

Southdean Local Place Plan

2025 - 2035

Setting The Future Path for Southdean

Southdean Community Council



Contents

1. Foreword and Acknowledgements	4
2. Introduction and Overview	6
3. Description and Context of the Area	9
3.1 Local Place Plan Area Map	10
3.2 About the Area	13
3.3 Community Assets, Natural Capital and Heritage Assets	14
3.4 Access to Nature	17
3.5 Cultural and Heritage Assets	17
3.6 Tourism and the Visitor opportunity	19
3.7 Southdean Community	20
3.8 Community Owned Assets	21
3.9 National and Local Planning Policy Context	22
4. Community Engagement	23
4.1 Overview	24
4.2 Community Survey	24
4.3 Schools Engagement	24
4.4 Stakeholder Engagement	26
4.5 Open Meetings and Discussions	26
4.6 Landowner and Partner Engagement	28
5. Assets, Opportunities, Needs and Challenges	29
5.1 Overview	30
5.2 Housing and Energy Efficiency	31
5.3 Services and Amenities	32
5.4 Connectivity	32
5.5 Provision for Young People	32
5.6 Public Transport	32
5.7 Traffic	32
5.8 Road Infrastructure	33
5.9 Net Zero and the Energy Transition	33
5.10 Community Owned Assets	33
5.11 Visitor Provision	33
5.12 Relationship with Neighbouring Communities	33

6. Proposals	34
6.1 Overview	35
6.2 Fit with LDP2	35
6.3 Themes, Priorities and Projects	35
6.4 Map of Projects (Land and Assets)	42
6.5 Management and Governance	43
5. Epilogue	44

Foreword and Acknowledgements

01

1. Foreword and Acknowledgements

Thanks to all who helped formulate and contributed to the Southdean Place Plan, which gives a clear vision of where the community would like to be in 2035. It brings out the strong Natural Capital and Heritage attributes and the strong community spirit that already exists.

Special thanks to our coordinating group within Southdean. The Local Place Plan was produced in conjunction with Community Enterprise¹.

Southdean had already undertaken a survey and produced a Community Plan and this formed an excellent base to build a Local Place Plan. There were a series of events and meetings across the community during the process, which provided excellent input from a variety of mechanisms to ensure that the community views were properly reflected in the Plan itself.

Philip Kerr

Chair, Southdean Community Council



Introduction and Overview

02

2.1 Introduction

A Local Place Plan² is a new type of community-led plan, introduced by Section 14 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. This gives communities the opportunity to come up with proposals for the development and use of land in their local area³. Local Place Plans present how communities would like to see their places developed in the future.

This Local Place Plan will be submitted to Scottish Borders Council for validation and registration and will influence the development of its next Local Development Plan⁴ (LDP). The plan will identify what should happen in the community and where it should happen.

However, the purpose of a Local Place Plan is not only to contribute to the next LDP. The project ideas outlined in this plan can be initiated and executed by the community itself, with support from statutory bodies through collaborative partnerships, where relevant.

With our Local Place Plan registered and verified, the people of our community will be able to influence and drive developments in the area and this is our platform to voice our own aspirations for the area.

Southdean Community Council began developing this Local Place Plan in 2024. It builds on a wealth of existing research and community engagement in the area which took place over previous years including the work done on the Community Action Plan.

The Community Council members and interested people from the community have:

- Come together in 6 community events, 3 of which were facilitated by Community Enterprise⁵
- Met regularly to determine community opinion
- Undertaken a community survey

In 2024, Scottish Borders Council awarded funding, provided by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund⁶ through the Placemaking Framework⁷, to allow independent consultants Community Enterprise to co-produce a Local Place Plan with the Southdean community. Work has continued into 2025 to ensure alignment with the Local Place Plans being developed in some of our nearby Community Council areas, including Denholm, Hobkirk, Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water and Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage. The towns of Hawick and Jedburgh have also developed their own Local Place Plans. These towns are of importance to Southdean as many essential service providers are located in these areas.

We have worked alongside Community Enterprise to finalise this Local Place Plan for the area, which sets out the long-term vision that our community wants to achieve over the next ten years and beyond.

This Local Place Plan will be submitted to Scottish Borders Council by the Southdean Community Council as an eligible community body permitted to make such a submission.

2.2 Our Vision

In ten years' time Southdean will be an increasingly economically and culturally vibrant, inclusive, supportive place to live that embraces our natural and built environment and forms a great base for visitors to explore the South of Scotland.



2.3 Our Investment Themes and Strategic Objectives

The Place Plan process has identified core thematic areas that will underpin and support the achievement of the vision. Aligned with those themes Southdean has identified strategic objectives with the specific purpose of setting out what the Community wants to achieve, and to express where the Community aims to get to.

Theme 1: A Great Place to Live and Work

Strategic Objective: Southdean will optimise the attractions of the community to residents of all ages. Southdean community has the Village Hall in Chesters at its heart and its role and influence will be expanded. The resilience of the existing housing will be improved, and better facilities for families will be introduced. There is also a goal of skills improvement for those of all ages in the community and allow local enterprise to flourish.

Theme 2: A Sustainable Community

Strategic Objective: The natural environment remains the focus of attention with the utilisation of local resources bringing improved accessibility for all. Our community will continue the energy transition bringing greater energy sustainability.

Theme 3: A Resilient and Involved Community

Strategic Objective: Southdean will be a thriving and resilient community, where our assets can be of benefit to people in the area. Addressing climate change issues brings a focus on flood prevention, energy resilience and a resilience hub.

Theme 4: A Place that celebrates, preserves and promotes its Natural Assets and Historical Heritage

Strategic Objective: Southdean will ensure the protection of the natural capital and cultural heritage assets in the community, and preserve them for future generations to enjoy. There is an intention to establish a Forestry Hub, and to cooperate more widely in a Rural Community Alliance with neighbouring communities.

Theme 5: Connections: The Community, Neighbours and Visitors

Strategic Objective: Southdean will have improved connectivity. Our community will be safe, well-resourced and well connected, including improved digital infrastructure and better public transport.

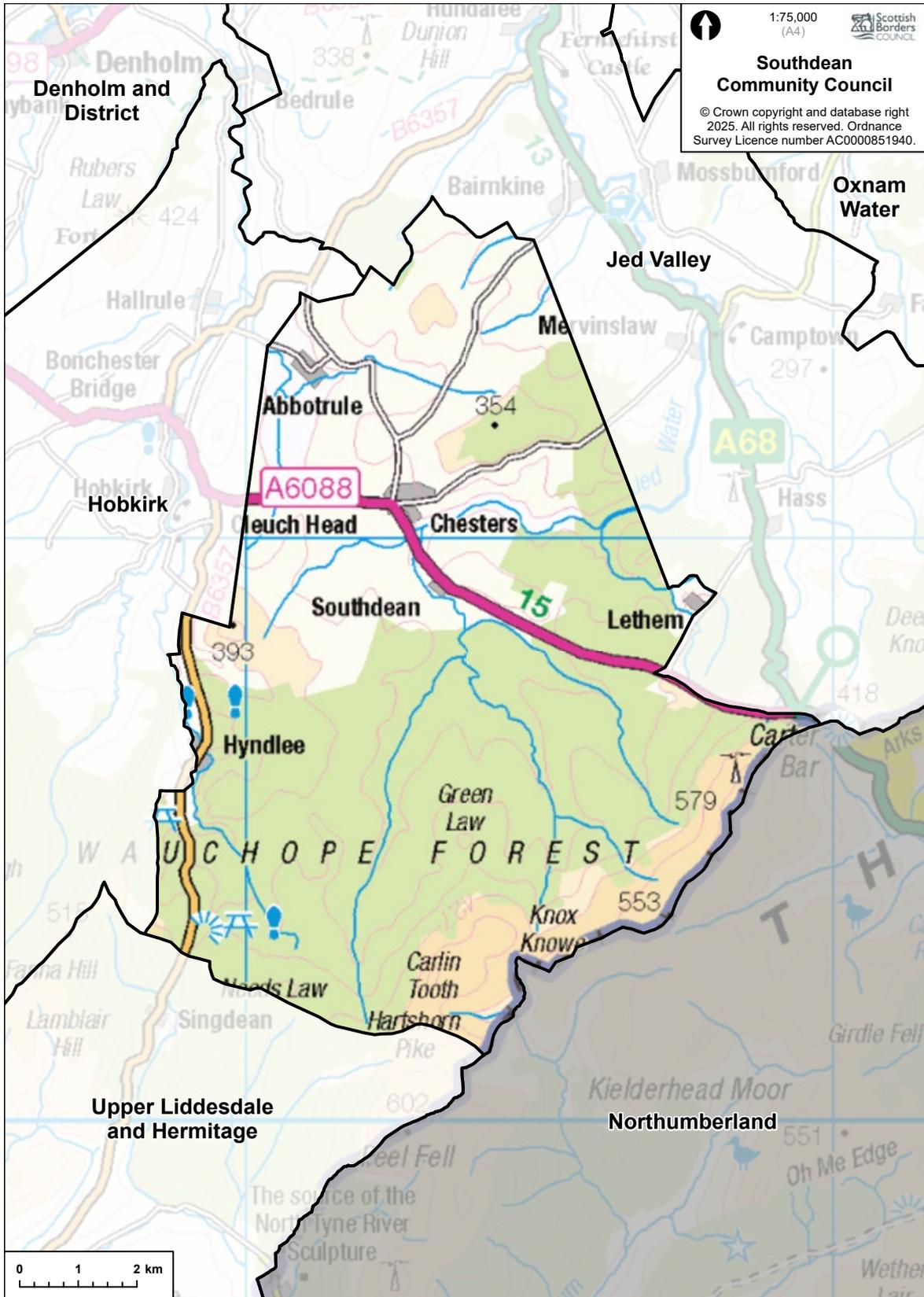


Description and Context of the Area

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3.1 Local Place Plan Area Map

The Southdean Council boundary⁸ forms the Local Place Plan boundary

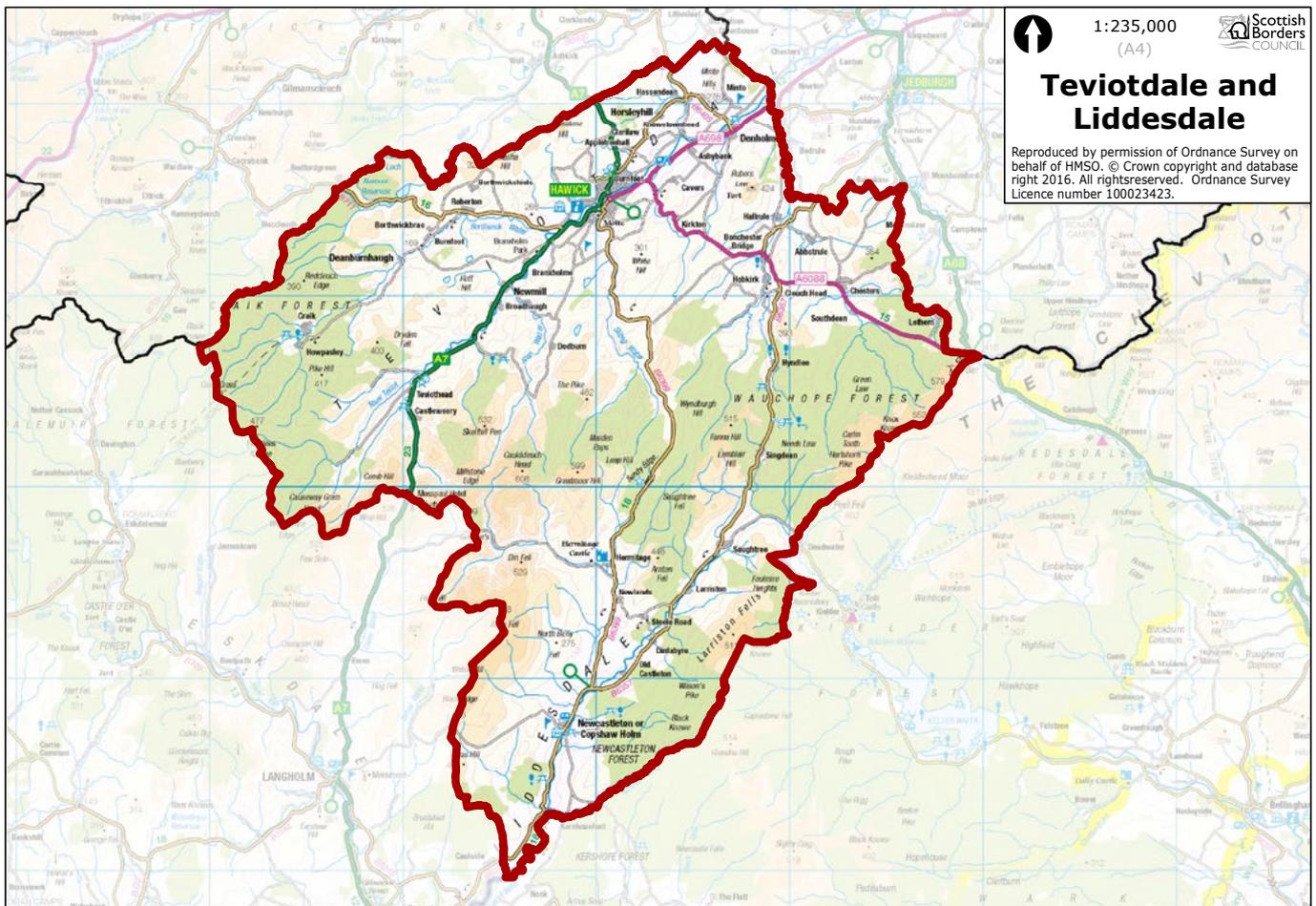


The Southdean Local Place Plan border adjoins the Community Council areas of Hobkirk, Jed Valley and Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage. The area in the southeast borders onto the English county of Northumberland.

The adjacent Community Councils, who have been notified of this Local Place Plan are:

- Hobkirk
- Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage
- Jed Valley
- Kielder Parish Council
- Rochester Parish Council

The area falls within the Scottish Borders Council Locality of Teviot and Liddesdale⁹. The Local Place Plan needs to be considered in the wider context of this locality, as well as the context of Scottish Borders Council.



The Southdean Community Flag



The flag was created in 2004 through a community competition and sets the scene. It is a full-size flag as used on public buildings. The design is a diagonal tricolour with a shield emblem in the blue section. The colours are, from top left; blue, white, and green.

The shield is fimbriated in black and divided into four sections, containing a sheep, a motorbike, Southdean Church and the old beech tree under which village meetings were once held.

The blue stands for the blue sky, the white for the sheep in this rural community, and the green for the fields, woods, and forests.

The flag that epitomises a number of the key values the community places on its core attributes. Natural Capital lies at its heart. Southdean has a key agricultural and forestry sector, stunning landscapes and natural beauty, and dark skies, with the setting being highly valued by its residents and visitors alike,

It also has history with a range of cultural assets ranging from old Churches, Pele Towers, Rights of Way and Drove Roads, and scheduled Forts.

3.2 About the Area

Overview and History

Southdean Community Council area is in the far south of the Scottish Borders in the Cheviot Hills adjacent to the Scotland-England Border. It also lies on the edge of Scotland's Watershed and forms part of the Tweed Valley catchment.

The land use is primarily pasture and forestry with the elevation ranging between 200m and 550m. It does have Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), and the northern part of the Community Council area is part of the Teviot & Liddesdale Special Landscape Area.

The main settlement is the village of Chesters with a collection of smaller settlements around Southdean, Lethem, and Ruletownhead/Westerhayes. The remainder of the area is sparsely populated and dominated by forestry.

Chesters is a small linear village with housing clusters to the East and West of its nucleus. It is on the A6088 9 miles southeast of Hawick and 9 miles southwest of Jedburgh.

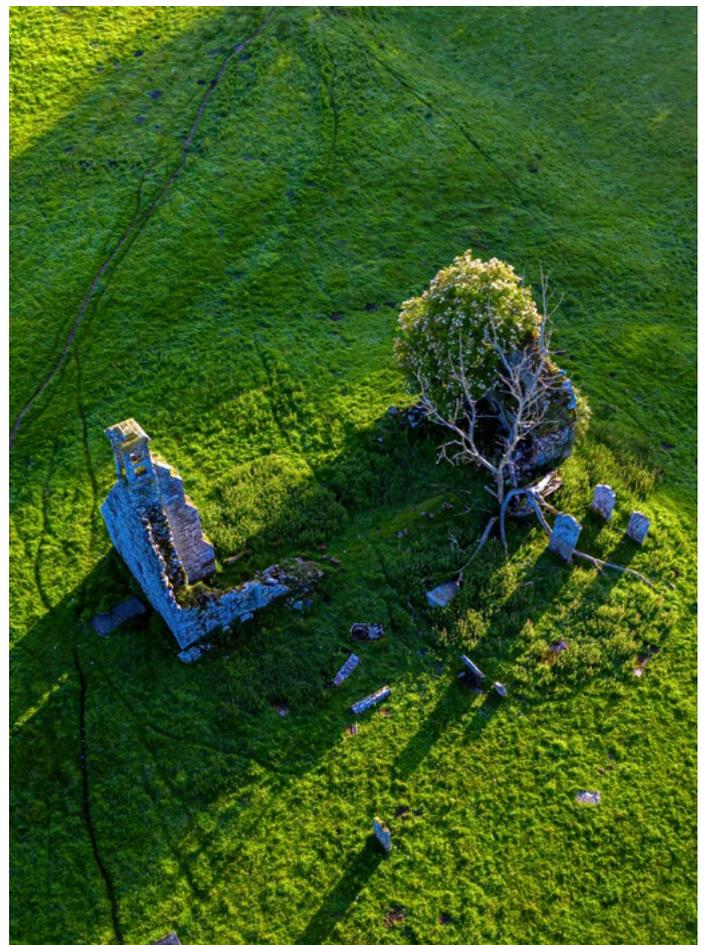
The 2022 Census for the Southdean area was 161 though this only included output areas totally within the Southdean boundary, which is understating the total. Similarly, the recorded number of 76 households understates the actual number of 107 when all buildings are taken into consideration.

There is no current land available for new housing within the existing village boundary, and it is not an LPP priority for this community.

History

The significant cultural heritage assets within the community area reflect the long-standing history within the community. There are a large number of hill forts in the surrounding area and Southdean has more than its fair share with assets stretching back to Roman times.

The Southdean Community formed part of the "Scottish Middle March" and was in the heart of Border Reiver Territory with significant cross border activity and clans having a major role to play. Southdean Parish forms the outline of the Community Council Area that applies today and is reflected in the number of Churches to be found within the boundaries. Southdean and Hobkirk also annexed the parish of Abbotrule in 1777. Souden Kirk is also the destination of one of the Jedburgh Common Riding Festival Ride- Outs. The population peaked in the 1849 census.



Facilities

The Southdean community has at its heart the Village Hall in Chesters, the focus of community activity. The community owns the Village Hall but owns no other assets, and there are no local authority owned buildings. There is no primary school, or shop in the village, and the church is in the process of being closed and sold by the Church of Scotland. The broadband availability in the community has improved significantly but the mobile phone signal strengths are variable. It also has access to a mobile library and B&B's. Hawick and Jedburgh are the nearest towns with a good range of shops.

There are also amenities at the nearby villages of Bonchester Bridge and Denholm. These are all outside the Southdean Area. Local education for the community is located in Denholm and Jedburgh.

Health facilities used by the community include medical centres in Jedburgh and Hawick, and community hospitals, with the main Borders General Hospital near Melrose. Sports facilities used by the community include the Swimming Baths and Gym at Jedburgh, and also various nearby Golf courses are available to play. Horse Riding is a highly popular activity within the community, as is cycling.

Public Transport – A focal area for improvement.

The public transport system access is poor to the community and needs significant enhancement. The current bus service from Hawick is supplied on demand.

The nearest railway stations are at Tweedbank, Berwick and Carlisle.

The A6088 that goes from Hawick to Carter Bar is the main artery through the Community connecting with the A68 and A698. There are a series of minor roads also crossing the community with a crossroads at Chesters forming the centre.

3.3 Community Assets, Natural Capital and Heritage Assets

3.3.1 Natural Capital

Southdean has strong Natural Capital assets providing benefits to the whole community and visitors alike. These include stunning landscapes, natural beauty, dark skies and a significant agricultural and forestry sectoring and Ecology. The view from Carter Bar is an iconic gateway to Scotland and a window onto Southdean's community. The entry to Scotland has Landscape and Setting protection and is the first impression of Scotland for many. Southdean sees further potential for it to be enhanced in terms of signage, highlighting potential in the area.

The Borders Ridge separating Scotland from England forms the Southern Boundary of the community, including adjoining the Northumberland Dark Skies Area. Southdean also contains Kielderhead SSSI. (5th largest in the Scottish Borders) and the south-western boundary forms part of Scotland's Watershed. The Teviot Valleys Special Landscape Area extends into the north of the community council area in Landscape classified as Upland Fringe. In addition to the Kielderhead SSSI, there are two smaller SSSI's Cragbank and Wolfhopelee with ancient woodland.



3.3.2 Land Classifications

The major land classifications are “Southern Upland Forest Covered” and “Grassland with Hills”, with commercial forestry and agricultural grazing predominating. There is peat present in the Community area, predominantly in the Southern part and includes a section of Class 1 peat¹⁰.

The community effectively comprises upland and upland fringe¹¹. The classification of the areas is apportioned as follows:

- Southern upland Forest Covered BDR5
- Cheviot Foothills. BDR7
- Grassland With Hills. BDR11

3.3.3 Teviot Valleys Special Landscape Area

The northern part of the Southdean community area falls into the Teviot Valley Special Landscape Area and the description from the Landscape assessment study is as follows which is relevant to Southdean.

The Rule Water is smaller in scale than the Jed Valley and is densely wooded with beech trees along the road. It is an intimate, picturesque valley with traditional stone buildings and bridges, and intriguing gateways into estates. There is evidence of management which suggests a well-established and well-loved landscape.

The forces for change are:

- Changes in agricultural practices, crops and methods
- Farm diversification
- Changes in management of hedges and hedgerow trees
- Introduction of new woodlands
- Potential for visual impact of development on hills outside the proposed SLA Development of wind farms and wind turbines and associated works

The associated management recommendations are¹²:

- Continue to promote sustainable land management to balance the needs of biodiversity, recreation and tourism
- Encourage the sustainable management of hedges, and where possible seek the reinstatement of hedges and hedgerow trees
- Promote the restructuring of forests and the use of forest design plans for new areas of afforestation
- Consider the effects of development on hilltops, such as masts or wind farms, which may be visible within the valleys

The landscape is highly regarded and there are a number of scenic viewpoints, which allow the appreciation of Southdean's setting located at Carter Bar, Carlin Tooth, Carter Fell Communication Mast, B6357 Upper Wauchope Picnic Area, Belling and the Junction of Ruletownhead /Ashtrees at Cotlaw Corner.

3.3.4 Hydrology

Southdean is part of the River Tweed Catchment. The rivers that have their headwaters in Southdean flow into two different tributaries of the Tweed, namely Jed Water and the River Rule. The climate change impact has become more noticeable in

recent years with an increase in incidents of river flooding and field run off. The latest updated SEPA flood maps now show the increased risk of flooding¹³.

This is a major priority for the community looking to bring in natural flood management at the headwaters of the rivers and requires active engagement with the landowners.

3.3.5 Forestry

There is a large amount of forestry in Southdean, predominantly commercial, located on either side of the A6088 in the Southern part of the community. The commercial forestry is owned by several large landowners, with a concentrated list of operators. The commercial forestry has reached harvesting and replanting, and there are 10-year plans in place for all of the commercial forestry assets. There is ancient woodland in the two smaller SSSI's of Craghead and Wolfehopelee and there is an expansion of riparian investment underway across the community. There is a clear opportunity for enhanced community participation and an improvement in biodiversity. Local commercial forests include Wauchope East, Dykeraw, Hass & Lethem, Southdean Forest, and Falside.



Major development opportunities for Southdean:

- Improved access and signage on paths
- Reopening of core paths, drove roads, rights of way, historic paths
- Flooding solutions
- Improved biodiversity, riparian
- Importance of Heritage assets and bringing those to greater prominence
- Consistency across the supply chain

As a result of the engagements and with Forestry having such a significant presence within the community Southdean has identified a need for a community Forestry Hub.

This can be for Southdean Community or part of a wider Teviot & Liddesdale Rural Community Initiative

This would allow consistent information from the various asset owners to be accessible to the community in a centralised form, something that is currently not the case. Southdean would welcome Forestry managers inputting data from their hubs and encourage greater collaboration.

3.3.6 Biodiversity

Southdean is committed to see an improvement in biodiversity across the area. This approach has also been driven by the recent experience at Cummings Hill where new forestry planting approval was given on a site which had multiple biodiversity attractions to the community. It had a large-scale intact section on Upland Heathland with extensive heather (the largest in the Teviot & Liddesdale locality), a number of key bird species (curlew, lapwing, and golden plover) and also was the habitat of the Green Hairstreak Butterfly. Sadly, all of that biodiversity has been lost to a plantation of primarily Sitka, which was objected to by the community and other consultees.



To protect and improve biodiversity at community level, especially given the preponderance of existing forestry, there must be better recognition of the biodiversity at community levels and prevention of further biodiversity loss such as that at Cummings Hill which can be directly attributed to the Plantation Scheme.

Southdean will continue to pursue positive land use discussions and projects.

Golden Eagles used to nest in the Southdean Community area, and their departure coincided with the breed leaving the region entirely. Southdean has expressed support for the South of Scotland Golden Eagles project¹⁴ since its inception.

The community has been delighted to see Golden Eagles in the skies over Southdean as the presence in the South of Scotland continues to build alongside the increasing numbers of breeding pairs. The biodiversity of the area should be developed to allow the Golden Eagle Population to continue to build, and to encourage the re-establishment of the breed in the local area.

3.3.7 Agriculture

Farming forms the other significant form of land-based activity across the Southdean Area, with the main focus on Livestock given the upland/grassland land character of the community. Farms include Lustruther, Falside, Ruletownhead, Southdean Farm, Westerhouses, and Doorpool.



3.4 Access to Nature

3.4.1 Outdoor Activities

Walking, cycling, and riding are all popular activities, both for residents and for visitors to the area. The community has opportunities to build on what currently is in place in terms of widening access, and the potential facilities by making paths more accessible, and introducing e-bikes,

3.4.2 Walking Routes

There are several Rights of Way within the Southdean area that offer significant opportunities for enhancement. These include forest trails, and also notably along the Borders Ridge including in the vicinity of Carter Bar. Scotland's Watershed lies along the Community Council Boundary with Upper Liddesdale. There are also opportunities within the Teviot & Liddesdale Special Landscape Area, and local walks across the wider area feature in the Town of 1000 Trails¹⁵. Local walking routes are listed on the SBC website¹⁶.

3.4.3 Cycling

There is scope for cycling along local Borders routes and Off Road. These are popular with local cycling clubs and visitors. There are also local bike shops and repair stations nearby. Scottish Borders Council lists details of cycle routes and nearby Bonchester Bridge is featured in those setting out from Jedburgh and Hawick¹⁷. The Borderloop route¹⁸, promoted by the South of Scotland Destination Alliance, goes through the area.

3.4.4 Riding

Riding is a popular local hobby. Hacking and recreational use form a key part of local activities for all ages. Riding routes are listed on the SBC website¹⁹ and the South of Scotland Countryside Trails website²⁰.

Every summer, towns across the South of Scotland celebrate the riding of their boundaries – the Common Ridings. One of the country's most spectacular and ancient traditions, these ride outs are at the heart of vibrant festivals. Southdean forms an integral part of the Jedburgh Callants Festival and is the destination of one of the "ride-outs" of the marches. Southdean Community is a keen participant joining Jedburgh in commemorating the long history of the town.

3.4.5 Dark Skies

A strong feature of the community engagement was the reference to the dark skies as a natural capital asset, and the community lies adjacent to the Northumberland Dark Skies which has brought significant positive commentary. The plan includes the potential for a dark skies initiative for Southdean with the possible installation of equipment at a suitable location.

3.5 Cultural and Heritage Assets

Southdean is richly endowed with heritage capital, as evidenced by a study done in the early 1990's, by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments²¹ showing a fairly striking conclusion as to the uniqueness of the heritage assets.

Some key extracts from the report highlight the value of the assets within Southdean and the unique landscape it has created.

"The present survey has demonstrated the special character of the medieval and post-medieval archaeology of the Southdean area which has been determined in part by its location within the Forest of Jedburgh and its position adjacent to the border with England. Both these factors have combined to produce a unique archaeological landscape, and one which is greatly at risk from modern changes in land-use. The identification of the archaeological remains of a medieval horizon of occupation marks a significant development in the understanding of rural settlement in that period, not only in the Southdean area, but for the Borders as a whole. This, combined with the discovery of so many lost pele-house and tower sites of late medieval date, demonstrates not only the chronological complexity of the settlement remains to be found in this type of landscape, but also the value of further field and historical survey in adjoining parts of the Border."

It also points out:

"In common with some other parts of the Border counties, the Southdean area has been extensively afforested since the Second World War. This has taken its toll on the relict archaeological landscapes, including the important prehistoric settlement and field-system at Tamshiel Rig, which lies immediately south of the survey area (RCAHMS 1956, 426-7). Despite this, a well-preserved medieval and later landscape was still extant in 1991, when the area was selected for survey by the Afforestation Land Survey (ALS). Although monuments of all periods up to the last century were included in the survey, such was the quality of the late medieval remains that analysis has been concentrated on the medieval and postmedieval landscape."

Tamshiel Rig is under two different land ownerships, which have seen a different approach to stewardship. There is currently some felling ongoing in the more overgrown section, which is under FLS custodianship. Southdean is looking for re-designation of the Western section to bring it back into line.

3.5.1 Churches

Southdean Church: The current Southdean Church is a beautiful little church dating from 1874. It stands on the minor road to Ruletownhead and Jedburgh, along from 'The Steadings,' 'Roundabouts Farm', and a small group of houses. The Church has been put up for sale by the Church of Scotland.

Souden Kirk (now derelict): The original Southdean Kirk is located near Southdean Farm and the Jed Water and is the focus of the 'Southdean Rideout' during the annual Jedburgh Callant's Festival.

Old Cemetery: After the collapse of the roof of the original Souden Kirk located near the Jed Water, a new church was built in Chesters itself in 1690. This was in Chesters Brae, set back a little from the road and near to the former school and schoolhouse.

Abbotrule Church: The remains of Abbotrule Church lies within the western boundary of the Southdean community. The church belonged to Jedburgh Abbey from some date earlier than 1220, and the parish was suppressed in 1777.



3.5.2 Pele Towers and Bastles

Pele Towers: There are remains of several Pele Towers located within Southdean Community and more in the surrounding area. Kilnsike Pele Tower, Slacks, and Northbank are all located in Southdean with the nearby Mervinslaw Pele Tower in the old Southdean parish.

"The security afforded by feu-ferme led to the construction of many small tower houses or in some cases defensible stone farmhouses known as bastle or pele houses. At Southdean in Roxburghshire, and close to the English border, a group of pele houses is to be found in a remarkable fossilised farming landscape. The construction of these buildings is frequently interpreted as a reflection of the unstable conditions that afflicted the Borders."

3.5.3 Forts, Earthworks

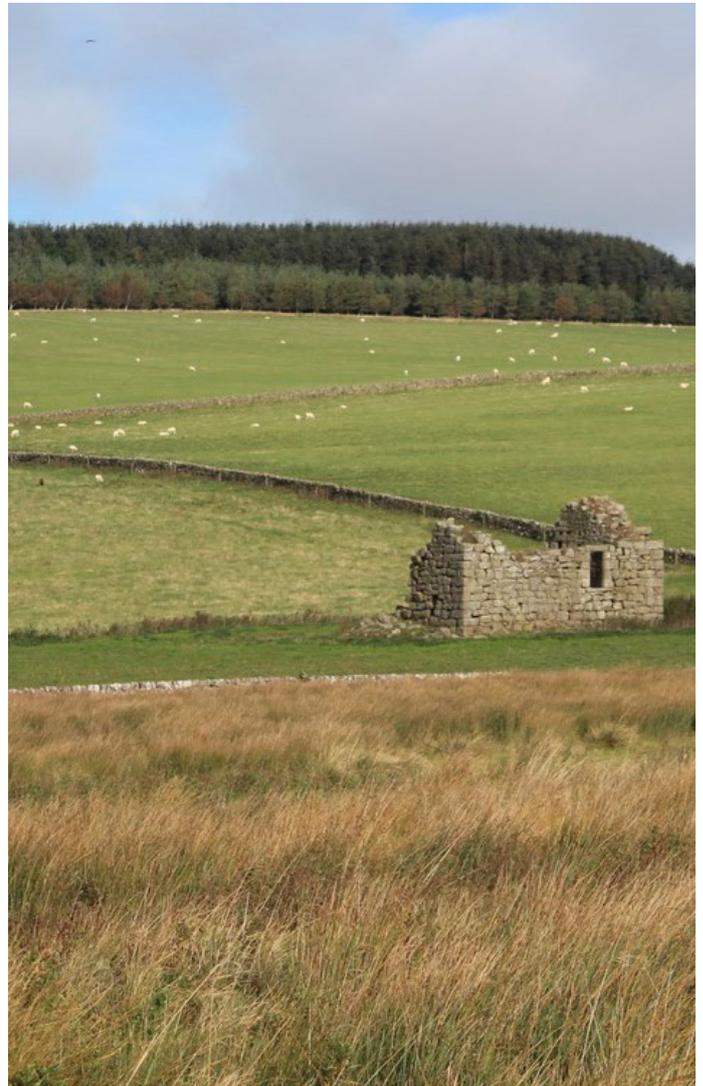
There are a number of heritage forts, earthworks, Field Systems and enclosures.

These include Tamshiel Rig Fort and Field System, Iron Castle Sike, Steel Knowe and Southdean Law. Tamshiel Rig is under two different land ownerships with a somewhat different approach. The FLS owned part which has allowed a lot of trees growth is now undertaking some felling.

3.5.4 Tracks and Paths

There are also a variety of old routes, tracks and paths leading through the community. Some of these rights of way need better maintenance having become overgrown and the community would like to see more investment to restore access. The Rights of Way include the Wheel Causeway, Knox Knowe, and there are also a number of old Drove roads within the community. Opening up paths is one of the community priorities.





3.6 Tourism and the Visitor opportunity

3.6.1 Tourist information

Carter Bar, the A68 Crossing point into Scotland, has significant signage directing visitors to attractions in the local area. There is scope for this to be augmented, notably regarding walks and activities, There is also an opportunity for additional information to be available at the Hall, at various Forestry locations, as well as at Carter Bar and on-line.

3.6.2 Dark Skies

Southdean borders onto the Northumberland Dark Sky Park and has many of the same characteristics as mentioned above. There is already a dark skies noticeboard at the Carter Bar Viewpoint.

3.6.3

The area also supports nature-based tourism, such as wildlife photography²².



3.7 Southdean Community

3.7.1 Demographics

A range of data sources have been assessed which is available in a separate document. Some key facts and figures:

- The total population of the Southdean Community Council area is 161 people using the Census output from data zones wholly within Southdean. This understates the actual population.
- There are 76 households within those data zones. The actual total number of houses is just over 100 within Southdean as a whole.
- 72.4% of houses are owned and 21% are privately rented and no homes are socially rented. The national averages for types of tenure are 63% owned, 22.5% socially rented and 12% privately rented.
- Only 1.3% of households in Southdean do not own a car which is much lower than the national average of 26.4%.
- Generally, health is good in the Southdean area, although 21.7% of the population have a long-term health condition. 4.9% have a mental health condition, which is lower than the national average of 9.7%.
- The demographic profile of the Southdean area is older than average for the Scottish Borders and Scotland. In particular, the proportion of people aged 65 and over is approximately 11 percentage points higher than the national average of 20.1%.
- Those aged between 16-64 years make up 54.3% of the total population in Southdean which is lower than both the regional and national averages.
- There are also a smaller number of children and young people aged between 0-15 years. At 13% of the population this equates to 20 children aged 0-15 years.
- In the Southdean area, 39.4% have a qualification at a degree level or higher, compared to 32.5% across Scotland.

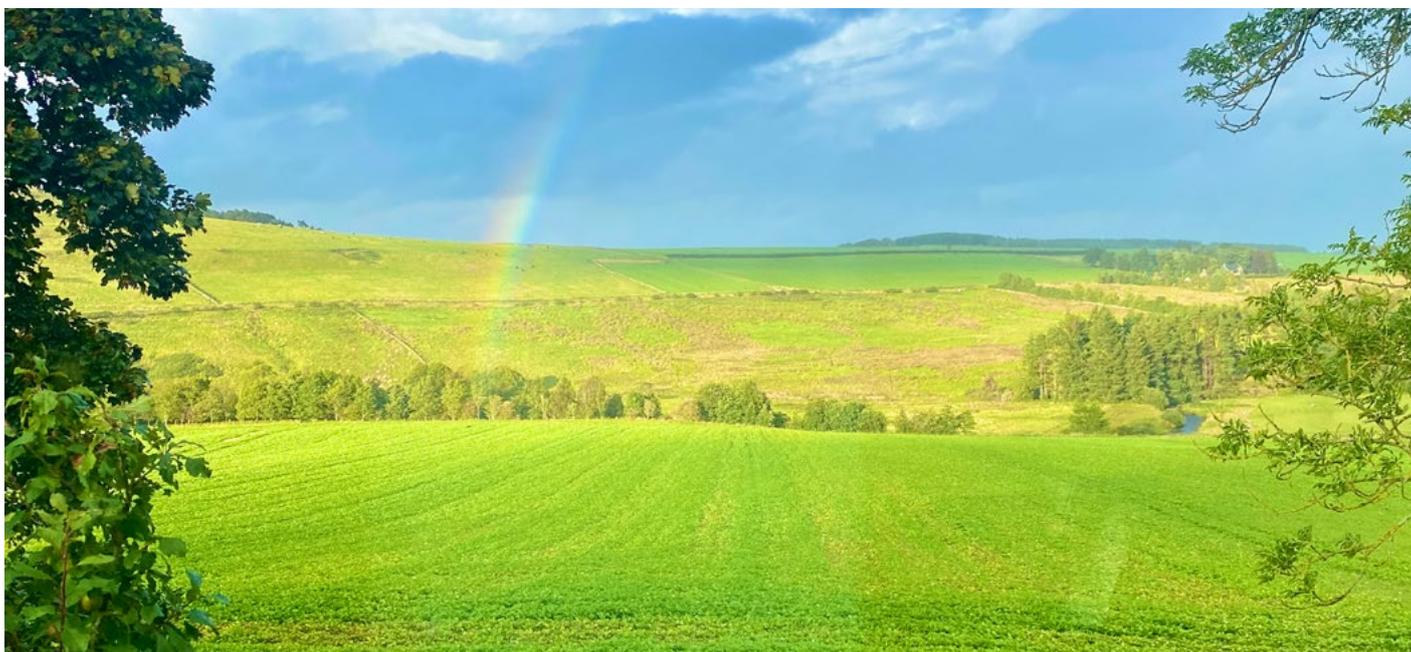


3.7.2 Housing

Southdean has relatively little scope for new housing, and this is not a feature of the proposed Local Place Plan. A major concern for the local community is how the existing traditional housing is adapted for the Energy Transition in a just manner. The current EPC score of 45 for the houses with completed EPC studies indicates the scale of the problem, as this is one of the lowest scores in the Scottish Borders. The predominant fuel utilised in heating remains Oil, with the Community not on the Gas Grid, and a key goal is the reduction of fuel poverty. Projects to decarbonise the housing stock in an affordable manner are a high priority and this would be a large-scale project to be undertaken over a period of time,

3.7.3 Visitor accommodation

There are 3 self-catering properties located in Chesters and further options, as well as the Horse and Hound pub, located in the nearby village of Bonchester Bridge in the Hobkirk Community Council area. There is an opportunity within the potential projects to improve the range and scope of accommodation options.



3.8 Community Owned Assets

Assets in a community include not just physical assets but also things like organisations and events, which foster a sense of local identity and civic pride.

3.8.1 Community organisations

- Southdean Community Council
- Southdean Hall SCIO
- The Guild (Church of Scotland)
- The Rural (SWI)

There is currently no Development Trust within Southdean.

3.8.2 Online resources

- Southdean Hall and Community Facebook Page
- Southdean Community website
- Southdean online shop sells tickets for events and workshops including, afternoon tea, wreathmaking session

3.8.3 Southdean Hall

Many events take place in the Southdean Hall, Chesters (the key community asset) with local annual events including dances, mobile library, film nights, meetings, tea and chat sessions, quizzes, and workshop sessions including crafts.

Southdean Village Hall, an asset owned by the community and run as a charity (SCO 44518), is a large, beautiful stone building providing a warm and welcoming community space for the local rural residents. There is parking at the hall which also offers:

- The Scott Room - A comfortable meeting/reception room with a well-equipped kitchenette and bar area, with coffee machine, geyser, sink, fridge, kettle and a full complement of mugs, glasses, teapots etc. It has a lovely log burner and a ceiling infrared heater.
- The Reading Room – a more relaxed room with comfortable seating and a log burning stove. A large TV allows for films to be played using the Hall's wi-fi.
- The Main Hall - A large light filled room with a soft wood floor and infrared heating. It has a large ceiling mounted projection screen with multimedia equipment for showing films, live streaming and visual presentations from any device. With surround sound speakers and black out curtains. It has a capacity of 70 people.
- Main Kitchen - In the centre of the building is the main kitchen, with a large range style cooker, commercial dishwasher, sink, microwave, large American style fridge/freezer, with crockery and cutlery for 70 place settings.
- Toilets - There are two toilets in the centre of the building and a disabled toilet / wet room in the foyer with a baby changing unit and shower.

It is regularly bustling with events and group meetings and provides shelter and a place to chat over a cup of tea whilst waiting for the mobile library, which visits the area once a week.

Southdean Hall is the focal point for the Community and features in a number of Community Projects that are featured and proposed in the Plan.

3.8.4 Schools

The children of Southdean mainly attend Denholm Primary School, and Jedburgh Grammar Campus. There is also the option for them to attend Hawick High School but there are no pupils currently studying there.



3.9 National and Local Planning Policy Context

This Local Place Plan has been drafted in line with the following:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)²³
- Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)²⁴
- Teviot and Liddesdale Locality Plan 2020²⁵
- Scottish Borders Community Plan 2023/33²⁶

The details of how this Local Place Plan aligns with those policies are available in a separate document.



Community Engagement

04

4.1 Overview

Our Local Place Plan has been developed using a variety of different community engagement mechanisms, aimed at giving as many people as possible the opportunity to share their views. These were:

- A community survey
- Discussions at Community Council Meetings
- Discussions amongst an initial group
- A session with pupils at Jedburgh Grammar School.
- Consideration of the data generated at Denholm Primary School
- Site visit with four residents to understand the assets and issues in the area
- Informal conversations with local residents
- 1:1 semi structured interviews with local residents, representatives of community organisations and local businesses
- An external review of the minute of Southdean Community Council, from January 2023 onwards undertaken by Community Enterprise
- Drop in events to consider the draft Local Place Plan (November 2024, January and February 2025)
- Statutory 28 day consultation involving the Community Councils of Jed Valley, Hobkirk and Upper Liddesdale and Hermitage in the Scottish Borders Council area. Also the Parish Councils of Kielder and Rochester and Byrness in the Northumberland County Council area. Local councillors in the Hawick & Denholm ward.

Our promotion of the process was through face-to-face contact, posters and public notices, target emails, word of mouth and social media.

In total, there were 137 individual engagements in the Local Place Plan process. The publicity for the engagement (Facebook, direct email, poster and word or mouth) also offered people the opportunity to contact the Community Council or a Community Enterprise representative for a telephone chat about issues and aspirations for the area.

4.2 Community Survey

The survey was available online and as a paper option in 2022 and was completed by 71 individuals. In the overall views about the area, people told us:

The statutory 28 day consultation period ran from 8th December 2025 - 15th January 2026 and was advertised locally by email, social media and poster. Southdean Community Council formally contacted all neighbouring Community Councils and the elected members for the area for feedback. The designed LPP and associated appendices document, was available to be downloaded from <https://southdeanhall.org/> or a paper copy could be viewed in Southdean Hall.

At the Southdean Community Council meeting held on 28th January 2026, members considered the positive verbal and written comments received by members of Upper Liddesdale Community Council and The Forestry Commission. It was also noted that the Wauchope East Forest Plan, 2025 to 2035, has incorporated several of the Southdean LPP suggestions into their plan.

Website visits note that there were 131 visits to the LPP page during the consultation period.

Comments received by the Southdean Community Council, both verbally and in writing, were complementary on the Place Plan content and structure with no justification provided to change the draft Plan further.

As a result the Southdean Community Council agreed that no further changes needed to be made to the draft LPP.

We are satisfied that there has been a good level of engagement with the process and that the people of Southdean have had been offered a menu of opportunities to participate in engagement and consultation activities.

“Natural space, setting and the landscape rated highest. People like the quietness of the area and feeling safe with strong community spirit. The lowest scoring categories were local public transport, speeding traffic, the disrepair of the roads, pavements and verges and the lack of facilities”

4.3 Schools Engagement

Jedburgh Grammar Campus

School staff arranged for pupils to attend a workshop facilitated by Community Enterprise in February 2025. To avoid disruption to class and study for senior pupils, the

school supported this session by inviting pupils from both the Southdean and Hobkirk Community Council areas in S1-S4.

Six pupils attended this session.

What we think is good now:

- Quiet place to live (x5)
- Nice views
- There is no hassle
- I can ride my horse safely

What would make things better:

- There is nothing to do/boring (4 responses)
- No public buses (6 responses)
- I would like a pump track (3 responses)
- My parents say fuel costs are too high to travel journeys (2 responses)
- Nets to play football (2 responses)
- Better park
- Clubs to visit us where we live (2 responses)
- Everywhere takes so long to get to (hobbies/shops etc.) (2 responses).

What words do you want to describe the area in the future?

Welcoming and Friendly (5 responses) Beautiful (4 responses) Active (4 responses)
Supportive (3 responses) Accessible (2 responses) Thriving (1 response) Green (1 response)

If we had money to make the area better, we would:

- *“Create more paths for walking and cycling or getting about on wheels. This would benefit the whole community.*
- *Have a shop where we live. A community shop with home essentials would allow people to meet.*
- *Food vans. We only get takeaways when the power goes. Parents don't like to travel.*
- *A pump track. We would use it all year round and can be for all ages.”*



4.4 Stakeholder Engagement

One to one semi structured interviews took place with representatives of local businesses and community organisations including: Purple Sage Soap, Beastie Assemblage, Chair of the Hall Committee and Rachel Wilson.

Their views, together with those expressed at the informal conversations and attendance at meetings set out above, have been incorporated into the next section of this Local Place Plan.

4.5 Open Meetings and Discussions

Three open meetings were held in late 2024 and early 2025 and allowed people to:

- Understand the LPP process.
- Identify the issues associated with living, working and visiting Southdean.
- Determine a vision for the future and have a collective discussion on the key issues for inclusion in the LPP, under the headings of Live, Work, Play (Leisure) and Visit. It is understood there is a degree of overlap between these, and these headings don't indicate any fixed themes for the LPP itself.

- Mapping projects and ideas. Chesters is the central location in the Southdean Community Council area and where the key community asset is located (Southdean Hall); most of the issues cover the whole Southdean area, rather than a specific location on a map.

The two public meetings held in February 2025, with around 35 people attending helped to shape the Themes, Priorities and Projects set out at section 6. These Themes, Priorities and Projects were confirmed at the Community Council meeting on July 30th 2025.

The following table summarises the open meetings discussions and the issues raised.

What is the issue?	How could it be improved / resolved?
WORK	
Mobile phone coverage	Mobile phone infrastructure
Broadband which doesn't perform adequately	Sharing information locally Collective lobbying and liaison
Facilities to work from home	Southdean Hall is already in use as a resilience Centre – has a generator and Wi-Fi, available to the community, including for work, in event of an emergency The Hall is regularly used as an ad-hoc place of work for those whose home wi-fi is lacking or interrupted
Access to a car and public transport	Improvements to public transport Car share initiatives etc.
LIVE	
Provision of Warm Space	Currently delivered in Southdean Hall
Electric charging points	The nearest are in Jedburgh and Hawick but consider points being sited locally. The Community Council have been in contact with SBC
Need for childcare	Supporting: Parent / carer and toddler groups Nursery places Childminders

Access to food	Crop Swap, a community exchange programme (not just food) Guild's Soup and Sandwich scheme
Improvements to housing stock	Retrofit schemes
Flood resilience	Supply chain Local expertise
PLAY (LEISURE)	
Southdean Hall: hosts a range of activities including: Yoga, Library / book groups, Crafts / workshops, Film nights, The Guild / SWI, Ceilidh dancing	Activities to be maintained Ongoing funding of maintenance costs for hall, so that financial barriers to participation are removed Succession planning
Southdean Show	Activities to be maintained Succession planning
Cycling	Creation of new routes e-Bike scheme for the community Cycling infrastructure,
Walking	Improve public access Maintenance of paths etc.
Horse riding	Improved signage
Access to leisure activities elsewhere for young people who are dependent on cars or people to transport	Improve public transport to allow young people to access leisure events and facilities Develop local informal and formal leisure facilities for young people
VISIT	
Walking / cycling / riding	As above
Churches / graveyards	Currently promoted on village website Further promotion in local signage
Wheel Causeway	Needs cleared, as well as promoted
Tourist information	Improve and develop: Signs Waymarks Maps Leaflets Noticeboards Website
B&Bs, hotels / caravan park / self-catering / pods	Develop collective marketing

4.6 Landowner and Partner Engagement

Throughout the period of the development of the Local Place Plan, Southdean Community Council have been proactive at engaging with partners and landowners in the area including Gresham House and Forestry and Land Scotland regarding their future forest plans and their ongoing relationship with the community.

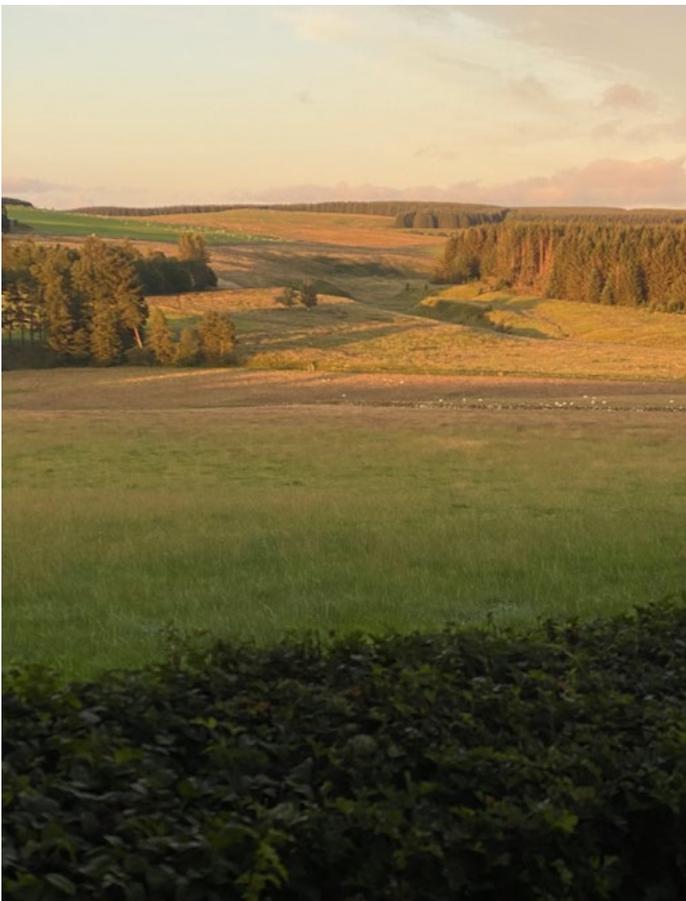
Southdean Community Forestry Sub-Group had introductory meetings with Gresham House on May 29th and Forestry and Land Scotland on 10th July 2025. In both cases the conversations were wide ranging covering Biodiversity, Access and Active Travel, Flooding and Heritage Assets. Gresham House also hosted a Southdean Forestry Community Event on the 26th of June 2025 in one of their managed Forest Assets which enabled further informal discussions with the wider community.

In both cases, as part of the Place Plan and Land Use Southdean expects the positive tone discussions to continue leading to increased cooperation. As a result of the engagements and with Forestry having such a significant presence within the community Southdean has identified a need for a community Forestry Hub. This can be for Southdean Community or part of a wider Teviot & Liddesdale Rural Community Initiative.

This would allow consistent information from the various asset owners to be accessible to the community in a centralised form, something that is currently not the case.

Southdean would welcome Forestry managers inputting data from their hubs and encourage greater collaboration.

The Forestry Hub would be centralised Online and potentially be part of Natural Capital Information Hub. There is also consideration of a potential physical hub. There are ongoing discussions with the major forestry managers to evolve these projects further.



Assets, Opportunities, Needs and Challenges

05

5.1 Overview

There was significant documentation produced at the time of the application for a Scottish Borders National Park that summarised the opportunities and challenges facing the broader area, and these are clearly relevant for Southdean Community. As a result, a number of these themes are also picked up in the Project list within this Place Plan.

The 2017 Feasibility study Scottish Borders National Park²⁸ found that the area has:

- Beautiful, historically authentic and geologically significant Borderland landscape that is nationally outstanding and admired.
- A continuing vibrant and distinct identity with a strong coherent pride of place treasured across all age-groups arising from a unique cultural heritage.
- Land based businesses and communities entering a new era of policy and support mechanisms.
- Social and economic special needs like incomes, jobs and digital connectivity that, for many residents, are well below the national average.

Some of the key findings²⁹ included:

- Centralisation of education, caring, community and retail services.
- High residential desirability but ageing demographic and outmigration of young.
- Gross Value Added³⁰ (GVA) below average growth, low average visitor stays and low national and international area profile.
- Maturing forestry – low added value and high impact on roads.
- Wildlife habitats - Rare but accessible and species-rich.
- Landscape – Outstanding quality, beauty and variety; No major roads or large settlements. Moorland mosaic with wide horizons and distant unobstructed views – grand and intimate scales – wildland qualities.
- Historic sites: Greatest density of scheduled monuments in Borders.
- Economy – Dependence on primary industries and small business. Lack of professional jobs. GVA per head below Scottish average. Poor broadband and mobile coverage.

The campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park was ultimately unsuccessful, but the challenges identified remain, and new ways will need to be found to address them.



5.2 Housing and Energy Efficiency

The nature of the housing stock means that households are dependent on gas or oil in tanks or cylinders, electricity, coal and wood.

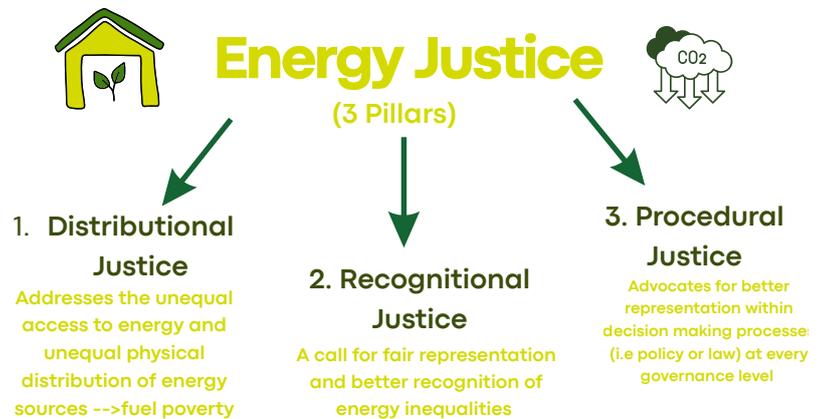
At public meetings ongoing concern over energy efficiency and fuel poverty was raised. Four main factors that influence whether a household is in fuel poverty have been identified:

1. Household income – the cost of heating a property forms a greater proportion of total income for those on low incomes
2. Fuel costs – the prices of different types of fuels vary considerably; in some areas/ properties consumers are unable to choose an economical type of heating system. Even with high levels of investment in energy efficiency measures, the recent increases in fuel prices have pushed many families back into fuel poverty.
3. Energy efficiency – thermal quality of the building and the efficiency of the heating source impact on heating costs.
4. How people use their heating systems and live within their home.

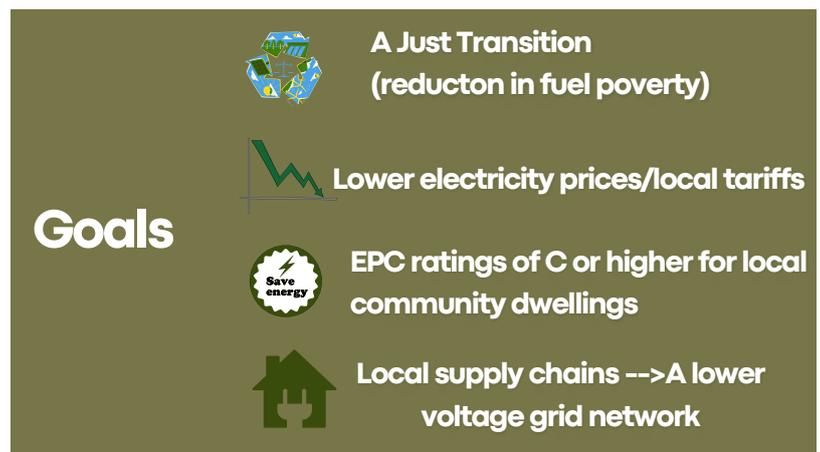
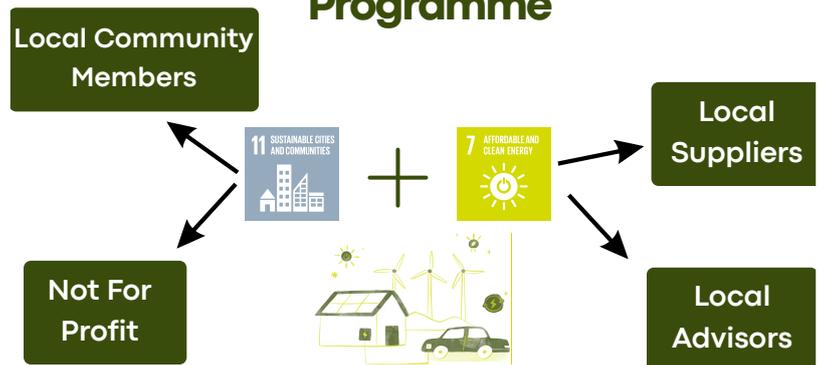
The International Energy Agency (IEA) has explored the multiple benefits of energy efficiency beyond reducing energy demand and carbon reduction (International Energy Agency, 2014).³¹

The multiple benefits are separated into 5 main themes: economic development, social development, environmental sustainability, increasing prosperity, enhancing the sustainability of the energy system.

Energy justice: A Conceptual Review (Jenkins et al., 2016)



Local Framework for Energy Efficiency Programme



Access to affordable / social housing in the area and neighbouring communities is a concern, as well as access to retirement housing and accessible housing for people with disabilities. The lack of Energy Justice is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Southdean forms part of Hawick and Denholm Council Ward which has the lowest EPC score of any ward in the Scottish

Borders. Southdean's score at the time that this place plan has been formulated is substantially below the ward average.

A major project could address the current energy injustice that exists in Southdean, and this could be part of a framework to create an improved local ecosystem. This is included in the proposed list of projects.

5.3 Services and Amenities

There is a low number of independent businesses in the area and the community is dependent on services in Hawick (11 miles) and Jedburgh (8 miles), including secondary schooling and healthcare.

Although there are some services in Denholm and Bonchester. The project list looks to increase the opportunities available for local businesses.

5.4 Connectivity

Digital connectivity is varied, which has implications for people studying or working from home in particular.

It is noted that Scottish Borders part of gigabit project which is currently underway³². Connectivity is a major theme within the place plan project list.

5.5 Provision for Young People

There are very few activities and facilities for young people in the area.

It is difficult / not possible for young people to attend after school activities in Jedburgh, Hawick and Denholm and then get back to Southdean via public transport.

5.6 Public Transport

The Southdean community is dependent on private bus companies operating out of Jedburgh and Hawick for a Dial A Bus Service,

The community would benefit from a significantly improved transport system, such as that offered by Borders Wheels³³.

5.7 Traffic

Traffic, throughout Southdean, is a concern. Specifically speeding motorbikes and cars are a problem and people do not feel safe walking and cycling in the area. Suggested traffic calming measures including crossings, speed limits (including enforcement), speed bumps etc.

The settlement of Southdean currently has a 20mph speed limit common to other Scottish Borders settlements. Two routes within the Southdean Community, the A6088 and B6357 are part of an 18-month 50mph speed limit trial introduced in April 2025 with the aim to reduce motorcycle fatalities.

5.8 Road Infrastructure

The road infrastructure is poor. Potholes and verges are badly in need of repair and pedestrian safety is a concern.

5.9 Net Zero and the Energy Transition

There is potential for small scale community led energy projects to enable the community to undertake the energy transition in an affordable way, which the community is keen to pursue. Large scale projects with output for the grid would significantly alter the natural and heritage attributes of the community and adversely transform the setting of Southdean.

Cycle routes and access to pathways could be improved significantly.

The nearest electric car charging points are in Hawick and Jedburgh and there is interest within the community in having access to local charge points.

5.10 Community Owned Assets

The community itself is an asset, with many people highlighting the community spirit across the area.

The key physical asset, the village hall in Chesters is a valued space. It will need to be maintained, both physically, and with a succession plan for the Trustees.

Southdean Church in Chesters is now closed and is up for sale. There are no formal playgrounds or communal green spaces in Southdean.

5.11 Visitor Provision

There is a perceived lack of accommodation for visitors. There is a lot to experience in the area but a lack of information for visitors, e.g., maps, guides, signage etc.

5.12 Relationship with Neighbouring Communities

Southdean Community has developed strong relationships with neighbouring communities on a number of combined issues, notably public transport and renewable proposals, but there is a clear benefit with shared discussion on a wider range.

With the abandonment of the Area Partnerships, Southdean has welcomed the emerging proposal for a Rural Community Alliance, which has been proposed by other neighbouring communities who are keen to foster a combined forum to continue future cooperation on a more formal basis. This is included in the project list.



Proposals

06

6.1 Overview

In ten years' time, Southdean will be an increasingly economically and culturally vibrant, inclusive, supportive place to live, that embraces our natural and built environment with amazing facilities and amenities for locals, and a great base for visitors to explore the South of Scotland.

The responses and engagement with the community, groups and organisations in our area, have helped us to identify the challenges faced by the community, and the actions we should undertake to work towards achieving that vision.

They require combinations of actions by Scottish Borders Council, partnership working with other agencies, by local organisations, and the community itself. In many areas, funding will need to be secured to deliver these actions.



6.2 Fit with LDP2

The Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP2) was adopted on 22 August 2024³⁴.

Alignment with the overarching policy themes is set out in the separate appendix document.

This Local Place Plan does not propose any changes to the Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2.

6.3 Themes, Priorities and Projects

The Local Place Plan has identified a number of projects which cover the following summarised priorities as identified in the community engagement.

- Southdean Hall continuing to support cultural activities and year-round events
- Improve Inclusivity
- Playpark for children
- Improved public transport provision
- EV Charging for the community
- E-Bikes for the community
- Forestry:
 - » Improved access, opening paths, natural capital zone
 - » Heritage assets
 - » Wheel Causeway, a specific cross community path project
 - » Flood improvement scheme, ponds, riparian planting.
- Retrofit for the community at an affordable cost for traditional rural buildings
- Enhanced resilience measures
- Improve biodiversity and Natural Capital attractions highlighted.
- Increasing awareness of significant Heritage Assets
- Enhance viewpoints with signage
- Improved Connectivity, Mobile Signal and Smart Meters
- Proposals for a Heritage and Forestry Hub
- Develop Dark Skies opportunity

The timescales are defined as:

- Priority: 0-3 years
- Medium Term: 3-5 years
- Long Term: 5-10 years.

The project list will be reviewed annually by Southdean Community Council to keep it live. The actual Local Place Plan will remain live on file and will be updated in time for the next round of Scottish Borders Council Development Plans.



Theme 1: A Great Place to Live and Visit

Strategic Objective: Southdean will optimise the attractions of the community to residents of all ages. Southdean Community has the Village Hall in Chesters at its heart and its role and influence will be expanded. The resilience of the existing housing will be improved and better facilities for families will be introduced. There is also a goal of Skills Improvement for those of all ages in the community and allow local enterprise to flourish.

Priority areas:

Housing and energy efficiency

Children and Young People

Work

Delivery partners and organisations

Timescale

Local Place Plan Projects

<p>1. Maintain and develop activities for all ages in Southdean Village Hall. The current demographic of older people has a strong base to build from. Further develop activities for children and young people, e.g., parent / carer and toddler groups, Rainbows and Cubs, youth groups, music and drama, sports.</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>Southdean Hall</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>2. Support and develop the existing programme of year-round community events for the wider community, so that these are sustainable for the long-term future. Focus in Chesters and Southdean Hall.</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>Southdean Hall</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>3. Improve existing housing stock with a focus on energy efficiency, and the replacement of fossil fuel heating including potentially by Solar and Batteries.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>SBC Sustainable Borders Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Long Term Major Project</p>
<p>4. Develop outdoor play park for children and young people. Focus in Chesters on land adjacent to Southdean Hall and at the Southdean Church.</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>Southdean Hall</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>5. Support initiatives that support home/local working with necessary infrastructure such as mobile phone coverage and broadband. Access to business startup and enterprise advice (including drop in enterprise sessions, mentoring, networking opportunities etc) and improve skills provision.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>SOSE³⁵ Business Gateway³⁶ Social enterprise networks³⁷ Local businesses</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>6. Improve inclusivity with better communication via improved Southdean Website, use of WhatsApp Groups, improved email distribution. Use of community hubs.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Southdean Hall Southdean CC</p>	<p>Priority</p>

Theme 2: A Sustainable Community

Strategic Objective: The Natural Environment remains the focus of attention with the utilisation of local resources bringing improved accessibility for all. Our community will continue with the Energy Transition bringing greater energy sustainability.

Priority areas

Green spaces and amenities

Promoting and developing walking, scooting, cycling and riding

Traffic calming, parking, and electric vehicle charging

Public transport

Delivery partners and organisations

Timescale

Local Place Plan Projects

<p>7. Develop and enhance active travel and local walking, riding and cycle routes. Improving and widening footpaths and forest located tracks for accessible access for all utilising the core path network and rights of way.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Sustrans³⁸ Forestry and Land Scotland Other Landowners</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>8. Specifically highlighting dedicated access and infrastructure for horse riding including gates, troughs, trailer parking near forest access etc.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>		<p>Medium Term</p>
<p>9. Ensure the provision of electric charging points for the community. Southdean Hall, Chesters.</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>Energy Providers, SBC Southdean CC Southdean Hall</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>10. Provision of electric bike hire station. Southdean Hall, Chesters.</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>Sustrans Southdean Hall</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>11. Develop small scale energy production to enable and accelerate the Community decarbonisation aims. This can be at an individual property level. Smart meter accessibility will also be important to this.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Energy Providers SBC Sustainable Borders</p>	<p>Long Term</p>

Theme 3: A Resilient and Involved community

Strategic Objective: Southdean will be a thriving and resilient community, where our assets can be of benefit to people in the area. Addressing climate change issues brings a focus on flood prevention, energy resilience and a resilience hub.

Priority areas

Community resilience and recovery

Empowerment and Ownership

Stronger Social Networks

Adaptability and Problem-Solving

Improved Well-being and Health

Self-Sufficiency

Delivery partners and organisations

Timescale

Local Place Plan Projects

12. Ensure Southdean Village Hall is fully resourced and upscaled for resilience activity. To include upkeep equipment sheds, defibrillators, generator maintenance, broadband and warm room. Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)	Southdean Hall	Priority
13. Address increased flooding issues across Southdean. Explore natural flooding solutions in the Forestry estate Ensure riparian planting across Southdean to help in flood defences. Seek improved warning signals, Flood proofing impacted homes. Improved road network resilience. Located throughout Southdean	FLS, Major landowners Southdean Community	Priority
14. Ensure smart meters signal accessibility for all community members. Located throughout Southdean	Arqiva Utility Providers	Priority
15. Campaign with SBC for improvement in ditches and verges and the repair of road potholes. Located throughout Southdean	SBC Southdean CC	Ongoing
16. Maintaining existing community paths such as "Courses". Located throughout Southdean	Church of Scotland	Short Term
17. Consider developing a tea-room enterprise for local people and visitors, providing training and employment opportunities including supported employment and volunteer pathways). This could incorporate a small shop selling essential provisions, showcasing artisan makers, seasonal tourism. Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)	SOSE Business Gateway Social Enterprise Network	Long Term
18. Increase the numbers of defibrillators in the community to complement the existing ones at Ruletownhead and Southdean Hall. Ensure maintenance is funded. Located throughout Southdean	Southdean Hall Southdean Resilience	Ongoing

<p>19. Undertake a feasibility study to determine the need for and scope of childcare provision in Southdean.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>SOSE Social Enterprise Networks</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>20. Consider the development of a dedicated skills project focussed on young people and under-employed groups.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>SOSE Business Gateway</p>	<p>Long Term</p>

Theme 4: A place that celebrates, preserves and promotes its natural capital and historical heritage

Strategic Objective: Southdean will ensure the protection of the Natural Capital and Cultural Heritage assets in the community and preserve them for future generations to enjoy. There is an intention to establish a Forestry Hub, and to cooperate more widely in a Rural Community Alliance, with neighbouring communities.

Priority areas
Natural assets Historical heritage

	Delivery partners and organisations	Timescale
Local Place Plan Projects		
<p>21. Highlight the value of the Local Landscape and Scenery in the Community. Publicise the Teviot Valleys Special Landscape Area within which part of Southdean is included. Engage with large landowners. Improve Biodiversity including natural forest planting. Promote the views from Carter Bar, and the Border Ridge.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean Teviot Valleys Special Landscape Area (Pin 2)</p>	<p>Forestry and Land Scotland Major Land Managers Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>22. Support and develop heritage projects noting the significant heritage assets in Southdean. These include Churches, Pele Towers, Historic Paths and Drove roads.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Archaeology Scotland Historic Environment Scotland</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>23. Development of a heritage centre. Explore the possibility of an online Heritage Hub to collect the information together, or in physical form.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Archaeology Scotland Historic Environment Scotland</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>24. Ensure the protection and preservation of SSSI's (which cover 10% of Southdean),</p> <p>Located at Kielderhead (Pin3.1) , Wolfhopelee and Cragbank (pin 3.2).</p>	<p>Nature Scot. Major Landowners</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>25. Ensure riparian planting across Southdean to bring more diversity to forestry.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean (Pin 2)</p>	<p>Forest Managers Major Land Managers</p>	<p>Priority</p>

<p>26. Enhance viewpoints on walks throughout Southdean to highlight the attractive views. Installation of signs, and benches.</p> <p>Carter Bar (Pin 4.1) Lower Cheviot Picnic site on the B6357 (Pin 4.2) Belling Forest (Pin 4.3) Coatlaw Corner (beside the Coatlaw Plantation) Carter Fell (Pin 4.5) Carlin Tooth (Pin 4.6) Mervinslaw Road (Pin 4.7)</p>	<p>SBC, Land Managers. HES, Nature Scot, Scotways</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>27. Seek improvement in biodiversity / ecosystems to encourage more bird life and to encourage the return of golden eagles to the community.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Nature Scot. Major Land managers, Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>28. Development of a forestry hub where collected information on all the forestry assets across the community can be found. Forest Plans: Access, Felling activity, Heritage sites. This can be online, with consideration given to a physical hub site, potentially within the forest developments.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Forest Managers Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>29. Create Teviot and Liddesdale Rural Communities Alliance to develop combined projects and scrutinise infrastructure applications with Neighbouring Rural Community Councils.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Southdean Community Council Denholm Community Council Hobkirk Community Council Newcastleton Community Council Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage CC Upper Teviot CC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>30. Develop a Dark Skies designation within Southdean given the proximity to Northumberland Dark Skies and similar characteristics. Explore the possibility of a community telescope at a suitable location (Dark Sky Hub).</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 2)</p>	<p>Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Long Term</p>
<p>31. Adopt GIS Geographic Information System mapping to further aid Southdean Community Council's project identification and assessment of major infrastructure developments (currently many of the information systems are hosted on different sites).</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Priority</p>
<p>32. Create a project which packages projects (focusing on heritage projects, the Heritage Hub, viewpoints, biodiversity, golden eagles and visitor information hub) into a "Discover Southdean" visitor experience – a mapped route linking trails, artisan producers, heritage points and viewpoints. This can also be linked to the tea room enterprise and be supported by a QR code based trail system to minimise signage clutter and encourage online activity.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Southdean Community Council</p>	<p>Long Term</p>

Theme 5: Connecting the Community, Neighbours and Visitors

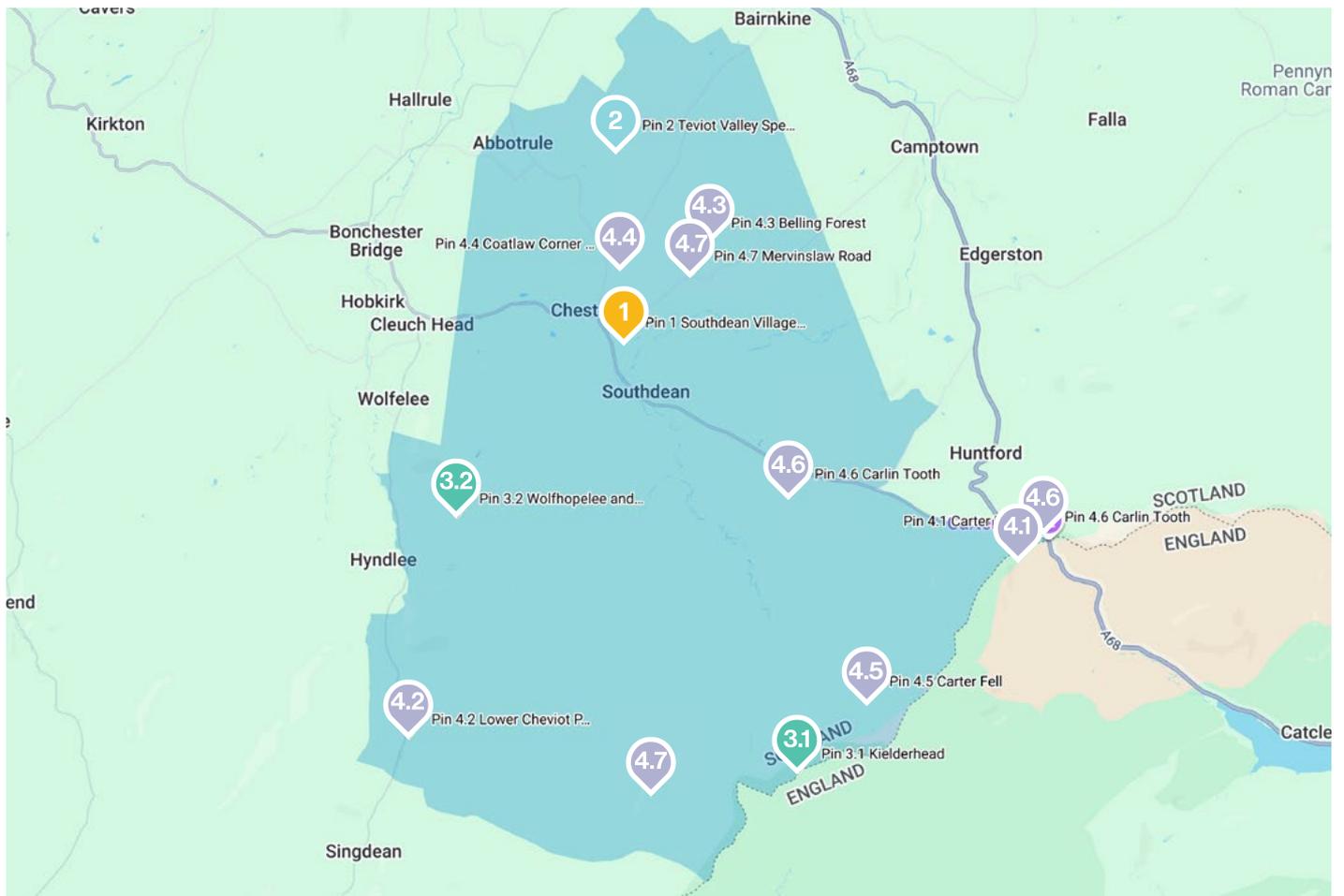
Strategic Objective: Southdean will have improved connectivity. Our community will be safe, well-resourced and well connected, including improved digital infrastructure and better public transport.

Priority areas

Provision of tourist information and promotion of the area Maintenance of and improvements to tourism infrastructure

	Delivery partners and organisations	Timescale
Local Place Plan Projects		
<p>33. Engage with existing public transport providers to improve the service across the community. Discussions with neighbouring rural communities.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>SBC. Borders Buses . Southdean CC . Neighbouring Communities</p>	Long Term
<p>34. Develop community owned transport options, in partnership with other. Community Councils and Borders Wheels or taxi demand service.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Border Wheels, Taxi on demand, Neighbouring Communities</p>	Long Term
<p>35. Review, develop and promote resources for local and visitor information, including maps, leaflets and noticeboards. Explore establishing a visitor Hub. Online Information via the Community Web pages and a potential physical hub.</p> <p>Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	<p>Southdean Hall Southdean Community Council</p>	Long Term
<p>36. Improve and enhance the maintenance and improvement of signage throughout the area. The signs can highlight Heritage Assets and Walking Trails.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	SBC	Short Term
<p>37. Provision of infrastructure for visitors, e.g., public toilets, water re-fill points, E charging points, and bike repair stations.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean Located in Southdean Village Hall (Pin 1)</p>	Southdean Hall	Long Term
<p>38. Improve, develop and enhance the mobile phone coverage and broadband infrastructure to improve connectivity. Mobile phone sector in particular currently remains challenging.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Mobile telephone providers SOSE</p>	Long Term
<p>39. Increase the availability of Tourist Accommodation for visitors and seek better promotion.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>Southdean Hall Visit Scotland³⁹ Scottish Community Tourism⁴⁰</p>	Long Term
<p>40. Link horse riding to the tourism and visitor experience via riding holidays, Common Riding Heritage, and informal "ride and picnic" day routes.</p> <p>Located throughout Southdean</p>	<p>SOSE Visit Scotland Scottish Community Tourism</p>	Long Term

6.4 Map of Projects (Land and Assets)



Key



Southdean Village Hall: Numbered projects: 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 12, 17, 19, 35, 37,



Teviot Valleys Special Landscape Area Numbered Project 21



Pin 3.1 Kielderhead
Pin 3.2 Wolfhopelee and Cragbank: Numbered project 24.



Pin 4.1 Carter Bar
Pin 4.2 Lower Cheviot Picnic Site
Pin 4.3 Belling Forest
Pin 4.4 Ashtrees
Pin 4.5 Carter Fell: Numbered project 26
Pin 4.6 Carlin Tooth
Pin 4.7 Mervinslaw Road

Numbered projects which take place within the Southdean boundary shown in blue shaded area: 3,5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31,32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40

6.5 Management and Governance

Southdean Community Council will act as the lead body to monitor progression and implementation of this LPP. They will support the delivery of projects by community groups and relevant statutory bodies and will ensure continued engagement with Scottish Borders Council.

The Community Council will oversee the success of the Local Place Plan but will also be responsible for reviewing it periodically to respond to changes in the local environment, many of which we will not be able to envisage just now.

We want the plan to be clear and agreed, but there may be opportunities that emerge that will require the leadership of local community groups, encouraging on-going community involvement, volunteering and activism.

Southdean Community Council will:

- Keep this Local Place Plan up to date and amend it where required
- Stimulate / support organisations to take on the actions identified in the Local Place Plan
- Promote the Local Place Plan
- Review progress
- Monitor the impact of the Local Place Plan

Project Sub-groups

Time limited, project specific sub-groups comprising community groups or interested individuals will be established by Southdean Community Council. These will operate while substantial projects are running. Sub-groups will have their own Chair and include someone from the Community Council.

Equal Opportunities

Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion are important to us. Although not a hugely diverse community compared to other places in Scotland, ensuring everyone is welcome, regardless of background is a founding value in our plan.



Epilogue

07

7. Epilogue

We are proud that we have developed this Local Place Plan, alongside our nearby Community Councils and influencing decisions about the land and assets that are important to us.

We want to thank the residents, businesses and organisations of the Southdean community who gave their time and ideas.

Keep an eye on the community website / FACEBOOK PAGE for more developments:

<https://southdeanhall.org/>

If you want to contact us directly, you can email us at:

southdeanchesters@gmail.com

Southdean Community Council



Footnotes

1. <https://communityenterprise.co.uk/>
2. <https://www.ourplace.scot/home/local-place-plans>
3. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/d426e6addf114cbe86be1cf0cf564214>
4. <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/plans-guidance/local-place-plans>
5. <https://communityenterprise.co.uk/>
6. <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/community-grants-funding/uk-shared-prosperity-fund/2>
7. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b8af497ec5d0471597354de63ff05fe4>
8. <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/1026/southdean>
9. https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/2250/teviot_and_liddesdale_map
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12. https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/1126/lldr_revised_report_figures_21-81.pdf
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22. <https://www.wildlife-photography.uk.com/>
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25. <https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/7595/teviot-and-liddesdale-locality-plan>
26. <https://borderstsi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Scottish-Borders-Community-Plan-20232033.pdf>
27. <https://southdeanhall.org/southdean-history/>
28. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/645920f54a2dc2492e2f0b55/t/6500556bef1d9355d5f7b066/1694520691947/Borders-National-Park-Feasibility-Study.pdf>
29. At pages 11-12
30. Gross Value Added (GVA) - Office for National Statistics
31. https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/6766/affordable_warmth_and_home_energy_efficiency_-_main_strategy.pdf
32. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/project-gigabit-progress-update-november-2024/project-gigabit-progress-update-november-2024>
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