

GO
TWEED
VALLEY
SCOTLAND

**Tweed Valley Tourism BID Business Plan
2025 to 2030**

Building a world-class activity destination



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PLEASE NOTE:

“Business” or variations of the word “business” are used throughout this document. The word “business” in this context refers to property owners or tenants and occupiers of properties who are liable to pay the non-domestic rate (NDR), whether they pay business rates or not. This includes all properties listed on the Scottish Assessors Association Portal (www.saa.gov.uk) with a non-domestic rateable value above the threshold level of £2,000, some of whom may be a charitable organisation, public sector organisation, social enterprise or community group who may not consider themselves to be a business.

OUR TEAM



RICH ROWE
Project Manager



LINDSAY QUAYLE
Project Officer



SARAH MCNEIL
Manager
Visitor Information Centre

How BIDS benefit businesses

A Business Improvement District (BID) – or in our case a Tourism Business Improvement District – is a private sector-led initiative where businesses within a geographical area invest together in the delivery of an agreed Business Plan that will make a positive impact over a five-year period.

By pooling and sharing resources in this way, local businesses lead on improving economic conditions through investment and initiatives over and above those undertaken by the local authority.

Today, BIDs continue to prove themselves as a successful model for driving the fortunes of businesses, tourism and local economies. The development of BIDs is now a key part of the Scottish Government’s economic strategy, with some 35 operational BIDs in Scotland and a further 20 under development.

All the money raised from the Tweed Valley Tourism BID levy is ring-fenced for the delivery of projects outlined in this Business Plan. The Tourism BID’s levy income is around £300,000 over the five-year term, although that figure can be increased considerably as BID status enables the leveraging of additional funding not available to individual businesses.

As well as having the resources to deliver a dynamic Business Plan, the Tourism BID company will lobby local and national government and work collaboratively with tourism organisations around the country to further the local tourism industry.

A second ‘Yes’ vote at the renewal ballot in January 2025 is essential if the Tweed Valley is to remain not only competitive with other tourism destinations but also continue to improve the visitor experience and the value of tourism to the local economy and communities.

For more information on BIDs, visit scotlandstowns.org

FOREWORD

CATHERINE MAXWELL STUART
Chair, Tweed Valley Tourism BID Board



I am delighted to present this renewal proposal, which is based on what you have told us are priority actions for your business. This Business Plan offers a taste of how we intend to build on the work of the past five years and to continue attracting more visitors to the Tweed Valley who stay longer and spend more.

A BID is where businesses, within a defined geographical area, vote to invest collectively in local improvements over and above those provided by statutory authorities. It is a partnership arrangement where the local business community and the statutory authorities work together on projects that will benefit the local economy and businesses.

Continued support of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID provides an excellent opportunity to work together and make the changes we all want to see. Your contributions ensure we maintain access to external assistance and funding not available to individual businesses.

All the proposed improvements in this Business Plan detail ideas initially from you, shared through our surveys and one-to-one consultations. Every Tourism BID business in the area has had the opportunity to let us know what their priorities are.

Supporting the Tourism BID means we can preserve what we have put in place over the past five years and to continue to work together to increase visitor numbers and provide a strong and effective voice to develop improved tourism infrastructure, for the benefit of all.

You can find more information about the projects we have been involved in over the coming pages and at gotweedvalley.co.uk

Ballot papers (together with this Business Plan) will be posted to the eligible person responsible for casting a vote within their business on 5 December 2024. Those eligible to vote will have at least six weeks to cast their vote before the ballot closes at 5pm on 16 January 2025. Ballot papers received after this date and time will be null and void and not be counted.

I have been involved as a tourism business owner in the Tweed Valley for over 30 years and this initiative has been the most effective project in which I have been involved. I strongly believe that having a business plan based on what local businesses really want is the most effective way to promote tourism and build the Tweed Valley as a world-class activity destination with a sustainable, year-round offer.

I would ask you all to vote YES so that we can continue to build on our past achievements and look forward to an exciting future ahead.



RICH ROWE
Project Manager, Tweed Valley Tourism BID

What makes a destination special? Often, it's about a capacity to intrigue, surprise and exceed expectations – a story that is told daily at the Go Tweed Valley Visitor Information Centre in Peebles, where thousands of visitors tell us how much they are enjoying exploring a 'new' part of Scotland.

Receiving and helping so many visitors get to know the area better is a source of great pride. But it also identifies where we must improve further, where we need to fill the gaps.

And that's where the Tweed Valley Tourism BID comes in. We have made great strides in building the area's identity as a compelling place to visit, as evidenced by the surge of interest following the launch of the Tweed Valley Canoe Trail and, of course, international events such as the UCI Cycling World Champs.

But we know from speaking with Tourism BID businesses that more is needed if we are to become the destination that we all aspire to be. The Business Plan you are now reading is a distillation of those wishes, with every line informed by the priorities and ambitions of the businesses that pay into the Tourism BID.

That financial contribution is vital; every pound spent goes towards making the destination stronger and more appealing – with benefits, both direct and indirect, to local businesses.

But it's not just about finance. That contribution also comes in the form of collaboration and a collective energy that creates the conditions for growth and development, alongside economic agencies and local authorities.

Today's tourism landscape feels more fast paced and volatile than ever. For many businesses, times are extremely challenging. In such a climate, it is even more critical that we work together to promote our destination and to give visitors more reasons to extend their stay.

While we are not there yet, we believe that the Tweed Valley has all the ingredients to become a world-class activity destination. For us, what that means is ensuring that every element of the offer – from services and experiences to tourism infrastructure – is the very best it can be. That has to be the ambition.

I am immensely proud of the leading role played by the Tourism BID over the past five years but am also conscious that we are only just getting started. The pages that follow outline the actions that we will take over the next five years, with clear direction on how each will be delivered.

I invite you to read this Business Plan and then encourage you to vote YES in the renewal ballot so that we may continue our collective effort to make the Tweed Valley an even more special destination for visitors and all who live and work here.

LAST FIVE YEARS

What have we delivered so far?

The Tourism BID is built on an ambition for the Tweed Valley to become a world-class activity destination with a sustainable, year-round offer that also brings richness to the lives of those who live here.

Of course, it has not been easy for tourism and hospitality in recent years. The combined impact of a global pandemic, Brexit, spiralling operating costs and international instability has challenged tourism businesses like never before. Despite those pressures, the Tweed Valley Tourism BID has been successful in:

- Delivering the 2020-2025 Business Plan
- Securing more than £100,000 in additional funding as well as enabling individual businesses to source funding over and above that specified in the original Business Plan

Here, we measure our work against the priority actions in the Business Plan voted for when the Tourism BID began in 2020:

Marketing & promotion

We market the area as a rounded destination that marries the needs of visitors, businesses and local communities. Our efforts include:

- **Strong digital content** – developed a high-quality website (with upwards of 50,000 page views per year) and a growing social media presence
- **Not just summer** – significant promotion of the area as an off-season destination, encouraging visits between October and March
- **Physical presence** – open since November 2022, our Visitor Information Centre in Peebles welcomes upwards of 500 visitors a month during the high season
- **A place for print** – developed a range of free maps, guides and route booklets that showcase the area and Tourism BID businesses
- **Spreading the word** – advertised the area in print, online and in commentary for the BBC's coverage of the Cycling World Champs in 2023

- **Destination video** – developed the Tweed Valley's first ever destination video (with a reach of more than 260,000 and counting)
- **Tweed Valley Tales audio trail** – created for the Geotourist app together with our partners Tweed Forum, Destination Tweed and the University of Dundee
- **Professional image library** – added more than 500 pro images to an online library for use by Tourism BID businesses
- **Press & media coverage** – generated high-profile coverage across major media platforms, including the *Guardian*, *BBC Travel* and *ITV*
- **FAM trips and influencers** – hosted and supported itineraries covering budget travel, food & drink, luxury stays and more
- **Relationship building** – close ties formed with key partners (e.g. VisitScotland, South of Scotland Destination Alliance, South of Scotland Enterprise and Scottish Borders Council)



Tourism infrastructure

An especially key area of work as we look to ensure that on-the-ground infrastructure meets the needs of visitors, businesses and communities. Our efforts include:

- **Tweed Valley Canoe Trail** – launched in May 2024, the first such trail in the south of Scotland now attracts a whole new audience to the area
- **Go Tweed Valley Visitor Information Centre** – a key asset, the centre helps drive thousands of visitors to all corners of the Tweed Valley
- **Eddleston Water Path** – working with partners, we have created interpretive signage along the popular multi-use path between Eddleston and Peebles
- **Mountain biking signage** – supported the HUB CIC on Park + Pedal and related signage to guide mountain bikers in Innerleithen
- **Lade Trail, Innerleithen** – secured funding to support a feasibility project into the creation of a heritage trail that follows the old mill lade in Innerleithen
- **Camperstops** – secured funding to support a feasibility study into overnight provision for motorhomes throughout the Tweed Valley

Business support & advocacy

What began as post-covid support and proactive visitor management evolved into wider advocacy work for the area. Our efforts include:

- **Welcoming responsible visitors** – developed a Tweed Valley 'Visitor Charter' that provided a positive welcome to responsible visitors
- **Visitor services** – secured funding for a feasibility study into the development of visitor services in Innerleithen
- **Funding access** – supported businesses and community groups to access grants and public funding (from bike infrastructure to growing cultural events)

Events & festivals

Whether sporting, cultural, literary, historical or otherwise, events & festivals are key drivers for attracting visitors to the area. Our efforts include:

- **Event support** – provided seed funding and support to events, including the Wild Writers Festival (now an annual fixture attracting more than 500 people in January)
- **Promotion** – vigorous promotion of all major events with continual efforts to plug local businesses into events for mutual benefit
- **UCI Cycling World Champs** – supported the development of a Fringe programme involving Tourism BID businesses
- **Measuring impact** – undertaken business community feedback on key events to gain a better understanding of their impact on businesses
- **Events calendar** – provided regular updates so that businesses can share details of events to their guests and customers

- **Giving voice** – represented the Tweed Valley at a variety of trade, consumer and industry events
- **Strategy building** – fed into South of Scotland Destination Alliance's Locally Led Destination Development work and the all-agency South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy (2024-2034)
- **River Tweed Trail** – as a key member of the Destination Tweed Tourism Group, we continue to support business involvement in the new path from Moffat to Berwick
- **Behind the scenes** – countless calls and meetings with agencies and public bodies lobbying for improvements that benefit the destination

TESTIMONIALS

Supporting words

We've had the pleasure of working with and on behalf of a diverse range of tourism businesses and partners. As these comments reveal, we are delighted that so many feel that we are doing a good job:



"Go Tweed Valley has done an excellent job of shining a spotlight on the region, showcasing our beautiful walks, amenities and all that we have to offer from a tourism perspective. This exposure has significantly benefited local businesses, including our hotels and café, by attracting both day visitors eager to explore the great outdoors and overnight guests keen to discover everything the area has to offer."

Charlie Leckie
Crieff Hydro Family of Hotels (owner of Peebles Hydro, The Park Peebles & Glentress Forest Café)



"All of us at Alpine Bikes are really happy with how positive our relationship with Go Tweed Valley is. We very much look forward to working closely with you over the next few years."

Ben Brough
Manager, Alpine Bikes Glentress



"The partnership with Go Tweed Valley is helping to raise the profile of the region, attracting visitors to this beautiful corner of Scotland and to Dawyck Botanic Garden. The launch of new initiatives such as the Tweed Valley Canoe Trail earlier this year have been well-received and the group is to be congratulated on this much-needed initiative. We look forward to working with them again in 2025 and beyond."

Graham Stewart
Curator, Dawyck Botanic Garden



"Over the last five years Go Tweed Valley has significantly contributed to the development of the visitor experience in the area. Using a strong brand, consistent style and innovative approach, the team has helped shape a strong sense of place – so vital when selling an area to tourists."

Stewart Wilson
TVB Tours & Tweed Valley Blogger



"Go Tweed Valley have been immensely helpful in the development of the Destination Tweed project. In trying to deliver the River Tweed Trail over two countries and three local authority areas, we have the confidence that Go Tweed Valley and their can-do attitude have this area well covered and that they provide a critical asset to the successful delivery of the Trail. We also align perfectly in our messaging, of trying to encourage slow-paced, sustainable tourism, which celebrates the uniqueness of the landscape and its people."

Marina Piper
Destination Tweed Project Manager



"The impact of Go Tweed Valley over the last few years has been positive and productive. Their strong presence on digital and social media, well-designed guides and colourful shop window on Peebles High Street have all helped attract and inform visitors to the area throughout the year. Their understanding of the many different elements that contribute to a unique tourism offer – from hospitality to historic buildings, outdoor activities to arts events – means that local enterprises of all sorts and sizes have benefited from the welcome growth in visitor numbers."

Caroline Adam
General Manager, Eastgate Theatre & Arts Centre



"Go Tweed Valley are a welcome addition to the support available for visitor economy businesses in the region and have undoubtedly added real value. Together, we have a collective South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy which unites everyone in the private and public sector. We see Go Tweed Valley as a key partner in the next chapter of tourism in the South of Scotland and the delivery of this strategy."

David Hope-Jones
Chief Executive Officer, South of Scotland Destination Alliance



"Go Tweed Valley's understanding of the tourism businesses in the area and their willingness and ability to work with organisations such as VisitScotland highlight to us the valuable role they play in supporting and growing the visitor economy of the Tweed Valley. We recently worked closely with them to support the launch of the Tweed Valley Canoe Trail and hope that we will be in a position to continue this relationship in coming years."

Gordon Smith
Destination Development Director – South of Scotland, VisitScotland

BUSINESS CONSULTATION

How we have consulted businesses

First via an online survey and then through extensive face-to-face meetings, we have sought to understand the challenges faced by businesses; what value they have gained from being part of the Tourism BID to date; and what they would like us to deliver on their behalf during a second, five-year term.

This invaluable research established support for the continuation of the Tourism BID and confirmed that the following key elements have been completed to deliver a successful ballot:

- The need for the Tourism BID to continue is supported by more than the required minimum of participating businesses
- The Tourism BID area is clearly defined
- There is support from the local authority at both officer and political level

What businesses told us

The consultation process for the renewal ballot began in May 2024 when the Tourism BID sent out a questionnaire to all eligible voters asking for their initial thoughts on what we have delivered to date and what new initiatives they would like to see undertaken both for their own businesses and for the wider destination. In June 2024, the survey results were distributed to all Board members.

Throughout the summer, and as of 30 September, we have gathered input from a wide variety of participating businesses, whether online, by phone or in face-to-face meetings. Of those consulted:

- 79% said they intended to vote 'Yes'
- 6% said they intended to vote 'No'
- 15% said they are undecided and are waiting to see the Business Plan in full

In September, we distributed a Next Steps document to all participating businesses, highlighting the key actions we plan to take over the next five years. Further feedback then shaped this Business Plan that businesses will vote on in January 2025.

A pre-ballot business members event is also planned for November.

"Scottish Borders Council is very supportive of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID and officers will continue to assist Go Tweed Valley in the delivery of a renewed BID proposal for the defined area. We believe the BID is particularly useful for this part of the Scottish Borders and brings huge benefits to the Tweed Valley for tourism businesses and visitors alike."

Graeme Johnstone
Place & Enterprise Manager,
Economic Development,
Scottish Borders Council



What we have done well

Our face-to-face meetings were especially valuable in understanding how we might best continue to bring value to businesses and the wider destination as part of a future term.

Businesses are pleased with and greatly appreciate:

MARKETING & SOCIAL MEDIA	WEBSITE CONTENT	CREATION OF NEW EXPERIENCES	VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE	PROVISION OF MAPS & GUIDES	COMMUNICATION & CONNECTIONS
AREA REPRESENTATION	LEVERAGING OF FUNDING	MEDIA & FAM TRIPS	INDUSTRY LOBBYING	CONSIDERATION OF COMMUNITIES	HOW WE KNIT THESE STRANDS TOGETHER

But much work remains to be done, with businesses having a clear sense of what more is needed if we are to become the destination that we all aspire to be.

We must work on:

IMPROVING ON-THE-GROUND INFRASTRUCTURE	BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS	EVENTS SUPPORT AND CREATION	BOOSTING THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY	IMPROVING SIGNAGE	DIVERSIFICATION OF THE TOURISM OFFER
CONTINUED FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY	IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESSIBILITY AND DIVERSITY	SUPPORTING BETTER MANAGEMENT OF KEY ATTRactions	IMPROVING AWARENESS OF THE AREA GENERALLY	CLOSER WORKING WITH THE TRAVEL TRADE	

NEXT FIVE YEARS

Tourism BID 2025 to 2030

Our plans for the next five years have been shaped by feedback from businesses and also align with the following national and regional strategies:

- The objectives laid out in the national tourism strategy, Scotland Outlook 2030: Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future
- South of Scotland Responsible Tourism Strategy 2024-2034, which sets out how, together, we can transform the South of Scotland's visitor economy by:
 - Developing the region as a year-round 'rural escape' destination for the 14m people within 2-4 hours travel time
 - Becoming a 'go-to' rather than a 'go-through' destination
 - Increasing international visitor numbers (who spend significantly more and stay longer than domestic visitors)

Our mission is for the Tweed Valley to become a world-class activity destination with a sustainable, year-round offer that also brings richness to the lives of those who live here.



Deliverable objectives

Following a successful ballot, the Tourism BID will focus its activities on four priority areas, each of which will form part of a detailed, measurable and fully costed annual workstream:

Priority one: Marketing & promotion

We will:

- Significantly enhance our national and international marketing
- Leverage our proximity to Edinburgh (targeting both visitors and residents)
- Target specific audiences elsewhere, including Glasgow, Newcastle and northern England
- Continue to develop the relationship between tourism and local communities
- Continue to enhance the visitor experience and reputation of the Tweed Valley as a year-round destination
- Explore new visitor experiences: agritourism, voluntourism, dark skies and more
- Attend major national and international travel trade events, including VisitScotland Expo
- Continue to feed the Tweed Valley into the wider work of South of Scotland Destination Alliance

MAJOR FOCUS

Edinburgh for less

Position ourselves as *the* low-cost way to experience the nation's capital, with our range of much more reasonably-priced accommodation for visitors of all ages

Big six attractions

Lead with primary visitor attractions (Glentworth Forest; Traquair House; Dawyck Botanic Garden; Neidpath Castle; Kailzie Gardens; River Tweed) as part of an 'attract and disperse' approach

Destination visibility

Advertise with Edinburgh Trams (12 million+ annual passenger journeys between Edinburgh Airport and Ocean Terminal), Borders Buses, Borders Railway and key arrival points into the wider south (Newcastle ferry terminal, motorway service stations)

Make new friends

Build relationships with 'vertical' market sectors (walking, canoeing, mountain biking, golf, fishing, road cycling etc) in key international markets via specialist magazines, bloggers, podcasters, outdoor stores and influential groups

NEXT FIVE YEARS

Priority two: Tourism infrastructure

We will:

- Continue to lead discussions with the local authority/ agencies to influence initiatives that fill key infrastructure gaps (toilets, parking, bike storage/ wash, EV charging points, motorhome aires and more)
- Work closely with all partners to ensure that Glentress (one of the area's primary visitor attractions) is the very best it can be
- Use our involvement in the River Tweed Trail Tourism Group to shape the impact of Scotland's next great long-distance trail
- Add appropriate infrastructure along the Tweed Valley Canoe Trail as demand dictates (camping options; composting toilets; additional signage; canoe storage etc)
- Maximise the impact and reach of the visitor centre (tying in closely with John Buchan Museum and Tweeddale Museum & Gallery as visitor attractions)
- Work with public and private sectors to greatly improve the Tweed Valley's accessibility for travellers with disability

Priority three: Events & festivals

We will:

- Continue to support and promote existing events during high season months
- Work with event organisers to smooth out the calendar to minimise clashes
- Encourage and support event development in shoulder seasons
- Ensure that event organisers have access to the full toolkit of information and funding packages available from Scottish Borders Council
- Explore the 'right' mix of events in the Tweed Valley (community, cultural, grassroots, elite sports etc)
- Build community and local businesses into all events wherever possible

Priority four: Business support & advocacy

We will:

- Continue being the 'oil in the engine' that connects and informs all Tourism BID businesses
- Further develop how – and what – we communicate with Tourism BID businesses
- Identify funding and grant opportunities for businesses looking to expand, improve or deliver new experiences or services
- Represent all Tourism BID businesses at travel trade events
- Be a strong, representative voice on local and national issues that matter to the destination

MAJOR FOCUS

It's built, they will come

Improve awareness of and enhance existing trail infrastructure for walkers, mountainbikers and horse-riders (including Southern Upland Way, John Buchan Way)

Public transport

Work with Scottish Borders Council and Borders Buses to improve public transport links to rural areas and to/ from Edinburgh

Let's talk toilets

Be a leading player in a three-year action plan (led by South of Scotland Destination Alliance) to deliver a pan-south approach to the provision/running of public toilets

Literary feast

Develop a new trail that tells the story of the area's key literary figures (John Buchan, James Hogg, Sir Walter Scott – even JK Rowling, with her links to Glentress)

Coherent signage

Work closely with key partners on destination and site-specific signage that greatly improves the visitor experience

Climbing high

Explore the potential for developing an indoor climbing/ bouldering wall within the Tweed Valley (adding to our wet weather activity provision)

MAJOR FOCUS

Sense of place

Support the development of new, themed festivals that speak of all that the area has to offer (e.g. Festival of the River, local food & drink etc)

Courses for horses (and more)

Work with landowners and public agencies to develop a network of serviced 'sites' (some large, some small) that can be used for different-sized events

MAJOR FOCUS

Taxing question

Lead on discussions relating to the future implementation of a 'tourism tax' (likely from 2030) following the passing of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill

Working together

Deliver regular networking events for 'clusters' of businesses (river users, food & drink, attractions etc) to share challenges, best practice, problem solve and collaborate

TOURISM BID AREA & SECTORS

What area is covered?

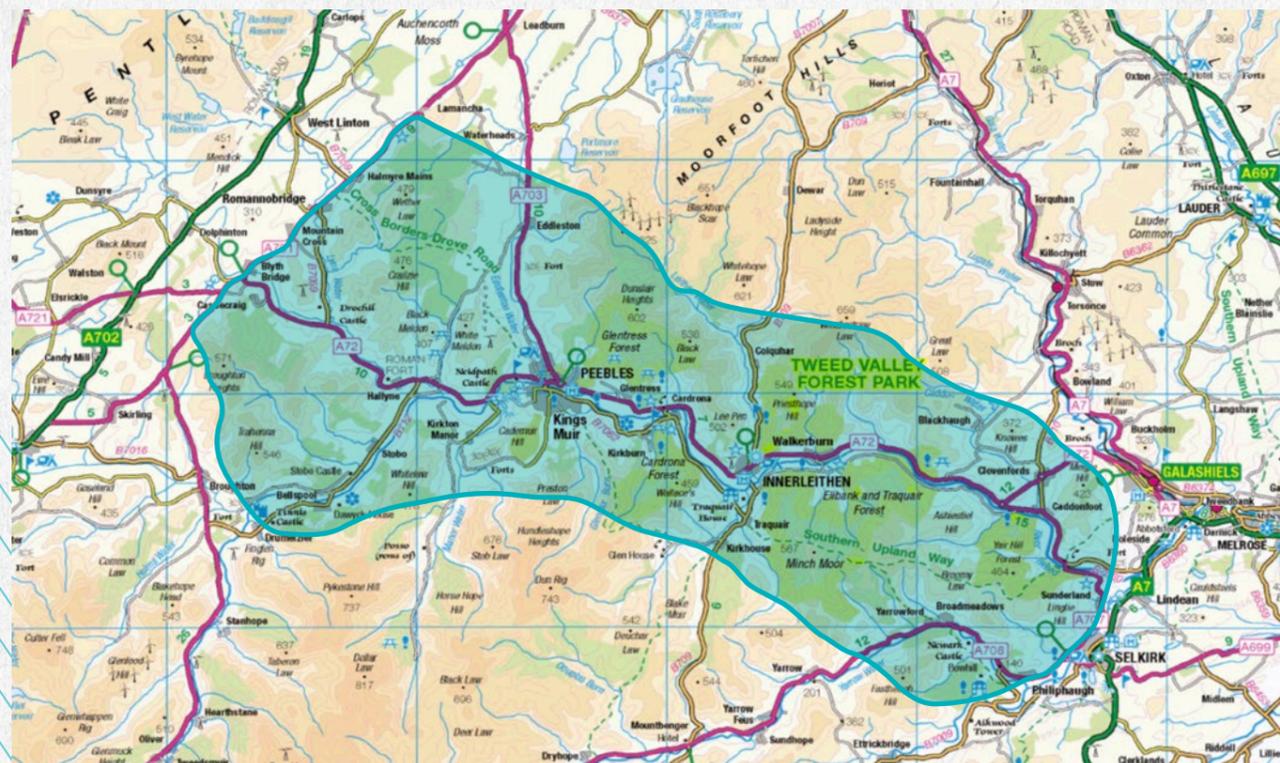
The Tourism BID Board has agreed that the Tourism BID will follow the same geographical area as the current term, with the exception of West Linton. For this second term, it will extend east from Blyth Bridge and Stobo, roughly following the River Tweed to include Peebles, Cardrona, Innerleithen, Traquair, Walkerburn and Clovenfords, finishing just west of Selkirk. To the north, Eddleston is also included. With the development of the River Tweed Trail (from Moffat to Berwick), we will also look to bring businesses and communities in the upper Tweed into the orbit of the Tourism BID through opt-in involvement.

Who's in?

The Tourism BID involves payment of a levy by a range of tourism businesses that operate within this geographic area. Tourism businesses are defined as businesses that are geared towards or that especially benefit from the visitor economy, such as accommodation, attractions, activity providers and eateries (although many of course also serve local residents and communities).

The sectors involved are:

- Accommodation providers
- Visitor attractions
- Events & festivals
- Cafes & restaurants
- Pubs & inns
- Activity centres and providers
- Outdoor activity-related retailers (bike and outdoor shops)
- Heritage and cultural organisations
- Museums and historic buildings
- Theatre
- Golf clubs
- Breweries and distilleries with visitor centres
- Transport services



TWEED VALLEY TOURISM BID BUSINESS PLAN

BID LEVY EXPLAINED



Why a levy?

A BID levy is a fair and equitable way of funding additional projects and services which the local authority and other statutory bodies are not required to provide. The levy will be mandatory for all eligible tourism businesses in the Tourism BID area that are listed on the Scottish Borders Council Valuation Roll by the local Assessor on the ballot date and will be liable for the levy for the duration of the Tourism BID.

The Tourism BID Board has identified four criteria that determine if a business is included within the Tourism BID:

- The business operates in one of the sectors listed
- The business premises are situated within the designated geographical area covered by the Tourism BID
- The business has a non-domestic rateable value (RV) of £2,000 or above
- The business is eligible to pay non-domestic rates, as detailed on Scottish Borders Council Valuation Roll by the local Assessor (even if exempt).

Other businesses, such as those without premises, or below the RV threshold but who would still like to participate in the Tourism BID, or who have premises outwith the geographic boundaries of the Tourism BID area, will be able to pay an opt-in fee no less than the minimum levy rate.

Paying the levy

The Tweed Valley Tourism BID includes 82 eligible businesses that will contribute levy payments. The Tourism BID Board has agreed:

- The levy structure will continue to be based on a banded system fixed on the RV of the property on the day of the ballot (16 January 2025) and remain the same throughout the five-year term of the BID
- There will be no increase in the levy throughout the BID term because of a non-domestic rateable revaluation occurring during the BID term

- For Year 2 (2026/27) and subsequent years of the term, the Board will have the discretion to increase the BID levy annually by the rate of inflation (index linked to the Consumer Price Index) to a maximum of 3% per annum based on the previous year's levy to take account of inflation

In addition:

- The levy will apply to properties with an RV of £2,000 and above. Levy bandings will be applied with a maximum banding at £200,000 and above
- The BID levy will be paid by the occupier (the eligible person liable to pay the non-domestic rates)
- If there is a change in occupier to a property, until a new occupier is found the property owner will be responsible for paying the levy
- All eligible occupiers (of eligible properties) i.e. the eligible person liable to pay the non-domestic rate, as listed on the local Assessor's Valuation Roll on the ballot date will be liable to pay the levy
- If a property is vacant on the day the levy invoice is issued or any subsequent vacant periods, the property owner will be liable to pay the levy
- Self-catering holiday accommodation which is not the sole or main residence of any person and which is available (or intended to be available) for letting on a commercial basis, with profit in mind, for short periods totalling more than 140 days in the financial year remain liable for non-domestic rates for the whole year and will be included and liable to pay the levy
- The levy payments are not linked to what businesses actually pay in rates but are based on the rateable value of the property
- The levy must be paid annually or in monthly direct debit instalments arranged with Scottish Borders Council
- Any new commercial development, subdivision of existing properties or merging of properties or new tourism-related businesses with an RV of £2,000 or more coming into the area during the five-year term of the BID will be liable for the levy

BID LEVY EXPLAINED

The levy fee

As with the current term of the Tourism BID, a banded system based on the RV of eligible businesses represents a simple and easy way for businesses to understand their levy payment, provides for ease of collection and represents a fair and reasonable methodology.

The levy fees range from £280 (for the smallest businesses) to £4,200 per year (for the largest).

THE LEVY FEES WILL REMAIN THE SAME AS THE CURRENT TERM OF THE TOURISM BID FOR ALL BANDS.

Levy band table

Band	Rateable Value	Annual levy	Monthly cost	Cost per day
1	£2k to £9,999	£280	£23.33	0.79p
2	£10k to £19,999	£490	£40.83	£1.34
3	£20k to £29,999	£630	£52.50	£1.72
4	£30k to £49,999	£910	£75.83	£2.49
5	£50k to £79,999	£1,120	£93.33	£3.06
6	£80k to £99,999	£1,540	£128.33	£4.21
7	£100k to £149,999	£2,800	£233.33	£7.67
8	£150k to £199,999	£3,500	£291.67	£9.58
9	£200k and up	£4,200	£350	£11.50

Levy collection and enforcement

Scottish Borders Council will collect the levy on behalf of the Tourism BID, lodging the levy within a dedicated Revenue Account. The Tourism BID Revenue Account and levy cannot be accessed by Scottish Borders Council nor used by the council as an additional source of income.

In the event of any non-payment of the Tourism BID levy, Scottish Borders Council (as the billing body) will strongly pursue non-payment using recovery powers available to them to ensure fairness to all the businesses that have paid. Scottish Borders Council will be entitled to charge an additional fee to the levy amount to meet any additional costs incurred in the recovery of the levy.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Delivering the Business Plan

The levy provides, with additional income streams, the amount required to deliver the Business Plan agreed by participating businesses.

Our income

Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Levy ¹	£62,000	£64,000	£66,000	£68,000	£70,000	£330,000
Opt-in ²	£10,000	£12,000	£14,000	£16,000	£18,000	£70,000
Other income ³	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£10,000
Total	£74,000	£78,000	£82,000	£86,000	£90,000	£410,000

Notes

- ¹ The estimated levy income for the Tourism BID is based upon a 95% collection rate. Due to the current instability in the industry, and the associated risks of business closure, no forecast is being made for any increase beyond index linking over the 5-year term of the BID. It is calculated that there are 82 eligible properties located within the Tourism BID area (this figure may change as businesses move, expand or close)
- ² Opt-In income is from businesses not automatically included in the Tourism BID but which have chosen to join. We will be extremely proactive in growing this income stream
- ³ Branded merchandise sold through the Visitor Information Centre plus commissioned work

In addition, Scottish Borders Council endorses the continued work and activities of the Tourism BID and is therefore fully committed to supporting the activities of the Tourism BID. As such, it will look favourably on funding applications to appropriate Scottish Borders Council funds provided the applications meet all the required criteria. Applications will only be considered on an annual basis and be subject to the strict governance on the use of Scottish Borders Council funds.

Similarly, Scottish Borders Council will look favourably on commissioning the Tourism BID (Go Tweed Valley) and using its local area expertise to carry out specific pieces of work within the Tourism BID area.

Opting in

As this is an activity-led Tourism BID rather than a town centre BID, we do not automatically include all retailers, even though it could be argued that many also benefit from the work of a Tourism BID. However, such businesses are very welcome to join as opt-in members, paying an opt-in fee no less than the minimum levy rate.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Our expenditure

Expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Marketing & promotion	£26,000	£28,000	£30,000	£32,000	£34,000
Tourism infrastructure	£20,000	£21,000	£22,000	£23,000	£24,000
Events & festivals	£14,000	£15,000	£16,000	£17,000	£18,000
Business support/advocacy	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000
Visitor Centre service charge/overheads	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000
Contingency	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000
Total	£74,000	£78,000	£82,000	£86,000	£90,000

The Tourism BID will also continue to seek additional grant funding for project activity from appropriate regional and national funds as and when they become available, as well as from South of Scotland Enterprise, VisitScotland and other organisations.

Any variations within budgets will be reported to the Tourism BID Board. The Board will agree on an annual basis how funds for subsequent years will be allocated. This will be based on business feedback during the previous year and the priorities for the coming year, which allows the Tourism BID the flexibility to respond to changing business needs and requirements.



THE BALLOT

What to expect

Pre-ballot

We must submit the Tweed Valley Tourism BID Proposals to the Scottish Government and the local authority (Scottish Borders Council) at least 98 days in advance of the ballot date and of their intention to put the BID Proposals to ballot.

The local authority then has 28 days in which to veto or not the Tourism BID proposals. A 'Notice of Ballot' will be issued at least 42 days before the day of ballot.

The ballot

- For the ballot to be successful there must be a minimum turnout of 25% (the headcount) by number of eligible persons and by combined rateable value; and of those who vote, the majority must vote in favour by number and combined rateable value
- Ballot papers (together with this Business Plan) will be posted to the eligible person responsible for casting a vote within their business 42 days before the ballot day. In the case of national companies, the responsibility for voting may lie with head office
- The Tweed Valley Tourism BID ballot is a confidential postal ballot conducted by Scottish Borders Council on behalf of the Tourism BID, in accordance with Scottish BID legislation
- In the Tweed Valley Tourism BID's case, voting papers will be issued no later than 5 December 2024
- The last date for all ballot papers to be returned is 5pm on 16th January 2025. Papers received after this date and time will be deemed null and void
- Voting papers are easy to complete, simply place a cross on either "Yes" or "No" to the question "Are you in favour of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID?" The ballot paper must then be signed by the person eligible to vote and returned in the pre-paid envelope
- All eligible persons (i.e. those persons liable to pay non-domestic rates) will have one vote or where a person is liable for non-domestic rates for more than one property, that individual shall be eligible to cast more than one vote however they will be required to pay the levy for each of the properties that they occupy
- Where an eligible property is vacant the voting papers will be sent to the property owner
- Some eligible persons may receive more than one ballot paper. Each ballot paper should be completed, signed and returned in its pre-paid envelope
- The ballot papers will be counted on or around 17 January 2025 and the results announced by Scottish Borders Council by 24 January 2025 at the latest
- Following a successful ballot, the BID will commence on 1 April 2025 and will run for a period of five years until 31 March 2030

HOW THE BID OPERATES

Our governance and management

The Tourism BID is a registered not-for-profit limited company trading under the name Tweed Valley Tourism BID Ltd. Following a successful renewal ballot, it will deliver the projects and activities outlined in this Business Plan through its Board of Directors and management team.

The Board will oversee all decisions relating to staff, contracts, the delivery of the approved Business Plan and other activities undertaken by the Tourism BID.

The Board also reserves the right to work with representatives from other levy-paying businesses who can offer specialist activities where appropriate.

In fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as directors, the Board will at all times minimise any risk associated with the Tourism BID (financial or otherwise) by adhering to best practice, while at the same time being open and transparent.

The Board will have the authority to adapt or alter the projects and services from year to year to reflect any change in economic circumstances or any new opportunities that may arise. This will be in the best interests of the levy payers and without recourse to an alteration ballot.

Board of Directors

Catherine Maxwell Stuart, Chair

Traquair House

Pauline Archibald

The Hub on the High Street

Stephen Brennan

Macdonald Cardrona Hotel

Nigel Davis

Barony Castle Hotel

Patrick Diack

Peebles Hydro Hotel

Janey Kennedy

Tweed Valley Bikes

Martin Page

Forestry & Land Scotland

Steve Plag

Kailzie Gardens & Kailzie Big Lodge

Ed Shoote

South of Scotland Enterprise

Richard Spanner, Treasurer

Barony Castle; Tontine Hotel; The Cross Keys

Robin Tatler

Scottish Borders Councillor for Tweeddale East

Graeme Johnstone (observer)

Scottish Borders Council

Measuring success

Throughout the lifetime of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID, all work on the Tourism BID projects will be monitored to ensure the projects proposed in the Business Plan achieve a high level of impact and are delivered to the satisfaction of the businesses that voted for the Tourism BID.

This will include production of an Annual Report that will be presented at the Tourism BID's Annual General Meeting at the end of each year.

The Board of Directors may consist of up to 12 directors, of which there are currently 11 in office. An active campaign will be launched after a successful ballot to recruit or replace any directors to the Board. Every eligible person that pays the levy will have the opportunity to nominate themselves or someone else from within the BID area to be elected to the Board but limited to one eligible person from each eligible property.

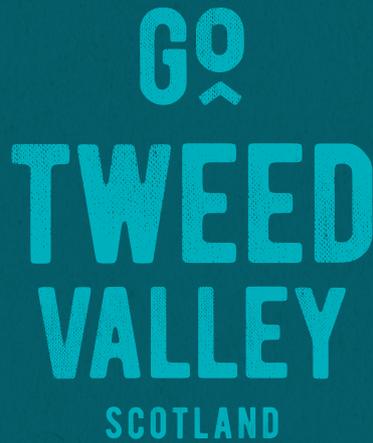
DON'T STOP NOW ...

What if there is no Tourism BID?

We believe that the continuation of the Tourism BID is essential if the Tweed Valley is to remain competitive with other tourism destinations and to enable continued improvement of the visitor experience, with all of the benefits that brings to the local area and its communities.

If there is no second term of the Tourism BID, much will be lost:

<p>The Go Tweed Valley Visitor Information Centre will close</p>	<p>There will be no tourism development organisation in the Tweed Valley</p>	<p>There will be no promotion of our area to visitors, locally, nationally or overseas</p>
<p>There will be no organisation working to leverage additional funding for businesses and the wider destination</p>	<p>The Tweed Valley will receive no specific lobbying at local, regional or national level</p>	<p>There will be no organisation to support events and festivals in the area</p>
<p>There will be no organisation to represent the Tweed Valley at national and international travel trade events</p>	<p>There will be no organisation acting as the conduit between the public sector and the local tourism community</p>	<p>The new Tweed Valley Canoe Trail will not be supported and grow</p>



Vote **YES** from 5 December 2024 for
the continuation of the Tweed Valley
Tourism BID and Go Tweed Valley

For more information, please visit:

gotweedvalley.co.uk/tourism-bid-renewal-2024-25

or contact: rich@gotweedvalley.co.uk