

May / June 2017 Peebles Community Trust Report

A relatively quiet month.

- ❑ We were unsuccessful in our request to the Peebles Common Good Fund sub-committee for temporary use of the Old Corn Exchange. Following the local council elections in May we propose to make a second attempt, as it is clear that a tenant for the property has yet to be signed up.
- ❑ Work on building the case for community acquisition of part of the March Street Mill site continues. There were 122 responses to the online questionnaire put together by our consultants, and in late May they were also able to make a second site visit to the former administration building to test redevelopment ideas. They are now building a detailed viability assessment focused on development of a community owned and operated co-working space, and the acquisition of the allotments on behalf of the community (wherever planners determine they may be).
- ❑ Consideration of the planning application for redevelopment of the March Street Mill site is expected to go before the SBC Planning Committee in September of this year.
- ❑ In a separate but related development, two board members of the PCT will attend a two-day practical workshop on setting up co-working spaces – organised by the Coworking Accelerator Network, in collaboration with The Melting Pot, Edinburgh and the Scottish government.
- ❑ The Tweeddale Wood Fuel Group, which had previously been supported by the PCT and Invest in Ideas to identify how it could move forward as a social enterprise, is now actively exploring, with Forestry Commission Scotland, the acquisition of the Eshiels Wood as a demonstration wood fuel and coppicing project.
- ❑ The PCT is also in the early days of identifying local interest in seeking transfer of the Victoria Day Centre to community ownership and management under the Asset Transfer facility laid out in the Scottish Community Empowerment Act which introduces a right for community bodies to make such requests to local authorities.
- ❑ We will, over the summer period, also step up our efforts to identify and recruit a new chair of the PCT (David Pye stepped down from this position at our last AGM, and remains a board member, and is currently acting chair). We are also looking to recruit a further 3 individuals to the board.
- ❑ We should also point out that the PCT articles and memorandum make provision for three community councillors to sit on the PCT board. With his election to the Council, Robin Tatler has stepped down from his position as chair of the PCC and as a board member of the PCT. Lawrie Hayworth and John Swanson are currently the only community councillors on the PCT board.

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.