

# Muirhouse community to use memorial funds in the Borders

## ✖ Memorial funds to be used towards outdoor centre

A community that was shattered by the tragic events of the death of toddler Mikaeel Kular have raised over £3,000.00 to be used for a memorial. Donations came in from local residents, companies, groups and individuals from across the country.

A variety of ideas were put forward as to what the money should be used for – suggestions included planting trees, a bench, play equipment and gifting to local groups.

Taking in all this into consideration the board have agreed unanimously that they should offer £3,000 to My Adventure, a Muirhouse-based group and their Towford centre project.

This project will allow local residents in Muirhouse and surrounding areas to use an outdoor facility in the Scottish Borders.

For many years now [Muirhouse Youth Development Group](#) (MYDG) and its Social Enterprise [MY Adventure](#) have been looking to secure a building, a bothy :

*A place that people can get away to and relax in that is basic, comfortable and affordable.*

*A place where young children can play safely but adventurously, in the outdoors, exploring Scotland's natural heritage with their families and friends. A place where teenagers can get away from pressures and learn new skills.*

*A place where groups of adults can build friendships but enjoy space to themselves. Towford Outdoor Centre, near Jedburgh, set in the beautiful remote yet accessible Scottish*

*Borders, is the place we have been seeking.*

The building has been empty and unused for 17 years. It urgently needs some heating and a rewire if it is to survive its first winter in the care of TRIM. They also seek to make it more sustainable and more importantly more accessible to people with disabilities.

Many of the old systems are now considered unsafe. The roof needs patching and the grounds have become hugely overgrown and inaccessible. TRIM have a fantastic community of volunteers who can provide the labour (they are of course always looking for more, especially people with trades experience).



Funds are needed specifically to:

- Put in a wood burning stove
- Re-wire the building
- Replace two windows
- Up-grade the Shower/toilet block – making it accessible to people with disabilities

***Robert Pearson Chairman of Tenants & Residents in Muirhouse (TRIM) said:***

“Firstly thanks to everyone who donated, I know Mikaeel’s’ family are touched by the response from our community. It was always going to be difficult to decide just what to use the money for.

“Reading all the suggestions and talking to residents who visited the community shop, I got a sense of outdoor, play area and family activities are what people are looking for. When a resident mentioned the Towford Centre, I immediately

thought it ticked all boxes.

“I was absolutely delighted when the board agreed to offer a local group the memorial money. I know that Jonny and the team will ensure that there will be an everlasting memory at Towford.

“When I visited Towford I was amazed by the setting and I know it fits just what our community wanted as a memorial. Our community should feel proud of what we all have achieved and now we will have a access to a great outdoor facility.”



**Jonny Kinross**, Director of **MY Adventure** added: “Towford Outdoor Centre will be an affordable outdoor resource for children, families, communities and businesses to stay or use. The centre, formerly a 19<sup>th</sup> century school, will be entrusted to the Muirhouse community, safeguarded by registered local charity **Muirhouse Youth Development Group** whose trustees comprise many local people, businesses, teachers, community leaders, professionals and local activists.

“Together using social enterprise we will ensure Towford is sustainable long term and well managed. Most importantly, our centre will be affordable and accessible to thousands of local people, groups, businesses and school pupils all year, next year and for generations.

“We created a crowdfunder campaign because we needed some funds immediately and urgently to install heating and re-wire the centre after 17 years of closure. We need the place heated before the winter sets in to prevent further deterioration or damage. Already the centre has benefited from use by local high schools Craigroyston and Drummond High. Getting it even to this stage could only be achieved with the support of local businesses and over 60 local volunteers.

“Eighty official backers have surpassed our target of £6,000,

£3,500.00 was raised simply from individual supporters and local organisations in just 2 weeks. These people felt either connected to Muirhouse or inspired by what the centre will come to be and mean to local people.

“It was this that inspired the **Mikaeel Kular Memorial Fund** to pledge such a large amount to our campaign. These original backers gave the Board and the community the confidence that the money would go into a community-led project that will benefit so many children, families and groups not just from Muirhouse but across the whole city.

“The money raised by this community for Mikaeel’s Memorial Fund will secure his legacy and will specifically help create a children’s play area in the 17 acre grounds dedicated to him and as a testament to how his community showed strength, solidarity and compassion at a time of their greatest need.”