

Alnwick

Borderlands Place Programme Board

Meeting Report

12th January 2022

10:30 – 12:00

St James' Centre, Alnwick

Attendees

Board Members	Organisation
Tony Kirsop (Chair)	Northumberland County Council
Cllr Gordon Castle	Northumberland County Council
Cllr Martin Philip Swinbank	Northumberland County Council
Cllr Lynda Wearn	Alnwick Town Council
Jeni Storey	Northumberland Estates
Lisa Aynsley	Alnwick Chamber of Trade
Mark Brassell	Alnwick Garden
Peter Reed	Alnwick Civic Society
Jean Humphrys	Baliffgate Museum
Officers	Role
Anne Lawson (Lead)	Senior Programme Officer (Town Regeneration)
Chris Walker	Community Regeneration Officer
Iain Hedley	Community Regeneration Officer

Apologies

Board Member	Organisation
Cllr Martin Harrington	Alnwick Town Council
(Zoey Hawthorne)	Karbon Homes
(Sue Patience)	Gallery Youth
(Marianne Whitfield)	MSP



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Governance

The following documents have been circulated amongst board members and have been placed on the publicly available [Borderlands Place Programme webpage](#) for the town, they are also attached as appendices to this report.

- Governance and Terms of Reference - see appendix 1
- Code of Conduct - see appendix 2
- Pen Portraits – see appendix 3

Declaration of Interests have been completed by each board member and are held at NCC.

The board may refer to NCC Policies, links to these are available on the Place Programme webpage for the town.

- Whistle blowing
- GDPR
- Complaints



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Briefing on the Place Programme

Growth Deal commitment

Through the Borderlands Place Programme, we will target investment in places that will help boost economic activity across the region. Recognising the importance of our smaller rural market and coastal towns to the local economy, this programme will provide £50million of funding across the Borderlands area with UK Government committing up to £30 million in Cumbria and Northumberland and Scottish Government £20 million in the South of Scotland to support the revitalisation of towns across the Borderlands region, subject to full business case approval. A series of Place Plans will be developed for the region's priority towns and town centres. Towns will only enter the Place Programme should their Place Plan contain projects eligible for Borderlands investment.

Borderlands Approach to Economic Recovery

- Help to re-start local economies and towns as they emerge from the pandemic, focusing on repurposing towns and town centres and safeguarding and retaining as much as possible of the current business, employment, and population base.
- Supporting towns to return to pre Covid-19 levels of activity by investing to increase footfall and spending in town centres, improve the attractiveness of towns, and encourage visitors to return.
- As towns complete the recovery phase, the focus will shift over time towards delivering long-term inclusive and sustainable economic growth, increasing employment, growing businesses, and boosting wealth and productivity. This will include investing in infrastructure for growth, such as new industrial and commercial developments, housing, transport infrastructure, and visitor attractions.
- The investment approach will vary between towns, depending on how each place has been impacted by Covid-19, and the types and scale of intervention needed to support their recovery, resilience and return to growth.

Supported Capital Interventions

The Place Programme will support a range of capital interventions targeted at enhancing the economic infrastructure needed to ensure the sustainability and growth of our towns. This includes:

- Purchase and assembly of land and buildings.
- Remediation of vacant and derelict sites.

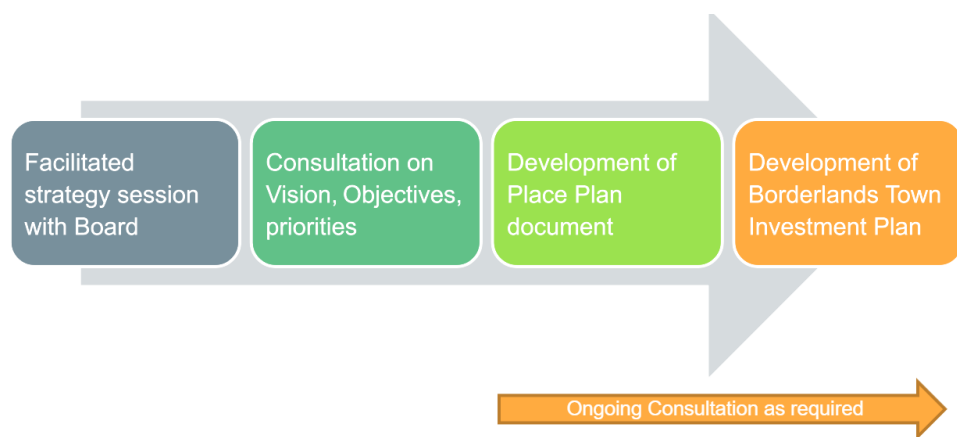


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- Property development and enhancement, including schemes to encourage private, public and third sector investment in improving buildings, re-modelling business premises, and conversion of buildings to new uses to support the repurposing of towns (e.g. residential, leisure, community uses).
- Development of arts and cultural, visitor economy, community, and skills and education facilities.
- Enhancement of shop, business and commercial public facing fronts.
- Development of the upper floors of buildings for affordable housing and other uses.

Place Programme Development

The Place Programme in the town will take the following path during its development, supported by NCC officers at each stage. The programme is a ten year program to 2031 and there is no pre-prescribed timeline for each stage.





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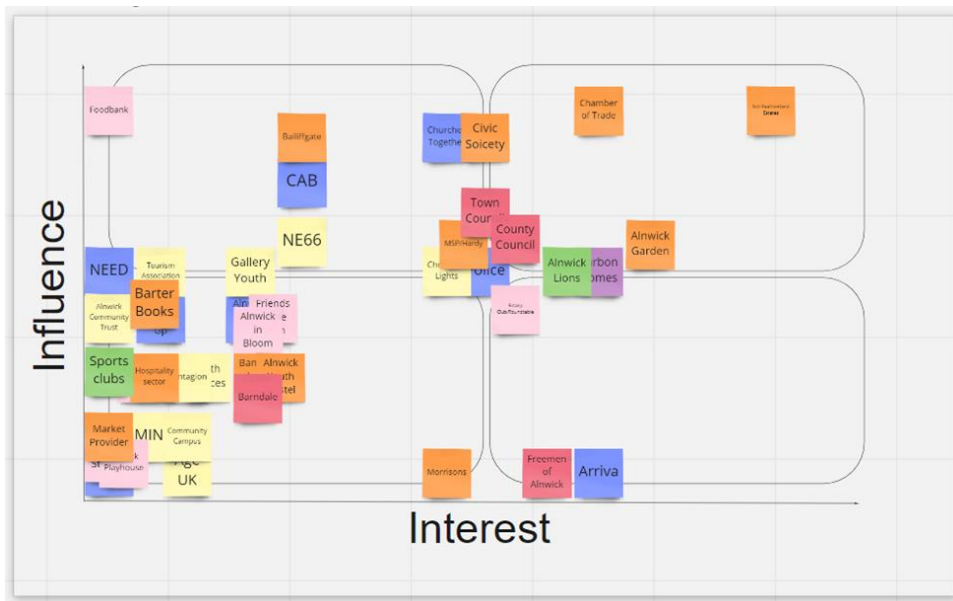
Stakeholder Mapping and Board Development

A stakeholder mapping event was held on the 17th November 2021 with elected members. The results are shown below with summary analysis provided to understand those stakeholders with significant influence and interest in the future of the town

Named by one group	Named by both groups
Northumberland Estates	Chamber of Trade
Town Council	Alnwick Garden
County Council	Karbon
Christmas lights	Civic Society
Friends of the Earth	Alnwick Lions
Alnwick in bloom	Bailiffgate
Banks & legal reps	Churches Together
Alnwick Youth Hostel	Rotary Club & Roundtable
	Police
	NE66
	Citizen's Advice Bureau
	Major Employers (MSP/Hardy's etc)
	Gallery Youth



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From the above mapping activity, the accountable body; NCC, identified those organisations it felt were eligible and appropriate to participate in the Borderlands Place Programme Board. NCC elected Members were invited directly, Town and Parish Councils and other local stakeholders were invited to nominate suitable named representatives.

All organisations identified in the stakeholder mapping activity will be invited to participate in consultation and engagement activities as the programme progresses.

The stakeholder mapping and subsequent review process has resulted in the following Borderlands Place Programme Board:

Board Member (Name)	Board Member (Organisation)
Tony Kirsop (Chair)	NCC
Cllr Gordon Castle	NCC Councillor
Cllr Martin Swinbank	NCC Councillor
Cllr Martin Harrington	ATC Councillor
Cllr Lynda Wearn	ATC Councillor
Jeni Storey	Northumberland Estates



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Lisa Aynsely	Alnwick Chamber of Trade
Mark Brassell	Alnwick Garden
Peter Reed	Alnwick Civic Society
Jean Humphrys	Baliffgate Museum
	Karbon Homes
	Gallery Youth
	MSP

The board will be supported by the following officer group:

Officer	Role
Anne Lawson (Lead)	Senior Programme Officer (Town Regeneration)
Chris Walker	Community Regeneration Officer
Iain Hedley	Community Regeneration Officer



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Vision for the Town

The board was asked to consider the elements that might be incorporated into a Borderlands Place Plan Vision for the town. They were reminded of the Borderlands overall programme core principles when they did this:

The five core principles that underpin the Place Programme:

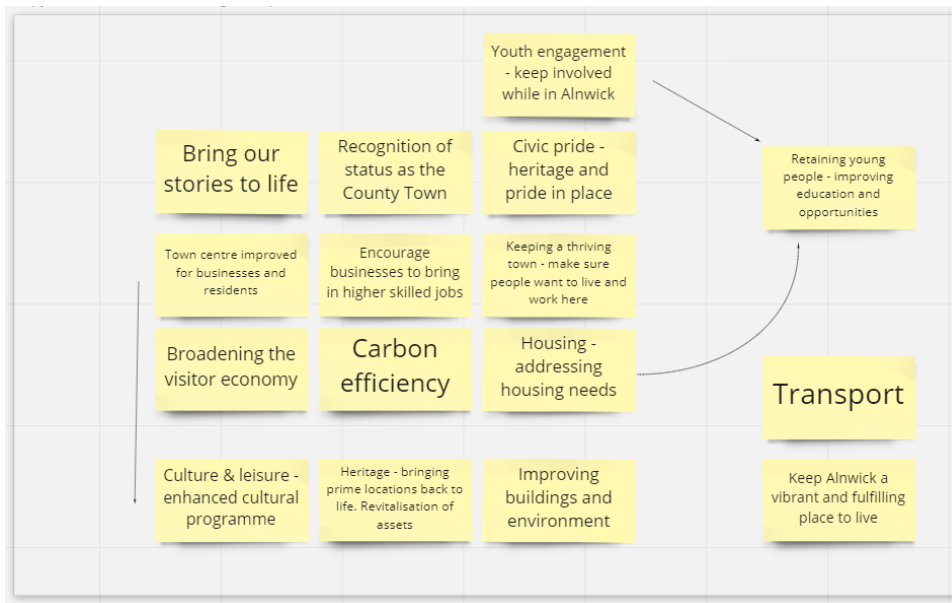
- **Place-based:** Assessing investment needs and solutions for each place on its own terms: what the place wants to be in the future, what it needs, and what it offers.
- **Collective:** Looking at the contribution of each part to the whole: the added value to the place, the area, the region, and the country.
- **Systemic:** Bringing public, private, third sector, and community assets together as part of a single, integrated system supporting communities, services and the economy.
- **Community-led:** Putting communities at the heart of decisions about the solutions that the Place Programme brings to the challenges facing their towns and town centres.
- **Prevention and future proofing:** Investment and action directed towards preventing further deterioration in our towns and town centres.

The group used flip charts in breakout groups to brainstorm ideas. These are shown below:

Group 1 - Martin, Jean, Lynda, Jeni & Tony



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- Bringing our stories to life
- Town centre improved for businesses and residents
- Broadening the visitor economy
- Culture & leisure - enhanced cultural programme
- Recognition and celebration of status as the County Town
- Encourage businesses to bring in higher skilled jobs
- Carbon efficiency
- Heritage - bringing prime locations back to life. Revitalisation of assets
- Youth engagement - keep involved while in Alnwick, and:
 - Retaining young people - improving education and opportunities
 - Civic pride - heritage and pride in place
 - Keeping a thriving town - making sure people want to live and work here
- Housing - addressing housing needs
- Improving buildings and environment
- Transport provision
- Keeping Alnwick a vibrant and fulfilling place to live

Group 2 - Gordon, Pete, Lisa & Mark



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- Breaking seasonality
- Affordable housing - particularly for young people
- Put the economy first
- Encourage growth of hi-tech industry
- Economically - seasonal - break the seasonality chain
- Evening economy
- Respecting heritage assets and the residents living in the town
- Encouraging people to live in the town centre
- Working from home economy, hi tech and industrial parks
- Heritage – conserve
- Retention of young people
- Capacity of transport network - highways infrastructure limited, alternative - buses and trains
- Recognition of the number of holiday lets and find winter activities to smooth out economic impact across the year.
- Recognise that tourism is fundamental to economy as agriculture economy declines



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The NCC Officer group used these ideas to draft the following proposed Borderlands Place Programme Vision for the town. This will be reviewed, and a draft vision confirmed at the next board meeting, ahead of community consultation.

Proposed Alnwick Borderlands Place Programme Vision

“Balancing a wonderful place to live and work with a fantastic experience for visitors”

Recognising the importance of the tourism industry to the economic prosperity of Alnwick, the Borderlands Board will strive to develop this industry by reducing seasonality, recognising and celebrating the town's heritage and assets and respecting its residents. It will encourage the adoption of technology to ensure inclusivity. Working to support young people and ensure that they have a sustainable future in Alnwick, the board will look to develop opportunities in employment, skills, housing and leisure. Working with industrial partners, the board will recognise the importance of low carbon and advanced technology as a growth driver for the economic and environmental sustainability of the town.



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Alnwick Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives

The board were asked to consider the overall Borderlands Place Programme. The Programme has seven investment objectives, focused on addressing regionally identified challenges and opportunities:

- **SO1:** Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in.
- **SO2:** Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres.
- **SO3:** Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in our towns and town centres.
- **SO4:** Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation.
- **SO5:** Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres.
- **SO6:** Retain and increase the working age population in towns.
- **SO7:** Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in our towns and town centres.

The board were asked to identify at least **four** of the above that could be tailored to suit the needs of the local community in their view.

The following draft strategic objectives for the Borderlands Place Programme in the town were identified, for further consideration by the board and in community consultation.

Proposed **Alnwick** Borderlands Place Programme Strategic Objectives

1. Safeguard Alnwick's existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation.
2. Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Alnwick, decreasing the seasonal nature of tourism in the town.
3. Retain our young people and increase the working age population in Alnwick.



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4. Maintain and raise the quality of the physical environment in Alnwick town centre.

The above Strategic Objectives will be underpinned throughout, by the use of the methodology implied by **SO1**: Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in.



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Appendix 1 Governance and Terms of Reference

[Webpage link](#)



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Appendix 2 Code of Conduct

[Webpage link](#)



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Appendix 3 Pen Portraits

[Webpage link](#)