Portfolio of public support for the proposal that Peebles and District Men's Shed acquire Hay Lodge Depot under the terms of the Community Empowerment Act 2005

Peebles and District Men's Shed (PDMS) has long relied on social media, principally Facebook, as its preferred method of communication with the public.

Our own Facebook page currently has 943 followers. The post, detailed below, was viewed by over 20,000 people between the 8 July and the 10 July.

On 8 July 2026 the following question was posted on three platforms, those being the PDMS Home Page and then shared with Peebles W4 and Peebles Common Good Forum.

"Around two years ago we appealed for the help of our followers and Members to compile a portfolio of support for a proposal that we should be allocated the lease of Hay Lodge Depot. Sadly, it has proved impossible to agree terms with Scottish Borders Council and with the Common Good Fund. The main stumbling block is that we now know, having spent around £7,000 on professional reports and investigations that extensive renovation will be required to make this building fit for our use and we are not prepared to do that unless we have better security of tenure. To achieve this we have now submitted an application to seek ownership of the building under Community Empowerment legislation. We now need to know what you think about that proposal. Please take the time to put a comment below and we will transcribe these into our new business case for ownership. Thank you all for your continued support."

The following comments were posted on the PDMS Homepage over the following 2 days and have been copied here unedited:

Kenneth Stevenson

If the correct terms were agreed? Would that be less of a stumbling block ?

Peebles and District Men's Shed

You would have hoped so, but we have been at this for two years now and have not seen any signs that those making the rules are prepared to bend in our direction. We took legal advice as well which was to walk away from the lease conditions offered. It isn't just about owning versus renting either. It has been made clear to us that the Common Good Fund, as owners and landlord in the event of a lease arrangement are not prepared to finance the urgent repairs needed to make the building safe for occupation. SBC Officers consulted won't even acknowledge that the repairs are necessary. If we are to take on the responsibility for this our ability to raise the necessary finance will be so much stronger if we own the building.

Peebles Christmas Lights Association

When the original application went in for Peebles and District Men's Shed went in for them to take over these premises, our Association was named as one of the benefactors. We still fully support any application PDMS to acquire this building as it will only benefit the town.

The impact it would make is not measurable through the different organisation who would benefit from this, the work that goes on behind the scenes in so many ways to make different events happen by being able to use it.

Transferring this premise over to Peebles and District Men's Shed is with out a doubt the most sensible decision SBC and the Common Good Committee can come to.

Sophie Hamilton

The Men's Shed provides an invaluable service in our community, tackling isolation, supporting mental wellbeing and giving people a sense of purpose, friendship and belonging. A permanent home would give the group the security to invest in the building, expand what they offer and ensure these benefits continue for many years to come. It seems only right that such a well-supported and worthwhile community organisation has the opportunity to own and develop this space for the benefit of local people. Wishing you every success with the application. 💛

Karen Hamilton

The Men's Shed has a proven record of offering support, companionship and a sense of purpose for men of all ages. It offers practical hands on opportunities as well as a place to just 'be' if that is what is needed. This facility would literally be 'beacon' for services and support in Peebles. It is located in a position for all to see further enhancing the acceptance that men (and yes women too) need not hide away from their emotions and needs. I sincerely hope this initiative succeeds.

Lynn Walker

I believe the Men's shed should be accommodated in a suitable building in Peebles. The benefits of this organisation are fantastic, and very needed. I think they should be given security of tenure at the Haylodge depot, if this cannot be agreed upon, I think the impact could be devastating for many men mental health

Lizzie Luckman

I fully support the Peebles men's shed proposal to secure ownership of the Haylodge depot. The building is sitting empty and disintegrating further- which is in no-one's interest. The men's shed are a fantastic organisation who not only hugely benefit their members, but who in turn do a lot for our community.

Ewan Gowrie

Can I associate myself with all the positive comments and reiterate the need for a long term tenure for the Mens Shed. Experience with commercial leases suggest that either SBC make the building fit for occupation or they offer an extended rent free period to reflect the costs incurred by the PMS.

Gill MacDonald

I fully support the ambitions of PCT to acquire the Hay Lodge Depot for the Men Shed. I understand the building is neither safe to use and needs upgraded to comply with health & safety legislation. It's in an ideal location to facilitate mobility access issues. Plus, it is a SBC council building which is deteriorating and I welcome the initiative of the PCT to rectify this by taking ownership. I fully support any funding requests.

The benefits of a community Mens Shed is well recognised, so let's support this application.

Leaf Rrainer

Please allow The Men's Shed Peebles to take ownership of the Hay Lodge Depot. I trust that they will raise funds enough to bring the building back into very purposeful use and look after it henceforth with their skills.

Stephen Talas

I fully support the Men's Shed aims to make Haylodge Depot into a home for a group that has proven to be a valuable asset to the community, and rather than see this building further degrade, it would be surely an indication of forward thinking by SBC to bring this distinctive building into beneficial use and in turn present an advert for the community spirit which is a hallmark of Peebles life.

John Dumper

I fully support the proposal to secure the Haylodge Depot for the Men's Shed and am mystified

Carberry Campers

I fully support this application, I believe it’s a great use of the building and would represent a fantastic opportunity for a proactive community organisation to further support the community in their endeavours. I would encourage those responsible for making this to make this happen for the good of the Peebles community.

Gina Nutini

I fully support Peebles Men’s Shed’s proposal to secure ownership of Hay Lodge Depot. Long-term security is essential if the building is to be properly renovated and developed. Investing in a permanent home for such an important community resource would be a real benefit to Peebles.

Mandy Sewell

Given the known benefits of the Men’s Shed (already documented and needs no further justification), the priority is to accommodate it in a secure, suitable location due to the closure at some point of it’s current building. It absolutely makes sense to allow the purchase of the Haylodge Depot if a long term secure tenancy is not available. It would also allow the

building to be brought back to life rather than left empty to deteriorate further. I have lived in Peebles for over a decade and it has been empty for much of that time.

Further, given the councils drive to cut costs at any opportunity it would be another non productive asset off their books presumably.

Joanne Anderson

I fully support the proposal to secure the Haylodge Depot for the Men's Shed and am mystified as to why SBC seem to put barriers in place to stop the migration happen. The men's shed is a great asset to the community and we should whole heartedly do what we can to ensure their move happens. Keep doing a great job! You have my continued support.

Shona Haslam

I fully support this application. Peebles Mens shed is a fantastic organisation, helping men (and) women in our community to stay fit and healthy, physically and mentally. I implore SBC, the common good and local councillors to give this their full support.

Frances Price

Please allow Peebles and District Men’s Shed to appropriate and accommodate the Haylodge depot, to make it fit for purpose, such a marvellous organisation is vital for the well-being our menfolk, but for our community as a whole.

Nancy Thomson

I fully support the Men's Shed being able to purchase the Haylodge Depot. This organisation gives so much to our community and is vital to those attending and those who will attend in the future. Owning the building will allow the Men's Shed to access grants to compete the significant building works needed to make this building fit for purpose. There's no benefit to the community of the building continuing to fall into disrepair and lying unused.

John McCracken

As one who has benifited from member ship of the Mens Shed, it goes without saying ,They have my 100% support

Rebecca Sweetland

Fully supportive of this venture by the Men’s Shed

Sue Nash

I am a very keen supporter that the men's shed should take over this property, keep up the good work and comradeship and not let this property fall any further into disrepair, it is very much in the view of everybody who approaches Peebles from this side of town and to see it used and kept would be a great asset to the town as a whole.

I hope those who need to will see common sense and goodwill

Glen Comyns

Guys, I support you but as your name suggests…… you should be happy with a shed and this building is a lot better than that even in its current form. Move in, make the most of it and enjoy yourselves. Don't let bureaucracy run rings around you. Life is too short.

Peebles and District Men's Shed

Thank you for your views Glen. We have actually tried to get immediate access through a Licence to Occupy arrangement but that has been refused since day one of this journey. The problem with moving in as it stands is that there is a real danger that the ceiling will come down. Our investigations have revealed quite a number of compromised joists which both hold the upper floor up and stop the outer walls falling out sideways. The health and wellbeing of our Members remains foremost in our minds.

Wattie Malcolm

I would be happy to help remove ceiling that's in disrepair and any timber joists that have to go before anymore damage is done to the structure just sitting there rotting away

Rosie Barley

I fully support proposal. I echo the above comments.

John Steele

A great organisation that deserves to be granted security of tenure at the depot.

Liz Taylor

It's a tremendous facility and appears to bring in men who would not seek medical support for their mental health. A great sav…

Dawn Derbyshire

Good luck with it. I hope you succeed

Robin William Smith

I support this proposal

John Dumper

I fully support the proposal that the Peebles Men's Shed should use the intended means to achieve ownership of the Haylodge Depot and cannot understand how the Scottish Borders Council have failed to interpret the need for such a facility to be made available rather than, to all accounts, becoming the stumbling block, with only negativity at every turn. I assume the process will not involve SBC as Stakeholders as the asset is Common Good Property and the locally elected Councillors are effectively the Trustees and who have proposed this from the beginning, will simply endorse the agreement.

The following comments were posted on Peebles W4 and have been copied unedited.

Kay Learmond

More sensible to be given to. Men’s Shed than left to rot away and become an eyesore.

Andy Wright

Supported

Forge in the Forest ·

If community acquisition seems the only way to ensure the brilliant Men's Shed initiative gets to do what it does best then I'm fully behind it.

Audrey Jane

Fully behind this venture.

Jan Ramsay

I believe this is a great idea. Giving you security of tenure and a permanent home for a brilliant local initiative. Let us know how else we can support you. x

Ellie Johnstone

I am fully supportive as I believe this proposal satisfies the requirements set out in Part 5 of the Community Empowerment Act:

the proposal will improve economic development by improving the infrastructure of a town that depends on tourism for income,

regenerate a building that would otherwise be left to deteriorate further,

contribute positively to improving health, social and environmental wellbeing,

and reduce any inequalities experienced by the Men's Shed members (e.g. age, disability / long term conditions).

The Act also states that the request must be agreed to, unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal, so I wish you all the very best with this application.

Peter Maudsley

Ellie Johnstone Endorsed 100%

Jane Mcgarry

Fully behind your plans. You do lots for the community and always well used. Such a shame you have to move in 1st place

Sue Vipond

I agree with other comments, it would be a shame if the Men's Shed disappeared through lack of premises when buildings are standing empty

Trudi Palmer

Supported, the Men's shed is a fabulous initiative.

Ann Johnston

I think it's a wonderful idea and I support it 100%..

Lorna Gray

Supported. The men's shed needs to survive 😊👍

Marie Wallis

Supported 🙏

Ruaraig Maciver

Supported

Danielle Stennett

Always supported

Jane Macfie

Supported 100%

Ian Lindley

Would be a double win. Firstly resurrection of the men's shed and second restoration of a prominent building on the western edge of the town

Lorna Pryde

Supported 👍

Anne Brown

Supported good to see the building going to such a good use

Lynn Mathieson

supported

Margaret Anderson

Support 100%. Definitely needed in Peebles.🙏

Ryan Thomson

I fully support this. Rather than have a building lie unused in an unfit condition, it would be great to have a Men's Shed. These groups provide fantastic mental health support for men, and also encourage community projects. SBC made note previously about hoping to have a

business rent this building to bring £9500 annual rental income towards the Peebles Common Good Fund. Having a Men's Shed will provide support for men of various ages, and will have members keen to carry out local projects to help maintain and upgrade the town, and increase tourism and town income by doing so. Full support!

Anne Smith

Support this.

Sarah Mulligan

Great idea. I know men who have greatly appreciated the opportunity that a Mens shed gives them to socialise

Sandra McMillan

I support this 100%

Joanne Anderson

Supported 👍

Lovely McConnells

we will support you it's a great idea 💡

Grant MacPherson

Supported 💯

Margaret Hall

Fully support this venture …

Rebecca Sweetland

Fully supportive of this suggestion

Peter Maudsley

If the building requires expensive work, then either the Men's shed group or the Common Good will have to pay. The Common Good hasn't the money. Even if it did the work, it is almost certain that the return would not justify the expense. The community has already spent £7K and deserve the credit for this. Further, if my memory serves me well, SBC

withdrew some services some time ago and as usual expected the community to pick up the pieces. The Men's Shed was specifically mentioned at the time. Our elected councillors are the Common Good trustees. They are also elected by the community to represent the interests of the community. Perhaps it is time for them to stand up and be counted. Peebles needs the Men's Shed. The group need the building. I strongly support them and the sooner the building is transferred the better. It is innately unfair to expect the community to incur serious cost without a long lease

Peter Maudsley

Chair

Peebles Community Council

Iain Palmer

Supported 😁👍🏽

Margot Swanston

Supported .

Fee Nicoll

Absolute support!

Mike Isherwood

Don't loose this opportunity, go for it and provide a workshop for men and women who have acquired life long skill to express and share them.

Sara Napier

Support

Charlotte Hamilton

Supported

Jerry Rimmer

I fully support the initiative. SBC / PCGF are not immune from the regulations to ensure that a property is compliant with regulations covering Environmental and Health & Safety legislation if they wish to lease the property. If they have both the funding and the will to commit finance to repair and recover the building, let them declare this intention to do so publicly; they have not done so to date. If they don't, I cannot see how any rational

organisation could refuse the Men's Shed proposal which would improve the property for the common good of Peebles and the Men's Shed. This is a Win Win.

Jill Nicholson

Supported

Bob Watterson

Supported

Arthur Crittell

I am against the use of Common good funds or what's left of them to prop up a building in such bad repair , who knows what the real cost of repair is and that's speaking who spent his whole working life renovating buildings where there is no way of telling the true cost of

Kerrie Guiney

Fully supported

Karen Ritchie

I support this venture and agree with many of the previous comments

Catriona Bhatia

In fact the legal status of Common Good assets is different to Council assets. This complicates community buy outs and asset transfer. The Common Good Fund also has to make enough income to cover cost of maintaining its "assets", most of which are not in a good state of repair.

Councillors act as Trustees in a very different role to their SBC obligations.

The Men's Shed undoubtedly needs new premises for its important work but could the community find them more suitable

premises that are a less challenging option?

Jackie Cowe

Supported 100%

Fiona Wright

Absolutely supported

Anne McKinnon

Fully support this

Mike Murray

Great idea...👍

Sandra Paton

Supported

Emma Jones

Support

Sue Mccracken

I support men’s shed ,it s the only place some men get out to socialise,

Benny Lawrie

Supported. Very disappointed at the Council in this situation

Chris Patterson

Taking ownership would be a brilliant idea.

Irene Macdonald

Fully support this project and fail to understand why obstacles would be put in your way. I wish you every success.

Stevie Dolata

Totally support this proposal which can only benefit our community.

Derek Dickson

I too support this proposal.

Sheila Browne

This makes so much sense

Deb Sterricks

What I think, is it's very difficult to sell a common good asset but if SBC don't, they're going to end up with a ruin on their hands. And since the common good assets belong to the people, we would rather it was sold and renovated for use by Men's Shed, rather than it turn to ruin. The fact you've already poured 7k into it, and it's still needing a whole lot more spent on it again, it would be honourable, as well as sensible (they need a bob or two) to sell to yourselves. No one else is gonna put the money in, including SBC. Remind me again, who are we trying to convince? 🤔 And can I just clarify, fit for your use, I assume that means anyone's use ie the building without these clostly works, is not fit for use?

Susan Bell

Fully support !

David Pye

As an asset of Peebles Common Good, the building has deteriorated under their ownership for many years. This is not going to change in the foreseeable future, as there are not enough funds available to undertake the substantial repairs required. Essentially this asset has now become a liability.

As there is another Community Group that appears to be willing to undertake this project and bring the building back into community use, I fully support the efforts of Peebles Men's Shed who are currently prepared to undertake this project. We should all support them.

John Falla

I fully support the Men’s Shed and let’s remember it’s not just men that are getting the benefits.

It is typical how little maintenance on Common Good assets means a major project and costs are the only way forward.

I recall Jedderfield and now they are even unable to repair 3 millennium salmon.

Surely the tenants for the last 10 years have been under breach of health and safety laws which were not being implicated by Common Good.

The following comments were posted on Peebles Common Good Forum and have been copied unedited.

Irene Campbell

I hope your new proposal to take ownership of this building is successful.

Given the location of the building, its size and outdoor space it could see an expansion of the work already undertaken to support men within Tweeddale .

Prevention we are told is the best form of medicine .

Mental, physical and emotional health should be available to all and having a purpose in life comes from support and shared interests.

Perhaps partnering with local reuse centres would ,in these premises expand what you already do so that you add to the circular economy and reduce waste .

The building and surrounding area could also allow for growing plants both to enhance the town but also for sale .

I’m sure your ideas will expand as needs are identified .

Catriona Hamilton

Admin

All-star contributor

It is such a shame Peebles Common Good Fund aren't maintaining their immovable assets such as Hay Lodge Depot.

There was a lot of funds spent on Jedderfield Farm, for a commercial business, which doesn't provide benefit to the community, as Common Good assets are intended to, so why wouldn't they spend from the Peebles Common Good Fund on this asset, Hay Lodge Depot, for the Men's Shed which is community led & actually provides community benefit.

I feel for PDMS this hope for a wonderful new home has turned sour & been dragged out way too long. I would have fully supported a 'peppercorn rent' as many other Common Good Funds in Scotland offer to such groups as Men's Sheds.

As much as buying it will take it from the Peebles Common Good Fund I wholeheartedly believe it is the best thing for Hay Lodge Depot, the Men's Shed, the town & our community.

The fund has had no income in rent from this asset for years now due to the dithering about.

Being a charitable org PDMS can access funding for the building repairs & renovations, maintaining it for future generations.

I fully support Peebles and District Men's Shed with this application & wish them success.

Here's hoping, at last, Hay Lodge Depot is home to PDMS ☝️

Diana Carmody

Good luck

To summarise once again, in total, over the space of two days, the posts requesting a view from the public on this important matter across the three platforms used were viewed approximately 20,000 times, generated 119 ‘likes’, 108 people commented positively and the posts were shared 8 times to other pages.

By any measure, this is an overwhelming response from the Community.