

## SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY FUND  
INTERIM EVALUATION FORM

<b>Group name:</b>	<b>Tweeddale Youth Action</b>
<b>CF Reference No.</b>	CF2021/TW/14

Please return this form when your project/period of support is complete. If you have any questions about this form or are unclear as to what is required when reporting, please contact the Communities & Partnerships Team on Tel: 0300 100 1800.

**Section 1: Spending your grant**

Please give details below of the items funded by this grant. Please note that **original receipts must be submitted** with this form for review. All receipts submitted will be returned to you.

<b>Item/activity</b>	<b>Cost (corresponding evidence of spending attached)</b>
Volunteer delivery expenses (mileage @ 40p per mile)	£134.80
Xero food receipts summary 1	£1,293.87
Xero food receipts summary 2	£419.96
Xero food receipts summary 3	£492.95
Xero food receipts summary 4	£26.20
Xero food receipts summary 5	£17.36
Xero food receipts summary 6	£11.40
Cash and carry invoices still to be processed.	£300.00
<b>Total amount spent by your group</b>	<b>£2,696.54</b>

If the items detailed above are **different in any way** from what was stated in your original application form, use the space below to explain the change(s). Please give details of the contact you had with Communities & Partnerships Team to agree these changes.

**Total project spend £2,696.54**

Spend includes lots of food receipts- summarised above through xero accountancy software. Minor underspend on volunteer mileage- spent on ingredients.

**Section 2: The benefits of your award**

Which age group(s) has the grant benefitted most?

(0-16)	(17-25)	(26-49)	(50-70)	(70+)
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How many people do you estimate have benefitted from the grant?

(5-100)	(101-500)	(501-1,000)	(1,001-5,000)	(5,001-10,000)	(10,000+)
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Tell us the difference the grant has made to your community?

Improved the health and wellbeing of community members  
 Improved the quality of life of community members  
 Reduced social isolation  
 Increased participation in community activities  
 Created better learning

Tell us in what way the project has achieved these differences

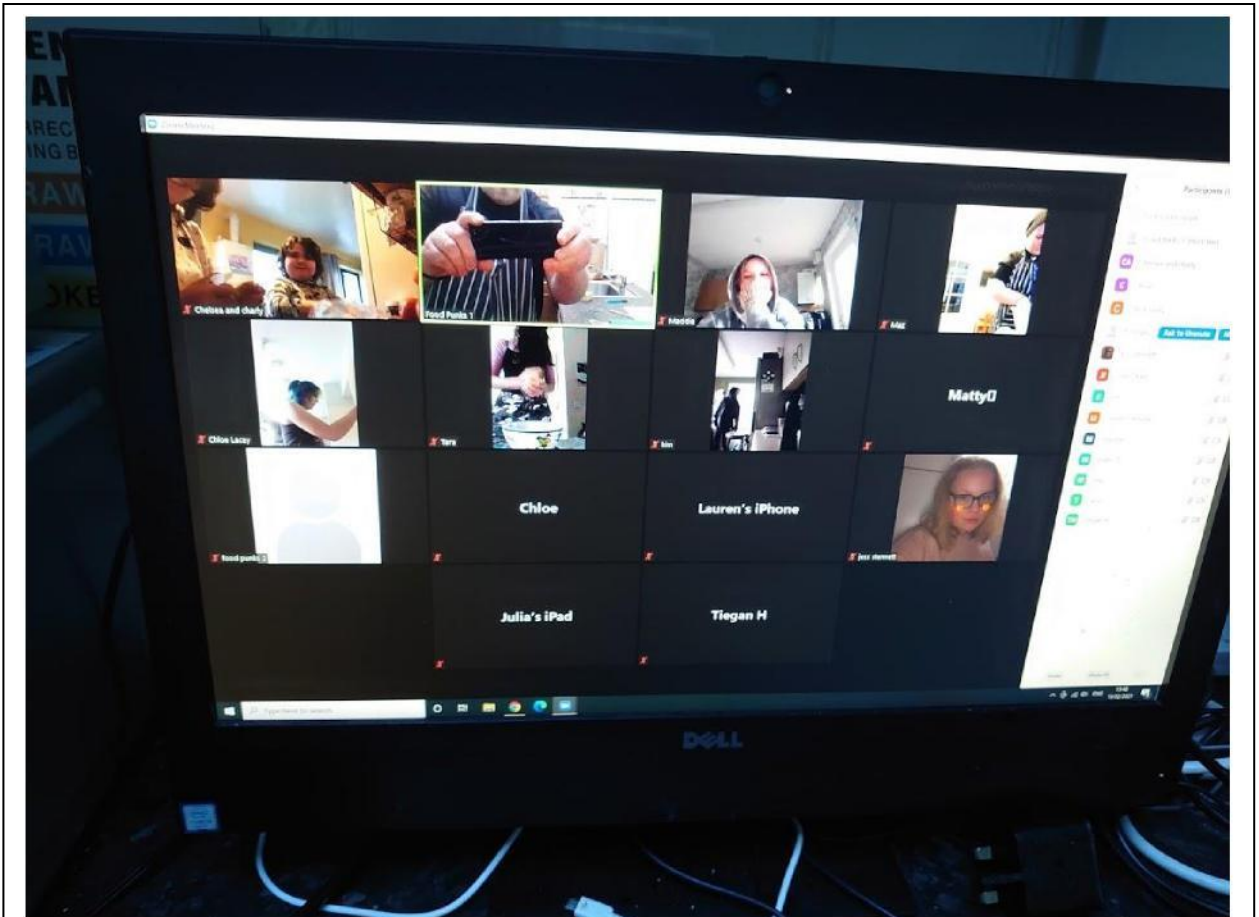
Our Food Punks Feel Good Friday cookery sessions came at a bleak time with lockdown restrictions preventing face to face socialising, dark days and miserable weather. Our aim was to give a focal point for coming together and through collective cooking and baking, to bring some much needed cheer and opportunities for conversation.

The project was hugely successful and from December 2020 to the end of March 2021, 33 different young people joined us online with a typical weekly attendance of 15-20 each week.

In total, we delivered 435 bags of ingredients to 47 young people over 14 weeks and the following e-mail demonstrates the impact the project has had, even for those who didn't join us online:

*Food Punks is proving to be a great motivator for the young person I am working with. "A" is struggling with depression and low mood, impacting on motivation to engage in all daily activities. Having previously enjoyed baking, Food Punks was something that appealed to her. Receiving the ingredients pack takes away the barrier of cost for a family on a low income and having everything measured out makes the task less overwhelming for "A" helping her to feel confident in being able to complete the activity. On top of that "A" and her family get to enjoy the goodies! This brings the family together and builds self-confidence for "A". Having the option to participate in the zoom cookery class either with or without the video on means "A" can relax and join when she's ready to. Whilst young people are used to using tech to communicate, it can lead to angst, this zoom class provides a 'safe space' which enables young people to learn, enjoy and socialise with peers at the same time. Dave is planning to do some more challenging recipes too, which will increase the challenge and skills when the young person is ready. Overall this is a great initiative for young people that is flexible and can be graded to the individual's ability. By overcoming some of the barriers as I've outlined above, this paves the way for lots of positive outcomes.*

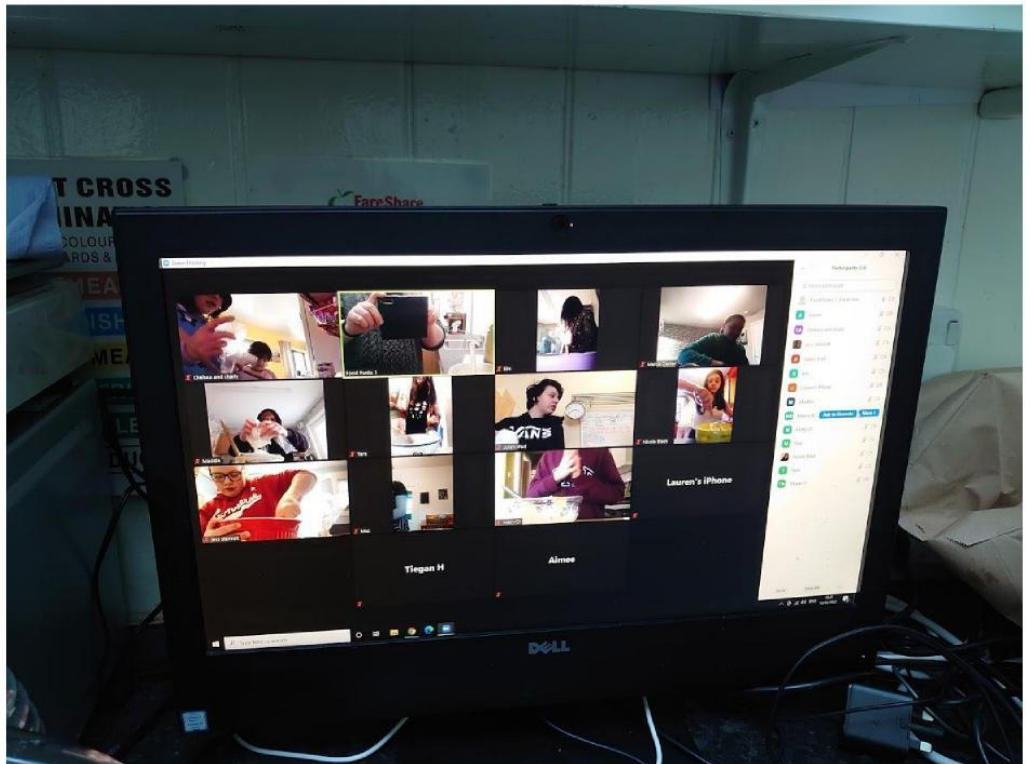
I have also attached a few pics to show what we've been up to.









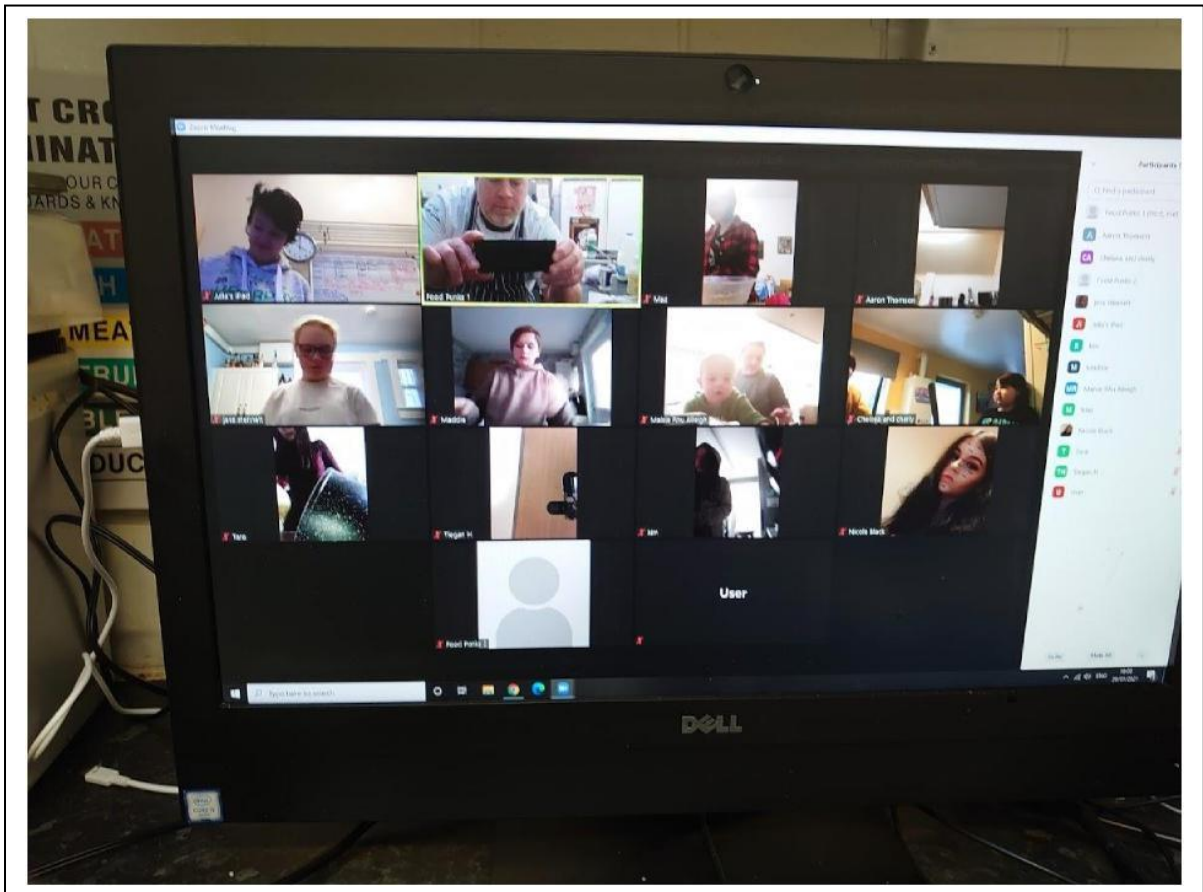


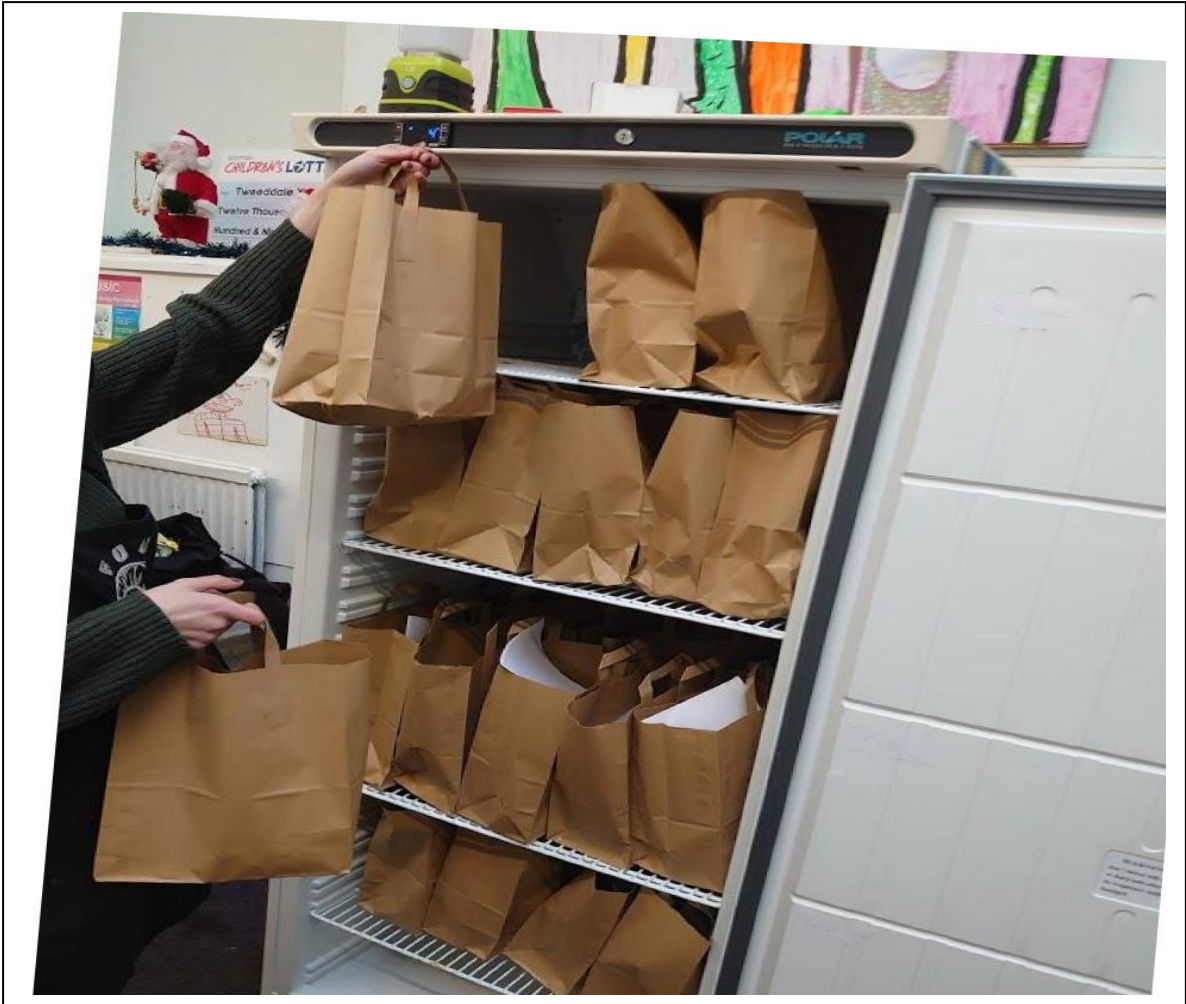


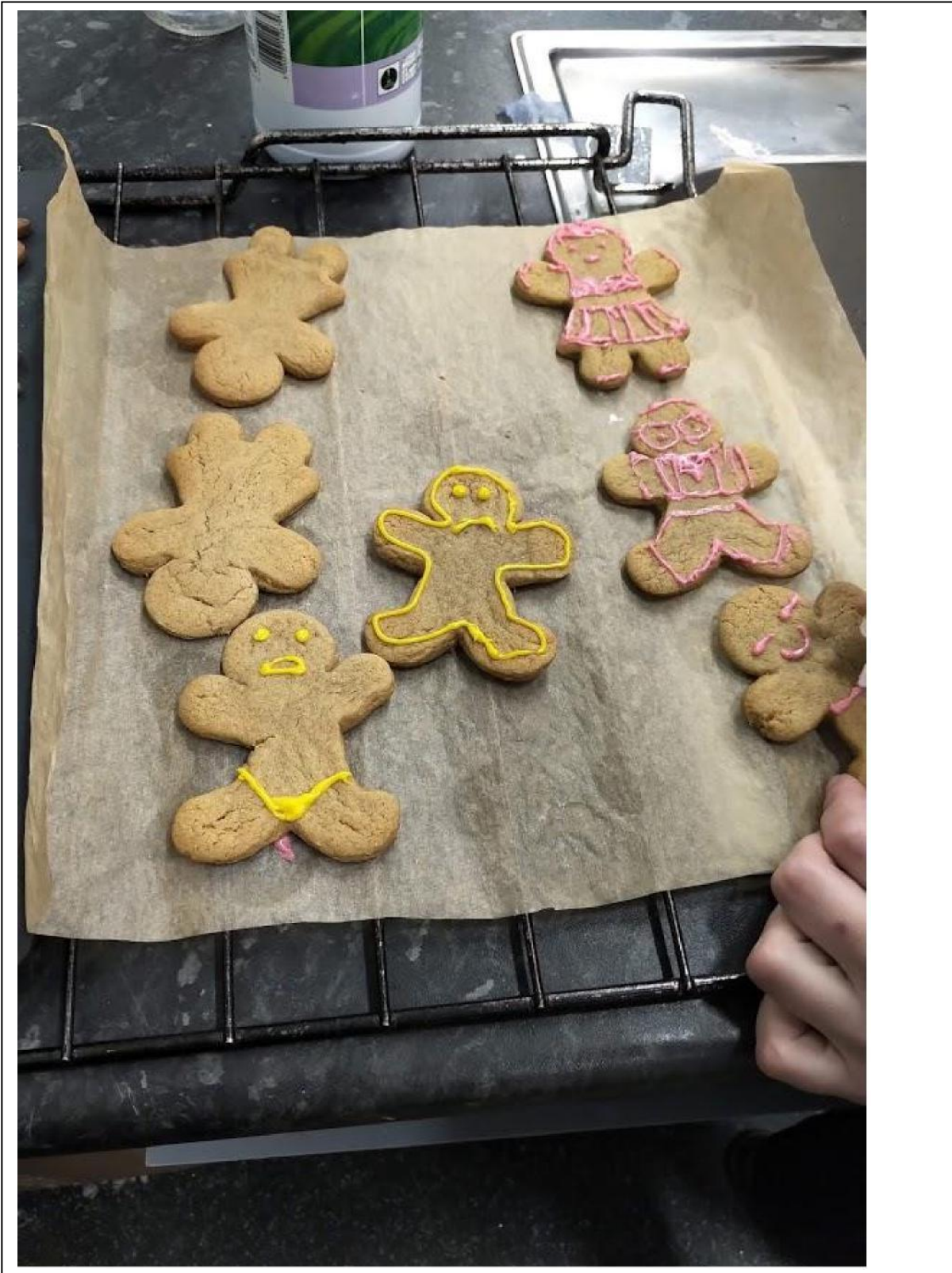














# Interim Community Fund Evaluation Form

Group name:	Stable Life
CF Reference No.	CF1920/EIL/12
Amount Awarded	£20,000

Following your successful application to the Interim Communities Fund we would like to hear what impact your funded project / activity has had in your area. Remember that failure to report will impact on your eligibility to secure future funding. Community Fund funded projects will also be invited to share their story with the wider community at local Area Partnership meetings.

Your project had the identified outcomes of:

*Communities have more access to better quality local services or activities*

*Communities have more access to a better quality environment*

*Communities have more pride in their community*

*Communities have more access to better quality advice and information*

*More local groups or services are better supported to recover from financial difficulty*

## Section 1: Tell us about your project / activity and what difference it has made

To tell us what you did and what difference your project / activity made to your community. You can submit photographs, short films or audio as well as feedback from people who were involved. Alternatively you can write about your experiences here. Remember to refer back to the description of your idea / project in your application and include information on the number of people who were involved, how they benefited and what the impact of the project / activity was. If your project has achieved a different outcome or additional outcomes, please select the different / additional outcomes above and explain why.

We have had a productive year at Stable Life despite the current crisis and as an organisation we feel we have grown and developed and enhanced the services we offer to the young people we support. This includes:

- We have become fully affiliated to provide the SQA National Progression Award Level 4 Horse Care
- In partnership with Borders College able to deliver the SQA National Progression Award Level 4 in Rural Skills
- Project staff have been trained to deliver Hi5's, Dynamic and Youth Achievement Awards

Over the year we received 74 new referrals and were already supporting 28 young people. The majority of these referrals have come in over the last few months which we anticipated following the Covid lockdown. Over the year 66 young people have completed

their intervention with us. 2 young people disengaged during their time, 5 were unable to continue, 2 did not engage with Stable life and one referral was unsuitable. We are currently supporting 29 young people and have a waiting list of 26.

#### Activities:

Over the year 69 young people participated in our main EAL programme. This consisted of 39 young people participating in 1:1 sessions of which 19 young people progressed on to join group sessions. In addition 30 young people went straight into group sessions. The 1:1 sessions ran for 10 weeks and the group session followed a 17-week programme both once a week. All group sessions usually last around 2 hours and 1:1's run for one hour. We deliver our sessions during term time within school hours. We ran 171 1:1 sessions and 124 group sessions over the year.

In addition to the main EAL programme in August we started our Healing Hooves project which links the benefit of sport as well as mental health support through our EAL programme, a personal fitness instructor and a qualified Mental Health Professional. We have delivered 41 sessions to 11 young people working with the personal trainer to develop a fitness plan for the young people as well as EAL sessions. This integrates the skills young people need to build confidence, and watching our first groups go through has shown how their confidence has grown exponentially. Supporting their team through fitness, has also shown the benefits as they are working around the horses.

From December 2019 to April 2020 3 young people participated in our 11 Environmental Group sessions once a week for 2 hours where they made bird feed, grew vegetables, landscaped round the yard and planted flowers.

Working in partnership with Selkirk High School and Borders College, from August 2020, 7 young people have participated in our Pathway to Rural Skills programme which is giving young people an opportunity to work towards gaining their NPA Level 4 in Horse Care and NPA Level 4 in Rural Skills. We are working with the farmer to offer a more diverse programme including working with sheepdogs, land maintenance, and fencing as well as environmental conservation. This programme runs twice a week on a Monday and Wednesday afternoon and is aimed at young people who are struggling in main stream education. We have ran 33 sessions to date and the programme will run over the academic year finishing in June 2021.

4 young people have completed work experience on the yard over the year. Due to COVID and looking at how to keep our young people, staff and volunteers safe we had to limit the number of people on the yard as a result of this we have not been able to offer as many transitional work placements as we would have liked.

We have provided peer mentoring opportunities for 4 young people through a tailored training package. Each Peer Mentor attended once a week to help deliver a group session. 18 young people are also volunteering on the yard completing over 3,700 volunteering hours between them, helping out at weekends, after school and during school holidays, again all have completed a tailored training package. 4 of these came through our EAL programme this year and 17 have obtained Saltire Awards for the hours of volunteering

they have completed, 10 have completed a NPA level 4 in Horse Care. Again due to COVID we have had to reduce the number of volunteers helping out on the yard.

Due to COVID this year we were unable to run a summer programme however from the 1st July, as restrictions continued to lift, our project staff started to resume our services and developed a programme that we were able to offer whilst fully complying with guidelines as laid down by Scottish Government. This consisted of meeting up with our young people on a 1:1 basis. As transport was an issue we decided that the staff could go to the young people's town/village and meet up with them there to do a social distancing walk and chat or activity in a local park. This worked well for a few weeks over the summer holidays and allowed us to catch up with the young people we had major concerns about.

#### Main Outcomes:

Outcome 1 - Young people have improved confidence.

Of the 66 young people who completed their intervention with us, we have seen a significant increase in self-confidence for 16 of them. 49 of these young people showed a moderate to slight increase and 1 young person showed no change - this was because lack of self-confidence was not an issue for them. Although some young people did not complete the



programme we still saw various improvements in them and feedback from the young people also showed that they had felt some benefit of attending Stable Life.

Of the 28 young people we are currently working with we are seeing 17 young people experiencing progress every week they attend. We have 11 young people who have yet to experience progress, as they have just started.

Examples of this progress includes young people taking the lead in sessions, young people volunteering for Stable Life to 6 young people having the confidence to go on and complete a SQA Level 4 in Horse Care. Visually the difference in the young people is very noticeable, they begin as non-engaging within the group, not knowing each other, to being happy and laughing while completing tasks and activities, the groups start to bond, often keeping in touch after their intervention has been completed.

An example of this is one young boy who being part of a very nurturing group, using psychosocial intervention, developed new skills in a new environment and developed valuable transferable skills. He is now showing the confidence to use them & developing new friendships in school, he is a voice and advocate for others, being part of the school media group, LGBT Group & Pupil Council. He is more able to regulate emotions, deal with social situations and peer problems that may arise, whilst accepting who he is and being proud of himself.

Feedback from referring agencies will give us an indication that the skills they have developed have been transferred to other areas of their lives, including engaging in school, joining in with extracurricular activities and increased attendance and attainment.



Attendance at multi-agency meetings allows feedback to be provided from a different setting. *"X is much more confident in interacting with others and also less anxious about trying new things"* Feedback from a teacher.



Feedback from young people also evidences the progress they have made: *"I didn't think it was possible to achieve everything that I have"*  
*"This is the first time I have felt proud of myself"*  
*"It made me feel love"*

Outcome 2 - Young people develop increased resilience.

We have seen a significant increase in resilience for 13 of them. 51 of these young people showed a moderate to slight increase and 2 young people showed no change.

An example of this progress is a young person who was diagnosed with ASD and found the diagnosis difficult. He was an extremely bright & articulate boy, but was experiencing overwhelming emotions, and required time out of classes as he struggled to self-regulate, and very much experienced fight, flight or freeze in a number of situations, and due to sensory issues, heightened anxiety. He had very set interests and could find it difficult when others don't have the same interest or understanding. Participating at Stable Life, from the challenges and experiences here, he began to show his true self and enjoyed sharing experiences with the group and increased in confidence as the weeks passed. If we threw something different into the mix or change ponies unexpectedly, he coped with this and saw it through, even if he found this difficult, clearly showing self-regulation. He is more aware of social cues, and can readily take turns as well as being able to offer opinions and advice to others, showing great kindness and empathy. He fully recognised the changes in himself and the impact this had on his life out with Stable Life. In his own words he has become more resilient, and able to cope. He is more flexible in his thinking and more accepting of others.

Other feedback we have received also evidences the difference in the young people: *"A has had a very positive experience at Stable Life which has had a positive impact on how he manages his behaviour. It has given him much needed time to talk and be himself away from what can be a very chaotic family life"* Feedback from a teacher

*"X can often appear unmotivated and it has been noted that she is motivated to participate and feedback during Stable Life sessions. It is great to learn that she has been challenging herself: we are currently building on X resilience within school so it is hoped that she can transfer the skills built at Stable Life"* Feedback from a teacher

Feedback from young people: *"Stable Life helps me behave"* *"Joining my group at Stable life has been amazing, it has brought me out of myself and I think others are more accepting of me now"*

Outcome 3 - Young people have improved social skills.

We have seen a significant improvement in relationships with 13 young people. 53 of these young people showed a moderate to slight increase.

An example of this progress is A 12 year old boy, transitioning to High School in a different town after experiencing bullying was referred with issues of low self-confidence, social isolation, low self-esteem, relationships, mental health and a victim of bullying. He presented as very awkward & anxious and clung to Mum & communication was limited. We completed some 1:1 sessions over the Summer, with a view to commencing group



work, when transition to local High School would happen. By communicating in a different way using Equine Assisted Learning techniques, with one of our ponies he was able to become more assertive in order to join up and communicate in a way where he & the pony understood each other. This enabled him to start talking more about feelings and emotions, and further develop some techniques and strategies when fear & anxiety started to rise. After a few sessions, he began to cling less and less to his Mum and had less trouble 'letting – go' when he was dropped off, and was able to give positive feedback and share his experiences when he was picked up.

Over the weeks that followed, using various exercises on and off the ponies, focused around resilience, communication, friendships, trust & problem solving, he was able to become more vocal and was more willing to voice his opinion and talk in front of others. He was also able to show his enjoyments and sense of humour, seeing much more open body language and smiles and laughs, readily joining in, without the need to prompt and encourage as much. He developed strong friendships within the group, with a greater sense of self. As a result things became much more settled at school, with less issues around attendance & peer relationships, with greater independence, and less reliance on Mum.

Other feedback we have received includes:

*"X has gained much more confidence with horses and this will extend into other parts of her activities. The insights provided by focusing on how the horse communicates have really given her a valuable tool in all forms of communication"* Feedback from a parent

*"I'm not a Hermit anymore and I feel less trapped"* Feedback from a young person

Other outcomes include:

- All of the young people we have supported over the last year have increased their level of physical fitness through participation in the sessions
- 14 young people re-engaged with school
- 1 gained a place at college
- 1 found employment
- 6 young people have gone on to start commercial riding lessons
- 7 young people have gone on to join other new groups i.e. Scouts, youth club

- 8 adult volunteers have helped out on the yard or in EAL sessions and between them have completed over 1,700 volunteer hours. 3 have been awarded Saltire Awards and one has completed a NPA Level 4 in Horse Care

## Challenges:

When Covid hit the country and lockdown began we had to cease all activities on both our main services and commercial activities. We had to furlough our Project Staff, Volunteer Co-Ordinator and an Instructor. Our yard staff continued to look after the ponies during this period and the Team Leader and myself continued to work from home on reduced hours. Initially our project staff contacted parents and offered the opportunity for them to get in touch if they needed to at any time. We were putting posts up on our social media highlighting how our ponies are doing, some self-care tips and any other support that we could offer.

During the crisis we have learnt that we have been able to cope well with the situation as an organisation, and adapt to change quickly however delivery of our services very heavily rely on our ponies and it has been very frustrating not being able to support our young people in our normal way.



Our main services recommenced in August and where our group session historically had children from different localities, due to restrictions we are not able to offer this and all groups had to be from an individual school bubble. Transport has also been a major issue with the restrictions in place and these factors have impacted the service we can provide, resulting in an increased amount of potential groups we would be expected to offer and 1:1 sessions. The result of Covid19 has also amounted to an increase in referrals in which we have had to implement a waiting list. Session intakes were split in to 4 per year. This was to ensure no young person had a significant period on a waiting

list. Due to Lockdown we were not able to start our Easter intake, however the referrals were moved forward to the August intake.

Our use of volunteers has been limited due to restrictions and reduced capacity which has impacted on our ability to offer supported work experience, work placements and volunteering opportunities to some of our young people which has included the establishment of the young people's steering committee.

In the first quarter of 2019/20 our commercial income was £25,631 and commissioned income was £4,316 in total circa £30k. During lockdown our commercial income was £4,568 and commissioned income was nil for the first quarter of 2020/21 – this was a huge reduction and a major concern, however were able to access the Scottish Government's Third Sector Resilience Grant and Business Support Grant which helped to cover some of the loss. Our funders have also been very proactive and flexible with diverting our grant funding to where we require it which has also helped with our financial situation.



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Since the lifting of restrictions our commercial activities were able to offer a reduced number of riding lessons, riding school hire and smaller sized Pony Club activities, however in total the numbers have reduced dramatically and are over half of what they are normally.

In amongst the Covid epidemic our Indoor School project has eventually started – timing could have been better but it's underway and we are working around it and focusing on the end product which is starting to get there and will be fantastic when finished (hopefully in December) This too has impacted on our service delivery and commercial income. Our lease extension will come into effect from when the work on the Indoor Riding School is complete and as such we await a copy of it from the landlords.

Between September and October two of our Project Workers have recently resigned and in light of losing 2/3 thirds of our Project Team we completed a recruitment drive and have just started 2 new Project Workers. As we are limited at the moment with what we can deliver we have offered them both 20-hour posts with the possibility of increasing these hours as restrictions are lifted and our capacity increases. Prior to the October holiday we had a few young people finish their intervention with us and we were due to start new groups up after the break – we delayed starting these groups so that we can continue to cover our current sessions with the staff we had in place, however these new groups have just started this week.

As time goes on there will be ongoing changes that we envisage will impact on the charity, our staff, clients and partner agencies and we are looking at this as a time of opportunity and how we can adapt our services to best meet these changes for everyone whilst ensuring the sustainability of Stable Life.

## Section 2: How you spent the money

Please give details below of the items funded by the award. Please note that **original receipts must be submitted** with this evaluation form. All receipts submitted will be returned to you. This table can be copied if more space is required.

Item/activity	Reference Number (please number your receipts)	Cost (corresponding evidence of spending attached)
Contribution to rent costs	Invoice 6	9,000
Contribution to electricity costs	Invoice 4	2,000
Contribution towards water bills from Dec 19 to Nov 20	Invoice 3	1,000
Contribution to Mobiles from Dec 19 to Nov 20	Invoice 1	1,000

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Contribution towards landlines & broadband	Invoice 2	1,000
Contribution towards Insurance costs	Invoice 5	6,000
<b>Total amount spent by your group</b>		<b>£20,000</b>

If the items detailed above are **different in any way** from the expenditure listed in your original application form, use the space below to explain the change(s).

### Section 3: Future work

If your project is continuing, let us know what you have planned for the next stage or, if your project has inspired you to start a new community project, please tell us about it

Due to Covid the progress made on our Business Plan has not progressed as we had planned, for many months it was a case of focussing on short-term survival and not longterm planning, however the crisis has allowed us time to look at where we are going as an organisation and we actively working on our recovery plan and longer term goals. Some of the changes that will help with our recovery plan include reviewing our commercial prices as well as our commissioned costings as neither has been increased for a number of years and the implementation of an equine management software system so we work more efficiently, safer and smarter, keeping tighter control on budgets, costings and financial management.

We have our ongoing funding from Children In Need, Big Lottery and Comic Relief. In addition we have secured one-year grant of £20,000 from KP4 and one-year grant of £12,000 from the Bank of Scotland Foundation. In addition we have received funding from the Scottish Government's Third Sector Resilience

Grant of £11,300 and Business Support Grant of £25,000 to support us during Covid. We will also continue to apply for identified funding streams as required as well as continue to try to develop a clear commissioning framework between Stable Life and referring partners which includes SBC which again has not progressed very far over the year



## Coldingham Beach Wheelchair Project Evaluation





*'Such a special day at our favourite place. Thank you so much Coldingham Beach Wheelchairs - it's so amazing having this facility right on our doorstep & was so good for us all to be able to enjoy it together!'*

Irene Dougal, Auchencrow. Scottish Borders

Project delivered by Sea the Change

Report compiled by Alice Fisher, Project Coordinator, August 2020



## Summary of the Project

Sea the Change is a social enterprise striving to create happier, healthier, more sustainable communities. We aim to foster a greater appreciation and respect for our coastline and encourage our whole community to get outdoors, connect with others, and make small changes to reduce our environmental impact. Our work, with schools, community groups and local businesses helps to reduce social isolation and improve health and wellbeing for our whole community.

This is well aligned with Scottish Borders Council Community Plan that encourages projects that have a positive impact on quality of life, well-being, our economy and in promoting communities where more people are in good health and leading an active lifestyle at any age or stage in life.

In August 2018, following our Sea the Change Beach School sessions where some children could not access the beach, we carried out a community consultation to identify whether there was a need locally to get some beach accessible wheelchairs. The response was overwhelmingly in favour of the idea, and so began our journey to making Berwickshire beaches accessible for all.

***'I watched a disabled child in a wheelchair being taken on this experience and I found it one of the most amazing things to witness. I feel that everyone should be able to have the opportunity to experience the sanctuary that the coastline can offer, regardless of ability or financial status and I heavily support this great cause.'***

***Zoe Long, Berwick Upon Tweed. Northumberland***

In March 2019, we received a grant from UnLtd to purchase our first children's beach wheelchair and with a grant received from Greencoat Drone Hill Community Fund in partnership with Coldingham School, we were able to build our storage unit at the beach. In August 2019 we won the Scottish Borders Locality Bid, as voted for by the local community, that enable us to purchase our additional two adult wheelchairs. **The project was officially launched on the 14th July 2019.**



***'I haven't been on a beach for around 10 years due to my disability and would love to do so again.'*** Neil McMurdo, Eyemouth. Scottish Borders

## Summary of Achievements

- Community Consultation undertaken
- Funding secured to purchase 3 beach wheelchairs, hoist, and storage unit
- Storage unit build on Coldingham Beach
- A team of volunteers trained and recruited to help manage the project
- Plans to install additional disabled parking and upgrade the storage to enable more families can enjoy a day at the beach together.

## Community Consultation

Following requests for a beach wheelchair, in August 2018 we invited the whole community to have a say in the projects that Sea the Change proposed for East Berwickshire Communities and the feedback was incredibly positive. We held an open house event at our office in Eyemouth and more than 30 people attended, including Cllr Carol Hamilton, Cllr Helen Laing and MSP Paul Wheelhouse who were all hugely supportive of the proposed Beach Wheelchairs Project.

In addition to this, we circulated an online and paper copy questionnaire in the community. The results of this questionnaires have shown that respondents believe that there is demand for this initiative in the community - all respondents strongly supported the scheme and 96.8% agreed that not only disabled people would benefit of such scheme but also people with long term health conditions and older people in general who may find difficult to walk on sand.

Most respondents were either an individual who is unable to access the beach due to age or a pre-existing health condition; a main carer or provided paid or volunteering assistance to people who would benefit of such scheme in the area. This correlates with our conversations with older peoples' services such as Saltgreens Residential Care Home and sheltered residential complex such as Linkim Court and Swan Court as well as Chest Heart & Stroke group in the area, BHA residents, NHS Life Style advisor feedback, Ability Borders and the local physical rehabilitation group.

**'This service would offer a fantastic opportunity for people if all ages to continue to access the beach, the sea and benefit physically and emotionally.'**



Sea the Change has comprehensive public liability & contents insurance that is required to protect goods, customers, equipment, and volunteers.



## Alison Black, Eyemouth. Scottish Borders

### **Storage**

Sea the Change partnered with Coldingham School on a funding application to Drone Hill Windfarm to open a community beach hut. As space would be limited in this hut due to the size of our wheelchairs, we managed to negotiate a separate storage unit to house our beach wheelchairs.

Our storage container is currently located opposite the community beach hut. It is close to the beach and the toilets, however the path to access it has a very uneven surface that has proved tricky to wheelchair users. We want to reassess whether this is the ideal location for our storage unit, or whether we could house our wheelchairs closer to the disabled parking at the foot of the hill (in discussion with Scottish Borders Council).

Our Beach Wheelchairs & Hoist



We are delighted to now have 3 beach wheelchairs: one child and two adult beach wheelchairs available for hire - a large Hippocampe, a Terrawheels, and a Sandcruiser All Terrain Beach Wheelchair. In addition to this we now have a Birdie Compact Folding Hoist.

Picture	Type	Features
	Hippocampe	Often used for children and small adults.
	Terrawheels	Adult wheelchair
	Sandcruiser All Terrain	Adult wheelchair
	Birdie Compact Folding Hoist	Transportable Hoist.

Hiring wheelchairs

It is FREE for all users to hire one of our wheelchairs, however we do accept donations to cover the cost of maintenance, marketing, and insurance.

*'When you wake up to beautiful sunshine on a Sunday morning so decide to head to the beach. No longer an issue for us now we know we can use the beach wheelchair without any fuss as it stays at Coldingham beach. Lots of fun and laughter had by all and lovely to see it so busy! And bonus, we met a couple who hadn't been on the beach together for years so we set up the adult wheelchair so they could stroll to the waterfront together too'*

Fiona Blaikie. Eyemouth. Scottish Borders

## Our Volunteers

We currently have a team of 15 volunteers that have been recruited to help administer our beach wheelchairs.

All volunteers are expected to undertake regular training sessions and will need to register in the PVG Scheme (Protecting Vulnerable Adults) run by Disclosure Scotland. We would also like to get all volunteers First Aid Trained

Sadly, due to COVID-19 many of our volunteers have been unable to give their time due to shielding.



*'It was nice to get onto Coldingham beach this week. Thanks to the volunteers for helping us out on the day'. Neil McMurdo. Eyemouth. Scottish Borders*

## Training for volunteers



All volunteers undertake training and will also now be required to complete the online Covid Awareness Training.

- Operations on the beach
- Opening and Closing Up
- Safe use of equipment
- Customer Service
- Maintenance of equipment
- Administration

*'Can't thank you all enough. First class service.'*  
Elaine Wood, Berwick Upon Tweed. Northumberland





## Impact within our Community

Sea the Change aims to empower people to make positive changes and play their part in looking after themselves and the place where they live.

Improvements in mental health and wellbeing can not only benefit individuals and their carers, but it can also reduce demand in services such as social and the NHS. By enjoying the outdoors and more specifically, the East Berwickshire coast, we can make our community a more vibrant place and help people to develop a positive outlook of the area where they live.

*'Emma loved it in the beach wheelchair and being able to play in the sea with her sisters and cousin.'*  
Karen Thomson. Coldingham. Scottish Borders

Research has shown that spending time in nature has been associated with decreased levels of mental illness, with the strongest links to reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety, in addition to increased self-esteem.

Feedback users, their families and support staff and volunteers who participated in this project has been overwhelmingly positive about the impact these beach wheelchairs have had, on both then and this wider community and visiting residents:

*'My daughter had an amazing time at the beach. Something she has not done for a long time and something we all take for granted. Thanks once again. You were amazing.'* Angela Richie. Belford, Northumberland



 Elaine Wood  recommends  
Coldingham Beach Wheelchairs.   
21 mins · 

We had an absolutely amazing time today. Thankyou very much. Kerry loved it and as you can see even her great nephew hitched a lift 🙌 we will definitely be back. Can't recommend you enough. 🍌🍌🍌



## Partnership Work within the Community

Just prior to COVID, Sea the change was awarded 6mth funding from Awards for All to recruit a project coordinator for 1 day a week to help train up members of our community in the logistics of accessing the storage unit, health and safety requirements and operations of our chairs. This training will remove the requirement of an additional volunteer needed to access our wheelchairs and will ensure the sustainability of the project.

*'I work at Lanark Lodge, a day service for adults with learning disabilities. We have a few service users who would love a walk along the beach who are not physically able.'* Marnie Liddle, Lanark Lodge Care Home



Obviously COVID has changed our immediate plans and it is now looking unlikely that we will be able to engage with local residential care homes in the surrounding area, but what we are hearing is that families are struggling without the regular support or day cays sessions and activities that would normally take place on a weekly basis.

We now need to focus on a new way to engage. A safe way that supports families struggling in a lockdown world. We need to make this service as easy and accessible as possible and let families have fun and enjoy being outdoors in a safe environment.

*'It would be great if you could come and do a presentation to Brainbox to tell the parents all about your wheelchairs- Brainbox is a north east charity that support families with young people with a brain injury and neurological conditions.'* Elizabeth Bruin, Brainbox

### Lessons Learnt

- We must move our Beach Storage Unit closer to the beach– the current location is too difficult for wheelchair users to access safely.
- An additional Beach Hut would give us capacity to host another wheelchair, plus much needed shelter for our volunteers.
- More volunteers are needed. Currently we only have a handful who are available due to COVID.
- A fixed hoist would be easier. One that does not require the battery to be charged after each hoist.
- The beach this summer was busier than ever. At least one additional disabled parking space is required.
- Access to the beach via the boardwalk must be achieved. Accessing via the slip ramp can be difficult when wet and sandy.
- Access to the beach café should be reviewed and upgraded
- The current disabled toilets are outdated and inaccessible. Ideally funding would be accessed to upgrade these to a *Changing Places Toilet* located next to the new storage hut.



*'Be easier if there was a way to hoist next to the beach'*  
Catherine Bond. Darlington. County Durham

## Future Aspirations

With one in 5 people in the UK living with a disability or health condition, there is a clear business case for ensuring that disabled people's needs are catered to and that everyone, regardless of age or disability given equal access to our beautiful East Berwickshire coast.

Tourism is booming across the UK, according to a press release published by the Department of Work and Pensions in August 2018 the industry is now worth over £66 billion a year to the economy with "more than 11 million disabled people in the UK with a combined spending power of their households, standing at around £250 billion". Schemes such as these can be a real boost to the tourism industry in the area and we must ensure that they are invested in appropriately.



Ashley Sim

This is such a great service thank you so much for helping my princess smile she has never enjoyed being at the beach as we normally sit to the side while her brothers play this is fantastic she's never stopped talking about it!!! Thanks again Karen and Antonio for taking them xx

4 w Like Reply



**'This will only work if the infrastructure is in place to support it. Disabled Parking, Disabled toilets, all easily accessible'. Mike Clift, Coldingham. Scottish Borders**



We want Berwickshire Beaches to be accessible to everyone. Coldingham Bay is the ultimate destination location that should be accessible for all.

Sea the Change are now looking for funding for a long-term Beach Wheelchair Coordinator who will manage the changes needed for this project.



## Joelle's Story

*My 12-year-old daughter Joelle has quadriplegic cerebral palsy amongst a host of other medical issues. We have lived beside the beach all her life but haven't been able to fully enjoy the benefits for the last 8yrs as Joelle has become too heavy to lift from her chair. While visiting North Berwick on a day trip we came across the charity Beach Wheelchairs which offered people with disabilities the opportunity to experience the beach just like everyone else. It was the most spectacular sight, seeing my daughter feel the sand and sea water on her toes again and the joy she expressed sharing in the fun with her brother and step sister was an experience I will never forget. To be lucky enough to have this facility on our immediate doorstep at Coldingham Sands would enhance my daughter's life, and therefore our family life, immeasurably. It would allow us to enjoy our fabulous surroundings together along with her newest siblings and really give Joelle the ability to enjoy new sensations, sounds and sights which have been previously difficult for us to offer her. It is so important for her development, health, and mental wellbeing to be able to enjoy nature, outdoors and experiences other people take for granted. Having a beach wheelchair available locally would allow her, and others, to safely access all our beautiful area as to offer. It will also bring new visitors to our towns who may never have had the luck to see what awaits them at Coldingham Sands, an absolute haven of beauty and serenity. **Fiona Blaikie. Eyemouth. Scottish Borders***

