

Community Led Tourism

Imagining New Futures Together

“PRESS PAUSE”

SELKIRK & TD7

Report and Recommendations

April 2024

BE LOCAL

SCOTO
Scottish Community Tourism



This Press Pause initiative has been funded by the Community Lottery Fund through the Social Enterprise Academy's Imagining New Futures Together Initiative.

The first workshop took place at the Cross Keys Inn, Etrickbridge on 9 June 2023.

SCOTO

PRESS PAUSE

COMMUNITY LED TOURISM IN SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS REPORT STRUCTURE



SCOTO visited SELKIRK AND TD7 and facilitated a Press Pause Community Led Tourism workshop in June 2023. We met with various local interests – business and community. Time was taken to explore the area online and experience local sites and features of interest prior to the workshop.

This report provides context and sets out the key findings, and then offers a number of recommendations for the short and longer term.

What is Community Led Tourism (CLT) ?



Historically many communities have felt that tourism happens to them - rather than with them. It was traditionally promoted by tourist board, larger attractions and businesses - and more recently through numerous digital touch points – TV, film, social media, Online Travel Agents, bloggers, travel trade, VS and DMOs.

But as more and more communities across Scotland form local development trusts, take ownership of assets, and are providing visitor facing services and experiences.... there is a growing sense of tourism being not just something that can happen with the community but also something that can deliver many positive benefits and can help address priority issues such as social isolation, retaining young people, showcasing local producers and crafters and preserving artefacts and assets.

For SCOTO community tourism is where a geographic community is directly involved in managing the tourism offer in their area and ensuring tourism derives tangible benefits at a local level.

SCOTO believes there are two types of community tourism in Scotland.

- Community Led Visitor Services and Experiences*
- Community Led Destination Development and Promotion*



What is Community Led Tourism?

A: Community Led Visitor Services and Experiences

B: Community Led Destination Development & Promotion

WHAT Travel, events and visitor services and experiences that are owned, managed and/or delivered by the local community

A geographic community makes a conscious choice to come together to manage their tourism offer and how their area is promoted

WHY Ensure tourism as a means to an end – wider benefits are realised for the community addressing local priorities

To avoid tourism just happening – tourism becomes a force for good. Business and community interests work together

WHO Social Enterprises – Cooperative, CIC, SCIO, Charitable Trust with trading arm

Community Development Trusts, Community Associations, Cooperatives, Town/Village/Area DMOs

HOW Asset transfers, service level agreements, partnerships, change of use, added value

Community led destination competency appraisals and action plan
Community led place branding and visitor proposition

What is Community Led Tourism?



A: Community Led Visitor Services & Experiences

This is typically where the community has set up a social enterprise which delivers a visitor facing service or experience which derives important benefits back into the community as well as servicing the needs of visitors. The service may not be totally visitor facing and equally tourism may not be seen as the primary driver. But the interface with visitors brings in much needed spend and other social benefits and helps the community deliver against priority issues and opportunities.

B: Community Led Destination Development & Promotion

This is where a geographic community – a village, an island, a town, a city neighbourhood or a glen, for example – come together to consider and then manage their tourism offer and how their area is promoted. This involves local business and community interests collaborating to better understand how the area presents itself as a destination and jointly agree what could be done better or differently that can make the place an even better place to live, work and visit

SELKIRK & TD7

'PRESS PAUSE' REPORT

April 2024

SELKIRK



SELKIRK & TD7

Scene Setting



As part of the lottery funded Imagining New Futures Together Programme being delivered by the Social Enterprise Academy, representatives from what was Selkirk BID and the Ettrick and Yarrow Valleys took part in the early activity. When offered the option of a SCOTO 1-2-1 mentoring session to review the vision and next steps, especially in light of the BID not continuing, this was accepted, and an online meeting took place in March 2023.

The main conclusion from this session was that there is an urgent need to bring key representatives from tourism businesses and community organisations together from across the TD7 postcode area in a facilitated workshop to collectively explore the vision.

This took place on 9 June in The Cross Keys Inn and followed the 'Press Pause' format designed by SCOTO.

This Press Pause Report sets out the key findings with recent updates and lists a number of recommendations for the community to consider as part of their journey in community led tourism.



SELKIRK & TD7

An Overview



SCOTLAND

- TD7 is located in the Scottish Borders and broadly covers what was Selkirkshire
- Selkirk has a population of c 4500 and is a historic royal burgh
- Selkirk lies on the Ettrick Water, a tributary of the Tweed
- Upstream and extending to the west there are two parallel valleys – the Ettrick Valley and the Yarrow Valley
- The Ale Water Valley lies to the south
- Selkirk is on the A7 and is 38 miles from Edinburgh

SELKIRK & TD7

Community Structures



The TD7 postcode area has three community councils – Royal Burgh of Selkirk and District, Ettrick and Yarrow Valley plus Lilliesleaf, Ashkirk and Midlem.

Ettrick and Yarrow has a Community Development Company which was set up 2010 to address the concerns, increasingly voiced over a period of years, that changing land use and demographics, particularly at the upper end of both valleys, was leading to question marks over whether people would continue to live and work in these areas. Their purpose is to support the economic and social development of the rural communities of the Ettrick and Yarrow Valleys.

Selkirk has a community-based charity – Selkirk Regeneration – which is seeking sustainable development towards a low carbon future. It operates Sustainable Selkirk which is a lottery funded project specifically focusing on reducing Selkirk's carbon footprint. There are several other community organisations active in the town.

Ale Water doesn't have a valley-wide Community Development Trust but Lilliesleaf for example has a group focused on acquiring the last green space in the village and are also looking at the village hall and a community pub



SELKIRK & TD7

Local Tourism Structures



'Selkirk Means Business' was a BID that was established in 2018 and employed a coordinator who led on various initiatives in the town including tourism. The BID concluded after its first 5-year period and ceased to operate in 2023. www.exploreselkirk.co.uk is operated by the community council. There hasn't been a tourism group for the town for several years.



Etrick and Yarrow Valleys Tourism Association has existed for a number of years and brings tourism interests across the two valleys together to promote the area. It has a website www.etrickandyarrow.co.uk and has produced a 15-page guide. The group recently developed the James Hogg Poetry Trails with a map and official trail guide. The group has been dwindling post Covid.



Ale Water Valley Tourism Cooperative has also existed for a number of years and covers the area to the south of Etrick and Yarrow Valleys - from above Ashkirk through to Lilliesleaf and Midlem, and then on to Ancrum where the Ale Water meets the River Teviot. The Cooperative has a website www.alewatervalley.co.uk



SELKIRK & TD7

Local Tourism Maps & Websites



SELKIRK TOWN CENTRE

Why not take a walk round the 'Ring of the town', touch the Burns plaque for luck and visit the Kirk Yard to learn more about Franklin D Roosevelt's ancestors. For more details about each place take a look at our website or pick up a visitor book from one of our museums.

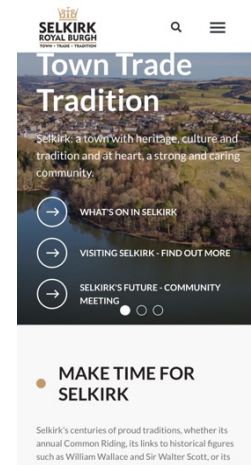
THE RIVERSIDE

Head to the Riverside for Walks, Visitor Attractions, Selkirk Leisure Centre & Swimming Pool and carps site. Attractions include traditional mills such as Lochcarron of Scotland and Andrew Elliot Ltd as well as other craft and retail outlets. See our website for more information.

- 1 HALLIWELL'S HOUSE MUSEUM / TOURIST INFO
- 2 HAMMERMAN'S HALL MUSEUM
- 3 BURNS PLAQUE & SITE OF OLD FOREST INN
- 4 THE HAINING HOUSE, LOCH, WALKS & BIKE TRAILS
- 5 DANDIE DINMONT SCULPTURE
- 6 SITE OF PEEL HILL
- 7 AULD KIRK
- 8 STATUE OF A SOUTER
- 9 MARRIAGE STONE
- 10 MASONIC LODGE
- 11 MUNGO PARK STATUE
- 12 VICTORIA HALLS, FLETCHER STATUE & FLODDEN MEMORIAL GARDEN
- 13 SITE OF BLACK SWAN HOTEL
- 14 TOM SCOTT RSA PLAQUE
- 15 WAR MEMORIAL
- 16 OLD SELKIRK JAIL - NOW SELKIRK LIBRARY
- 17 SELKIRK SHERIFF COURT
- 18 FAIRY WELL
- 19 STATUE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT & FORMER COURT HOUSE
- 20 LOCHCARRON VISITOR CENTRE
- 21 ANDREW ELLIOT LTD
- 22 SELKIRK LEISURE CENTRE & CAMPSITE
- 23 RIVERSIDE MOSAICS
- 24 PARKING
- 25 BIKE PARKING
- 26 STEP-UPS TO RIVERSIDE - CARE REQUIRED
- 27 TOILETS



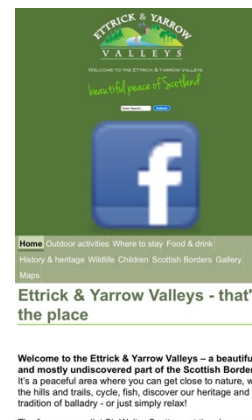
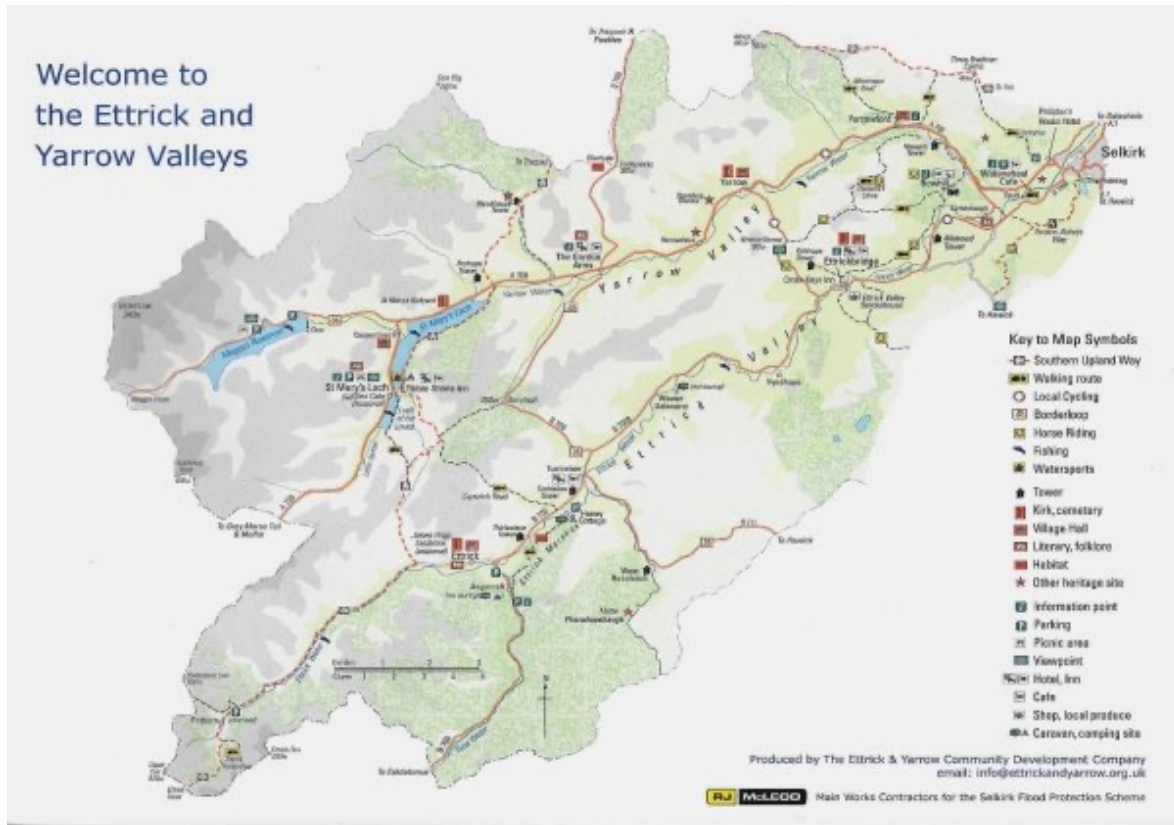
www.exploreselkirk.co.uk



A new Welcome to Selkirk brochure is being launched in May 2024 which profiles the town and for the first time also profiles Ettrick and Yarrow Valleys. This has been popular in the past and has been distributed in the town and also in other visitor information centres including Edinburgh.

SELKIRK & TD7

Local Tourism Maps & Websites



The Ale Water Valley

The Ale Water Valley is home to a wonderfully diverse range of Scottish tourist attractions. From golfing to horse riding, clay pigeon shooting, fly fishing and more, there's no shortage of things to do in the Scottish Borders. Visitors can also eat in remarkable restaurants, pubs and

alewatervalley.co.uk



SELKIRK & TD7

Regional Tourism Structures

Selkirk & TD7 sits within the South of Scotland Destination Alliance (SSDA) which is a Destination Management and Marketing Organisation (DMO).. It operates www.scotlandstartshere.com

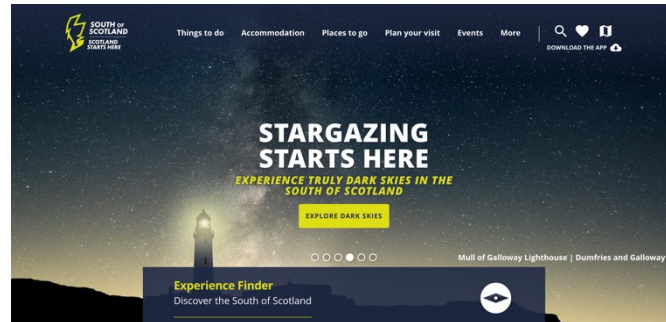
The SSDA was established in 2020 shortly after lockdown and was a response to the recognised need for a single voice for tourism across Dumfries & Galloway and the Borders as the new South of Scotland Enterprise was established.

A new Responsible Tourism Strategy for the South of Scotland was launched in March 2024. It seeks to

- increase the visitor economy by £1 billion, to £1.76bn by 2034, and
- support a further 6,000 jobs, to 20,000 FTE posts by 2034.

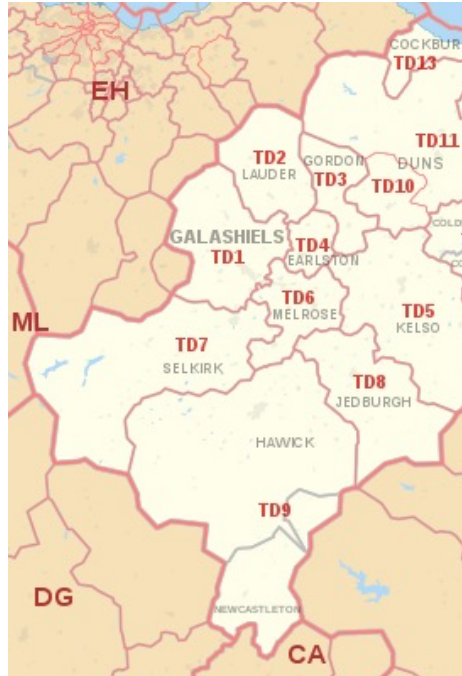
This will be achieved by

- extending the season
- becoming a 'go to' not 'go through' destination, and
- increasing international visitors to the area



SELKIRK & TD7

Initial Observations



- TD7 is a large area in the centre of the South of Scotland
- It is characterised by lush river valleys with agriculture, woodlands and forestry with several small hamlets and Selkirk being the only town
- Selkirk was formerly the county town of Selkirkshire
- Selkirk is one of the oldest Royal Burghs in Scotland
- TD7 is the site of some of the earliest settlements in the Scottish Borders
- William Wallace was declared guardian of Scotland in Selkirk in 1297
- Sir Walter Scott presided as the sheriff depute Selkirk in the early 19th century
- Selkirk grew in the mid-19th century around its woollen industry with many mills constructed – the industry largely closed in the 1970s.

SELKIRK & TD7

SELKIRK



SELKIRK & TD7

ALE WATER VALLEY



SELKIRK & TD7

ETTRICK VALLEY



SELKIRK & TD7

YARROW VALLEY



SELKIRK & TD7

SELKIRK



SELKIRK & TD7

THE GORDON ARMS



SELKIRK & TD7

THE CROSS KEYS INN



SELKIRK & TD7

SELKIRK COMMON RIDING



THE HAINING



SELKIRK & TD7

ALE WATER VALLEY



SELKIRK & TD7

ST MARY'S LOCH



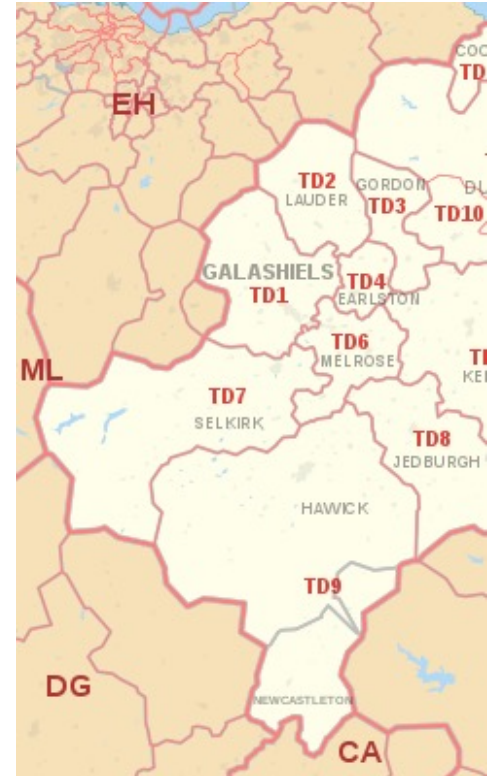
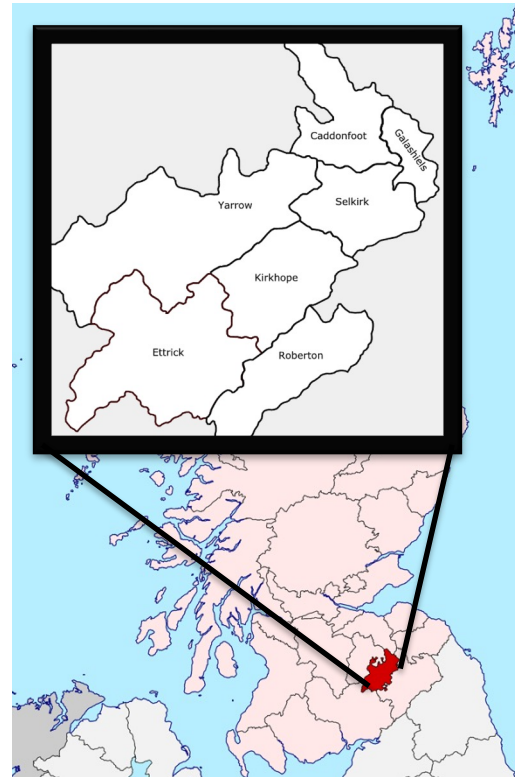


1. Defining the Destination

There was clear and immediate agreement that the area to be considered for community led tourism purposes was the town and the three valleys. These are currently promoted separately – 3 websites. Need to be unified. There is strong cohesion across this combined area from both a community and historical perspective. This has been called TD7 to date (the postcode area) for working purposes – but the inclusion of Lilliesleaf which is outwith TD7 is also relevant as, for example, their school feeds into Selkirk.

The old county of Selkirkshire is a good basis too as it covers Yarrow, Ettrick, Kirkhope, Roberton and Selkirk parishes. However it also covers Caddenfoot and Galashiels which are felt to be part of a different destination. This area is also known as Ettrick Forest.

There was recognition of the need to name the area in a visitor friendly and appealing way, and effort should focus on the commonality of the tourism offer – a sense of cohesion. This report refers to Selkirk & TD7 (including Ale Water) and addresses the naming under the Place Branding.



2. What's working/not working



- Southern Upland Way passes through and brings walkers
- People visit the valleys from Hawick and Eskdalemuir
- The old Selkirk and the Valleys guide was good – 2003 - *but never updated*
- Still have a few hotels in the town – *but not proactive*
- Selkirk is one of the stops on the new Coast to Coast cycleway – *but not yet geared up*
- Heritage and literary tourism – strong assets to work with
- The Hogg Trail – good work done – launch went well – needs promoted
- St Mary's Loch is a key attraction – *but major issues post lockdown with volume and lack of infrastructure*
- The X95 bus connecting Carlisle with Edinburgh goes through the area
- Selkirk and the valleys have not traditionally been marketed together – not seen as a destination
- Over time the town has disassociated itself with the valleys
- Selkirk hasn't had a tourism group for several years
- Local communication is very poor – limited awareness of what is happening – Selkirk paper is no longer published
- Facebook activity is disjointed
- Selkirk isn't seen as a hub in the same way Hawick and Kelso are
- Evidence that not all community people support tourism
- The area has potentially lost out with the new railway making other areas more appealing
- The old mills in Selkirk need repurposed
- Business closures and empty premises
- Lack of off road bike trails
- Lack of coach parking in Selkirk
- Lack of cultural spaces for arts and crafts, exhibitions etc
- Lack of evening venues/activities/night time economy
- Poor public realm – dog dirt, broken glass, pot holes
- Traffic through Selkirk town centre – pedestrian impediments
- Public transport links finish early





2. What could be done better

Initial thoughts

- Centralised comms for the valleys and Selkirk
- Selkirk becomes a hub for the wider area
- Better connect and package the visitor facing estates – Haining, Phillipshaugh, Bowhill
- Build on William Wallace, Sir Walter Scott and James Hogg connections
- Better coordinate presentation of the historic sites and attractions – eg Auld Kirkyard, Selkirk Castle, Philliphaugh Battle Site
- Local businesses become more outdoor focussed to better cater for the cycling and walking markets and linked to the Southern Upland Way and the new C2C cycle route which both pass through
- The Hogg Trail could be developed with a stronger community led tourism approach
- Camping provision investment (eg at Victoria Park or new larger site)
- Events and festivals – do more and have a what's on guide
- Information provision – VIC in Selkirk?



3. Competitors & Comparators

A useful exercise is to think of communities that are either local competitors and can be attracting the visitors you would like to see or comparators which are communities that are similar but located elsewhere and have achieved success and therefore could have valuable insights to share. Learning exchanges can be very fruitful.

COMPETITORS

Kelso, Peebles, Melrose and Moffat – these Borders /market towns have a stronger tourism presence and attract good numbers – especially day trippers. They have good independent shops, cafes, attractions and events. There appears to be good collaboration and marketing.

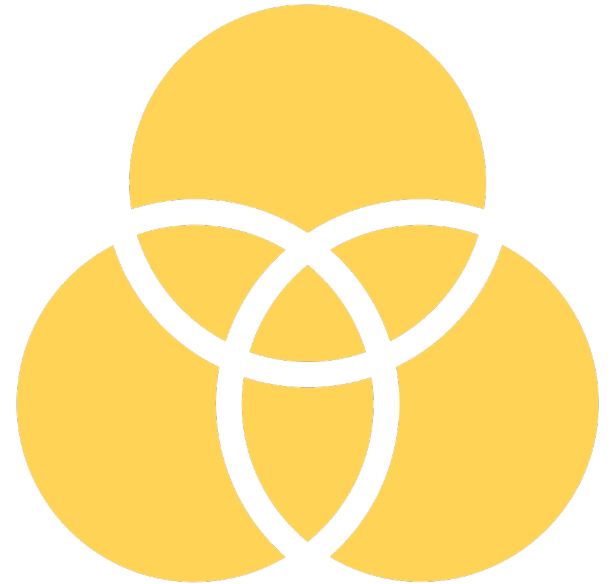
Galashiels – the new Borders Railway and the Tapestry are attracting more daytrippers to the town.

COMPARATORS

Hawick and Langholm - both are also seen as competitors but are similar market towns that are both seeking to build better relationships with their rural hinterland. In Langholm the community has acquired a large tract of land for nature conservation and related visitor activity (Tarras Valley) and are developing relationships with the Esk Valley and Eskdalemuir.

In Hawick recent work has focused on presenting Hawick as the Town of a Thousand Trails with a web presence and seeking to position Hawick as a hub for trails into the countryside.

Girvan – traditional seaside town on the main route between the Irish ferry and the central belt which is reinventing itself – very successful dog friendly campaign building on an existing strength and including guidance for business owners. Quirky outdoor crochet – eg themed hanging baskets at shops. Local Ambassadors to meet and greet visitors around the town. Good links with coast and Carrick countryside.





4. Visitor Profile

Past, Present & Future

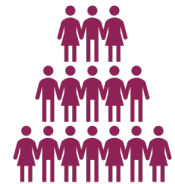
PAST

Selkirk and the valleys enjoyed a reasonable visitor profile in the past – various hotels and B&Bs, fishing in the valleys, St Mary's loch as a family day trip destination



PRESENT

Hotel trade in Selkirk has fallen away
Lots more campervans/motorhomes evident in the area
St Mary's Loch excesses post lockdown



FUTURE

Active and outdoor
Two nights plus

All agreed there is a need for the area to reinvent itself – it has numerous assets but not well profiled. Building the day trip market is a priority which can then lead to overnights and short breaks



5. Destination Competency

Tangible and Intangible Assets



TANGIBLE ASSETS

(can be touched, have a physical location and are features)

St Mary's Loch
Various pubs, hotels, restaurants
Southern Upland Way
Coast to Coast Cycleway
Bowhill House
Megget Reservoir
Grey Mares Tail – nearby
Dryhope Tower
Standing stones
Selkirk Museum
Sir Walter Scott's Courtroom
The Haining

INTANGIBLE ASSETS

(have no physical form, don't have a precise location and are conceptual)

- Sense of community
- Selkirk Bannock
- Sir Walter Scott associations
- The Ettrick Shepherd/Hogg associations
- Textiles
- Common Riding
- William Wallace connections
- Bonnie Prince Charlie connections
- Souters (people of Selkirk)
- Black Bob

5. Destination Competence

An Introduction



Being a successful destination is a function of many factors and how they interplay.

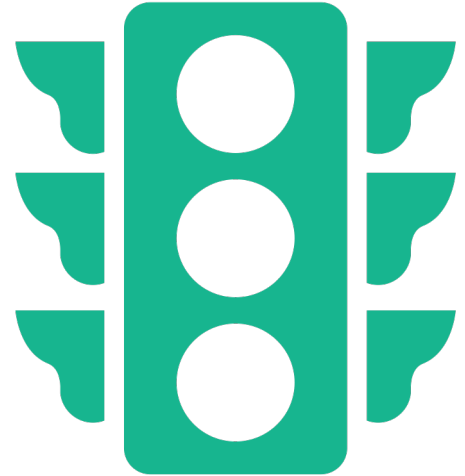
SCOTO has devised a competency appraisal for geographic communities to undertake as part of the Press Pause conversations.

Through conversation and discussion at the workshop the community are asked to describe their current offer under each of 16 criteria and then rate it in terms of

Red – things are really not working/don't exist

Amber – things do need improved

Green – things are functioning well.



This rating is generated by all present and helps facilitate collective thinking and also trigger ideas for improvement

The initial discussion about tangible and intangible assets is a precursor to this more detailed appraisal.



5. Destination Competence Appraisal – 15 Criteria

1. Tourism Traditions and Timelines
2. Sense of place and Visitor Proposition
3. Features and attractions
4. Accommodation
5. Activities and Experiences
6. Food, Drink and Refreshments
7. Events and Festivals
8. Makers and Producers
9. Travel and Connectivity
10. Amenities and Infrastructure
11. Visitor Management, Signage and Interpretation
12. Digital Presence and Marketing
13. Biodiversity and Net Zero
14. Community Assets
15. People and Players
16. Destination Collaboration



5. Destination Competence



NO	CRITERIA	CURRENT APPRAISAL	RAG	COMMUNITY LED TOURISM (CLT) OPPORTUNITIES
1	TOURISM TRADITIONS. TIMELINES & SEASONALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism hasn't been a big thing in the past – been a poor cousin to other border towns and valleys • The valleys had more tourism activity in the past as a day out • Feels like there isn't any baggage and by recognising this there is scope to reinvigorate the area with new visitors • 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good position to be in and scope to really focus on place branding to differentiate the area and appeal to specific target markets
2	SENSE OF PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong sense that this hasn't been considered in detail • There isn't a clear proposition for the town or the valleys and really keen to develop it 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear priority is place branding
3	FEATURES & ATTRACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant built heritage assets but these aren't currently exploited • need to much better understand what there is, their individual significance to make more of them and promote them • also assets which are open to the public – need to be more accessible 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit needed of all assets – natural and cultural and current accessibility for visitors/the public • Consider possible trails to connect important assets with common themes
4	ACCOMMODATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Hotels in Selkirk – varying quality • B&Bs and self catering in the valleys • Caravan parks • Victoria Park campsite – great location in the town – needs reassessed • No hostel type accommodation • Some tension as the offer isn't all good quality • Issues with a lot of campervan/motorhomes in the valleys since lockdown especially at St Mary's Loch 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope to consider community run accommodation – eg campervan aire , hostel/bunkhouse specifically for outdoor visitors in the valleys • Selkirk caravan and camping provision needs reviewed and improved

5. Destination Competence



NO	CRITERIA	CURRENT APPRAISAL	RAG	CLT OPPORTUNITIES
5	ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green for outdoors and in the valleys and DIY activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good walking and cycling in the valleys Trails/guided walks – eg James Hogg Poetry Trails Kayaking Walking Cycling Wildlife viewing – eg Philipshaugh salmon viewpoint Very limited activities and experiences in Selkirk - red Limited activity providers across the area 	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 15px; height: 100%; background-color: green; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="width: 15px; height: 100%; background-color: red; margin-right: 5px;"></div> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope for partnerships with activities and accommodation providers Possible social enterprise opportunity linked to activities (good examples elsewhere) Promote Selkirk as a hub for trails – Southern Upland Way, Kirkpatrick Fleming C2C cycle route, Borders Abbey Way Promote Selkirk as a hub for cycling and biking – gravel, road and mountain
6	FOOD & DRINK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has been patchy and fluid Went well through covid but recent casualties Consistency is an issue and is a moveable feast Takeaway is good Some new owners and investments – eg Gordon Arms and Cross Keys Inn – big improvements 	<div style="width: 100%; height: 100%; background-color: yellow;"></div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate information and have readily available with opening hours, booking links Develop a BeLocal facebook page where businesses can post and visitors/locals can ask questions
7	EVENTS & FESTIVALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional music events were successful – historic 2019 Scottish Borders walking festival in Selkirk and Valleys – successful as a one-off Selkirk Common Riding – is one of the bigger ridings in the Borders Selkirk 7s Other events are very local (ie not for visitors) Recognise there is a lot of potential to both resurrect old and start new events Need critical mass of events for the area and to have things happening regularly 	<div style="width: 100%; height: 100%; background-color: yellow;"></div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate what is already happening Develop a TD7 area event calendar and a clash diary to plan and streamline timing of different events (including the wider area) Display events calendar online Scope to repeat the walking festival and work jointly across the area

5. Destination Competence



NO	CRITERIA	CURRENT APPRAISAL	RAG	CLT OPPORTUNITIES
8	MAKERS & PRODUCERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selkirk has a long tradition of shoemaking (the souters) and textiles, glass and wood – however not visitor facing – could do much more Do still have working mills – scope to join up and better promote as package for visitors Strong links with historic and current artists Currently looking for a creative hub in Selkirk Selkirk Bannock still made locally Food festival celebrating local producers is returning 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community owned and operated Creative Hub with workspace and selling space Open studios events and studio trail NB Lochcarron in Wester Ross (which has also taken part in Press Pause) is working on a tartan week to celebrate their tartan heritage – scope for collaboration?
9	TRAVEL & CONNECTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major issue – frequency/connectivity of public transport Routes to Moffat and Berwick in summer - not promoted There are arterial routes in the valleys and Selkirk is on A7 and Carlisle/Edinburgh bus route New taxi office in centre of Selkirk No bike hire – community e-bike initiative – visitor use? Demand responsive minibus - can see potential and for EV based solution Poor parking in Selkirk for cars and coaches – needs addressed 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car parking review Explore community transport options combining local and visitor needs Consider bike/e-bike hire social enterprise Better promote the taxi service for visitors
10	AMENITIES & INFRA-STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selkirk is well served for main services – fuel, ATM, supermarket, health facilities - but lacking in the Valleys Major issue in the town is parking St Mary's loch has major issues – council closing the loo – major vandalism Limited places in the valleys to stop Lack of waste provision 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community run public loos (invest and charge) and include waste disposal Community run campervan aire in different locations linked to village halls etc

5. Destination Competence



NO	CRITERIA	CURRENT APPRAISAL	RAG	CLT OPPORTUNITIES
11	VISITOR INFO & SIGNAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Welcome to Selkirk brochure being published and distributed which includes Ettrick and Yarrow Valleys • No visitor information point in Selkirk • Significant visitor management issues at St Mary's Loch with real tension between residents and visitors • limited signage in the area for walks and features • Sporadic interpretation and not joined up – although the websites have good information online (3 separate sites) • The Hogg Trail guide is excellent but needs promoted 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an interim visitor information point in Selkirk (eg Scotts Selkirk 2nd hand bookshop/empty retail unit) – and scope out longer term solution • develop a strategic community led tourism plan highlighting the issues and potential solutions • Pull existing information together from the three websites/leaflets into one location
12	DIGITAL PRESENCE & MARKETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not coordinated • do have digital assets but not easily found – content not being regularly updated • good information online once people are here (Explore Selkirk and E&YV websites) • poorly represented outwith the area by VS and others to inspire people to visit – SSDA are looking at a new • recognise the need to better organise everything and also develop place brand and proposition with appropriate content 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a strong and single proposition for the whole area and encourage others to share content • Single web presence for the area and digital channels
13	BIO-DIVERSITY & NET ZERO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good local activity in different locations • Ettrick Marshes site owned by the community • Bright Green Nature – at the old Deer Park • Mauldsheugh Wood – wildlife and nature trails • Sustainable Selkirk • Reuse, recycle & repair place in Selkirk – General Store • Salmon and Golden Eagle viewing spots 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the tourism potential at the nature/wildlife sites • audit the level of uptake of green tourism credentials and EV provision

5. Destination Competence



NO	CRITERIA	CURRENT APPRAISAL	RAG	CLT OPPORTUNITIES
14	COMMUNITY ASSETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ettrick and Yarrow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • village hall • old Ettrick primary school • 53ha marshes site • Business units and housing (weaver and sculptor) • Selkirk - common good land but no assets at present • Ale Water Valley - ambition for green space and pub at Lilliesleaf 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider options for community led hub in Selkirk – eg O'Malleys or the Coop Building • Review all existing community owned assets and current/potential uses that could support tourism eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Information • Bunkhouse opportunity • Camping/caravan site • Motorhome aire locations • Artists' cooperative - making and selling space
15	PEOPLE & PLAYERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People present on the day are keen to progress things • Considerable challenge in the town – disparate and siloed • Landownership and nimbyism is stifling activity • Resource needed to galvanise everyone to look beyond their own business and see the bigger picture (eg coordinate opening times of cafes) • Have interest and ideas – but leadership needed and paid resource to drive things forward 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning exchange with other areas that have successfully streamlined structures under an umbrella partnership • Open day/eve to socialise this Press Pause activity and show case the possibilities and benefits in being more coordinated across the area/see the bigger picture • Use BeLocal FaceBook page to highlight different volunteering opportunities • Tourism development role
16	DESTINATION COLLABORATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Got good relationships with VS and SSDA but content is lacking • acutely aware need to get collaborative spirit and proposition right first 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on place branding and visitor proposition as a priority • Create a dedicated coordination role linked to a central hub facility

5. CLT Opportunities

Ideas to Explore in Selkirk & The Valleys



CRITERIA	CLT OPPORTUNITIES WORTH EARLY EXPLORATION
Sense of place	Selkirk and the Valleys place branding and visitor proposition
Accommodation & Food and Drink	Audit of what exists and who is doing what across the area. Identify any gaps worth considering for community led enterprises – eg hostel, camping, motorhome aire Review the camping and caravan provision in Selkirk
Events & Festivals	Need to initially collate what is already happening and develop a what's on calendar/clash diary Encourage more events and festival activity Consider a new festival for the area to reinforce the place brand – eg heritage and/or outdoor based
Travel & Amenities	Consider community transport options for locals and visitors; promote e-bike exploration Major review of parking in the town and valleys.
Visitor Information Digital Presence	Combine the three websites and associated maps and information under the new place brand Find premises to host visitor information in Selkirk – consider Scotts Selkirk as interim info point, enquire about recently closed book shop (owned by the council)
Community Assets	Explore options for a community/visitor hub in Selkirk with multiple uses – eg O'Malleys, Coop, bank Consider options for simple motorhome aire stop overs – eg at village halls Options for caravan and camping in the valleys and in Selkirk
People & Players	Need to engender a more collaborative spirit across the area Learning exchange to other communities who are strong on collaboration

5. CLT Opportunities

Inspiration from Elsewhere



Findhorn Campervan Aire

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/fsqnta50/scoto_findhorn-case-study.pdf

Callander Youth Project/Callander Hostel

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/f3oerevm/scoto_callander-hostel-case-study.pdf

Loch Ness Hub, Drumnadrochit

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/ylepaaos/scoto_loch-ness-hub-case-study.pdf

Wild Skies Shetland

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/xgzchqln/scoto_wild-skies-case-study.pdf

Callander Visitor Information Centre

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/ogmnlyxl/scoto_cvic-case-study.pdf

Tweedsmuir The Crook Inn Plus

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/bznbqgqxg/scoto_tweedsmuir-case-study.pdf

Isle of Eigg Camping Pods

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/zy4lzkkt/scoto_eigg-camping-pods-case-study.pdf

Lewis Point & Sandwick Trail

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/31khsd2p/scoto_point-sandwick-case-study.pdf

Strontian Oakwood Tourism & Crafts

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/yppgkurp/scoto_oakwood-case-study.pdf

Moray Walking and Outdoor Festival

https://www.scoto.co.uk/media/341kukao/scoto_moray-walking-festival-case-study.pdf



5. Managing Expectations

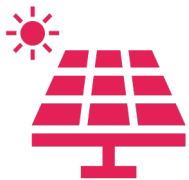
A key consideration for any destination is managing visitor expectations.

Visitors don't always do their research and can arrive in a community with preconceived ideas of what to expect.

This can be anything from getting a mobile signal to finding toilets, being able to use credit cards and not need cash, get an Uber, order a takeaway for delivery or having a sit-down meal in the evening.

To avoid disappointment and frustration communities can do a lot to manage expectations in general but also if there is a specific and short-term issue affecting a service.

A valuable resource is an open access 'what's on' group page on FaceBook where information can be posted (and pinned) and also visitors can ask questions. Local business should be encouraged to join and post regularly and also invite questions. Many communities have these pages. A key pointer is to reserve this for local information posts and not use it to moan about public services



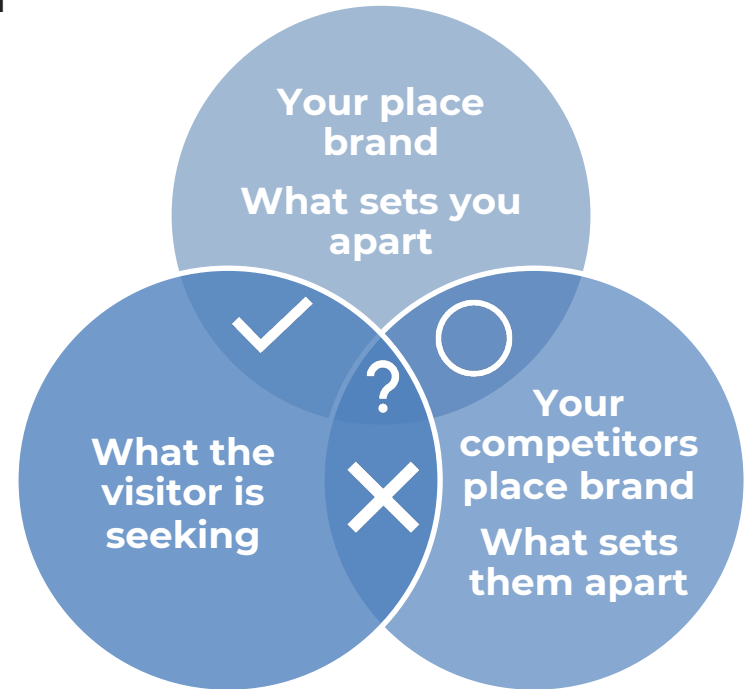
Selkirk & The Valleys

- Create framed info points at key locations across the area (or integrate within existing community noticeboards) with a map of key facilities and attractions across the area plus opening times
- Develop 'Selkirk and the Valleys' open Facebook page for visitor enquiries and for all businesses to post updates, offers and features for locals and visitors, pin a post on the eatery opening times/booking and encourage all local businesses and organisations to promptly respond to visitor enquiries and queries
- Highlight public transport options for walking and encourage people to use the bus to travel first and walk back



6. Place Branding

- Place branding is the idea that **a place, a town, a city, or a region can be branded** – given an identity with a value proposition for a target market and have branding techniques and marketing strategies applied to drive a marketing campaign. Much in the same way a product, service or business can.
- In essence, place branding is "**a strategy for projecting images and managing perceptions – and expectations - about places**". **Authenticity.**
- Place branding seeks to form **a meaningful relationship between person (locals and visitors) and place.**



6. Place Branding Community Led



- We now live in a rapidly developing digital world
- Visitors are influenced by multiple sources of inspiration before, during and after travel – Visitor Touch Points
- Much of this content lacks a proper sense of place and rarely is the host community's voice asserted
- To ensure authenticity and integrity, host communities need to assert themselves – scope out and own their place brand – differentiate their community and then influence other visitor touch points to use the place brand and help target appropriate visitors
- Host communities can readily develop products and experiences to bring their place brand to life





6. Place Branding Hierarchy



6. Place Branding



“To see ourselves as others see us”

SELKIRK

Towns & Villages



The Royal and Ancient Burgh of Selkirk stands high above the Etrick and Yarrow Valleys in the heart of the Scottish Borders.

Selkirk is famous as a town for its braes and wynds, and sudden unexpected views. This historic town can boast some famous patronages: William Wallace was proclaimed Overlord of Scotland in the town's Forest Kirk, while Sir Walter Scott served as Sheriff for 33 years. Halliwell's House, the town's oldest dwelling, is now the local museum.

Selkirk Common Riding, with over 400 riders taking part, is recognised as one of the oldest of the Border festivals and dates from the Battle of Flodden in 1513, where Selkirk sent 80 men with the Scottish King and only one returned, bearing a blood-stained English flag. Another tradition of the town is the Selkirk Bannock, a delicious fruit cake.

Three miles west is Bowhill house, a Georgian mansion, set in extensive grounds, with beautiful woodland walks and an adventure playground. Its Little Theatre hosts drama and music performances.

The twin valleys of Etrick and Yarrow contain some of the most glorious scenery in the Scottish borders, with St. Mary's Loch, southern Scotland's largest stretch of water.

If you fancy exploring a little further afield take a trip to the [Ale Water Valley](#), which is located between the historic towns of Selkirk, Hawick and Jedburgh. You'll find lots of outdoor activities to take part in, such as cycling, horse riding, golf and more, as well as plenty of charming pubs, cafés and restaurants, where you can enjoy a tasty bite to eat.

6. Place Branding



“To see ourselves as others see us”

About Selkirk

Selkirk is one of the oldest Royal Burghs in Scotland and also one of the earliest settlements in what is now the Scottish Borders. It was here that the first Borders Abbey was founded by a community of Monks who then moved to Kelso Abbey during the reign of King David I.

Similar to the other large towns in the Borders, Selkirk grew because of its wool industry and experienced a boom in production in the early 19th century and a subsequent rise in population.

It is also home to Scotland's oldest horse racing track, the Gala Rig, on the outskirts of the town. Fitting with this the Selkirk Common Riding is a celebration of the history and traditions of the Royal and Ancient Burgh and one of the biggest of these types of Festivals in the borders with 300-400 riders each year.



About Ettrick

Ettrick is a small and tranquil village set in stunning countryside with roots going back to the Bronze Age. The Ettrick water flows through the Ettrick Valley and is the 2nd fastest rising river in Scotland.

There has been a church at Ettrick for at least 800 years and the Kirk is still a focus for community there. There are a few notable people buried in the Ettrick church graveyard such as Thomas Boston a Covenanting preacher, and poet and novelist James Hogg who is known as the "Ettrick Shepherd".

The Ettrick valley was used as the setting for the story "No Advantages", from Alice Munro's 2006 short story collection, The View from Castle Rock.

Ettrick was also home to one of Scotland's most enduring theologians, Rev Thomas Boston who served as Ettrick's minister from 1707 and some of his work is still in print today.

6. Place Branding

Selkirk & The Valleys - Observations



- Selkirk is a well known name – but not necessarily as a place – for example the Selkirk Grace is not from Selkirk
- Selkirk town has many important historical associations both in terms of events and people
- Most would immediately associate Selkirk with the Scottish Borders
- Ettrick, Yarrow and Ale Water valleys are not necessarily well known and many from outwith the area would struggle to locate them
- Each of the valleys are lush and highly scenic and offer many outdoor activities





6. Place Branding

Using USPs, POPs & PODs

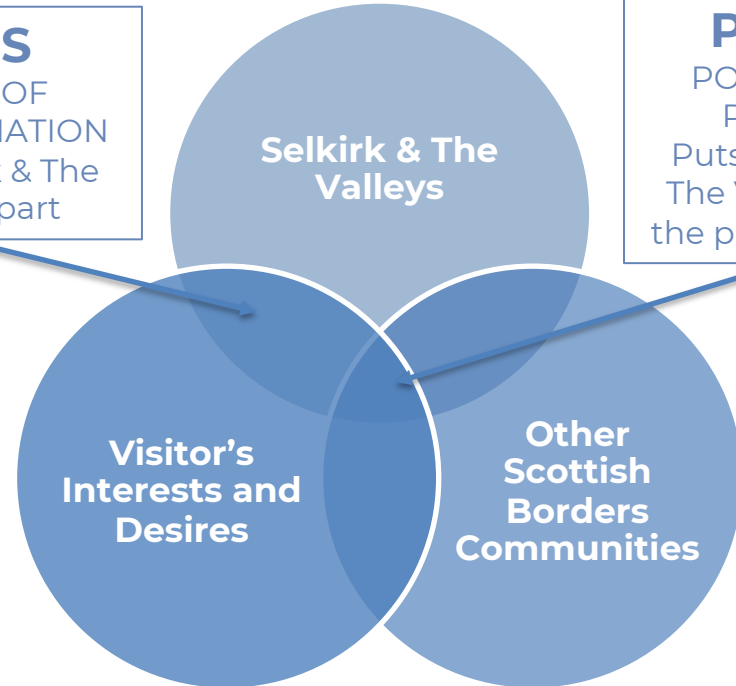


USPS

UNIQUE SELLING POINTS
What is unique about Selkirk & The Valleys that no other destination can claim

PODS
POINTS OF DIFFERENTIATION
Sets Selkirk & The Valleys apart

POPS
POINTS OF PARITY
Puts Selkirk & The Valleys on the playing field



6. Place Branding



Selkirk & The Valleys' USPs, POPs & PODs

USPs – what would the world miss if SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS didn't exist?

POPs – what gives SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS a right to be considered by visitors to the north west coast?

PODs – what sets SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS apart for visitors from other north west coast destinations?

6. Place Branding

Selkirk & The Valleys USP, POPs & PODs



USPs – what would the world miss without SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS ?	POPs – what makes SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS a viable destination?	PODs – what sets SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS apart?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sir Walter Scott connections to courtroom • Birthplace and home of James Hogg • The oldest common riding (is disputed) • William Wallace proclaimed guardian of Scotland here • Murrays of Philipshaugh - Roosevelt is a descendant • Mungo Park – discovered the source of the Niger • David Balfour in 'Kidnapped' set out from Ettrick • Border Ballads originated here - 1400s oral storytelling • Hogg and Scott transcribed them and they became recognised • Hogg and Scott got together with Wordsworth at Tibbersheids • Captain Napier of Thirlstane developed the idea to develop Hongkong [check] • Ettrick Forest – royal hunting ground • the wild west of the Border Rievers • Covenanters came to hide here • Philipshaugh – largest walled garden • Battle of Philipshaugh – Lesley defeated Montrose – end of genocide • Bowhill and Buccleuch - best private art collection • French prisoners entertained by Scott 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife • Historic buildings • Museum • Cycling • Long distance walking • River fishing • Village Inns • Rugby 7s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Riding - one of biggest • Oldest common riding (disputed) • Debatable/ungovernable lands (not just TD7) • Traditional mills and textiles • Modern textiles - Bernat Klein designer – studio is here • Selkirk the tweed town (Hawick was the knitting town) • Strong literary connection • Significant claim to SWS • The Ettrick Shepherd and the Hogg Trail • Connections to the Border ballads and oral traditions • Connections to the Scots language

SCOTO Scottish
Community
Tourism

A growing network of Scottish
community run tourism enterprises
inspiring visitors to be temporary locals.

scoto.co.uk | [#scotonetwork](https://twitter.com/scotonetwork) | [#beatemporarylocal](https://twitter.com/beatemporarylocal)



7. Reflections ...

TO do to help?

at no-one else is





7. Reflections from SCOTO

The workshop was very productive but of note, representation from Selkirk and Ale Water Valley was low. This has been supplemented through discussions linked to the current place planning work for the TD7 area and a newly formed tourism sub group.

At this stage the following reflections are provided

- Selkirk and the Valleys is a significant historical area which has witnessed many important events in the history of Scotland.
- It is easily accessible from the central belt
- It has many features of interest and set within a stunning landscape
- However, from a tourism perspective it is not well known or promoted.
- Press Pause presents a golden opportunity for the three areas - the town of Selkirk, Etrick and Yarrow Valleys and the Ale Water Valley – which currently promote themselves individually - to come together and present a new and dynamic representation of the area to the market place
- The Reivers were discussed and is felt to be a differentiating feature of a wider area than Selkirk and the Valleys – and could be the basis for a wider collaboration between relevant communities.





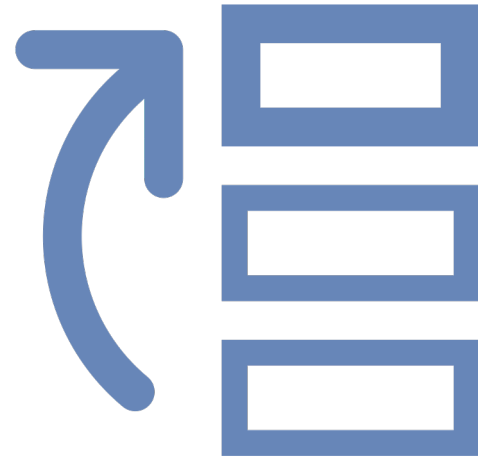
8. Recommendations

Embracing Community Led Tourism in Selkirk & the Valleys

Selkirk & The Valleys have several opportunities to much better position themselves as a visitor destination. The destination competence appraisal flags several business and community led tourism opportunities and the key priorities are around the Place Branding, a single digital presence and collaboration – plus a resource to stimulate and coordinate action.

The area is not well known and suffers as adjacent areas have been more proactive. It does however have a strong basis for place branding which would enable a range of easily implemented products and experiences to be provided and a differentiating annual festival with activity across the area.

The quality of landscape and the outdoor offer is significant as is the built heritage. Visitors are on the doorstep - so communication and messaging is critical to motivate a planned day out/short break and to entice travellers off the M74 and visiting adjacent Border Towns.





8. Recommendations

Embracing Community Led Tourism in Selkirk & the Valleys

Selkirk in particular feels like it needs a major community led initiative that has a physical presence in the town and seeks to welcome, inspire and disperse visitors and provide much needed facilities.

Parking and pedestrian movement were both highlighted as issues in the town. Coach parking in particular was highlighted as a major shortcoming where it is hard to park where visitors want to be. But also one night stay budget accommodation especially for walkers and cyclists moving through the area is lacking.

Selkirk hasn't had a visitor information centre for several years. It was previously housed in the Halliwell Museum with extensive displays of leaflets and information available and was operated by VisitScotland. The museum is now operated by Live Borders and this space is now a reception for the museum. An information centre is seen as vital – both for welcoming visitors but also helping to disperse them around the wider area. This could be part of a bigger community venture which has hub facilities, bunk house accommodation and possibly creative spaces - and housed in a building which could provide multiple services for visitors and locals. The Coop building, the bank and the O'Malleys building each offer opportunities and could be acquired and developed via the Community Land Fund and other resources.

Addressing the parking and information point are key priorities. Parking is an infrastructure issue and not necessarily easy for the community to tackle alone but the information point could be addressed in early course by incorporating it in an existing easily accessible space like Scotts Selkirk and also developing a team of local volunteers to operate a rota. There are numerous examples elsewhere of communities successfully providing information and ensuring that a face to face welcome and interaction is available.





8. Recommendations

Embracing Community Led Tourism in Selkirk & the Valleys

Based on this review, there are several immediate opportunities for TD7 and the tourism sub group to consider

- Explore a temporary and longer term visitor information hub in Selkirk
- Develop Place Brand
- Explore place brand associated product ideas – including small scale events and a new annual festival
- Collate all existing map and leaflets produced by the E&YVTG and AWTC with Selkirk resources and produce one map, leaflet and web portal

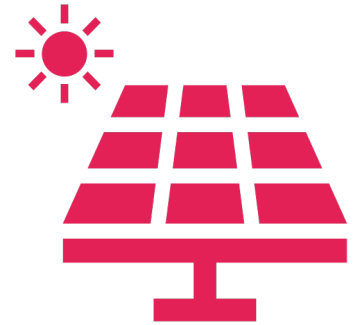


8. Recommendations



Potential Quick Wins

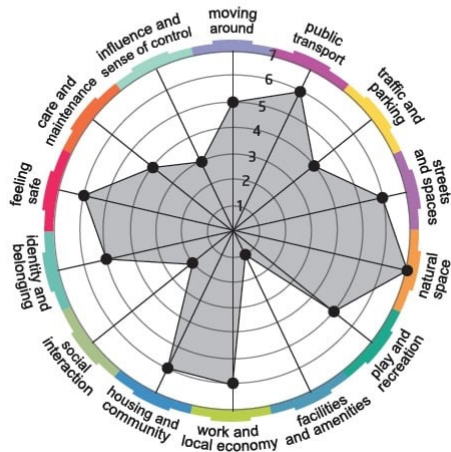
- An open day event(s) in the community to share the Press Pause findings, gather interest in project ideas and recruit new volunteers for different initiatives
- Secure agreement from E&YVTG and AWC to collaborate as and seek more involvement from Selkirk business and community interests
- Develop place brand
- Curate content to showcase the outdoor and cultural offer
- Produce place branded fence banners for strategic locations
- Develop an online central events calendar for all events – encourage everyone to use it to promote events and also as a clash calendar when planning events
- Undertake learning exchanges to other relevant communities





9. Recalibrating Tourism in Selkirk & The Valleys

Place Standard –
How good is Our Place?



Tourism in Scotland is traditionally measured by footfall, spend and employment. SCOTO seeks to recalibrate tourism and measure what is important to the individual community. Many communities have developed Community Action Plans and/or are taking part in Place Planning activity.

These plans highlight priority themes and issues for the individual community. By measuring impact of CLT in relation to local priority issues the benefits can be clearly articulated – eg young people retained/attracted to return, permanent jobs created, local crafters and producers supported, volunteer hours provided and succession addressed. This measurement demonstrates tourism as a force for good within the community.



9. Recalibrating Tourism in Selkirk & The Valleys

*“what we measure
affects what we do.
If we measure the
wrong thing, we will
do the wrong thing.
If we don't measure
something, it
becomes neglected,
as if the problem
didn't exist”.*
Carnegie UK

Place Planning is underway for TD7 and a tourism sub group has been set up.

Once the local priority themes are agreed consideration should be given by the sub group on which of these can be or are being addressed via tourism and also where tourism can be a means to an end.

Measures should then be established which will demonstrate how tourism is impacting on the area and making it an even better place to live, work and visit.

SCOTO recommends that a template is devised to record positive impact from the CLT ventures within the area and, also more widely by local businesses, to provide a strong narrative on tourism as a force for good that can be supported by info graphics.



9. Press Pause

SELKIRK & THE VALLEYS

Closing Thoughts

SCOTO's Vision

“for every community in Scotland to embrace and be ambassadors for localness and to develop community led tourism as a force for good which enables their community to be an even better place to live, work and visit”.

The Press Pause initiative seeks to help individual geographic communities take time out to consider tourism and how it could be much more of a force for good within their community. This involved business and community interests – everyone attending having a stake in the game.

Post pandemic there has been a focus on recovery but this can't be to pre-pandemic conditions. We are in a new era in tourism – post Covid, post Brexit, in the midst of a technological revolution and a climate emergency - and this requires a new approach and also presents many exciting opportunities at a local level for individual communities.

This reports seeks to set out what was discussed together, highlight what could be done differently to help the community be a better place, provide a range of ideas for consideration and also set out inspiration from elsewhere. The community is the driver and can establish which ideas to pursue or explore further.

Whatever action is taken the primary aim should be for tourism to deliver real benefits that address local issues at an individual community level – the presence of visitors should be making a positive difference and helping make the community an even better place to live, work and visit.

scoto

Scottish Community Tourism