

## **Nov 2017 Peebles Community Trust Report**

### **Community Land Scotland – meet the Board event**

Board members Steve Dubé and Crick Carleton took the opportunity to meet the board of Community Land Scotland (CSL), at Borders College, Galashiels. CSL Board members gave presentations on their work and its application to the Borders and southern Scotland.

Board member presentations were made by:

- the CSL chair, Ian Hepburn, who is a director of the North West Mull Community Wood Company and of the Community Woodlands Association Scotland (Anna Lawrence of the PCT is also a director)
- Peter Peacock, Policy Director of CSL, and former MSP for the Highlands & Islands, and prior to that convenor of Highland Council
- Professor Jim Hunter, former chair of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)
- Lincoln Richard, Chair of the Wanlockhead Community Trust.

A presentation on the work of the CSL was also made by CSL Development Manager Lindsay Chalmers.

There was active debate between attendees and board members, with particular discussion about the practicalities of community land and property acquisition, sources of funding, an increasingly positive policy environment, perceived differences in perception / approach between institutions in the Highlands and Islands and the rural and urban environments of southern Scotland, and how a South of Scotland Enterprise Agency might give further impetus to progressing community interests.

It was also suggested that much of the preparatory work undertaken with respect to recasting the NUTS 3 designations (an EU construct) of central and the southern Scotland through the work of the South of Scotland Alliance (separating the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway from the Central Belt as a distinct statistical and development area) would still hold relevance post-Brexit, even though Scotland and the UK would no longer be within the EU.

### **Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS)**

Three PCT board members met with the new DTAS Development Officer for southern Scotland, Ian Leaver. The PCT is a member of DTAS and is able to access the many services offered by DTAS and its associated organisations and initiatives – including wide ranging case records and experience from other community developments, funding to visit and learn from the accomplishments of other communities, access to legal advice on specific topics, and advice from the Community Shares Scotland unit.

Board members were able to bring Ian up to speed on the work of the PCT, the range of local issues that the Town Action Plan and Whole Town Master Plan sought to address, the good use to which previous grant funding has been put, and the PCT's quest for funding to support a physical base in Peebles and a paid facilitator / anchor person.

### **Tweeddale Locality Committee meeting, Nov 2017**

Lawrie Hayworth, PCT Board member, represented the PCT at the latest meeting of the Tweeddale Locality Committee.

A short report on the issues discussed with regard to the preparation of the Tweeddale Locality Plan and the first funding round under the Tweeddale Locality Fund is appended below.

## Eshiels Wood Group

The group, taking forward a project under the auspices of the PCT, has secured funding from the Forestry Commission Scotland Community Fund to take forward work to undertake audit, valuation and planning work preparatory to entering into negotiation for the community acquisition of this woodland. The intention is that this woodland, located between the Peebles-Innerleithen multi-use path and the River Tweed, will be developed as a training and demonstration site, and for use by community groups as a learning, leisure and recreational site.

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

## Report back on the November 2017 Tweeddale Locality Committee meeting held at St Ronan's Primary School, Innerleithen

Lawrie Hayworth attended this meeting both as chair of the Peebles Community Council and a board member of the Peebles Community Trust.

The agenda items of greatest relevance to the PCT concerned the drafting of the Tweeddale Locality Plan and the procedures governing bid applications to the Tweeddale Locality Fund.

### Tweeddale Locality Plan

The basis of the Locality Planning process is:

*Whilst the Borders offers many an excellent quality of life we recognise there are significant local challenges too, all set against an increasing demand for better, local public services at a time when there is significant financial pressure on funding.*

*Under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 the Scottish Government has made this a requirement that at a regional level each Community Planning Partnership should work together with local communities and businesses to effectively tackle these challenges and improve outcomes, with a particular focus on reducing inequalities. Reducing inequalities means closing the gap between our least and most disadvantaged in our communities.*

*As an example of this, in our most disadvantaged areas people are more likely to have low incomes and experience more health problems, whilst those living in the most affluent areas tend to live longer, healthier lives. The reasons for this are complex. However a focus of the Partnership is to reduce these gaps, and improve outcomes for our most disadvantaged communities.*

The expectation is that a Scottish Borders Locality Plan will combine a number of local plans generated by communities, using a bottom-up process. Some inequalities and outcomes are not Borders-wide but much more localised to specific communities, for example rural isolation. To reflect these variations each of five Locality Committees across the Borders will be tasked with generating their own plan reflecting more localised inequalities. Thus there will be one local plan for each of the following areas:

- Berwickshire
- Cheviot
- Eildon
- Teviot & Liddesdale
- Tweeddale



The core themes of each Locality Plan will be (as illustrated in graphic below):

- Our Economy and Skills
- Our Health and Wellbeing

- Our Children and Young People
- Our Vulnerable Adults and Families
- Our Ageing Population

in addition there are a number of cross-cutting outcomes, and a Local Priority (as agreed by Locality Committee)



The Tweeddale Locality Committee will convene a public meeting every two months. Over the first year of operation of this committee, each meeting will be themed to one of the five themes listed above. To speak to each theme, the committee will be informed by a panel of 20 people comprising 6 councillors, 4 representatives of the local Community Councils, and ten other representatives with relevant knowledge / experience.

The next meeting of the Tweeddale Locality Committee will be on 11<sup>th</sup> December, and will focus on “Our Economy & Skills”.

Peebles is well-positioned to input to this themed meeting, having already put in substantial community engagement and planning in the development of the Peebles Town Action Plan and the 1<sup>st</sup> stage draft Whole Town Master Plan. It is proposed to put forward two candidates to fill the local representative slots on this panel (tentatively David Pye and Crick Carleton).

### **The Tweeddale Locality Fund**

For the financial year 2017/18 Scottish Borders Council has allocated a total of £500,000 to the Localities Bid Fund – to be disbursed across the Borders. This fund will be split across the 5 Locality Committees across the Scottish Borders and support community activities decided by public vote. The Tweeddale Locality Committee has been allocated the sum of £91,400.

It is expected that in subsequent years this allocation will be significantly larger.

The purpose of this fund is to support ideas or projects which improve the lives of people living in the Scottish Borders and align to the themes of the Community Plan, which has

been prepared and published by the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership. The themes are:

The themes include:

- Our Economy and Skills
- Our Health and Wellbeing
- Our Children and Young People
- Our Vulnerable Adults and Families
- Our Ageing Population

In addition there are a number of cross-cutting outcomes and a Local Priority category (as agreed by Locality Committee).

The first round of fund bids is now open, with applications accepted up until 3pm on 1st December 2017. The pot of money available in this first tranche of funding has been capped at £30,000. Eligible project applications received by the closing date will be presented to a panel of councillors and key council staff before going to a public vote early next year. A key selection criterion will be the extent to which the idea / project fits with at least one theme of the Community Plan or an identified Local Priority.

The PCT intends to make an application for funding of a part-time facilitator / anchor person to take forward key projects identified within the Peebles Town Action Plan, explore other sources of funding, and coordinate deployment of the PCT's substantial volunteer resource base.

Alongside this it is hoped that the success of this bid will also leverage parallel funding from the Peebles Common Good Fund for rental of a town centre base for the PCT. Our application to the Peebles Common Good Committee back in August was essentially set aside on the basis that it was insufficient on its own to deliver sustainable outcomes, but the Committee indicated that it would be considered for approval in the future if we were able to come up with additional / match funding. We will seek to resubmit our application to the committee (either at its next meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> November, to secure approval dependent on the Localities Fund application being successful, or to its first 2018 meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February, after the outcome of the Localities Fund bid has been announced).