

March 2017 Peebles Community Trust Report

Annual General Meeting (15th Feb)

Key elements arising from the PCT AGM:

- David Pye is to step back as chair of the PCT; he will remain in post until an external candidate for the post is secured – adverts for the position will be posted shortly
- The establishment of a “Town Team” remains a PCT priority – a funded anchor person to drive the Town Action Plan forward, and a public facing facility to promote the PCT, town issues and receive public input / participation
- The Old Corn Exchange at the top of School Brae has become vacant, and new tenants are being sought; this is a Common Good Asset, and the PCT is requesting the Common Good Sub-Committee for use of the facility as a pop-up until a new tenant is found (further details below)
- The establishment of a community owned co-working space remains a priority action for the PCT
- Acquisition and repurposing of the March Street Mills former Admin building and associated weaving sheds remains a priority for the PCT, as well as achieving the transfer of ownership of the allotments, in their current location, to community ownership
- Given the unsympathetic planning proposals being put forward for development of the March Street Mills site, consideration is being given to registering a Community Right to Buy for parts of this site
- The PCT is also exploring the processes that would be involved in securing the transfer of ownership of the Victoria Day Centre to the community through Asset Transfer, as allowed for under the new Community Empowerment Act.

March Street Mill site

In principle, consultation on the PPP and CON planning applications for the development of the March Street Mills site will be welcomed by SBC Planning until such time as these proposals are considered by the SBC Planning Committee. With council elections scheduled for early May, it is unlikely that these applications will be considered until after the elections.

The applicant is arguing in its submission that unless it is allowed to relocate the allotments to a smaller and unsuitable part of the site, and to build housing across the rest of the site, it will not be economically viable to develop the site and it will become derelict. Even with this it is also arguing that a waiver should be agreed by the Council to forego payment of Developer Contribution (to schools and roads, etc.) and to remove the requirement to provide affordable housing.

The PCT is presenting strong objection to these proposals, and encourages all others to do so. The objections already logged to the ePlanning website raise many of the arguments as to why these proposals should be strongly rejected in their current form.

Old Corn Exchange, Peebles High Street

The PCT presented a request to the Peebles Common Good Sub-Committee at its last meeting, March 1st, to let the PCT use the facility as a pop-up whilst a new tenant is found for the premises. Since the deadline for bids for the tenancy was scheduled for March 2nd, this item was deemed commercially sensitive and taken in closed session. We are still waiting to hear from either the Common Good Sub-Committee or SBC Estates on the outcome of our request.

If you would like to talk through any of the above, or for further information, please contact our secretary on myriam@PeeblesCommunity.org, or phone 01721 729839.