Feasibility study for a proposed Scottish Borders National Park
1. **Introduction**

1.1 This independent study has been commissioned by the Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park to examine the evidence for and feasibility of the proposal that an area of the Scottish Borders be formally considered for designation as a new National Park.

1.2 The Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park identified seven objectives for this study.

1. To provide a well substantiated case for designation of an area of the Southern Scottish Borders as a National Park drawing on the archaeological, geographical, geological, topographical, environmental, cultural, historic, architectural, industrial, agricultural, forestry and land ownership and management attributes of the area, and any other relevant consideration.

2. To set out and critique the various options of models for governance, funding and operations and make a recommendation.

3. To discuss, backed up with suitable case study data, the likely consequences of designation of the area in terms of protection of the natural and cultural heritage, and the socio-economic impact on the proposed area and “gateway” areas around it.

4. To draw on experience in other National Parks and other relevant research to give a preliminary assessment of the possible financial and fiscal benefits and balance them against the possible costs of a) implementation and b) operation over the first 10 years.

5. To discuss the pros and cons of where, in principle, the boundaries might lie, and the consequences of including or excluding the towns in the area within the designated National Park.

6. To give a preliminary assessment of procedures and possible timescales for legislating for and then procuring and implementing a proposed Scottish Borders National Park.

7. To adequately address the points raised by Scottish Borders Council (see Appendix 7) and indicate where in the study these points are addressed.

1.3 No name has been agreed for the project and terms like Borders National Park or Southern Borders National Park are working titles. It is accepted that ‘A Scottish Borders National Park’ may be the name that delivers the greatest benefits to the whole area.

1.4 The map accompanying the study brief covers a proposed National Park area of approximately 1000km² in the southern section of the Scottish Borders Council area comprising Teviot and Liddesdale, Cheviot and part of Eildon.

1.5 This area is by no means definitive. It is taken as a working proposal for the purposes of this report. Boundary issues and options are discussed further in Section 9.

---

Roxburgh to Kelso railway line, now a pathway © Frank Wielbo
2 Study outcomes

2.1 The study outcomes are defined within the seven objectives in 1.2 above.

2.2 It is worth noting that Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, made it clear in Parliament in September and December 2016, that there are no current plans to designate new National Parks in Scotland. She said:

"While the Scottish Government recognises the important contribution our existing National Parks make to tourism, conservation and the wider Scottish economy, any new national parks would incur significant costs. At a time of pressures on public finances, we do not believe that it is right to raise expectations regarding the designation of new national parks. We will therefore continue to focus our support on our existing Parks so that they can continue their track record of success.” Official Account 19 December 2016. (See Appendix 6 for other NP comments by Ministers and MSPs.)

2.3 But, Ministers have not ruled out new parks in Scotland and they have a duty to consider proposals put before them. Parks are very popular with the public and most people would like to see more\(^2\). Hence the need for the evidence in this study that a National Park in the Southern Borders is entirely in line with Government priority of creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

2.4 Government must also respond, with policy measures and investment, to major strategic shifts like changes in support systems, market movements precipitated by events like the Brexit referendum and climate change. The Scottish National Park model is adaptable and can respond, for example, to strengthen the rural economy, enrich people’s lives and care for the natural world.

2.5 The formal process for establishing a new National Park in Scotland is set down in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. If satisfied there is sufficient merit in a proposed case for a new park, Scottish Ministers may trigger a 10-stage process (see Section 14 for more details) involving formal consultation and evidence gathering possibly with a Public Local Enquiry (PLI).

2.6 Scotland has only two national parks, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs (LLTNP) designated in 2002 and the Cairngorms (CNP) 2003 respectively, both of which are administered by their own NDPB (non-departmental public body) National Park Authority (NPA). Beyond an unsuccessful bid for a National Park in Harris in 2009, no new formal proposals have emerged.

2.7 That said, the Scottish Campaign for National Parks (SCNP) and the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland (APRS) have been actively promoting the case for more parks (Mayhew 2013) including one in the Cheviot area (see Appendix 9). There has been exploratory work on a park in Galloway (SUP 2016) and interest has been shown in a Glasgow National City Park.

2.8 For a new National Park proposal in the Southern Borders area to be successful, much depends on gaining SBC support and wider public endorsement and convincingly demonstrating that the proposal will become a significant and credible rural ‘industry’ as part of a wider vision making a difference to people and communities.

\(^2\) In a 2013 survey 93 percent of those surveyed agreed that the UK’s National Parks are areas of national importance.
3 Study methodology

Research

3.1 This report draws on existing and evolving materials and feedback collected by the Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park, SCNP and APRS or published by public authorities. The report sets out in more detail the special qualities of the area which was prepared using local expertise and knowledge.

3.2 Using published reports, papers and minutes, the methodology reflects on learning points from the strategic and operational experience and issues that have arisen in the two existing parks.

3.3 This report also references relevant studies and policies of National Parks in England and Wales and international experience. Lessons are drawn from Scotland and beyond where other types of protected area status, including National Scenic Area, Biosphere Reserves and Regional Parks, have been planned and/or adopted.

3.4 Sources include official published reports from Scottish Borders Council and other public agencies like VisitScotland and Scottish Natural Heritage. References to prevailing values and attitudes that shape National Parks worldwide come from writers and academics including Campbell 2011, Farrell 2015, Jones and Wills 2005, Sheail 2010, Tweed 2010 and Reynolds 2016. Academic journals and other report references are included, where appropriate.

Contributions

3.5 The Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park has used public meetings and posting material online to seek public opinion – this is summarised in Appendix 8. During this study, selected specialists and opinion formers were consulted. However, a full public consultation of Border residents was not undertaken as part of this report.

3.6 The study identified different needs amongst individuals, groups and communities, both locally and more widely, to assess whether the proposal would make a positive contribution to residents and the people of Scotland.

3.7 Most consultees gave personal comments. Employees of public bodies that take their lead from Government were only able give general views. Comments are not attributed to consultees.

Approach

3.8 In considering part of the Scottish Borders for park status, this report ‘sets the scene’ on National Parks in Section 4. Sections 5 and 6 examine the ‘special qualities’ of the area and its socio-economic circumstances. Section 7 considers how the area might ‘fit’ the conditions laid down in the National Parks (Scotland) Act of 2000.

3.9 Section 8 examines ‘Why a National Park’ could be a valuable tool to address the area’s needs. Section 9 considers options for park powers and governance arrangements, while Section 10 looks at boundary options and challenges in Section 11. Section 12 reviews possible ‘Other options’ instead of a National Park and Section 13 draws conclusions. Further information is contained in the appendices.

*Scottish Ministers will carry out their own consultations if proposals are taken forward.
“We are already experiencing a decline in biodiversity and an increasing fragility of our environmental assets”
SBC 2017

“The Anglo-Scottish frontier is arguably the most beautiful, and certainly the most bloodstained, region of Britain”
Fraser 2000

“The Borders offers a cost competitive location and an excellent quality of life”
New Ways Partners 2011
4
Background to National Parks in Scotland

Summary

• National Park Act (Scotland) 2000. National parks in England and Wales date from 1951
• Two existing NPs in Scotland – Loch Lomond and Trossachs and Cairngorms. 15 NPs in UK
• About achieving a balance – communities and economy as important as the environment
• No ‘one size fits all’ model – opportunity to shape model to the area’s needs
• Time for a change?
4.1 In an independent study on the feasibility of a new National Park for the Southern Borders it is important to understand the roots of National Parks in Scotland and the purpose of the enabling legislation. England (10 parks) and Wales (3 parks) have had National Parks since 1951, with the 10th and most recent being the South Downs in 2011. Scotland has two National Parks (2002 and 2003) which cover 7.2% of Scotland’s land area, compared with 9.3% of England and 19.9% of Wales.

4.2 In Scotland, before 1997, despite a range of committees and studies, including the Ramsay Reports in 1945 and 1947, and wider public support, a lack of political will and patchy local enthusiasm for National Parks combined to prevent their establishment (Warren 2009).

4.3 The evolution of National Parks in Scotland is set out in the SCNP/APRS report Unfinished Business (Mayhew 2013) and by Warren (2009) and Reynolds (2016). Readers of this report are referred to these authors for accounts of past and ongoing debate. Appendix 1 sets an international context.

4.4 The devolution settlement of 1997 provided the necessary political conditions for a Scottish model. The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 provides the enabling legislation. Thus, the newly elected Scottish Government quickly passed legislation and established Loch Lomond and Trossachs in 2002 and the Cairngorms in 2003.

4.5 The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 gives our National Parks the following aims:

1. to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage;
2. to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
3. to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
4. to promote sustainable social and economic development of the communities of the area.

4.6 Rennie (2007) believed the post devolution institutional ‘nation-building’ agenda, was a key factor in securing the unanimous support of the Scottish Parliament for the Act, and this agenda took greater prominence than developing an IUCN type nature-based culture in our National Parks (see Appendix 1 – What is a National Park?). However, the Act embraces a revised conservation paradigm ‘the working landscape’. A concept which has the capacity to evolve, but also to divide opinion.
4.7 Stockdale and Barker (2007) note similarities to park legislation in England and Wales, but emphasise that Scottish parks arose from a very different developmental heritage and were always intended to combine environmental management with local rural development. From Donald Dewar’s first commitment to Scottish National Parks in 1997, the Act’s distinctiveness was emphasised: ‘We are not…’ Dewar declared, ‘... talking about importing the English model... of National Parks into Scotland. We are looking for a unique Scottish solution to meet the particular requirements of Scotland’ (Rennie 2007).

4.8 Dewar sought balance. ‘We want to establish proper control of visitors and associated issues. The land erosion and damage to tree roots, which can be seen, and the problem of water skiing on Loch Lomond, are good examples of why we must strike a balance. The point of a national park is to create and enforce that balance.’ (Official Report 10 February 2000). Seventeen years on and that balance is still evolving.

4.9 Sarah Boyack MSP, then the Minister responsible for the Act, commented in 2000 that ‘An integrated rather than a sectoral approach is needed to manage these pressures in a way which minimizes the conflicts and maximizes the benefits’. Warren (2009 p219) was more direct when he said ‘The new National Park Authorities inherit an inspiring but unenviable challenge as they set out along uncharted tightropes amidst the crosswinds of high expectations, multiple objectives and conflicting demands. The battle for NPs in Scotland has been won. Ahead now lies the challenge of making them realise their positive potential’.

4.10 When compared to other countries, the fourth aim in the Scottish legislation is highly distinctive, as is ‘sustainable’ in the second aim; although the word is not defined. The fourth aim addresses concerns that parks would be overwhelmingly about ‘conservation’ and recognises that parks in Scotland will inevitably encompass communities, businesses, privately owned homes, property and land with a long standing economic and social worth safeguarded by ‘human rights’ and ‘natural justice’.

Securing a balance

4.11 National Park Authorities (NPAs) are charged with securing this balance and the long-term interests of the park by ensuring that the aims are collectively achieved in a coordinated way. How they will do this is set out in the statutory National Park Partnership Plans (NPPP). Other public bodies are required to ‘have regard’ for the aims when exercising their statutory and policy function. (This does not mean the aims are binding; but they must be given proper consideration and included in any associated plans).

4.12 Achievement of one aim should not undermine the achievement of another. All four aims are part of a common integrated purpose. Within the spirit of the legislation, the starting point in any decision-making process must be to work towards a solution which achieves all four aims.

4.13 However, where there might be irreconcilable conflict between aims, the Act’s Section 9(6) guides the NPA to give greater weight to protecting the area’s natural and cultural heritage (the first aim). Sometimes called the ‘Sandford principle’ as it is like a clause introduced to English and Welsh legislation by Lord Sandford’s committee in 1974.

4.14 Critics, mainly from the conservation ranks, would like to see more frequent application of the ‘Sandford Principle’ in Scottish NPA decisions as weight in support of the first aim. But its application is not straightforward and is being defined in case law.

4.15 For example, in his written opinion on an Appeal to the Court of Session in September 2012 Lord Glennie said: ‘That greater weight need not necessarily be decisive. Further, greater weight only has to be given to that aim where that aim is in conflict with one or more of the other aims identified in s.1(a) of the Act. The Act contemplates that in many cases there will not be any conflict’. (Glennie 2012)

90% of the public say that NPs are important to them.

4.16 Secondary legislation, normally a Designations, Transitional and Consequential Provisions Order, sets out the detail on NPA constitution, functions and powers and how and when they can be interpreted and exercised. The Scottish model means no one size fits all and secondary orders are intended to address different area characteristics and management.
4.17 Although relative newcomers to the National Park ‘family’ LLTNP and CNP quickly encountered the social, political, economic, and ecological complexity and change that characterises National Parks worldwide. Scottish National Park Authorities (NPAs) are seeking new approaches, through collaboration and partnerships, and new sources of income.

4.18 The two parks are both, fundamentally, new rural service-delivery methods. National Park Partnership Plans address visitor experience, rural development and conservation with a statutory commitment to planning and access. LLTNPA has full planning powers and the CNPA has call in powers.

4.19 But, the two NPAs have adopted different management approaches and organisational structures. For example, LLTNPA directly provides visitor services – Ranger Service (one of the largest Ranger Services in the UK), Loch Patrol, boat launching sites, visitor centres etc – the NPA having taken over infrastructure and established services around Loch Lomond. Recently, bye laws to control loch-side camping have been approved by Ministers.

4.20 In the Cairngorms, delivery is mainly carried out in partnership and collaboration with others and no rangers are directly employed by the CNPA nor do they have assets like park visitor Centres, car parks or toilets. Table 10.3 in section 10 shows the headline 17/18 budget allocations for both NPAs illustrating the differences.

4.21 Challenges for the parks include a growing emphasis on tourism development and branding, changing community demands and environmental pressures due to growth, economic turmoil and a reduction of available resources. Scottish Government priorities are built around achieving sustainable economic growth – not a new concept for parks. Wallace Stegner (1909 – 93) US writer and environmentalist said ‘if we preserved as parks only those places that have no economic possibilities, we would have no parks’. New, smaller bodies, like NPAs, can respond more rapidly, be more flexible and be open to new ideas. Equally, they can be subject to scrutiny and criticism from pressure groups.

4.22 Both NPAs are focused on innovation and attracting more of their own income and project based funding. Long term action on affordable housing allocations for local people, large scale habitat improvements, access network maintenance and socio-economic and ecological monitoring loom large in NPA programmes and still require core public finance. grant-in-aid budget reductions make it harder to sustain some aspects of park aims and governance, but do stimulate thinking on economic justifications, leaner structures and new sources of funding.

Engagement in regional, cross border and international collaboration...

Time for a Change

4.23 In 2008, the Minister intimated ‘our openness of mind on future structures’ for National Parks. This openness of mind is highly relevant for Borders because it allows for simpler, lower cost options to be proposed. And, as Scottish Land and Estates note, “Brexit and other pressure means if our rural areas are to thrive, public and private investment must be delivered in different ways.

4.24 ‘The Scottish Government recognises that natural capital contributes to a fairer society, a more sustainable economy, and a healthier environment’

(First Minister, in her opening speech to the World Forum on Natural Capital, 2015).

* A new direction for Scottish land management SLE 2017
5 Challenges and needs

Summary

The Scottish Borders has a ‘mixed’ score card - showing some growth overall but looming signs of underlying key weaknesses e.g.:

- Fewer young people and those of working age
- Rapid increase in proportions of older people – much greater than Scottish averages
- Lower GVA per head than Scottish average
- Higher proportion of micro enterprises than Scottish average and less innovation
- Low levels of digital connectivity
- Road Condition Index showing roads in worse condition than other rural areas
- Higher average house prices, lower average incomes than the Scottish average
- Biodiversity decline

Larger numbers of lower spend day visitors compared to higher spending tourists

Twin track Borders. Tweeddale, Eldon and Berwickshire compared to Cheviot, Teviot and Liddesdale where there is:

- Lower economic performance
- Greater social needs
- Greater population loss and health challenges
Introduction

5.1 To address the Campaign’s desire for a well substantiated case for a National Park designation in the Southern Borders - understanding the economic and social challenges and needs of the area is essential. Establishing if there is a fit with national and regional policy direction is also important as any proposal must embrace an integrated approach.

5.2 The whole Scottish Borders Council area is 473,614 hectares (1,827 square miles). Located in the South East of Scotland, Edinburgh and the Lothians is to the North, Northumberland to the South and Dumfries and Galloway to the West.

5.3 The estimated population for the Scottish Borders was 114,030 in 2014: an increase of 0.1% from 113,870 in 2013. Predominantly rural, only two towns, Galashiels (12,670) and Hawick (14,003), have more than 10,000 residents and 30% of the population lives in settlements of under 500 people or in isolated hamlets. The area is the fourth most sparsely-populated mainland local authority area in Scotland. In February 2017, Scottish Borders Council budget plans included a five-year revenue plan of £1.3 billion and a ten-year capital plan of £321 million.

5.4 Although the total population in the Borders has grown steadily over the last 10 years and is predicted to grow further, the proportion of the population which is in the working range has remained in the region of 61% since 2001 (lower than the Scottish average of 66% in 2010). Only 13.5% of the Borders population are aged 16 to 29 years: the Scottish average is 18.3%.

5.5 Between 2010 and 2035 the National Records of Scotland project a 10.6% increase in population for the Scottish Borders from 112,870 to 124,824 with an almost 50% increase in those over 64 and a 100% increase in those over 75. Table 5.1. There are significant minorities of single and widowed people, particularly women, who are surviving into extreme old age. There will be a rapid acceleration of care needs over the next two decades alongside a significant decline in the care providing age groups.

5.6 The projected change in the Borders by broad age group highlights the ageing population and the reduction in people of working age (both in terms of proportions and numbers). This demographic profile has major implications on the future delivery of services, especially social services, on the future workforce and on economic development in the Borders.

### Table 5.1: Population change in the Scottish Borders 2010 -35

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2035</th>
<th>Projected Change (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td>19,880</td>
<td>21,458</td>
<td>+7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-29</td>
<td>15,570</td>
<td>17,094</td>
<td>+9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>29,544</td>
<td>26,773</td>
<td>-9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>24,996</td>
<td>20,561</td>
<td>-17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>12,633</td>
<td>18,603</td>
<td>+47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>10,247</td>
<td>20,335</td>
<td>+98.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economic challenges

5.7 The Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita is significantly lower in the Scottish Borders compared to Scotland and the UK. GVA per head fell between 2007 and 2013 – from 72% to 70% of Scottish average; average weekly wages also slipped. Most recent (2014) data shows that jobs in the Borders, at £456 per week, pay below the Scottish average of £519 and the UK average of £518. Many in the region commute to better-paid jobs in Edinburgh and the Lothians, Berwickshire and Northumberland raising the area average.

5.8 In 2014, the GVA per capita for the Scottish Borders was £17,180 compared to £23,102 for Scotland and £24,958 for the UK. GVA per head is not an entirely accurate measure of regional productivity as the population estimates used to calculate it include economically inactive people. However, if the gap between the regional and national average continues to grow so does the risk of an unbalanced economy vulnerable to external factors.

5.9 Compared with Scotland, the Scottish Borders has a higher proportion of mainly small enterprises in agriculture, forestry and fishing – 24% of all enterprises in the Borders – compared to 10% in Scotland. Total employment in these industries is holding relatively steady at 7% (1.7% Scottish average) of the Border workforce, but few net new jobs have been created as the overall economy has expanded. Borders agriculture will probably continue to employ fewer people as it becomes increasingly efficient and automated. Farming support is facing an uncertain future post-Brexit.

5.10 Taking forestry as an example, large parts of the proposed National Park area are afforested but limited added value is created locally. In the
The Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita is significantly lower in the Scottish Borders compared to Scotland and the UK.

‘macro region’ of the Borderlands (SBC, Cumbria, Northumberland and Dumfries and Galloway) forestry, employed 7,343 people in 2013, but only 6% are employed in the Scottish Borders compared to 48% in Cumbria and 28% in Northumberland. The Scottish Government wants woodland cover to go from 17% to 25% by 2050 and if, post Brexit, forestry prospects improve some additional planting will be in the Southern Borders, but how much added value it will bring to the area is unclear.

5.11 Generally, employment in non-service industries like manufacturing in the Borders has fallen, as it has over Scotland. Nevertheless, between 2010 and 2015 the Scottish Borders economic turnover increased by £313 million a significant 10.9% increase above the 1.3% increase for Scotland. But in Hawick for example, where textile manufacture was dominant, replacement economic activity has been slow to emerge and social disadvantage is growing.

5.12 The Scottish Borders has a similar proportion of micro/small businesses compared to Scotland (94% vs. 96%), however micro/small enterprises account for 47% of turnover in the Scottish Borders compared to 24% for Scotland. Most of the micro / small businesses have less than 10 employees. The decline of larger employers has forced self-reliance, but consequently created features of low pay, job insecurity and seasonality.

5.13 The lower proportion of enterprises in professional, scientific and technical activities may adversely affect the GVA for the Scottish Borders. SBC considers that the area needs to strengthen the key sectors of food and drink, tourism, textiles, creative and digital arts, if it is to have similar levels of growth to that experienced nationally and notes a relative lack of cutting edge commercial innovation.

5.14 Growing businesses require good digital connectivity. For example, the tourism industry reports that 68% of visitors use smart phones to access information while in Scotland. The Scottish Borders faces huge challenges in terms of physical, digital and mobile connectivity.

• 10Mb/s is the universal service obligation by the UK Government and 24% of premises in the Borders are unable to receive connections with this speed;
• 47.8% of Scottish Borders premises have no 4G signal and 83% of the Scottish Borders geographic area has no reliable 4G coverage from any operator;
• Visitor satisfaction with digital connectivity in the Borders (mobile phone, free wifi and 3G/4G) was amongst the lowest of all Scottish regions in the VisitScotland 2015/16 survey.

5.15 Tourism and other growing businesses require good transport connectivity and the Borders rail line to Tweedbank is welcome. But the condition of roads in the Scottish Borders is deteriorating faster than in other rural areas, according to an SBC study published in 2015. The Road Condition Index (RCI) for the Borders became worse from 2013 – 15 with more routes rated as red (poor condition). Furthermore, the A68 only achieves trunk status at the Border and being locally maintained in England may mean ‘sat-nav’ users are directed onto other routes by-passing the area. Currently, the Borders does not provide a great choice for electric vehicle users to charge their vehicles. As of March 2016, there were 35 public electric car charging points in the Borders, of which seven are Rapid. But Tewit and Liddesdale only have two and Cheviot six.

5.16 Overall, the Borders is seeing a broader transition from a commodity-based to a services and knowledge-based economy and this trend is likely to continue. More residents than the Scottish average earn below £10,000 but a higher proportion than average earn more than £30,000. Workless household numbers have declined although there are still 6,000 across the region and pockets of persistent deprivation remain. The outlook is mixed, but many of the long-term challenges and weaknesses in economic and social conditions are more acute in the Southern Borders than elsewhere in Scotland.
Fragile communities and inequalities?

5.17 Scottish Borders Council usefully gathers socio-economic data for six geographical localities, Berwickshire, Cheviot, Eildon, Teviot and Liddesdale, and Tweeddale. By identifying and analysing local trends, and comparing these with the national picture, insights into the current economic ‘make-up’ of each area’s needs are achieved.

4.5 million people live within a two-hour drive time of the central Scottish Borders. Nearly 8 million people live within a three-hour drive time.

5.18 Of primary concern are the special socio-economic needs of the proposed National Park area in the Southern Borders defined as Teviot and Liddesdale, Cheviot and part of Eildon.

5.19 Cheviot is the smallest locality in Scottish Borders, with the second-smallest population. Teviot and Liddesdale is the smallest of the five Scottish Borders localities in terms of population yet 85% of the population live in the locality’s main town of Hawick and in the two larger villages of Denholm and Newcastleton. The largest of the proposed National Park area options is approximately 1000km² with some 20,000 residents, if Hawick is included.

5.20 Teviot and Liddesdale is the only locality in the Borders losing population over the past 10 years, mostly due to population migration from Hawick, whereas the population in the rural parts of the locality has increased. The GVA per capita in the Borders is lower than for Scotland which in turn suggests the GVA for the Teviot and Liddesdale area will be lower still.

5.21 Looking more closely at some output areas in the proposed National Park area of Cheviot, Teviot and Liddesdale (Census Local Output areas numbers 95619, 94960, 94959, 94968, 95620, 94983, 95001, 94998) data shows that population trends facing the wider Borders area are more pronounced here. In the proposed National Park area, numbers of 16-29 years’ age group are around half the Scottish average and age groups 60-74 years are significantly above the Scottish average.

5.22 Galashiels, Tweedbank and Melrose are enjoying a recent boost from the Borders rail link and Melrose has the highest footfall rate per 1000 residents, four times that of Hawick, and reflecting its tourism activity. Kelso saw a 27% increase in average weekly footfall 2012-15 in the town centre, whereas Hawick saw a drop of 42%, suggesting major leakage from the Teviot economy and/or a slowdown in visitors to the area.

5.23 The proposed National Park area could already see less discretionary spending by residents than in other parts of the Borders. Towns like Peebles and Melrose seem to enjoy non-employment spending power, largely investment and retirement income, held by comparatively wealthy retirees living in the area, which appears to benefit local shops, restaurants and trades.

5.24 61.5% of households in the Scottish Borders are owner-occupiers: this is the most typical tenure type in the region, although around average for Scotland. The Scottish Borders has a more active private rented sector than the Scottish average and a higher proportion who live “rent free”, per the 2011 Census. This may include those in tied housing, whose accommodation is provided with their job; this arrangement is typically found in the agricultural and rural estate communities that are more common in Scottish Borders than elsewhere in Scotland.

5.25 Average house prices across the Borders tend to track above the Scottish average. £176,700 compared to £168,495 for the third quarter of 2016/17, while average incomes are well below. Domestic property prices in the proposed National Park area are lower. Newcastleton, (per rightmove.co.uk February 2017) with an overall average price of £157,177 was more expensive than nearby Hawick (£96,323), Jedburgh (£148,257) and Selkirk (£127,009).

5.26 A lower level of economic activity in the proposed National Park area is both a weakness and an opportunity as it means that office, commercial and industrial floor space and employment land is very competitively priced compared to other areas. And, unlike most other National Parks in the UK, there appears to be a good stock of lower priced properties available to rent and buy.
The VisitScotland survey in 2011 showed that 50% of overnight visitors to the Scottish Borders were from England, Wales and NI.

Tourism opportunities and challenges

5.27 4.5 million people live within a two-hour drive time of the central Scottish Borders. Nearly 8 million people live within a three-hour drive time. Tourism is a key sector in the Scottish Borders economy and is facing both opportunities and challenges. Tourism would be central to the proposed National Park local economy.

5.28 There is some debate over volume and value of tourism statistics for the Scottish Borders. SBC use STEAM\(^4\) derived data while Scottish Government and VisitScotland use the Great Britain Tourism Survey, the International Passenger Survey and direct survey techniques\(^5\) in calculating their data so their figures are different and not directly comparable.

5.29 The SBC STEAM survey estimates an economic impact of £194 million annually, supporting approximately 4000 jobs (2015)\(^6\). About 1.8 million people visited the Scottish Borders in 2015, spending 3.5 million days in the area. Of these, 1.15 million were day visitors\(^7\).

5.30 The Midlothian & Scottish Borders Tourism Destination Audit 2015, commissioned by SBC and Midlothian Council to identify tourism business development opportunities arising from the Borders Railway, noted three main issues to be addressed to underpin business development opportunities through the railway: Coordination of Business Communications, Winning Hearts & Minds, and Capacity.

5.31 The new railway has attracted more passengers than were anticipated and, STEAM data suggests, early impact results are positive. When comparing Jan-June 2015 with Jan-June 2016 (pre-and post-Borders Railway opening) figures from Borders STEAM for January 2017, show:

- The number of visitor days in hotels and bed and breakfasts has risen by 27%.
- A 20% rise in visitor spend on food and drink.
- Visitor spend on accommodation is up 17%.
- A 16% rise in overall visitor spend.
- The number of days that visitors stayed in the Borders has increased by almost 11%.
- An 8% increase in employment related to tourism.

5.32 Despite this welcome data some stakeholders believe that, so far, the economic benefits from the Borders railway are limited and many places and businesses have not reported a significant uplift in trade. Reopening the rest of the line to Carlisle would be likely to improve prospects\(^8\) for Southern Borders and towns like Hawick, but that opportunity is a decade or more away. The 2015 Audit on the first section of the railway to Tweedbank concluded:

“The railway will not deliver tourism benefits if every business sits back and waits for someone else to take the lead in initiating the development of new products and services. It will not deliver tourism benefits if every business sits in its own little silo and only collaborates with others in the same sector or the same local community. A wider vision is needed to make the most of the tourism opportunities the Borders Railway can bring”.

5.33 Meanwhile, VisitScotland published data estimates that 3,500 people (2013) are employed and £47.8 million GVA is generated by leisure overnight tourism in the Scottish Borders. The total annual spend of £77 million comes from 290,000 domestic visitors and 38,000 overseas visitors to the Scottish Borders. Typically, accommodation makes up 42% of the spend of staying visitors; food and drink is 27%; shopping is 13%; transport /fuel is 8%, and leisure is 9%. The average spend per person is around £80 per day. Those on overseas trips spend more than twice as much per trip as domestic visitors\(^9\).

\(^4\) STEAM providers, Global Solutions, advise that their model is not designed to provide a precise and accurate measurement of tourism in a local area, but rather to provide an indicative base for monitoring trends. The confidence level of the model is calculated to be within the ranges of plus or minus 10% in respect of the yearly outputs and plus or minus 5% in respect of trend. At a minimum, the implementation of STEAM depends on: information on occupancy percentages each month for each type of accommodation; bed stock for each type of accommodation within the areas to be surveyed; attendance at attractions/major events by month; TIC visitor figures by month.

\(^5\) VisitScotland report that in 2015/16, 2,999 people responded to a follow-up online survey on their return home. 505 visitors were interviewed in the Scottish Borders and 127 visitors answered specific questions about their visit to the area via the follow-up online survey.

\(^6\) The 2015 Audit noted that: “While there may be some questions about the absolute volume and value figures that STEAM produces, it is the most robust means of tracking trends over a period.”

\(^7\) Tourism - economic impact and business opportunities Report to SBC Executive Committee 31 January 2017

\(^8\) Summary Case for a New Cross-Border Rail Link Campaign for Borders Rail

\(^9\) http://www.visitscotland.org/pdf/Tourism%20in%20Scotland%20Factsheet%202015.pdf
5.34 VisitScotland survey showed 1,048,000 overnight stays in the Scottish Borders; approximately 40% in self-catering with 20% in hotels, 5% in B&B and 12% other accommodation with 23% staying with friends or relatives\(^a\). In 2015, VisitScotland occupancy figures for the region showed that hotels and guest houses achieve average annual occupancy levels well below the Scottish average, while self-catering properties show an average annual occupancy significantly above the Scottish average.

5.35 In the 2015/16 VisitScotland survey, compared to other regions, the Scottish Borders recorded the highest proportion of touring caravan / motorhome overnight stays and amongst the smallest proportion of Air B’n’B, Couchsurfing or roomorama, glamping overnight stays. This is indicative of both mobile visitors passing through the area and a more traditional approach to accommodation provision for an older market.

5.36 The VisitScotland Visitor Survey 2015 showed that 8% of all tourists to Scotland came to the Borders, while 17% and 12% visited LLTNP and CNP respectively. Of all tourists, 5%, 7%, and 6% respectively stayed overnight in the Borders, LLTNP and the CNP.

5.37 The 2015 Great Britain Day Visits Survey records average spend by visitors on a day trip from home across Scotland. Day trip spend was reported as being lowest in the South of Scotland (including the Scottish Borders) at £30 per person (Transport £6.30, Food and Drink £12.90, Entrance fees £4.20, Shop £5.40, Other £1.20).

5.38 The VisitScotland survey in 2011 showed that 50% of overnight visitors to the Scottish Borders were from England, Wales and NI; 39% are from other parts of Scotland and 11% are from overseas. The Scottish Borders is more reliant on domestic visitors than other parts of Scotland. The age profile of visitor to the Scottish Borders is older than for Scotland overall, with 31% of visitors being aged 55 or over and only 8% being in the 16 – 24 age group.

5.39 Two-thirds of visitors were attracted to visit the Scottish Borders because of the scenery and landscape – significantly more than Scotland overall (50%). The history and culture of the area was also important for just under half of visitors\(^b\). This is a major increase on the 2011 survey when the top reasons given by visitors were:

- The scenery and landscape (cited by 35% of visitors)
- It’s an area I know well (cited by 17% of visitors)
- To enjoy a specific activity (16% of visitors)
- History (16% of visitors)
- To visit a specific attraction (16% of visitors).

\(^{a}\) Tourism in Scotland’s Regions 2015 Updated October 2016.
\(^{b}\) Tourism in Scotland’s Regions 2015 Updated October 2016.
5.40 Off-road cycle provision in the Tweed Valley has proved hugely popular with riders in recent years. Glentress attracts over 300,000 annual users; Newcastleton has another smaller trail centre. Despite this, cycling is not recorded as a significant motivation in the 2015/16 survey for overnight visitors suggesting a day market user group mainly coming to the central Borders.

5.41 Indeed, local businesses report that many riders are day trippers and quite self-contained with limited additional spend on serviced accommodation, food and beverage27. Go Ape report 95% of their customers at Glentress are on day trips from the central belt and their numbers are half that of their site in the LLTNP at Aberfoyle28. Investment, such as the Forest Holidays accommodation project at Glentress, may bring in more long stay, higher spending visitors, but their welcome contribution to the economy may take longer to filter through to the Southern Borders.

5.42 The Midlothian & Scottish Borders Tourism Destination Audit 2015 reported similarly mixed findings for the Borders Rail project and included the following challenges and unmet potential for growing Borders tourism.

- A limited number of hotels with capacity to accommodate leisure or business tourism parties of any size;
- No national budget hotel chains such as Premier Inn and Travelodge and only two national branded hotels;
- Potential to develop one or two larger self-catering complexes, particularly if they can be aligned to the outdoor activities in which the region excels;
- Virtually no hostel or bunkhouse accommodation;
- Opportunities to attract the less committed and novice activity tourist by combining “softer” outdoor facilities with heritage, cultural and food and drink products;
- The heritage product of great houses and ruined abbeys mostly operates only seasonally and is traditional in its presentation;
- Potential to create more cultural activity packages;
- Greater joint promotion of quality food and drink products;
- Opportunities for strengthening the evening economy.

5.43 For reference, Northumberland and other Scottish National Parks show the following volume and value data from both STEAM and VisitScotland.

Northumberland, with a population approximately 2.7 times larger than the Borders, reported 2015 STEAM figures showing an economic impact of £816m supporting 11,600 direct jobs from 14.8 million visitor days, of these 7.8 million were day visitors.

The proposed National Park area is an area performing less well than the Scottish average in several key measures.

The VisitScotland Scottish National Parks Sector Review-2012 recorded that 482,000 UK trips to the LLTNP and 571,000 UK trips to the CNP were made in 2012. A total of £243million was spent within Scotland’s national parks in 2012 by domestic visitors, a 25% increase on 2011.

The average spend per trip to Scotland’s national parks in 2012 was £226. Tourism is vital to the Cairngorms National Park. It accounts for 30% of the economy (GVA is circa £400million) and 43% of employment.

Social challenges

5.44 In looking at the special social needs of the proposed National park area, data from the ‘KnowBorders: Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership Strategic Assessment August 2016 Update’ produced by the Strategic Policy Unit of Scottish Borders Council suggests that the Scottish Borders might be actually ‘Two Borders’.

5.45 Firstly, the Central Borders area represented by the Tweed Valley – Peebles/Galashiels/Melrose/St Boswells/Kelso appears to be a relatively prosperous area, with social measures mostly better than the Scottish average.

5.46 Secondly, the ‘Southern Borders’, the proposed National Park area, comprising the more isolated parts of Teviot and Liddesdale and Cheviot to the south and east with high ground, remoter villages and the town of Hawick is an area performing less well than the Scottish average in several key measures. The Borderlands strategy also highlights the persistent levels of socio-economic deprivation adjoining the Anglo-Scottish border.
For example, with measures below the Scottish average, the Teviot and Liddesdale locality has the highest proportion of people in the Borders:

- classified as income deprived, well above the Borders and even the Scottish average;
- of working age population who are employment deprived;
- of working age population claiming ‘Out of Work Benefits’;
- of children living in poverty;
- of people claiming pension credits (60+).

Other indicators for the locality are the “missing section” of young working-age people in the Cheviot population. Yetholm has the highest proportion of pensioners and the lowest proportions of children and working age people out of any settlement in the Scottish Borders - but its population is increasing. There is a much higher age of carers here than the Scottish average.

The high average number of vehicles per household points to people having to travel for work, possibly the higher earning residents. This potentially brings additional disposable income into the area, but highlights the need to address the lack of higher value jobs available locally. Unemployment is generally the highest in the Borders and average earnings are lower, consistently below the Scottish average, although qualifications and occupations are more comparable. A higher proportion of respondents ‘do not use internet or email’ in Teviot (16.5%) compared to the Scottish Borders (14.9%).

Teviot and Liddesdale has the second-smallest proportion of owner-occupiers of the five localities, after Cheviot, and the highest proportion who rent their home, particularly from a social housing provider, as it also has the second smallest proportion of those who rent from a private landlord.

A larger rented sector indicates a younger workforce, but a disproportionately large social rented sector indicates a lack of affluence and confidence amongst young families to enable them to buy their own home. Critics argue that the reduction of permanent housing stock resulting from the use of homes as holiday lets drives up prices and can prevent first-time buyers from entering certain markets, although the stock of low-cost houses for sale in the Southern Borders remains plentiful.

The Scottish Borders Household Survey 2015 results show that people in the Teviot and Liddesdale and Cheviot area report some significant civic disadvantages compared to other parts of the Borders:

- When asked to rate their neighbourhood as a place to live, respondents in the Teviot area expressed the greatest dissatisfaction in the Borders;
- When asked if their neighbourhood had ‘got better or worse’ over the past three years, almost 20% of people in the Teviot area thought their neighbourhood had ‘got worse’;
- 20% of the adults in the Teviot area were ‘very dissatisfied / fairly dissatisfied’ with street cleaning;
- satisfaction in street cleaning and local public toilets was lowest in the Teviot area;
- The area with the lowest level of reported voluntary work was the Teviot area;
- Cheviot was least satisfied with opportunities for participating in SBC decision making.

An analysis of the EU LEADER programme in the Scottish Borders between 2007 and 2013 showed there were 70 projects receiving over £3.5 million for the Scottish Borders. 51% of the projects were ‘Borders Wide’. Of the five localities, Cheviot got 6% of projects (8% of funding) while Teviot and Liddesdale got only 4% of projects (2% of funding) and received the least LEADER funding for area specific projects.
5.54 The Scottish Government approved an allocation of funding for Scottish Borders LEADER 2014-20 of £4 million and the programme was launched in 2016. The focus is on enterprise, small businesses, people and areas of rural deprivation. After the Brexit referendum, the UK and Scottish Governments have many issues to resolve, and no clear guidance is available yet on LEADER funding beyond 2020.

Health challenges

5.55 Health in the Scottish Borders is mostly better than or comparable with the Scottish average, but there is evidence in Teviot and Liddesdale of long term age-related health conditions. The rurality and lack of public transport in the Borders limits the range of activities that children and young people can engage in. This can have a negative impact on both physical and mental health.

5.56 Cheviot has the highest proportion of people who exercise daily (they may have more time). Teviot the lowest. For 2011-2013 Scottish Borders and particularly Teviot and Liddesdale had a higher rate of people hospitalised with Coronary Heart Disease or asthma and diabetes compared to the Scotland average.

5.57 On a wider note, physical inactivity is the second biggest cause of mortality, leading to around 2,500 premature deaths in Scotland every year. Increasing physical activity can lead to improvements in many conditions, from heart disease to mental health issues.

Biodiversity challenges

5.58 Biodiversity plays a huge part in making the Borders an attractive place to live in and to visit. However, in their recent submission to the Scottish Government on planning reform SBC reports that:

“We are already experiencing a decline in biodiversity and an increasing fragility of our environmental assets, so it is critically important that environmental issues are given sufficient weight in the decision-making process and are not overridden in the drive for development.”

Policy fit

5.59 A National Park should contribute to the Scottish Government’s wider national objectives set out in the National Performance Framework and address regional priorities including:
NATIONAL AGENDAS

5.60 Delivery of Scottish Government’s Strategic Outcomes, 2,4,6,10,11,12,13,14,16.

• Climate Change
• Reversing the loss of biodiversity
  • 2020 Biodiversity Challenge
• Building Natural Capital
• Making Scotland More Active
  • Cycling and Walking Action Plans
• Empowering communities to take the lead
• Sustainable economic growth
  • Scottish Planning Policies and National Planning Framework 3
  • Tourism 2020

REGIONAL STRATEGIES AND PLANS

5.61 Scottish Borders Council’s ambition for the Borders is ‘We seek the best quality of life for all the people in the Scottish Borders, prosperity for our businesses and good health and resilience for all our communities.’\(^{20}\) A National Park could help delivery across six of SBC’s eight priorities

• Priority 1: Encouraging sustainable economic growth
• Priority 4: Building the capacity and resilience of our communities and voluntary sector
• Priority 5: Maintaining and improving our high-quality environment
• Priority 6: Developing our workforce
• Priority 7: Developing our assets and resources
• Priority 8: Ensuring excellent, adaptable, collaborative and accessible public services

National Parks are well placed to champion a low carbon approach

‘By 2023 the Scottish Borders will have a more resilient low carbon economy. By supporting businesses and communities to reduce their carbon footprint, our business competitiveness and quality of life will be improved.’\(^{21}\)

Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2016

Strategic Development Plan for Edinburgh & South East Scotland (2013)

Edinburgh and the South-East City Region Deal

• Four interconnected programmes – innovation hubs, infrastructure investment, a regional housing programme, cultural tourism investment

South of Scotland Alliance - Scottish Borders Council Dumfries and Galloway Council, Scottish Enterprise

• South of Scotland Competitiveness Strategy 2016-23
  • Fostering a culture of innovation
  • Inspiring enterprise and entrepreneurship
  • Creating resilient, future proof enabling infrastructure

Borderlands Strategy 2015

• Economic and social evidence base for a collaborative approach by five councils

Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy 2013–2020

• To capitalise on the opportunities offered by our inherent assets. Enhance the product offering and optimise the benefits to be gained from these key assets. Encourage responsible custodianship of the Region’s built and natural environment, scenic and wildlife assets by supporting government, local government, agencies, land owners and managers to manage and protect the Region’s landscape and wildlife assets in a manner that maintains and improves the qualities of beauty, remoteness, wildness, peace and tranquillity. Inculcate a mutual understanding by all the Economic Value of Landscape to the Region’s Tourism Industry.

LEADER 2014-20 Local Development Strategy

• The main theme is the creation of Enterprising Communities.

Solway and Tweed River Basin Management Plans

• set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to improve the water environment

5.62 Measures and indicators include the following baselines:

• Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership 2016 Strategic Assessment – August update
• 2012 Scottish Borders and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)
• STEAM and VisitScotland tourism surveys
### 6 Special qualities

**Summary**

- Unique and distinct Border culture of national significance e.g.
  - Greatest density of recorded prehistory and pre-Christian sites in Scotland
  - Common Riding, traditions and events
  - Tweed cloth and Cheviot sheep
- Strong and deep literary and artistic connections
- High end textile products for world fashion centres
- Outstanding landscape – inextricably tied to the ebb and flow of Border/Scottish history
- Good foundation network of paths, trails and ways providing people with access
- Very special geodiversity and natural heritage resources
- Longer term possibility of re-opening Waverley line.
Introduction

6.1 The special and evocative qualities of the Southern Borders are central to making the case for its proposed designation as a National Park and the basis of its appeal and prospects for economic prosperity. I found that the area has an outstanding and unique concentration of cultural heritage, landscape and wildlife assets of significance both to Scotland and internationally. A summary of the contribution made by different features and their characteristics is shown below, with further detail supplied by specialists shown in Appendix 2.

Cultural heritage

6.2 Section 36 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 defines ‘cultural heritage’ as including structures and other remains resulting from human activity of all periods, languages, traditions, ways of life and the historic, artistic and literary associations of people, places and landscapes. Pre-history and archaeology.

6.3 Cheviot has the greatest density of recorded prehistory and pre-Christian sites in the Scottish Borders and possibly in Scotland with, perhaps, the greatest density of Roman sites in Scotland,

- The hills are marked by forts and cultivation going back to the pre-Christian era.; such as Pennygant and Din and very possibly the iconic centre piece of Teviotdale, shapely Ruberslaw.
- Names like Trimontium, Chesters and Bonchester Bridge and roads like sections of the A68 are reminders of the Roman occupation.

Language, traditions, ways of life

6.4 Until the 17th century the people of this region were in many ways a society apart from the rest of Scotland. This created a unique authenticity still prevalent in some of today’s traditions.

For example:

- Hawick and vicinity – distinct linguistic development.
- Common Ridings, sport like rugby and traditions of hand ba’.
- The Borders dialect has the distinction of a long tradition of poetry and song giving rise to the great Border Ballads in Scots.
- Many people in the Borders today still bear names of historic Border families - Kerr, Scott, Elliot, Armstrong, etc.
- Yetholm Gypsies found that the border location made travel and avoidance of persecution easier and the last true King of the Gypsies died in Kirk Yetholm in 1883.
- The King’s Own Scottish Borderers, now 1 Scots Royal Regiment of Scotland, conveys an immediate recognition of place, people, values and characteristics.
- The eponymous Border Terrier, bred to work in the Border hills.
6.6 Heritage sites in the Borders, many of which are open to the public, are in a variety of ownerships as shown in Table 6.1.

ARTISTIC, LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC CONNECTIONS

6.7 The Borders have produced writers and scientists, and the remarkable landscapes have been used as the settings for many works of folklore art, prose and poetry. Notable characters include:

- Michael Scott – the Wizard
- Sir Walter Scott (the inventor of the historical novel, one of the first British writers to achieve international fame and, arguably, a founding figure of Scottish tourism), Hugh MacDiarmid, James Hogg and the many stories of Border families and their roots in the landscape
- J.M.W. Turner, the great landscape painter, visited Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford, his home near Melrose in 1831. He painted many watercolours of Border abbey and castles including one of Hermitage Castle.
- Mary Sommerville of Jedburgh excelled in scientific research (and breaking glass ceilings) was the first woman to present a paper to the Royal Society and had Sommerville College, Oxford named in her memory.
- Men of the Scottish Enlightenment - James Hutton a farmer from Duns is known as the ‘founding father’ of modern geology. Robert Wilson, historian of Hawick praised “the encouragement of education and the provision of libraries”, Scots philosopher David Hume had Border roots.

Table 6.1: Heritage sites in the Southern Borders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HES</th>
<th>Dryburgh Abbey, Hermitage Castle, Jedburgh Abbey, Kelso Abbey, Melrose Abbey, Smallholm Tower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NTS</td>
<td>Harmony Garden and Priorwood Garden, Melrose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBC</td>
<td>Heritage Hub and archive, Heart of Hawick, Drumlanrig Tower, Harestanes Countryside Visitor Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liddesdale Heritage Centre and Museum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Private

| Floors Castle, Makerstoun and Monteviot, Roxburghe Castle, Bemersyde, Hume, Fatlips, Stobs Camp, Ferniehurst Castle, Waverly Line route |

Historic – banditry to books

6.5 The Scottish Borders has 746 scheduled monuments and 2,998 listed buildings including 182 Category A listed buildings and 44 conservation areas. Towns and village origins often stretch back to medieval times. As Professor Ted Cowan said “the Borders moved from Banditry to Books” when the Enlightenment influenced Borders people like Scott, Hume, Leyden and Hutton.

- The Scottish Border is one of the oldest national borders in the world, established in 1237 by the first Treaty of York.
- The Wars of Scottish Independence were a series of military campaigns which ebbed and flowed across the Border in the late 13th and early 14th centuries.
- The Anglo-Scottish Wars were a series of wars fought between England and Scotland in the 14th and 15th centuries, and ended by the Union of the Crowns in 1603.
- The impact of the wealth of the four great abbeys, Melrose, Dryburgh, Kelso and Jedburgh, in the medieval period is still evident today through place names, Abbotrule, Abbotsbar, Abbotsheil etc and the legacy of sheep and textiles.
- The architecture and layout of towns and other settlements display their origins as royal burghs and then centres of textile manufacturing.
- Turning points in history from nearby Flodden Field to the Jedburgh house where Mary Queen of Scots was staying when she rode 40 miles to visit the wounded Bothwell at Hermitage Castle.
- Border Reivers raiding back and forward across the frontier, or against each other in the 16/17th century, especially in the ‘Debatable Land’.
- In the frontline of the Union in 1707 and influenced by the Scottish enlightenmentiping Scottish enlightenment22
- Industrialisation – much based on water power, and the wealth it generated created ‘big’ houses and designed landscapes.
- Role in international conflicts - Stobs Estate World War One internment camp – largest in the UK.
- Agriculture influenced rural settlement patterns.

CIVIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

6.8 Many towns in the Scottish Borders have traditional common riding events and some newer festivals which celebrate the local community and its history. For example

- Reivers Festival – March in Hawick
- Borders Festival of the Horse – May
- Following each other through the summer are: Hawick Common Riding: Jedburgh Festival; Selkirk Common Riding; Melrose Festival and Kelso Civic Week - all of which involve massed ride-outs across open country around and through the towns and villages of their areas. Other similar festivals also take place in West Linton, Peebles, Galashiels, Duns, Lauderdale, and Coldstream, as well as in nearby Langholm.
Specialness in the Borders is more than the sum of people and landscape, history and tradition.
• Borders Book Festival – June in Melrose
• The Border Union Show – July in Kelso
• The Scottish Borders Walking Festival – varies location each year. Now in its 23rd year and the longest established Walking Festival in Scotland - September
• Borders Heritage Week – September
• Annual Folk Festivals in Denholm – November and Newcastleton - July

In addition, many other regular or annual events attract visitors from all over the UK and beyond, such as the many Rugby Sevens tournaments including the one where Sevens were invented, in Melrose, horse-racing at Kelso; three-day eventing at Floors Castle and Hendersyde; the Tweedlove cycling festival based in Peebles (May and June); the Jim Clark Rally at various Borders locations in July; mass motor-cycle rides to commemorate famous Borders’ champions Jimmy Guthrie and Steve Hislop; and the Historic Motoring Extravaganza (now in its 45th year) held at Thirlestane Castle in June, as well as non-regular events such as stages of the Tour of Britain cycling event which will return to the Borders in 2017. Some of the Borders’ stately homes, such as Bowhill near Selkirk, and Paxton near Berwick, are venues for classical music recitals and theatre.

Natural Heritage and Landscape

6.9 Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) advise that the Scottish Borders has 95 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), eight Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), five Special Protection Areas (SPA), 3 Ramsar sites and two National Scenic Areas (NSA). There are some unique characteristics and sites of local, national and international importance in the Borders landscape.

GEOLOGY, SOILS AND LAND FORMS

6.10 Geology and geomorphology underpin the soils, form, texture, colour and use of the landscape and the environment. They form building materials and influence settlement patterns and agricultural production.

• The modern Scottish Border lies along the most fundamental geological divide in the UK, the “Iapetus Suture”.
• The area is well-endowed with sites which illustrate the stages of its geo-history.
• Geological formations observed near Jedburgh in the 18th Century laid the foundation for evolutionary theory. Hutton’s ‘unconformity’ just outside Jedburgh underpinned his theory on how the world was formed and is one of the most significant geological sites in the world. “The landscape is not a museum” (SNH, 2002).
• Other nationally important geological sites in the Southern Borders include:
  • Kershope Bridge SSSI
  • Penton Linns SSSI
  • Palmers Hill Railway Cutting

LANDSCAPES AND LANDFORMS

6.11 There is one NSA – Eildon and Leaderfoot, 20 Conservation Areas and three Special Landscape Areas (SLA) in the area proposed for park status. To illustrate landscape quality two SLA designation statements are shown here.
Cheviot Foothills SLA Designation Statement

The Cheviot uplands are distinct from typical Borders hills, being of different form with more frequent rocky outcrops. The area has a very remote feel, with wildness value at the summits. The rocky outcrops enliven the green grass moorland expanse of some hills. Layers of hills give visual depth to views into and within the area. It can be an exciting, dramatic landscape which draws you in with the promise of fine views from higher ground. The surrounding valleys have a quieter, unimmitidating drama. Flat valley floors without tree cover allow open views to the hills. Carter Bar is a key access point into the Borders, and indeed into Scotland. The border car park offers panoramic views across wide areas of the Southern Uplands. The Cheviots are a well used recreational resource, contiguous with the Northumberland National Park, and including sections of the Pennine Way and St Cuthbert’s Way. The valley is a minor gateway into the Borders from Northumberland. Yetholm is an important settlement for recreation as it lies at the end of the Pennine Way. The Kale valley has prominent cultivation terraces on its east slope, presenting a clear sign of past habitation.

Teviot Valleys SLA Designation Statement

This area covers a series of distinctive Borders valleys and hills, and has been defined to draw together a number of landmark features with their pastoral and woodland settings. Visually prominent hills include Minto Crags, Peniel Heugh, Duncon Hill and Rubers Law, each of which has a strong relationship with the adjacent valleys and the wider landscape. The three valleys each have their own distinctive character and scale. Minto Crags are a dramatic feature contrasting strongly with the gentle farmed valley Teviot below. Long views along the Teviot valley are terminated by the monument on Peniel Heugh. The romantic setting of Fatips Castle is a reminder of a historic past, when the landscape was dominated by wealthy landowning and military classes, and extensive designed landscapes make a positive contribution. The smooth, rounded grassy Minto Hills contrast with the rugged, wooded Minto Crags. Rubers Law has a distinctive craggy summit, dissected and rocky. Bonchester Hill is almost a reduced version of the same, while Duncon Hill is a landmark above Jedburgh. The Jed valley is important as a key gateway into the Borders along the A68, including the sense of sudden arrival at Jedburgh after the scenic drive through the wooded valley. Rocky cliff features of red sandstone along the Jed are particularly attractive against spring green of trees. The Rule Water is smaller in scale than the Jed valley, and is densely wooded with beech trees along the road. It is an intimate, picturesque valley with traditional stone buildings and bridges, and intriguing gateways into estates. There is evidence of management which suggests a well established and well-loved landscape.

6.12 In less scenic parts of the proposed National Park area there can still be found a strong sense of naturalness, seclusion and remoteness with wide open horizons and dark skies.

96% of the public felt that every child should experience a NP first hand.
6.13 The Scottish Borders has a countryside path network of circa 3000km, of which 1200km are promoted paths/core paths and an extensive cycling network and mountain bike trails. The network includes parts of the Southern Borders and transboundary trails like the Pennine Way.
- The Pennine Way starts or (more commonly) ends in Kirk Yetholm, 268 miles north of its southern terminus in Derbyshire.
- More recently, Kirk Yetholm has also become a feature on the St Cuthbert’s Way, a 62-mile walk following in the footsteps of St Cuthbert from Melrose to Lindisfarne.
- Scottish National Trail from Kirk Yetholm to Cape Wrath.
- Borders Abbeys Way.
- Southern Uplands Way.
- Cross Borders Drove Road.

6.14 The Southern Borders has sections of a cycling network and one mountain bike trail centre
- National Cycle Route 1.
- 4 Abbeys Cycle way.
- Borderloop.
- Tweed Cycleway.
- Mountain Bike Forest Trail centre – Newcastleton.
- Local cycle routes around towns.

6.15 Designations reflect two key habitats in the area, peatlands and rivers. The Peatlands are internationally important and the Borders have a significant share of the UK resource. They store over three billion tonnes of carbon – 20 times that found in all of Britain’s forests. With more than half found in Scotland, they represent Scotland’s single largest carbon store on land. They provide a home for a variety of specialist plants and animals, can reduce flood events, provide clean drinking water and are an asset for sporting managers. They can take the form of blanket bog as in the Newcastleton Hills or the numerous lowland mosses or mires.

6.16 Water flow from the uplands of the Southern Borders into the world renowned River Tweed and its tributaries, much of which are covered by Natura designation, and EU protection given to key species like salmon.
- River Tweed Special Area of Conservation SAC
- Langholm-Newcastleton Hills SPA
- Borders Woods SAC
- Din Moss and Hoselaw Loch SPA and Ramsar
6.17 In the Southern Borders the Langholm-Newcastleton Hills support extensive, open areas of either dry upland heath or globally rare peatland formation known as blanket bog dominated by cotton grass. The lower slopes are mostly semi-improved or boggy grassland. Woodland is found in a few cleughs and along the Tarras Water.

Upland breeding birds are an important feature and the site is of international importance, and consequently classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA), for breeding hen harriers. The hills are the site of the Langholm Moor Demonstration Project. Raptors like golden eagles and osprey are returning to breed again in the Scottish Borders.

6.18 Some species in the area have EU protected species status e.g. otter, Atlantic salmon and a range of bat species. Red Data Book species are also found in the area.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DESIGNATIONS

6.19 The area of the Southern Borders proposed as National Park includes many national and regional designations.

A Border NP could become a stronghold for hen harriers and golden eagles.

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST - SSSI

- Kielderhead Moors
- Langholm-Newcastleton Hills
- River Tweed
- Adderstonelee Moss
- Buckstruther Moss
- Hummelknowe Moss
- Kirkton Burn Meadow
- Lynnwood
- Whitlaw Wood
- Slitrig
- Allan Water Hillhead
- Cragbank and Wolfhopelee
- Jedwater Woodlands
- Din Moss and Hoselaw Loch
- Yetholm Loch

REGIONAL SITES

- Scottish Wildlife Trust sites and reserves - Yetholm Loch

6.20 Natural heritage polices and strategies for the Borders already in place include:

- Blanket Bog HAP, Montane HAP, Upland Cleuch and Scrub HAP, Upland Heath HAP
- LBAP Action Plan
- Tweed Catchment Management Plan

CONNECTIONS AND INTERDEPENDENCE

6.21 Like most of Scotland, in the area proposed for National Park status, the long-established effect of cultural influences of change and past management on ecological systems is clear. Our environment is still inherently dynamic with climate change and socio-political effects of land-use support mechanisms currently particularly uncertain. However, the strong connections and interdependence between culture, economy and environment remain and can be enhanced at a large scale through National Park status.

6.22 The Borders Regional Land Use Strategy Pilot run by Scottish Borders Council, working in partnership with the Tweed Forum, reported to the Scottish Government in March 2015. Across a broad range of stakeholders, the pilot generated an improved understanding of an ecosystem approach and the need for trade-offs to balance the needs of competing uses of the land and opportunities to deliver multiple benefits from the land (e.g. natural flood management, riparian woodland, biodiversity, improved water quality and carbon storage).

6.23 National Park status can help coordinate and attract funds for mechanisms and agreements to help deliver the 2020 Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and regional priorities. Park status can provide focus for collaboration, sharing effort and resources and setting the necessary level of ambition for conservation in the Southern Borders.
Does the Scottish Borders meet the National Park Act conditions and aims?

Summary

• Area satisfies the three ‘tests’ set down in Section 2 of the legislation
• Area has special socio-economic needs that national park status could help to address
• Clear opportunities to fit with aims set down in the National Parks Act (Scotland) 2000.
Introduction

7.1 To qualify for consideration as a National Park, the Act sets down the three conditions (or tests) an area must meet. The conditions are difficult to define in any absolute sense and thus testing if an area complies is a matter of judgement. Metrics can be applied to Conditions 1 and 2 and their significance are set out in Section 6 under special qualities.

Condition 1

The area is of outstanding national importance because of its natural heritage or the combination of its natural and cultural heritage.

7.2 In my opinion, Condition 1 is met because the Southern Borders has outstanding concentrations of cultural heritage set in a unique Borderlands landscape. This is combined with natural heritage, significant to the nation when measured by distinct geodiversity which shapes landscapes and the presence of habitats and species of high national and even international value.

Rationale

7.3 Section 36 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 defines ‘cultural heritage’ and the definition includes much of what is special and unique about the Southern Border area.

7.4 UNESCO has adopted the concept of cultural landscapes - “a continuing landscape which retains an active social role in contemporary society, closely associated with a traditional way of life and where the evolutionary process is continuing... where human impact is evident and valued” (UNESCO). This accurately describes the Border landscape.

7.5 The Scottish Historic Environment Forum (SHEF, 2015) has also emphasised the importance of this holistic approach to landscape as adopted by the European Landscape Convention (ELC,) to which the UK and Scottish Governments are signatories, i.e. landscape is “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of the natural and/or human factors”.

7.6 Furthermore, the National Trust for Scotland considers “The intangible associations of places or objects can be as important as more easily measurable physical features, and should be considered alongside more tangible qualities when evaluating the significance of a place or feature. These associations may relate for example to history, spirituality, culture, myth, legend, communal memory or identity... historical associations, particularly if of iconic status, can give ‘ordinary’ places extraordinary importance, even if they have no other significance” (NTS 2003).

Condition 2

The area has a distinctive character and a coherent identity.

7.7 In my opinion, Condition 2 is met, subject to careful determination of the most appropriate and practical boundaries. Boundary options are considered in Section 9. Option four best meets Condition 2.

Rationale

7.8 Section 6 describes the special qualities of the area and clearly shows the Border identity is deeply embedded in long established authentic customs, traditions, dialect and practices as well as geography. Its character reflects the story of the evolution of the Scottish Border land and its communities in this relatively intact natural environment of spectacular landscapes and ancient settlements.

7.9 Coherency is in the topography. The Cheviot watershed defines the Border, from which wild uplands the visitor, moving northward, passes through decreasing rolling and occasional craggy moorlands and small glens to the wider valleys of the Teviot and Tweed enjoying the gradual change that links the magnificent and massive range of the Cheviots to the more pastoral and agricultural lowland valley plains.

7.10 The Romans pushed their famous road north from York, Dere Street, beyond the heights of the Carter Bar towards the Firth estuary when they saw the vast expanse of fertile land to the north of what is now the Border between Scotland and England.
No wonder the beauty of the scenes has been celebrated in song, literature and visiting artists, such as William Turner, who chose to execute some stunning, romantic landscape paintings and drawings here.

7.11 There is no dramatic Highland change from mountain top to glacial valley floor, rather a single, sinuous sweep of subtle variation from rolling moorland, through ancient and less ancient woodlands, giving way slowly through dry-stone dyked, fenced and hedged pastures to the wide, open agricultural bread-basket of The Merse. The visual connection is a two-way delight: panoramic views from the highest points, across the foothills to the valleys, glens and plains are complemented by the reverse view from riversides and their cultivated former flood plains up to the distant hills, all under a unifying ‘big sky’.

7.12 There is a timeless quality to the landscape in the proposed National Park area with classic open views and outlooks to layered hill ridges. The landscape has strong contrasts between wild remote moorlands and the farmland in the valleys. Yet it is still a living and working landscape which continues to be shaped by the people who live here many of whom have a strong and deep rooted stakes in land management.

7.13 George MacDonald Fraser sums up this epic distinctive character and Border identity when he says “The Anglo-Scottish frontier is arguably the most beautiful, and certainly the most bloodstained, region of Britain, perhaps of all Europe. For centuries, it was the scene of internecine warfare between England and Scotland, in which great battles were fought, vast areas scorched into wilderness, towns and villages and magnificent abbeys were destroyed, and countless Borderers on both sides were killed” (Fraser, 2000)

There is high dependency on primary industries such as farming and forestry that dominate the economy and the environment.

Condition 3

Designating the area as a National Park would meet the special needs of the area and would be the best means of ensuring that the aims that are central to a National Park are collectively achieved in relation to the area in a coordinated way.

7.14 Condition 3 is rather counter intuitive in that it requires hypothesising future and unpredictable scenarios and interpreting the words ‘best means’. However, the profiles in Section 5 clearly illustrate socio-economic fragilities and structural weaknesses in the part of the Borders proposed for National Park status and no obvious mechanism proposed to address them.

7.15 This is a complex condition which seeks to ensure that designating the area as a National Park meets the area’s special needs and will be the best means to meet all four overall aims in a coordinated way.

7.16 The area profiles in Section 5 highlight that addressing the special socio-economic needs of the area will require a long term sustained effort and investment, whether the area is designated as a National Park or not. Most indicators are not positive and demonstrate a twin track socio-economic situation in the Scottish Borders, with the greatest challenges found in the Teviot Liddeston and Cheviot areas. Demographics show a rapidly ageing population, health and well-being challenges, a reduction in service provision and below average economic performance in towns and villages all contributing to community fragility.

7.17 There is high dependency on primary industries such as farming and forestry that dominate the economy and the environment of the Southern Borders and both are facing significant approaching challenges. Tourism provision is currently mostly seasonal with only modest activity extending across 12 months. I (and businesses I consulted) am not aware of any major new alternative strategic economic actions proposed for the Southern Borders area; particularly no major tourist attractions or investment by accommodation providers. Investment through the ‘Borderland Growth Deal’ in the UK Conservative manifesto is only proposed as an election pledge.
7.18 Clusters of tourism investments north and south of the area, and even the A1 corridor to the east and Galloway in the west may actually draw visitors out from the area or at best reduce the time visitors allocate to the area.

7.19 National Park status for an area that meets the first two conditions could help provide the necessary focused approach for satisfying condition three; especially for growing tourism opportunities. And it would help other enterprises, with branding and dedicated resources to address the special social and economic needs of the area.

7.20 This study has not assessed management of the area’s special qualities but National Park status would help to ensure the continuity and, where necessary, the enhancement of these features in the long term. Northumberland National Park, just across the Border, with a very similar landscape to the southern Borders has demonstrated for over 60 years that it meets similar park criteria and by most indicators has achieved a measurable degree of success.

7.21 My professional judgment is that a compelling case can be made showing that an area of the Southern Borders could meet the three conditions and thus qualify for gaining National Park status.

Duncan Bryden

7.22 National Parks are a proven way to apply innovation and creativity to collectively achieve the four aims in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. Typically, outcomes will include.

7.23 **Aim 1 – To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area.**

Fit through:
- The area will be increasingly recognised in Scotland and further afield for its outstanding natural and cultural environment supporting a wide range of wildlife and Border culture;
- The distinctive landscape character will be enhanced through improved stewardship and support for responsible land managers;
- It will be a landscape shaped by land use and management as well as natural processes, and characterised by responsible farming, forestry, game and wildlife management;
- In the settlements, farms and estates the best examples of distinctive local architecture will be protected;
- Evidence of previous generations, physical remains, language, traditional stories and song will be recorded and made more accessible to understand and appreciate;
- Residents, visitors, business and organisations will feel pride and will contribute to conserving and enhancing what is special about the area.

7.24 **Aim 2 – To promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area.**

Fit through:
- Sustainable and innovative new buildings will be exemplars of good practice, and growth of settlements will safeguard the traditional pattern and character of the built heritage;
- Project will provide exemplars of good management in themes including sustainable development, low carbon and climate change adaptation and mitigation;
- Residents will be well informed about the area and keen to communicate their knowledge and the needs of those living in, working in and visiting the area will be mutually respected.

7.25 **Aim 3 – To promote understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.**

Fit through:
- Residents of all ages and abilities and visitors will enjoy, understand and feel a sense of “closeness” to the special qualities through experiences of the highest quality;
- A wide range of outdoor access opportunities will be available to everyone for responsible enjoyment, fun, spiritual rejuvenation, sport and healthy living;
• Everyone will be encouraged to experience the varied landscape in ways that respect the natural environment and cultural heritage of the area;
• Visitors will come year round to enjoy fine landscapes, appreciate wildlife and heritage, explore character and take part in a range of activities;
• They will be aware of what is on offer, understand the importance of built, natural and cultural conservation, seek to support this and communicate this value to others.

7.26 **Aim 4 – To promote sustainable social and economic development of the communities of the area.**

Fit through:

• The challenging socio-economic needs of the area will be better sustained by its special nature and cultural qualities;
• The outstanding environment will stimulate economic activity and diverse local business will flourish;
• People in the park will be able to find housing, education and training, employment and services that meet their needs in communities that are thriving and inclusive;
• Businesses will feel welcome and that they are part of the area, benefit from it, offer a high-quality service and experience and be involved in a sustainable approach to management;
• Communities will play an active role in shaping the park and will have the confidence to share their ideas, experience and culture. They will have a sense of ownership and responsibility.
Summary

• Status can provide competitive advantage and address structural weaknesses
• Builds and strengthens existing assets making them more productive
• Can create improved conditions for businesses to compete
• Can create and develop the future workforce
• Provides leadership and new methods of service delivery
• Addresses biodiversity decline
• Provides opportunities for better public physical and mental health
• Parks worldwide report returns on public investment of up to 1:10
8.1 National Park status makes areas better placed and branded by enlisting cultural and natural amenities and scenic backgrounds to help increase productivity and deliver sustainable outcomes. People love these national treasures: 90% of the public, for example, say that National Parks are important to them. Parks tend to offer greater recreational provision and opportunities that help stimulate migration, draw in entrepreneurs and attract a skilled workforce to a range of faster growing service, knowledge and creative industries. They are also likely to inspire more people to value and enjoy Scotland’s natural environment.

8.2 The attraction for people to run businesses, have a great lifestyle, and live in a very beautiful place – designated as a National Park - should not be underestimated in the 21st century and can be actively promoted to investors. Evidence from other parts of the Borders and Northumberland suggests this is already happening and park status for the Southern Borders would accelerate this process and address disadvantage. Local mean household incomes in the Northumberland National Park were higher than the regional averages, by as much as 7.5% in 2010. See Appendix 4 for comparisons and Northumberland case study.

8.3 Evidence from other National Parks shows that Park status can address structural weaknesses in the local economy though championing improvements to digital connectivity and investment in tourism infrastructures from access networks to building more hotel beds. Important sectors like farming and forestry in parks are supported and encouraged to diversify and adopt more sustainable practices for the uncertain times ahead.

Competitive advantage

8.4 There are opportunities to market premium goods and services linked to National Parks and multiple worldwide evidence that National Park status provides a competitive advantage to a whole region. National Parks are at the heart of the rural economy in their regions. A 2009 survey of Northumberland businesses by Newcastle University found that a park based location was a key factor for start-up entrepreneurs seeking a change to their work-life balance with market opportunities, beauty and tranquility as key factors.

8.5 Proximity benefits surrounding communities. Businesses in Duns and St Abbs have already expressed support for a ‘nearby’ National Park. The brand can be associated with niche manufacturing (in quality ‘natural’ products), tourism, construction, creative industries, farming and food and drink. Through exposure to visitor markets and online, park status can help to grow business value – in terms of wealth and employment creation, and in export sales.

8.6 Benefits occur on both side of the demand/supply equation. For example, over a third of visitors to the

---

A park based location was a key factor for start-up entrepreneurs seeking a change to their work life balance with market opportunities, beauty and tranquility as key factors.
96% of visitors say they ‘love it’ after their stay in the Cairngorms National Park.

CNP (two thirds of higher spending international visitors) say that National Park status is an important influence in their decision to visit and over 96% of visitors during their visit say they ‘love it’. The 2014/15 Cairngorms Visitor Survey shows that over 50% of local tourism businesses say that being in a National Park is very good for attracting visitors. This endorsement of the park’s role from businesses has never been higher according to the Cairngorms Business Barometer.

Building on assets

8.7 National Park legislation allows for arrangements to be tailored to build on existing strengths. A National Park provides a clear and understandable offering to attract and retain people, visitors, young professionals, entrepreneurs and businesses. Investment ripples out to surrounding communities – in a ‘halo’ effect.

8.8 There is interest in developing new types of visitor experiences based on packaging local assets including outdoor adventure and experiences of nature, dark skies, wilderness and wildlife. New businesses have already opened in the area. Born in the Borders, an attraction near Hawick, operates an ‘osprey cam’ into its restaurant. For example, linking this type of facility into a park location, as other sites have done, could raise its profile and attract partnership investment.

- The RSPB at Abernethy National Nature Reserve, situated in the CNP, is grateful to BG-Group and Cairngorms LEADER + for their support for their osprey satellite tracking project.
- The Lake District Osprey Project is a partnership between the Forestry Commission, Lake District National Park and RSPB with fantastic support from many volunteers leading to the:
  - Re-colonisation of Lake District habitat by ospreys
  - Raised awareness of wildlife and biodiversity
  - Increased environmental tourism: more than 1 million visitors to the site
  - New jobs/skills in biodiversity, tourism, cameras and satellite technology
  - Increased economic activity to sustain rural communities.
  - Improved public transport, reducing car travel.

- Kielder Osprey Watch is possible thanks to the hard work of Kielder Water & Forest Park Development Trust, Forestry Commission, RSPB, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Northumbrian Water and other partners. Bellingham Fund and Northumberland National Park Area Action Fund funded volunteer support and leaflets to improve the visitor experience.

8.9 Access infrastructure delivered through park status not only supports the main activity of walking, it helps visitors and residents enjoy a range of other activities on their own, in groups or through organised events. Paths support people’s learning, participation and health through multiple activities such as sightseeing, visiting historical and heritage sites, archaeology, cultural studies, wildlife watching, mountain biking, longer hiking, running, rock climbing, photography and camping. These can be done on their own or as packaged activities within a park setting, often combined with accommodation. Access networks assist land managers by providing managed routes for people to use avoiding more sensitive locations.

8.10 Local culture will receive support from tourism. Scanlon et all (2014) reports that the head of Visit Cornwall considers the holiday rental sector was ‘arguably a major plank in the renaissance of cultural tourism in Cornwall’. Park status will generate additional provision and choice in this sector as the market responds to demand.
Newcastle University found that a park-based location was a key factor for start-up entrepreneurs.

Tower Mill, Hawick: a converted 'A' listed building, previously a spinning mill but now a cafe bar, cinema, theatre, conference centre © VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins
8.11 A Headwaters Economic review in 2016 found that while every county in the western states of the US has its own set of unique circumstances, numerous studies have concluded that protected lands such as National Parks, Wilderness, National Conservation Areas, National Monuments, and National Wildlife Refuges can be an important economic asset that extends beyond tourism and recreation to attract people and businesses. In four key economic measures (population, employment, personal income and per capita income) counties with more protected lands performed better on average than their peers with less.

8.12 A tourism report published by Northumberland NPA in 2016 shows that, just across the Border, tourism is thriving within the park. Tourism figures for 2015 show that visitors are spending more and staying longer, contributing £76.44m to the rural economy and supporting 1,128 jobs in the park. The report shows that Northumberland National Park currently attracts 1.76m visitors to the area per year, of which 1.41m are day visitors and 350,000 stay overnight. (Scottish Borders reports 1.8m visitors with 1.15m day visitors).

8.13 Northumberland NPA has created mobile enterprise hubs at two of their sites. New self-contained starter units, pods and hot desk packages have co-use of NPA office facilities like meeting rooms, reception and parking. Facilities for a further 20 start-up businesses have been built at the new £14 million National Landscape Discovery Centre in the south west of the park.

Creating the conditions for businesses to compete

8.14 Park status can help to address market failure and encourage “footloose entrepreneurs” to live in scenic areas like the Borders. Along with good mobile and broadband connectivity, an important element in locational decisions is the availability of transportation networks, and access to metropolitan centres like Edinburgh and Newcastle with airports and rail links. People in the Scottish Borders have relatively easy access to three airports. People in the east have easy access to a mainline railway station at Berwick, while those in the southern Borders are around an hours drive from both Berwick and the West Coast mainline at Carlisle. Ports too are comparatively near.

8.15 Tourism in the Scottish Borders faces some structural weakness such as a lack of fit-for-purpose accommodation in terms of location, scale, quality and capacity. Today, customers expect comfort at the very least and increasingly many seek a luxury experience. The most profitable, and often most sustainable, visitors are those that stay the longest and spend the most, so providing the optimum mix of accommodation types is critical for the future. Spending with accommodation providers is more than four times as much as in ‘stand-alone’ food and beverage establishments like cafés.

8.16 National Parks can attract and secure investment in accommodation. In 2011 Travelodge announced plans to secure sites near to all 15 UK National Parks in response to a high demand for accommodation in the UK’s top rural locations. Other chains have followed.

8.17 Northumberland NPA has included a new, world-class YHA Youth Hostel on their National Landscape Discovery Centre site with approximately 90 beds to provide people with a modern, high-quality visitor experience. LLTNP and the CNP have seen multimillion-pound investment over the last 10 years in a range of accommodation from the five-star Fife Arms in Braemar, MacDonald Highland Resort in Aviemore to a Marston’s Inn in Balloch and 5-star investment at Cameron House. Further investment in accommodation is planned in several park locations.

Developing the future workforce

8.18 Colleges and schools are important players in the provision of skills necessary in the modern approach to National Parks. They can offer local employers and start-ups a steady supply of bright and eager students and workers with additional talents and skills. For example, the CNP has a collaboration agreement with the University of the Highlands & Islands. Heriot Watt University and Borders College, co-located at the Scottish Borders Campus in Galashiels, could be valuable partners to a new National Park attracting/retaining skilled, qualified young people.

Claire Maclaine, Lake District National Park Authority Sustainable Transport Manager © Duncan Bryden

National parks attract skilled qualified young people.

Cairngorms National Park, Loch Morlich © Duncan Bryden

Prepared by Duncan Bryden – Bryden Associates

21 http://www.bighospitality.co.uk/Venues/Travelodge-invests-135m-in-plans-to-open-hotels-near-National-Parks
Park status can help to address market failure and encourage “footloose entrepreneurs” to live in scenic areas like the Borders.
Mountains and People project has just completed training ten people in SVQ Level 3 countryside skills with some going straight into full time employment within businesses set up by previous trainees. A further set of trainees will be recruited in 2017.

Creating employment

8.23 National Parks aim to strengthen the tourism sector but also to strengthen and diversify other sectors to reduce reliance on tourism. Land management is a diverse industry which cross-cuts wider sectors including tourism, forestry, agriculture, renewables etc. There are opportunities to improve the economy in terms of collaboration, supply chains, and marketing. Sectors like food and drink processing (especially meat processing, meat wholesaling and butchers, game and game management, particularly in relation to forest venison), artisan food retailers, brewing and distilling, and cosmetics could be stronger.

8.24 Creative industries and crafts thrive in beautiful rural locations which add authenticity and profile. Recently a set of craft studios, built by a community landowning body on the Isle of Harris, were three times oversubscribed. Seasonal summer trade is a bonus to year round online and craft fair sales allowing high value work and employment to continue throughout the winter. Affordable housing with attached studios encourage live/work opportunities. Craft can cross into tourism through activities like learning to make cheese, or dry-stone walling.

8.25 Tourism is often associated with low wages and is susceptible to seasonal and global trends. Initially, greater visitor expenditure will mainly improve remuneration from existing jobs rather than creating significant new employment, although growth will mean tax revenues increase and some may enjoy a rise in wages. Addressing seasonality means some employees can be retained and annualised contracts used to give a predictable and steady wage throughout the year, so allowing people to better enter financial arrangements like mortgages.

8.26 Direct tourism employment includes staff such as cleaners, gardeners, maintenance contractors, catering assistants, craft work assistants and activity guides. However, tourism businesses also indirectly utilise accountants, lawyers and planners and other professional services, as well as construction trades, plumbers, electricians, builders, printers, photographers, laundries, landscape gardeners, path and bike track builders etc. who maintain the buildings, infrastructure and services.

8.27 More self-catering accommodation could be a ‘quick win’ for a new National Park. Scanlon et al (2014) found that 75% of holiday rental owners hire a cleaner for their rental property, while 43% hire an accountant and 38% hire a gardener. Scanlon et al found that the average total annual

8.19 Higher education delivered locally can change young people’s migration patterns by offering courses to home based students. National Parks also offer academic research opportunities with areas like the Cairngorms generating hundreds of published peer reviewed papers.

8.20 In addition to curriculum subjects, National Parks support a wide range of non-formal skills and qualifications and self-improvement from practical skills in outdoor pursuits, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the John Muir Award. Over 25,000 people have undertaken their John Muir Awards in the Cairngorms National Park.

8.21 NPAs themselves require staff with a wide range of professional skills from management and accounting to landscape architecture, ecological impact assessment, IT, GIS and media management. For example, the LLTNPA and CNPA both support various apprenticeship schemes leading to employment with local contractors and businesses.

8.22 In an example of up-skilling people in rural workplaces CNPA has run a land based business training scheme with bespoke training in over 20 different skills held on farms and in forests for over 500 people. In both Scottish parks, the
Park status could help key species by coordinating essential conservation work and attracting extra funding to ensure they thrive within the Southern Borders.
expenditure per unit is £6,000, with £1,600 of that being spent on hiring outside workers. Self-catering visitors often only prepare breakfast in their accommodation. Choosing to eat other meals out opens up opportunities for restaurants and food suppliers to increase the ‘stickiness’ of the tourism spend in local businesses.

8.28 Specialist tourism businesses (Wilderness Scotland, Speyside Wildlife, WalkScotland) based in National Parks have grown into handling agents and tour operators, website managers and guide book publishers in niche markets like worldwide wildlife tourism, photography, bush craft and adventure tourism. Internationally, these are some of the fastest growing segments of the tourism market.

8.29 Park locations attract and retain high quality, skilled staff who can indulge their own passions and pass on skills to people from the area, now working in the sector. In turn this creates demand for specialist training. Entrants to postgraduate courses in eco tourism and adventure studies increase as does demand for business skills tailored for rural enterprises. More people work within the Northumberland National Park than live there and 2000 workers commute daily into the Cairngorms National Park area, while 1800 travel to work out with the park.

Providing leadership

8.30 National Parks are about a shared vision with partners where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. They can promote sustainable development, biodiversity and economic development, but they are also about people’s health and wellbeing. The park is not a ‘separate organisation’ it is a living, breathing destination with a reputation as an outstanding place for living, working and playing. They can be regional leaders and drivers.

8.31 An NPA can facilitate structural change through progressive policies that promote innovative design, affordability, environmental and cultural opportunity. Change is more likely to be incremental and cumulative rather than revolutionary, allowing people time to change, adapt and realise new opportunities.

8.32 Park status can lead to ‘park champions’ bringing the power, respect and authority of third-party endorsement, reaching new audiences and creating a stronger park voice through passionate supporters. Stakeholder event programmes create opportunities for greater engagement so communities, businesses and the public sector understand each other better and work more effectively together.

A new method of service delivery

8.33 Most people using National Parks care little about administrative jurisdictions. Visitors want an enjoyable holiday and residents a better place to live and work. Research regularly shows that visitors are looking for high quality, sustainable, authentic and distinctive experiences and they will respond to a National Park brand and place that delivers. The brand may be used by businesses, organisations, communities, event organisers, schools working within the park to demonstrate pride and commitment to quality and sustainability.

8.34 Park designation must add value to, not duplicate, the service delivery partnership in the Southern Borders. Effectively becoming a rural ‘industry’ taking advantage of the National Park brand. Northumberland NPA recognise this joint approach is essential in the successful development of its £14 million Sill Centre combining visitor centre with accommodation and business hub.

Addressing biodiversity decline

8.35 The fortunes of wildlife and habitats vary widely across the Borders but there has been a worrying overall decline in the area’s biodiversity as noted by SBC. Species like the osprey have been a real conservation success story with pairs nesting in the area and golden eagles are beginning their return, but species like hen harrier are still subject to illegal persecution. Native red squirrel populations are recovering and spreading.

8.36 Park status could help key species by coordinating essential conservation work and attracting extra funding to ensure they thrive within the Southern Borders. This effort, by a range of organisations, land managers, various groups and individuals, will be vital to the area’s continued importance for biodiversity. Parks can deliver projects on a landscape and water catchment scale. Parks provide a focus for measures to manage disease and the spread of non-native species threatening indigenous populations. In both existing parks mink control has lead to a revival in water vole populations.

---

84 The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park 2010 85 Valuing National Parks in England 2013
Parks can directly improve public health. They provide unique resources for all age groups that promote healthy behaviours and lifestyles.
**Healthier citizens**

8.37 Parks can directly improve public health. They provide unique resources for all age groups that promote healthy behaviours and lifestyles from physical exercise and nutrition to mental stimulation and social engagement in programmes like volunteering. For example, in 2010 an independent evaluation of the Cairngorms Walking to Health Programme of almost 700 walks concluded that the programme had:
- contributed to reported levels of health improvement
- increased levels of physical activity among participants
- helped sustain higher levels of physical activity
- made a positive contribution to reducing social isolation and loneliness
- contributed to enhanced feelings of well-being and confidence
- provided numerous and regular opportunities for people:
  - to derive pleasure in other peoples’ company
  - to feel good, be encouraged and motivated whilst “having a laugh”
  - to move from isolation to socialising and meeting new people.

**Community engagement**

8.38 National Parks involve people in their planning processes. The Community Futures programme in LLTNP ensures a bottom-up approach, with the NPA engaged in community consultations, charrettes and business engagement to encourage innovative projects, new activities, attractions and markets for local produce. LLTNPA has over 14,100 likes on its Facebook page.

8.39 During recent consultation on the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan, 319 responses were received with 72 % submitting views online through Survey Monkey. Over 250 people attended seven open meetings and special meetings were held with all community councils and locality committees. There were 4,400 web site hits, 1,100 video views and 1,780 people engaged through Twitter. Visit Cairngorms Facebook page has over 50,000 likes.

**Benefits to the NP area and ‘halo’ effect**

8.40 Unequivocal evidence that National Park status is directly responsible for improved socio-economic outcomes is hard to establish as there are multiple factors at work. However, it is reasonable to assume that the following evidence from other established parks from Scotland to Australia strongly suggests designation does have significant influence – for example delivering increasing tax revenue at national and local levels and decreasing benefit and unemployment payments.
- From 2003 – 2010 in the CNP there was an increase of approximately 1,000 jobs. By 2013, employment increased by a further 400 or 4.5%. Tourism, and financial and business services, were responsible for most of this job creation. Inflows of people from the European Accession States, as well as hotel refurbishments accounted for much of this. The park’s population continues to grow, as it has since designation, and has probably now passed 18,000.28
  - The contribution of English National Parks to overall employment is in line with their population while the number of businesses per unit of population is twice the national average, a reflection of the number of small businesses in the National Parks. It is worth noting that several studies in individual National Parks indicated that over 50% of businesses surveyed felt that their business was directly or indirectly dependent on a high-quality landscape and environment, and positively impacted by the National Park designation, with this figure rising for tourism-related businesses.29
  - ‘English National Parks contribute between £4.1 - £6.3bn to the economy through economic activity within their boundaries. That is equivalent to the UK aerospace industry.
  - In England and Wales many businesses in towns and cities located close to, but outside, National Parks stated that they were also dependent on and positively influenced by the ‘halo’ effect of National Parks. The National Parks are icons for tourism inside and outside the boundaries and they provide a strong brand image for goods and services. Much of the economic benefit of the parks occurs outside their boundaries supporting both the local and national economy.
  - In 2006, a breakdown of the headline figures showed that the Welsh National Parks directly supported 10,200 jobs, generated £146 million income to businesses and contributed £176 million to the economy of Wales.30 A 2013 study showed that the National Parks in Wales account for over £0.5 billion of the country’s GVA representing 1.2% of the entire economy.31

---

28 The Economic and Social Health of the Cairngorms National Park 2010
29 Valuing National Parks in England 2013
30 Value of National Parks of Wales 2006
31 Valuing Wales’ National Parks Arup 2013
The Southern Borders could join the world-wide ‘family’ of National Parks.
8.41 Social productivity in National Parks looks at how value is produced in the relationships between services and citizens, and seeks out the most fruitful combination of resources to support this process. The mixed economy of service provision in parks can often provide an enabling environment by tapping innovation in social enterprises, microenterprises and public service ‘spin offs’ and transfers of skills across very different industries.

8.42 It is estimated that volunteering co-ordinated by English National Parks contributes over the equivalent of an additional 200 FTE jobs, with a value of more than £3 million annually; these figures would be even greater if volunteering through partner organisations and the value of the work done by volunteers was also considered. Estimates from the Peak District National Park suggest that for every £1 spent on supporting volunteers, £3 is gained in work delivered.

8.43 In promoting sustainable use and conservation National Parks also help to enhance the delivery of so called 'ecosystem services' that are important to society and contribute to wider well-being. These include provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting services underpinning economic activities such as farming, forestry, extractive industries, tourism and recreation; reducing costs to society by improving health, storing carbon, and purifying water; enhancing the wellbeing of people and communities by providing recreational experiences, tranquility and fine views; and maintaining a liveable environment by regulating climate, air quality, soils and water cycles. If managed correctly, National Parks should be net carbon sinks, meaning that they store more CO2 than they release. These services are harder to value but nonetheless provide real economic benefits.

8.44 In 2011 over 100 economists and academics in related fields from across the USA saw the benefits parks could bring and wrote to President Obama urging him to "create jobs and support businesses by investing in our public lands infrastructure and establishing new protected areas such as parks, wilderness, and monuments."77 By the end of his presidency in 2016, Obama had created an additional 2 million acres of protected lands and an ocean reserve twice the size of Texas.

77 The Economic Value of Protected Landscapes in the North East of England 2004 Report to ONE North East SOW
79 Economic Impact of Parks Canada The Outspan Group Inc 2011
80 Julius Arrieger: Protect and Prosper Oxford 2011
So which areas do we include?
Possible boundary options

The evidence

• Southern Borders has outstanding features and special socio-economic needs
• More accessible location for more of Scotland's people than north and west
• Other parts of Borders are in lesser need
• Boundary still to be agreed – four options proposed
• Including settlements fulfils fourth aim – promoting socio-economic benefits
• Preferred scenario 500km² – 1000km² in area
Why the Borders?

9.1 A unique cultural place that has evolved along one of Europe’s oldest frontiers, the Borders is close to Edinburgh, one of its oldest capital cities and a major centre of population. Moreover, there are the evident socio-economic pressures within the area exacerbated by weak infrastructure and an external ‘squeeze’ from the prosperous Edinburgh conurbation and Cumbria/Newcastle to the south.

9.2 There is national strategic balance to be gained by establishing a park in this location with its proximity to people living in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Other National Park proposals are to the north or west, often in quite remote locations and, it might be said, without the cultural and historic depth of the Borders. Others agree the SCNP/APRS have identified seven recommended areas for new National Parks in Scotland, including one in the Cheviots (Mayhew 2013). See Appendix 9 for a strategic statement explaining the SCNP/APRS justification for including the Cheviot area.

9.3 Other areas proposed as National Parks, like Galloway, already often have their landscapes and biodiversity well protected and promoted through designations such as National Scenic Area, Dark Sky Park, National Forest Park, National Nature Reserve Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, Site of Special Scientific Interest and Biosphere Reserve.

9.4 Ben Nevis and Glen Coe are of the highest landscape and recreational quality; however, the study carried out by Red Kite (2012) for the Nevis and Glen Coe Integrated Management Working Group concluded the area is a part of a larger landscape character area and so in itself does not justify National Park status, nor may it be a priority for Scotland’s next National Park compared to other areas.

9.5 But, it can be argued that these areas face much less of a socio-economic challenge; have their own opportunities and assets; and will not be at all disadvantaged by the proximity of a new National Park. Highland Perthshire around Loch Tay has demonstrated that superb areas, even if they lie between two National Parks, need not be disadvantaged.

9.6 A strong case can be made for concentrating on the Borders’ least visited upland landscape with its fragile communities, wildness and heritage, where park status could make the greatest difference and make it more able to present its outstanding features to the public. In any case, if the proposed park were to be named The Scottish Borders National Park, experience elsewhere (e.g. Pembrokeshire Coast NP) has shown that the whole area covered by that name would benefit.

Where should the boundary go?

9.7 The legislation requires a National Park area to have a distinctive character and a coherent identity. The boundaries of a potential Borders National Park have not yet been defined, and the options discussed in Table 9.1 are indicative (other options are possible). Appendix 1 discusses cross border parks.

9.8 Any final Park boundaries are likely to follow easily distinguishable and permanent natural physical features such as ridges or watersheds and should be long standing, practical and sensible.

9.9 Villages are normally wholly included or excluded from National Parks. Boundaries that could vary through changes in land ownership are usually avoided, although impacts on land management operations may be considered. For example, the Cairngorms investigated five different boundary options and the boundary was further extended after establishment (as recently happened in the Lake District).

9.10 Boundaries do not change landownership arrangements, rights and responsibilities. NPAs generally only own a tiny percentage (if any) of the land within the National Parks. The Government does, however, own substantial amounts of land in National Parks. For example, nearly half of the of 1049 km² Northumberland National Park is owned by the Ministry of Defence and the Forestry Commission but the NNPA only owns 2.5 km².

9.11 That communities adjacent to the CNP lobbied for boundaries to be extended to include them is perhaps further endorsement of their perceived value at a local level.

Why this part of the Borders?

9.4 There could be a great debate about which parts of the Borders’ diverse landscape should be proposed as a National Park. The central Borders, the upper Tweed valley and the Berwickshire coast have undoubted outstanding characteristics and strengths.

9.5 A strong case can be made for concentrating on the Borders’ least visited upland landscape with its fragile communities, wildness and heritage.
### Boundary Options

9.12 The report presents four possible boundary options in Table 9.1 to stimulate debate. Appendix 3 has a proposed boundary map prepared by the Campaign.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1       | **Map Area 1**  
Small, compact area. Area recommended by SCNP/APRS. Adjacent to NNP with options for shared services. Could be expanded. Lower operating costs |
| 2       | **Map Areas 1 and 2**  
Includes Option 1 but also incorporates the Eildon and Leaderfoot NSA, the Tweed Lowlands SLA and the areas around Kelso, Melrose and Newtown St Boswells |
| 3       | **Map areas 1,2,3 and 4**  
Includes Option 1 and 2 but also extends along the flanks of the Cheviots west of Carter Bar to upper Teviotdale and upper Liddesdale, including Wauchope and Newcastleton Forests and Hermitage Castle to border with Dumfries and Galloway |
| 4       | **Map areas 1 and 4**  
Comprises Option 1 plus extends along the flanks of the Cheviots west of Carter Bar to upper Teviotdale and upper Liddesdale, including Wauchope and Newcastleton Forests and Hermitage Castle. It excludes the Eildon and Leaderfoot NSA, the Tweed Lowlands SLA and the areas around Kelso, Melrose and Newtown St Boswells |
### Table 9.2: Pros and cons of different boundary options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Area km²</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Estimate 350</td>
<td>Small, compact area. Area recommended by SCNP/APRS. Adjacent to NNP with options for shared services. Could be expanded. Lower operating costs</td>
<td>Small area, may attract limited investment and has limited profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Estimate 750</td>
<td>Includes tourist centres in Melrose and NSA of Eildon Hills. Adjacent to NNP</td>
<td>Includes more intensively used farmland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3       | Estimate 1000 | Larger area  
Greater operating costs | Includes larger part of SBC and towns where planning issues would be more complex |
| 4       | Estimate 850 | Area focuses on sections of the Southern Borders with the greatest socio-economic need and uplands | Excludes the larger settlements that could act as gateways |
| CNP     | 4500     | Large area  
Landscape scale opportunities | Large area presents difficulties in achieving cohesion between all areas |
| LLTN    | 1865     | Proximity to urban areas in west of Scotland | Significant operating costs |
| Northumberland National Park | 1049 | Operating for 60 years  
Well established systems and partnerships | Significantly-sized settlements remain outside park - 2 people/km² |

Setting up a new National Park would require further boundary search, survey, consultation and inquiry work using a dedicated team, probably from Scottish Natural Heritage. When the two existing Scottish parks were established, public funding plus a support officer were provided for park wide Community Council Groups to develop manifestos and hold meetings, consultations, gatherings and learning visits.
Settlements in or out?

9.13 Settlements are part of the cultural landscape and there are good reasons for their inclusion. Boundaries should avoid splitting settlements. Unavoidably, some land holdings will straddle a boundary, but owners and managers can make representations at the proposals stage.

9.14 The consequences of including or excluding settlements could have notable impacts for planning powers in that there would be many more applications from settlements. Peter Peacock MSP made the following remarks on boundaries and settlements in the plenary debate in the Scottish Parliament on 04 Nov 2009.

“In the Cairngorms, communities are in the park. That was the subject of much debate. The exception is Laggan, which objected to being left out of the park. As soon as communities are brought into a park tensions arise, because that involves all the human interactions with housing, for example, that do not arise if the park’s size is narrowed to a core conservation area. If parks are to have social and economic purposes—I think that they should—we must accept that communities might be brought within park boundaries. As soon as that happens, it means that the governing body’s membership must involve local people and that planning and housing issues must be dealt with.”

9.15 Northumberland National Park boundaries, formed in 1956 and covering 20% of the county, deliberately excluded larger settlements. This decision is now considered a mistake by many as park resources cannot be so readily spent beyond its boundary in these settlements. Over 2000 people travel from these settlements into the park for work and they provide services for park visitors.

Recommended boundary scenario for the Southern Borders

9.16 The core area must be sufficient to meaningfully contribute to wider socio-economic strategies at the national and regional level. It should be of a size that will encourage investment and businesses to grow as a route to a more balanced economy.

9.17 Landscape scale cultural and natural heritage improvements should be possible in a National Park. With that in mind it is suggested that an area covering less than 500km² would be too limiting. However, an area extending significantly over 1000km² would impose greater administrative challenges and may be too large for the Southern Border context.

9.18 Serious consideration should be given to including settlements perhaps up to the size of Jedburgh. This would be comparable to Aviemore or Callander in the two established parks. Hawick may prove too large and complex to be included within the boundary given its size, but it could have a major role as a gateway town. In a similar role to Kendal for the Lake District or Hexham for Northumberland, Hawick could possibly house a National Park HQ, perhaps with shared space with public agencies and/or a visitor centre/ accommodation function.

9.19 Detailed park boundary lines have not been included on the map and areas should be considered as indicative at this stage.

9.20 By retaining park boundaries within a single local authority, as in the Scottish Borders, planning arrangements would be made more manageable. (see Appendix 10)

Establishment costs

9.21 Setting up a new National Park would require further boundary search, survey, consultation and inquiry work using a dedicated team, probably from Scottish Natural Heritage. It is suggested that a budget of £250,000 per year for 2-3 years would be required for a team of four-part time professional staff based in the Borders.
There is a risk for the Teviot, Liddesdale and Cheviot area that, without a clear brand like a National Park, the area may become ‘second or third choice’ as a visitor destination and start-up business location.
10 Governance, powers and operational costs

Summary

• Four options on different governance styles and approaches
• Board size 9-15 people – local appointees and democratic control
• Powers set by secondary legislation
• Planning should facilitate and encourage genuine sustainable development, not act as an impediment
• Annual operating costs could range from £1 – £2.5 million based on 5-year National Park Partnership Plan delivery
• NPA essentially has a non-trading nature and its main income from Government grant-in-aid on 3-year cycle - options to raise 10% locally through fee income etc.
### Table 10.1: Summary of options discussed in Section 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plans and funding options</th>
<th>Option 1 Embedded committee</th>
<th>Option 2 Possible charity</th>
<th>Option 3 NDPB*</th>
<th>Option 4 NDPB*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Park Partnership Plan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Development Plan</td>
<td>Included in SBC Plan delivered by SBC</td>
<td>Separate plan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development management</td>
<td>Through SBC</td>
<td>Through SBC</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call in powers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access authority</td>
<td>Through SBC</td>
<td>Through SBC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEADER</td>
<td>Through SBC</td>
<td>Through SBC</td>
<td>Park specific</td>
<td>Park specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage Lottery Fund</td>
<td>Unlikely if considered part of SBC</td>
<td>Yes if separate body</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends Group</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>May not support local council</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Non-departmental public body

10.1 Finding the right model for the Southern Borders is important because structures within National Parks can be more varied and complex than conventional approaches of ownership or centralised management. Typically, key elements of any model will include:

- Governance
- Powers
- Staffing levels
- Partnership arrangements and agreements
- Budget – income and expenditure.

**Governance**

10.2 Governance concerns the strategic direction and effective stewardship of the organisation. Governance scenarios may be described in terms of both how independent and accountable the park body might be. For NPAs this means incentivising people through both a centralised national profile that attracts Government funding and a more local approach that encourages involvement at the community level.

10.3 Options for a park body for the Borders could range from a committee integrated into the Scottish Borders Council with embedded specialists to a ‘stand-alone’ Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) governed by a Board, with full planning powers, directly employed staff and a budget from the Scottish Government.

10.4 Table 10.2 sets out the pros and cons of models within this range. Current NPAs in Scotland are Option 3 and 4 ‘stand-alone’ NDPBs. NPAs, relative to other NDPBs in Scotland, have larger boards reflecting the need for accountability and community engagement.

10.5 NDPBs have autonomy and carry out administrative, commercial, executive or regulatory functions on behalf of Government, usually following a broad strategic direction set by Ministers. They are not directly integrated into a larger authority and can move rapidly and respond to business and community needs. Other NDPBs in Scotland include SNH, SEPA, HIE, SE and VisitScotland and are normally established by statute through an Act of Parliament. They each have a ‘sponsor’ department providing links to the relevant Minister and other divisions in the Scottish Government.

10.6 Option 1 and 2 governance options for National Parks have not yet been applied in the UK. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine these in detail, but ‘light touch’ models with a main committee, supported by staff embedded with a local authority with a ringfenced but lean budget from central Government should be possible, provided adequate safeguards are in place to secure robust long term delivery of park aims, and that measures to promote national public interests are considered alongside local needs. In 2011 Christie* used the words radical and new to describe future public services – they still apply today.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increasing Governance Levels</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 1 Advocate</strong></td>
<td>Can still prepare park plan and promote NP brand. Co-location with partner body</td>
<td>Public confusion. Limited powers. Perhaps seen as a more local rather than a national initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated NP management committee within local authority. Service level agreements. Local chair, committee of elected members plus independent appointees. Expenses only. Staffing 5-10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Option 2 Enabler/Facilitator** | Lower operating costs especially with charitable status and volunteer board. Formal planning consultation role Strategic partnership plan by Park body – delivery by partners. Could build long term revenue streams. | Possible confusion amongst partners and public over responsibilities. Constraints over powers. Partners may dispute priorities and reallocate their resources. |
| Lighter touch perhaps even a charitable trust. Service level agreements. Appointed chair, nominated councillors and experts. Expenses only. Staffing 10 -15 E.g. Historic Environment Scotland has charitable status and a volunteer board like Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England | | |

| **Option 3 Planner/ Manager** | Cost effective form of partnership. Opportunities for leadership and shared vision with other public/community bodies. Can attract additional funds. Annual checks to ensure delivery by partners. | Possible confusion amongst partners and public over responsibilities. Constant need to reaffirm partnership protocols with new staff. |
| ‘Stand-alone’ NDPB – board of appointed and elected paid members with partial powers, for example in planning. Staffing 20 - 60 Board options 15, 11, 9 see below e.g. CNPA | | |

| **Option 4 Planner/Regulator/Manager** | Gives clear message on commitment and direction. Direct Government influence Like most other UK Parks Annual checks to ensure delivery by partners. | Resource heavy – budget and staff. Scale requires key posts, office accommodation, communications, IT system etc |
| ‘Stand-alone’ NDPB – board of appointed and elected paid members with full powers for example in planning, access, by laws. Staffing 60 - 120 Board options 15, 11, 9 see below e.g. LLTNPA | | |
10.7 The Act allows up to 20 members for a NPA Board: the exact number to be decided by the designation order. LLTNPA has 17 members, the CNPA has 19 members. (There are similar numbers for park boards in England and Wales. For example, the Northumberland NPA has 18 members.) Numbers are set out in Table 10.2.

10.8 Democratic control of NPAs has been questioned, but most NPA members are elected securing a strong local voice alongside national interests. Apart from NPAs and the Crofting Commission none of the other 40 plus NDPBs in Scotland have Boards with elected members.

10.9 Under the Act, at least 20% of the NPA Board’s members (5 in both parks) must be elected by voters on the electoral roll in defined wards within the park. Terms of office for elected members are generally for four years and park elections may be held in parallel with local authority elections.

10.10 If you are standing for election you:
- need not be a park resident (e.g. a person working in the park but living elsewhere could stand);
- may be a serving councillor;
- may be an individual representing a large organisation or interest/lobby group.

10.11 It is highly unlikely someone not well connected with the park could attract sufficient local votes to get elected and someone associated with a lobby group is unlikely to attract support unless the issue has popular appeal. Members need to be aware of conflicts of interest. Government advice is: “in deciding whether to declare an interest, the key test is whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision-making in your role as a member of a public body”.

10.12 The Act provides for 40% of members to be nominated by the Local Authority(s) that cover the park but they require approval from the Minister. Local Authorities are not required to nominate councillors (for example, Community Councillors could be nominated) but, so far, only elected members have been appointed.

10.13 The other 40% are directly appointed by Scottish Ministers after a competitive process. Appointed members should demonstrate that they have knowledge or experience relevant to the functions of the NPA (or the National Park), but they are not appointed to represent interests or sectors. To improve diversity and equality, Ministers seek a 50:50 gender balance on all public boards. This is not guaranteed for elected posts although a wide range of candidates are encouraged to stand.

10.14 Some argue that larger numbers make Boards unwieldy and difficult to manage. Others note that if Boards are small, local accountability must be achieved by involving people in other ways, perhaps with added cost and complexity.

10.15 On a practical front, a larger board allows for a greater quorum and provides a measure of cover if members are unable to attend due to other commitments, poor weather or illness for example. Table 10.2 shows options for a Borders NP Board as between 9 and 15 members.

### Appointing a park authority convenor

10.16 In most NDPBs Ministers appoint a Board chair or convenor. However, on NPA Boards members elect a convenor and deputy convenor from amongst their number and they may also elect other committee convenor roles, such as planning.

---

### Table 10.3: Possible Board numbers for an Option 3 and 4 type Borders NP model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Scottish Borders NP (options)</th>
<th>CNPA</th>
<th>LLTNPA</th>
<th>SNH</th>
<th>SEPA</th>
<th>Northumberland NP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elected members</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(options)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Parish)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed members</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Parish)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Local authorities)</td>
<td>(options)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(options)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Parish)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(options)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Parish)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.22 To reach more people, the Board may meet in a central or more accessible location, use different locations around the park or webcast meetings. They can decide on public access to meetings, standing orders and on how they make papers and decisions public bearing in mind Freedom of Information legislation.

10.23 The CEO reports to the Board and is the accountable officer on finance. NDPBs receive annual grant-in-aid from the Government, manage their own budgets and are subject to audit.

What are the influence and powers a Borders NPA might have?

NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN

10.24 The main influence on the area applied by the NPA is through the five-year National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP), prepared for approval by Ministers. Section 14 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 places a duty on other public bodies ‘to have regard’ to the NPPP in exercising their functions in so far as they affect the National Park.

10.25 In preparing the NPPP, the NPA needs to work in close partnership with the many stakeholders in the park, including communities, landowners and managers, and other organisations and individuals. For the NPPP to succeed it needs to be embedded within the operating plan and budgets of the partner bodies. Delivery is by all public bodies with annual and on-going checks by the NPA on the speed and effectiveness of delivery.

10.26 Prior to approval, the NPPP must be the subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as defined by EC Directive 2001/42/EC and the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

10.27 The Minister chairs an annual review of NPPP delivery by partners. It is important to understand that the NPPP is for the whole National Park and is not just a plan for the NPA. The NPA will have its own Corporate/Operational Plan approved by Board members.

10.28 NPAs can play an important role in park economies in a variety of ways and should work at the national and regional level to promote park objectives. Evidence suggests that their interventions at this level can be influential and NPAs have sought to strengthen relations between themselves and other public agencies with a place ‘at the national table’.

10.29 There is further evidence that NPAs can influence institutions at other governmental levels in favour of park communities and ‘force the pace’ on infrastructures such as broadband, trunk road design and ‘shovel ready’ investment by Government.
10.30 NPAs have been very successful in getting LEADER funding for their park areas and being located within the park can add weight and appeal to applications for other rural development, recreation, health, education, transport, climate change and environmental schemes and funds. Membership of bodies like Europarc can provide NPAs with useful links to European policy priorities and to funding sources such as LIFE. Clearly, post Brexit these arrangements will change.

PLANNING POWERS

10.31 A secondary designation order would make provision for the levels of powers and functions under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 awarded to the NPA. These would be tailored to the needs of the park area.

10.32 Views have been expressed that planning in National Parks is unreasonably restrictive and bureaucratic. The evidence does not support this assertion and, compared to the average of Scotland’s 32 local authorities, NPAs deliver equal or better planning approval rates and processing timescales. It can be overlooked that planning challenges from European and national designations or comments from other statutory bodies like SEPA would still arise if the area was not a National Park.

10.33 Furthermore, delays that do occur are often caused by applicants themselves, submitting insufficient or inaccurate plans and surveys. And introducing elements like ‘affordable housing’ and planning gain brings greater legal and financial complexities into the planning process. Developments with planning approvals may also falter as they negotiate the process of meeting building standards and off-site planning gain commitments, which may be outwith the NPA control. Similarly, the time taken to get infrastructure connections, such as water and sewage may add to delays.

10.34 Appendix 5 includes further analysis of four potential planning powers that could be adopted by the four governance options in Table 10.1 and their likely pros and cons. The four options may be summarised as:

- Local Development Plan and any Supplementary Planning Guidance for the area included within existing Scottish Borders Local Development Plan with park specialists placed within the local authority
- Preparation of the NPPP local development plan but with the Scottish Borders Council delivering the development management service
- Call in powers with responsibility for preparation of Development Plan and development management powers on a call-in basis (the Cairngorms NPA model)
- Full planning powers including production of Development Plan and responsibility for all development management matters (the Loch Lomond and Trossachs NPA model).

10.35 Whatever planning model is adopted; local authority collaboration will be required on:

- HNDA (Housing Needs and Demand Assessment) process in housing areas
- National Planning Framework 3 (National Parks opt out on housing allocations)
- Building standards
- Transport
- Appeals (and engagement with the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division - DPEA)
- Monitoring and enforcement.

10.36 The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 provides duties on National Park Authorities as organisations responsible for the management of outdoor access within the park. The Act provides everyone with access rights, if they are used responsibly.

10.37 NPAs have several statutory duties relating to the Act and the associated Scottish Outdoor Access Code, including publicising the code, upholding access rights, establishing an Access Forum and preparing a Core Paths Plan. Access responsibilities could remain with Scottish Borders Council.

Other powers and functions

10.38 As specified in the 2000 Act, under secondary legislation the NPA can be awarded powers TO:

- Enter into management agreements, make bylaws and establish management rules
- Make charges for goods and services
- Provide advice and assistance and undertake or fund research
- Provide grant
- Purchase land
- Create nature reserves
- Provide information and education
- Provide countryside facilities such as toilets, car parks, campsites and picnic areas
- Provide sport, recreation and leisure facilities
- Make improvements to inland waterways
- Protect and maintain rights of way; and
- Request traffic management schemes.

[Section 32](#) [National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 Schedule 2 - powers, Schedule 3 - functions](#)
The precise scope of some of these powers is not defined in the Act and the experience of the existing National Parks will be useful if a Borders National Park proceeds. The range of powers and functions can be varied to fit park needs. None of these powers are unusual or draconian – the first five of these powers are common to all NDPBs and Local Authorities, whilst the others are available to Local Authorities.

### Staffing

The extent of governance powers will largely determine the staff compliment and what organisational structure works best and the organisational ‘game’ plan. For example, the CNPA and the NNPA employ around 60 fte staff while the LLTNPA employs around 120 fte. Staff are the largest cost to an NPA. Park staff tend to have higher education qualifications or training and young qualified NPA professionals and their families can help revitalise rural communities.

Ideally, park staff need to know their area and relate to the people who live and work there if they are to make good decisions. They need professionalism, tenacity and to have a caring, but ‘can do’ approach with a good self-awareness to help them analyse how they might improve their contribution.

Volunteers with a few hours or days to spare as surveyors, conservation workers or rangers can be an invaluable resource for parks. People who volunteer will bring their own energy and knowledge but may also learn new skills and have the chance to meet other people and make new friends. A volunteer programme for a Borders park would be recommended.

### Relationships with partners

If a National Park is considered the most suitable structure, it is essential that the major partners recognise the requirement for a co-ordinated approach. To bring about change it will be important to engage with the people who could support the National Park and others who might work in partnership. Understanding the nature and scale of this wider interest is crucial.

A large share of the cost of maintaining the Scottish Borders landscape is expended through the commercial business models employed by farms, estates and forestry enterprises (often part of the National Forest Estates). This would continue following designation. However public scrutiny of land management practices is increasing so it is important that managers continue to contribute responsibly to the social and economic well-being of Border communities and the broader framework of strategic land use policies. For example, this could include access, raptor protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation. Together with responsible land managers, National Park status can provide landscape scale frameworks to help deliver improved public benefits.

Many of the relevant public sector partners share an interest in clusters like tourism, food and drink, agriculture and forestry, so a National Park which focuses on these will be both consistent with local strategies and will help to contribute to the achievement of their goals.

Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) subsidy support from Government is hugely important to agricultural and forestry production in the Borders countryside, e.g. single farm payment and Less Favoured Area (LFA) payment. This support contributes to farm profitability and maintaining production, but again post Brexit, levels may soon be altered, perhaps with the uplands seeing the greatest changes. Scottish Land and Estates (SLE) reports Government figures showing that 58% of businesses had a farm income of less than £20,000, and that 22% of farms had an income of less than zero. Furthermore, while the average income for all businesses was £23,000, once subsidies and grants were discounted it was a loss of £17,000 – emphasising the dependence on public financial support. Park status could help attract additional Government support to the area for the delivery of public goods and services.

### Core funding and budgets

National Park status attracts central Government resources to an area and provides opportunities to attract further funding through revenue income and project support. Most of the core funding for Scottish National Parks comes in the form of revenue grant-in-aid from the Scottish Government. In England core funding comes from DEFRA. Table 10.4 shows annual funding for Scottish NPAs.

Funding is on a 3-year cycle from Scottish Government, with annual budgets, reports and accounts being prepared. Government bodies like NPA are independently audited by Audit Scotland. In Scotland, almost 100% of annual income is from the Government. In Wales and England this has dropped to 70% or less.
### Table 10.4: NPA annual incomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPA</th>
<th>Total £ Million</th>
<th>Revenue Grant in Aid 2017/18 £ millions</th>
<th>Capital Grant in Aid 2017</th>
<th>Other sources – fees, contribution, income etc. £ millions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CNPA</td>
<td>4.565</td>
<td>£4.315</td>
<td>£0.0</td>
<td>£0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLTNPA</td>
<td>£7.746</td>
<td>£6.27</td>
<td>£0.86</td>
<td>£0.617 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNP</td>
<td>£4.5</td>
<td>£2.4</td>
<td>by project</td>
<td>£2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(from DEFRA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 10.5: Actual and estimated Operational Plan and Annual Core Budgets £000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERATIONAL PLAN</th>
<th>CNPA 17/18</th>
<th>LLTNPA 17/18</th>
<th>BORDERS NP ESTIMATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land management and conservation</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>Option 1 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor experience</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>Option 2 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor management</td>
<td></td>
<td>440.5</td>
<td>Option 3 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural development</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>106.6</td>
<td>Option 4 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own estates</td>
<td></td>
<td>235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor experience tourism</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporateservices</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUB TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>994</strong></td>
<td><strong>1097.7</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| CORE BUDGET                        |            |              |                     |
| Board                              | 155        | 153          |                     |
| Staff                              | 2740       | 5118         |                     |
| Board & staff costs                | 206        | 120.5        |                     |
| Property costs                     | 296        | 778          |                     |
| Transport                          |            | 130          |                     |
| IT & professional support          | 178        | 271          |                     |
| Admin & supplies                   |            | 232.5        |                     |
| **SUB TOTAL**                      | **3575**   | **6806**     |                     |
| **TOTAL**                          | **4569**   | **7903.7**   |                     |
NPAs have been very successful in helping others to raise matching funding to support projects within their parks. In 2015/16 the CNPA attracted four pounds for every one pound of core Government funding.

10.49 Some park income comes from fees. There is scope to derive an increased income from fees and contributions through the work the NPA does in the planning process. However, higher fees would require a faster and more efficient processing system and performance. Planning gain contributions would have to be carefully targeted to clearly compensate the community for externalities such as environmental impact or impact on community life. Contributions could be in kind (mitigation) or in cash bonds held by the NPA.

10.50 On receipt of a full application, the NPA should decide, very early on the process, if the development is likely to get consent, thereby removing uncertainty, and that the developer could not just ‘buy’ their mitigation. From the outset, it could be stipulated that the onus was on the developer to demonstrate that their plans included all the necessary information and reflected supplementary guidance such as vernacular design and biodiversity priorities. Equally, the NPA could prepare well researched development briefs for sites that would allow rapid planning, construction and sale.

Corporate Plan

10.51 A Corporate Plan should set out how the NPA will fund the coordination and its own role in the delivery of the five-year National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP). Table 10.4 summarises the budget headings used by the CNPA and the LLTNPA and, under some of the same headings, estimates annual budgets for the four Borders NP options.

Fund raising and matching with Government funding

10.52 NPAs have been very successful in helping others to raise matching funding to support projects within their parks. In 2015/16 the CNPA attracted £4 for every £1 of core Government funding.

10.53 NPA support and guidance can help communities and groups to resource successful applications and to ensure consistent and high quality outcomes. For example:

- In 2011 the Callander Landscape Partnership secured £1.5 million of Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) for the ‘Callander Pass’ scheme.
- In 2014, the Mountains and the People project which brings together Scotland’s two NPAs to address the serious threat of man-made erosion to paths across areas of outstanding natural beauty received £3.28 million of HLF support.
- In 2016 Tomintoul & Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project secured £2.34 million of HLF support.
- Following on £7 million in the first programme, Cairngorms Local Action Group secured £3 million of European and Scottish Government 2014 -20 LEADER funding

Importantly, once the project is complete the NPA can ensure benefits are secured into the long term, for example through long term maintenance agreements.

10.54 A UK survey of 2000 people on the future of the National Parks showed nearly 50% are concerned they will deteriorate if funding levels are further reduced. Some 85% said that their perception of a large company would improve if it supported National Parks, so together in 2015, the 15 UK NPAs set up the National Parks Partnership (NPP) to work with large private companies and attract new sources of funding. Funding has already come to UK NPAs from promotional campaigns with multinational companies like Reckitt Benckiser and in May 2017 with Oregon based US outdoor clothing brand Columbia. Parks have set up deals with local suppliers like vehicle providers.

10.55 The National Parks Partnership NPP is developing commercial deals to attract: ‘Active Parks Partners’ to promote health and wellbeing activities; ‘Parks Discovery Partners’ to help provide for children who wouldn’t normally get the chance to visit a park; an official outdoor clothing supplier for park staff; a national funder for the ‘Miles without Stiles’ programme that creates and maintains accessible paths and opportunities to collaborate on environmental initiatives including sustainable transport, water and carbon management.

10.56 The Friends of Loch Lomond charity generates significant funding to spend on projects within the LLTNP – 18 projects in 2016. Other small charities also contribute e.g. Callander Mobility providing all-ability ‘terrain hoppers’ for affordable hire. Promoting some form of ‘visitor giving’ arrangements and/or ‘Friends’ group or Trust to receive business and individual memberships, legacies, donations and make funding applications would be recommended for a Scottish Borders park.

10.57 Interestingly, the US Congress created the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 1965. The idea was to take money from the extractive industries of offshore oil and gas and put that money into the conservation of land and water via National Parks. A Scottish fund linked to renewable energy could be considered as a 21st century equivalent.
Summary

• Reconciling different aspirations around park status will be challenging
• It must be made clear that park status should not add to bureaucracy and will support legitimate responsible land management
• The park must remain relevant to public needs and expectations
• Resource pressure should be dealt with in a pragmatic way through collaboration, shared services and prudent budgeting
• Overcrowding by visitors is less likely at sites in the Borders, but National Parks are better placed to manage people pressure (parking, toilets, erosion etc) if it does occur and to future proof access infrastructure
• The Borders already faces competition from National Park locations in the north of England and must avoid relegation to a ‘lower tourism league’ position
• Parks can be harnessed as regional economic drivers with international profile
• Mechanisms will need to be put in place to measure the park’s contributions and effectiveness in the local economy
11.1 In many parks, prior to designation, there was a complex, often conflicting, history between traditional land use and more recent use for conservation, development and access. Overall, research worldwide seems to suggest their effect has been overwhelmingly popular with the public. But, 15 years of Scottish parks, as with 145 years of National Parks worldwide, shows that universal agreement on their purposes, focus and priorities will always be difficult to achieve.

11.2 Doubtless this debate will occur in the Borders too. The Scottish model is designed around a ‘no one size fits all’ principle and legislation is intended to be flexible. This inevitably means that opinions will differ and, probably, there will be disagreements on how multiple objectives can be achieved and what priorities and resources should be applied. In these cases, it is worth remembering the broad reaching ‘public interest’ values vested in the founding legislation.

11.3 For example, some voices consider Scottish parks are failing to give enough weight to the first aim. This is mainly because the Scottish approach does not follow a John Muir inspired North American or Scandinavian style, state owned and funded National Park model with the unchallenged primacy of nature and informal recreation as the only core purposes. The two Scottish NPAs, responding to Government priorities on issues like rural housing, tourism and growth have been described, sometimes in pejorative terms, as acting like ‘economic development agencies’.


“\ldots what we’ve seen in recent years from park authorities is an unwelcome focus on economic development, such as large housing schemes, and ill-advised restrictions on responsible recreational access with yet more restrictions to come.”

“The problem with our National Parks is one of priorities. The emphasis is on attracting visitors when it should be on caring for landscapes, which is why they were chosen in the first place. They should be managed as an example for other landowners to follow, role models for the restoration and expansion of native habitats; they should be at the forefront of species reintroduction and at the heart of environmental education. And National Parks should be owned by the nation…”44

11.5 Yet, others consider species, habitats and landscapes get too much priority; to the detriment of local people. These voices include residents, land managers and local MSPs, who consider some decisions on planning applications for housing and policy direction on economic activity as imposing unreasonable constraints on people living and working in the park. An NPA was accused by one local MSP in the local newspaper of applying rules that ‘suck the life out of communities quite literally’. (Forbes 2016)

11.6 Sometimes the original purpose of collective achievement for National Park areas is not always fully understood. In his report to the Comhairle, not supporting the Isle of Harris NP proposal, the CnES Director of Development states (incorrectly) that ‘National Parks are primarily concerned with natural heritage, and considers “local experience” suggests that designations are utilised either to restrict or prevent legitimate development’ Mackenzie (2013). This despite 70% local approval for the National Park proposal obtained through a ballot.

The park is not a ‘separate organisation’ it is a living, breathing destination with a reputation as an outstanding place for living, working and playing.

11.7 Two quotes illustrate this view. Firstly, from an article by Fergus Ewing MSP published under the headline ‘It’s time to put people first in Cairngorms’. Secondly, from a letter to the CNPA dated 5 September 2016 from the Chairman of the Scottish Gamekeepers Association.

“Well, over the past 16 years, many many constituents have had cause to express concerns to me that the park authority did not adequately represent that fourth aim – looking after the interests of the people who live and work in the park.”45

“As CNPA is a public body, funded by Scottish Government and reporting to Scottish Ministers – and not a campaigning body – we question why information which is more likely than not to encourage a negative opinion of grouse moor management should be disseminated from the park’s official website before a democratic exercise takes place.”46

44 Scots Magazine October 2016
45 Strathspey & Badenoch Herald 6 October 2016
46 https://raptorpersecutionscotland.wordpress.com/
National Parks are a trusted brand, known around the world as the best places in a country for scenery, wildlife, culture and great visitor experiences.

11.8 Of course, reality and a pragmatic course of action for NPAs lies somewhere in between these views and a park in the Borders would have to identify and set its own course and balance.

More bureaucracy?

11.9 The view that parks bring more bureaucracy is often heard. In fact, there are few changes to current arrangements as people and businesses in parks remain bound by national rules, regulations and standards not altered by park status. But, no-one wants duplication of effort and where they can, NPAs will try to apply different bureaucracy in simpler and more effective ways with outcomes that are in the wider public interest. Different practices can be agreed through partner protocols, concordats, voluntary agreements, codes of conduct, etc. and a Memorandum of Understanding can set the ground rules for working across administrative boundaries.

11.10 Planning is often cited as being a problem. But, there is no evidence to suggest that businesses in National Parks are suffering from undue planning restrictions compared to elsewhere. For National Parks in England, a significant majority of planning applications (89%) are being approved by NPAs compared to an average of 87% approvals in other planning authorities in England. In the CNP, for year 2015/16, 100% of planning applications ‘called in’ by the CNPA were approved.

11.11 Where it is felt personal freedoms are being compromised, individuals may oppose change. A key role for NPAs is to constantly define how National Parks serve the many, not just the able and wealthy few. For example, in a recent speech by Environment Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham – she spelt out the kind of change Government expects not just in National Parks but across rural Scotland.

“I have no truck with any excuse that raptors damage driven grouse shooting interests – such damage is a business risk that grouse moor owners have to live with, and manage for – and this has to be done within the law”.

3 March 2017 Speech to SGA.

11.12 Partnership working can be time consuming and gathering a wide range of views may seem burdensome to some people. But NPAs can be innovative and have been breaking new ground. Consultation brings rewards. In the 2016 Scottish Government Planning Awards, the judges praised the CNPA for its partnership working, community consultation and sheer determination over a decade to develop the best off-road route for the Speyside Way National Trail extension. This included the first use of a Path Order in Scotland to secure public rights to develop the path on the preferred route for everyone to enjoy.

11.13 Sometimes bureaucracy and cost for NPAs arises from addressing external challenge. In 2013, a group of environmental bodies lodged a legal challenge to the CNP Local Plan which failed in the Scottish courts system twice before they lodged an appeal with the UK Supreme Court. Before the appeal was heard, it was abandoned leaving the taxpayer with significant legal costs.

Keeping parks relevant

11.14 National Parks are a trusted brand, known around the world as the best places in a country for scenery, wildlife, culture and great visitor experiences. However, the challenge is ongoing to ensure National Parks continue to be a relevant and responsive tool for improving people’s lives and securing our priceless heritage.

11.15 After 15 years of parks in Scotland and over 60 years in England and Wales alongside National Parks worldwide, evidence suggests that National Parks remain highly popular. In 2013, 90% of the public said that National Parks are important to them and the CNP Visitor Survey 2014/15 reports that 96% of visitors love the park. 98% would recommend it to others and 93% would visit it again.

11.16 To retain this level of support parks must be true to their founding legislation and respond to agendas of the day and serve the public interest. A powerful lesson for the Borders. To do this their model and approach must be both flexible and innovative. Analysis of National Parks worldwide suggest that they have constantly adjusted to reflect what the host society wishes the park to provide for their citizens. For example, the 2016 US National Parks Service ‘Call to Action’ seeking to re-define objectives for the next century now focuses on engaging people and communities as much as it does on environmental stewardship.
11.17 But, public interest and benefit can be difficult to establish and measure. For example, visitors have expectations of seeing wildlife in National Parks. Charismatic species like deer, eagles and mountain hares are more popular with people than rarer bogs or insects and not seeing them is more likely to invoke expressions of dissatisfaction. Fix et al. (2010) noted large deer herds are positive attractions for visitors to U.S. National Parks, and many visitors (as in Scotland) do not consider high deer populations as a management problem. Yet, ecologists in the US and in Scotland advise that too many deer can be highly detrimental to natural habitats like woodland.

11.18 Keeping pace with economic, social and now climate changes and continuing to deliver ever more public objectives with declining budgets requires NPAs to be politically astute and adept. Having a flexible model is advantageous in many respects but it is clear different approaches also create different expectations amongst stakeholders.

11.19 Post the Brexit referendum (and Indy ref 2 discussions) activity in the UK is likely to bring reviews of agriculture support mechanisms. Protected area designations may provide a comparative advantage for land managers located within the boundaries. George Monbiot, an outspoken social commentator writing in the Guardian, in his blog on the 4th January 2017, makes the point:

“How many people, post-Brexit, will be prepared to keep paying £3bn, roughly the same as the NHS deficit, in farm subsidies whose current benefits are hard to discern? Taxpayers may be more inclined to part with this money when it produces such obvious public goods as functioning ecosystems and magnificent wildlife.”

In 2016, Andrea Leadsom, Secretary of State for the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) said this on the future thinking about agricultural subsidies:

“It would make so much more sense if those with the big fields do the sheep and those with the hill farms do the butterflies … it’s perfectly possible but only if we leave the EU and do it for ourselves.”

11.20 Social conditions change rapidly too. In highlighting how the tourism industry might best meet the challenges of tomorrow’s marketplace VisitScotland’s Insight trends for 2017 identify strengths and opportunities that National Parks are well placed to deliver. These public goods include intrepid travel (mild camping and the safe adventure), the growth of interest in health and wellbeing by consumers (silence and dark skies) and inspiration through history and heritage (cultural noir – horrible histories and literary landscapes).

Resource pressures

11.21 The current squeeze on public spending in Scotland has reduced NPA budgets by about 5%. National Parks in England have lost millions of pounds of Government funding in the past five years, amounting to a 25% grant reduction from 2011 to 2016 (DEFRA 2016)

11.22 Cost cutting of parks budgets in the UK seems to have recently slowed and even slightly reversed in England because of evidence that people love and want to support their parks. But, NPAs must be realistic and respond in pragmatic and creative ways, which may mean downsizing and redundancies for some, while adapting to meet Government priorities.

11.23 Pressure on parks is not confined to the UK. The US National Park Service is under severe financial pressure to cut costs and become relevant to a more diverse demographic to retain their core funding. So, despite growing visitor numbers at the popular parks and their 100-year anniversary in 2016, the US Park Service reported in May 2015 that they delayed $11.5 billion in necessary maintenance due to their budget shortfall.
11.24 People have different tolerances for tourism and access, some fear litter and disturbance on their land, others seek greater occupancy or footfall for their business to generate revenue. So, how many people must visit a place before it spoils residents’ quality of life, or interferes with their businesses? Equally how many are needed to make shops and services viable in rural areas? Expectations are difficult to manage and evidence suggests that those who experience the lowest levels of access tend to be the most resistant and vice versa. Overcrowding in the Borders seems an unlikely prospect. However, some land managers may experience localised visitor pressure with little opportunity to generate compensatory income and here the NPA may readily assist. Social media can generate rapid increases in visitor numbers, as experienced in Skye and on the North Coast 500 route, so some future proofing would be wise.

11.25 Most visitors will go to where they are made most welcome and where activities and facilities are provided. NPAs and partners can develop progressive plans to cope with visitors, improve local infrastructure and guide visitors to where their impact is lower and easier to manage. Joined-up thinking on tourism should deliver maintenance, cleaning and repairs and better provision of key services like toilets, car parks and litter collection. Parks also offer great opportunities for people on limited incomes to enjoy the benefits that the countryside provides, especially if facilities like campsites and path networks are managed sympathetically and cater for their needs.

Most visitors will go to where they are made most welcome and where activities and facilities are provided.

11.26 Destinations with National Park status can become ‘branded aspirational places’ to visit. National Parks in Northumberland, the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales and the North York Moors are destinations attracting visitors from within the same North of England and South of Scotland catchment as the Scottish Borders.

Dartmoor National Park © Duncan Bryden

11.27 These destinations are not standing still. A new National Parks Plan for England was launched in 2016 intended to promote activities and attract new customers to these parks through three key themes.

INSPIRING NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS
1 - Connect young people with nature
2 - Create thriving natural environments.

DRIVERS OF THE RURAL ECONOMY
3 National Parks drive growth in international tourism
4 Deliver new apprenticeships in National Parks
5 Promote the best of British food from National Parks

NATIONAL TREASURES
6 Everyone’s National Parks
7 Landscape and heritage in National Parks
8 Health and wellbeing in National Parks

11.28 These parks are direct ‘competitors’ for the Scottish Borders. For example, over 30% of all visitors to Wasdale in the Lake District only live between 101-150 miles away6. But there is a risk for the Teviot and Liddesdale and the Cheviot areas that, without a clear brand like a National Park, this part of the Borders may become ‘second or third choices’ as visitor destinations and start-up business locations.

11.29 The challenge for the Southern Borders is putting a brand and a structure in place that would attract customers who are keen to visit new places that offer experiences like those they enjoyed in other National Parks.

Providing regional opportunities

11.30 National Parks, although national in status, are all individual economic drivers for their surrounding region. Governance of a NPA requires members to weigh up local, regional and national interests when making their decisions. An appropriately structured National Park in the Borders would primarily contribute to local communities while delivering strategic national, regional and outcomes. The so called ‘halo’ effect.
Measuring economic and social impacts

11.31 After 15 years of Scottish National Parks, evidence strongly suggests that strategic success at the local level can be closely linked to the designation. Equally, the fears of farmers and land managers that park status would detrimentally affect their businesses have proved unfounded. Instead, park status has helped to strengthen local economies through supporting and diversifying business, and helping people develop and train towards employment.

11.32 In taking a holistic view of the total contribution park status makes to the local and regional area, it is not possible (or appropriate) to place a tangible and quantifiable economic value on every benefit. Improved mental and physical well-being and social inclusion for example are not easily quantified in financial terms but are hugely important and valued benefits which people derive from parks. The benefit of parks extend well beyond their boundaries when outreach, branding and image are considered.

11.33 Where possible performance indicators (KPIs) should be developed to demonstrate key park benefits. In 2015 the CNPA reported a leverage figure of £4 from every £1 of its grant-in-aid spending and the LLTNPA reported an average spend per visitor of £180. The NNP area had a business turnover of £27 million which is around six times the NNPA annual budget.

11.34 Areas recently designated as National Parks do not have dedicated economic baselines and information to calculate their impact comes from a variety of sources. Since 2009, to examine if park status is making a difference and to create an economic history, the Cairngorms Business Barometer, commissioned by the CNPA and the Cairngorm Business Partnership, delivers results on business performance and confidence every quarter. Economic baseline reviews of the CNP were undertaken in 2009 and 2013.

11.35 The 2015/16 CNP Business Barometer report found that the influence of National Park designation in attracting customers and impacting on business operations and profitability continues to grow and reached record high levels in the last quarter of 2016.

11.36 Accommodation providers in the CNP outperformed other businesses as the highest annual average occupancy on record was achieved (c. 60% occupancy). Looking to the next 12 months, businesses intend to increase their infrastructure investments faster than they did previously.

Policy challenges

11.37 Criticisms that NPAs are not rising to the conservation challenge tend to overlook how the established (and confusing) raft of National Nature Reserve, National Scenic Area, SSSI and Natura, Ramsar designations and policies also struggle to effectively manage biodiversity declines. The National Park brand, applied well, can generate greater popular support and investment in conservation.

11.38 Assets like National Parks often have huge intangible values or externalities, negative or positive, which are hard to capture through an income or expenditure stream. Generally, the market will undervalue positive externalities, such as culture, wildlife, scenic views and natural beauty, because it cannot easily extract value from them. Similarly, negative externalities, such as pollution, species and heritage loss, are more prevalent because the market does not pay the full costs of their impact or loss.

11.39 Hence, allocating development rights and user responsibilities and addressing these externalities should be inherent in our economic, social and environmental policies. In areas like the Borders with traditional industries, like farming and forestry, where market values have long been established other costs may be overlooked. National Parks can be a mechanism to examine the market for Border ‘goods and services’ more holistically and in greater depth.

Hermitage Castle, Newcastleton © VisitScotland/Paul Tomkins

Destinations with National Park status can become ‘branded aspirational places’ to visit.
12

Are there other non-National Park options?

Summary

• Agencies operating locally could provide some of the same services as a NP but lack sufficient integration and dedicated budgets for the area
• Other non-statutory mechanisms like biosphere reserves are available but they struggle to maintain funding and staffing and have little public profile
• Other options like NSA or Regional Park will not provide the structure or uplift the area needs
NOT DESIGNATING THE AREA AS A NATIONAL PARK

12.1 It can be argued that public administrations operating in areas pre-park designation could have identified issues of rural development, visitor experience and conservation, managed them and delivered the opportunities. Most of the issues and opportunities facing the areas, broadly speaking, lie within the responsibility of existing local authorities or agencies.

12.2 So why didn’t they manage and deliver? Local authorities, rightly, focus on areas of greatest need and delivering cost effective services to their residents rather than to tourists. Per person, rural areas are harder and costlier to service. Additional resources might have helped, but long term ring fencing of dedicated resources for specific areas would be difficult to achieve.

12.3 Other public bodies could invest in the area but these bodies tend not to function in the necessary integrated way. Institutional settings can be resistant to changes in strategic focus and accountability. Fear of change to the status quo and the counter factual perception of a ‘lack of sound evidence’ on alternative approaches may be used as reasons not to support new collective service delivery mechanisms.

12.4 SNH is responsible for conservation activities, primarily on statutory sites (not the wider countryside), promoting knowledge and enjoyment of the natural heritage and environmental sustainability. FCS is a direct arm of Government running the National Forest Estate and the National Forest Parks – first established in the 1930s and provides regulation and forestry grants. Commercial woodland tends to be optimised for production. SEPA is the environmental regulator and adviser responsible for controlling pollution in Scotland. Working to a shared strategy has proved challenging.

12.5 Scottish Enterprise is focused on economic development, although in establishing the South of Scotland Enterprise Agency by early 2020, Government seems to suggesting that rural productivity in the area could be enhanced and community interests better served by a new approach. VisitScotland provides tourism marketing and information and has a South of Scotland strategy but does not provide funding beyond marketing schemes. Linking the economy to environmental and community sustainability has also proved hard to achieve.

USING OTHER (NON-STATUTORY) MECHANISMS?

Biosphere reserves

12.6 Other protected area mechanisms do exist. Biosphere Reserves have three main functions: conservation, learning/research, and sustainable development. Biospheres are managed by a framework which divides the area into three complementary management zones: Core Area, Buffer Zone and Transition Area. The Transition Area is where people live and where sustainable economic and community development is being actively promoted.

12.7 Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is the first example of the ‘new style’ Biosphere in Scotland and is one of only four in the UK. Managed by a Biosphere Partnership Board and employed by the Southern Uplands Partnership, a Biosphere team of only five people work in a massive area of 5268km² to help use the Biosphere designation to make a difference by stimulating interest and understanding.

12.8 A small annual budget of £100,000 has been agreed for 2017-2022 comprising: from Dumfries and Galloway Council £20,000; from South Ayrshire Council £15,000; from East Ayrshire Council £15,000; from Scottish Natural Heritage £10,000; from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency £10,000; from the Forestry Commission Scotland £10,000; and from Scottish Government £20,000.

12.9 Biosphere reserves have international recognition through UNESCO but designation brings no new regulation of activities within the area and crucially no additional dedicated funding resources. Biosphere designation may carry some weight in policy decisions and is compatible with national parks, but evidence suggests that there is limited recognition of the status amongst politicians, residents, visitors and businesses. Securing funding for on-going projects and management is difficult. This perhaps underlines why Galloway is seeking National Park status.
GEO PARKS

12.10 A Geopark is an area of outstanding interest for its rocks and landforms, and where greater appreciation and understanding of that geological heritage can benefit local people and businesses through tourism and education initiatives. In November 2015 UNESCO created a new accreditation of ‘UNESCO Global Geopark’, giving Geoparks within the Global Geoparks network the same level of recognition as World Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves.

12.11 In Scotland, there are two Geoparks – North West Highlands Geopark and Geopark Shetland. Proposals for Geoparks are developed by partnerships of local communities, local authorities, earth scientists and Scottish Natural Heritage.

12.12 Each Geopark has an established management group. These groups co-ordinate activities and promotion. Businesses that make use of or benefit from the area’s geological heritage are encouraged to ensure that their activities are environmentally sustainable and support conservation of that heritage. Businesses that adhere to the geopark’s aims may use the logo to help promote their business and day-to-day land management is unaffected by designation.

12.13 As with Biosphere Reserves, securing policy positions, branding, public awareness and funding for Geoparks is difficult. For example, Lochaber still operates as a Geopark, though without the UNESCO accolade after losing status in 2011 due to lack of funding, despite geodiversity of national importance like Ben Nevis and the Great Glen Fault. The North West Highlands Geopark has even taken to crowd funding to pay staff on a month to month basis.

Others

12.14 There are 40 National Scenic Areas (NSAs) in Scotland which, with their outstanding scenery, represent Scotland’s finest landscapes. The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 gives a statutory basis to NSAs by adding a new section to the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The new legislation was brought into force in December 2010 through The Town and Country Planning (National Scenic Areas) (Scotland) Designation Directions 2010. This allows Ministers to designate an area as an NSA, and instruct that special attention be given to safeguarding or enhancing its character. Dumfries and Galloway Council prepared detailed management plans for three of their NSAs to guide delivery of a programme of environmental management works for the benefit of the landscape and the community. However, NSAs are still little known and without dedicated resources and staffing have limited value in wider rural development terms.

12.15 There are currently three regional parks in Scotland: Clyde Muirshiel, Pentland Hills and Lomond Hills. Designated under section 48A of the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967, as amended by section 8 of the Countryside (Scotland) Act, 1981 regional parks are relatively small areas (under 100km²) managed by local authorities, with support from Scottish Natural Heritage. There are currently no statutory obligations on local authorities arising directly from a regional park designation. Provision of services is discretionary and regional parks have struggled to attract the required levels of essential funding as local authority budgets are squeezed.
13

Conclusion on the case for National Park status

Summary

• The Borders are in a state of flux and the effects of externalities may be felt more acutely here
• Brexit may have a significant effect on land management businesses
• Based on current socio-economic trends the South Borders area could take a downward trend
• Conversely, the area has strong grounds for optimism with its strong vibrant culture and asset base – time for change
• A South Borders park would be close to large centres of population
• National Parks are proven contributors to sustainable economic growth in rural areas around the world and the accolade offers a flexible ‘vehicle’ for transition to new and creative approaches
13.1 Underneath a proud, distinct and celebrated heritage the Borders are in a state of flux with some overshadowing threats. The demographic change here differs significantly from national averages with strong evidence of people and communities facing accelerating challenges and pressures.

13.2 Analysis highlights the volatility in business performance across the entire Borders linked to a range of external factors including the recession, oil price fluctuations, supplier costs and wages and the ‘Brexit’ referendum, and points to the need for a better understanding of specific issues among different types of businesses. Land management businesses, the backbone of the local economy, face a particularly uncertain future and there is evidence of ‘silos’ thinking with limited integration.

13.3 The short-term outlook for the South Border area of the Teviot and Liddesdale and the Cheviot areas could take a downward trend. Primary industries using natural resources are still the base on which the area’s prosperity rests supported by public funding, but in a physically challenging landscape with a sparse population and uncertain future support mechanisms, it is time for a change to traditional thinking and disciplines.

13.4 Overall, residents in the area are getting older and accessing services is becoming more expensive and more difficult. The ‘central massif’ of the Southern Borders is its principle landscape asset but it also acts as a natural barrier to movements and to communication. The area is in danger of being ‘left behind’ and ‘bypassed’ relative to surrounding localities, attractions and investments along the Anglo-Scottish Border.

13.5 Yet there are grounds for optimism in the area’s culture and assets base. Other rural areas do not have a manufacturing history in towns like Hawick which means there are still service centres to supply the area, elements of a keen, skilled and adaptable younger workforce based in the area and an affordable housing stock. The local culture and environment offer much greater tourism, creative industry and lifestyle potential than is currently being exploited.

13.6 The Scottish National Park model can help get more out of the area’s assets, driving footfall and investment. Parks can integrate sustainable development objectives within natural heritage management and help power the important evolutionary transition the area needs to adopt if it is not to be left behind by surrounding economies. The brand and ‘existence’ value43 of National Parks is established, clear and strong and provides the ‘product’ and ‘framework’ so important for attracting visitors and entrepreneurs in a highly competitive world. It would boost the established Borders reputation with a renowned accolade.

13.7 The emphasis on partnership and democracy encouraged through the Scottish National Park vision will support social capital growing here. The English and Welsh model offers valuable experiences too and the proximity of Northumberland NP should be viewed as an opportunity. Inevitably, establishing a new national park status would generate initial teething trouble as its role and purpose are further defined, but long-term evidence suggests parks can and do deliver.

13.8 Scottish emphasis upon land reform, responsible stewardship and increased social justice is beginning to prove fundamental to the assertion of landscape as a ‘meeting ground’ of nature and society to ensure much greater integration between socio-economic and environmental objectives for wider public benefit. It is important to stress again that park status will not impose on legitimate activities rooted in deep and long-standing cultural values within communities, nor will it be an instant panacea to social, economic or environmental ills, but it can provide a proven foundation on which to build.

13.9 As a strategic investment for Scotland, a Borders park has much to offer. Unlike the other candidate National Parks areas distant from centres of population (Affric, Wester Ross, Nevis), the Southern Borders are very accessible and affordable to people visiting from Edinburgh and the Lothians, Carlisle and Newcastle. Park status is primarily about what people can do within the park and designation could ‘kick start’ activities in an area that is experiencing economic decline and demographic challenges likely to have an increasing cost to local and national taxpayers in the future.

13.10 Delivering positive economic and social impacts to the Southern Borders through designation is not an exact science. The economic profile of the area has some deep-seated and inherent weaknesses with social trends contributing to an increasingly fragile status. So, judging by experience and evidence from elsewhere, it seems reasonable to assume that, post designation, there would be opportunities for greater sustainable economic growth, improved business performance and better social resilience; closely aligned to Scottish Government priorities.

13.11 This report is only at the beginning of assessing the cost benefit of a new National Park for the Southern Borders. Social and environmental values have yet to be further quantified and people consulted. However, once considered, the full range of use and passive-use values from the accolade would probably make an already compelling analysis even more convincing.

13.12 For a National Park, shaped for the Southern Borders, delivering sustainable economic growth and based on stewardship of the unique and much-loved rich historic, culture and landscapes of the Borderlands a strong case can be made. It is now up to the Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park to present their case to Border residents, businesses and Scottish Borders Council and urge them to support a well evidenced proposal going to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Climate Change.

43 Existence values are a class of economic value, reflecting the benefit people receive from knowing that a particular environmental resource, such as a National Park or an endangered species exists.
14 Where next?

14.1 There is not a national strategy for establishing new National Parks in Scotland or an established model for their delivery. The process for establishing National Parks in Scotland is set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. The legislation allows for balancing structures, functions and powers to meet local needs.

14.2 A National Park for the Southern Borders will only happen if people, businesses and the community get behind the proposal, secure Scottish Borders Council support and make a formal submission for consideration by Scottish Ministers.

14.3 This legislation provides for two phases of public consultation on a formal Ministerial proposal, with the final decision to establish a National Park taken by the Scottish Parliament. The detailed purpose of a new park is set out in a secondary Designation Order which follows Parliamentary agreement on the park’s establishment. The designation of a National Park does NOT require ANY transfer of privately owned land to state control or ownership and reinforces the need for a partnership approach to conservation and development.

14.4 If Ministers accept a case could be made for a National Park in the Borders, they would instruct a ‘reporter’ to undertake a more detailed examination. The ‘reporter’, could be a body such as Scottish Natural Heritage. The examination would include a definition of the proposed park area and scrutinise the evidence on how it meets the conditions set down in the legislation. The ‘reporter’ is required to consider the desirability of designating the area as a park, the functions a Park Authority might exercise, the likely costs and any other relevant matters like local authority views on designation and establishment costs. Establishment costs are estimated in Section 9.

although final costs would depend on a final choice of NP model.

14.5 The 10 stage process to designation could take between two and four years:

1. Scottish Ministers make a statutory proposal to establish a NP in the Borders and appoint SNH as the reporter.
2. SNH undertake a public consultation lasting at least 12 weeks and prepares advice based on the views expressed during the consultation.
3. SNH advises Scottish Ministers and its advice is published.
4. Scottish Ministers consider SNH’s advice (and findings of PLI if necessary) and prepare a draft designation order based on it.
5. Scottish Ministers undertake a public consultation on the draft designation order lasting at least 12 weeks.
6. Scottish Ministers consider the consultation responses and revise the draft designation order. They also prepare a report of the views expressed during the consultation and how they have or have not been addressed in the revision of the designation order.
7. Scottish Ministers lay the draft designation order and consultation report before Parliament.
8. Parliament considers the draft designation order and consultation report.
9. Parliament approves or rejects the draft designation order.
10. A NPA is established. Board places are filled and staff appointed.

Report authors

The report author, Duncan Bryden, is a rural development consultant with a deep knowledge and first-hand experience of National Park development in Scotland. He was a Ministerial appointee to the Board of the Cairngorms National Park Authority from 2003-2015. He was Board Convenor for the last three years of that period and previously chaired the Planning Committee for six years.

Previously vice chair of National Parks UK, he has visited and studied parks in the UK, Ireland, North America, Scandinavia, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. He led the team that prepared a case for the proposed Harris National Park.

Andrew Tait who presented the planning section is an experienced planner, now in private practice based in the Lake District, but with previous employment in Dartmoor and the Cairngorms National Parks.
References

In addition to footnotes the following references are given.

Adirondacks Park Authority http://www.apa.ny.gov/
Boyack 2000 National Parks for Scotland: Consultation on the National Parks (Scotland) Bill January 2000 (Sarah Boyack MSP – then Minister for Transport and Environment with responsibility for National Parks)
Campbell CE (Ed) 2010 A century of Parks Canada 1911-2011 University of Calgary Press, Calgary
Dick L., in Campbell CE (Ed) 2010 A century of Parks Canada 1911-2011 University of Calgary Press, Calgary
Glennie 2012 XA158/10 - OPINION OF LORD GLENNIE https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/search-judgments/judgment?id=72aad8a6-8980-69d2-b500-f10000d74aa7
Grunstead, C 2009 National Parks of Sweden Bokforlaget Max Strom
Jones K R., and Wills, J., 2005 The Invention of the Park. Polity Cambridge
Monbiot B 2017 Blog
Red Kite 2012 Nevis and Glen Coe Options for Integrated Management Integrated Management Working Group
Scanlon,K., Sagor, E and Whitehead.C., 2014 The economic impact of holiday rentals in the UK A project for Home Away LSE London
Scottish Campaign for National Parks
• Tourism report (2016)
• Volunteering report (2016)
• Socio-economic Benefits report (2015)
• Governance Models report (2015)
Scottish Parliament Official Account
Scots Magazine October 2016 National Parks - The Great Debate pp70-71 Vol 184 No 10
UNESCO “Cultural Landscapes” whc.unesco.org