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Thanks for your support

Hello and thank you again for your continued support of Link.

Sadly, this is the final issue funded through our Awards for All grant from the Big Lottery. Your feedback tells us that you view Link as a valuable resource for the third sector in the Scottish Borders. Not only does it help organisations to find out what is going on across the region, it also helps to raise public awareness of the valuable work of the sector and the many ways it offers support and help to the community.

We believe in Link and what it seeks to achieve. For that reason, we will be spending the next few weeks working hard to find ways in which we can make the publication sustainable.

If you have any ideas that can help us to continue, then please do get in touch. All the contact details are on the back page. And please do keep giving us your feedback via www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/facepr - it could really help us find a way to keep going!

Kathleen Travers, Editor



On the move

Streets Ahead has been supporting people in the Borders for 30 years, from Duns to Peebles.

The charity was formed to support people with learning disabilities, who were moving from long-term care to independent accommodation across the Scottish Borders.

Now it offers a whole range of personalised services to people with various support needs.

The organisation recently moved into new offices in Kelso and Galashiels.

At the opening of the Kelso office, people spoke about the life-changing opportunities they have experienced as part of the Streets Ahead community.

Jason McLeod spoke about being connected with people, the importance of avoiding social isolation and how Streets Ahead helped

to encourage his artistic endeavours.

Jason was supported to host an art exhibition in Old Gala House and helped with the design of the new Streets Ahead logo.

Chief Executive Officer, Sandy Devers, said: "We have come a long way in 30 years and it's clear that we have the trust of many people in the Borders."

Streets Ahead hosted a conference in Galashiels earlier this year, setting out its vision for supporting people to lead great lives, asking 'what matters to you?'

The guest speaker was Gavin Harding OBE, the first person with a learning disability to hold the office of Mayor, in Selby, Yorkshire.

Chair of Streets Ahead, Tricia Hunter added: "We want to be at the heart of communities in the Borders, working in partnership.

"We want our new offices to be community hubs, which benefit the wider community and help people to stay connected".



▲ Pictured at the new Kelso office are (left to right) Community Councillor Colin McGrath and his wife, Ruth, Trustee Grant Mooney, and Sandy Devers.

CONTACT

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Celebrating success at Re-Tweed

The first trainees to take part in an innovative training course at Eyemouth-based social enterprise, Re-Tweed, celebrated their achievements at an event in the town's golf club in July.

Six Berwickshire women completed the 11-week pilot Craft, Design and Technology course, learning how to use a sewing machine and create a range of furnishings, fashions and crafts.

They used upcycled textiles, donated from across the community, in the manufacturing of bags, cushions, crafts and fashions.

Re-Tweed Director, Hazel Smith, said: "Re-Tweed is about creating a viable manufacturing enterprise and promoting positive environmental actions

using recycled textiles, but it is fundamentally about encouraging positive journeys for our students.

"Over the last 11 weeks, the women have made an amazing range of products. The biggest thing for me, though, has been hearing them talk about their own sense of achievement, and the way they worked in mutual support of one another has made all the effort worthwhile."

Annie Watt, Social Enterprise Business Adviser with Business Gateway Scottish Borders presented certificates to the women, who were inspired and supported by trainer Jacqueline Thompson and volunteer Rhonda Noble.

The work produced by the trainees went on sale at local events and their creations will also be



▲ Trainee Stacey Dougal (left) receives her certificate from Annie Watt of Business Gateway

available for sale in some Berwickshire shops.

Re-Tweed has just launched its website at www.retweed.com, which will, in time, enable sales to be made online.

Meanwhile, some of

the women from the course are moving into volunteering or jobs – and most have, or will be, buying sewing machines as they are all keen to continue to develop their new-found skills!



Scottish Borders Disability Sport Group is hosting its second Borders Boccia Open Competition at the Queens Centre in Galashiels on Saturday 1st October.

The competition is open to players of all ages with a physical or learning disability.

Pictured above are members of the recently formed Kelso Boccia Club.

■ For information, contact Alan Oliver on 01896 661166, 07887 471 137 or e-mail aoliver@liveborders.org.uk.

Rod's a Local Hero



'Local Hero' Rod Anderson, a project worker at Addaction in Galashiels, took part in the Scottish Parliament's day of celebrations in Edinburgh at the start of July.

Rod was nominated as a 'Local Hero' by MSP Christine Grahame, after being put forward by someone at Serendipity Recovery Café – the small charity that Rod set up with Addaction.

The nomination highlighted Rod as a "selfless, unassuming man who gives people hope that they can overcome addiction and get on the path to recovery".

Rod, pictured on the big day with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, was part of the Local Hero procession along Edinburgh's Royal Mile, part of the celebrations to mark the official opening of the Scottish Parliament's fifth session.

Young Start support

LGBT Youth Scotland has received funding from the Big Lottery's Young Start programme to develop its work with young people in the Borders.

There are two local groups for young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people – one in Duns and one in Selkirk.

They offer one-to-one support, face to face, online, via phone and by text.

The groups also provide support for young people at school, and often to teachers and agencies, so that they feel confident and equipped to work with LGBT people.

Transforming care for patients with cancer

Cancer care should not stop when treatment ends, but should continue until the individual no longer needs support.

That's the ethos behind the Transforming Care after Treatment (TCAT) project, which is now up and running in Tweeddale.

It aims to enable people to live as independent a life as possible in their local community, following treatment and recovery from cancer.

The project works with individuals and their families and friends to provide practical, tailored one to one support.

Project Co-ordinator Angela Davidson said: "The project is about what is important to each individual.

"Many people who are diagnosed with cancer don't know where to turn for emotional support, financial advice or practical help.

"There is a real gap that we are trying to fill," added Angela. "After some people have finished their treatment, they can feel quite isolated. We work to support them and build their confidence to move on."

The services available can range from information about local services to practical support.

Once someone contacts the service, an occupational therapist will visit to find out what is important to them.

If it's exercise, for example, they can be referred to FitBorders for gentle exercise classes and receive 10 free passes or, if required, have one-to-one sessions in their own home.

"One person who contacted us felt very socially isolated. Part of his recovery and well-being was to receive help in moving to a better supported housing complex, which enabled him to get involved in social activities", explained Angela.

With support from the Scottish Government, Macmillan is funding the £5m TCAT programme across Scotland.

In Tweeddale, it's a joint initiative by Macmillan Cancer Support, NHS Borders, British Red Cross, Scottish Borders Council and FitBorders.

To find out more, contact the Tweeddale Social Care and Health Team on 01721 726355.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Making the right connections

Ryan Telfer is a Business Connector for Scottish Borders. He is on a full-time secondment from Bank of Scotland to the charity Business in the Community.

The Business Connector programme works to increase the positive impact of business in local communities, using the expertise, skills and energy of business people to tackle local social issues.

Ryan said: "It's fantastic to be in the Borders talking to businesses, voluntary organisations and charities,



learning all about the activities, challenges, needs and actions all aimed at supporting the community.

"It's a great job and I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to build partnerships between diverse groups, matching skills and resource to ultimately 'Help Britain Prosper'," he added.

One example of a new partnership facilitated by Ryan was between the charity Tomorrow's People and First Bus.

The Tomorrow's People team, led by Mark Timmins, has been delivering the Galashiels Works programme since 2013. It offers support to disadvantaged young people living in rural areas to find opportunities and work.

The programme strives to develop and unlock individual strengths, skills, confidence, knowledge and get young people "on track" for the world of work. The results are impressive, with more than 80 per cent



of participants finding a positive destination before the end of the programme.

Young people go through a series of social, practical, individual and team work experiences. They take part in work taster days, volunteering opportunities and team building, and tasks linked to employment such as CV writing and interview preparation.



As part of Ryan's role as a Business Connector, he became aware that First Bus was looking at ways it could work with other local businesses and groups.

A conversation in Ryan's network quickly developed into a community partnership between Tomorrow's People and First Bus.

The partnership has since grown and is flourishing. It has provided:

- job placement experiences
- customer service training workshops
- mock interview and feedback sessions
- business scenario role plays to test skills.

The experience and insight for the young people is valuable in helping the Galashiels Works programme to turn young people's lives around and get them thinking positively about the future.

In addition, First Bus identified an opportunity to develop staff through a different experience.

Lee Young, First Bus Operations Manager, said: "It was a positive education for us as much as the young people.

"They continuously ask good questions, challenge us and make us think differently - a real win-win situation.

"There are clearly some very talented young people, many of whom we'd like to see working in the bus industry."

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Picture special - Border Union Show

Charities on show at the Border Union

The annual Border Union Show was held, as always, on the last Friday and Saturday of July in Springwood Park, Kelso.

Thousands of people flocked to the show, which offers a great day out for all ages, with lots of animals, foods, amusements, shopping and demonstrations.

And this year the third sector again had a big presence at the show, with stands staffed by community groups, charities and social enterprises dotted around the park.

The show is an ideal opportunity for organisations, national and local, big and small, to promote the valuable work that they do and to raise much-needed funds.

Among the many taking part this year were Rotary Club and Inner Wheel members from across the Borders, helping to keep young visitors safe by offering a free wristband with a contact mobile number for children in case they became separated from their parents.



▲ Clockwise from top: Rotary Club and Inner Wheel, Guide Dogs, Borders Search and Rescue Unit, Let's Talk Associate

Guest column



s CIC, Multiple Sclerosis Society, The British Horse Society

I SAY...

David Parker, Leader of Scottish Borders Council and Chair of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Strategic Board



‘The third sector has a fundamental role in delivery of community planning priorities’

As Chair of the Community Planning Partnership Strategic Board, and in my role as a Councillor, I know first-hand how valuable the Third Sector is as a key partner to assist us in the delivery of our community planning priorities.

The CPP is made up of statutory partners including NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services and Scottish Enterprise alongside our other non-statutory partners including Borders College, registered social landlords, and the third sector.

Through the CPP, we ensure our strategic plans are influenced by our partnership discussions which have a vital contribution to the quality of life in the Borders. Our key focus is on improving quality of life for those living within our most deprived communities, through a stronger economy and through targeted partnership action.

The role of the Third Sector and the wide range of services they provide in particular to our younger and older people continue to support Scottish Borders Council and its partners to deliver these priorities.

Of course we have challenges. We all know that we are living in a difficult economic climate, and on top of that, more demands are being placed on our services than ever before. However, due to our forward planning and strong partnership working - we are in a better place here in the Borders than most other areas of the country. We will be shortly launching our public consultation on our Budget which allows us to take on board any ideas from our public, and partners about what we can do differently to continue to invest in areas which need it most. We continue to focus on reducing inequalities and tackling deprivation with local, targeted action, but we continue to have a clear vision for the CPP and see successful projects being driven forward such as our Localities project in Cheviot and the ongoing work in Health and Social Care Partnership. I continue to be extremely proud of the work that we do here in the Borders, and would like to personally thank our Third Sector colleagues, for their continued support and valuable role they continue to have in our communities.

Special feature

Supporting families in crisis

Every day, 130 families experience the heart breaking loss of an infant.

More than 86,000 babies in the UK will need the service of a Special Care Baby Unit this year.

A small Lauder-based charity is working hard to support families in crisis as a result of the premature birth of a baby, the birth of a special needs baby or the loss of a baby to miscarriage, stillbirth or neo-natal death.

Zaagi lovingly transforms donated wedding gowns and other garments into nesting wraps and blessing gowns for bereaved families.

It provides these outfits as a donation to the hospital so that they are readily available for families when needed.

The charity also makes outfits for premature and special needs babies in special care baby units, and cloth dolls to help brothers and sisters cope while they wait for baby to come home.

Kimberly Shaw-Walker founded Zaagi after losing her baby girl at 35 weeks to a massive abruption.

"I was trying to find something I could physically do about my grief," she explained. "A friend and grief counsellor asked me if there was any

one thing that could have been different, aside from the obvious outcome, what would it be. My immediate answer was something to dress her in. That's how it got started."

Kimberly created a Facebook post in July last year, looking for gowns, and was contacted by Michelle Gibb (pictured below), who joined her in organising a local group, finding trustees and moving on to apply for charitable status, which was granted in November.

"We aim to relieve a minute portion of the stress of this tragedy in ensuring they have options to choose from, on hand at the hospital, for the one and only time they will get to be with and dress their baby.

"It acknowledges their short, beautiful lives and pays respect to the little time they were here," said Kimberly.

Zaagi also produces four garments, specially designed to meet the medical needs of premature and special needs babies. They allow parents to care for their babies without over-handling or having to disconnect critical equipment.

"It's a critical stage for both parent and baby to be able to bond. Babies respond to human contact and these

Zaagi is a Native American word from the Ojibwe band of the Chippewa Nation. It means "to love and to treasure".



garments allow parents to have a role in caring for their child," Kimberly explained.

The charity needs funding to develop its services, specifically to purchase supplies and materials to produce garments and to create a workshop space.

It's also looking for volunteers to help with various activities, such as sewing, knitting, sourcing donations and supplies, and helping with funding applications. Please get in touch if you can help.



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One Step Borders

CIC has been awarded £50,000 from The Big Lottery Young Start fund.

It's for a two-year, peer support project for young people experiencing mental health challenges and living within the Scottish Borders area.

The project will provide self-management workshops, social activities, one-to-one and group peer support. It will also develop a peer support network.

Cheviot Youth was also awarded £49,737 for a youth project in Jedburgh from the Young Start fund.

Activities will include a youth led drop-in three times a week for 8-18 year olds; a community connections group developing community based projects with other local organisations; volunteering opportunities for individual or groups of young people, and support through older Community Connections Ambassadors.

Other organisations to receive funding recently from Big Lottery programmes include:

Berwickshire Association for Voluntary Service (BAVS) - £10,000 - to purchase a community vehicle as a part of Berwickshire Wheels fleet.

BIG support!

New Horizons Borders - £8,320 - additional hours for drop-in facilitators to allow them to carry out the role of Emotional Support Worker delivering one-to-one support.

Peebles Community Centre Management Committee - £9,440 - to run a weekly arts and crafts club for older people in Peebles and Innerleithen.

TweedAstros - £9,700 - This project will enable the group to develop its activities and create an educational and outreach facility for astronomy, by funding high quality equipment and a storage container to be installed beside the Society's viewing site.

Gala Rugby Football Club - £2,150 - to establish an adult women's rugby team.

Ashkirk Village Hall - £3,270 - to purchase a projector, a screen and assorted equipment in order to improve the facilities of the hall.

Jedburgh Community Sports Hub - £5,699 - for venue hire and a range of equipment for various sports so that it can hold

an open sports festival and increase participation in local sports clubs.

P.H.D. FUNDamentals - £10,000 - for equipment to better serve the needs of male gymnasts and expanding the membership.

St Ronan's Youth & Community Centre - £3,675 - for a summer activity programme aimed at nursery and primary school aged children.

Eastgate Theatre (Peebles) & Arts Centre Ltd - £20,000 - for enriching and enlarging the Eastgate programme.

Alchemy Film and Arts - £50,000 - Scotland and Venice 2017.

Live Borders - £10,000 - Visual Arts and Craft Awards 2016-2017.

■ **If you have recently received funding and would like to let us know about your project, call 0300 111 1920 or e-mail link@facepr.co.uk.**



Feels like flying...

Think, Thrive! has received funding from Cycling Scotland to run a bike ride project, *Feels Like Flying*.

It will involve training volunteers as Cycle Leaders with a trainer from Cycling Scotland to help Think Thrive! staff lead bike trips.

Director Graeme Nisbet explained: "Many people have found that cycling is a great way to keep fit, both physically and mentally, and that it has played a big part in recovery from mental health problems.

"Here in the Borders we have many quiet country roads and beautiful scenery that makes for really great cycling and once you're out and the bike is rolling along, it really does feel like flying!"

Locations will be chosen with either off road cycle paths or quiet country roads for short trips on bikes that the project will provide.

■ Visit www.thinkthrive.co.uk for more details, or contact Graeme on 07795 549574, e-mail info@thinkthrive.co.uk.

News

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Diabetes Scotland is setting up a new diabetes community support group in the Scottish Borders, with the support of Ability Borders.

An open meeting will be held on Saturday 10th September in Galashiels.

For more information, contact Lorraine McAuley at Diabetes Scotland on 0141 245 6380 or e-mail her at Lorraine.mcauley@diabetes.org.uk.

A fundraising event in Galashiels on Saturday, 3rd September, aims to challenge mental health stigma.

"Walk a mile in someone else's shoes" starts from the Volunteer Hall at 1.30pm. It's being organised by SeeMe.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/2b18rbj>

The 8th annual Borders Heritage Festival will be held from 1st-30th September at more than 40 sites.

It will include walks, talks, theatre, exhibitions and archaeology.

Visit <http://bit.ly/2b18rbj> for details.

Committed to co-production

Co-production means that the people who use services are equally involved in the planning, delivery and review of those services.

It builds on community engagement methods, such as public involvement, but goes further by supporting truly joint working relationships and shared decision making.

Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership (CPP) recently adopted guidance for co-production.

It will help CPP staff to use a co-productive approach when they are working with communities.

And although it's aimed at staff, the guidance is available to anyone interested in finding out more about co-production.

The benefit of co-production to the Community Planning Partnership is that it draws on a variety of skills and knowledge.

The community is involved in developing the services it uses, so it helps organisations to get it right first time. Most things can be co-produced.

"We have seen the value and benefits of co-production when planning and delivering services in areas where this

An introduction to co-production

SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERSHIP



approach is already being used," said Elaine Torrance, Chief Social Work Officer at Scottish Borders Council.

"By adopting a partnership-wide approach to co-production, we are seeking to make sure that more of our services are co-produced in the future."

The guidance, *'An Introduction to Co-production'*, includes good practice case studies from Scottish Borders Council, third sector organisations, Scottish Borders Housing Association and NHS Borders. It's available at www.scotborders.gov.uk/coproduction.

For more information contact: communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk.



▲ **The Duns group making up planters**

The Border Links group in Duns spent five weeks over the summer making up planters to sell to the public.

Each week, the group went to the local garden centre to select fresh bedding plants and compost to make up their orders.

They sold 18 planters in total and made enough money to fund an outing later in the year.

Peebles gets behind RNIB fundraising bid

Peebles is the first UK town to back the "Sponsor a Talking Book" fundraising drive, launched by the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB).

Local community groups, organisations, businesses and book clubs are getting behind the bid to raise £5000 by March next year, which will allow RNIB to produce two books.

Audio books can be a lifeline for blind and partially sighted people. Whether it's listening to the latest novel, learning a new language, or losing yourself in poetry, the

RNIB library has a range of books for everyone to enjoy.

All of the books in the library are free of charge to blind and partially sighted children and adults. They have been narrated by an actor to bring the books alive and capture the listener's imagination.

They can be downloaded via a free app on smartphones, iPads or a PC, or obtained by post on a USB stick or CD.

Angela Preston (*pictured right*) is the charity's Area Fundraising Manager for East Scotland.



"Once the total has been reached, two books will be chosen and recorded with a dedication acknowledging the generosity of the Peebles community," she said.

"This will be played at the start of the book each time someone downloads it and the book will remain in the RNIB library for all to enjoy for many years to come."

RNIB audio books can also be downloaded by people with dyslexia or any condition that prevents them from reading a book.

It costs RNIB £2500 to produce an adult book and £1500 for a children's book.

A woman in Peebles, who is a Talking Book user, has matched the town's £2500

target because of the difference they have made to her life.

That means that two books can be produced, thanks to the generosity of the people of the town.

Board members wanted

Volunteer Centre Borders (VCB) is recruiting for new Board Members. There is already a broad range of skills on the board, but VCB would be interested in speaking to people who have a passion for volunteering, a knowledge of the third sector, and management and strategic expertise.

This is an opportunity to help shape the development of an organisation that is playing a significant part in addressing social isolation, inactivity and inequality across the Scottish Borders, as well as contributing to sporting and cultural pursuits.

It is also a chance to develop skills in areas such as leadership and governance.

Meetings are held bi-monthly in Galashiels and usually last two hours,

For more information, call 0845 602 3921 or e-mail enquiries@vcborders.org.uk.

CONTACT

07827 872 409
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www.facebook.com/PeeblesCommunity

DONATE

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/PeeblesCommunity
 Text PEEB60 £5 to 70070

Tackling social isolation

Interest Link Borders has secured £13,000 from a Scottish Government Fund that aims to increase social connections for people experiencing social isolation and disadvantage.

Interest Link's volunteer friendship service supports children, young people and adults with learning disabilities.

Project Co-ordinator Andrew Findlay said the fit with the Social Isolation and Loneliness Fund's priorities was clear:

"Friends and social networks are essential for wellbeing. But people with learning disabilities often find them out of reach.

The one-to-one friendships and friendship groups we



facilitate create real and equal relationships that can last many years."

Anyone aged over eight with a learning disability, including most people on the autistic spectrum, can apply to use the Interest Link service.

It supports around 200 people each year, from Eyemouth to West Linton, through four local branches.

Protecting older people from harm

Action on Elder Abuse Scotland works to protect older people.

It supports those experiencing (or at risk of) harm and abuse, as well as raising awareness and advocating effective prevention.

It offers free and impartial advice and support on neglect, harm and abuse, whether it's financial, physical, psychological, emotional or sexual.

It is confidential, free to call from a landline or mobile, and won't appear on the phone bill.

Freephone 080 8808 8141 (Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm).



Get canny in the kitchen!

The Borders HELP (Home Expenses: Lessening the Pinch) project provides specialist advice and practical support to help people stay affordably warm in their homes.

As part of the project, free Kitchen Canny workshops help people to manage their food bills by cutting down on waste.

A two-hour, hands on workshop gives participants:

- Advice on meal planning and food shopping to make food and money go further

- Tips and tools for storing food, managing date labels and getting portion sizes right
- Ideas for using leftovers and wasting less food
- A free Kitchen Canny kit (worth £12) to help people get started.

Last year, families who attended the workshops and used the Kitchen Canny kit saved an average of £467 a year on their food bills.

To book a workshop, call Hannah Milne on 0131 538 7959 or e-mail hmilne@changeworks.org.uk.

Link

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