

Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club

Business Plan

February 2023

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club is a constituted, not for profit club, which has been in existence since 1925. The Club operates a bowling green and clubhouse facility. The clubhouse house facility is an owned asset, sited on ground leased from Aberdeenshire Council. The bowling green facility used by the club is owned by Aberdeenshire Council.

2. PURPOSE OF PLAN

This business plan is to support an application for Asset Transfer for the long-term lease of the bowling green and the surrounding grassed garden area from Aberdeenshire Council.

3. BUSINESS DETAILS

Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club
Address: Union Grove, Fraserburgh, AB43 9LD
Email: [REDACTED]
Legal Entity: Not for profit club. Constituted Group
VAT Registration: Not VAT registered

History/Background

Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club was formed in 1925 and has operated as a not for profit organisation during that time. The club makes use of the local authority owned bowling green and until 2016 used an old wooden building for the club house facility. In 2012 the club secured a 25 year lease from Aberdeenshire Council for an area of ground to the West side of the bowling green, which housed the aforementioned old wooden building which was used as the club house facility. This building was in very poor condition and members commenced a programme of fund-raising to erect a replacement facility. In 2017, once the fund-raising target was successfully achieved, a new club house facility was built.

As an outdoor only facility, the green is open annually from April through to end of September.

Similar to the majority of bowling clubs we had seen a decline in our membership over a number of years, due to the general demographic of membership of bowling clubs. We have and continue to take steps to address this and have seen our membership numbers increase. Membership numbers reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic, however following a concerted effort to attract new members in this last year we have increased our membership numbers by 20 to 50.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, Aberdeenshire Council ceased cutting, tending and maintaining the bowling green due to lockdown, when only essential services were permitted to be undertaken. At this time, members of the club took over these duties to ensure the bowling green was fully maintained and not lost to the community. Without members taking these steps, the grass would have grown to a level

whereby the green would have been ruined and unable to be played upon and ultimately lost to the community.

Whilst haven taken on responsibility for the green to ensure that it remained suitable for playing bowls, we now wish to place this on a formal basis, therefore this business plan is prepared in support of our Asset Transfer application for a long-term lease of the ground.

Our plans are to continue upon the basis we have been operating since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, whereby we commenced with the tending and the maintaining of the bowling green in addition to the operating of the club house facility and the club itself. We will do so by looking to retain and grow our membership and continue with our ongoing fundraising efforts to ensure we meet our day to day financial commitments.

Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club is very much a community club. We engage with the immediate community and the wider community through various means, including social media, posters throughout the town, ensuring the facility is open for use by the wider community and the open days we hold, which are promoted widely.

We provide a valuable social resource to the community and have volunteers and motivated members.

There are health and wellbeing benefits to playing bowls. Bowls is a game that can be enjoyed at any age and experience level. While it's not a particularly energetic game, bowls can help with posture, flexibility, balance and hand-eye coordination.

IMPROVED FITNESS

According to the NHS, low-impact, moderate-intensity exercise can be just as effective as high-impact exercise (for example, running) at lowering the risk of heart disease. Bowls is one type of therapeutic exercise that ticks the boxes in terms of fitness and health benefits. There's a surprising amount of walking involved in bowls (you could end up walking up to three miles while you play!), and it's a good workout for your arms too.

INCREASED COORDINATION

Rolling the bowl with the goal of getting it as close to the jack as possible requires a healthy amount of hand-eye coordination. The more practice you get playing bowls, the better your hand-eye coordination will become. This, in turn, can stimulate mental alertness and improve concentration.

ENHANCED MENTAL WELLBEING

By increasing the level of endorphins in your body, exercise has been proven to boost mental wellbeing. Bowls also has a social element and sense of community, which can also be a great mood booster and source of support*. (*source: bowlr.co.uk)

We will continue to build on our knowledge and success that has seen the club grow and develop over the 97 years we have been in existence. We are acutely aware, like many bowling clubs, that a significant number of our members are of an older age demographic. We will continue with the work and support that we provide ensuring that members and users do not suffer from social isolation, feel part of our bowling community and getting them more active, helping maintain and perhaps even improve mental and physical health

by playing lawn green bowls and enjoying the social aspect that the club house facility brings.

Advisers consulted

Bank: Santander

Solicitor: Masson & Glennie

Other advisers: Officers of Aberdeenshire Council within Area Managers Office, Landscape Services, Estates and Economy.

4. PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club houses a bowling green and a club house facility.

The bowling green is used for the practising and playing of lawn green bowls.

Access to the club house facility permits for the safe storage of items, the purchasing and serving of light refreshments including teas, coffees, cakes and biscuits, changing facility and WC facilities. We host our prize giving/trophy awards at the clubhouse facility as well as hosting events, including coffee mornings, bingo, Christmas meal and burns supper (catering for these events is ordered in). The events are not restricted to the outdoor lawn green bowling season but are held throughout the year. The events are a way for the club to fund-raise as well as ensuring the club keeps in touch with members throughout the year.

The club hosts 2 tournaments annually which generates entry income and income from refreshments sold throughout the day.

The clubhouse facility is used by the club for the above as well as hosting other fundraising events and activities. It is available to let to other groups/organisations for fundraising events.

The general open hours of the facility are 13:30 – 16:00 and 18:30 – 21:00 during April to September. The bowling green can be accessed outwith these times to allow games to be played. Access is given following prior arrangement. Similarly, the clubhouse facility can be accessed outwith these times following prior arrangement.

5. THE MARKET

Customers

The club was formed in 1925 and has maintained a membership since that time.

Our target market is anyone with an interest in learning and playing outdoor lawn green bowls. The playing of lawn green bowls can be from a social aspect, enjoying being in the outdoors and also from a playing perspective – competitively and for leisure. The club

hosts our own competitions, both at club level as well as individual players and teams from other club coming along to participate in competitions.

Players are encouraged from a young age of 5 years+ with no upper age limit.

New members are targeted through the holding of open days. These open days include demonstrations as well as target bowls. The aim of these days is to show the leisure aspect as well as the competitive one for the sport.

Younger players/members are encouraged through the school programme which we participate in, whereby school pupils come along for practice and learning.

Annual Membership fees are kept at affordable levels:

Full membership - £40 in this current financial year
Junior membership - £20 in this current financial year
Pay as you go - £2 per session

Membership is open to all within Fraserburgh and the immediate surrounding area, extending to Banff & Buchan and Buchan.

Competitors

A direct competitor would be Fraserburgh Bowling Club, who are also located in the town and provide outdoor bowling facilities. Whilst recognising there is another club in the town which provides outdoor bowling, we have coexisted for several decades and see no reason why this will not continue.

It would be fair to say that any outdoor bowling green in the Banff & Buchan or Buchan area could be classed as a competitor. Again, we see no reason as to why this will not continue. Clubs attract individuals and players for various reasons, with most clubs having a similar offering. We do not have an indoor bowling facility, however for those who wish to play and compete in indoor bowls, there are various options locally in the Banff and Buchan and Buchan area.

Indirect competitors could be classed as any outdoor sporting facility, golf, driving range, cricket etc. Some of our members also play some of these other outdoor sporting activities.

Pricing

The cost of membership is determined at the Annual General Meeting of the Club each year. We have:

Full membership - £40 in this current financial year
Junior membership - £20 in this current financial year
Pay as you go - £2 per session

Promotion

The club is a member of Bowls Scotland. Member clubs can be found on their website: www.bowlsscotland.com/club-finder

The club is a member of Buchan Bowling Association. Members clubs can be found on their website: www.buchan-bowling.info/clubs.html

The club has its own Facebook page.

Posters are placed in various locations within Fraserburgh, including local shops to promote the club and events being held, including our open days.

Posts regarding activities at the club are posted on Fraserburgh Community pages to ensure a wider reach.

6. OPERATIONS

Staff & volunteers

The club has a constitution and is run by a committee. Currently there are 10 committee members, which includes office bearers.

The AGM is held annually in April.

The club does not have anyone of the payroll. We have a contractor who assists with maintaining the bowling green and they are paid upon presentation of their business invoice.

Volunteers, who in general are club members, provide further assistance with the tending and maintenance of the bowling green and keeping the surrounding grass and flowerbeds in a well-kept condition and tending to the clubhouse.

Premises

The clubhouse is owned by Fraserburgh West End Bowling Club, built on land owned and leased by the club from Aberdeenshire Council. The clubhouse facility comprises a single storey building, built in 2017. Within the clubhouse there are WC facilities, a kitchen area, seating area and lockers.

The bowling green, which we operate and play from is owned by Aberdeenshire Council, which currently has no lease in place. The purpose of this business plan is to accompany an asset transfer application seeking a long-term lease of the bowling green and surrounding area. Following the club taking on responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of the bowling green, which does incur costs, we are seeking to place this on a formal basis.

Legal

The club operates as a constituted group.

The club holds the necessary business insurance, which covers the building, contents of the building and public liability.

Kitchen area – no food is prepared on site. The facilities provided meet with all current environmental health requirements.

The club is a member of Bowls Scotland and Buchan Bowling Association.

Suppliers

Local retailers are used for the purchase of the refreshments which we sell. The level of these does not merit the joining of a wholesaler to source these goods. Also, by purchasing locally, we are keeping our spend within the local community.

Supplies to maintain and tend to the green and the surrounding grassed area and flowerbeds, including fertiliser, iron, grass-seeds, wetting agents, top soil, plants and weed-killer (for pathways) are purchased from specialist suppliers in the area.

Fuel for the grass-keeping equipment is purchased locally in Fraserburgh.

Environmental

The club disposes of waste in line with Aberdeenshire Council requirements, with waste recycled where appropriate.

7. FINANCE

Capital expenditure

There is no immediate requirement for any capital expenditure. The club-house was purpose built in 2017 and we have invested recently in equipment for tending to the bowling green and surrounding area. This equipment was purchased by way of fundraising and grant support when we took on responsibility for the tending and maintaining of the bowling green during the first COVID-19 lockdown in 2020. In addition to the equipment purchased, we were given equipment from Aberdeenshire Council, this equipment included mats, leveller, and dew brushes.

Income

Annual membership is collected in April of each year. Other turnover is generated through refreshment sales. These can fluctuate depending on tournaments and competitions held as well as visiting parties. There is a weekly lotto for members. Events and fund-raising

activities are held, as noted in section 4, and these add to the income generated by the club.

This year the club hosted the semi-finals of Buchan Bowling Association Tournaments/Competitions – our club's Secretary is Vice President of the Association this year. Next year, our club Secretary will take over as President of Buchan Bowling Association which will see us hosting the finals of the Association's Tournaments/Competitions. The hosting of these will see additional income generated by us from both green fees and with the serving of refreshments at all tournaments/events.

Overheads

Current overheads incurred include insurance, utilities, grass-seed, fertilisers, contractor for green maintenance, purchase of refreshments for re-sale.

We do not forecast any additional overheads being incurred following the Asset Transfer, the costs for running and maintaining the bowling green are already being incurred by the club.

As a constituted club, we are currently exempt from paying Non-Domestic Rates.

As a constituted club, we do not pay bank charges.

The finances of the club are handled by the Treasurer, who is appointed annually at the club's AGM.

8. APPENDIX

- Lists of assets/equipment already owned