

**The Wilton Centre (The Arches), Hawick – Community Asset Transfer Request
Public Online Consultation Comments**

(Week 1 – 8: 18 November 2025 – 11 January 2026)

| Response No. | Comment |
|---------------------|--|
| 1 | <p>This is a wonderful idea. It will enable a disused building to be repurposed and saved from dereliction. It will also provide a much-needed intergenerational facility in Hawick. The opportunity to develop all aspects of the arts will be beneficial to all. The range of activities and participants that could be engaged is far reaching. Supporting the development of skills which are known to support positive mental health.</p> <p>There is a real need for a space of this size in Hawick.</p> |
| 2 | <p>I wholly support this project, believing that it will not only be an asset to the town in general but a necessary lifeline and resource for the youth in Hawick. The former school building will be the perfect venue for this project in all respects.</p> |
| 3 | <p>A central hub for the creative arts is long overdue, a project as what is proposed would be a great opportunity and benefit not only to the town but to the wider community.</p> |
| 4 | <p>At a time when many public facilities are under threat it is good that these volunteers, are in a way future proofing Hawick. It is good that a building which otherwise may have fallen into complete disrepair can become an amazing space to encourage and nurture talent of many genre in our town. I fully support the asset transfer</p> |
| 5 | <p>This would be a fantastic project for the community of Hawick, bringing a safe place for creativity and community engagement.</p> <p>At present there are a number of fragmented groups dotted around the town and wider community and would allow a central hub to be used by groups to enable collaboration between those groups. It would also serve as an educational resource by collaborating with schools to bring extra curriculum events. From art classes, music tuition, singing tuition and theatre / drama.</p> <p>All of the above being well recorded as a benefit to mental health and wellbeing.</p> |
| 6 | <p>I strongly support the proposed change of use of the recently closed Wilton PS in Hawick to a community creative arts centre "The Arches".</p> <p>This initiative, I believe, presents an excellent opportunity to revitalise a valued local asset while meeting the growing cultural and social needs of our town.</p> |

Hawick is home to a vibrant and diverse range of community groups, many of whom are mentioned in the application form already and all of whom would greatly benefit from accessible, well-equipped space for artistic, educational, and collaborative activities. Transforming the former school into a creative arts hub would not only preserve an important building but also provide a welcoming environment where residents of all ages can explore the arts, develop new skills, and strengthen community ties.

This project represents a positive and forward-looking investment in Hawick's future. It will encourage participation, foster local talent, and support the wellbeing of our community. I therefore wholeheartedly endorse the proposal and trust that it will be given full consideration and urge that this be signed and sealed at the earliest opportunity.

- 7** Fantastic project should be given as much support as possible.
- 8** This is vital for the community
- 9** It's an excellent project.
- 10** I fully support the Community Asset Transfer Request for the Wilton Centre (The Arches). If successful, this will be of great benefit to the town and particularly its young people.
- 11** The Arches process has been well thought out and executed.
- A wonderful and ambitious project which will produce many benefits for Hawick and its future.
- 12** I think that the proposed project and use of The Wilton Centre is a much need resource/facility within Hawick. Working as a Headteacher of a Hawick primary school I can absolutely see the benefits and opportunities that this can offer, not only to the pupils of my school but the whole of Hawick community.
- Creating an arts focused facility in our own town is one we would definitely use and support as a school.
- 13** Please keep this open xx
- 14** This creative hub will be a major asset to the community to enable the continuation of the love of live music and theatre within Hawick and the surrounding area.
- 15** It is a unique opportunity to save a historic and spacious building and turn it into something that should continue to benefit multiple community groups for decades to come. Given the statistics showing that mental health problems are higher in the Scottish Borders than the Scotland average, we absolutely must give a resource like this every chance of success.

- 16** A great opportunity for Hawick.
- 17** While I think it would be great to use the building to benefit the community, will this initiative be in competition with Burnfoot Community Hub in the form of hiring for venues, room leases?
- 18** I support this proposal. But would encourage SBC to look at replacing the provision the Arches provided. In supporting children to re-engage with education in an environment that is outside mainstream education and off site.
- 19** This application would ensure the building would be saved from further deterioration and enhanced for future use within the whole community of Hawick and the wider surrounding areas. I can only see this as a positive step to save an historic building within the town and provide space for many different groups, some of whom struggle to find suitable accommodation to suit their needs.
- 20** A query on membership - why limit to age 6 and above?
- 21** Would be amazing to see one of our derelict buildings brought back to life as a vibrant community arts hub and I think this would be continuing the original educational purpose of the building.
- 22** Positive move. Building will be restored and benefit community of Hawick.
- 23** I commend all persons involved and committed to the task ahead and wish them well in repurposing this iconic town building. The paperwork alone would have been a nightmare for many but not so for them. Plenty reading for all interested folks to absorb and dream away towards the end result. A wonderful building fit for purpose, for all, for many years.
- 24** An ideal or possibly a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform this iconic building into a much-needed cultural centre that could be used by a vast cross section of the public from schoolchildren to the more senior. A place where our vast array of mixed and talented individuals can showcase and improve their particular choices. A place to nurture new talent.
- 25** This seems a worthy proposal for the ongoing use of as much of the existing building as possible and if successful will be a welcome community asset for the town.
- 26** There is a need for a central contact among artists in the town of Hawick, sharing skills and a space to meet others of a similar discipline. The chance to pass on skills to the inexperienced, participating for personal development. A place to exhibit and share ideas. Too many private places become off putting due to the prohibitive costs involved.
- 27** I think this would be an excellent development for the town and an ideal use for the building.

I would wholly support the request for Asset transfer.

- 28** I whole hearted support this venture and hope the Council give it the backing it deserves.
- 29** Fantastic idea, nurturing our youth, eliminating social isolation, sharing experiences and learning.
- 30** There is a real need for this type of facilities in the Borders so I heartily laud the initiative. Apart from offering classes and such, they might provide important training facilities for young people. Therefore, I'd recommend working closely with vocational training colleges in the Borders.
- 31** I believe the people of Hawick need a creative space for the talented people who live in the area and surrounding towns and villages.

We have a vast group of actors, musicians and artists who deserve to have a place that they can rely upon to rehearse and perform their art.

I also believe that the children and young people of Hawick will benefit greatly from having a good place they can attend; keeping them off the streets.

- 32** It would be good to see this building coming back into use. I think an expressive arts centre is a fabulous idea and know there are lots of groups in Hawick who could make use of this space.
- 33** Having been brought up in Hawick and being involved in drama/music based interests within the town over several years; it's so encouraging to see this request being made. Not only the group's drive to give local people from all walks of life the opportunity to engage in and enjoy arts and culture; but also encouraging the community to come together whilst breathing new life back into an established building that still has much to give.
- 34** I am in favour of the application as anything that brings prosperity to the town should be supported and there a great bunch of people led by [REDACTED] who live and breathe for the town.

I must say that the SBC continues to be a major concern for me as an investor in the town I have received no help only negativity towards everything I have done and the continuing escalation of rates is unbearable on top of other cost increases I think the council should get a grip on reality and start to support local business ventures and then we would see the town prosper again.

- 35** Excellent proposal and would be great to see a community asset transfer with funding to bring the building back to live and create economic and wellbeing opportunities to the community of Hawick.
- 36** The property would be a wonderful asset to the town and careful consideration should be given to this.

As a cafe with those windows, large outdoor area etc perhaps. With additional areas as community space.

Though the cost of our governments decision to close such schools in favour of all inclusive classes is now coming to light. Classrooms are a battleground for the kid now.

37 I think the transfer will be a great asset to Hawick in promoting and encouraging the development of arts in the town and giving opportunities to young and old alike to develop their talents and abilities in various ways which will ultimately benefit the town.

38 To whom it may concern,

Deeply in support of this transfer for the moth the positive social and economic impact that it will have.

Hawick needs to have a thriving attack culture and community scene and this venture could check all those boxes.

We have a deep need to re-engage with the skills on our doorstep from weaving to woodwork.

Recently I have been impressed by the local General Store and the not so local Maker Space NYC.

Offering a membership based system along with engagement from DYW and local businesses such as Barrie's could deliver much needed coherence to a broke eco system of jobs and social respite.

The opportunities are limitless with this project.

39 As a lifelong member of the local community, I wish to see the Community Asset Transfer Request made by The Arches Arts and Creative Hub (SCIO) for The Wilton Centre (The Arches), at 36 Princes Street, Hawick TD9 7AY, become reality. The people who have formed The Arches Arts and Creative Hub, I steadfastly believe, are passionate, informed and possess the wherewithal to transform the asset - The Wilton Centre - into a facility worthy of hosting and nurturing talented artists. I strongly support The Wilton Centre becoming a venue where the arts can flourish in Hawick.

40 A perfect use of public asset which can only enhance provision of cultural facilities for the whole community.

41 This would be a great asset for the town and I'm confident it would be well supported.

42 I wholeheartedly agree with the aforementioned application. The use of the Arches to support and enhance creative activities within our community is visionary. In my opinion many groups across all age ranges and abilities will benefit from a dedicated and flexible space to grow.

43 I support the application for a CAT transfer for the old Wilton School.

It will provide a space for talented young people to hone and expand their skills and for all to explore and get hands on experience in many creative activities.

The iconic building deserves to be brought to life.

Providing opportunities to socialise learn and have fun is essential for the health of our community.

- 44** I agree with the CAT application in respect of the Arches (old Wilton School).

Providing a space for talented young people to hone and explore their creative abilities will benefit the recognised and long established traditions of our community. It will also be a place for all to enjoy a variety of creative fun activities.

The iconic building deserves a chance to inspire and contribute to the health and well being of the whole community.

- 45** This could provide an excellent and greatly needed asset for the town at a time when it is becoming increasingly vital to provide attractive facilities and events.

- 46** This is a fantastic idea and a wonderful initiative. There is a shortage of art-making spaces in Hawick, and there are too few offerings for local folks who want to try new skills and crafts. This would be a valuable setting for face-to-face interaction that has greatly diminished since Covid, especially for older people who actively practiced crafts in the past but have no venue to do so in company. Such a venue would be invaluable to locals in the long, dark days of winter where they can socialise while using their hands to make things in company.

As a solo practitioner in Hawick, I have until now found it difficult to galvanise people to have them come to my occasional studio events. I think that a social hub like The Arches would make regular meetings much more appealing and I'd welcome the opportunity to teach sessions there and to attend other sessions as tasters in areas I'd like to explore. I think affordability is key and hopefully such a centre would be affordable and attractive to multiple sectors of the local Borders population. I've attended and enjoyed Live Borders sessions at the Heart of Hawick and at the Towerhouse, but those offerings are too few for my taste! A great model of a similar location is the Little Art Hub in Galashiels where I have attended printmaking sessions and other events but Hawick lacks such a gathering place.

- 47** At a time when the arts are playing a smaller role in school it would be great to have a place for everyone to experience the arts physically rather than on a small screen.

- 48** The hub would offer a welcoming and inclusive space where people of all ages can come together to learn, create, and take part in a wide range of activities. Providing areas for workshops, exhibitions, and performances

would encourage social interaction, helping to reduce isolation and build stronger connections within the community.

Affordable access to creative activities is widely recognised as supporting mental health and wellbeing, which is particularly important at present. The hub would also be of real benefit to young people, offering them a positive place to spend time, connect with others, and engage in activities away from screens.

The project would create employment and volunteering opportunities, both through the day-to-day operation of the venue and through events that attract visitors to Hawick. Generating income through venue hire, classes, and partnerships would support the long-term financial sustainability of the building.

The Arches is a well-loved building in a prominent location, and refurbishing it would protect an important local landmark, ensuring it remains actively used and cared for rather than falling into disrepair. Reusing and revitalising a historic building also represents a sustainable approach to development.

Overall, transforming The Arches into a community arts and creative hub would deliver clear and lasting benefits for Hawick. The focus on partnership working, inclusion, and sustainable income generation demonstrates a responsible and forward-thinking approach to community asset ownership.

49 Having had a gallery in Hawick, I can safely say that this town has an absolute wealth of artists, musicians and creative people. The Garfield Mill has taken off extremely well with no help which is a sign that the Arches with funding can only be a winner. There is a growing artistic trend here.

50 I believe the Arches would impact negatively on the residents on Princes Street with regards to parking and traffic control. Currently the one way system has not been working well every day cars go the wrong way on the one way street and I believe it is an accident waiting to happen, when cars and vans go the wrong way they obviously do not see the lights at the crossing directly outside the proposed Arches Art centre.

I also think parking is another issue what with three hairdressers and residents already struggling for space. To suggest the small parking area outside Wilton Church would not work either as this parking is full due to the Wilton School's proximity. I believe as a resident on this street we have been heavily impacted with changes the flood defence brought already it feels there's no let up for residents and no actual benefits for us either.