

2021/2022 BUILD BACK A BETTER BORDERS RECOVERY FUND

Assessment Form

For the purpose of assessment, projects have been ranked high, medium or low to reflect how strongly the application meets the criteria of the Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund.

High – a strong demonstration of how the project will assist recovery from the pandemic

Medium – provides acceptable examples of how the project will assist recovery from the pandemic

Low – lacks detail of how the project will assist recovery from the pandemic

1. Applicant Details

Organisation name	Melrose Bowling Club					
Organisation structure	Unincorporated sports club					
Application reference	BBBB/EIL/10					
Theme of application	Sport	Arts & culture	Environment	Community capacity	Community resilience	Intergenerational activity
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Project start date	November 2021			Project end date	January 2022	

2. Organisation's Finances

End of year balance	£13,773.56
Current bank balance	£30,866.95
Total cash/Unrestricted reserves available & purpose	£3,535
Total restricted /committed funds & purpose	£27,331

3. Project:

Outline of what the group plan to do to help people recover from the pandemic. Projects will be ranked higher if the application strongly demonstrates that they are meeting an identified need in the community.

High **Medium** **Low**

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of Melrose Bowling Club has been to be as pro-active as possible in its efforts to engage and communicate with members. The group has achieved this through various means including welfare calls to all members to ensure they were safe and well and felt supported by the club, reinvesting club funds to renovate social areas such as the bar lounge to attract members, guests and community groups back in to the club and the outdoor area which has been repurposed to house a new safely distanced seating area to allow bowlers to sit and socialise. The efforts that the club has gone to over the last 12-18 months has ensured that the majority of its existing members have retained and renewed their membership throughout 2020 and 2021.

The bowling club wish to continue their efforts in order to further strengthen their position within the local community. A key part of maintaining members and attracting new ones is maintaining the bowling green to a very high standard.. The group wish to purchase a new lawn mower that is suitable for the needs of a modern-day bowling green. The lawn mower

the club currently has is 16 years old and is beginning to incur increasingly high annual costs (around £500 per annum) for servicing and repairs and is significantly less effective than when it was purchased. The green is required to be cut six or seven times per week and therefore directly impacts the success of the club.

If the bowling club is able to purchase the lawn mower using grant funding, it will provide high quality playing conditions for all that use it including a large group of elderly members who live alone and for some whose only opportunity to socialise is at the bowling club. The club also provides members with an ideal opportunity for regular exercise, leading to an increase in both physical and mental wellbeing after almost 18 months in isolation.

Evidence of individuals, groups or communities likely to benefit from the new initiative and how they have been affected by the pandemic:

High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>
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The groups of people who will directly benefit from the project to purchase a new lawn mower are significant. This encompasses not only the entire Melrose community, but also benefits those from further afield across the whole of the Borders and beyond. including:

- **All existing playing members**, particularly senior members who have told the club they benefit from playing on a surface that runs at good speed and does not require extensive effort to throw their bowls. If green conditions are heavy, they are less inclined to play bowls.

- **New playing members** from throughout the local community which the club seek to attract in the years ahead and will have the best opportunity to be introduced to the sport. Melrose Bowling Club's target is to drive a 10% minimum increase in playing membership numbers in 2022 and build on this further in subsequent years.

- **Visiting clubs and teams** from throughout the Borders and beyond – the club's Gents, Ladies and Senior Teams will all return to Border League play in 2022, which means there are 40 - 60 visiting players playing on the green most weeks throughout the summer months.

- **Bowls Scotland and Border Bowling Association** will also be direct beneficiaries, as they always look for the best quality greens to host their Matches and Championship Tournaments. This is a key linked goal within the bowling club's strategy, to ensure the club attracts more high-profile events on its green.

- **Non-Bowlers within the Melrose Community** will also benefit. The club have created and developed relationships with Melrose Rugby Club and some local businesses, who have confirmed they wish to return in future years for "Try Bowls" days. These events have been popular and successful in the past and very much help the club promote the sport to many more people than it has in past years, and notably these "Try Bowls" days bring a younger contingent, which is something the club is increasingly seeking to encourage. Melrose Bowling Club expect to have a minimum of 150 non-bowlers try Bowls in 2022 through these initiatives and partnerships.

The groups listed above have been adversely affected by the pandemic and their opportunity to play bowls at Melrose has been significantly impacted. Play at the club was unable to be resumed until June 2020, so almost 2 months of that short summer season were lost. Even after re-starting in June 2020, play was very much restricted, with strict social distancing and limited numbers able to play at any one time.

The mental and physically benefits of Bowling and the camaraderie were diminished hugely, and even when there was a phased return to play many were rightly cautious and therefore played much less in 2020 and indeed this has continued to an extent in 2021.

During Lockdown, two of the club's most experienced bowlers successfully qualified as Bowls coaches through Bowls Scotland Coach Workshops and they also attained PVG Certificates. The aim of the club is to "build back better" and with a coaching infrastructure now in place, the club is able to target 2022 and beyond to set up "Try Bowls" (which Bowls Scotland, the sport's Governing Body will support the club with). In addition, the club can target more youth groups, inviting them to the club for tester days, with hands-on support to encourage and develop opportunities for children, with the aim of building up the youth section. Around 1 in 4 people who attend the "Try Bowls" events go on to join the club. These events are communicated widely throughout social media, local posters and are free of charge. The club plan to run these events in May 2022 and July 2022. The club have received donations of smaller sized Bowls from several members, which means it also has the right equipment in place to support these events. This demonstrates the club's and existing members' enthusiasm and desire to attract new people, and particularly more young people to the sport.

Should members of the community wish to join the club, there are a variety of benefits available to them, such as:

- a reduced annual membership fee for new members of £10 (compared to the normal price of £60) during their first season
- no membership fee for all members under the age of 16
- free equipment available to all players
- free coaching and support from members and the club's three qualified bowls coaches
- the bowling club allows new players to compete in 5-6 matches free of charge before requesting membership fee payment

Community groups are also welcome to spend the day at the club to try out bowls for the first time, free of charge.

Expected impact of the new initiative and how will it help those most in need recover from the pandemic

High <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/>
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The purchase of a new lawn mower will safeguard the future of the bowling club for years to come, by ensuring that its main focal point, the green, is improved and maintained rather than have it diminish and decline. The project will help ensure that the club continues to offer a valuable and well used local recreational facility not only for existing and future members but for community groups and indeed the whole wider community of Melrose.

The new mower is battery powered, as opposed to the existing petrol mower in place, and therefore emits significantly less harmful gases and noise, offering a much more environmentally friendly alternative.

The club committee expect to see memberships increase by more than 10% in 2022, with a particular increase in the highly competitive Bowlers, senior members and youth members. The club have invested significant effort over the last two years to encourage new people through its gates via direction communication with community members, the taster days and a pro-am event in 2021 and plans to continue this effort into 2022 by utilising social media and posters to promote upcoming events, more taster days and by encouraging current members to bring along friends and family to try out bowls for free. The club will also invite its sponsors along free of charge to use its facilities on and off the green to try and encourage more players to join.

4. Project Expenditure:

Total Project Cost	£10,920
10% organisation contribution	£1,092
Request to BBBB	£9,828

Item of expenditure	Cost
Infinicut 22" Lithium mower	£10,920

Match/other funding sought:

Funder	Funding Requested	Status
	£	

Grants received from Scottish Borders Council or any other funder within the last three years

Date	Project Title	Amount
2020/21	Scottish Government - Strategic Framework Business Grants (Business Closure and Restricted Opening)	£23,450
2019/20	Scottish Government - Strategic Framework Business Grants (Business Closure and Restricted Opening)	£11,400

SBC OFFICER ASSESSMENT	The application meets the criteria of the BBBB fund
Comments	The application scores high as showcases how important the quality of the bowling green is in retaining and encouraging the number of players at the club across a variety of age groups. The application has great examples of the numerous groups of people that the club's plans will benefit and the positive impacts it will have. The bowling club's proven track record of assisting members of the community in times of need also showcases the efforts its players/members are willing to go to in order to ensure the wellbeing of their peers.
Additional terms and conditions required	The applicant must follow Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance. Appropriate training must be given to any user(s) of the mower and relevant safety equipment must be worn by the user(s) at all times when the mower is in operation. Appropriate insurance must be in place
Evaluative measures	Feedback from user(s) of the lawnmower as to the level of improvement in comparison to the original mower (ease of use, results, ongoing costs) Feedback from club members on the improvement of conditions Increase in membership uptake Number of "Try Bowls" days organised and number of attendees (with a focus on young people attendance)