

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a young girl with long blonde hair, wearing a denim dress, looking up and to the right with a smile. She is holding a clipboard with a colorful worksheet and a blue pen. The setting appears to be a museum or historical site, with large, dark, industrial machinery visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image. The top part of the text is on an orange background, and the bottom part is on a blue background.

Live Borders  
Corporate Strategy  
2026-31  
Strategic Summary



# Welcome from the Chair



**Bill Douglas - Chair of Board of Trustees**

This is not an ordinary strategy document. It is not designed to be produced, filed and revisited five years from now. It is a working document, a clear account of where Live Borders is, what it is committing to, and how it will be held to account along the way.

Live Borders is at a defining point in its history. With a refreshed Board, a new Chief Executive and a management team that is building its capability and confidence, the organisation has the leadership and ambition it needs to move forward.

The question this strategy answers is: forward to where, and how.

The answer is straightforward, even if the work is not. Over the next five years, Live Borders will stabilise its finances, strengthen the organisation from the inside, and build the platform for consistently high-quality services that the people of the Scottish Borders deserve. It will do this with discipline and with honesty about what it can and cannot commit to. And it will demonstrate, year on year, that public money is being well used in the service of communities across the region.

The Board of Trustees stands fully behind this strategy. It has been involved in its development, it is accountable for its delivery, and it will report publicly on progress. We are asking our people, partners and communities to work with us on this strategy, to test us against it, and tell us when we fall short.

That is not a formality. It is an invitation.







## Introduction from Catriona

This strategy is about more than where Live Borders is going next. It is about why we exist, who we serve, and the difference we believe we can make in people's lives across the Scottish Borders.

Live Borders is first and foremost a charity. We exist to improve lives through sport and physical activity, culture and heritage, lifelong learning and creativity. These are not optional extras. They shape health and wellbeing, confidence, opportunity and belonging, and they matter deeply to individuals, families and communities across the Borders.

Over the past year, we have faced the reality of where we are. We have started the difficult work of stabilising the organisation, taking tough decisions and rebuilding the foundations we need for the future. That period has tested us, but it has also shown the strength, care and commitment of our people. I am incredibly grateful for the resilience and professionalism of our people throughout this time.

What remains absolutely clear to me is the scale and importance of what Live Borders holds. We care for places, programmes and experiences that are central to our sense of place, support tourism and the local economy, and touch lives every single day. We are not simply a provider of public services on behalf of others. We are focused and true to our own charitable purpose, and responsible to the people of the Borders.

A vital part of delivering that purpose is how we work with others. Live Borders must be and continue to grow as a trusted, impactful partner. Our strategic priorities do not sit in isolation. They are deeply intertwined with the work of council, health and social care partners, education, the voluntary sector, communities and national agencies. By working in genuine partnership, we can achieve far more than any of us can alone. Collaboration, trust and shared ambition are essential to fulfilling our charitable aims and maximising our impact.

This strategy sets out how we will do that. It gives us clarity of direction and a framework for making decisions, focusing our effort and holding ourselves to account. It is not a document to be admired from a distance. It is how we will work, every day.

For it to succeed, it must belong to all of us. I want every one of our people to see themselves in this strategy, to understand how their role contributes to our wider purpose, and to feel pride in the difference they make. That is how strategy becomes real and meaningful.

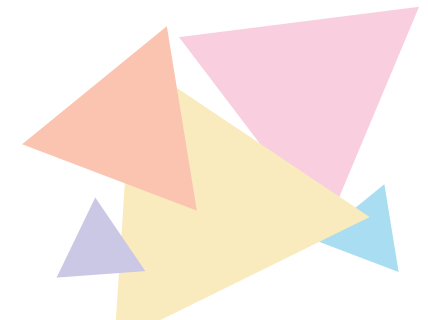
We will continue to learn as we go. Where we need to change course, we will do so openly and with integrity. What will not change is our commitment to improving lives across the Scottish Borders and to being a charity that people trust, value and believe in.

Live Borders has the potential to be a strong, confident and compassionate organisation rooted in place, driven by purpose and focused on impact. This strategy is our next step in that journey.

I believe deeply in the power of this organisation and in the people who make it what it is. With this strategy, we have a shared direction and a renewed sense of belief in our impact. Together, we will continue to build an organisation that makes a meaningful difference to lives across the Scottish Borders.



**Catriona McAllister -  
Chief Executive**





## Our Strategic Framework

### OUR PURPOSE

To improve health and wellbeing and widen access to culture, heritage, sport and lifelong learning, enabling people and communities to connect their past, empower their present and inspire their future in a thriving Scottish Borders.

### OUR VISION

A Scottish Borders where culture, heritage, sport, and lifelong learning are woven into everyday life and are valued, used and championed by the communities they serve.

### OUR MISSION

To deliver high-quality, consistent cultural, heritage, sporting, and lifelong learning services communities rely on, by building a stable, accountable organisation and strengthening our people, infrastructure and partnerships over the long term.





## What you can expect from us

Live Borders CARES describes how we work together and what communities can expect from us.

**We are:**

### Collaborative

which means we work together across all roles, teams, services and partners. We succeed or fail together.

### Accountable

which means we do what we say we will. We are clear about what we can commit to and honest when things change.

### Resourceful

which means we make the most of what we have. We learn from insight, listen to feedback, and keep improving. We fix what is broken before we look elsewhere, and we innovate.

### Excellent

which means we focus on clear standards, reliable delivery, and services people can trust. We are committed to quality and high standards in everything we do.

### Supporting

which means we work so everyone can access what we offer. We adapt how we work to serve all communities across the Borders.





## How we will measure success

Our purpose is to improve wellbeing and widen access through culture, heritage, sport and lifelong learning, enabling people and communities to connect their past, empower their present and inspire their future in a thriving Scottish Borders.

We measure success by how effectively we deliver that purpose over time. We judge success by the quality, consistency and reach of our services, the difference they make to wellbeing and inclusion, and how reliably we deliver for communities across the region. We are committed to transparency, accountability and continual learning. Where delivery falls short, we will take responsibility, learn from experience and adapt our approach.

### How we will track progress

This strategy will be delivered through annual business planning, with objectives and targets aligned to our five strategic priorities. As Live Borders strengthens, planning will evolve from annual plans to a rolling multi-year approach.



Progress will be tracked through:

- Delivery of annual strategic objectives
- A small number of headline performance indicators
- Regular reporting to the Board and Scottish Borders Council
- Publication of an annual impact report

The Board of Trustees oversees delivery of the strategy, while the Chief Executive is responsible for its implementation, monitoring and reporting.

The strategy will be reviewed annually, allowing us to learn, adapt and respond to changing circumstances while maintaining a clear and consistent long-term direction.





## Thank You

This strategy was developed in consultation with our people, communities and partners across the Scottish Borders and beyond. We are grateful to everyone who gave their time and shared their expertise to help shape it.

To read the full strategy and find out more, visit [liveborders.org.uk/about-us/our-strategy](https://liveborders.org.uk/about-us/our-strategy)

