

COMMUNITY\*  
LAND SCOTLAND

**Helmsdale & District**



**Development Trust**

**2017 Conference**  
**Sharing the Knowledge**

## May 2015

Sutherland Estates approached the Common Grazings Committee of the four townships of Marrel, West Helmsdale, Gartymore & Portgower, with a proposal to sell in the first instance their land/assets within the area of Helmsdale, some 3,000 acres.

The committee took the decision to follow this through, however, identified that they initially did not have the time or the expertise or the skill sets to take forward. They therefore approach HDDT to explore this on their behalf, this was agreed in the June of 2015.

We held the first public meeting to inform all of the proposal and reasoning behind the sale as explained by Sutherland Estates.

HIE were also invited to explain the mechanisms in place to support a community.

Carloway were also invited to give a perspective of what in reality really happens and the timeline associated with a purchase, warts and all.

## **Difficulties:**

- Reaction to - Responsibility** - few stepped forward to be part of a Steering Group. although huge support, 'on a plate please'
- Understanding** - application speak, language used in the industry, understanding of timeline and how this is tied to funding regimes.
- Balances** - crofters a minority  
non crofters a majority.
- Voices** - loud voices / quieter voices balance – engagement methodologies
- Divisions** - within the community, with each other, disagreement lambasting ideas, moving forward whilst respecting the past
- Manpower** - drag in expertise, employ people
- Perception** - many varied views

**Now we want ownership,  
our name on the ticket**

**We can now do  
this with  
support**

**Take ownership**

**Engage**

**Ballot**

**Encourage and  
Empower**

**G.A.C.I.**

## **TOP TIPS**

- Follow the CLS 8 steps
- Be clear on the aims of your feasibility – we learnt from several others
- Be VERY clear on your feasibility procurement – engage first, then invite, seek expertise
- Recover your costs – we gained no return on our contribution
- Use language that can be understood by ALL – no LDO/SLF or funders talk