

## **Press Release from the Portas Pilot Group**

02 April 2012

The bid for Buxton to be a 'Portas Pilot Town' has been submitted. It will now be assessed by the Department for Communities and Local Government, with the announcement of the first twelve successful bidders, sharing £1 000 000, being expected in May.

Janet Miller of the 'Pilot Group' which has submitted the bid for a total of £95 000 said:

"An unprecedented number and cross section of groups and individuals came together to support and produce Buxton's bid. Thank you to all those who got involved and to everyone who pledged their support – the response has been overwhelmingly positive."

The vision described in the bid looks to bring the whole town together behind the concept of one coherent 'Main Street' linking Spring Gardens to High Street through the Crescent, Hall Bank and the Slopes and the Market Place. This will turn the disjointed assets of the town centre into "a single rewarding place to be", it hopes, linking the retail elements with the cultural and architectural highlights.

Through the activity of a 'Town Team' it is suggested that this route could be brought to life by a range of initiatives included in the bid: from engaging with landlords to actively seek short term use of empty premises for new businesses, through funding business training and street trading opportunities for local people, encouraging street music, theatre and food and even a high tech 'Augmented Reality' tour for smart phone users. Better signs, route marking and interpretation of Buxton's history are also seen as important and funding has been requested for early stage work on developing a comprehensive and contemporary scheme.

'Match funding' has been pledged for certain elements of the plan by High Peak Borough Council and by Vision Buxton.

The full text of the bid can be seen at [www.buxtontownteam.org.uk](http://www.buxtontownteam.org.uk), together with the short video made to accompany it. You can also download the video from YouTube – search for 'Buxton Portas Pilot – YouTube'.

The groups directly involved in preparing the bid are Vision Buxton, Transition Buxton, The Buxton Group, Churches Together, Buxton Civic Association and Buxton Against Tesco, with support from High Peak Borough Council, the University of Derby and a number of influential and enthusiastic individuals. They have formed a pilot 'Town Team' which will continue to develop ideas whilst the Portas application is being considered. The group would welcome comments on the bid document and any offers of assistance, which can be posted on the Town Team website or sent to [pilotgroup@buxtontownteam.org.uk](mailto:pilotgroup@buxtontownteam.org.uk)

