

**Appendix 2:**



**Scottish Borders Council**

**Housing needs and aspirations of young people**

**August 2018**

**Survey Findings**



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# 1. Young People’s Survey

## 1.1 Survey Background and Respondent Profile

The Young People’s Survey consisted of a face-to-face survey of young people living in the Scottish Borders, undertaken on an in-street intercept basis over the period from June to August 2018.

398 interviews were completed over this period with the sample being evenly split in relation to gender.<sup>1</sup>

The age group covered was 16-34 and the sample was evenly split between the 16-24 and 25-34 year old age groups.

Interviews were conducted in 25 locations across the Scottish Borders, broken down into six “clusters” around the settlements of Eyemouth, Galashiels, Hawick, Kelso, Selkirk and Peebles, with target interview numbers being broadly reflective of the overall population in the Scottish borders.

For the purposes of reporting, we have broken the results down into four broad geographical clusters, reflecting different economic, social and housing market circumstances:

- Galashiels / Melrose (150 interviews, 37% of the total sample)
- Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso (140 interviews, 35% of the total sample)
- Duns / Eyemouth (51 interviews, 13% of the total sample)
- Peebles (57 interviews, 14% of the total sample).<sup>2</sup>



Profile information was also gathered on current working status, income, disability and ethnicity, though specific quotas were not set for these factors.

<sup>1</sup> 400 interviews were undertaken but, on checking, 2 of these were from individuals outwith the Scottish Borders area and so these have been removed from the data set.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that, throughout the report, figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

The profile of the sample in relation to working status is tabulated below:

**Table 1: Which of the following best describes your current working status?**

Working Status	Proportion of Sample
Full-time paid work	41%
Part-time paid work	14%
Self-employed	2%
Education or training	26%
Unemployed	9%
Long-term sick / disabled	1%
Looking after family / home	6%
Other	1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>398</b>

This profile reflects the overall age profile with significant parts of the sample being in education but also with the greatest number now being economically active (albeit there is also representation from different groups of economically inactive young people).

The profile of the sample in relation to income is shown below.

**Table 2: What is your annual gross income (that is, before tax etc. and including all income from employment, savings or benefits)?**

Income	Proportion of Sample
Up to £10,000	38%
Between £10,000 and £20,000	28%
Between £20,000 and £30,000	22%
Between £30,000 and £40,000	6%
Between £40,000 and £50,000	1%
More than £50,000	0%
Prefer not to say	5%
<b>Base</b>	<b>398</b>

The significant proportion of the sample having income in the “up to £10,000” bracket is reflective of the high proportion of the sample that are either in education or economically inactive. There is a significant variation in terms of income according to age, with 58% of 16-24 year olds indicating that they have income of up to £10,000 but only 18% of 25-34 year olds. The mean gross income amongst 16-24 year olds was £11,108 whereas for 25-34 year olds the figure was £18,731 (the figure for the sample as a whole being £15,000).<sup>3</sup> For 16-24 year olds, the median income figure lies in the “up to £10,000” range whereas for 25-34 year olds it lies in the £10,000 to £20,000 range (and with the most common income level being in the £20,000 to £30,000 range (this being so for 37% of 25-34 year olds).

4% of the sample indicated that they considered themselves to have a disability.

The most common declared ethnic group was White Scottish (89% of the sample) followed by White Other British (7%), with other responses being spread across a range of ethnicities.

Throughout the report, the overall survey results are set out and, where appropriate, we comment on significant distinctions by the respondent criteria set out above, most commonly in relation to

<sup>3</sup> This is calculated taking the mid-points of the various scales and assumes a figure of £5,000 for the “up to £10,000” income bracket.

location, age and gender. A full breakdown of the survey results by all of these criteria has been provided under separate cover.

## 1.2 Survey Themes

The survey addressed the following issues:

- Young People’s Views on the Scottish Borders generally
- Housing issues (including a mix of descriptive and attitudinal issues)
- Views about the Scottish Borders in the future.

The survey results in relation to each of these themes are set out in full in the following sections.

## 1.3 Young People’s Views on the Scottish Borders Generally

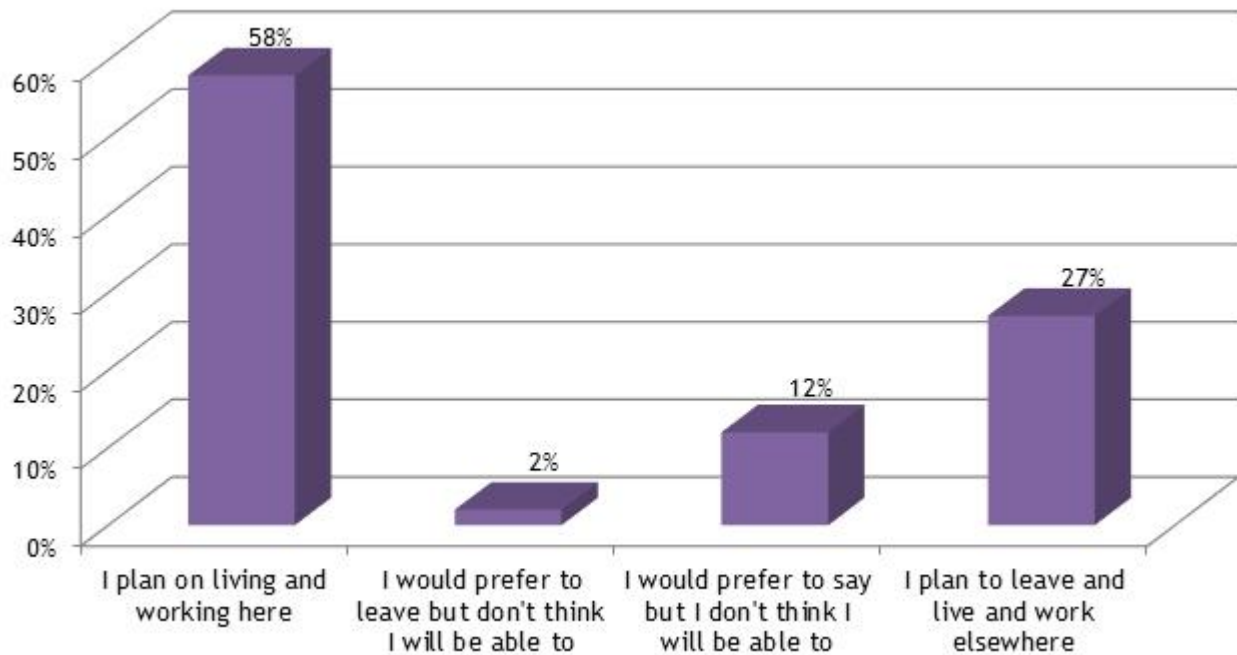
This initial section of the survey explored young people’s views on the Scottish Borders as a place to live and work, whilst exploring young people’s aspirations for the future, in particular with respect to their desire (or otherwise) to make a life in the Scottish Borders.

Respondents were asked firstly to place themselves in one of a number of categories that reflected their overall aspirations with respect to the Scottish Borders and these results are tabulated over the page (the table includes a breakdown by age and location, as there are significant variations by these criteria in relation to this question).

**Table 3: I am going to show you a list of statements. Please choose which of these best describes you.**

Statement	Overall Sample	16-24	25-34	Galashiels / Melrose	Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso	Duns / Eyemouth	Peebles
I live in the Scottish borders and I plan on living and working here	58%	37%	81%	54%	68%	57%	47%
I live in the Scottish Borders. I would prefer to leave but I don’t think I will be able to	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	0%	2%
I live in the Scottish Borders. I would prefer to stay but I don’t think I will be able to live and work here	12%	20%	5%	11%	9%	24%	11%
I live in the Scottish Borders, but I plan to leave and live and work elsewhere	27%	43%	12%	32%	20%	20%	40%
<b>Base</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>57</b>

**Figure 1: Views on the Scottish Borders Generally**



A significant minority of the overall sample (27%) indicate that they plan to leave and live and work elsewhere but this varies very significantly by age group, with 43% of 16-24 year olds indicating that they plan to do so but only 12% of 25-34 year olds. Conversely, the great majority of 25-34 year olds indicate that they plan on living and working in the area (81%) but significantly fewer 16-24 year olds state such an intention (37%).

The intention to leave the Scottish Borders and live and work elsewhere is most common in the Peebles area (40%) and, to some extent, in the Galashiels / Melrose area (32%), most probably reflecting the proximity of those areas to larger settlements and, thus, economic and social opportunities.

The figure for those indicating a plan to leave and live and work elsewhere is significantly lower in each of the Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso and Duns / Eyemouth areas (20%). However, it should be noted that the proportion of young people in Duns / Eyemouth indicating a preference to say but not thinking they will be able to do so (24%) is significantly higher than is the case in the other areas.

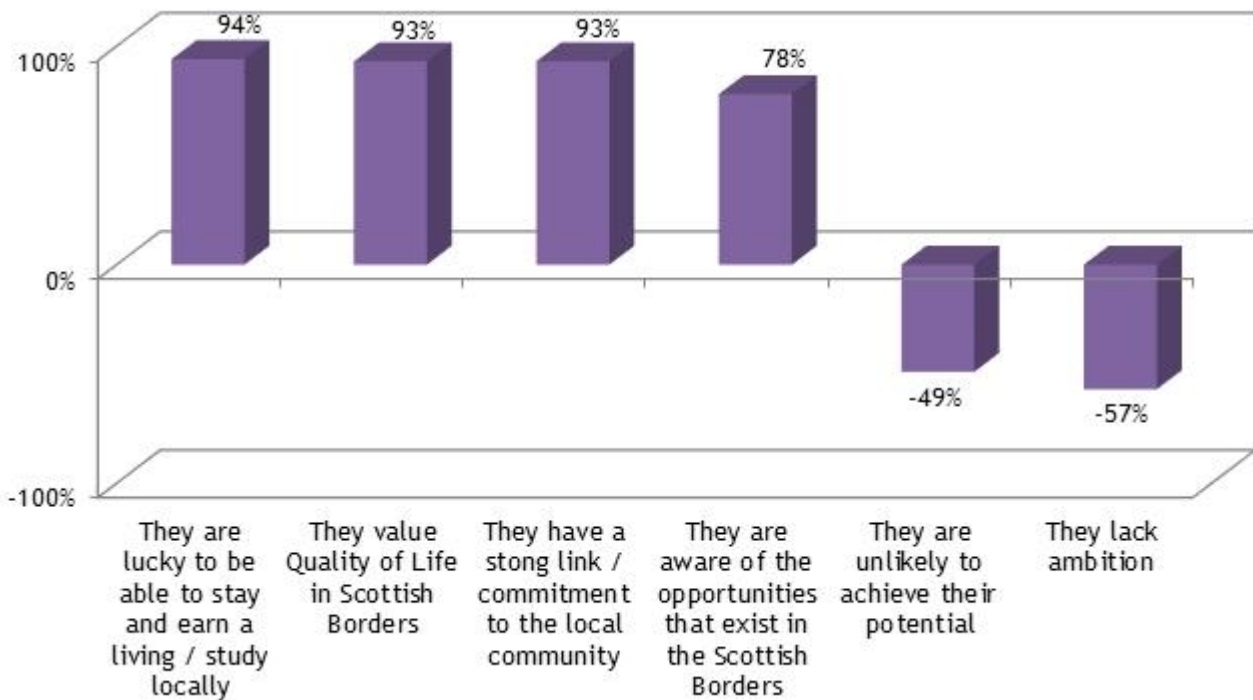
Respondents were then asked about their level of agreement with a number of statements relating to young people either choosing to stay or to leave the Scottish Borders area. Key perceptions of young people choosing to stay are tabulated below:



**Table 4: What do you think of young people who STAY in the local area after they leave school?**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>4</sup>	Base
They are lucky to be able to stay and earn a living / study locally	39%	57%	2%	2%	0%	+94%	398
They value the good quality of life in the Scottish borders	39%	57%	1%	2%	1%	+93%	398
They have a strong link / commitment to the local community	42%	53%	3%	2%	0%	+93%	398
They are aware of the opportunities that exist in the Scottish Borders	26%	58%	10%	5%	1%	+78%	398
They are unlikely to achieve their potential	2%	11%	25%	40%	22%	-49%	398
They lack ambition	2%	9%	20%	37%	31%	-57%	398

**Figure 2: Attitudes to Young People that Stay in the Local Area (figures represent net agreement)**



Clearly, there are high levels of agreement across the board that young people that stay in the local area are “lucky” to be able to do so and that they value a good quality of life in the area and have a strong commitment to the local community and are aware of the opportunities that exist for them, There is also a high level of disagreement that young people who stay in the local area are unlikely to

<sup>4</sup> As with similar questions throughout the report, this is based on the total “Agree” figure less total “Disagree” figure.

achieve their potential or that they lack ambition. These perceptions are common across demographic and location criteria.

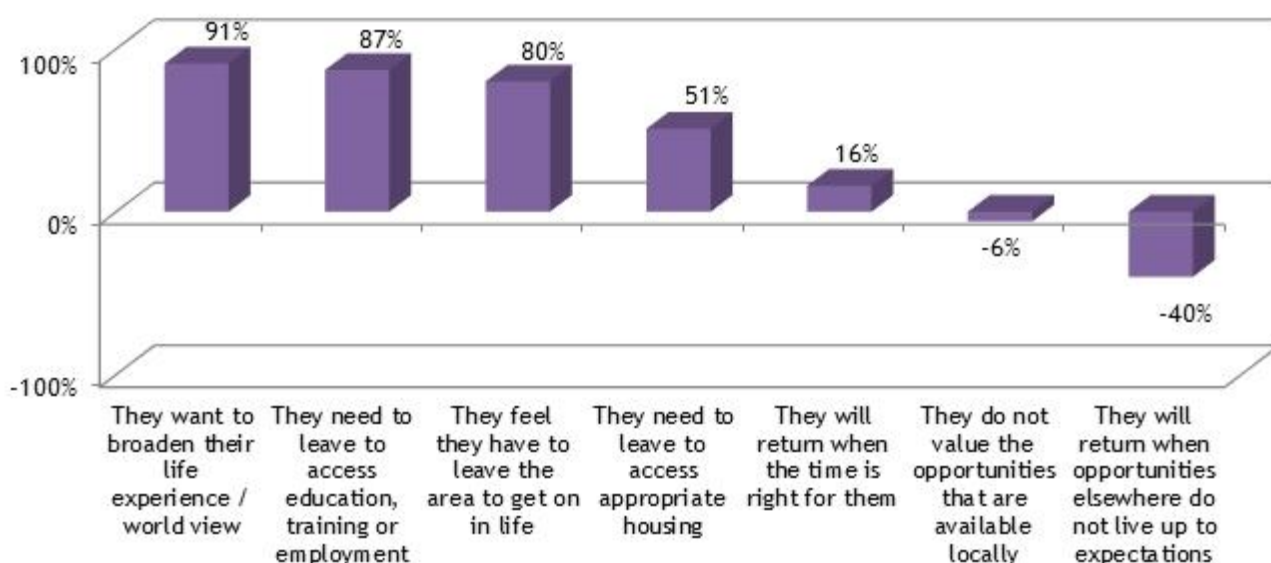
There is nothing to suggest, therefore, that a decision to stay and live / work within the Scottish borders is seen as a negative thing by young people living in the area.

Perceptions in relation to young people that choose to leave the Scottish Borders are tabulated over the page.

**Table 5: What do you think of young people who LEAVE the local area after they leave school?**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>5</sup>	Base
They want to broaden their life experience / world view	47%	45%	7%	1%	0%	+91%	397
They need to leave to access appropriate education, training or employment opportunities	46%	45%	6%	4%	0%	+87%	397
They feel they have to leave the area to get on in life	36%	49%	10%	5%	0%	+80%	397
They need to leave to access appropriate housing	23%	43%	19%	14%	1%	+51%	397
They will return when the time is right for them	10%	24%	49%	13%	5%	+16%	397
They will return when the opportunities elsewhere do not live up to their expectations	4%	12%	62%	15%	7%	-6%	397
They do not value the opportunities that are available locally	3%	8%	38%	42%	9%	-40%	397

**Figure 3: Attitudes to Young People that Leave the Local area (figures represent net agreement)**



<sup>5</sup> Based on the total "Agree" figure less total "Disagree" figure.

Whilst the desire to broaden one’s life experiences is clearly seen as an important factor motivating young people that leave the area (and this can reasonably be viewed as a positive thing) a number of the statements that gain higher levels of agreement suggest, at least to some extent, that the motivation to leave can come from opportunities being seen as being available elsewhere but not in the Scottish Borders. Thus, for example, the need to leave to access education, training or employment is seen as a common factor as is, more generally, the sense that people feel they need to leave to get on in life. Housing clearly is an issue in amongst these potential drivers to leave, with 69% of young people agreeing that people need to leave the area to access appropriate housing.

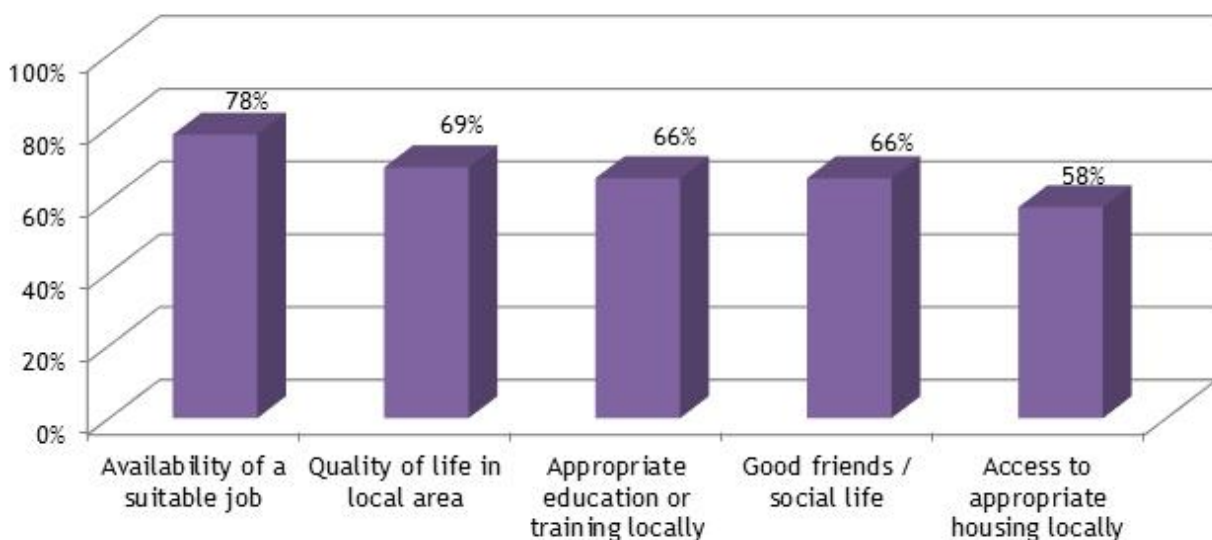
There were mixed views within the survey as to whether people would return when the time was right for them or, indeed, were opportunities elsewhere not to live up to their expectations. There is also some disagreement as to the suggestion that young people that choose to leave the area do not value the opportunities available to them locally; the perception is of opportunities being more apparent elsewhere but that this does not mean that young people don’t value the options that are available to them locally.

Respondents were then asked to comment on the things that they felt would motivate them to remain in the Scottish borders in the future and these results are tabulated below (ordered by the proportion saying that these would be factors “to a significant extent”).

**Table 6: To what extent would you say that each of the following things would motivate you to continue to live in the Scottish Borders in the future?**

Factor	Not at all	To some extent	To a significant extent	Base
The availability of a suitable job	4%	19%	78%	397
The quality of life in the local area	3%	28%	69%	397
The availability of appropriate education or training locally	6%	28%	66%	397
Having good friends / social life	4%	30%	66%	397
Access to appropriate housing locally	5%	37%	58%	397

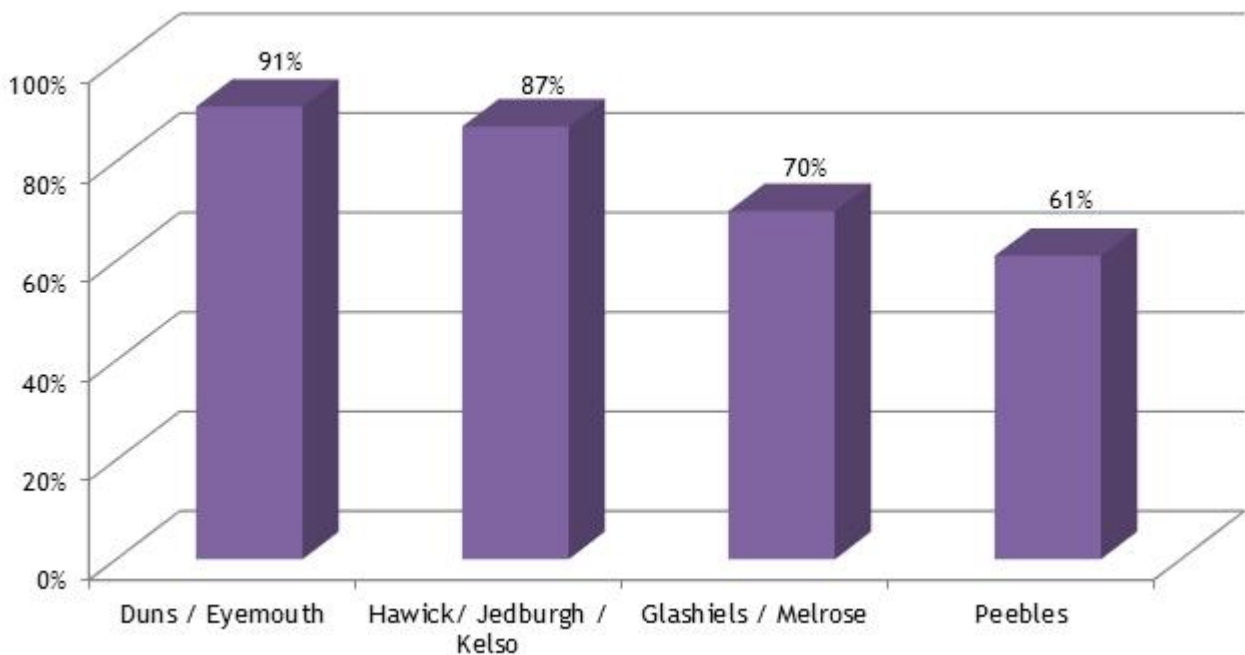
**Figure 4: Motivators to Continue to Live in the Scottish Borders (figures represent those saying this is a motivator “to a significant extent”)**



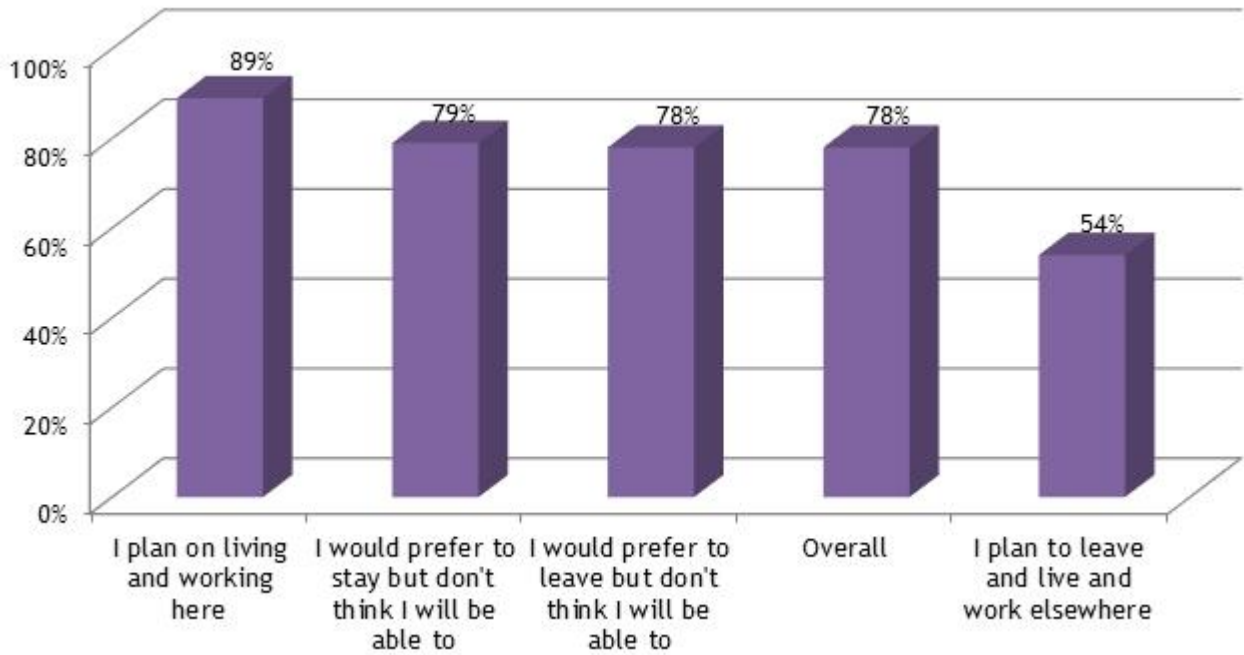
For each factor, a majority of respondents suggest that it would be a motivator to remain in the Scottish Borders area “to a significant extent”. This is particularly so for the availability of a suitable job, which is seen as being a motivator “to a significant extent” by 78% of respondents; this figure is actually significantly higher amongst some groups, including 25-34 year olds (85%), people living in Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso (87%) and people living in Duns / Eyemouth (92%). Thus, the availability of a suitable job is more likely to be considered a motivator in those areas where there are fewer local employment opportunities or where the potential to reasonably commute elsewhere is more limited. For each of the other factors, a somewhat higher proportion of respondents from Duns / Eyemouth cite the factor as a motivator “to a significant extent”: quality of life in the local area (88%); the availability of appropriate education or training locally (84%); having good friends / social life (86%); and, access to appropriate housing locally (92%).

As noted above, 58% of respondents cited “access to appropriate housing locally” as a factor that would encourage them to continue to live in the Scottish Borders “to a significant extent”. There are modest differences in this figure by age, with the figure for 25-34 year olds (62%) being somewhat higher than that for 16-24 year olds (53%). Females were also slightly more likely to see this as an issue “to a significant extent” (62% compared to 54% of males). As noted previously, the figure in Duns / Eyemouth is significantly higher but the reverse is true in Peebles, where only 39% of respondents considered the availability of appropriate housing as something that would motivate them to continue living in the Scottish Borders in the future.

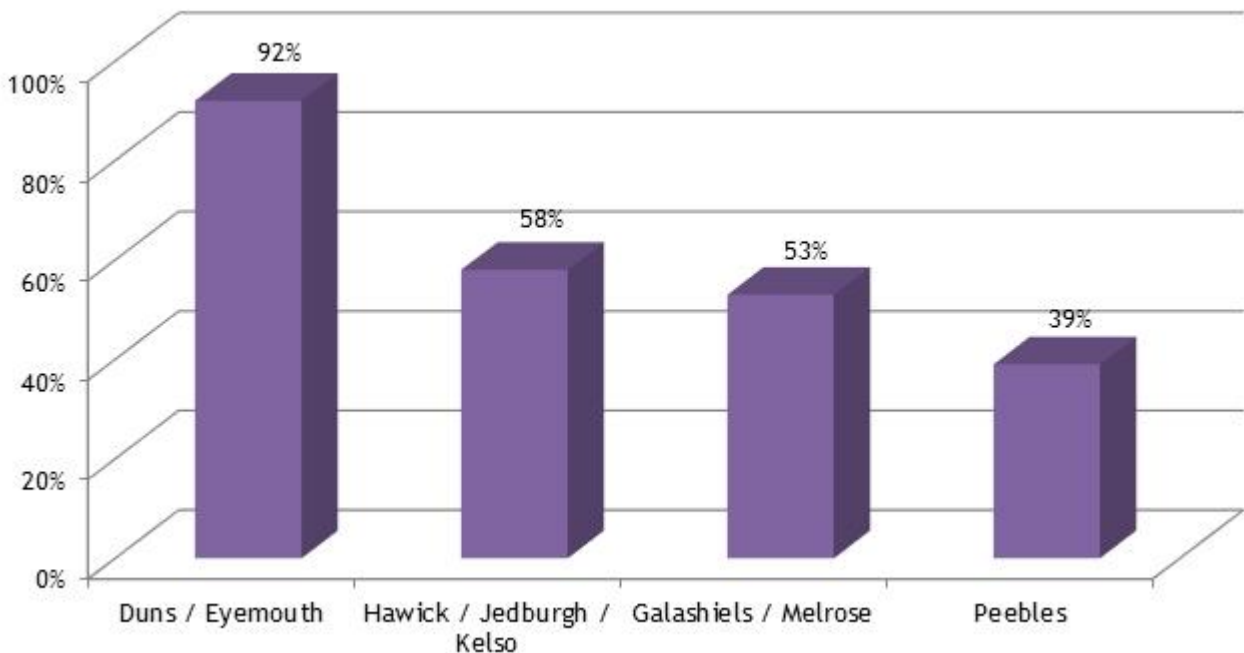
**Figure 5: Some potentially significant local variations (example: % that cite “availability of a suitable job” as a potential motivator to remain “to a significant extent”)**



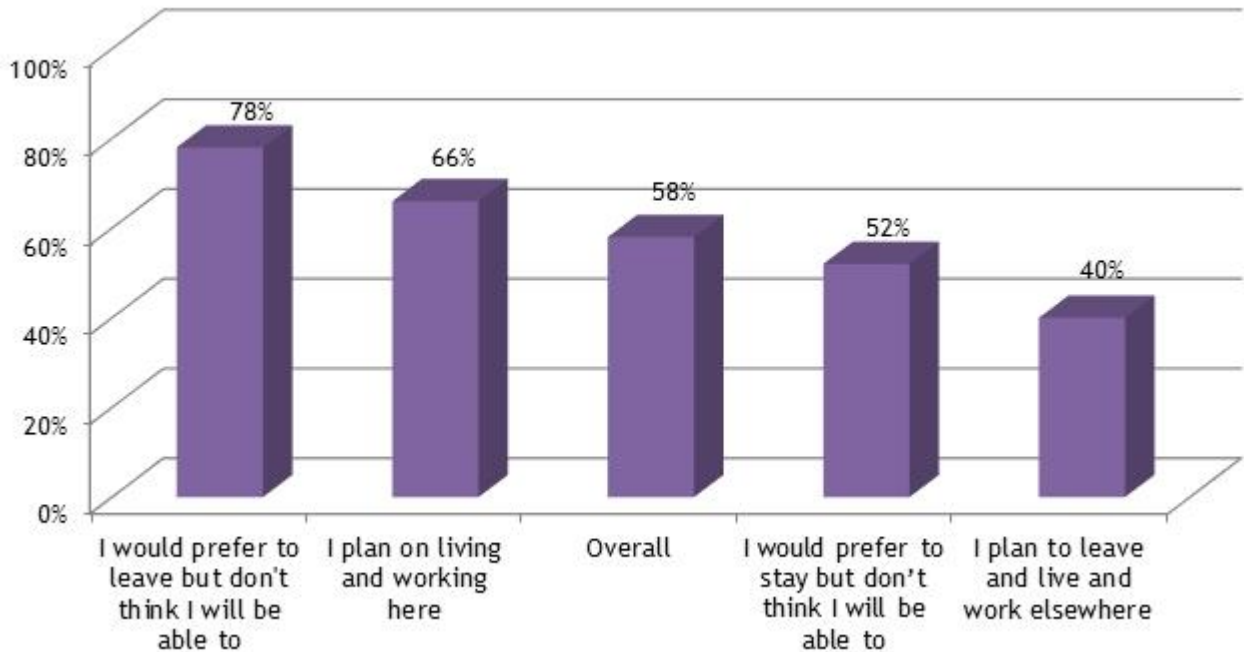
**Figure 6: Variations by Views on Scottish Borders Generally (example: % that cite “availability of a suitable job” as a potential motivator to remain “to a significant extent”)**



**Figure 7: Also in Relation to Housing Specifically (example: % that cite “access to appropriate housing locally” as a potential motivator to remain “to a significant extent”)**



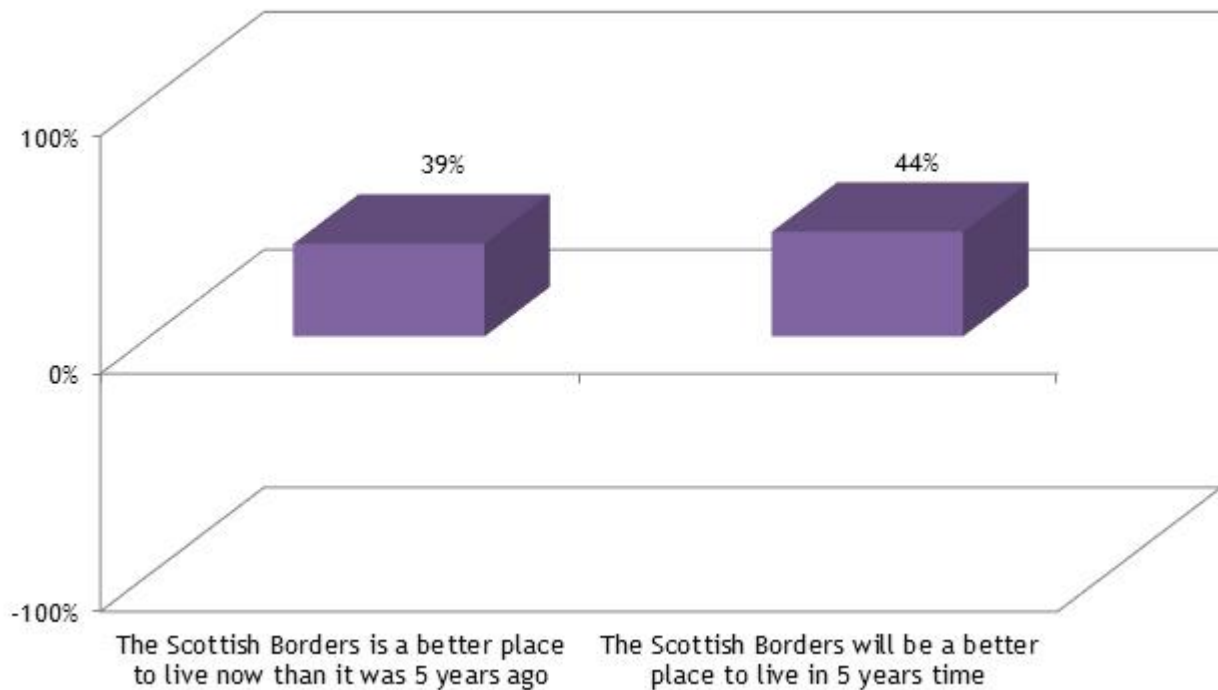
**Figure 8: Variations by Views on Scottish Borders Generally (example: % that cite “access to appropriate housing locally” as a potential motivator to remain “to a significant extent”)**



Respondents were very likely to agree that the Scottish Borders was a better place to live now than it was five years ago; 61% of respondents overall agreed that it was compared to 22% that disagreed (with the balance giving a “don’t know” response). These figures did not vary significantly by age and gender but it is worth noting that responses from the Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso area were somewhat less favourable (51% agreeing that the Scottish Borders was a better place to live now compared to 37% that said it was not).

There is also a good measure of optimism about the area with 61% of respondents overall indicating that they think the Scottish Borders will be a better place to live in five years’ time compared to 17% indicating that it will not (again, the balance being “don’t know” responses). Again, respondents from Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso were somewhat less positive, with 54% expressing the view that the Scottish Borders would be a better place to live in five years’ time but with 29% disagreeing with this. Respondents from Duns / Eyemouth (65%) and, especially, Peebles (84%) were significantly more likely to believe that the Scottish borders would be a better place to live in five years’ time.

Figure 9: Perceptions are Improving (figures represent net agreement and include neutral responses)



#### 1.4 Housing Issues

Turning now to housing issues specifically, respondents were first asked as to the broad location that they would like to live in over various time periods. These results are tabulated below, firstly for the sample as a whole.

Table 7: Where would you like to live over each of the following time periods?

Area	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Local area (your current home town or surrounding area)	89%	60%	52%
In the Scottish Borders (but not necessarily in your current home town or surrounding area)	2%	7%	8%
Elsewhere in Scotland	7%	22%	23%
Elsewhere in the UK	3%	8%	8%
Elsewhere in the world	1%	3%	9%
<b>Base</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>397</b>

In an overall sense, it is clear that a significant proportion of the sample overall indicate a desire to move outwith the Scottish Borders in the future, with this aspiration being not necessarily an immediate one but one which manifests itself over a 5 years+ time period.

It is instructive to compare these aspirations in relation to the different age groups and these are tabulated below.

**Table 8: Where would you like to live over each of the following time periods (16-24 only)?**

Area	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Local area (your current home town or surrounding area)	82%	43%	34%
In the Scottish Borders (but not necessarily in your current home town or surrounding area)	1%	9%	8%
Elsewhere in Scotland	12%	31%	32%
Elsewhere in the UK	4%	12%	13%
Elsewhere in the world	1%	5%	14%
<b>Base</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>199</b>

**Table 9: Where would you like to live over each of the following time periods (25-34 only)?**

Area	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Local area (your current home town or surrounding area)	94%	76%	70%
In the Scottish Borders (but not necessarily in your current home town or surrounding area)	2%	5%	8%
Elsewhere in Scotland	2%	12%	14%
Elsewhere in the UK	2%	5%	4%
Elsewhere in the world	0%	2%	4%
<b>Base</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>198</b>

There is a clear distinction by age in these figures in that 78% of 25-34 year olds express a desire to stay in their local area or elsewhere in the Scottish borders over a 10 year period whereas for 16-24 year olds this figure is only 42%. Conversely, aspirations to move elsewhere (especially outwith Scotland) are much more apparent amongst the younger age group. There may well be a number of reasons for this: people may be more likely to leave in their late teens or early twenties (for example, to access educational opportunities) and it may be that by their late twenties / early thirties people have begun to establish family or other social relationships and to begin working in the area, which make any aspiration to move out of the area less evident.

Respondents were then asked as to their current living arrangements and the profile of this by age, gender and location is tabulated over the page.

**Table 10: What are your current living arrangements?<sup>6</sup>**

Arrangement	Overall Sample	16-24	25-34	Galashiels / Melrose	Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso	Duns / Eyemouth	Peebles
Living in parental / family home	55%	86%	24%	50%	50%	65%	71%
Living in private rented home, by self or with partner	20%	7%	32%	22%	21%	20%	9%
Living in Council / Housing Association home, by self or with partner	12%	4%	20%	13%	18%	10%	0%
Living in own home (owned or with a mortgage), by self or with partner	12%	2%	23%	13%	11%	4%	20%
Other (including shared accommodation and student accommodation)	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	0%
<b>Base</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>56</b>

<sup>6</sup> Details were captured as to whether people were currently living in a flat or house; this detail is included in the supporting information but has been summarised herein, for ease of analysis.



55% of the young people interviewed live currently in the parental / family home (which could itself be of any tenure) but there is a significant variation by age band with 86% of 16-24 year olds living in the parental / family home and this dropping off to 24% amongst 25-34 year olds. The proportion of those living in the parental / family home is slightly higher in each of Duns / Eyemouth and Peebles (though the drivers for this may be different in each area in relation to factor such as affordability and availability of different housing options).

A very significant proportion of 25-34 year olds live in private rented accommodation; indeed, at 32% of people in this group, this is the single most common tenure amongst people in that age band. It is notable that fewer people from Peebles live in private rented accommodation (with, conversely, people being more likely to live in the parental / family home or in their own home).

12% of the sample live in social rented property through their own tenancy; this is significantly higher in Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso (at 18%) and significantly lower in Peebles, where no respondents indicated that they lived in social rented accommodation.

Home ownership amongst the sample as a whole is 12% but, again, there is a significant variation by age with 23% of 25-34 year olds indicating that they live in their own home compared to 2% of 16-24 year olds). Home ownership is significantly higher than for the sample as a whole in Peebles (at 20%) and significantly lower in Duns / Eyemouth.

Overall, 27% of respondents indicated that they expected to move home WITHIN the Scottish Borders over the next three years. This figure did not vary significantly by age or gender but it is notable that respondents from the Duns / Eyemouth area were significantly more likely to say that they expected to move home within the Scottish Borders over the next three years (47%) This figure is higher than average amongst respondents currently living in private rented accommodation (36%) and lower than average amongst those that own their own home (15%).

Respondents were then asked to indicate the tenure of home that they would expect to move into the next time they move home (this being whether or not that move was within the Scottish Borders. This is tabulated below, illustrating a comparison to respondents' current arrangements.

**Table 11: What type of home would you expect to move into the NEXT time you move home?**

Arrangement	Current	Expected on moving home NEXT time
Living in parental / family home	55%	0%
Living in private rented home, by self or with partner	20%	51%
Living in Council / Housing Association home, by self or with partner	12%	20%
Living in own home (owned or with a mortgage), by self or with partner	12%	28%
Other (including shared accommodation and student accommodation)	2%	2%

Over half of respondents indicate that their next move within the Scottish Borders would be to a private rented home. This reflects this being the most common first destination after people leave the parental / family home. The remainder are divided between those that envisage their next move as being to their own home (28%) or to the social rented sector (20%) with very few people envisaging their next move (within the Scottish borders to other shared accommodation or student accommodation (the limited expectation of moving into shared accommodation of some sort perhaps reflect this being not a significant part of the housing scene in the Scottish borders at present).

Taking a longer term view, respondents were then asked about the form of housing they would HOPE to live in over a number of time periods and these results are tabulated over the page.

**Table 12: Should you stay in the Scottish borders in the future, in which of the following forms of housing would you HOPE to be living in over each of the following time periods?**

Area	Current	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Living in parental / family home	55%	53%	16%	1%
Living in private rented home, by self or with partner	20%	20%	36%	15%
Living in Council / Housing Association home, by self or with partner	12%	13%	16%	16%
Living in own home (owned or with a mortgage), by self or with partner	12%	13%	30%	69%
Other (including shared accommodation and student accommodation)	2%	1%	1%	0%
<b>Base</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>362</b>

These figures show a clear aspiration towards home ownership, with this being the 10-year aspiration for 69% of respondents. These figures vary only marginally by age and gender. However, there are some variations by area with the 10-year aspiration towards home ownership being significantly higher than average in Duns / Eyemouth (83%) and in Peebles (92%).

16% of respondents declare a 10-year aspiration to be living in social rented accommodation. This figure is very significantly lower amongst 16-24 year olds (9%) than amongst 25-34 year olds (24%) suggesting a change in awareness of options and / or aspirations as people get older. People in Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso were particularly likely to indicate the social rented sector as being their 10-year aspiration (24% did so).

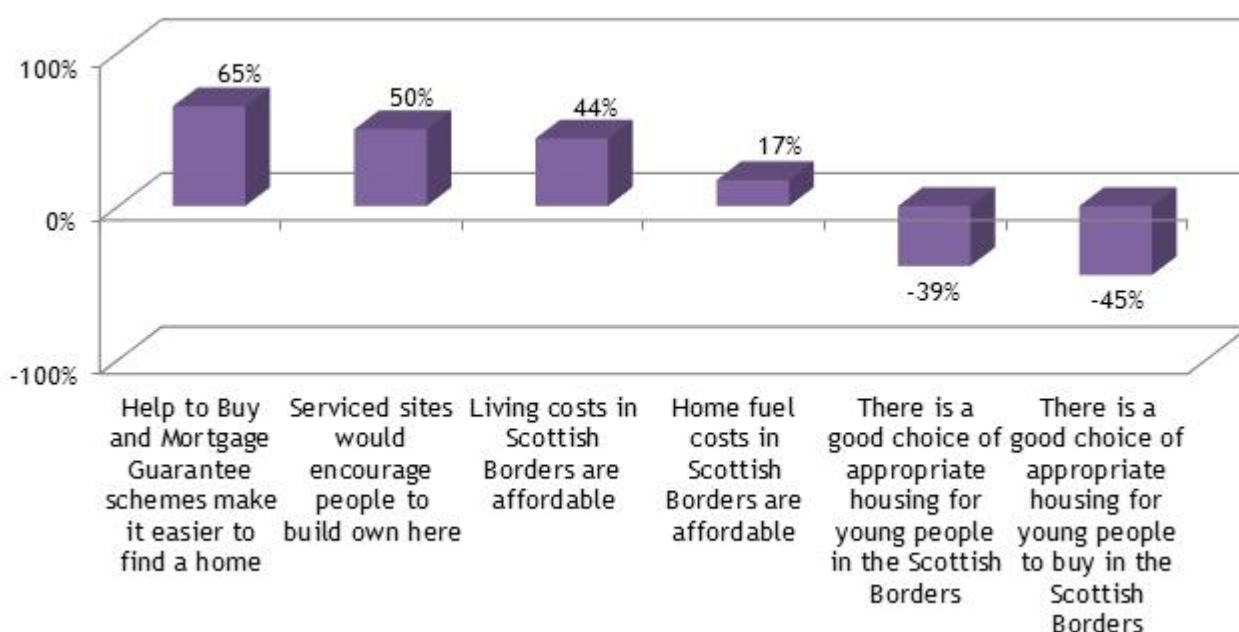
It is interesting to note that, whilst the proportion of people that hope to live in private rented accommodation over a 10-year horizon is 15%, this peaks significantly over the 5-year time horizon (at 36%) suggesting that a significant proportion of people see this as a transitional phase towards other housing options. This 5-year aspiration to live in the private rented sector is greatest amongst 16-24 year olds (at 47% compared to 25% of 25-34 year olds). As a 5-year aspiration it is particularly common amongst people from Galashiels / Melrose and Peebles (41% in each case) and Duns / Eyemouth (38%) but lower amongst people from Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso (28%).

At this point in the survey, respondents were asked about their agreement or disagreement with a number of statements about housing in the Scottish Borders and the overall results in relation to these attitudinal statements are tabulated over the page.

**Table 13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding housing in the Scottish Borders?**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>7</sup>	Base
Initiatives such as Help to Buy and mortgage guarantee schemes make it easier for young people to find a home	37%	39%	14%	10%	1%	+65%	398
Housing serviced sites available would encourage people to build their own home	24%	42%	19%	10%	6%	+50%	398
Living costs in the Scottish Borders are affordable	5%	53%	27%	11%	3%	+44%	398
Home fuel costs in the Scottish Borders are affordable	2%	33%	48%	14%	4%	+17%	396
There is a good choice of appropriate rental housing for young people in the Scottish Borders	1%	15%	29%	43%	12%	-39%	398
There is a good choice of appropriate housing for young people to buy in the Scottish Borders	1%	13%	28%	52%	7%	-45%	398

**Figure 10: Attitudes to Housing in the Scottish Borders (figures represent net agreement)**



These figures suggest considerable agreement (albeit based only on a brief description) that initiatives such as Help to Buy and mortgage guarantee schemes would be beneficial to young people and also

<sup>7</sup> Based on the total “Agree” figure less total “Disagree” figure.

that the availability of serviced sites would encourage some people to build their own home. Such views were common amongst the main demographic and location criteria.

There is a reasonable level of agreement that living costs in the Scottish Borders are affordable with 58% of the sample agreeing with this, albeit very few “strongly agree” with this proposition. Again, variations by demographic and location criteria were fairly modest, although people from Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso were more likely than average to agree with this proposition (70% compared to 50% of the sample as a whole).

Only 35% of respondents felt able to say that home fuel costs were affordable. Again, there were some significant differences by area, with only 21% of Galashiels / Melrose respondents considering this to be the case, rising to 35% of Peebles respondents, 42% of Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso respondents and 55% of Duns / Eyemouth respondents.

Clearly, there is a high level of disagreement that there is a good choice of either appropriate rental housing or housing to buy for young people in the Scottish Borders. Overall, only 16% of those surveyed agreed that there was a good choice of appropriate rental housing for young people in the Scottish Borders; the only area where this figure was at least slightly higher was in Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso but even here, the 25% that agreed that there was a good choice of appropriate rental housing was outweighed by the 48% that disagreed with this (others giving a neutral response).

Only 14% of respondents overall considered that there was a choice of appropriate housing for young people to buy in the Scottish Borders. Again, this figure was marginally higher in Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso (at 18%) but, across the board, there was a considerable level of disagreement with this proposition.

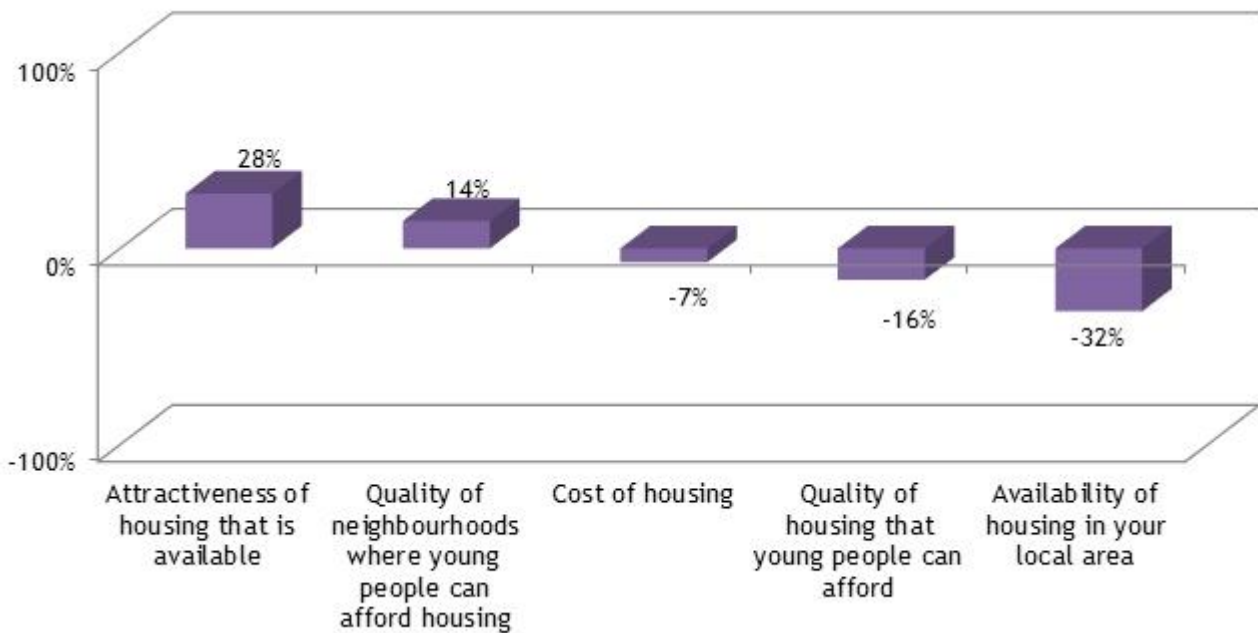
Respondents were then asked to provide ratings for a number of specific aspects of housing in the Scottish Borders and these results are tabulated over the page.

**Table 14: Overall, how would you rate the housing options available in your local area with regard to each of the following?**

Housing Issue	Very Good	Quite Good	Neither Good nor Poor	Quite Poor	Very Poor	Net Rating <sup>8</sup>	Base
The attractiveness of the housing that is available	9%	42%	26%	19%	4%	+28%	398
The quality of neighbourhoods where young people would be able to afford housing	8%	33%	31%	20%	7%	+14%	398
The cost of housing	1%	26%	39%	27%	7%	-7%	398
The quality of housing that younger people can afford	2%	24%	33%	33%	9%	-16%	398
The availability of housing in your local area	1%	19%	27%	40%	12%	-32%	398

<sup>8</sup> Based on the total “Good” figure less total “Poor” figure.

**Figure 11: Rating of Housing Issues in Local Area (figures represent net positive score)**



The ratings provided for each of these elements are fairly lukewarm with respondents either likely to give a “neither / nor” response or to provide a “poor” rating.

51% of respondents give a positive view for the attractiveness of the housing that is available but it should be noted that only 9% consider this to be “very” good. Respondents from Peebles were somewhat more likely to be positive, with 78% giving a positive rating for this.

41% of respondents gave a positive rating to the quality of neighbourhoods where young people would be able to afford housing. Again, a much more positive view was evident in Peebles (77% giving a positive view) with, in this case, a lower proportion of Galashiels / Melrose respondents giving a positive rating (32%).

Only 27% of respondents gave a positive rating for the cost of housing. This rating was particularly low in each of Duns / Eyemouth (14%) and Peebles (16%).

With respect to the quality of housing that younger people can afford, whilst 26% gave a positive rating this was outweighed by the 42% that gave a negative rating. The proportion giving a positive rating was particularly low in Duns / Eyemouth (at 16%).

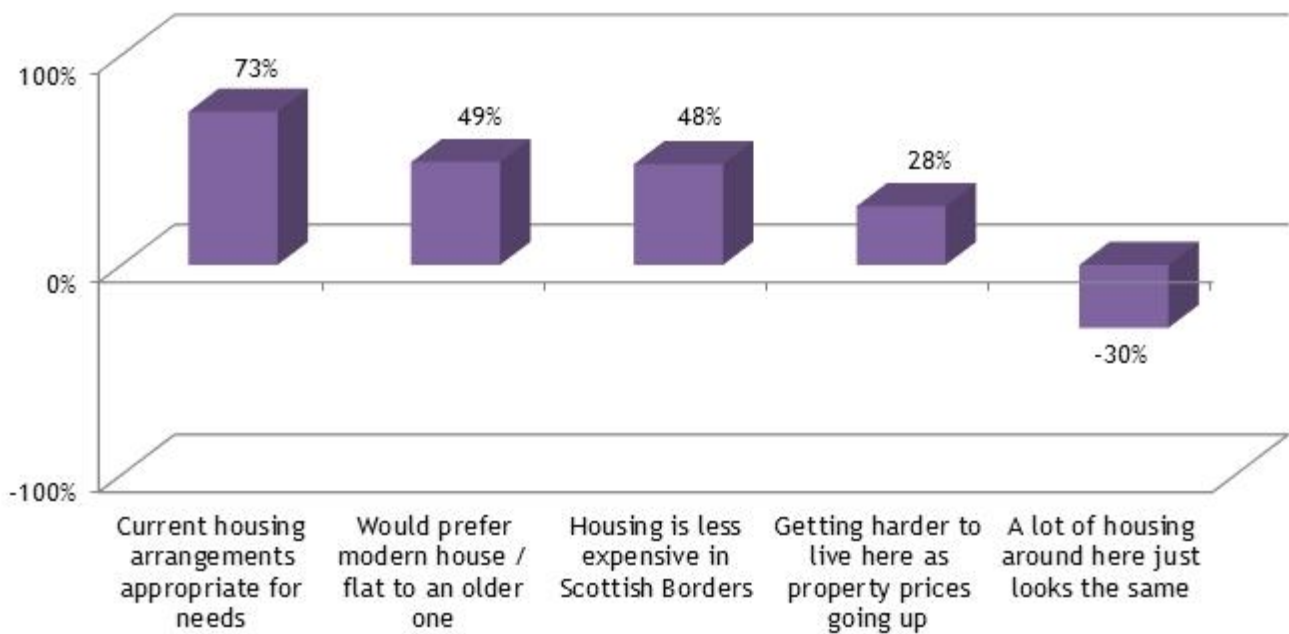
Only 20% of respondents gave a positive rating for the availability of housing in their local area with this figure being outweighed by the 52% that gave a negative rating. Ratings were particularly low in both Duns / Eyemouth and Peebles (14% giving a positive rating in each case).

A range of other statements were then put to respondents relating to different aspects of the housing market and their specific needs; the levels of agreement or disagreement with these are tabulated below.

**Table 15: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding housing in the Scottish Borders?**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>9</sup>	Base
My current housing arrangements are appropriate for my needs	44%	41%	4%	10%	2%	+73%	398
I would prefer a modern house / flat to an old one	25%	36%	27%	10%	2%	+49%	398
Housing is less expensive in the Scottish borders than in neighbouring areas	9%	53%	24%	11%	3%	+48%	398
It is getting harder to live here because property prices are going up	18%	33%	27%	23%	0%	+28%	398
A lot of housing around here just looks the same	6%	24%	10%	46%	14%	-30%	398

**Figure 12: Wider Attitudes to Housing Issues (figures represent net agreement)**



The great majority of interviewees (85%) indicated that their current housing arrangements were appropriate for their needs with only 12% of people disagreeing with this. However, it is notable that the proportion of people that disagreed with this statement was higher in Duns / Eyemouth 9at 22%). There appears to be a general preference for modern flats / houses compared to old ones with 61% agreeing this to be the case against 12% that disagree. Again, this view is common amongst the different demographic groups although people in Duns / Eyemouth were less likely to agree (45% did so with the remainder giving a “neither / nor” response).

There is general agreement that housing in the Scottish Borders is less expensive than in neighbouring areas (though this is clearly seen as a matter of degree, given the poor ratings noted above for cost

<sup>9</sup> Based on the total “Agree” figure less total “Disagree” figure.







**Table 17: I am going to show you a list of things to do with the Scottish Borders as a place to work, live and study. Firstly I would like you to tell me how important or unimportant you would consider each of these things to be.**

Attribute	Very Important	Quite Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Quite Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Total Rating as Important	Base
Availability of recreational / social opportunities	81%	19%	1%	0%	0%	100%	395
Good access to housing	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%	100%	394
Affordable transport links	77%	22%	0%	1%	0%	100%	395
Availability of high quality jobs	87%	12%	1%	0%	0%	99%	394
Having lots of things to do in the local community	85%	14%	0%	0%	0%	99%	395
Opportunities for career progression	86%	12%	2%	1%	0%	98%	395
Lower cost of living	85%	13%	2%	0%	0%	98%	395
Access to the outdoor environment	63%	35%	1%	1%	0%	98%	395
Mobile connectivity	56%	41%	3%	0%	0%	97%	395
Good access to Further / Higher Education	84%	12%	2%	2%	0%	96%	394
Opportunities for postgraduate education	58%	30%	8%	2%	1%	88%	395
Digital connectivity	49%	37%	11%	4%	0%	86%	395
Availability of childcare	33%	30%	14%	10%	12%	63%	395

Perhaps the main factor to note here is that a high level of importance is ascribed to each of these factors (and even in the case of childcare, the somewhat lower level of importance ascribed is probably a function of people’s individual family circumstances).

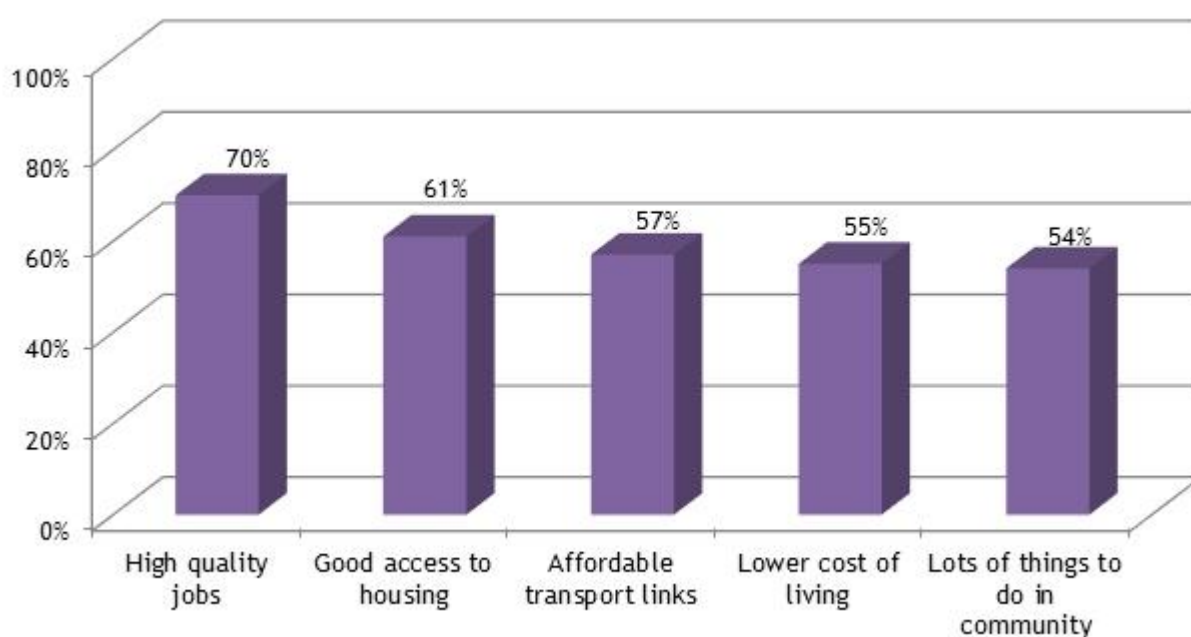
In most cases, respondents have said that they see these things as “very” important and this is particularly the case for: availability of high quality jobs (87% indicating that this is “very” important); opportunities for career progression (86%); having lots of things to do in the local community (85%); and, lower cost of living (also 85%).

To gain further insight into the relative importance ascribed to each of these elements, respondents were asked to choose up to five of these things that they considered to be most appropriate. The frequency with which each element was chosen is tabulated over the page.

**Table 18: Now, looking at the same list, please choose up to five of these things that you would say were most important in making the Scottish Borders a good place to live, work or study.**

Attribute	Proportion of Sample Selection in Top 5 Most Important
Availability of high quality jobs	70%
Good access to housing	61%
Affordable transport links	57%
Lower cost of living	55%
Having lots of things to do in the local community	54%
Opportunities for career progression	49%
Good access to Further / Higher Education	34%
Availability of recreational / social opportunities	33%
Access to the outdoor environment	28%
Mobile connectivity	17%
Availability of childcare	17%
Opportunities for postgraduate education	12%
Digital connectivity	11%
<b>Base</b>	<b>397</b>

**Figure 15: Most Important Factors for Young People (placed in Top 5)**



When looked at in this way, a number of issues that are most commonly seen as being of particular importance emerge.

The factor that is most likely to be ranked in respondents' top five priorities is the availability of high quality jobs (ranked in the top five by 70% of respondents and this is the most common priority across the various demographic and location criteria).

Just behind this is good access to housing, ranked in the top five priorities by 61% of respondents. Again, this view is common across all groups but is particularly evident in Duns / Eyemouth (92% of respondents from this area ranking good access to housing in their top five priorities).

A further set of issues (affordable transport links, lower cost of living, lots of things to do in the local community, opportunities for career progression) are ranked in the top five priorities by between 49% and 57% of respondents.

The extent to which issues are seen as one of the most important priorities then drops off somewhat, with 33% choosing recreational / social opportunities in their top five and 28% choosing access to the outdoor environment.

The remaining potential priorities (mobile connectivity, availability of childcare, opportunities for postgraduate education) are much less likely to appear in respondents' top five most important issues \*being chosen as such by between 11% and 17% of respondents).

Respondents had a final opportunity to raise any further opportunities and / or barriers they saw to them finding the right sort of housing in the Scottish Borders. These comments are listed in full in the supporting information but were generally a restatement of themes already raised in relation to availability and affordability of housing and t wider economic and social issues of relevance to young people in the Scottish Borders.

## 2. Former Residents Survey

### 2.1 Survey Background and Respondent Profile

The Former Residents Survey was organised to provide a perspective from people that had chosen to leave the Scottish Borders for whatever reason.

Initial attempts were made to secure interviews with such people on an in-street intercept basis at various events over summer 2018 but these had limited success, with only six valid interviews being achieved. However, an online version of the survey was prepared and promoted by Scottish Borders Council through various channels and this was considerably more successful, generating 66 additional responses.

A sample of 72 responses was therefore achieved for this element of work.

No quotas were set for the profile of responses to this survey. In terms of age, 29% of respondents were aged 16-24, 67% were aged 25-34 and 4% were aged 35-44. 76% of respondents now lived elsewhere in Scotland, 7% elsewhere in the UK, 3% outside the UK and 14% indicated that they preferred not to say. Amongst those living elsewhere in Scotland, the most common current locations were Edinburgh City (36% of those now living elsewhere in Scotland) and Midlothian (16%) with others scattered across a range of Local Authority areas.

The majority of respondents to this survey were in full-time paid work (65%) but with significant proportions in part-time paid work (10%) and in full or part-time education (14%).

4% of these respondents considered themselves to have a disability.

The most common declared ethnic group for this survey was White Scottish (90% of the sample) followed by White Other British (8%).

A full breakdown of the survey results by all of these criteria has been provided under separate cover. However, given the relatively small sample size overall, in the following commentary we focus on the overall results of the survey.

### 2.2 Survey Themes

The Former residents Survey addressed a broadly similar set of themes to the survey of young people:

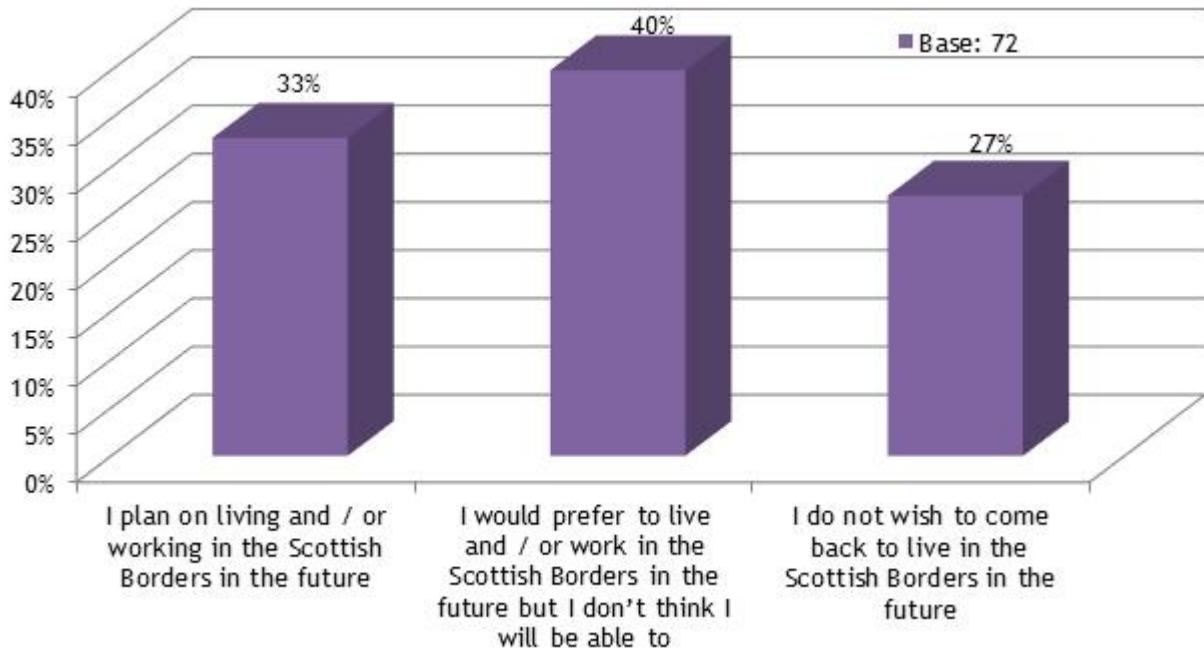
- Views on the Scottish Borders generally
- Housing issues
- Views about the Scottish Borders in the future.

The survey results in relation to each of these themes for this specific strand of the work are set out in full in the following sections.

### 2.3 Views on the Scottish Borders Generally

Respondents were asked firstly to place themselves in one of a number of categories that reflected their overall aspirations with respect to the Scottish Borders (and which mirrored a similar

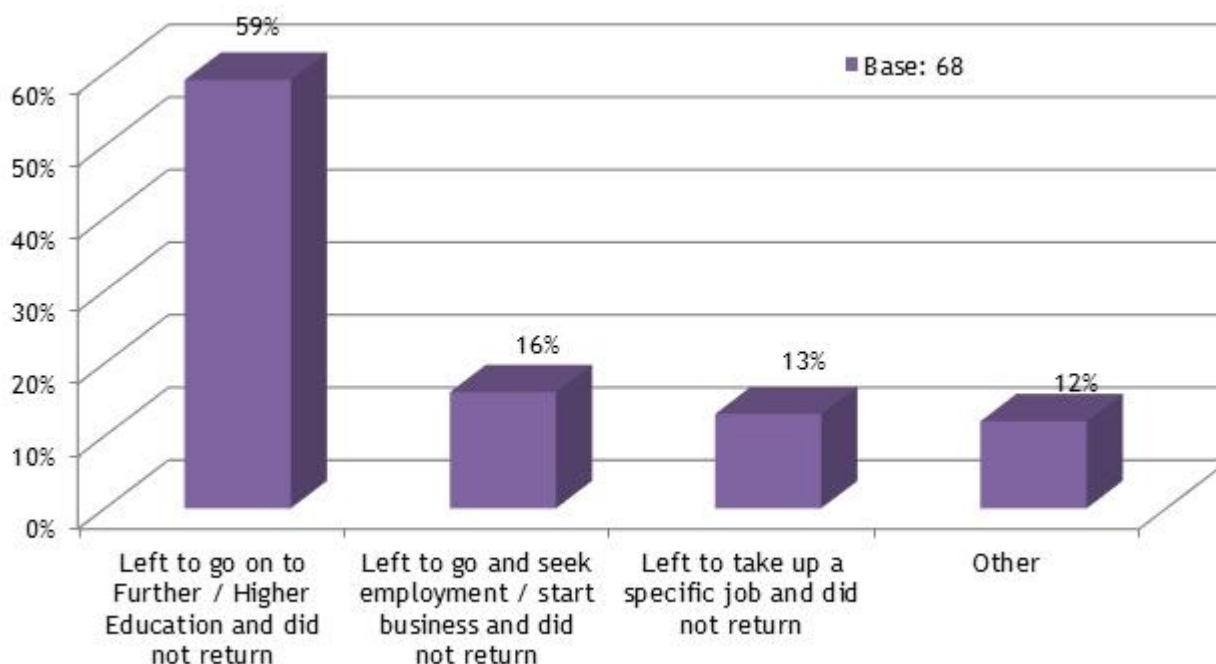
**Figure 16: I am going to show you a list of statements. Please choose which of these best describes you**



The key point to note here is that a significant proportion of respondents (73% overall) indicate some plan or desire to return to the Scottish Borders but with a significant proportion of these (40%) believing that they will not be able to.

Respondents' circumstances when they moved away from the Scottish Borders are tabulated over the page.

Figure 17: I am going to show you a list of statements. Please choose which of these best describes you.



These figures suggest that leaving for purposes of Further / Higher Education is a particular factor in many people moving away but that moving for job purposes is also a driver in many cases (the “other” category consists mainly of people moving for a variety of family reasons).

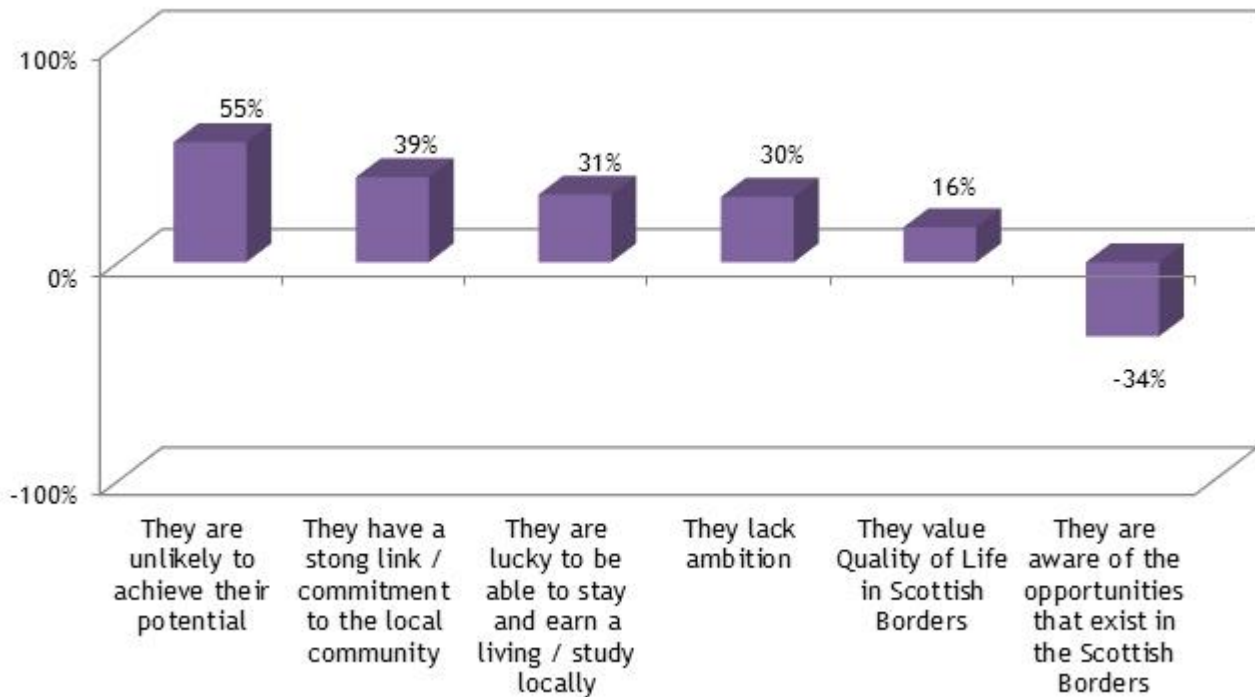
Respondents to this survey were then asked a similar question about their level of agreement with a number of statements relating to young people leaving the Scottish Borders area as was asked in the young person’s survey. The results are tabulated over the page:

Table 19: What do you think of young people who STAY in the local area after they leave school?

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>10</sup>	Base
They are lucky to be able to stay and earn a living / study locally	22%	35%	17%	19%	7%	+31% (+94%)	72
They value the good quality of life in the Scottish borders	8%	40%	19%	17%	15%	+16% (+93%)	72
They have a strong link / commitment to the local community	15%	42%	25%	14%	4%	+39% (+93%)	72
They are aware of the opportunities that exist in the Scottish Borders	1%	18%	28%	32%	21%	-34% (+78%)	72
They are unlikely to achieve their potential	29%	39%	19%	10%	3%	+55% (-49%)	72
They lack ambition	19%	32%	28%	17%	4%	+30% (-57%)	72

<sup>10</sup> The comparative figure from the young person’s study is in brackets for comparative purposes.

Figure 18: Attitudes to Young People that Stay in the Local Area (figures represent net agreement)



Although the extent of agreement is less evident than was the case in the young person’s survey, these figures still suggest that there is a general view amongst former residents that people are “lucky” if they are able to live / study locally and that such people value the quality of life available in the area and have strong links / commitment to the community. They are, however, quite likely to disagree that people who stay in the local area are actually aware of the opportunities that exist in the Scottish Borders.

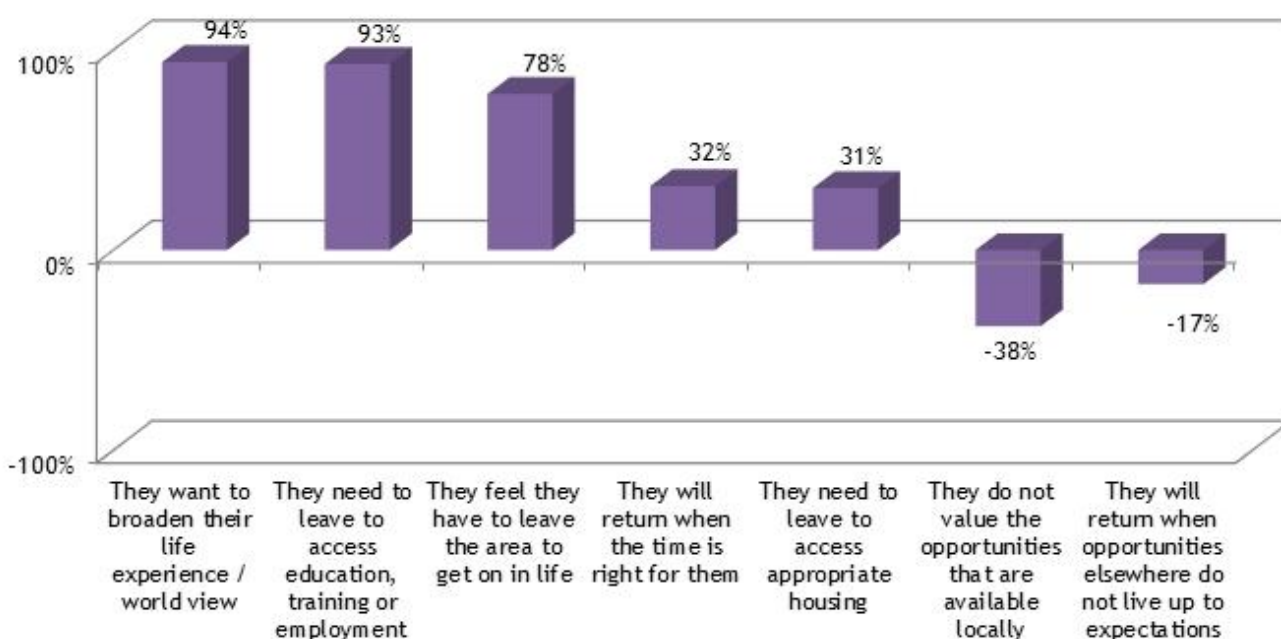
It is particularly notable that former residents were much more likely than respondents to the young person’s survey to consider that people that stayed in the local area after leaving school lacked ambition and that, in particular, they were unlikely to achieve their potential.

Again similar to a question posed in the young person’s survey, respondents to the Former residents Survey were asked to comment on their views on young people that leave the area after finishing school. These results are tabulated over the page.

**Table 20: What do you think of young people from the Scottish Borders who LEAVE the local area after they have finished school?**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>11</sup>	Base
They want to broaden their life experience / world view	63%	31%	7%	0%	0%	+94% (+91%)	72
They need to leave to access appropriate education, training or employment opportunities	76%	17%	7%	0%	0%	+93% (+87%)	72
They feel they have to leave the area to get on in life	50%	32%	14%	4%	0%	+78% (+80%)	72
They need to leave to access appropriate housing	33%	19%	26%	17%	4%	+31% (+51%)	72
They will return when the time is right for them	17%	29%	40%	10%	4%	+32% (+16%)	72
They will return when the opportunities elsewhere do not live up to their expectations	6%	19%	33%	28%	14%	-17% (-6%)	72
They do not value the opportunities that are available locally	6%	17%	16%	37%	24%	-38% (-40%)	70

**Figure 19: Attitudes to Young People that Leave the Local area (figures represent net agreement)**



Although there are some variations in the numbers quoted here, the overall pattern of responses in relation to this question is broadly similar to that from the young person’s survey. Whilst there is a view that people leave to “broaden their life experience” there is also a very common view that it is necessary to do so for a mixture of educational and employment opportunities and to “get on in life”.

<sup>11</sup> Comparative figures from young person’s survey in brackets.



As with the young person’s survey there is a majority view that people can need to leave to access appropriate housing, with 52% of the former residents indicating this to be so.

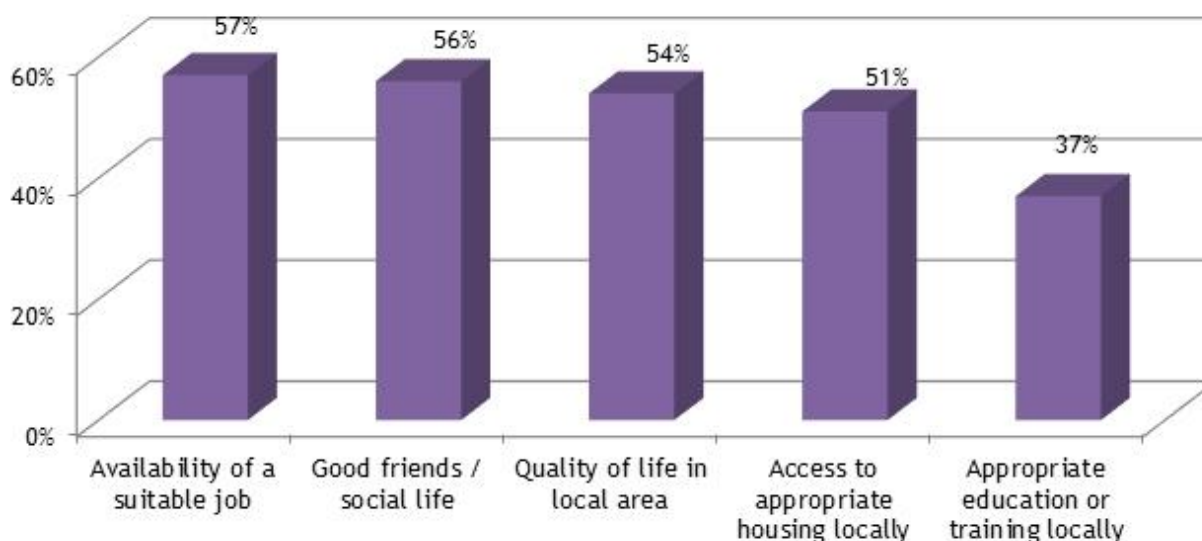
Former residents are slightly more likely to say that people will return when the time is right for them but are even less likely than respondents to the young person’s survey to consider that this will be due to opportunities elsewhere not living up to expectations. They are also very likely to disagree that people that leave do so as they do not value the opportunities that are available locally.

Respondents were then asked about the extent to which a number of things would motivate them to move back to the Scottish Borders in the future. The results are tabulated over the page.

**Table 21: To what extent would you say that each of the following things would motivate you to continue to move back to the Scottish Borders in the future?**

Factor	Not at all	To some extent	To a significant extent	Base
The availability of a suitable job	11%	32%	57%	72
Having good friends / social life	10%	35%	56%	72
The quality of life in the local area	8%	38%	54%	72
Access to appropriate housing locally	13%	37%	51%	71
The availability of appropriate education or training locally	24%	39%	37%	71

**Figure 20: Motivators to Continue to Live in the Scottish Borders (figures represent those saying this is a motivator “to a significant extent”)**



Education is less of a motivator here (many people having moved away from the Scottish Borders in pursuit of educational opportunities in any case). There is no single stand out issue here with each of the issues (jobs, friends / social life, quality of life generally, housing) being seen as a motivator “to a significant extent” by between 51% and 57% of respondents.

Respondents were significantly less likely than those taking part in the young person’s survey believe that the Scottish Borders was a better place to live now than it was five years ago; only 32% of respondents overall agreed that it was compared to 39% that disagreed (with the balance giving a “don’t know” response).

There was slightly greater optimism about the area, however, with 36% of respondents overall indicating that they think the Scottish Borders will be a better place to live in five years' time compared to 24% indicating that it will not (again, the balance being "don't know" responses). This result still shows considerably less optimism amongst this group than amongst the respondents to the young person's survey.

## 2.4 Housing Issues

Turning now to housing issues specifically, respondents to the Former residents Survey were asked about the extent to which the availability or lack of availability of appropriate housing was part of the reason why they moved away from the Scottish Borders when they did. It was clear from these responses that housing issues were at least part of the reason for moving away amongst a significant proportion of respondents, with 21% saying it was a reason to some extent, a further 18% saying it was a major factor and a further 7% saying that it was the main reason.

Respondents were then asked about the type of home they would expect to move into were they ever to return to the Scottish Borders and these results are tabulated below.

**Table 22: Were you ever to return to the Scottish Borders, what type of home would you expect to move into?**

Area	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
Parental / family home	19%	0%	0%
Private rented flat or house	19%	26%	6%
Council / Housing Association flat or house	17%	13%	9%
Privately owned flat	7%	13%	6%
Privately owned house	26%	49%	80%
Other (including shared accommodation and student accommodation)	13%	0%	0%
<b>Base</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>35</b>

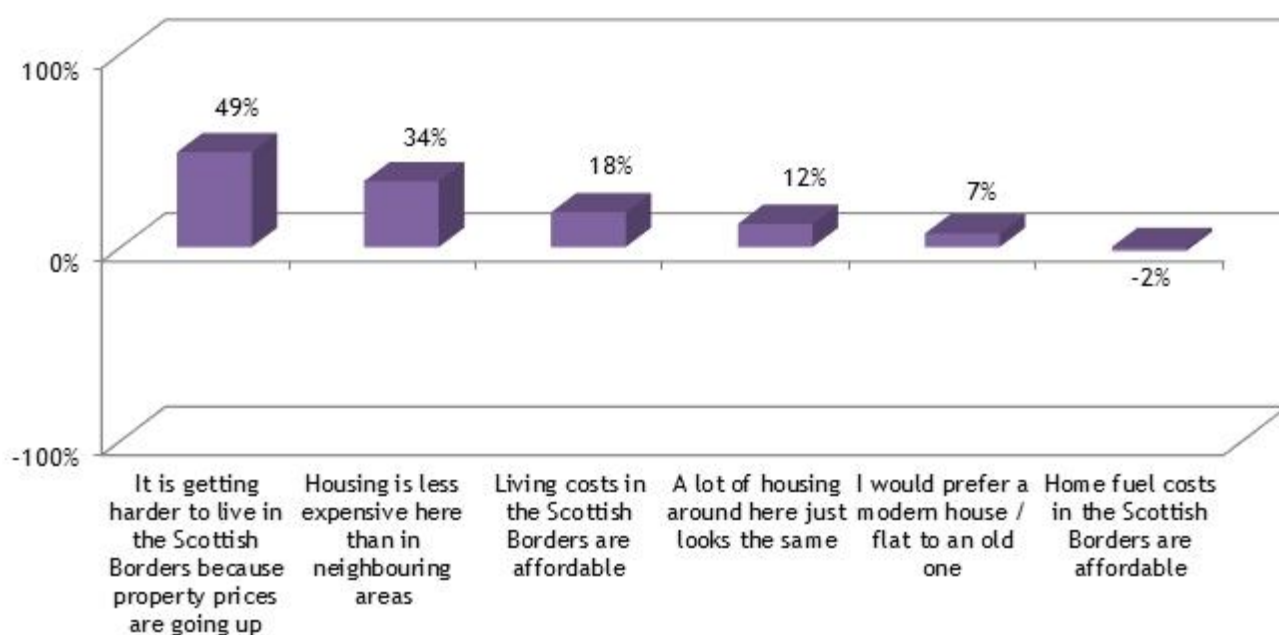
Overwhelmingly, people returning to the area would be seeking to buy their own home (86%) with this usually being a house (80% of the total). A small proportion would seek to move back either to a private rented flat or house or to the social rented sector.

At this point in the survey, respondents were asked about their agreement or disagreement with a number of statements about housing in the Scottish Borders and the overall results in relation to these attitudinal statements are tabulated over the page.

**Table 23: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding housing in the Scottish Borders?**

Statement	Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Net Agreement <sup>12</sup>	Base
Living costs in the Scottish Borders are affordable	18%	38%	17%	21%	7%	+18% (+44%)	72
Home fuel costs in the Scottish Borders are affordable	4%	22%	46%	17%	11%	-2% (+17%)	72
There is a good choice of appropriate housing buy in the Scottish Borders	4%	28%	25%	26%	17%	-11% (-45%)	72
I would prefer a modern house / flat to an old one	21%	22%	21%	25%	11%	+7% (+49%)	72
Housing is less expensive here than in neighbouring areas	19%	39%	18%	17%	7%	+34% (+48%)	72
It is getting harder to live in the Scottish Borders because property prices are going up	27%	35%	25%	6%	7%	+49% (+28%)	72
A lot of housing around here just looks the same	13%	24%	39%	19%	6%	+12% (-30%)	72

**Figure 21: Wider Attitudes to Housing Issues (figures represent net agreement)**



A majority of respondents considered living costs in the Scottish borders to be affordable generally although they were less likely to consider home fuel costs to be affordable.

A majority of these respondents disagreed that there is a good choice of appropriate housing to buy in the Scottish Borders although the extent of this view is less apparent than in the young person's survey. These respondents were also quite likely to recognise housing to be less expensive here than

<sup>12</sup> Figures in brackets are from the most comparable question in the young person's survey.

in neighbouring areas but were particularly likely to recognise that it was getting more difficult to live in the Scottish Borders because of rises in property prices.

Opinions amongst this group were fairly divided as to the preference for a new flat / house over an old one and they were quite likely to consider that a lot of the housing around here looked the same. Comparatively few respondents took up the option to make further comments about housing in the Scottish Borders; these comments are listed in full in the supporting information. The comments that were made related, in general terms to the availability of affordable housing for purchase and for social rent. Whilst recognising that housing costs may be lower in the area, some respondents observed that this advantage was outweighed by wages being lower in the area and / or people having to incur significant transport costs to access jobs in other areas.

## 2.5 The Scottish Borders in the Future

As with the young person's survey, respondents to the Former residents Survey were asked to rate the importance of a number of attributes of life in the Scottish Borders. These results are tabulated over the page.

**Table 24: I am going to show you a list of things to do with the Scottish Borders as a place to work, live and study. Firstly I would like you to tell me how important or unimportant you would consider each of these things to be.**

Attribute	Very Important	Quite Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Quite Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Total Rating as Important	Base
Opportunities for career progression	75%	24%	0%	0%	1%	99%	72
Availability of high quality jobs	83%	14%	1%	0%	1%	97%	72
Affordable transport links	78%	17%	3%	1%	1%	95%	72
Good access to housing	71%	22%	6%	0%	1%	93%	72
Availability of recreational / social opportunities	53%	39%	6%	3%	0%	92%	72
Good access to Further / Higher Education	57%	33%	6%	1%	3%	90%	72
Access to the outdoor environment	49%	39%	10%	1%	1%	88%	72
Mobile connectivity	45%	42%	10%	1%	15	87%	71
Having lots of things to do in the local community	46%	39%	10%	4%	1%	85%	72
Lower cost of living	57%	28%	11%	1%	3%	85%	72
Digital connectivity	49%	32%	175	1%	1%	81%	72
Opportunities for postgraduate education	43%	35%	14%	7%	1%	78%	72
Availability of childcare	49%	26%	13%	6%	7%	75%	72

As in the young person's survey, a high level of apparent importance ascribed to each of these elements with availability of high quality jobs (83%), affordable transport links (78%), opportunities

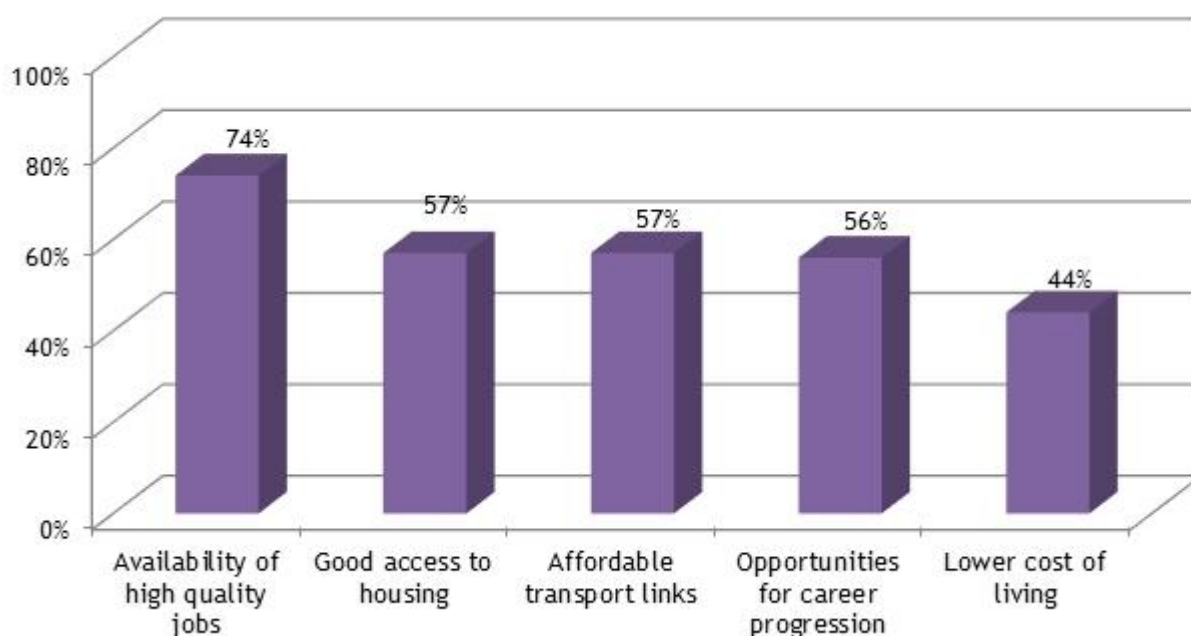
for career progression (75%) and good access to housing (971%) being particularly likely to be seen as “very” important.

To gain further insight into the relative importance ascribed to each of these elements, respondents were asked to choose up to five of these things that they considered to be most appropriate. The frequency with which each element was chosen is tabulated below.

**Table 25: Now, looking at the same list, please choose up to five of these things that you would say were most important in making the Scottish Borders a good place to live, work or study.**

Attribute	Proportion of Sample Selection in Top 5 Most Important
Availability of high quality jobs	74%
Good access to housing	57%
Affordable transport links	57%
Opportunities for career progression	56%
Lower cost of living	44%
Access to the outdoor environment	34%
Good access to Further / Higher Education	29%
Availability of childcare	29%
Availability of recreational / social opportunities	27%
Digital connectivity	24%
Having lots of things to do in the local community	23%
Mobile connectivity	16%
Opportunities for postgraduate education	11%
<b>Base</b>	<b>70</b>

**Figure 22: Most Important Factors for Young People (placed in Top 5)**



These figures confirm the particular importance amongst former residents of the availability of high quality jobs (with good opportunities for career progression), good access to housing and affordable transport links in making the Scottish borders a good place to live, work or study.

### 3. Depth Interviews

#### 3.1 Background

The programme of depth interviews was designed to provide further insight into a number of emerging issues and to provide an informal “test” in relation to existing and potential interventions. The interviews were conducted by telephone by IBP’s consultant team and allowed for a more in-depth and exploratory conversation, typically lasting in the duration of 30-40 minutes. The key themes explored were as follows:

- Exploration of the factors that might motivate people to wish to, and be able to, stay in the Scottish Borders in order to fulfil their potential.
- More detailed exploration of specific housing issues for young people within the Scottish Borders including future aspirations and their achievability, having regard to perceived affordability.
- Exploration of the interest in a range of emerging options to best ensure that the housing needs of young people are met.

Interviews were selected from participants in the quantitative survey that had indicated a willingness to take part in future research and a £20 incentive (in the form of High Street Shopping Vouchers) was made available to participants. 30 follow-up interviews were targeted and this number of interviews were arranged but due to repeated “no shows” on the part of participants, a total of 20 interviews could be achieved within the time available.

A significant proportion of the interviews were with young people living in the Galashiels / Melrose / Selkirk area (10 interviews) but with a spread of interviews with people from Hawick / Jedburgh / Kelso (6 interviews), Duns / Eyemouth (2 interviews) and Peebles (2 interviews). 12 of the interviewees were female and 8 male. The majority of interviewees were working (13) but with 4 in education and 3 carrying out caring or home making responsibilities. A spread of current housing circumstances was apparent, with 8 people living currently with their parents, 2 in the private rented sector, 5 in the social rented sector and 5 being homeowners (including one that lived with their partner, who was the home owner). Interviewees were evenly divided between single individuals and people in a relationship.

This range of circumstances allowed us to approach the issues from a variety of perspectives. A commentary on the findings of these depth interviews follows, broken down into the three themes noted above.

#### 3.2 Motivations for Staying in the Borders

The following question was posed to interviewees:

*“In general, what do you think would have to be different from now, about the Scottish Borders, to encourage more people to want to, and be able to, stay in the area to fulfil their potential?”*

Where appropriate, respondents were prompted in relation to each of jobs, education, transport links and social factors.

**Employment opportunities** are clearly a significant factor in young people’s motivation (or otherwise) to remain in the Scottish Borders. However, it is important to recognize that this is not only about “raw” measures of employment but that issues relating to quality of job, future job prospects and job security are a significant concern to many:

*“It is only Call Centre jobs that are available”*

*“There are not enough well paid jobs to be able to rent and, at the same time, save for a deposit for your own home.”*

*“The jobs that are advertised usually require experience; there are no apprenticeships for young people.”*

*“There are no career prospects in Galashiels. I know people with lots of little jobs to make ends meet but they would have to go to Edinburgh for a proper career.”*

*“When you want to move up and get to the next level then you have to go elsewhere for better opportunities.”*

*“Job security is a massive issue for me. Our factory is foreign owned and if they closed down lots of people would be out of work and I would have pretty few job options.”*

In addition, despite recent investment in the public transport infrastructure (especially trains) the option to commute was not always seen as practical (even from those settlements closer to the substantial job markets of Edinburgh or Glasgow). Perceptions of reliability were a factor in this:

*“The train is just not reliable; there is a one in three chance that it will be late or cancelled.”*

For people with jobs (or potential jobs) elsewhere there was a common feeling that the additional travel costs (and associated time and hassle) outweighed the benefit of lower housing costs in the Scottish Borders (though it is worth noting that this was more of a feeling than something that young people had considered in purely objective and rational terms).

Often, the “clincher” in terms of setting young people’s aspirations was the view that the **social opportunities** and life for young people (especially those at the younger end of the age range) were much more significant elsewhere:

*“I would rather just go to Edinburgh. There’s nothing interesting here. It’s a bit fuddy duddy and more aimed at the older generation.”*

For those remaining in the Scottish borders, public transport in order to move around within the area was seen as both inconvenient and expensive by a number of interviewees:

*“You need a car to get around. I have a 15 mile journey to work but I couldn’t get there on time by bus and the costs are high. It is £3 plus for a one way journey from Melrose to Galashiels.”*

Whether directly or indirectly (because of the need to have and run a car) this issue impacted on some interviewees’ ability to accumulate savings that could go towards their housing costs in the future.

Young people leaving the area **to attend University** was recognised as often being a key turning point in their lives:

*“Young people don’t stay here as they go to Uni in Edinburgh and Glasgow and do not return.”*

For those living in certain parts of the area, practical access to post-school education was a particular issue:

*“The College here is good but it is just the problem of getting there because the Borders is such a big area and it takes people more than an hour to get there. There is a college in Hawick I think but it is pretty small and doesn’t have many classes.”*

More generally, for a number of interviewees, it was felt that local post-school **educational provision** was relatively narrow and did not provide them with the breadth and depth of opportunities that they felt were needed to get on in life:

*“There is a limited offering at the College.....it’s okay if you want to be a baker or a beauty therapist but not if you want to study things like graphic design at a good level.”*

*“You can go to College in the Scottish Borders, and I would like to, but if they don’t have the right opportunities at the right level I will have to go elsewhere. Edinburgh has more and better options.”*

It was interesting to note, however, that participants that were more settled (and especially those that had a family) sometimes had a different perspective:

*“From my perspective, just having had a baby and meeting with other young families, this location is ideal. Property is cheaper than Edinburgh, transport links are good and the schools have a very good reputation”.*

*“The social life is good here. We tend to go mountain biking and to socialize with that group of friends. There are pubs and restaurants and Peebles is fairly close by so overall I would say that life is pretty good.”*

The difference in immediate lifestyle aspirations (and the extent to which they could be met) was very clear between those interviewees in their teens or early 20s and those in their late twenties or early thirties, this being particularly so in relation to desires for a social life:

*“For young families having a few local pubs and restaurants is fine but for young single people there is not a lot to do”.*

Overall, these discussions highlighted a range of inter-related barriers to people fulfilling their potential in relation to perceptions of the quality of jobs (having regard to issues such as the potential for career progression) and (especially amongst younger people) the range of social opportunities available in different parts of the Scottish Borders. The rural nature of the area and its diffuse population potentially creates difficulties of accessibility and the range of services that can be provided (for example in relation to education) which creates a sense of opportunities as being more limited in the area than in larger settlements nearby.

However, there is a clear distinction between the views of younger people and slightly older (and often more settled people) in their late twenties and early thirties who place a significantly greater value on different aspects of the quality of life that the Scottish Borders can offer.

### 3.3 Specific Housing Issues

The following question was put to interviewees:

*“Were you to stay in the Borders, ideally, how would you like to see your housing situation develop over the short term (say 1 year), the medium term (say 3 years) and the long term (say 10 years)?”*



Where appropriate, we probed further into issues relating to tenure, type of property and location.

Reflecting the findings of the overall survey, there was a **strong preference towards (eventual) home ownership** amongst most interviewees. Taking the cohort of younger people, typically living with their parents currently, the broad path they saw for themselves (whether living within the Scottish Borders or elsewhere) had the following broad path:

- Typically, to remain with parents for a period of time (with there being some sense that people were staying an increasingly long time with their parents)
- To rent a property at some stage (with the desire for this being much more commonly “a small house” rather than a flat.
- To potentially buy in the future (though, especially for people in their late teens and early twenties, this was sometimes seen as a relatively distant aspiration).

Those interviewees living in the social rented sector currently included a mix of people who were well settled and happy where they were but also a number of people that had an aspiration towards home ownership; this was largely driven by whether or not individuals were currently economically active. There was a common theme of there being a **lack of housing generally**, this being articulated both by people that saw a need for more homes to buy and by those that saw a need for more social rented housing.

**Being able to save for a deposit** was the challenge identified by most of the people that we interviewed (and it was rare that interviewees were anticipating receipt of inherited wealth within the timescale that was of relevance to them):

*“I am 29 now and the thing for me is to be able to save for a deposit and that’s why I moved back with my parents. Over the medium term I would aim to buy my own property.”*

In these interviews, there was a strong preference (at least over the medium to long term) for people to be able to live in houses rather than flats:

*“I don’t like the notion of a flat – you seem to get a lot of neighbor trouble. I would prefer a house, even if it’s a small one, as it gives you a bit more privacy.”*

*“A three bedroom semi would be my dream.”*

This appeared to be a strong preference across many of those that expressed a view on it and may be a reflection of what people see in their local community, which helps to set their own aspirations.

Some participants expressed a desire for edge of town development rather than for more intense, flatted developments in towns:

*“They should be building on land on the edge of towns where it is quieter but you can still walk into the town.”*

We did not come across any evidence of concerns over encroachment of green belt land although it should be stressed that interviewees were not prompted to comment on this.

The general distinction between younger and older interviewees was also apparent in relation to aspirations to move away from their current home. Amongst the younger group, there was a reasonably common desire to move away from the Scottish Borders. The motivation for this would

be perceptions of the social opportunities for young people rather than relating to housing issues in a very direct sense (with people rarely having considered relative housing costs in different areas in any great detail). However, amongst slightly older people (and those younger people that wished to stay in the Scottish Borders) the desire was almost always to remain within their existing settlement. However, the **prosperity and vibrancy of individual settlements**, and especially their high streets, was clearly an issue in terms of specific locational aspirations:

*“Gala was lovely but it has been let go a bit. It seems like there is another recession on the horizon and it’s like nothing is moving forward, everything is closing.”*

For those aspiring to home ownership it is increasingly seen as a long-term aspiration and, in some cases, not something that people see as attainable due to issues of **affordability**:

*“A lot of my friends are not bothering to save anymore because they know home ownership is unattainable.”*

Some participants commented to the effect that there was a growing “buy to rent” market which they saw in negative terms, as increasing both the price of private rented properties (which they may have as a medium term need) and the cost of properties overall (more of a long-term aspiration):

*“It is difficult for people to save for a mortgage because rents are so high.”*

There were a number of observations (more commonly from slightly older and more settled people) that there could be achievable options for young people to buy:

*“In the area where I am, I managed to buy my first flat for £45,000. There is definitely property in this area to buy that is much more achievable than the likes of Edinburgh.”*

Such comments are of relevance both to young people’s awareness of what is available and to the realism of their expectations.

Our investigations revealed **highly varying perceptions as to the cost of homes** to rent and / or buy. For example, taking only those respondents from the Galashiels area that were able to provide an answer to the questions we put:

- The perceived monthly cost to rent a 1-bedroom Housing Association flat varied between £175 and £450, with an average figure of £321.
- The perceived monthly cost to rent a 1-bedroom flat in the private rented sector varied between £275 and £500, with an average figure of £393.
- The perceived cost to purchase a typical 2-bedroom starter flat varied from £50,000 to £125,000, with an average figure of £93,000 (and it should be noted that 4 of the 10 interviewees from this area could not comment on this).

There were also very significant variations in the proportion of their net monthly income that interviewees felt they could reasonably spend on either rent or mortgage.

One point to note in this regard is that there were examples of some younger interviewees, in each case living with their parents currently, who indicated that they felt they could spend a substantial proportion of their net monthly income on rent or mortgage (for example, one interviewee with net monthly income of £1,300 felt they could reasonably afford £600 (46%) and another, earning £800 per month felt they could reasonably afford £400 (50%)).

Amongst others, however, and especially those that had already taken on responsibilities of their own (including housing but also other costs such as vehicle costs or, more generally, family responsibilities) the proportion of net household income that people felt they could allocate to rent or mortgage costs was significantly lower. Amongst a further 10 respondents that felt able to answer this question, the average net monthly income figure given was £1,930 and the average amount they felt they could spend on rent or mortgage was £485 (25%).

These figures are clearly based on a small sample, and there is considerable variation between the figures quoted by individual respondents but the figures do highlight that most interviewees were willing to spend only in the region of 20-25% of their net household income on rent or mortgage, which (based on the current average earnings figures cited by interviewees) would place a limit on what they might be able to afford (in whatever sector of the market).

### 3.4 Different Housing Options for the Future

This section of the interview allowed for exploration of a number of potential options and alternatives that either exist currently or could be developed or explored in the future. These options are listed in turn below, along with a commentary on the feedback provided for each option and an overall summation of this feedback.

**Mid-market rent (this refers to rental properties that are somewhere between the cost of private rent and rent from a Housing Association). They are often managed by a Housing Association but targeted at people in work. Can you see this being of interest to you, now or in the future?**

Some interviewees that provided a view on mid-market rent were generally positive and saw particular benefits in it:

*“This would be good if it gave you a bit more security. Part of the problem with private renting is that they can give you short notice.”*

However, people would generally compare any mid-market rental offer to the offer in the private rented sector and so support would be conditional on the detail of what was offered:

*“It is maybe something that I would look at in the future but it would depend on the property and on the price.”*

*“This is fine in principle but the price would need to be right.”*

In general terms, therefore, people were open to the idea of mid-market rent but were somewhat ambivalent about it. It would be fair to say that the concept was not one that people always understood clearly and its benefits and relative costs would need to be articulated clearly.

**A “matching service” to help young people share properties with others rather than having a tenancy themselves; this could be private rented or Housing Association properties. This would give people someone to share with and potentially make housing costs more affordable. How attractive do you think this might be to you, either now or in the future?**

It was clear from a number of our interviews that the prevalence of sharing properties amongst friends was not as common as in cities (albeit not unheard of):

*“There is not a lot of flat sharing here. It seems to be more of a city thing.”*

Some people saw this option in positive terms as giving some young people an option that they did not have previously:

*"I could see this being a good thing for people if they find it hard to find someone to share with."*

However, it was seen as being a short term approach for most people:

*"People prefer to have their own home. This is really just a short-term thing, like for people that are studying."*

A key issue here would be the extent to which young people choose (and are able) to stay in the parental home for longer, often with the aim of building a deposit for their own home, as opposed to incurring costs in renting a flat (even if those costs are kept to a minimum by being shared with other people).

**A "lodgings" scheme where a homeowner lets out a bedroom for a young person and the rent includes other costs (such as, in some cases, meals). Is this something you can see as being of interest, now or in the future? Interviewer, explore for the most appropriate locations for this type of scheme.**

There was considerable skepticism about this concept amongst the people that we interviewed:

*"I would have zero interest in this. You would have no privacy and would be as well staying with your parents."*

*"To be honest, you would want to know the person you were moving in with."*

*"I think people would be in and out of places like this; I don't think it is something people would stick with."*

Worries about issues of independence and privacy were very common in interviewees' reaction to this concept and it will be important to clearly identify the specific nature and scope of any need and demand that may exist for this.

**Shared ownership / shared equity. This is where you get a mortgage for part of a home and pay rent for the remainder (usually at a subsidised "social rent"). Over time, you are usually able to buy a greater share of the home, when you can afford it. Is this something you can see as being of interest, now or in the future?**

A range of views were apparent about shared ownership / shared equity schemes. For a number of people, they recognised it as potentially a significant opportunity for them to get onto the housing ladder:

*"This could be a good option for me in the future. My wages are not the highest but if it can keep costs down it might help me to get my own home. It would be slower but maybe more realistic."*

*"This sounds like a good idea to me. I'm also pursuing a "help to buy" scheme through my bank."*

*"We had shared ownership before. We bought 70% and it helped us get on the property ladder. In principle, the scheme was good."*

Others were considerably more skeptical, with the concerns often relating to the practicality of the arrangements:

*"I would rather do one thing or the other. If I decided I wanted to own a property I would want to invest as much in it as I possibly could. I wouldn't want half of it going on rent."*

*"What happens if you want to enhance the property? You wouldn't get all the benefit."*

*"My dad's partner had something like this and bought 25% of the house but it was quite hard to sell part of a house when she came to do so."*

*"This sounds like a complete mess."*

In general, shared ownership / shared equity does have the potential to be of value to a number of young people in the Scottish borders but the devil would be in the detail in terms of what would be offered and at what cost (and, thus, the extent to which it would contribute towards those young people's aspirations towards home ownership and the sort of home they would like). The content of some of our discussions suggested that the rights and responsibilities of shared ownership / shared equity may not be fully understood and would need to be articulated clearly.

**Some young people have the opportunity to live in 'transition flats' before moving into their own permanent home. This is where they may learn about keeping a home, cooking and budgeting. What do you think about this idea and is it something you could see yourself being interested in?**

In no instances did interviewees see this concept as being "for them". Some did, however, see it as having a relevance to certain young people in specific circumstances:

*"A very good idea for young people who have been in care."*

*"I think this is a good idea for vulnerable young people."*

*"Something like this should only be for people who are vulnerable or have learning difficulties."*

Others were significantly more sceptical:

*"These skills should be taught at home and in schools"*

*"Surely it is parents that should prepare young people for moving into their own place?"*

*"I could see that this could make life easier for some young people but it might be better to throw them in at the deep end."*

*"This wouldn't be for me; I would rather just go out on my own."*

In general, this would be seen as a specific offering for a relatively narrowly defined group of people who may not have formed part of the depth interview sample.