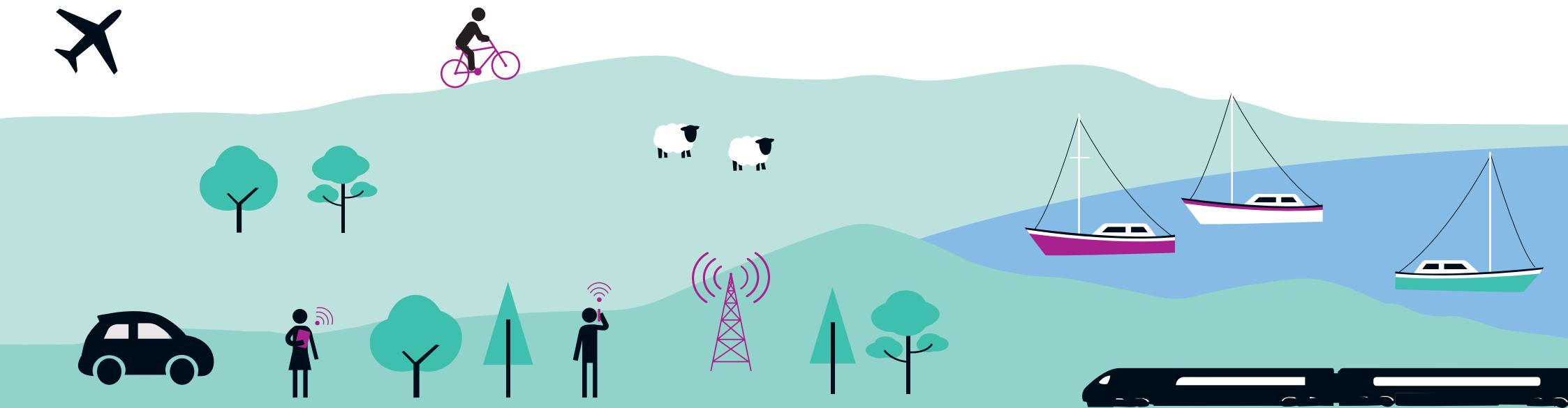




# Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

Progress Update - February 2020



## Introduction

Back in July 2019, the Leaders of the Borderlands Councils and UK and Scottish Government Ministers signed a Heads of Terms agreement setting out the framework, projects and programmes that are included in the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

This announcement was the result of collaborative cross-border working between the Borderlands Councils and has secured a £394.5million investment package for the benefit of our region. This is made up of UK and Scottish Governments' investment combined with financial support from the Borderlands partners.

Since then we've been continuing the work of the partnership and engaging with the UK and Scottish Governments to develop project business cases and move towards agreement on the Final Deal package.



## Second sell-out Borderlands Conference a big success

Delivery of schemes under the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal will start this year - delegates at the second Borderlands Conference in November 2019 were told.

More than 300 people came to Slaley Hall in Northumberland for a showcase on the steps the partnership has taken so far and take part in a series of workshops on future plans.

Director at the Northern Powerhouse Henri Murison gave a keynote address and stressed how the cross-border deal would allow local authorities to work together to lever funding which would benefit all their communities.

Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council Gavin Stevenson told the conference how detailed work is now taking place on business cases, which would then need to be approved by government before money is released for projects - with delivery scheduled to start in 2020.

Specific funding has already been confirmed for some projects, including £8million for a Dairy Innovation Centre in Dumfries and Galloway, £10million to support natural capital innovation across the Borderlands region, £19million for the Biking Innovation Centre in the Scottish Borders, £15million for Carlisle Station in Cumbria, £5million for Alnwick Garden in Northumberland. A feasibility study into the extension of the Borders Railway from Carlisle to Tweedbank will also be funded to the tune of £10million.

The Deal will also mean an investment of £31million in green energy projects and £7million to develop key skills needs to boost the visitor economy in the South of Scotland.



## Ideas Shared at Conference Workshops

The second Borderlands Conference played host to a series of workshops covering place and destination, energy, digital, business infrastructure and natural capital which provided a great opportunity to share ideas and help shape the final deal. Here's what came out of the various workstreams.



### Place and Destination

The workshop included discussion of how the Deal will deliver for places across the region. The towns across the Borderlands are vital to the economic success, resilience and social sustainability of the region. The Place programme will target investment to create and sustain economically vibrant towns and town centres and take a place-based, systemic, collective and community led approach - aimed at future proofing our region's towns. Selected towns will also produce Town Investment Plans to drive forward their investments, facilitating maximised devolution with this capital investment.

Delegates examined how the Deal will build upon the strength of Borderlands as a destination. They heard that priorities are to grow international visitors to the region while managing pressure on the most visited areas and promoting a cohesive offer to drive economic growth. Seven priority projects have been identified: Lillidorei at Alnwick Garden; Hadrian's Wall and the Wider Roman Frontier; The River Tweed Route; Berwick Theatre and Conference Centre; See More Lake District; The Star of Caledonia, and Stranraer Marina. Alongside this, investment to enhance existing network of long-distance cycling and walking routes will link up the rural and urban areas of Borderlands and connect these priority projects. The next steps for the Destination programme are to develop Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOBCs) to submit to the government this Spring.



### Energy

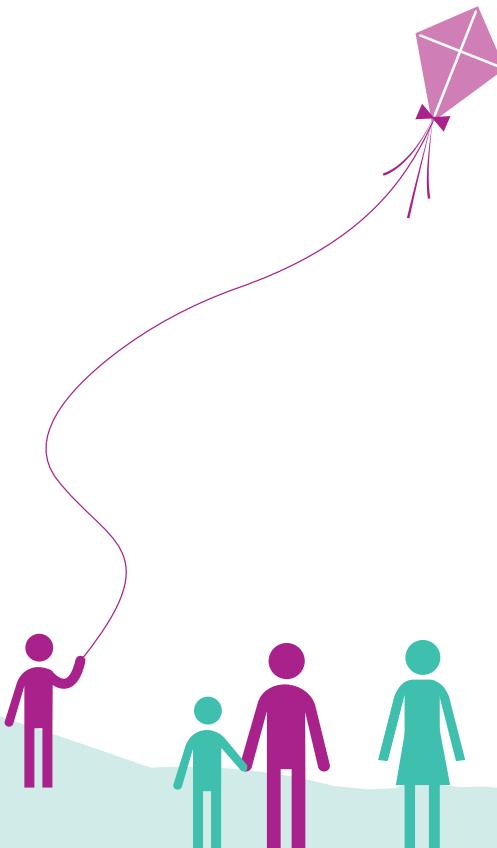
Delegates were told that since the Heads of Terms agreement, the partners have been working towards commissioning the Borderlands Energy Masterplan. A project board has been established with representation from both UK and Scottish Governments, LEPS, Scottish Enterprise and the partner Councils.

The board is seeking to broaden its membership with private sector and community participation.

The Masterplan will establish the framework for more detailed local area energy plans (LAEP) which will provide a clear understanding of the energy generation and consumption opportunities in the Borderlands.

These local energy plans will set out the opportunities for green energy production, efficient energy use and projects that will contribute to delivering the net zero target.

The Masterplan will also establish the framework for the investment programme which is identified in Heads of Terms.



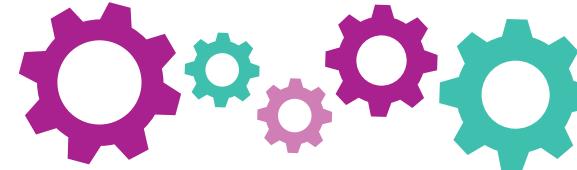


## Digital

At the workshop attendees heard about the two phases of activity that are currently being progressed. The first phase includes a ‘top-up’ voucher scheme for Cumbria and Northumberland that is aligned to the Government’s Rural Gigabit Connectivity voucher scheme and specifically designed to help fund the infrastructure costs for full fibre connectivity for businesses and communities in our more remote superfast ‘not-spot’ locations. It’s hoped this scheme will be ready to start from April 2020.

The second phase is focused on improving mobile infrastructure to improve 4G coverage across the Borderlands region.

The development of this business case will need to be aligned with the Government’s Shared Rural Network that is currently under negotiation with the four mobile network operators. We recognise the importance of mobile and full fibre connectivity to the future prosperity of the region and we will continue to engage with Government and other partners to make the case for these essential infrastructure improvements in the Borderlands.



## Business Infrastructure

The Business Infrastructure Programme recognises there’s not enough business space to meet the needs of expanding local business or inward investment.

At the workshop attendees heard it’s not possible to meet policy drivers of both UK and Scottish Governments with a single solution, so two business cases are being developed.

In Scotland, the focus will be on sites and premises which will be supported by a planned South of Scotland Property Study.

In England, Cumbria and Northumberland Councils are working with the Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure sites and premises are aligned to the Local Industrial Strategies. There is a lot of demand for this type of investment across the region and the Partnership is keen to spread the investment as widely as possible.

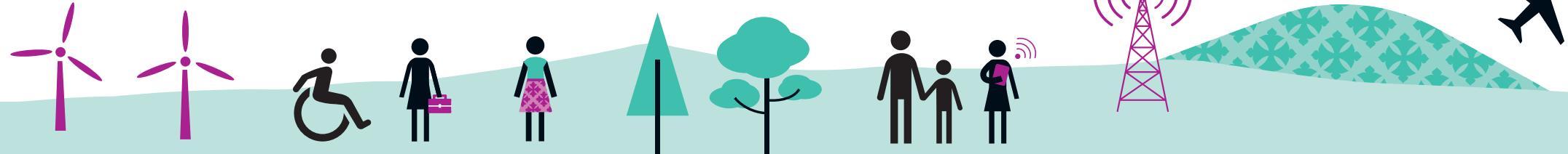


## Natural Capital

Delegates heard about the ambition to establish the whole of the Borderlands as a Natural Capital Innovation Zone (NCIZ), complemented by the provision of two Innovation Centres, one focused on Forestry and the other on Dairy. The NCIZ will provide a vehicle, at a whole landscape level, to develop integrated, place-based and locally-led pathfinders that will showcase the full value of our countryside.

The UK and Scottish Governments have pledged a combination of £10million (evenly split on both sides of the Border) to facilitate this approach and work has now started on developing a detailed proposition.

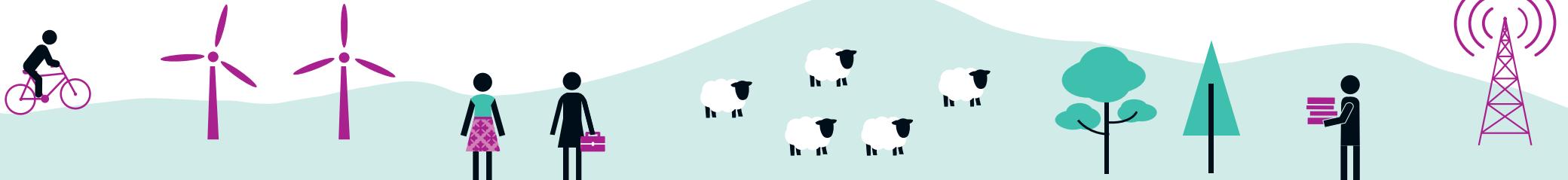
The proposal for a Dairy Innovation Centre is being developed by Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC) focused on developing sustainable dairy farming practices that remain financially viable. Over the common months, a similar approach will be pursued for the forestry sector.



# Collaboration Agreement signed

The five Borderlands Council Leaders signed a Collaboration Agreement at the end of January 2020. This provides the governance framework to enable all the councils to work together to deliver the Deal. It also contains the detail to allow the Deal to be managed, monitored and reported back to the Scottish City Region and Growth Deal Delivery Board.

As part of the agreed governance framework, a private sector Economic Forum is being established. Recruitment of members to the Forum will take place soon, creating an opportunity for the private sector to participate in the collaborative work of the Partnership and act as champions for investment into the Borderlands region.



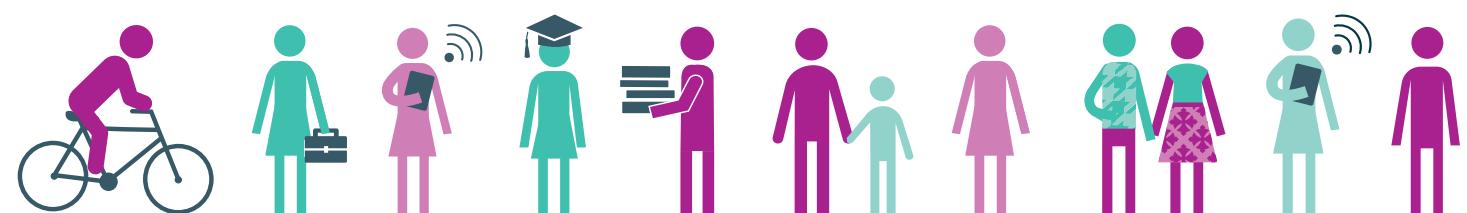
## Next Steps

A great deal of work is going on behind the scenes to ensure all aspects of the Deal run smoothly. The Programme Management Office (PMO) will be formally established from April 2020. This will provide support to the differing tiers within the governance framework and ensure that projects and programmes are delivered on time and on budget.

The PMO will also monitor and evaluate performance and provide reports to the Partnership Board and onwards to both Scottish and UK governments.

Its initial staff will consist of a Senior PMO Manager, two Senior Project officers and an Admin Assistant and recruitment to these posts is currently being finalised.

We'll announce the new team in our next newsletter. In the meantime, for updates, please visit [www.Borderlandsgrowth.com](http://www.Borderlandsgrowth.com)



The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is being delivered by the following partners:

