

Peebles Town Action Plan

embracing and strengthening town sustainability

Peebles is a great town to live in – so much going on: for kids, parents, retirees. And it's a great place to visit – popular with people on a day out and for longer visits: surrounded by hills and forests, with river-side walks and parks, shops, cafés, museums and art galleries, gentle walks and more energetic rambling, mountain biking, rugby, music and theatre.

But it has become unbalanced as a settlement – rapid expansion in housing, and thus population, has not been matched by the necessary balancing investments in physical and community infrastructures; nearly two thirds of the town's workforce commutes to work outside Peebles, but little has been done to attract or create more and better jobs within Peebles; and despite a full calendar of events across the year, there has been little change in the scale or depth of the town centre visitor / tourism offer – whether it's accommodation, parking, or attractions beyond the High Street.

On top of that, a pervading image of affluence and high standards of living masks a low wage local economy, significant pockets of deprivation, limited local provision of affordable housing and care facilities for the aged and infirm, an unacceptably high number of NEETs (youngsters not in employment, education or training), and a busy Foodbank.

The **Town Action Plan** highlights a small number of key actions that have been prioritised by the community as needing resolution within the next 3 to 5 years and, crucially, where the community can influence outcomes. As these are addressed, there are other identified actions to take their place.

Accompanying this, in terms of directing the future development of the settlement, the **Peebles Whole Town Master Plan** (in preparation) captures the longer term (5 to 20 years) aspirations of the community and details the direction, nature and expected quality of future development.



Peebles Town Action Plan – embracing and strengthening town sustainability

1. plans & strategies

1a. prepare this Town Action Plan

1b. complete 1st stage draft of the Peebles Whole Town Master Plan

1c. prepare plan for replacement or substantial remodelling of Peebles High School

1d. develop a comprehensive Upper Tweed Valley Tourism Strategy

2. achieving smarter solutions

2a. review how to make more of the Hay Lodge Health Centre & medical practices

2b. plan out how to improve our in-town network of paths

2c. balance on- and off-street parking, cycle parking, and public transport provision

3. achieving policy shifts

3a. allow services and infrastructure to catch up with recent housing expansion

3b. slow-down new house building

4. building capacity

4a. establish the Peebles Community Trust

4b. establish a Peebles “Town Team”

4c. establish a Peebles Traders Association

4d. establish a Peebles Network of Businesses

5. direct actions / interventions

5a. ensure that the March Street Mill site remains an economic asset

5b. actively encourage businesses to locate to Peebles

5c. protect and enhance the landscape setting of the town

5d. facilitate safe routes to school for cyclists and the mobility impaired

to be implemented over the period 2016 to 2018