



# RECRUITMENT PACK

## HEAD OF LEISURE SERVICES

*(Sport Facilities and Services, Health and Fitness, Community Centres,  
Town Halls, Social Prescribing and Child and Adult Programmes)*





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# ABOUT LIVE BORDERS

Live Borders is a forward-looking charitable trust at the heart of the Scottish Borders, delivering active, creative, heritage, life-long learning and community services that make a real difference to people's lives.

We exist to help communities thrive - physically, creatively and socially. Every day, our teams support people to be active, curious and connected, whether that's through sport and fitness, libraries and learning, arts and heritage, museums, events or community programmes.

Since our establishment in 2016, Live Borders has brought together sport, leisure, culture and learning services into one organisation with a shared purpose: to improve wellbeing, reduce inequality and strengthen communities across one of Scotland's most distinctive regions.



## **A PLACE-BASED ORGANISATION DELIVERING SOCIAL IMPACT**

The Scottish Borders is a unique place - rural, diverse and deeply connected to its communities. Live Borders reflects that. We deliver services across towns, villages and rural communities, reaching people of all ages and backgrounds.

Each year, we support more than a million visits to our sport and leisure facilities and hundreds of thousands of visits to our cultural venues and services. But our ambition goes beyond numbers. We want to ensure that what we offer is relevant, inclusive and responsive to the changing needs of the communities we serve.

We reinvest every penny we generate back into services and communities, ensuring public value and social impact sits at the heart of everything we do.

## **A TIME OF OPPORTUNITY AND CHANGE**

Live Borders is on an exciting journey. With new leadership and a clear focus on impact, we are strengthening how we engage with communities, partners and stakeholders, and how we tell our story.

This is a place for people who want to make a difference - who are motivated by purpose, but also excited by change, improvement and innovation.

Following an organisational restructure, we have an exciting opportunity to recruit three new heads of service roles, including this role. The role holder will have a career defining opportunity to establish and develop a restructured service and be a major influencer and leader, shaping the transformation of Live Borders.



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Thank you for your interest in joining Live Borders.

Live Borders plays a vital role in the life of the Scottish Borders. Every day, our teams support people to be active, creative, curious and connected, through active living, creativity, culture and heritage, learning and community services. The impact of this work is felt across our communities, and it matters deeply.

We are a values-led organisation with a strong sense of purpose, and we are also one that is evolving, responding to the changing needs of our communities, the challenges facing the public and third sectors, and the opportunities ahead of us. This is a moment to be ambitious, thoughtful and bold about how we deliver our services and how we engage with the people we serve.

Our senior leadership roles are critical to that journey. We are looking for people who bring professional expertise, strategic thinking and a collaborative mindset, people who are motivated by purpose, but also comfortable leading change, asking questions and finding better ways of working. Above all, we are looking for leaders who care about people and place, and who want to make a positive, lasting difference.

At Live Borders, we value openness, inclusion and teamwork. We believe that empowered people deliver the best services, and we are committed to creating an environment where our leaders and teams can grow, develop and do their best work.

If you are excited by the opportunity to lead, to shape the future of an organisation rooted in community and impact, and to be part of a committed and passionate team, I encourage you to consider joining us.

I look forward to welcoming the next generation of leaders to Live Borders.

Catriona McAllister  
Chief Executive  
Live Borders



# THE ROLE

**Hours:** 37

**Location:** HQ, Newtown, St Boswells / Hybrid

**Salary:** Grade 13: £53,865 - £58,360

The Head of Leisure Services will be accountable for setting an innovative, compelling strategic direction for their portfolio, focused on productivity, income generation, exceptional service and risks and opportunities. You will have a demonstrable track record at this level and be able to evidence experience of significant transformational change.

You will be a proven leader who has led large teams through whole-system cultural change, with the ability to identify learning and development opportunities to improve the team's productivity, capabilities, and competencies.

Your focus will be on delivering transformational change that improves services, increases income generation, and widens inclusion across the portfolio. You will lead the delivery of the portfolio's strategic plan with the drive and passion to bring innovation and deliver the business case targets within your remit.

Live Borders is a charity and key community delivery partner to a wide range of organisations. A fundamental element of the remit is to develop strong delivery partnerships and initiatives that can help the organisation secure additional funds and grants, and accelerate the delivery of national, regional, and our own strategic priorities.



# THE ROLE

The Head of Leisure Services will be accountable for delivering key performance measures of both financial and social impact across their portfolio.

Live Borders is at a pivotal moment. Following the recent council-led review of our services, the Head of Leisure Services will be a key programme manager, supporting the CEO in delivering the launch of the Business Transformation Programme, designed to secure a sustainable future for our diverse portfolio of facilities and services.

This ambitious three-year programme will provide significant improvements in efficiency, productivity, and customer experience, ensuring that the Scottish Borders remains a vibrant place to live, work, and visit.

You will lead over £5m of capital investments in our estate. You should have a proven track record in senior project management and be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of project management methodology.



# KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

## STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

- Contribute to the development of the organisational strategic planning process and be accountable for delivering the outcomes and impacts for their portfolio of services. Provide a challenge to the development of strategic plans, ensuring that focus remains on the delivery of social impact and financial targets.
- Lead partnership management with SBC and external sector bodies relating to the portfolio.
- Develop detailed implementation plans to ensure the portfolio's operations deliver exceptional service and demonstrate regular progress toward key performance indicators. Monitor progress and implement mitigation to succeed.
- Represent the organisation at appropriate sector forums. Attend networking events and industry-related events to enhance and strengthen the Live Borders profile and to key role holders' sector knowledge.
- Contribute to the corporate management, growth and development of the organisation as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team. Lead relevant cross-company working groups
- Act as Programme Manager, leading strategic programmes and projects as part of the Business Transformation Programme.
- Ensure the portfolio's organisational structure is fit for purpose and has the capacity and capabilities to deliver the strategic plan. Make recommendations for changes to the structure to reflect evolving service demands.
- As part of a wider stakeholder group, implement and drive forward the delivery of the Scottish Borders Council Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.



## SERVICE DELIVERY

- Ensure services within the portfolio are delivered. Oversee the design and delivery of all activity programmes with a focus on inclusion, service excellence, social impact and improved income generation.
- Ensure that service managers within the portfolio are accountable for delivering innovative programmes and excellent customer service with safe practices at the core of service provision.
- Accountable for the cascaded development and delivery of operational plans for areas of responsibility.
- Ensure that managers achieve Key Performance Indicators and that service delivery is managed effectively and adheres to Health and Safety guidelines and statute legislation.
- Embed a culture and system of continuous improvement with robust monitoring and evaluation of customer satisfaction in place.
- Monitor and analyse business performance data and are competent at using data and research to underpin decision-making and innovation.
- Provide and present reports, data and advice to the Executive team, staff teams, partners and the Board as required.
- Oversee the management of contracts with all external providers to ensure that terms of agreement are adhered to, including start and termination dates, review points etc.
- Accountable for ensuring that the company obtains best value for money for all external services provided to the function and reviews the performance which it receives on a regular basis.
- Lead on collaboration with service stakeholders to improve ways of working and associated internal processes.



## BUDGET MANAGEMENT

- Accountable for the delivery of the organisational business plan and annual budget. Work closely with the Head of Finance and Business Services to prepare annual budgets and monitor performance.
- Accountable for identifying deviations from budgets and implementing corrective action in the year.

## PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

- Manage, lead, develop, motivate and coach direct reports so they are fully equipped to deliver a quality service.
- Promote a culture of continuous organisational improvement with a strong focus on both internal and external customers
- Ensure all direct and indirect reports understand the organisation's strategic goals and are motivated to achieve them.
- Ensure effective channels of communication and collaboration are in place both within the function and across the wider organisation.
- Support innovative ideas from team members aimed at service improvement and encourage creativity
- Ensure that managers adhere to policies and procedures.
- Undertake performance development reviews and ensure all team members have an annual impact objective and a clear personal learning and development plan.



## PARTNERSHIPS

- Work closely with other senior managers to identify and act upon potential commercial opportunities.
- Lead and promote partnership working with a range of professional bodies and external stakeholders to support potential commercial opportunities for the organisation.
- Represent Live Borders externally e.g. at networking events, conferences and exhibitions to enhance and strengthen the company's profile.
- Identify and secure fundraising and grants opportunities, and develop fundable projects within the service delivery portfolio.

## OTHER DETAILS

- Undertake any other reasonable duties which may be requested by Live Borders
- Requirement to work out with normal hours /weekends may occasionally be required to ensure business continuity
- Full UK Driving Licence and access to vehicle essential.
- Live Borders offers a flexible working environment, with a hybrid approach. This is a senior role and the balance can be shaped around the needs of the role.
- Relocation packages may be considered



# KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

## EDUCATION

Essential	Assessed	Desirable	Assessed
Educated to postgraduate level in sports management or related subject or able to demonstrate equivalence through CPD or experience	A	Master's or equivalent	A
		Project Management Qualification	A

## EXPERIENCE

Essential	Assessed	Desirable	Assessed
Demonstrable track record and skills/experience gained within a similar position(s), at a similar level.	A/I	Impressive, demonstrable track record and skills/experience gained within a leisure organisation or similar trust organisation at a similar level.	A
Experience of successful strategic planning, development, implementation and consultation	A/I	Lead development of departmental or organisational strategic plans	A/I
Ability to analyse and use complex management data and research to inform decision-making and improve performance	A/I		
Experience in securing external funding and Implementations	I		
Experience of senior leadership, managing complex relevant services	A/I	Leadership in Charitable, Leisure / Sport Environment	A/I



## EXPERIENCE

Essential	Assessed	Desirable	Assessed
Senior people leadership and management skills, and experience in dealing with a range of people issues	A/I		
Experience in writing and presenting Board papers, experience in creating communication suitable for a variety of audiences, including the Board. Persuasive writing and presenting to secure decisions	A/I		
Experience in developing successful strategic partnerships and working in collaboration to deliver key outcomes	A/I		

## SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Essential	Assessed	Desirable	Assessed
Self-motivated, with the ability to work proactively using own initiative.	A/I		
Tenacious and results driven with sound business judgement	I		
Ability to influence at all levels, both internally and externally, including at Board level.	I		
Ability to organise, communicate and motivate	A/I		
Understanding of external funding programmes	A/I		



## SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Essential	Assessed	Desirable	Assessed
Detailed knowledge of appropriate industry sector(s)	A/I		
Able to work collaboratively with CEO, senior managers, board directors and external stakeholders	A/I		
Ability to motivate individuals and teams to achieve/exceed targets	A/I		
Ability to organize, prioritise and meet deadlines	A/I		
Good working knowledge of Office 365 suite of programmes	A/I		
Ability to plan and achieve objectives and maintain quality outcomes within tight deadlines.	A/I		
Ability to scrutinise and review information and data, prepare and present reports based on analysis	A/I		
Ability to build and manage effective links with a variety of organisations and individuals	A/I		
Ability to build persuasive arguments and make recommendations to different audiences.	A/I		
Ability to lead complex programmes and projects	A/I		
Ability to effectively manage compliance of swimming pools	A/I		



# PACKAGES AND BENEFITS

**Pension:** Starts with a 5% company contribution into an Aviva scheme, increased to 10% after 2 years service. After 5 years service, you can join the Local Government Pension Scheme (current company contribution is 17%)

**Holidays:** Starts at 30 days of annual leave plus 4 public holidays (for Christmas and New Year). Increases with service up to a maximum of 35 days after 6 years' service.

Free membership at our Gyms & Swimming Pools

Free entry to our Attractions (e.g. The Great Tapestry of Scotland, The Jim Clark Motorsport Museum)

Death in Service benefit of 3 times salary

**ASVA membership:** We are a corporate member which means staff can get free access to other member attractions, including Edinburgh Zoo and Historic Scotland sites.

**Cyclescheme:** Saves the employee tax and NI contributions on the purchase of a new bike and accessories

**Help@Hand:** Employee assistance programme which includes a variety of services including a 24 Hour advice and information line with support including -

- Counselling and legal information
- Financial Support
- Remote GPs: where employees can arrange a call back from a practising UK GP 24/7
- Savings and discounts - access savings and rewards across a variety of big brands



# WORKING IN THE BORDERS

The Scottish Borders is an outstanding place to live and work, offering an excellent quality of life alongside rewarding career opportunities. Live Borders plays a vital role in supporting culture, sport, learning and wellbeing across the region's communities.

Predominantly rural and rich in history, the Borders is known for its strong local identity, traditions such as the Common Ridings and its sporting heritage as the birthplace of seven-a-side rugby in Melrose. The area offers exceptional opportunities for outdoor activity, with world-renowned mountain biking at Glentress, beautiful walking and cycling routes and access to the Berwickshire coast. A wide range of sports, leisure and cultural facilities are available throughout the region.

The Borders also has a vibrant cultural scene, with libraries, museums, galleries, festivals, theatres and community arts across its towns, alongside excellent cafés, restaurants and independent shops.

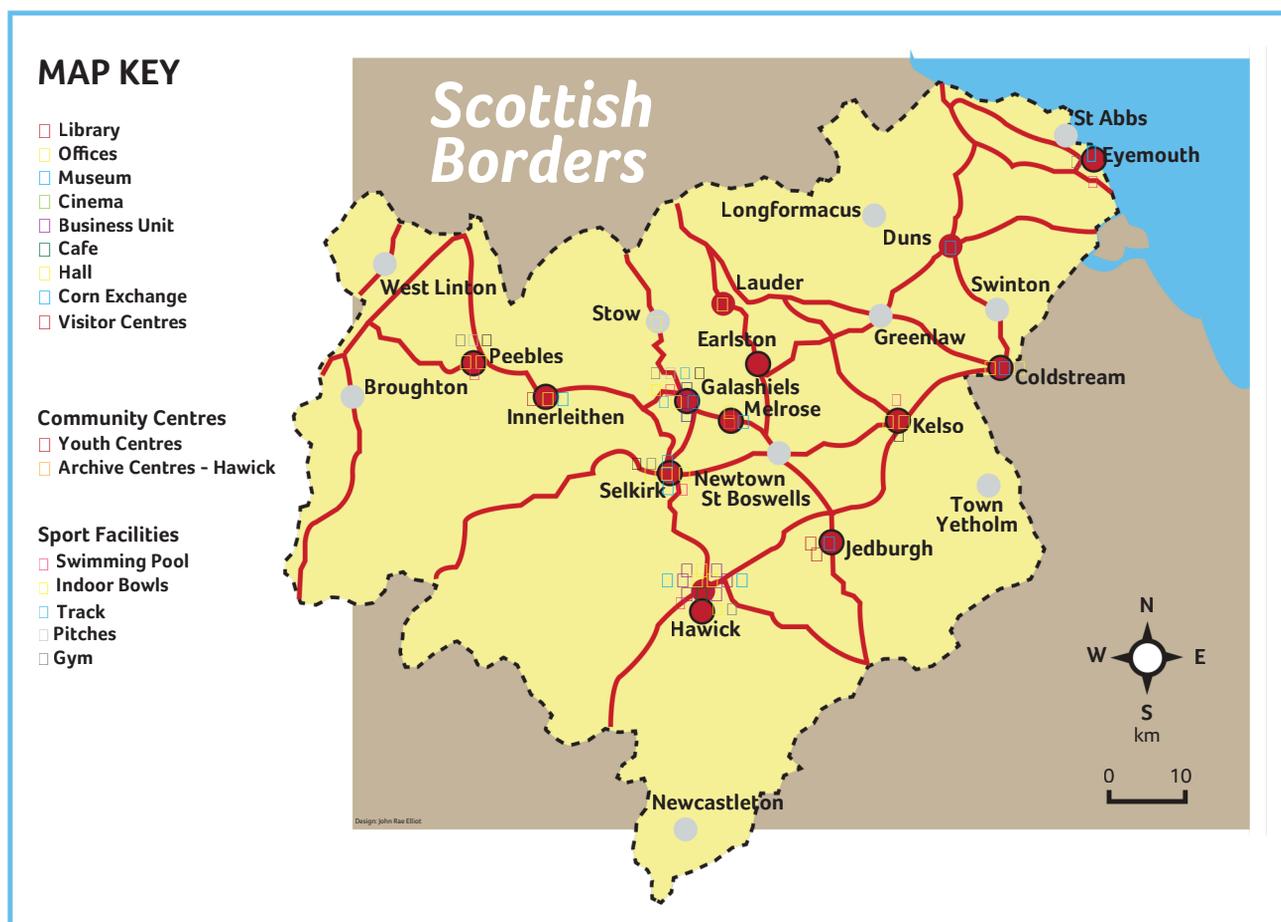
Despite its rural setting, the Scottish Borders is well connected. Edinburgh is around 30 miles away, with regular rail services via the Borders Railway taking around 50 minutes. There is also easy access to Glasgow, Newcastle and major airports.

The region offers strong education provision, with a network of primary and secondary schools across the region, and more affordable housing than many UK cities - making it an attractive option for individuals and families alike.

Working for Live Borders means being part of an organisation that makes a real difference to people's lives, while enjoying everything the Scottish Borders has to offer.



# WORKING IN THE BORDERS





## NEXT STEPS

If you would like more information or an informal chat about the role, please contact Catriona McAllister on [cmcallister@liveborders.org.uk](mailto:cmcallister@liveborders.org.uk)

If you would like to apply for this post, head to <https://liveborders.bamboohr.com/careers>

**Hours:** 37  
**Location:** HQ, Newtown, St Boswells / Hybrid  
**Salary:** Grade 13: £53,865 - £58,360  
**Closing Date:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 12pm Noon

The selection process can include different forms of assessment along with a formal interview. You will be advised of this if your application is successful.

If you have a disability and need assistance in completing your application form, please contact our People team [recruitment@liveborders.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@liveborders.org.uk) to discuss your needs.

We look forward to receiving your completed application.