Appendix

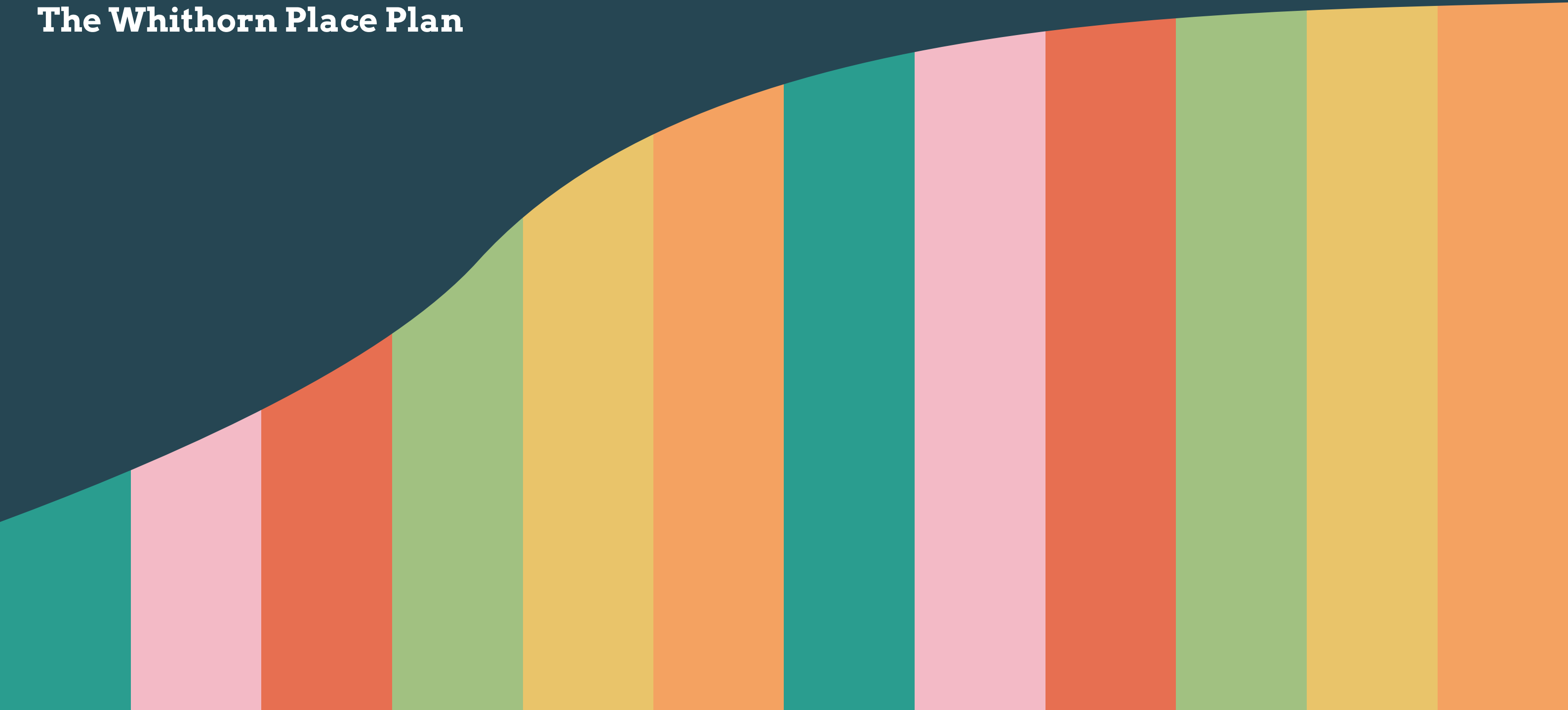## Part Four

The Whithorn Place Plan

Part Three

Chapter 6
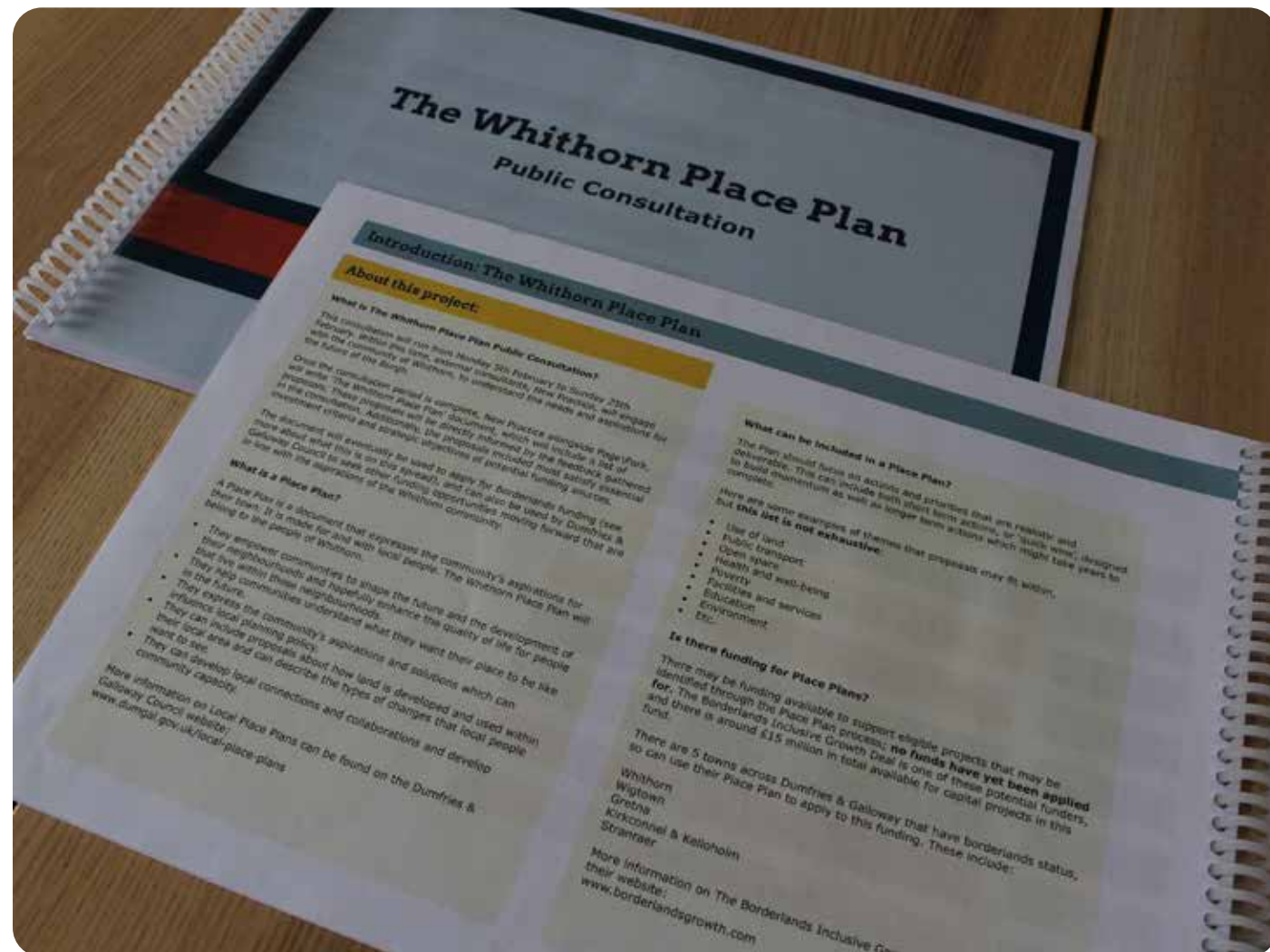## The
Engagement
Booklet

The following chapter contains the pages from the A3 engagement booklet which was used as a key engagement tool when talking in-person with the public during the consultation.

The content of this booklet was used to prompt and aid conversastion during the consultation process; these conversations led to the content of the draft Whithorn Place Plan. The six themes within this booklet have since been reconsidered as part of the writing of the Place Plan, and have been edited to now form the three themes that structure that document.

The Whithorn Place Plan

Public Consultation

New Practice PAGE\PARK Dumfries & Galloway COUNCIL Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

Contents

Introduction: The Whithorn Place Plan

About this project:

What is The Whithorn Place Plan Public Consultation?

This consultation will run from Monday 5th February to Sunday 25th February. Within this time, external consultants, New Practice, will engage with the community of Whithorn, to understand the needs and aspirations for the future of the Burgh.

Once the consultation period is complete, New Practice alongside Page\Park, will write 'The Whithorn Place Plan' document, which will include a list of proposals. These proposals will be directly informed by the feedback gathered in the consultation. Additionally, the proposals included must satisfy essential investment criteria and strategic objectives of potential funding sources.

The document will eventually be used to apply for Borderlands funding (see more about what this is on this spread), and can also be used by Dumfries & Galloway Council to seek other funding opportunities moving forward that are in line with the aspirations of the Whithorn community.

What is a Place Plan?

A Place Plan is a document that expresses the community's aspirations for their town. It is made for and with local people. The Whithorn Place Plan will belong to the people of Whithorn.

- They empower communities to shape the future and the development of their neighbourhoods and hopefully enhance the quality of life for people that live within those neighbourhoods.
- They help communities understand what they want their place to be like in the future.
- They express the community's aspirations and solutions which can influence local planning policy.
- They can include proposals about how land is developed and used within their local area and can describe the types of changes that local people want to see.
- They can develop local connections and collaborations and develop community capacity.

More information on Local Place Plans can be found on the Dumfries & Galloway Council website:
www.dumgal.gov.uk/local-place-plans

What can be included in a Place Plan?

The Plan should focus on actions and priorities that are realistic and deliverable. This can include both short term actions, or 'quick wins', designed to build momentum as well as longer term actions which might take years to complete.

Here are some examples of themes that proposals may fit within, but **this list is not exhaustive**:

- Use of land
- Public transport
- Open space
- Health and well-being
- Poverty
- Facilities and services
- Education
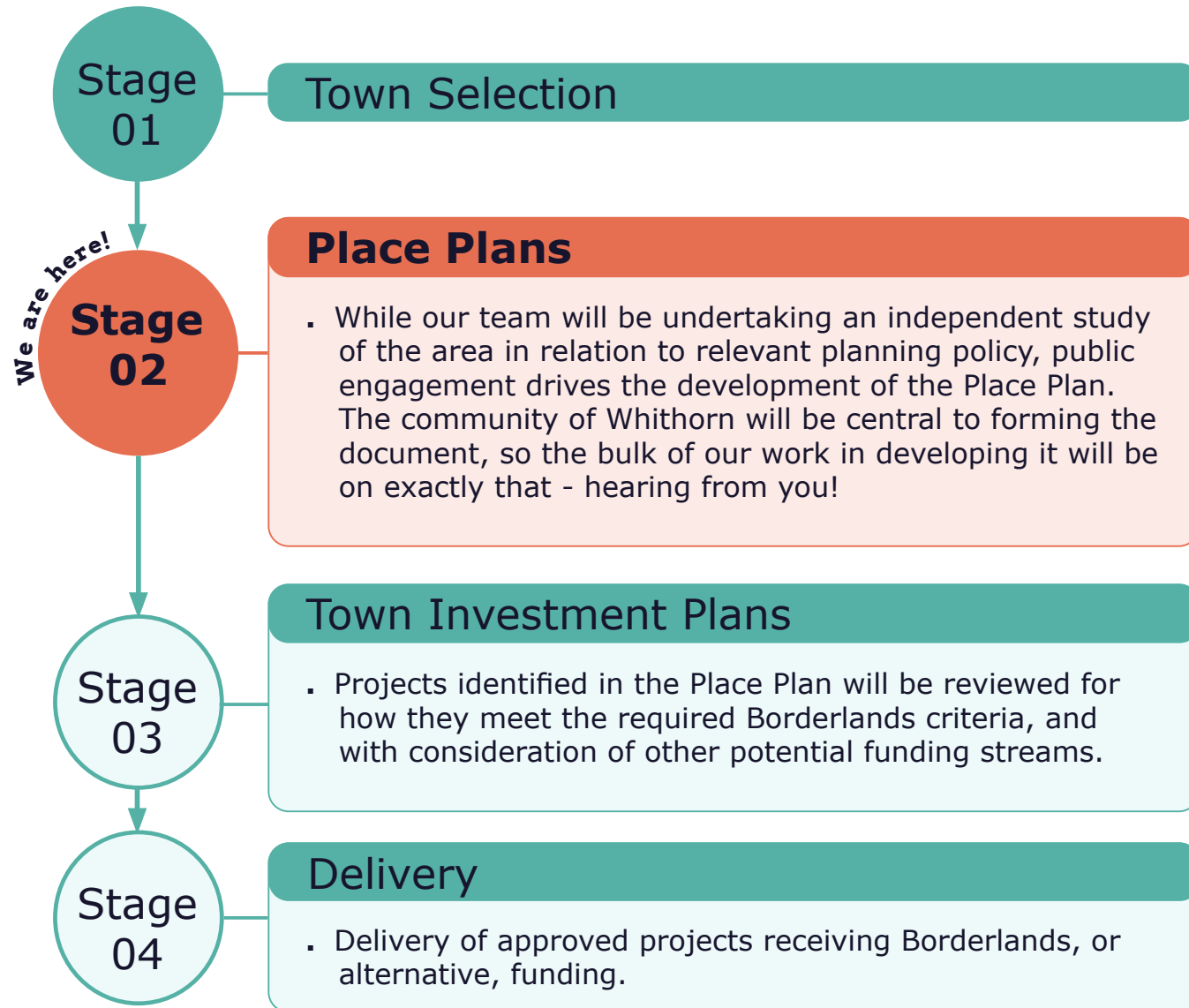- Environment
- Etc.

Is there funding for Place Plans?

There may be funding available to support eligible projects that may be identified through the Place Plan process; **no funds have yet been applied for.** The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal is one of these potential funders, and there is around £15 million in total available for capital projects in this fund.

There are 5 towns across Dumfries & Galloway that have borderlands status, so can use their Place Plan to apply to this funding. These include:

Whithorn
Wigtown
Gretna
Kirkconnel & Kelloholm
Stranraer

More information on The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal can be found on their website:
www.borderlandsgrowth.com

Overview of the Borderlands Place Programme process:

Stage 01 — Town Selection

We are here!

Stage 02 — **Place Plans**

- While our team will be undertaking an independent study of the area in relation to relevant planning policy, public engagement drives the development of the Place Plan. The community of Whithorn will be central to forming the document, so the bulk of our work in developing it will be on exactly that - hearing from you!

Stage 03 — Town Investment Plans

- Projects identified in the Place Plan will be reviewed for how they meet the required Borderlands criteria, and with consideration of other potential funding streams.

Stage 04 — Delivery

- Delivery of approved projects receiving Borderlands, or alternative, funding.

Strategic objectives of the Borderlands Place Programme:

The Programme has seven investment objectives (SO), focussed on addressing the identified challenges and opportunities facing borderlands towns:

SO1 — Empower local communities to imagine and then build a long-term future for the towns they live in, firmly in partnership with local, regional, and national governments.

SO2 — Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to our towns and town centres.

SO3 — Maintain and increase the number of visitors who spend time and money in our towns and town centres, increasing spend per visit and extending the visitor season.

SO4 — Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation, including education and training opportunities.

SO5 — Maintain and increase the number of people living in our towns and town centres.

SO6 — Retain and increase our working age population.

SO7 — Maintain and raise the standard of the physical environment in our towns and town centres.

The team:

New Practice (Lead Consultant)   *new-practice.co.uk*

New Practice is an architecture practice in Glasgow. We exist to develop the community, creative and cultural capacity of places to connect people with the decision making processes that underpin their lived experience.

Page\Park Architects   *pagepark.co.uk*

Page\Park is a progressive design practice with offices in Glasgow and Leeds, operating across the UK. We are an employee-owned business, with a reputation for inventive contemporary design grounded in an understanding of history, people, and place.

Introduction: 'Themes' and 'Projects'

The 'themes' and 'projects' in this booklet:

Based on our work so far, which has included an analysis of the Whithorn area, and an audit of relevant planning policy and past consultations by Dumfries & Galloway Council, we have come up with six high-level themes. We feel that these best describe the different opportunities most applicable to the scope of the Local Place Plan.

The themes:
- Community
- Townscape Improvements
- Connectivity
- Tourism
- Town Identity
- Sustainability

In this booklet, we outline each theme with a 'one-liner' quick summary and a more detailed overall goal.

Within each theme, we present a series of example projects, which we've devised based on our work so far in studying Whithorn and its surrounding area. We hope these projects will generate some ideas on how the goals for each theme could be met, and give you an idea of the type of projects that are within the scope of the guiding Borderlands Place Programme investment objectives.

Over to you...!

We want your feedback on the themes, goals, and the example projects outlined in this booklet. You can do this by talking to one of us, or you can do this independently using a feedback sheet (additional paper can be provided should you need it).

Your feedback will help us understand the types of projects and initiatives that would be most suitable, but we also hope that they present some new creative ideas for consideration and act as a springboard for you to suggest your own ideas. These are just examples for now, however if there is strong support for a project, it may make it into the Place Plan!

Theme One: Community

Quick Summary:

Improve daily life for people in Whithorn with amenities or community initiatives.

The Goal:

"To enhance the quality of daily life for people in Whithorn by improving access to key amenities and services, training opportunities, and intergenerational and family focused activities and spaces."

Feedback Prompts

What do you think your community needs?

Do you have any feedback on the example projects for this theme, or do you have any of your own ideas for projects that could help meet this goal?

Project 1: Library of Things

The idea:
Create a central hub for the affordable, sustainable and convenient hire / rental of useful things for your home, projects and adventures.

Items could include: lawnmower, carpet cleaner, pressure washer, electric tools, wallpaper stripper, sewing machine, games console, gazebo, pop-up bed, etc!

Examples of Libarary of Things.

This project addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of geographic access to services, upskilling and training.

Project 2: Community Greening

The idea:
Support in the initiation and development of community garden spaces (from planter size to entire gardens) that provide opportunities to grow, socialise, play and learn together.

Examples:
* Development of new community growing spaces
* Support to existing community greening initiatives e.g. 'Whithorn in Bloom'
* Pubs with community gardens (e.g. Feathers Inn in Gwynedd, Railway Hotel in Southend on Sea)
* Libraries with community gardens (e.g. The Lea Bridge Library Garden in East London, 'Secret Garden at South West Library in Greenock)

This project fulfils key aims of the National Planning Framework to *"bring nature into the design and layout of our cities, towns, streets and spaces"*.

The Lea Bridge Library Garden, East London (garden design by Tom Massey).

Project 3: Inclusive & Accessible Intergenerational Spaces & Places

The idea:
Support the initiation and development of new spaces to play and socialise, while supporting existing community groups to continue to develop their community focused offer and to deliver their vision, mission and values.

Examples:
- Spaces designed specifically for teenagers
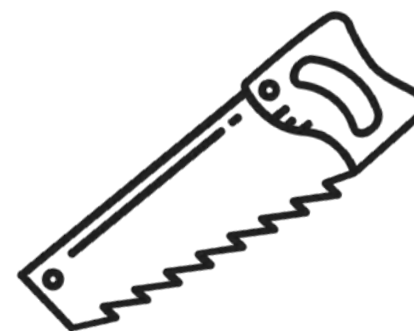- Adventure playground with nature play

Baltic Street Adventure Playground, Glasgow.

This project addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of liveable neighbourhoods, thriving town centres, engaged communities, population retention and rural isolation.

Project 4: Intergenerational Upskilling and Training

The idea:
Make Whithorn a centre of local alternative education, offering training to local people in traditional building trades, tourism, and other disciplines that will lead to jobs locally and retain them in the community. (e.g. conserving the fabric of the local area as tradesperson, and share local history with visitors as a guide)

This project addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of geographic access to services, upskilling and training.

Project 5: High Street Community Space

The idea:
A high street unit with open frontage that is an accessible, inclusive, flexible and multi-use space for the community.

Examples:
- Pop-up shop for small local businesses or craftspeople to sell their wares on a short term basis
- Exhibition space
- Community cafe
- Hang-out space for teenagers in winter months
- Storage for outdoor market furniture

Addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of liveable neighbourhoods, thriving town centres, engaged communities and sustainable development of conservation areas.

Theme Two: Townscape Improvements

Quick Summary:

Create a town that is made for people, building on what is already on offer, particularly enhancing accessibility.

The Goal:

"To create a cohesive and human-centred townscape, to encourage further development, facilitate events and community gathering in the town centre, and improve accessibility equitably throughout Whithorn."

Feedback Prompts

What changes would you like to see in your town, i.e. town improvements?

Do you think the town environment could better foster informal or formal socialising and/or events? If so, how?

Do you have any feedback on the example projects for this theme, or do you have any of your own ideas for projects that could help meet this goal?

Project 1: Ground Surface Renovation Scheme

The idea:
Address accessibility and vehicle speeding while restoring the historic 'feel' of the town, where it was defined by narrow and wider spaces for gathering, not just carriageway widths, which feels like the main driver now.

Marylebone Lane accessibility and ground surface improvements (by Publica).

Holistic ground surface strategy for Chartres City Core (by Reichen et Robert Associés).

This project addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of liveable neighbourhoods, thriving town centres and sustainable development of conservation areas.

Project 2: Flexible Public Space

The idea:
Re-establishing the widest-point of the town as a flexible public space in which parking spaces can temporarily be transformed and used for events and gathering (e.g. markets) by the introduction of service points, curated seating and a groundscape scheme that defines use of space.

Ground surfaces defining flexible public space, Place de Halles in Niort, France.

Temporary public space on the street for Malta Festival in Poznań (by Atelier Starzak Strebicki).

This project Aligns with the Local Development Plan's aim of "a return to a straightforward definition of space" as a future aim for the public realm in Whithorn.

Project 3: Places to Wait and Rest

The idea:
Support the initiation and development of new spaces to play and socialise, while supporting existing community groups to continue to develop their community focused offer and to deliver their vision, mission and values.

SouthGate public seating and planting in Bath (by Macgregor Smith).

Project 4: Business Overspill

The idea:
Allow businesses to 'spill-out', and support them to offer a more formalised and cohesive al-fresco food and beverage experience that is in-line with town centre aesthetics.

North Audley Street in London (by Publica)

Ormeau Road parklets in Belfast (by MMAS).

This project addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of liveable neighbourhoods, thriving town centres and sustainable development of conservation areas.

Project 5: Car Parking Strategy

The idea:
Formalisation of a 'tourist / visitor' car park, to reduce parking issues in the town centre, creating a more holistic visitor experience with a defined starting point and a considered route that benefits local businesses.

This project addresses planning concerns and Borderlands Place Programme objectives of sustainable development of conservation areas and touristic development.

Theme Three: Connectivity

Quick Summary:

Improve transport and internet services to help people stay connected.

The Goal:

"To provide better links and sustainable transport options for locals to access the wider area, along with digital connectivity improvements, to reduce isolation from services, provide more diverse employment opportunities and support employment retention."

Feedback Prompts

What is your experience with using public transport in Whithorn?

Do you work from home / hybrid?

Do you have any feedback on the example projects for this theme, or do you have any of your own ideas for projects what could help meet this goal?

Project 1: Digital Connectivity

The idea:
Support with high speed broadband set up and improvements to aid business, home working and leisure, and/or enhanced cellular coverage for mobile phones.

Project 2: Revised Public Transport Routes

The idea:
Improvements to bus routes, namely making destinations / stops closer to key out-of-town services.

Improving connectivity by sustainable means will remove barriers to future development in Whithorn, and the National Planning Framework prioritises development where it "can be accessed by sustainable modes"

## Project 3: Revised Public Transport Timetables

The idea:
Retention of a permanent service, and improvements to bus timetables, in particular the introduction of an evening service.

Examples:
- Introduction of an evening bus service.
- Introduction of a bookable bus service, however a large number of these services are not viable long term and are withdrawn.

Improving connectivity by sustainable means will remove barriers to future development in Whithorn, and the National Planning Framework prioritises development where it "can be accessed by sustainable modes"
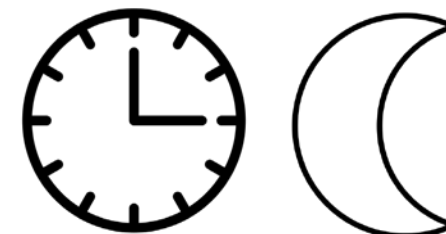
Project 4: Improved Bus Shelters

The idea:
Improve existing bus stops with electronic signage, timetables and live arrival time updates, or introduce a new bus stop location in Whithorn.

A bus stop with solar power shelter that supports bees, in Brighton.

Improving connectivity by sustainable means will remove barriers to future development in Whithorn, and the National Planning Framework prioritises development where it "can be accessed by sustainable modes".
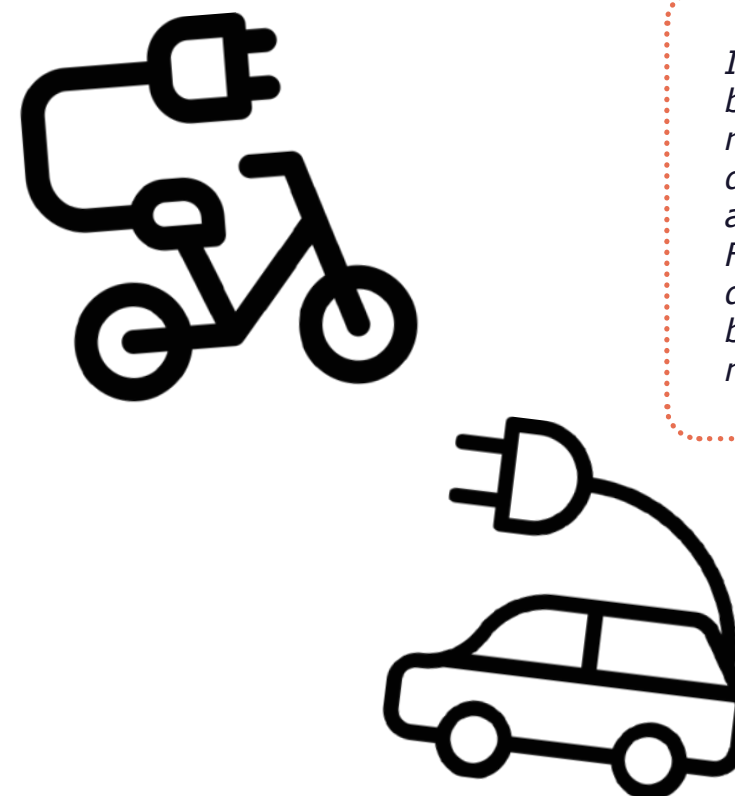
Project 5: Whithorn Mobility Hub

The idea:
Development of a 'Mobility Hub' in Whithorn. These are being developed elsewhere across the Dumfries and Galloway region by South West of Scotland Transport Partnership.

Examples of what a Hub can include:
- A fleet of electric cars (and potentially light vans) to hire, located in on-street parking bays in Whithorn.
- Electric bikes for hire (particularly important to tourism but increasingly also as a practical means of transport for the semi-rural population of the region).
- Improved Rapid Charge Vehicle Charging for both public and fleet use.
- Conventional longer stay vehicle charging for both public and fleet use.
- Information points (related to transport and the town).
- Secure bike storage areas.

Improving connectivity by sustainable means will remove barriers to future development in Whithorn, and the National Planning Framework prioritises development where it "can be accessed by sustainable modes".

Theme Four: Tourism

Quick Summary:

Developing Whithorn's unique tourist features, along with those of the surrounding area.

The Goal:

"To build upon the successes of existing and unique tourist attractions in Whithorn and the surrounding areas (such as Galloway dark skies), while also supporting growth in the sector, extending the dwell time of visitors and maximising the spending of tourists."

Feedback Prompts

What kind of things do you think would attract tourists to Whithorn? Think about now, as well as future potential.

Do you have any feedback on the example projects for this theme, or do you have any of your own ideas for projects that could help meet this goal?

Project 1: Community-Run Campsite

The idea:
A serviced camp-site operated by the local community to provide a more diverse offering for overnight travellers, particularly those with tents, motor homes or caravans. All profits generated by the camp-site would go back into regeneration and community projects within Whithorn.

Wick River Campsite.

Project 2: Development of Whithorn's Tourist Offering

The idea:
Supporting continued development of existing key tourist assets, and providing support for wider initiatives to 'join up' the offering to create a cohesive tourist draw.

Whithorn Priory.

This project addresses key objectives of National planning policy and the Borderlands Place Programme for economic and touristic development.

Project 3: Library of Things

The idea:
Create a central hub for the affordable, sustainable and convenient hire / rental of useful things for tourists and visitors. This tourist centred offer would be supplementary to the core offer for locals (outlined under the 'Community' theme).

Note: This project is also mentioned in the Theme of Community.

Examples:
- Items could include: Walking poles, billy cans, stove, tent, sleeping mats etc.

This project addresses planning concerns of geographic remoteness, access to key services and cost of living.
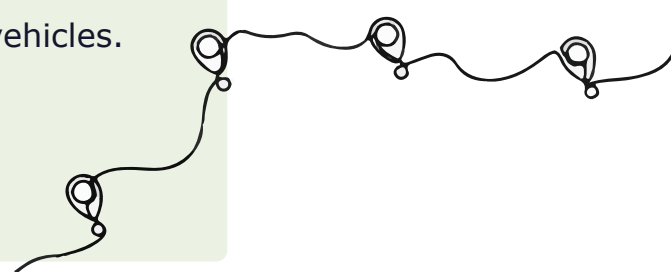

Library of Things.

Project 4: Improving Connections Beyond Whithorn

The idea:
Improving visitor access to Whithorn, particularly for those not using private vehicles.

Examples:
- A shuttle bus service to Stranraer for walkers.
- Formalised bike connectivity to the NCN73.

This project addresses planning concerns of geographic access, touristic development and improves sustainable transport options.

Project 5: Creative Wayfinding Strategy / Route Planning / Navigation

The idea:
Developing a creative wayfinding strategy to link up key assets in the town, creating a curated sequence of sites for tourists to visit, along with a new arrival sequence and a dedicated visitor parking area.

Examples:
- Clearly marking out the Whithorn Way in the town with ground surfaces or greening with respect to the town's conservation area.
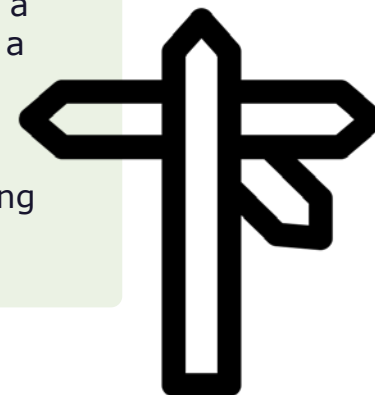
Inverness City Centre streetscape and heritage wayfinding at Abertarff House (LUC).

This project formalises and gives identity to the town's heritage identity, with a strategy to optimise tourist footfall and visitorship. It addresses key objectives of National planning policy and the Borderlands Place Programme for economic and touristic development.

Project 6: Outdoor and Tourism Training

The idea:
Offer training to local residents to become tourist guides for local outdoor pursuits or local historical assets, so that they can obtain upskilling, or get jobs locally to stay in the area.

This project would enable Whithorn to better function as 'Liveable Place' under the National Planning Framework by "providing opportunities for learning" and support Borderlands Place Programme objectives concerning touristic development.

Theme Five: Town Identity

Quick Summary:

Developing a unique town identity, along with its expression in the town itself.

The Goal:

"To define Whithorn's niche identity ('put it on the map'!) and develop its creative expression in the town, while supporting local communities to foster a cohesive and unique sense of place."

Feedback Prompts

Do you think Whithorn is welcoming to visitors and easy to navigate?

Do you have any feedback on the example projects for this theme, or do you have any of your own ideas for projects that could help meet this goal?

Project 1: Wayfinding Scheme for Heritage / Tourism Assets

The idea:
Create a unique and comprehensive navigation strategy that helps tourists explore Whithorn's attractions, and is in keeping with respect to the town's conservation area.

Creative signage in Milngavie for the West Highland Way (by Page\Park).

Project 2: Shopfront Improvements

The idea:
Support businesses to maintain and improve attractiveness of their frontages, to preserve Whithorn's special character and to support growth of the local economy and jobs.

Before and after photos from Traditional Shop Front Improvement Scheme in Govan, Glasgow (Get Into Govan).

Traditional Shop Front Improvement Scheme in Govan, Glasgow (Get Into Govan).

Project 3: Improved and Cohesive Welcome Experience

The idea:
Celebrate and make memorable the arrival 'moment' to Whithorn with bespoke and unique welcome signage, and direct tourists on a route around Whithorn to maximise dwell time and spending.

Note: This overlaps well with the project regarding visitor parking for the Tourism Theme.

Traditional welcome signage in Irthlingborough.

Project 4: Facade Upkeep Scheme

The idea:
Support locals to learn about their homes, how they fit into the history of Whithorn, and to help them make decisions about paint schemes, window boxes, window replacement, and so on. The support could be financial, but is primarily advice, educating and fostering pride for the local area.

Project 5: Formalised Town Brand

The idea:
Create a 'place brand' for Whithorn that builds an identity with its distinguishing features so that the town can stand out and clearly communicate its offer to potential visitors, or residents and to attract investment.

Examples:
• 'Wigtown Book Town'

Example of a Town Brand - Malton, Yorkshire.

Theme Six: Sustainability

Quick Summary:

Support and introduce more initiatives that help make Whithorn a sustainable place to live.

The Goal:

"To introduce and improve upon existing sustainable initiatives of varying scales, the impact of which will enhance the day to day quality of life for the community of Whithorn, for instance by improving access to affordable energy, local food networks, sustainable transport options, and providing appropriate improvements to property."

Feedback Prompts

In what ways do you think Whithorn should become more sustainable? You can use the example projects for inspiration, or give us your own ideas.

Do you ever find sourcing fresh produce difficult?

Do you have any feedback on the example projects for this theme, or do you have any of your own ideas for projects that could help meet this goal?

Project 1: Renewable Energy Community Grid

The idea:
Development of a renewable energy community grid, for instance through the erection of a wind turbine, to offer reduced energy bills through collective access to sustainable energy.
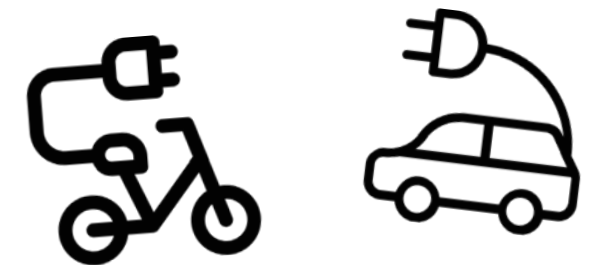
Project 2: Whithorn Mobility Hub

The idea:
Development of a 'Mobility Hub' in Whithorn. These are being developed elsewhere across the Dumfries and Galloway region by South West of Scotland Transport Partnership.

Note: there is a project under the theme of 'Connectivity' that talks more about general improvements to existing transport links e.g. bus services.

Examples of what a Hub can include:
- A fleet of electric cars (and potentially light vans) to hire, located in on-street parking bays in Whithorn.
- Electric bikes for hire (particularly important to tourism but increasingly also as a practical means of transport for the semi-rural population of the region).
- Improved Rapid Charge Vehicle Charging for both public and fleet use.
- Conventional longer stay vehicle charging for both public and fleet use.
- Information points (related to transport and the town).
- Secure bike storage areas.

Improving connectivity by sustainable means will remove barriers to future development in Whithorn, and the National Planning Framework prioritises development where it "can be accessed by sustainable modes".

Project 3: Building on Biosphere

The idea:
Supporting initiatives which link into existing investment or schemes focussing on the development and protection of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere.

The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere.

Project 4: Baseline Dwelling Standard

The idea:
Supporting local residents to improve the energy performance and comfort of their home, through potential financial aid or education, to create a baseline dwelling standard in Whithorn.

Project 5: Re-Purpose / Retrofit / Reoccupy Empty or Derelict Buildings

The idea:
Reduce the number of empty and derelict buildings on the high street to increase the availability of quality, highly energy efficient, and affordable housing (or other) for people in Whithorn. This will have a positive knock on impact on town centre regeneration and safeguard historic buildings for the future.

Aligns with the National Planning Framework's spatial principle of conserving and assets, not just those with heritage listing.

Project 6: Support the Development of a Robust and Sustainable Food Network

The idea:
Improve access to local fresh produce, reducing dependency on supermarkets out-with the town.

A community food market in Moffat.

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