

SELKIRK

CONSERVATION AREA REGENERATION SCHEME



FINAL REPORT AND EVALUATION

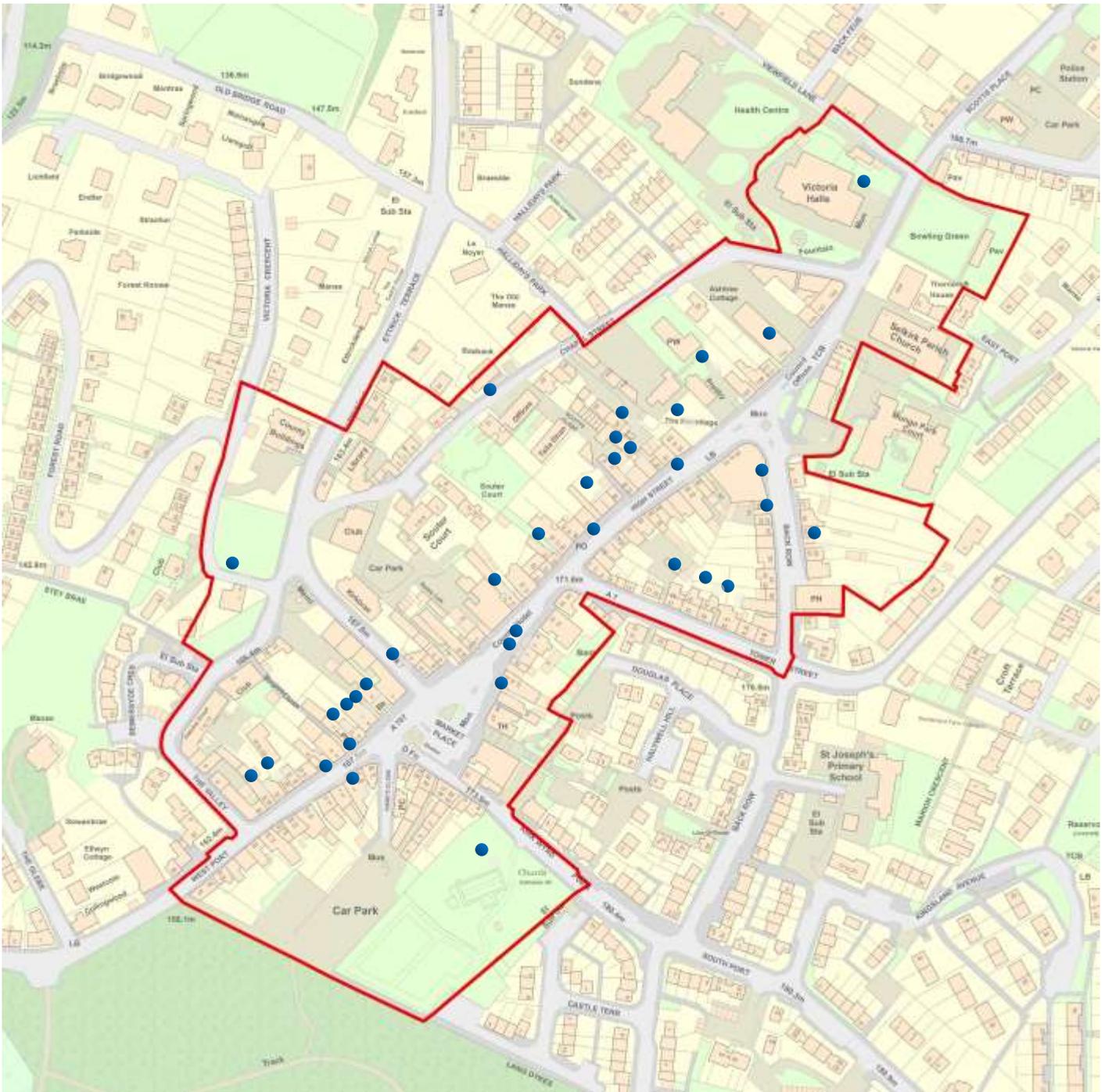


HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

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INTRODUCTION



Map Showing Selkirk CARS Boundary & Location of CARS Funded Properties

The information contained within the following document has been written at the conclusion of the Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) to capture and summarise all the outcomes and impacts of the 5 year, heritage led regeneration project.

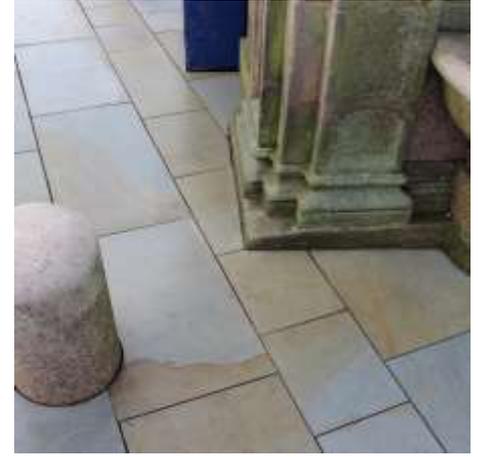
The report is intended to amplify and compliment the required **Regeneration Outputs Report (Schedule Part 5)** prepared for Historic Environment Scotland as a mandatory condition of the CARS funding with more detailed information and relevant images documenting the project.

The report has been written principally by **Colin Gilmour** (Selkirk CARS Project Officer) with assistance from **Mark Douglas**, Principal Officer (Built Heritage & Design)

Scottish Borders Council

September 2018

CONTENTS



1. SELKIRK CARS SUMMARY

2. PURPOSE - What We Set Out To Achieve

3. IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

4. REVIEW & FEEDBACK

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

6. SUPPORTING INFORMATION & APPENDICES

- A. HES OUTCOMES SUMMARY
- B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT
- C. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
- D. PRIORITY BUILDING FACT SHEETS
- E. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE
- F. EDUCATION & TRAINING REPORT
- G. PRESS & MEDIA COVERAGE
- H. LESSONS LEARNT

SELKIRK CARS SUMMARY

19 Technical Seminars

6

Primary
Schools
Engaged

£131,000

External Funding
Secured For
SWS Courthouse

£2million

Direct
Investment

£450,000

Streetscape Works

£865,000

HES Contribution

7,453

People That
Attended
Our Events

£1,080,000

Total Budget

7

Priority Buildings

Selkirk CARS *IN NUMBERS*

69

Grant Offers

ONE

Royal Burgh

537

Hours
Education &
Training Delivered

£205,000

Largest Grant Offer

28

Buildings Repaired

£525

Smallest Grant Offer

£215,000

SBC Contribution

104

Education Events

5

Years
(2013-2018)

753

sqm Scoutsmoor Sandstone Slabs

SELKIRK CARS SUMMARY

Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS), a partnership project developed with the local community and funded by Historic Environment Scotland and Scottish Borders Council, aimed to regenerate the medieval core of the Selkirk Conservation Area through the provision of grant funding to eligible properties for external fabric repairs using traditional materials and skills.

Funding of £1,010,000 was secured in April 2012, made up of £795k from HES and £215k from SBC. An additional £70k of funding was secured from HES during the scheme to augment the General Repairs Grant Fund which became oversubscribed.

The project officially launched in November 2012 and completed at the end of March 2018. Over 40 grant offers were made to support a wide variety of traditional repairs and reinstatement of architectural features.

Funding was allocated to seven “Priority” buildings identified by the Selkirk CARS Steering Group as being located in prominent positions and having an adverse impact on the town centre due to their condition or appearance. The scheme aimed to help these buildings establish a sustainable future as well as demonstrating the benefits of Heritage Led Regeneration. The results add vibrancy to the town centre, both visually and in their activity.

Over £1.4 million of building repair contracts were directly undertaken as a result of Selkirk CARS funding with approximately £650k coming from the building owners themselves.

Selkirk CARS provided further assistance of £100k to the £450k complimentary Town Centre streetscape improvement project undertaken by Scottish Borders Council in the Market Place. The town’s main Civic space was enhanced with new natural stone paving, accessible pedestrian cross points, complimentary street furniture, as well as a reorganisation of traffic movement to make the space more pedestrian friendly and flexible for future outdoor events. The Selkirk CARS funding allowed high quality, and historically accurate, natural materials to be utilised.

Selkirk CARS organised or funded over 100 community heritage education projects and traditional skills training events to compliment the grant funded physical repair projects. Over 7,500 people participated in these education activities.

The £1.08 million CARS investment was complimented by a further £650k of private sector funding as well as £350k for the Town Centre streetscape improvement project giving a total direct regeneration investment of over £2 million in the Royal Burgh.

Regeneration continues in the town with a new development progressing on the site of the long term derelict former Coop building, improvements to town shopfronts, and the successful development of the Selkirk BIDS Scheme.



Not only has Selkirk CARS made enormous improvements to the fabric of the town but it has motivated and energised our community.

Some of the most visible changes to formerly cherished but tired buildings are truly inspiring.

I wish we could continue!

Lawrence Robertson
Chair, Selkirk CARS Steering Group



PURPOSE - What We Set Out To Achieve

The vision for the Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) was to “...focus on the heritage led regeneration of Selkirk town centre and appreciation of its heritage assets...through offering grant aid towards works to buildings, as well as supporting complementary initiatives to increase understanding of the town’s rich heritage.” The aim was to provide a platform for sustainable regeneration of the town centre, increasing knowledge of both its built fabric and history, whilst encouraging development, both physically and economically, now and in the future.

To achieve this, Selkirk CARS set out a series of aspirational aims and objectives with the local community from the outset. These aims and objectives were refined by the Selkirk CARS Steering Group and incorporated into Action Plans which were reviewed and updated annually.

PRIORITY BUILDINGS

7No. Buildings were identified during the bid development by the community and Selkirk CARS Steering Group as being a Priority for grant funding. These were prominent buildings and/or in prominent locations which were having an adverse impact on the Town Centre due to their condition and/or appearance. Some were also listed on the Buildings at Risk Register.

The aim was to work with the owners of these properties to develop a package of repairs which were traditional in nature, offered the building a sustainable future, and demonstrated the benefits of Heritage Led Regeneration.

GENERAL BUILDING REPAIR GRANTS

A target of 28No. repair grants (12No. Major & 16No. Minor) was identified in the Selkirk CARS Bid Document. The aim was to target properties in Market Place, the main Civic space within the town centre, for the first year and then widen the opportunities for funding throughout the remaining defined CARS area.

The grant support was to be based on a scoring system (need, prominence, deliverability, quality, etc) to ensure that the funding was allocated to maximize the impact within the conservation area both to the built fabric and the aesthetic quality.

Some neighbouring properties were to be targeted following individual grant offers to ensure the potential impact of “group” repairs was maximized.

TOWN CENTRE STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

SBC Roads Engineering had developed proposals to improve Market Place, the main Civic space within the medieval core of the town. The aim was for Selkirk CARS to work closely with the project team and local stakeholders to enhance the proposals using CARS funding for quality and historically accurate materials.

“Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) is a partnership project developed by Scottish Borders Council in conjunction with a community based Selkirk CARS Steering Group, focused on the heritage led regeneration of Selkirk town centre and appreciation of its heritage assets.

It does so through offering grant aid towards works to buildings, as well as supporting complementary initiatives to increase understanding of the town’s rich heritage.”

Selkirk CARS Mission Statement



PURPOSE - What We Set Out To Achieve

COMMUNITY HERITAGE EDUCATION

The overall objective was to engage with the local community to encourage a better understanding of the history and heritage of the town and the built environment.

Formal education projects were to be developed with the six local Primary Schools and Selkirk High School, to compliment and enhance the curriculum without burdening the staff or pupils wherever possible. These projects were to be developed in years 2, 3 & 4 along the themes of Origins of Selkirk & the Royal Burgh; Literary & Creative Selkirk; and Industrial Selkirk.

Ideas for informal education projects were to be sought from the local community groups and organisations to ensure these were relevant and would be supported .

Funding was also allocated for legacy projects which would provide a lasting legacy of Selkirk CARS within the town.

TRADITIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

Specific traditional skills training and upskilling of the local contractors and construction professionals was a key target for Selkirk CARS to ensure that the grant funded repair works were carried out by local trades where possible, benefiting the local economy and building more resource for the future to repair and maintain the traditional building fabric in an appropriate manner.

The aim was to liaise with the local construction businesses to ascertain their capacity and training needs to develop a relevant series of events that would be supported.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

It was identified that the success of Selkirk CARS would depend on engagement with the local community. Key to that success would be the appointment of a full time Project Officer who could liaise with property owners, to provide advice and assistance with the grant process, as well as engage with the local contractors.

Early promotion of Selkirk CARS to stimulate interest in grant funding and/or education and training initiatives was also a key target from the outset of the scheme. Development of a Selkirk CARS “Brand” which could be incorporated into promotional material or site signage was important as was getting a funded repair project on site quickly.

Setting up and maintaining accurate records of grant enquiries, financial spend & projections, and quarterly reporting needed to be established from the beginning.

Development of a suite of Selkirk CARS documents including application forms, guidance notes, useful information, questionnaires etc. for the public as well as internal management documents would also assist in the management of the scheme.



IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

PRIORITY BUILDINGS

IN NUMBERS

CARS Bid = **7No.** Priority Buildings Repaired

Delivered = **7No.** Priority Buildings Repaired

Total Gross Value of Projects = £ 1,004,990

Total Eligible Value of Projects = £ 777,887

Total CARS Grant Paid = £ 441,097

Highest Individual Priority Grant = £ 205,000

Lowest Individual Priority Grant = £ 28,500

Average Intervention Rate = 56.7%

PROCESS

The local community and Selkirk CARS Steering Group had identified 7No. Priority Buildings in the Selkirk CARS bid document. These were:

- **Sir Walter Scott's Courthouse, Market Place** (Category A)
- **1-5 Tower Street** (Not Listed)
- **Auld Kirk, Kirk Wynd** (Category B)
- **Former Coop, 121 High Street** (Not Listed)
- **Former Queens Head Inn, 28 West Port** (Not Listed)
- **12-14 Scott's Close** (Not Listed)
- **Former Fleece Hotel, 7 Market Place** (B Listed)

Five of the above properties were taken forward and successfully repaired/brought back into use (Identified emboldened above).

Selkirk CARS worked closely with the owners of the Former Coop building, assisting in identifying potential other sources of grant funding and options for alternative conversion of the existing building. Unfortunately a conversion project did not stack up financially and the owner applied for demolition. Selkirk CARS had however introduced a local housing authority to the property owner during the discussions and the owner and LHA have now progressed on site with a new build project on the site. This resolution does address an area of long term blight within the Conservation Area and should be seen as a positive contribution.

The ownership of the former Queens Head Inn became more complex and issues with criminality at the property determined that the building should be removed from the Selkirk CARS Priority Buildings list.

Towards the end of Selkirk CARS the new owners of the property applied for, and were awarded, General Repairs Grant funding and the building has now been brought back into residential use.



A reserve Priority Building, the former Cross Keys Inn, Market Place had been identified during the Selkirk CARS bid document however its future was uncertain. SBC purchased the vacant property and were investigating a development which may have seen the building demolished.

Two alternative Priority Buildings were therefore identified within the CARS area on the basis of need and being in prominent locations where they would have a significant impact in the conservation area. These buildings were discussed and agreed with the Selkirk CARS Steering Group and subsequently formally requested changes to the CARS contract with HES. This would maintain the number of Priority Buildings assisted by Selkirk CARS.

The two replacement Priority Buildings are:

- **3-5 Market Place** (Category C)
- **51-53 High Street** (Category C)

PRIORITY BUILDING PROJECT SUMMARY

The following is a summary of each Priority Building project. A more detailed description of the Priority Building projects can be found in Appendix D - Priority Building Fact Sheets.

Sir Walter Scott's Courthouse, Market Place (Category A)

The main civic building and landmark of the town. Originally built as a Courthouse for Sir Walter Scott in 1803. The cost limited project comprised major stonework repairs to the spire as far as funding would allow. Re-gilding of the weathervane and refurbishment of the clock faces were also undertaken.

Selkirk CARS also assisted in securing £130k of additional funding from SBC and Selkirk Common Good to allow the stone repairs to be completed to eaves level, de-risking the building for the future.

1-5 Tower Street (Not Listed)

The property forms a prominent corner block within the core of the Conservation Area. The works included re-rendering the elevations with Lime render, roof repairs including formation of a lead parapet gutter to the tower. Overhaul of existing dormer structures and replacement shopfront to No.5 Tower Street.

Selkirk CARS also assisted the property owners in securing £12k of additional funding to allow the project to proceed.

Auld Kirk, Kirk Wynd (Category B)

The roofless ruin is a key historical building in the town with links back to Selkirk Castle and the Wars of Independence. The cost limited works focused on removal of invasive organic growth and consolidation of the existing stone walls.

Selkirk CARS also part funded an archaeological study and helped set up a community heritage group for the site.



12-14 Scott's Close (Not Listed)

Part of the former Walter Thompson Print Works. The properties are being converted to 2No. residential dwellings with the CARS funded works being carried out first to make the building wind and watertight. The CARS grant is conditional on the remaining works including the internal fit out being completed by March 2019.

The eligible works included re-slating existing roofs, re-pointing existing stone walls, replacement stonework to window surrounds and stone quoins.

Former Fleece Hotel, 7 Market Place (B Listed)

The property forms a prominent corner block within Market Place, the main Civic space in the town. The works included re-rendering the elevations with a coloured lime render, roof repairs including rainwater goods replacement, and replacement windows to the principal elevations.

The owners of the ground floor Public House also secured permission to create a new entrance to Market Place and agreed more appropriate signage within the Conservation Area to compliment the CARS investment.

3-5 Market Place (Category C)

A prominent building within Market Place which has been little altered from its construction in 1815. The building was re-slatted and the dormer structures repaired. The lead parapet gutter was replaced including the installation of trace wires. Minor stone repairs were also carried out and the stonework and dormer timbers were re-decorated to more appropriately reflect a building within the conservation area.

A general repair grant was also awarded to remove the aluminium shopfront and restore a timber shopfront in line with the original building design including repairs to the ornate consol brackets and hand painted signage.

51-53 High Street (Category C)

An interesting building on the High Street in Scots Baronial style. The feature turret was in poor condition with many shaped slates missing exposing the sarking boards and ashlar stone features delaminating.

The CARS funding focused on the turret and general roofs in the main, re-slating the turret with shaped and scalloped slates to match the existing pattern.

Minor works were undertaken to the dormers, sash & case windows (including half cills) as well as some minor stonework repairs. Defective guttering to the turret and the main roof was also replaced and decoration on repaired surfaces undertaken.



7 Market Place



3 5 Market Place



51 53 High Street

IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

GENERAL REPAIRS GRANTS

IN NUMBERS

CARS Bid =	28No. Grants Awarded
Delivered =	49No. Grants Awarded
Total Gross Value of Projects =	£ 537,798
Total Eligible Value of Projects =	£ 495,538
Total CARS Grant Paid =	£ 307,987
Highest Individual Repair Grant =	£ 15,000
Lowest Individual Repair Grant =	£ 525
Average Intervention Rate =	62.1%

PROCESS

A total of 49No. General Repair Grants were awarded to support repairs to 28No. Buildings within the Conservation Area (Supplementary grants, multiple ownership etc)

It became clear very early in Selkirk CARS that there was substantial interest in the funding available and that the level of grant being sought for each project was at the £15k maximum intervention. The original grant funding allocation was quickly oversubscribed however additional funding was secured from HES which, along with reallocation of funding from other sources within Selkirk CARS, allowed a number of additional projects to be supported.

Suitably experienced Professional Agents were required for any repair projects seeking grant funding of £5k or more. The information submitted varied for each application with some requiring extensive review and support from the CARS project officer. In general the Professional Agents located within the town were appointed for the majority of the repairs projects awarded CARS funding.

Support and advice on the selection of appropriate materials for repairs was obtained on a case by case basis from the Scottish Lime Centre Trust and The British Geological Survey.

The majority of the General Repair Grants awarded were for repairs to the roof, rainwater goods, chimney stack and external walls (both render and masonry).

A number of enquiries were received for replacement windows which, once a site visit was undertaken, were not supported. Generally high level repairs were more prevalent than low level work.

Scaffolding costs for access are significant and are a likely contributory factor to the lack of high level maintenance being undertaken in the town.



3 Market Place



3 West Port



111 High Street

IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

The visual impact of General Repair Grants can be minimal as they are generally not “transformative” projects however the physical impact to the building is significant and will likely extend the lifespan of these properties. The visual impact of grant aided repairs is however greater where there are a cluster of properties that have been repaired. A number of grant funded projects also saw significant other works carried out to the properties at the same time which led to a greater overall visual impact.

Whilst grant aid for repairs has now stopped, there are still building owners who are taking forward repairs to the outside of their buildings. Indeed one property, which was ineligible for CARS funding, has been transformed as the owner was keen to enhance the property on the back of the other improvements in the town.

A number of grants involved multiple owners and these were a challenge as they relied to a degree on one owner taking the lead and arranging to obtain the necessary estimates, making the grant submissions and ensuring that the necessary paperwork was submitted. Appropriate support from the CARS project officer is key to help the owners navigate this process.

VACANT FLOOR AREA BROUGHT INTO USE

A number of Selkirk CARS funded projects (Priority Buildings or General Repair Grant Projects) helped bring vacant floor area back into use.

One of the key criteria of Selkirk CARS funding is that the investment will retain or create a use for a specific property. Development of a “shell only” project with no end use will not generally be supported even where the future of the building is in doubt.

The properties which brought vacant floor area back into use may have been truly derelict or just requiring repair and/or upgrading. Through direct intervention by Selkirk CARS the successful projects will add physical and economic activity within the Conservation Area and potentially encourage further regeneration activity.

The following properties were brought back into use:

5 Tower Street =	32.3 sqm (347sqft)
12-14 Scott’s Close =	131.3sqm (1,413sqft)
59 High Street =	73.3sqm (789sqft)
6-8 Scott’s Close =	40.5sqm (436sqft)
3 West Port =	31.5sqm (339sqft)
25 High Street =	106sqm (1,141sqft)
Total Area =	<u>414.9sqm (4,466sqft)</u>



Tower Street

“Among the buildings which have benefitted from the Scheme is the provision of replacement gate pillars at the Victoria Halls to the original style, and using the original materials, greatly enhancing this fine old building .”

Alistair Pattullo
Chair, Selkirk Community Council



Victoria Hall Gate Piers



59 High Street

TOWN CENTRE STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

IN NUMBERS

CARS Bid =	1No. Grants Awarded
Delivered =	1No. Grants Awarded
Total Gross Value of Projects =	£ 605,171
Total Eligible Value of Projects =	£ 140,076
Total CARS Grant Paid =	£ 100,000
Intervention Rate =	71.4%

PROCESS

Proposals for improvements to the public realm, streets and pavements in Market Place, the main Civic space of Selkirk, were developed complimentary to the Selkirk CARS bid.

The Streetscape Improvement project set out to achieve a number of objectives including making the town centre more “pedestrian friendly”, relocating public bus services from within the main Civic space, and creating a flexible area which is easily used for events.

Building on experience that the council gained from Public Realm improvements in other towns, a dedicated Stakeholders Group was set up with an independent chair. Representatives from local organisations and interest groups were invited to attend - including the community council, traders, bus service providers etc. This group helped embed the design of the space within the community and ensured that information on progress could be passed easily to the wider community.

As part of the design development, a palette of materials was developed for the hard surfaces and options were considered for seating, signage, and planters to provide some colour and softening of the space.

Selkirk CARS assisted the group ensuring the proposals were discussed with HES and that they would be eligible for CARS funding. Selkirk CARS carried out research to determine the original street and pavement surfaces in the town centre. As a result proposals were drawn up to use Scoutmoor (Yorkstone) sandstone for pavements, steps and crossing points, as well as whin stone kerbing.

The Selkirk CARS funding was focused on the uplift (Conservation Deficit) between using a standard concrete product and the use of a high quality, natural, and historically accurate material.

Selkirk CARS also offered Legacy funding to Selkirk Community Council who were seeking to enhance the streetscape proposals with the emblems of the various Common Riding Casting Associations being carved into stone panels incorporated within stone planters and walling.



Market Place (Circa 1880)



Market Place (Circa 1950)



Market Place (Circa 2015)



Scoutmoor Sandstone



View from SWS Courthouse

IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

Additional funding was sourced by SBC Roads Engineering from Transport Scotland to allow road surfacing works to be undertaken on the A7 Trunk Road passing through the Market Place concurrently with the Town Centre Streetscape Improvement project. Whilst there was not a “heritage “ aspect to this resurfacing it does compliment the Streetscape works and provides a wider improved impact area in the town centre.

A number of buildings around the Market Place have also received Selkirk CARS funding with three of these being “transformational” projects which have removed blight and/or poor quality surfaces thereby significantly enhancing the wider medieval core.

The improved area is already proving popular within the local community with a number of civic events (Selkirk Common Riding and a new monthly Farmers Market) taking place even before the entire works were completed.



Resurfacing Works



Whin Stone Kerbs



Farmers Market



Market Place

The town centre now has a flexible events space, attractive flower beds, trees and new street furniture, as well as being much more pedestrian friendly due to the amended road layout.

With this investment we can now look forward to the utilisation of our new town centre, as well as having a lasting legacy for future generations to enjoy”

Caroline Penman

Chair, Selkirk Streetscape Stakeholder Group



IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

COMMUNITY HERITAGE EDUCATION

IN NUMBERS

Events Delivered =	67
Attendance =	6,893 People
Delivered Hours =	903
Total CARS Funding =	£ 39,051

PROCESS

The Community Heritage Education component of Selkirk CARS was delivered during a three year period aligned to the school's academic years. The funding was allocated to Formal Education, Informal Education and Legacy Projects.

The Formal Education projects were undertaken by the six local Primary schools and Selkirk High School. The following themes were provided:

Year 1	Origins of Selkirk & the Royal Burgh
Year 2	Literary & Creative Selkirk
Year 3	Industrial Selkirk

All the schools participated and developed interesting and varied projects from animation to drama, and model making to creative writing. The Selkirk CARS funding was used in a variety of ways such as bringing in creative practitioners, hire of transport, admission fees for site visits etc. Over 950 pupils were engaged and the feedback was positive from both the staff and pupils.

The Informal Education projects were open to the local community to develop ideas as well as some events that were developed specifically by Selkirk CARS. External funding sources were also secured with Selkirk CARS funding being used as seed funding as required to help larger projects come to fruition.

Selkirk CARS helped fund heritage activities at the local YES Arts Festival supported by Creative Scotland and was a key driver in the Reflections Residency and Exhibition Event which was part of the Year of Innovation, Architecture, and Design; the Festival of Architecture and the Borders Science Festival.

Many smaller activities also took place within the community with Selkirk CARs funding. Highlights included the "Yarn Bombing" of the towns landmarks by the Souter Stormers and "Selkirks Marvellous Monuments" a Poetry Promenade by local writer Julian Colton which was also published as a book.

The community also benefitted from legacy funding to enhance the Market Place Streetscape works with the emblems of the various Common Riding Casting Associations being carved into stone panels incorporated within stone planters and walling.

A more detailed description of the Community Heritage Education projects can be found in Appendix G - Education & Training Report.



Wallace Re-enactment



Medieval Construction Show



Animation Project



Bravura Ballads



Jenny Corbett Project

TRADITIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

IN NUMBERS

Events Delivered =	37
Attendance =	613 People
Delivered Hours =	84
Total CARS Funding =	£ 13,835

PROCESS

Selkirk CARS set out to create a programme of traditional Skills Training activities that would engage with a variety of people, in the construction industry, those looking after historic buildings, and those looking to a potential career in conservation.

A “Technical Launch” event was held to encourage local contractors and professional agents to find out about Selkirk CARS. A questionnaire was developed to identify needs and opportunities for training to try and tailor events for the local community.

The central element of the traditional Skills Training programme was a series of Technical Seminars. These hour long events covered a variety of conservation topics including Archaeology, Bats & Birds, Drone Surveying, Window Glass, Thermal Imaging and many more. In all 19 Technical Seminars were held with an average of 15 people attending each one. The information was concise and gave those attending some useful information which could then be researched in more detail as required.

A number of technical workshops were also held looking at surveying traditional buildings, the use of lime mortar, and finding sustainable uses for traditional buildings. The workshops were delivered by experts in the particular fields and were very well attended.

Selkirk CARS also hosted a number of external visits to the town to showcase the ongoing regeneration works. These included IHBC Summer School members, a Scottish Government Minister, and the HES Board members. Selkirk also hosted the annual CARS Officer Seminar in 2016 with over 30 CARS Officers from around the country visiting the town.

The High School was challenging to access due to limits on flexibility within the curriculum however after a significant change in the schools leadership team a site visit to the SWS Courthouse was facilitated with six S4 pupils being guided around the site by the contractor and project architect. Hands on experience of stone carving was also part of the visit for the pupils studying a construction module at Border College.

A more detailed description of the Traditional Skills Training projects can be found in Appendix G - Education & Training Report.



Technical Seminars



Quarry Visit



High School Stone Carving

Young and old alike have been engaged in many high quality skills training sessions, in learning, and participating in workshops and in creating delightful exhibitions.

Lawrence Robertson
Chair, Selkirk CARS Steering Group



Lime Mortar Workshop

IMPLEMENTATION - What We Delivered

Selkirk CARS aimed to encourage local Professional Agents and Building Contractors to be appointed to carry out grant funded repair works within the town. A series of events were held to ensure local awareness of Selkirk CARS as well as opportunities for updating and/or upskilling of traditional skills.

Whilst the target audience was focused on Selkirk itself, the events were also promoted throughout the Scottish Borders and beyond to encourage an understanding of traditional skills.

In terms of the grant funded repair projects that were undertaken in the town a total expenditure of over £2million pounds (gross) was invested of which a total of £849,084 was funded by grants from Selkirk CARS.

The majority (nearly 50%) of the project costs were for Priority Projects which resulted in “transformative” enhancements to the Conservation Area.

The streetscape costs included investment from Transport Scotland for resurfacing of the A7 Trunk Road in the town center to compliment the CASRS funded improvements to the Market Place.

Selkirk based Professional Agents were appointed for the vast majority of repair projects. These agents are well known and established in the community and were an obvious place to turn to for inexperienced property owners. Indeed, a High Street presence may have been key to their appointment.

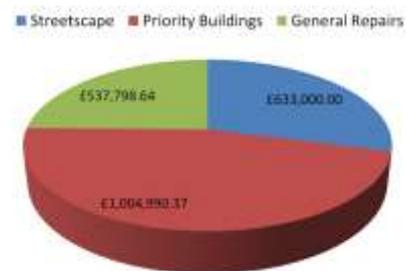
Other Agents were appointed mainly from within the wider Scottish Borders with only the specialist nature of the repair works to the SWS Courthouse requiring the appointment of an agent from outwith the Scottish Borders.

Similarly local contractors were employed for nearly all of the works undertaken. Again a specialist contractor was required for the repair works to the SWS Courthouse.

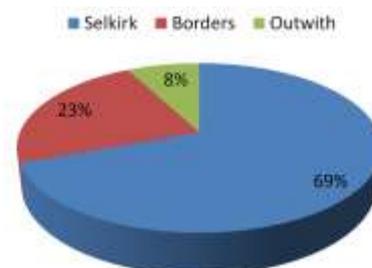
The scale of the projects undertaken by both Professional Agents and Contractors did follow a pattern with, in general, Selkirk based agents and contractors carrying out the bulk of General Repair projects, wider Scottish Borders based agents and contractors undertaking the bulk of the Priority Building projects, and the agents and contractors from outwith the Scottish Borders being employed on the largest repair project at the SWS Courthouse.

It should be noted that, in part, the Councils procurement policy led to the appointment of the professional agents and contractor from outwith the Scottish Borders for the largest repair project due to the need for specific criteria to be met (Insurance provision, resourcing etc.) however local representation was included on tender lists.

It is clear from the evidence that local Agents and contractors benefitted from Selkirk CARS investment both in terms of economic value as well as increased knowledge and techniques.



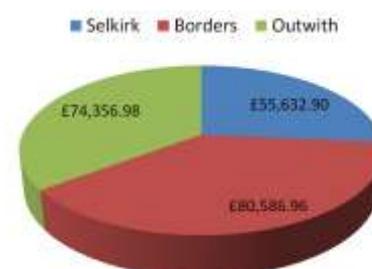
Contract Sums (Gross)



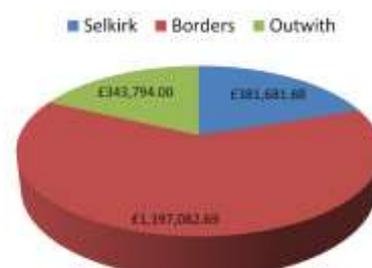
Prof. Agent (Location)



Contractor (Location)



Prof. Agent (Value of Fees)



Contractor (Value of Work)

REVIEW & FEEDBACK

A review of Selkirk CARS was implemented to capture external comments on the project outcomes both as a wrap up initiative at the end of the 5 year period as well as continual feedback during the project.

The reviews and feedback took a number of differing formats, with the results recorded and utilized during the project to enhance the delivery aspects of the scheme.

There were 5 primary sources of review & feedback:

- Comments from Stakeholders
- Grant Recipient Questionnaire
- Economic Impact Assessment
- Internal Audit Report
- Media Coverage

COMMENTS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Selkirk CARS asked for comments from community stakeholders as well as feedback from Education & Training recipients. Some of these were formal responses to specific questions and others were informal feedback on events and/or Selkirk CARS processes.

The Selkirk CARS Steering Group, Selkirk Community Council and the Selkirk Streetscape Stakeholder Group were all useful forums to generate feedback and ensure the delivery of Selkirk CARs was meeting the demands of the community.

The comments received were generally very positive with most of the participants, either for repair grant funded projects or education/traditional skills training activities, gaining valuable assistance or experience that they could utilize in the future.

GRANT RECIPIENT QUESTIONNAIRE

30% of the questionnaires issued to grant recipients were returned which provided a good base for analysis of the responses.

The vast majority (94%) thought that their experience with Selkirk CARS was either "Excellent" or "Good". The vast majority (86%) also found the grant application and formal delivery processes to be understandable and effective.

It is also clear that the majority (76%) of grant recipients found out about Selkirk CARS either through "Direct Contact" from the CARS Project Officer or by "Word of Mouth" from others in the town. This demonstrates that the community were aware of the scheme and that the promotional activities were being successful.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SBC commissioned Jura Consultants to undertake an EIA at the conclusion of the five year period. The results and conclusions of the EIA are to be found in Appendix B.

"The community in Selkirk do appreciate the improvements that the CARS scheme have produced in the town and are pleased with the sympathetic way the works were carried out.

Projects were delivered with the minimum of disruption and everyone was kept informed of progress as the works were carried out.

Great Job Well Done! "

Gordon Edgar
Selkirkshire Councillor

"Advice given by Selkirk CARS Officer was clearly given and allowed us to brief tradesmen to carry out such work necessary to keep the building up to standard."

Comment from Questionnaire

"An impressive element of the CARS project has been the rollout of education programmes advising and informing interested members of the public, as well as those already involved in the building trades, of the skills and training required for conservation and restoration.

The importance of the inclusion of younger members of the community cannot be underestimated, and work with the schools on the origins of the town, its creative links and industrial heritage has been exemplary."

Alistair Pattullo
Chair, Selkirk Community Council

"There were successful site visits reaching out to a wider audience including local architects, councillors and school children."

Comment from Questionnaire

"The CARS project in Selkirk has done so much to enhance the town.

Returning buildings to their former glory, stripping away years of modern alterations and coatings, and most importantly, protecting historic buildings for the future.

It is encouraging to see home and business owners continue the concept now the CARS project is complete."

Elaine Thornton-Nicol
Selkirkshire Councillor

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Selkirk CARS requested an internal audit to be prepared at both the middle and conclusion of the five year period.

The mid point audit was useful to allow the implementation of any recommendations to enhance the delivery of the project and ensure compliance with all of the HES CARS contract conditions. The final Internal Audit Report can be found in Appendix C.

MEDIA COVERAGE

The media has been generally supportive over the years in covering the project. It was useful in the early years for awareness raising and supporting events albeit this was mostly restricted to content in the printed/online "Selkirk Weekend Advertiser" rather than the more widely distributed "Southern Reporter".

ITV Border news have carried out regular updates on specific items such as the link to William Wallace at the Auld Kirk and the development of the Streetscape project.

The press did pick up on some negative stories as well, particularly the impact on the town centre of the 4-way temporary traffic control needed to carry out the repairs to 7 Market Place, and the increased time on site to complete the repair works to the Sir Walter Scott's Courthouse. The assistance of the SBC Communications team has been helpful to ensure a positive response was developed for these issues.

Positive coverage has however continued around the education and training activities and, as Selkirk CARS drew to a close and many "transformational" projects were revealed, the success of the wider Regeneration Initiative.

A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Selkirk CARS has had an immediate impact on the town both in terms of the physical environment as well as the enhanced knowledge and skills within the community.

Whilst it is early days, there are positive signs of continued future regeneration activity within the town as well. These include:

Selkirk BIDS - A successful ballot was held in November 2017 to form a Business Improvement District in Selkirk Town Centre. The BIDS Company has already identified a number of opportunities in the town which could be actioned in the near future.

New Development - Selkirk CARS assisted the community in the identification of gap sites within the town centre. At least two of these sites are now being developed and the awareness in the town will hopefully help others progress in the future.

Enhanced Frontage - The success of Selkirk CARS has encouraged other property owners to carry out enhancements to properties throughout the town centre.

"As chairperson of the Selkirk Streetscape Project, I am delighted that the project has come to an end.

Although the work involved took longer than expected, the end result is of a high quality and we now have a fantastic new town centre which as a local community we can be proud of."

Caroline Penman
Selkirkshire Councillor

"Continuation with this scheme will maintain Selkirk town centre in a high standard of building maintenance and render it an attractive stopping off point for tourists."

Comment from Questionnaire

"The Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) is improving the range and variety of what they offer in Selkirk.

They have well-developed links with local primary and secondary schools delivering programmes based around themes, for example Literary and Creative Selkirk.

These are highly valued by local schools and fit well with their curriculum planning."

HMiE Report (2015)



New Town Centre Development



Replacement Traditional Style

Selkirk CARS followed on from previous heritage led regeneration projects delivered by Scottish Borders Council in Hawick (2001-07) and Kelso (2010-15) and has benefitted from lessons learnt from both of these projects.

Whilst systems can be developed and put in place to manage these projects there are inevitably issues that arise along the way which require to be addressed and resolved. Solutions need to be pragmatic and also robust to ensure they meet the project partners aims and objectives.

All CARS schemes are different and there is not a “one size fits all” answer to the issues that may arise. The conclusion of the project however presents an opportunity to identify both positive and negative lessons learned during the Selkirk CARS project.

The encountered issues have been collated into tabular form in Appendix H, including a brief commentary on each item and split into two main sections as follows:

- **Lessons Learnt (Implemented)**

Commentary on how the previous Lessons Learnt report from the Kelso THI project have been implemented within Selkirk CARS. This section is colour coded to show which have been implemented in full (Green), partially implemented (Amber) or not implemented at all (Red)

- **Lessons Learnt (During Delivery)**

A list of issues that have arisen during Selkirk CARS delivery including a brief commentary on each issue.

These sections are broken down further using the same four headings in each section as follows:

- Cost Management and Cash Flow
- Project Management
- Internal or External Relationships
- Grant Monitoring

Issues identified within the Economic Impact Assessment prepared by Jura Consultants as a result of their questionnaires and interviews with building owners, as well as issues identified within the Internal Audit report have also been included in this section.

The aim of the Lessons Learnt report is to enhance the current monitoring systems and make the management of future heritage led regeneration projects, by Scottish Borders Council or other organisations, more robust.

Scottish Borders Council is currently delivering a CARS project in the Royal Burgh of Jedburgh (2017-22) and lessons learnt from all of the previous projects are actively being incorporated into the delivery stage of the project.



Market Place Streetscape



Property Repair Projects



Restoration of Original Detail



CARS Promotion & Branding



Annual CARS Officer Seminar

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Selkirk CARS acknowledges the support of a variety of individuals, groups, businesses and organisations as well as the wider Selkirk Community in the success of the project including:

Councillors Gordon Edgar, Elaine Thornton Nicol & Caroline Penman

Former Councillors Michelle Ballantyne & Vicky Davidson

The members of the Selkirk CARS Steering Group

The members of Selkirk & District Community Council

The board of Selkirk Regeneration Company

The members of Selkirk Chamber of Trade

The Staff & Pupils at Selkirk High School, Kirkhope Primary School, Knowepark Primary School, Lilliesleaf Primary School, Philiphaugh Primary School, St Josephs Primary School, and Yarrow Primary School.

SBC Colleagues in Engineering & Design, Archaeology, Ecology, Planning, Economic Development, Legal Services and Financial Services

Staff of the Museums and Library Services at LIVE Borders

Staff at the Heritage Hub in Hawick

The Haining Charitable Trust (Past & Present Trustees)

The Haining Volunteers

Local Building Contractors and Sub Contractors

Local Professional Agents

Historic Environment Scotland staff in the Finance & Performance Directorate, Conservation Directorate, and the Engine Shed

Property Owners and Selkirk CARS Grant Applicants





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