

PLACE PLAN 2026 TO 2036

Cockburnspath Cove and Old Cambus

Précis Report

A concise account of the community evidence, shared vision, six strategic priorities and route to delivery.

A community at the crossroads

This report summarises the full Place Plan. It should be read alongside the detailed evidence, priority actions and supporting material in the complete document.

PURPOSE AND EVIDENCE

The plan at a glance

The Place Plan sets one shared direction for Cockburnspath, Cove, Old Cambus and the surrounding farms, steadings and homes to 2036. It presents the area as a gateway community at the meeting point of the Scottish Borders and East Lothian, with strong links to wider transport, employment, education, healthcare and service networks.

The plan is both a statutory planning document and a practical platform for partnership. Once validated and registered, it will inform future Local Development Plan work and provide evidence for discussions with public bodies, landowners, developers, funders and infrastructure providers. Registration will not grant planning permission or guarantee delivery, but it will give the community's proposals formal standing in the planning process.

A strong community mandate

Measure	Evidence
Verified digital participants	162 local residents
Estimated eligible population aged 14 to 80	510 to 530 residents
Estimated digital participation rate	30.6% to 31.8%
Votes and written contributions	7,382 votes and 575 comments
Children and young people at workshops	26 attendances representing 24 young residents
Combined estimated participation	35.1% to 36.5% when young participants are included

The digital consultation was restricted to verified residents aged 14 and over in the TD13 postcode area. It was supported by door-to-door conversations, discussions in the Community Shop and Café, leaflet distribution, one-to-one help and participatory workshops with children and young people. This mixed approach reduced barriers linked to age, confidence and digital access.

How to read the findings

- Percentages have different response bases because residents could choose which questions and themes to answer.
- Votes show the strength of preference, while comments and workshops explain the reasons behind choices.
- The six priorities are connected and should be considered together rather than as separate programmes.

ONE COMMUNITY

A shared vision for 2036

By 2036, Cockburnspath, Cove and Old Cambus aim to be one thriving, connected and resilient rural community, proud of their distinct places and united by a shared sense of belonging. People of all ages should be able to find a home, travel safely, learn, work, participate and flourish.

The plan replaces a narrative of being “on the edge” with one of being “at the crossroads”. The community’s position between the Lammermuir Hills and the North Sea, beside major transport and energy infrastructure and close to an administrative boundary, is treated as a strategic strength. Daily life already crosses borders; planning, transport and service decisions need to do the same.

Six connected priorities

Priority	What the community wants to achieve
1 Housing	The right homes in the right places, with infrastructure and benefits that sustain the school, services and a balanced population.
2 Connections	Safer streets, improved active travel, reliable public and community transport, and planning that reflects cross-boundary journeys.
3 Young people	Protection for school and nursery, better childcare, more activities and places to meet, and a lasting voice in local decisions.
4 Wellbeing	Long-term planning for community assets, inclusive access, stronger local services, supported volunteers and strategic use of community benefit.
5 Environment	Protection of nature, landscape and heritage, practical climate action and energy development that addresses cumulative impacts.
6 Prosperity	Connected businesses and enterprises, proportionate tourism, routes into skills and work, and a lasting local economic legacy.

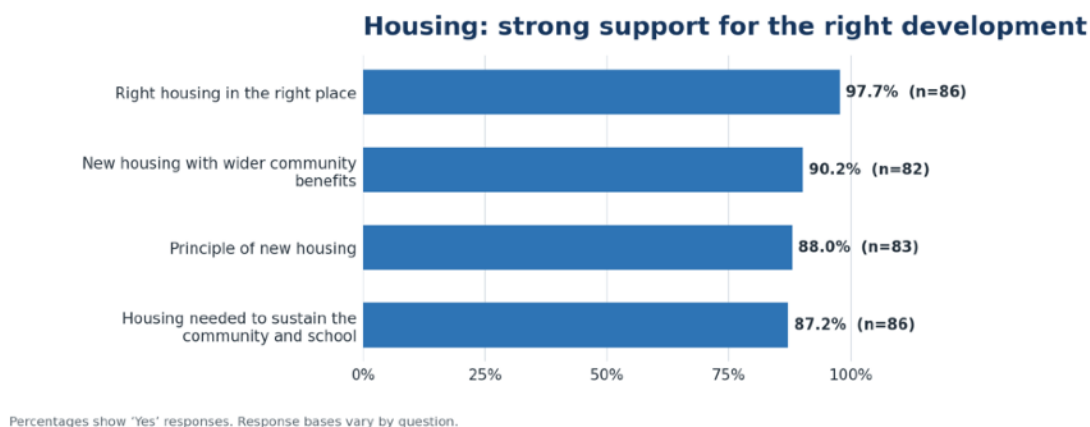
Principles running through the plan

- Growth should be thoughtful, proportionate and linked to community sustainability rather than pursued for its own sake.
- Children, older residents and people without easy access to a car should be able to participate fully in community life.
- Existing assets should be protected and better used before major new facilities are assumed to be the answer.
- Investment linked to housing, energy and infrastructure should leave visible, durable benefits within the community.
- Decisions should be open, evidence-led and shaped with local people.

HOUSING

Priority 1 Sustaining and growing the community

Housing is the foundation of the plan's wider ambitions. Residents connected the availability of suitable homes with retaining young people, attracting families, enabling older residents to stay locally, supporting the school and nursery, and sustaining services, businesses and voluntary life.



The figures show strong support for appropriate development, but the mandate is conditional. Residents want housing that meets identified needs, respects the landscape and character of Cockburnspath, and brings infrastructure and wider community benefit. Opinion on individual consented sites was more balanced, which suggests that quality, scale and benefit matter more than one preferred location.

What delivery should focus on

- Complete and bring forward existing consented sites before promoting significant new allocations elsewhere.
- Provide a balanced mix, including affordable homes, three-bedroom family homes, two-bedroom homes and smaller properties for one or two people.
- Require safe walking and cycling links, road capacity, health access and connections to the school and community facilities to keep pace with development.
- Promote energy-efficient, climate-resilient design that protects green space, biodiversity, views, heritage and village character.
- Create a Community Housing Delivery Plan and a Housing Liaison Group, then review local need every three to five years.

The community's test for new housing

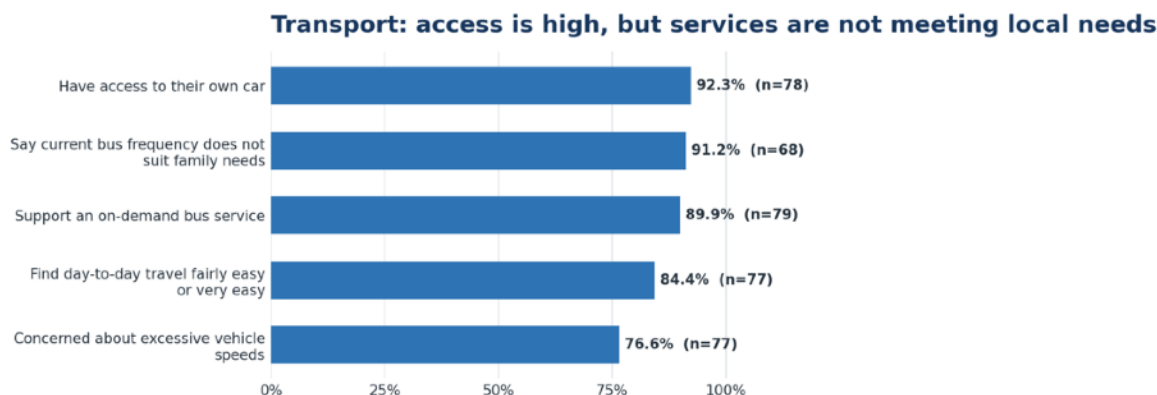
Test	Meaning
Sustainability before growth	Housing should help sustain the population, school, services and community life.
Quality before quantity	Design, affordability, landscape, resilience and infrastructure matter more than headline numbers.
Benefit before development	New homes should make a positive contribution to education, health, transport and community infrastructure.

By 2036, success would mean a wider choice of high-quality homes, stable or growing school and nursery enrolment, infrastructure delivered alongside housing, and a balanced population able to support local services and community life.

TRAFFIC TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

Priority 2 Connecting the community

Connectivity determines whether residents can reach work, education, healthcare, shopping, recreation and community life. The plan therefore looks beyond roads and buses to independence, inclusion, safety and the reality of everyday travel across council and national boundaries.



High car access can hide vulnerability. Cars are often shared by working adults, while young people, older residents and households without a vehicle depend on public transport and safe active travel. Residents travel frequently to Dunbar, Eyemouth, Duns, Berwick-upon-Tweed and Edinburgh, yet service planning does not always reflect those patterns.

Immediate priorities

- Review bus frequency, reliability and timetable coordination with operators and both local authorities.
- Explore demand-responsive and wider community transport for everyday journeys, not only hospital appointments.
- Improve communication about diversions, route changes and disruptions through digital and community channels.
- Prepare a Community Active Travel Plan covering walking, cycling and accessibility improvements.
- Secure targeted road-safety measures at the school, Village Hall, Community Shop, Hoprig Road, Callander Place and other identified locations.
- Build safe travel connections into new housing and development from the outset.

A practical approach

Principle	Delivery implication
Connectivity before convenience	Transport should open access to essential services and opportunities and reduce isolation.
Safety before speed	Prioritise crossings, pavements, signage, traffic management and well-maintained routes.
Integration before isolation	Coordinate transport across the Scottish Borders, East Lothian and neighbouring communities.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING

Priority 3 Investing in the next generation

The community wants every child and young person to feel safe, valued and connected, with opportunities to build friendships, learn skills, enjoy nature and influence local decisions. Protecting the school and nursery remains central, but the evidence also points to a significant gap beyond the school day.

Evidence	What it tells us
96.6% value continued pre-school childcare and education	Early years provision is fundamental to family life and long-term sustainability.
96.5% say the primary school is important to the village's future	Education, housing and population balance are closely connected.
87.5% identify the lack of after-school childcare as an issue	Families need practical support to balance work and caring responsibilities.
26 workshop attendances representing 24 young residents	Young people contributed directly rather than being represented only by adults.

What young people prioritised

- Better facilities for older children, supported by 76% of the older group.
- More clubs and organised activities, and more nature and outdoor activity, each supported by 62%.
- Parks, playgrounds and places to play, supported by 60%.
- Art, music, drama and creative activity, supported by 57%, and sport, supported by 52%.
- Places to meet friends, alongside practical ideas including a pump track.

The workshops also recorded a strong sense of belonging. Children described adults who know and look out for them, the freedom to walk to the shop or meet friends, pride in the natural environment and positive relationships across generations. Their first request was not for an expensive new building. It was for more opportunities and better use of the places the community already has.

Priority actions

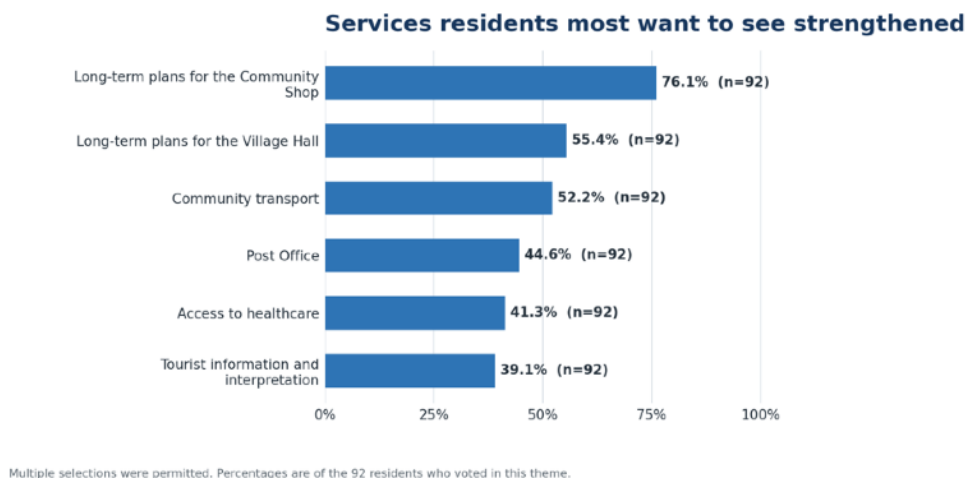
- Establish a year-round programme of clubs and activities and continue work on after-school childcare.
- Create a Children's and Young People's Advisory Group and embed younger voices in community planning.
- Improve informal meeting, youth-club and activity space in existing community venues.
- Direct Community Benefit Funding towards sustained youth provision, not only one-off projects.

Success by 2036 would mean a secure school and nursery, accessible childcare, regular activities, welcoming places to meet and a recognised role for young people in shaping the community.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Priority 4 Thriving together

Residents value the facilities and services they already have, but want a clearer long-term plan for maintaining them, widening access and making better use of available space. They also want gaps in healthcare and community transport to be addressed.



The Community Shop, Café, Village Hall, school, nursery and reliable digital connectivity are established assets. Better healthcare opportunities and wider community transport are development needs. The distinction matters because the plan must both protect what works and build what is missing.

What residents want to change

- Prepare a Community Assets and Facilities Plan covering condition, use, governance, costs, accessibility and future investment.
- Make facilities easier to use through clearer communication, simpler booking systems, inclusive programming and better coordination between venues.
- Expand activity in the Village Hall, including after-school provision, exercise, family events, seasonal celebrations and creative opportunities.
- Protect and strengthen the Community Shop and Café as services, meeting places, employers and anchors of community resilience.
- Improve access to healthcare, wider community transport and reliable digital services, with particular attention to people at risk of isolation.
- Support volunteers and community leaders while recognising that essential continuity cannot always depend on a small group of unpaid people.

Community benefit as long-term investment

The plan calls for a transparent Community Benefit Investment Framework. Funding should respond to evidence, include all ages, be communicated openly and, where possible, create lasting assets, services, income or savings. Modest investment in activities, youth work, outdoor programmes or creative opportunities may deliver as much community value as a major capital project.

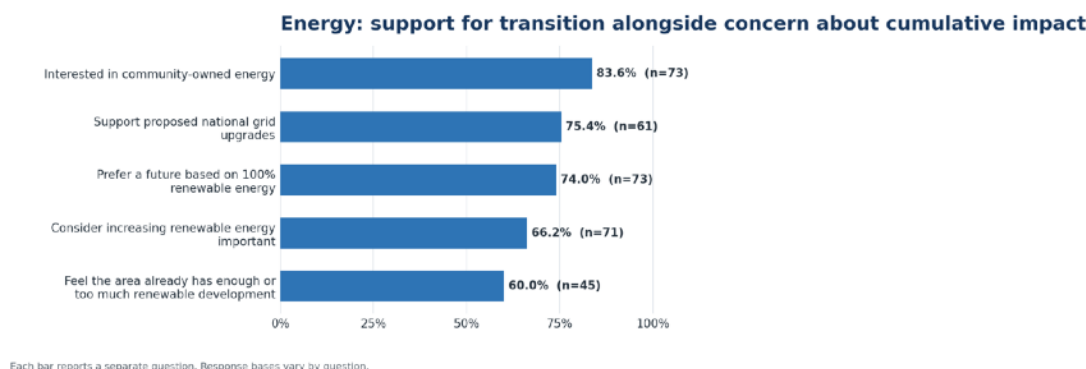
What inclusion means

Better use of community assets should widen access for residents of every age and help people feel welcome, included and part of the community. Children and young people need particular attention because access, trust, relationships and the freedom to participate are as important as the buildings themselves.

CLIMATE NATURE AND HERITAGE

Priority 5 Caring for the environment

The coastline, countryside, wildlife and heritage are central to local identity and quality of life. Residents support practical environmental action and the transition to renewable energy, while asking for stronger attention to cumulative impact, community ownership and a fair local legacy.



Support for renewable energy sits alongside concern that the area already carries a substantial share of development. Future wind, offshore, grid, solar and storage proposals should therefore be assessed together, with attention to landscape, seascape, wildlife, farmland, roads and communities.

A balanced environmental programme

Action	First focus
Nature and biodiversity plan	Map habitats and priorities, involve residents and young people, improve wildlife areas and address litter.
Climate resilience and flooding	Identify local risks, improve coordination and link land, drainage and development decisions.
Energy efficiency	Connect households and community buildings with practical advice, funding and retrofit support.
Community-beneficial energy	Engage early, address cumulative impacts and test credible ownership or shared-investment models.
Landscape and heritage	Protect important places and views while improving understanding and responsible access.
Food growing and stewardship	Build on the Community Garden, allotments, composting and opportunities for shared learning.

Assets to protect and celebrate

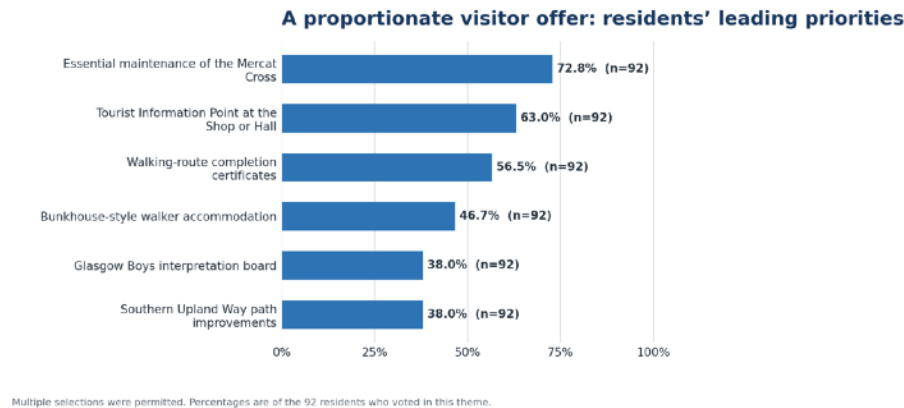
The plan recognises internationally important geology associated with James Hutton, the landscapes connected with the Glasgow Boys, the coastline and countryside, and sites including the Mercat Cross, Fast Castle, Cockburnspath Tower, Dunglass, St Helen's Church and the Hogback stones. These assets support identity, learning and proportionate visitor activity, but protection must remain the starting point.

By 2036, success would mean healthier nature, greater climate resilience, practical household and community action, stronger stewardship and energy investment that local people can influence and benefit from.

ECONOMY TOURISM AND COMMUNITY WEALTH

Priority 6 Building a prosperous future

The economic aim is to retain more value locally. That means connecting businesses and community enterprises, helping visitors use local services responsibly, creating routes into skills and employment, and securing a lasting legacy from major energy and infrastructure investment.



Residents do not seek tourism at any cost. They favour a proportionate offer that helps people already walking and cycling through the area to understand its stories, find facilities, stay longer where appropriate and spend locally without adding unacceptable pressure.

Five delivery strands

Strand	Practical direction
Local business network	Map businesses, producers, trades and accommodation; build a directory; improve links to advice, funding and procurement.
Tourism and heritage	Audit routes and facilities; improve information and interpretation; explore certificates, trails and modest walker accommodation.
Community enterprise	Plan for the Shop and Café, test additional services and create more opportunities for local producers and makers.
Skills and employment	Link schools, colleges, employers and major projects to work experience, mentoring, training and apprenticeships.
Community wealth legacy	Set expectations for local procurement, jobs, skills, ownership and investment that creates durable assets or income.

Community enterprise already shows the way

The Community Shop is rated very important to future sustainability by 83.8% of respondents; 74.3% support improvement or expansion over five years, and 92.6% believe its loss would affect them or the village. Together with the Café, it provides services, work, volunteering, local products and a place to meet. Its value is social as well as financial.

Success by 2036 would mean visible and connected local businesses, sustainable community enterprises, responsible tourism, better pathways into work and a greater share of the value generated in and around the area remaining within the community.

ACTION FRAMEWORK

Turning priorities into delivery

The Place Plan is ambitious, but its approach is practical. Early work should establish the partnerships, plans and evidence needed to unlock delivery. Medium-term work should turn those foundations into projects and investment. Long-term progress will depend on open review and the ability to adapt as circumstances change.

Phase	Priority work
Start now 1 to 3 years	Set up the Housing Liaison Group and housing delivery work; review bus services and community transport; prepare active-travel priorities; establish youth activity and advisory arrangements; begin asset, investment, nature and business planning.
Build delivery 3 to 5 years	Secure targeted road-safety and access improvements; expand childcare and youth provision; improve facilities and booking systems; progress energy-efficiency, biodiversity, heritage and visitor projects; develop skills and procurement pathways.
Sustain change 5 to 10 years	Review housing need and delivery; maintain cross-boundary transport cooperation; embed young people in decision-making; protect and renew community assets; pursue climate resilience and credible community ownership; monitor the local legacy of major development.

Who needs to work together

Community leadership will sit alongside partnership with Scottish Borders Council and, where cross-boundary matters arise, East Lothian Council. Delivery will also require NHS and care partners, schools and skills bodies, transport operators, housing associations, landowners, developers, local businesses, community organisations, environmental and heritage bodies, funders, energy companies and infrastructure providers.

A simple governance cycle

1. Confirm a clear lead, supporting partners, first task and realistic timescale for each action.
2. Use the full Place Plan evidence when seeking funding, negotiating development or commissioning further work.
3. Publish progress in a form residents can understand, including what has moved, what is delayed and why.
4. Review priorities regularly and update actions when new evidence, opportunities or constraints emerge.

Early decisions that will unlock several priorities

- Agree how Community Benefit Funding will be assessed, communicated and aligned with the Place Plan.
- Create a coordinated evidence and project pipeline so community groups are ready when funding opens.
- Open regular cross-boundary conversations on transport, services and economic opportunity.
- Invest in the capacity of volunteers and community organisations to lead delivery without burnout.

2036 OUTCOMES

What success will look like

Success will not be measured by funding secured or projects completed alone. The test is whether daily life improves, whether people of all ages can participate and belong, and whether development and investment leave a fair and lasting local benefit.

Outcome	Signs of progress
Homes and population	A wider choice of suitable homes, stronger population balance, and stable or growing school and nursery enrolment.
Movement and access	Safer streets and crossings, better walking and cycling routes, reliable transport and improved cross-boundary coordination.
Young people	Accessible childcare, regular clubs and activities, welcoming places to meet and a continuing voice in decisions.
Facilities and wellbeing	Secure community assets, easier access and booking, stronger services, supported volunteers and less isolation.
Environment and energy	Healthier habitats, practical climate resilience, protected heritage and local influence over energy development and benefit.
Local prosperity	Visible businesses, sustainable community enterprises, responsible tourism, skills pathways and more value retained locally.

The central message

Cockburnspath, Cove and Old Cambus already possess many of the ingredients of a strong rural future: a deep sense of belonging, valued community enterprises, remarkable natural and cultural heritage, active volunteers, strategic transport links and a community willing to engage. The Place Plan asks partners to recognise that strength and respond to clear local evidence.

Its six priorities form one programme. Suitable housing supports the school and services. Safe transport connects people with opportunity. Investment in young people strengthens belonging and long-term sustainability. Well-used facilities support health and participation. Environmental stewardship protects the qualities residents value. A stronger local economy helps investment circulate within the area.

The next stage is disciplined delivery: protect existing assets, address missing services, build partnerships across boundaries and use every major investment to create benefits that endure. The full Place Plan provides the detailed evidence and action framework for that work.

Use of this précis

This précis is designed for residents, delivery partners and funders who need a concise overview. The complete Place Plan remains the authoritative source for detailed consultation results, comments, action descriptions, delivery partners and supporting evidence.