. These policies collectively support Smailholm’s goals for sustainable development, improved connectivity, and community resilience. By integrating these strategies, the Smailholm Place Plan aims to foster a prosperous, healthy, and sustainable community. This comprehensive approach ensures that Smailholm not only addresses current challenges but also prepares for future opportunities, creating a vibrant and resilient environment for all residents. Through collaboration and strategic planning, the Smailholm Place Plan can effectively enhance the quality of life and ensure long-term environmental sustainability

