**News release – Monday 4th May 2020**

**Note to County Administrators: Please circulate widely**

 **APPLY NOW FOR YOUR SHARE OF £20MILLION CORONAVIRUS POT**

Bowls clubs across England have secured almost £400,000 cash from Sport England’s Community Emergency Fund in just four weeks.

Following guidance issued by Bowls England on 31st March, 185 clubs across all codes have been awarded a cash grant with the overall value of approved funds totalling £398,298 – more than £2,150 per club.

Nailsea Bowls Club in Somerset has received more than £4,500 of financial support from the Sport England Community Emergency Fund.

Duncan Edler, treasurer of Nailsea BC, said: “The online application form was quick to complete and guided you in what was required. Whilst you could have put a lot of detail in I think our application benefitted from being clear and simple.

“Outline figures were required to support the case and a clear explanation of what you needed and why. As soon as it was clear the season was not going ahead as normal we knew we had a problem in meeting our fixed and contracted costs.

“Our members have been very understanding and agreed to pay their annual subscriptions, however the grant has supplemented these and enabled us to meet those costs and survive to play next year.”

Ilminster Bowling & Tennis Club in Ilminster, also Somerset, has been awarded £4,500 from the fund which will assist towards the clubs ongoing running costs during the coronavirus pandemic.

Matt Hamilton, Committee Officer for Ilminster Bowling & Tennis Club, said: “We are delighted to have been awarded this money to help with the clubs ongoing running costs. Without this money there is a significant impact on the club’s financial position and would mean when we do reopen after this lockdown the facilities and service we offer to members and customers would not be as before with limitations on what was possible.

“The grant will allow Ilminster Bowling & Tennis Club to continue paying its ongoing running costs while the club is shut to all activity of Bowls and Tennis. The money will help the club pay its insurance, electric, gas, water and other outstanding purchases which are on monthly payments.”

Bowls England is now urging clubs to get their application in before it is too late – with an estimated £10million left to be allocated across all sport.

Bowls England Chair, David Tucker, said: “With Clubs facing a period where there is the loss of regular income but overheads and bills still need to be paid, we are delighted that so many of our affiliated clubs have benefitted from the Sport England Emergency Community Fund to date. Nearly half of the £20million has been allocated across all sport in just four weeks, so we would encourage any club in need of funds to get their application in at the earliest opportunity.

“Clubs can also apply for the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant (RHLG) available through their local Council and we strongly advise all affiliated Clubs to look into this further.”

To date, more than £8 million has been awarded in total by Sport England from the Community Emergency Fund, which was set up to help groups through immediate financial hardship caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The fund has been developed to help community sport and physical activity organisations meet their obligations, in particular fixed costs, which are no longer supported with revenue as a result of coronavirus.

To find out more about the Sport England Community Emergency Fund and to submit an application go to: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund>

To find out more about the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant (RHLG), visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-business-support-grant-funding-guidance-for-businesses>

Has your club also benefitted from the Sport England Community Emergency Fund? Let us know by contacting news@bowlsengland.com

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