

IT IS POSSIBLE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

So you're not short of opinions, and you've got a fair idea about what part of the debate a given topic does (or doesn't) fit into. It's time to start getting your thoughts across to the people who can act on them.

Everyone has a right to voice their individual opinion, but it can be good to get together with like-minded people to pool ideas, information and efforts. This works especially well for things like planning where the information is quite complicated and there can be a lot of different things going on. It can also result in concrete projects that one person wouldn't be able to tackle alone.

If you're a visitor, a lot of the information here is relevant regionally and nationally, and your own area will have groups with similar aims to the ones which exist in Berwick.

And visitor or resident, you can always send your views to the Advertiser while you're at it!

To find out how to get in touch with all these groups and individuals, take a free factsheet from the windowsill to your left.

THINGS TO DO

Find, read and respond to the emerging Local Development Plan (LDF) and the Masterplan

If you are interested in what happens in the long term, these are the documents you need to know about. There will be changing information about the stage they have reached in the middle of this room throughout the exhibition.

Keep scanning the newspaper and the council newsletter, *Bear Facts*

The Council has to publicise certain things like consultations, large-scale planning applications and applications falling within the conservation areas. The Civic Society is aiming to have more information in the newspaper because things like the statutory advertisement of planning applications can be quite easy to miss, but can signal large changes.

Tell your elected Council member what you think is important, or write to the Council officers

A good person to approach if you have something to say about the town centre is the new town centre manager, Neil Brown.

Get involved with the Conservation Area Character Appraisals or the English Heritage research project

Consultation on the draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals will be advertised here and in the newspaper. You can feed your views to the consultants at any time before then via the Civic Society.

The Civic Society can put you in touch with Dr Adam Menuge of English Heritage, who is interested in finding out as much as possible from the community while he produces a book on Berwick for English Heritage.

Participate in the planning process

Anyone can get help and information from the Council's planning office if they are interested in a particular development application, submit their thoughts in writing and, if they wish, speak at the meeting where the decision is made. Organisations like the Civic Society and the Chamber of Trade are a good source of information about the Public Enquiry into the retail applications (including Tesco) in October. If they can't help you, they'll have a good idea about who can.

Leave us your thoughts

You can use the visitors' book or the feedback sheets by the central map to tell the Civic Society what aspects of development in Berwick, Tweedmouth or Spittal particularly concern you.

Support the town, celebrate it and – if you're a visitor – come back soon!

PEOPLE TO JOIN

An organisation is only the sum total of its members, so if you're interested in a community, a place, or a particular topic, join the relevant group (details in the factsheet on the windowsill). If there's an issue that the official frameworks don't cover, ask the groups below as there will probably be other people interested in it as well.

Join your residents' group

Tweedmouth	St Boisil and St Bartholomew's Residents' Group
	West End Residents' Group
Spittal	Spittal Improvement Trust
Castlegate	The Castlegate Area Residents' Association
The Greens	The Greens Committee

Join the Community Development Trust

The Berwick-upon-Tweed Community Development Trust is based in the William Elder Building (known to many as the old Jobcentre) in Castlegate. Development trusts are community-enterprise organisations – in other words they may run schemes that turn a profit but this is all ploughed back into the local community. The Development Trust is accountable to the community (not the Council or any other organisation), and you can join to receive news and maybe stand for election to the board of trustees, which is made up of volunteers.

It is up to each development trust to decide what needs doing in its community. For example, they might run training, acquire shops, start renewable-energy schemes, organise festivals and deliver regeneration projects such as developing derelict sites or providing affordable housing.

Support the Preservation Trust

Not to be confused with the Civic Society, the Berwick-upon-Tweed Preservation Trust is another charity that has been operating since the 1970s. It was a development trust before its time, securing funding to acquire and renovate decaying property in the town, and then finding a new owner or use for it.

The Preservation Trust's address and phone number are on the factsheet, and they would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in the Dewar's Lane Granary project.

Get involved with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Local Strategic Partnerships unite the public sector, private business and voluntary and community groups into organisations that can make links to get things done. Berwick Borough Local Strategic Partnership (BBLSP) has produced a Community Plan setting out its aims in various areas until 2015 – these include things like increasing higher- and further- education opportunities, improving skills and transport, helping to increase the number of visitors and supporting local food production.

You can become a registered stakeholder in the BBLSP through its website (see factsheet on windowsill).

Join a special-interest group

There are many other groups with special interests – the Berwick History and Archaeology Societies, the Berwickshire Naturalists, the Friends of the Museum and Archives, the Chamber of Trade and Commerce and Bring Back Berwick, which focuses and lobbies on issues to do with the health of the town.

Join a regional or national group

These are a few of the organisations which the Civic Society has been involved with through its work (again, details are on the windowsill):

- The Civic Trust
- The North of England Civic Trust
- Northern Architecture
- The Northumberland and Newcastle Society
- English Heritage
- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
- SAVE Britain's Heritage
- Groups which safeguard buildings from a particular historical period, such as The Georgian Group and The Victorian Society

Join the Civic Society

You don't have to live here to support us!

Taking it one step further – Organising a Design Know-How project

Northern Architecture is an organisation promoting high-quality design in the North East. It worked with the North East Civic Trust and the people of the Fish Quay in North Shields near Newcastle to produce a document to help influence the shape of the place.

Northern Architecture are keen to run similar projects of this kind – perhaps in Berwick, Tweedmouth or Spittal. If you're interested in finding out more about design and how to ensure that development in Berwick is of the best possible quality, contact the Civic Society.

