

Melrose in Bloom

£5,750.00

Melrose in Bloom is looking for funding to replace the wooden fence between the Boat Brae footpath and Melrose Bowling Club's outer perimeter. This fence will follow the line of the present one, which is now unsightly and in very poor condition. This project will build on the improvement of this stretch of footpath, to create an enhanced visual experience for locals and visitors to Melrose, especially with the planting of bulbs and evergreen shrubs along the length of the footpath banking.

Panel thoughts:

- Melrose in Bloom/Melrose Bowling Club have not been able to confirm land ownership. SBC Solicitors were content with the actions the applicant had taken to try and ascertain land ownership despite no formal documentation could be located. The panel was concerned that a funding award may present difficulties in the future if the land ownership was confirmed and the fence was not welcomed by the land owner.
- The panel also had some concerns around ongoing maintenance of the fence and which parties would be responsible for it in future years.
- At the time of application, there was around £4.8k of unrestricted funds in the account of Melrose in Bloom which could be used for this project.

The panel recommends not to fund this project.

Live, Learn, Earn

£3,840.00

Live, Learn, Earn is seeking funding for a project that aims to support eight individuals over a twelve-week period to attend one metal work session per week. This is to enable intergenerational work with older people having the skills and knowledge to pass onto others creating long-term connections and bonds. This project aims to build self-esteem, confidence and create new friendships.

Panel thoughts:

- Confusion around the identified need and which SBC Local Area Coordination team would be involved.
- Concerns around project cost and how it was calculated – the £40 per hour breakdown still felt quite vague despite further explanation after Officer request.
- It's not clear where this project will be delivered.
- Lack of detail in quotes provided.

The panel recommends not to fund this project.

Hike and Bike Hub

£6,150.00

Hike and Bike Hub is seeking funding to cover its rent costs for the next nine months. The project is the continuation of provision of affordable bike hire, bike servicing, bike maintenance, led cycles and guided walks as well as the promotion active travel and the walking and cycling trails around Galashiels and the surrounding areas. Hike and Bike Hub applied to the Neighbourhood Support Fund last financial year and received 50% of its application amount, with the panel advising a further application in 2023/24 if the group could evidence that income was being generated.

Panel thoughts:

- Excellent project, delivering positive outcomes in the Scottish Borders, specifically, encouraging people to consider alternative travel options and subsidising the costs of bike hire and repair/maintenance.
- Strong partnership working with local community groups and businesses.
- There is evidence that income is being generated and it is increasing month-on-month. The panel would be keen to see a progress report once the peak of summer has passed.
- The funding will cover the group until the “break point” in its lease in April 2024.

The panel recommends to fund this project in full.

Go Wild Scotland

£9,992.78

Go Wild Scotland is seeking funding to support the ongoing employment of one full-time member of staff, paid at national living wage for approximately 6 months. The role would be to develop the group’s community engagement activities at Mauldsheugh Wood in Selkirk; continue its work with local schools on outdoor learning; expand its volunteering programme; develop nature-based activities to boost mental and physical health; and develop a programme of ranger-led walks and wildlife tours within the region.

Panel thoughts:

- The panel are supportive of the work that Go-Wild have undertaken to date and the extensive work that they have undertaken with local schools.
- Go Wild received funding support in 2022/23 from the Neighbourhood Support Fund to cover staffing costs.
- The panel would be keen to see the use of other funders in supporting on-going salary costs.
- The group have provided information that demonstrates a model to achieve sustainability, this is still at an early stage.

The panel recommends not to fund this project.

The panel also recommends that the group should seek an alternative funding source, such as the Community-led Local Development (CLLD) Fund. The Council’s Communities and Partnership Team can assist with this.

Galashiels Bowling Club

£10,000.00

Galashiels Bowling Club is seeking funding to replace the existing felt covering on its pavilion roof.

Panel thoughts:

- Uncertain whether the Neighbourhood Support Fund is the most appropriate fund for this project.
- The panel notes that the club engages with various community groups and allows them to utilise the pavilion space for a small donation but the panel feel that the repair of the roof is not directly encouraging community use. It may be more suitable for a fund that has been created to support community groups improve their facilities.

The panel recommends not to fund this project.

The panel also recommends that the group should seek an alternative funding source, such as the CARES Fund, administered by Local Energy Scotland. The Council's Communities and Partnership Team can assist with this.

Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company

£10,000.00

Ettrick and Yarrow Community Development Company is applying for funding for its Community Forest Ranger so that the group can continue their work maintaining access and improving the Ettrick Marshes as well as improving the outdoor nature area at the old Ettrick School. The group is including 12 days of additional ranger help to assist with jobs where two people are required. There is no vehicle access to the Marshes which means everything has to be carried in by hand.

Panel thoughts:

- The panel received two applications of a similar nature and was keen to maintain consistency.
- The panel appreciated the work of the rangers and the evaluation provided but had concerns about the ongoing sustainability of this paid role.
- The panel is aware that the group intends to fell trees within their community woodland to support the ongoing costs of a paid role. The panel is unclear, as yet, when this will happen and therefore unsure when the post will become sustainable.

The panel recommends not to fund this project.

Lauder Larder

£5,407.82

Lauder Larder is seeking funding to purchase a freezer, a laptop and a printer, new shelving, cookery books and a year's worth of core products. The group would like to be in a position to take and freeze food for its customers. The purchase of a laptop and printer will enable the group to type up and print recipes, as currently they are working from a very old iPad. Demand on the Larder has increased significantly since 12 months ago and whilst the group are fortunate to receive donations, further funding to cover a year's supply of core products will vastly reduce the strain on the service.

Panel thoughts:

- Very supportive and appreciative of the invaluable service that community larders and foodbanks provide throughout the Scottish Borders.
- The expansion of the current provision and being able to freeze products will allow a wider range of products to be available for the local community whilst also preventing food waste.
- The laptop and printer purchase is of a very reasonable price and when paired with the cookery books, will encourage service users to cook using ingredients they otherwise wouldn't.
- The panel notes the partnership working with the Lauderdale Leisure Centre on the cook club model.

The panel recommends to fund this project in full.
