



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

IMPORTANT NOTES:

This is the asset transfer request form for Scottish Borders Council.

You do not need to use this form to make an asset transfer request, but using it will help you to make sure you include all the required information.

You should read the asset transfer guidance provided by the Scottish Government before making a request and when completing this form. This form includes page numbers of parts of the guidance that will help you to complete the asset transfer request form. This does not replace reading the full guidance as some areas appear in more than one section of the guidance.

We strongly recommend that you contact Scottish Borders Council and discuss your proposals with us before making an asset transfer request.

You can phone us on 01835 826626, or email us at communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk

When completed, this form should be sent to:

**Asset Transfer Requests
Communities & Partnerships Team
Scottish Borders Council
Newtown St Boswells
MELROSE TD6 0SA**

communityengagement@scotborders.gov.uk

This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Section 1: Information about the community transfer body (CTB) making the request (pages 11-15)

1.1 Name of the CTB making the asset transfer request

Peebles Community Trust

1.2 CTB address. This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address: School Brae Hub
School Brae
Peebles

Postcode: EH45 8AT

1.3 Contact details. Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: [REDACTED]

Postal address: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to show agreement)*

You can ask Scottish Borders Council to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by letting us know at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given. (see page 29)

1.4 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of CTB and its official number, if it has one. (see pages 11-15)

X	Type of Community Transfer Body	Official/Charity or Registered number
X	Company	SC432119
X	Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)	SCO050520
	Community Benefit Society (BenCom)	
	Unincorporated organisation (no number)	

Please attach a copy of the CTB's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.

1.5 Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers? (see pages 14-15)

No ✓

Yes

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

1.6 Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers? (see pages 14-15)

No

Yes ✓

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

It is both a Community Controlled Body and an Incorporated Company

Section 2: Information about the land/building and rights requested

2.1 Please identify the land/building to which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a street address or grid reference and any name by which the land or building is known. If you have identified the land on the Council's register of land, please enter the details listed there. (see pages 20-21)

It may be helpful to provide one or more maps or drawings to show the boundaries of the land requested. If you are requesting part of a piece of land, you must attach a map and full description of the boundaries of the area to which your request relates. If you are requesting part of a building, please make clear what area you require. A drawing may be helpful. (see pages 29-30)

The building known locally as The Old Railway Building but listed on the Asset Register as East Station Office. This is situated within the East Station Car Park but also has a postal address of Venlaw Road, Peebles, EH45 8DZ. The exact curtilage is unknown at present.

2.2 Please provide the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number), if known.

This is listed in Scottish Borders Council's register of land/buildings

UPRN: PB004/08

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made (see pages 30-31):

for ownership (under section 79(2)(a)) - go to section 3A

for lease (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – go to section 3B

for other rights (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) - go to section 3C

3A – Request for ownership

What price are you prepared to pay for the land/building requested? (see pages 47-54)

Proposed price: £ 1.00

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

3B – Request for lease

What is the length of lease you are requesting? (see pages 30-31)

How much rent are you prepared to pay? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month (see pages 47-54):

Proposed rent: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

3C – Request for other rights

What are the rights you are requesting? (see page 31)

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Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes

No

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: £ per
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Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

Section 4: Community Proposal

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used (page 31)

This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.

This building, which has been allowed to fall into a dreadful state of repair since it was last in commercial use, is the only remaining structure in Peebles which was previously part of the railway infrastructure. A new railway line, owned by the Peebles Railway Company, came to Peebles on 4 July 1855 and brought both tourists and huge industrial benefits. Local agriculture flourished through both access to previously unreachable markets and the ability to bring stock and other materials into the town. The three local woollen mills also benefitted from this transport revolution with one having its own railway siding directly into its yard. This remained the case until February 1962 when economic factors resulted in the closure of the Edinburgh to Galashiels line, along with many other rural lines in Scotland, and the eventual demolition of most of the built estate connected with the railway. The line west to Glasgow owned by the Caledonian Railway Company had already closed to commercial traffic some years earlier.

Whilst in use, the building served as the goods yard and weighbridge office, evidence of which can still be found within in the form of pits which previously housed the mechanism and in window design. The actual date of construction is lost but we have evidence that the building in its current form was present earlier than 1887, when the current spire of the Parish Church started to appear in photographs of the railway goods yard.

Peebles Community Trust successfully negotiated a 25-year lease on the building in March 2018 with the hope that Heritage Funding could be sourced to allow the refurbishment of the building, possibly as a Railway Heritage Museum. Sadly, despite the submission of a professionally written application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, we were turned down. This has meant the small group who undertook the task were forced to reflect and consider other ways to achieve their primary ambition of restoring the building to its former glory.

A small grant had been obtained from the Community Fund to allow us to submit our Lottery funding application with professional input. As things turned out the author would not accept his fee and we successfully applied to be allowed to use the funds to carry out urgent repairs to the building. These took the form of a new roof on the northeastern end, and two new doors to keep the building secure.

As a mark of the Community support we enjoy, it should also be noted that local building trades professionals offered pro bono advice prior to negotiating the existing

As a mark of the Community support we enjoy, it should also be noted that local building trades professionals offered pro bono advice prior to negotiating the existing lease and also undertook to repair free of charge some dry rot which was identified in the floor of the main building. Following the fitting of the two new doors and door frames the joiner who fitted them very kindly undertook to return in his own time to paint them.

We estimate that a further £20,000 at least will be required to complete the refurbishment, including the restoration of a water supply and drainage connection which had been inexplicably severed by Scottish Borders Council at some point in the past.

It should be noted that this building occupies a prime site in a central location in Peebles. Many visitors to the town will park in the adjacent car park and tourist coaches are known to make short stops in the bus park a short distance away with passengers walking the short distance to the town right past the building. There is a well-used walkway running past the building which forms part of the town heritage trail. A section of the old town wall is directly opposite the building. All of this adds up to a bright commercial future for the refurbished building, should we be able to negotiate a successful transfer of title.

The restoration will include re-roofing the remainder of the building including the restoration of some of the more exposed roof timbers, restoring water and drainage, fully restoring exposed brickwork and chimney, probable removal of existing timber cladding, installation of modern insulation and recladding, painting the entire building externally in heritage colours, restoration of all windows and finally interior redecoration, installation of a toilet and kitchen sink, installation of an electric heating system and the fitting of suitable floor coverings. We have obtained estimates for some of this work already and are chasing down the rest. I am sure it requires no explanation that these estimates are very loose due to the current state of the building supplies industry, but we are still reasonably confident of the sum identified above and if this application is successful, we will work towards having all work carried out by local tradesmen. Indications have already been received that where possible, work will be carried out for us at as low a rate as possible.

As a group, we are not prepared to apply for suitable funding and carry out this work if we have no long-term control of the future of the building. Put bluntly, we would be in danger of simply improving an SBC Asset which could be taken away with only a few months' notice. Ownership of the building puts an entirely different slant on both our long-term ambition and our ability to effectively source suitable funding for the restoration.

As a fully refurbished asset within the Peebles Community Trust estate, we would seek a commercial tenant to provide income for the Trust and would work with any tenant to display railway memorabilia within the building, thus ticking as many boxes as possible. Ideal uses would be a railway themed cafe, a tourism information point, a bike hire shop or a hairdressing premises. The list is endless.

Finally, it should not be understated that our primary objective in this application is two fold. Initially we seek to have complete control over the building so that steps can be taken to halt further decline in the fabric of the building. Once that is done we can take steps to refurbish the building to a condition where it becomes an asset rather than a liability, capable of a successful commercial future.

Benefits of the proposal

4.2 Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to (pages 31-33, 42-44)

This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

As it stands, the building has been effectively abandoned by Scottish Borders Council. When Peebles Community Trust negotiated the existing lease, discussions held with the SBC Estates team personnel indicated that whilst they could see a commercial future for the building within the SBC Estate, the cost of refurbishing it to even a basic standard precluded any such move for the foreseeable future. In essence, it struck us that Scottish Borders Council were glad to be rid of the building and with the benefit of hindsight, we probably went into the deal with our eyes slightly closed in terms of the amount of work required to bring the building up to a suitable standard.

Our proposal will hopefully result in a viable future for the building whilst retaining its external Heritage features for many years to come. The existence of the railway in Peebles is far too important a part of our history to be allowed to be forgotten completely. Having this building in the town, painted in the Heritage colours of the North British Railway Company will serve as a talking point for many years to come. As a spin off bonus, any income from a commercial let will help the work being done by Peebles Community Trust both in terms of its own ambitions to provide a Community Hub to the town and its people, and in terms of helping the many smaller umbrella groups we support.

Restrictions on use of the land or building

4.3 If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land or building, please explain how your project will comply with these (page 33)

Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.

As it is our intention to restore the building to it's original look, we do not envisage any conflict with either Building Control or any Heritage listing, which we understand simply requires that we do just that.

Negative consequences

4.4 What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these? (page 33)

You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.

We cannot see a negative side to our request. Commercial space for let attracts premium rates in Peebles, and waiting lists exist for businesses to obtain premises. If anything, by agreeing to our request SBC will be encouraging business development in the town.

Capacity to deliver

4.5 Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives (pages 33-34)

This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.

The Board of Peebles Community Trust comprises members with relevant experience in asset management, marketing, commercial finance and running a business. In addition, we can call on volunteer support for specific issues from within the Community if and when required. This project will run in tandem with the plans for the refurbishment of School Brae Hub, which is an altogether larger project. The Trust have already appointed professional advisors to oversee all building work associated with the School Brae Hub project, and their advice would be available if required by the group managing this project.

Section 5: Level and nature of support

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request, from your community and, if relevant, from others (page 34-35).

This could include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been. You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

We rely heavily on social media to take soundings from the community and established the Peebles Railway Heritage Group page on Facebook several years ago, when we first secured the lease over the building. Today, we have 990 people following our progress online. The age range of our followers is from 13 to over 65 and is currently split as 60% male and 40 % female. Most of our followers are resident in and around Peebles but we also have followers in the USA, New Zealand and South Africa.

When our intention to submit this Asset Transfer Request was announced on our platform, and shared to two other local Community News platforms, the response was positive and hugely encouraging. Many people who live, or have lived in, Peebles have very fond memories of this building, especially as for many years following the closure of the railway it was used by a local coal merchant. One of my own boyhood memories was being sent to the building by my mother to pay the coal bill!

Comments received in the last few days include:

1. "It's a worthwhile project ██████ smack bang in the middle of the tourist "portal" to Peebles. Nobody wants to see a derelict building in the middle of the town. Well done securing a new roof. Wishing you all the best for the next phase and acquisition."
2. "Good luck so important to preserve this building."
3. "Good luck. A fantastic thing you are doing."
4. "I've often wondered if it could be brought into community ownership, restored and sympathetically repurposed as a coffee shop (with local railway history theme). Maybe the income would provide enough to cover basic upkeep."
5. "I'm happy to help with another financial contribution in order to secure this."
6. "Good luck with the project. Look forward to following your progress."
7. "Well done on all your efforts and negotiations to save and transform this historic

7. "Well done on all your efforts and negotiations to save and transform this historic building."

8. Well done to [REDACTED] who has progressed work and trying to move towards the future for this small, but iconic railway building in Peebles.

Once this application is at a more advanced stage, and better weather prevails, it is our intention to back up this social media expressed support with some more traditional forms of evidence gathering. An article inviting comments is planned for both the Peeblesshire News and Peebles Life. We also plan to hold informal face to face discussions outside the building on at least two Saturdays allowing both locals and visitors alike the chance to add their support for the project and to have a look inside the building as it stands.

Section 6: Funding

6.1 Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land or building, and your proposed use of the land or building (page 34).

You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.

As our application progresses, we would like to appoint a local architect to undertake a proper survey of the building with a view towards preparing a 'Scheme of Works' which would form the basis of proper costings for all necessary works and give us a much firmer platform from which to make applications for support. Initially at least, we would like to again approach The Heritage Lottery Fund and also specific Railway Heritage funders. We have also been encouraged to consider an approach to both Fallago Rig and Clyde wind farm Community Benefit funds, which though technically unavailable have been known to support other local projects in the past. The latest wind power project near to Peebles, Leithenwater, will also be approached as they are keen to 'front load' funding for local projects whilst their development moves through the planning phases.

As the 'parent body' responsible for this application and the proposed title holder on successful completion some funding for the project may also be available for this from within the Peebles Community Trust reserves.

We would hope in all of the prevailing circumstances that any value for transfer placed on the building will be an affordable one, ideally a peppercorn amount.

Proposed uses for the building are contained within our proposals above.

Signature

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud (page 36)

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.

We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.

Name
Address

Date
Position
Signature

Name
Address

Date
Position
Signature



Checklist of accompanying documents

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

Section 1 – you must attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Title of document attached: Articles of Association supplied previously
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Section 2 – any maps, drawings or description of the land requested

Documents attached: Not applicable

Section 3 – note of any terms and conditions that are to apply to the request

Documents attached: Not applicable

Section 4 – about your proposals, their benefits, any restrictions on the land or potential negative consequences, and your organisation’s capacity to deliver.

Documents attached: Not applicable

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached: Shown above

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: Not applicable
