

SILVERBUTHALL FINANCIAL PLAN

Silverbuthall Community Development Trust Limited has been set up as a company limited by guarantee to enable the residents of Silverbuthall to undertake projects for the benefit of their neighbourhood and the wider community. Founded by three local residents which now has a board of five and a rising membership of over twenty local residents. The initial setup was supported and funded by A Greener Hawick. Since our foundation in 2021 we have worked with A Greener Hawick to develop a plan to acquire the former Wilton South and St Margaret's Church site for the community. This plan is a substitute for accounts as we are in our first year of operation.

The acquisition plan has advanced to the point where we have all the necessary legal and legislative issues in hand which will enable an application to Scottish Ministers for a compulsory purchase order for the site. This has involved extensive overseas research, the negotiation of legal reports and academic opinions and a search for the present owner. All concluded successfully.

Bids have been obtained from several local architects for the preparation of plans and applications for planning consent, specialist reports and a financial plan. Additional specialist and technical support has been provided by Local Energy Scotland, Development Trusts Association Scotland Community Land Scotland and other national organisations. A Greener Hawick obtained funding on our behalf and in-kind professional help valued at around £15,000 to enable this progress.

Our next step and the first to be taken independently by Silverbuthall Community Development Trust will be to apply for Stage One funding from Scottish Land Fund which has been under discussion with that organisation during the whole period of the project. This is to enable an in-depth feasibility study to be produced which is necessary to prove the sustainability of the project. That application, supported by South of Scotland Enterprise, is in preparation.

We also require a professional valuation of the site and a community consultation to submit with the application. The former will be funded from the grants already obtained by A Greener Hawick for the purpose (£2000). Further funding already obtained will also support the professionally managed independent ballot required for the application to Scottish Ministers (£4000).

Completion of the feasibility stage will enable applications for acquisition and development funding to be made to several large funders, including National Lottery, Valencia Fund and Fallago Fund with whom discussions are at an advanced stage. Indicative levels of funding will enable the ballot to proceed and an offer to acquire the property to be made which if unsuccessful for any reason will trigger the application to Scottish Ministers.

The missing element is community consultation, an essential step without which the project cannot proceed. While researching the best way to conduct this A Greener Hawick found a tried and tested Scottish Borders system entitled Village Poll. The initial set up costs include a three year licence to use the system and three polls, of which this will be the first, which will enable Silverbuthall Trust and A Greener Hawick as our partner to identify the projects in Hawick which can be taken forward as a basis for Community Wealth Creation. A Greener Hawick is partnering us on this to enable the later polls to cover the whole town and will be an essential tool and part of the Partners contribution to the creation of a successful Place Plan for Hawick.

