

# community engagement framework

SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP  
2015 - 2018

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# SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

## 1. FOREWORD

Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership is committed to engaging with the Borders community both as a Partnership and as the individual organisations that make up our Partnership.

This Framework gives us the joined up approach which is crucial for us to work effectively and efficiently with our communities. It shows people what they can expect from us and gives them something to hold us to account against.

We welcome this and whole heartedly support its use by other organisations and groups.

**Cllr David Parker**  
Chair Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership Strategic Board

# THE SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

The members of Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership are:

- Berwickshire Housing Association
- Borders College
- Eildon Housing Association
- NHS Borders
- Police Scotland
- Scottish Borders Council
- Scottish Borders Housing Association
- Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
- SESTRAN
- Skills Development Scotland
- South of Scotland Scottish Enterprise
- Third Sector, represented by the Third Sector Interface
- Waverley Housing

## WHAT IS COMMUNITY PLANNING?

Community Planning is a process which helps public agencies to work together with the community to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives.

*Scottish Government*



# SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

## 2. BACKGROUND

Under the terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, public sector organisations are required to engage with community bodies as part of the community planning process. In this context, the Act states that the main aim of community engagement should be to improve the planning and delivery of services by making them more responsive to the needs and aspirations of communities.

### WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Developing and sustaining a working relationship between one or more public body and one or more community group, to help them both to understand and act on the needs or issues that the community experiences.

*The National Standards for Community Engagement*

## WHY WE SHOULD ENGAGE WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Effective community engagement is central to delivering services to suit those living and working in the Scottish Borders.

Scottish Borders Community Planning Partners are committed to improving the way in which we work together to ensure that we deliver the best service we can in the most effective way we can to suit the needs of the community we serve.

### WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COMMUNITY?

Everyone who lives and/or works in the Scottish Borders.

## HOW WE WILL CO-ORDINATE ACROSS THE PARTNERSHIP

**To join up our community engagement work, the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership will:**

- Share information about planned activities
- Inform the Partnership's Joint Delivery Team and relevant Programme Group(s) of consultations being undertaken, reporting back as and when required

- Promote Partner consultations and other engagement activity through organisation specific mechanisms including websites where possible
- Scottish Borders Council will provide support, where required and appropriate, to Partnership engagement work.



# SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

## 3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

An agreed framework will help us to deliver our engagement activities in a consistent, cost effective and transparent manner which will set out the key principles that our customers can expect to see. Where possible we will deliver these activities in partnership.

In the development of these key principles current community engagement policies/ strategies adopted by each partner have been studied and common elements, as well as those that are good practice, have been drawn out.

Each organisation has statutory obligations which may govern how it engages with the community; however there is flexibility with the framework to accommodate this.

By working together where possible appropriate resources can be maximised and the possibility of engagement fatigue reduced.

### THE AIMS OF THIS FRAMEWORK ARE:

- To strengthen partnership working
- To reduce duplication in engagement activity and increase capacity
- To create better understanding of engagement practices through a consistent approach

# THE KEY PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The principles set out below have been developed by the Partnership to ensure a consistent standard for community engagement activity.

**1. CLEAR PURPOSE** - the reason for any engagement activity should be clearly identified in any documentation and communication.

**2. LEVEL OF INFLUENCE** - state what is up for proposed change and how much influence consultees have on the outcome. If the decision has already been made, say so.

**3. LEVEL OF RESOURCE** - all known costs should be identified, and provision made for unexpected costs, when planning any engagement activity.

**4. COMMUNICATE** - engagement activity is a two way process so the communication channels should be well supported, clear and easy to use for all concerned.

**5. CO-ORDINATE** - engagement activity should be co-ordinated with others, and where possible joined up, to maximise resources and minimise engagement fatigue.

**6. BE EQUITABLE** - equality and diversity is an integral part of community engagement and an important part of the way we engage is to recognise diversity within the Scottish Borders and make a conscious effort to engage with all groups.

**7. MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE** - partners will ensure that engagement activity is fully accessible to all those who wish to be involved, by:

- Publicising the date, time and location of events and any relevant information so that it is easily accessed by those who wish to attend
- Holding events in accessible venues and locations
- Providing material in a range of formats, however to be cost effective some of this may only be produced on request
- Communicating in Plain English. Where this is not possible we will provide a glossary of terms used.
- Using a suitable variety of engagement methods

**8. DELIVER APPROPRIATE TRAINING** - training should be provided to enable staff to understand the importance and benefits of community engagement and how it can support them in their work, and to partner organisations to help them lead or participate in the community engagement processes.

**9. REVIEW** - there are always lessons to be learnt from any engagement activity. Time should be spent to review, document and share these.

**10. ALLOW TIME** - ensure enough time is given to planning and undertaking engagement activity.

**11. PROTECT** - many engagement activities result in the collection of personal information e.g. names and addresses and this information is required to be protected by law. Personal information cannot be shared with other stakeholders without the individual's permission. The individual must be made aware if it is intended to share information with Partners.

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY?

That individual as well as group differences will be recognised.

## GUIDES, FURTHER TOOLS AND RESOURCES

This includes the community engagement toolkit, and will include a series of guides on key community engagement topics for example consultation, methods of engagement etc. as well as additional tools, resources and useful links.

**These will be available from:**

SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP  
Council Headquarters | Newtown St Boswells | MELROSE | TD6 0SA  
tel: 01835 826626 | email: [CommunityPlanning@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:CommunityPlanning@scotborders.gov.uk) | [www.scotborders.gov.uk](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk)

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

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