

Dear <name of your MSP>

My name is <your name> and I am writing to you as one of your constituents on behalf of Kinross Curling.

We understand that the Scottish Government is reviewing the measures and restrictions in place for group activities and we are writing to seek your assistance to remove 2 restrictions which are threatening the continued success of our community based curling business in Kinross.

We had to close our facility before the end of last season due to the lockdown and had a delayed start to this season which we used to make our facility Covid Safe for our curlers. This involved:

- Installing additional air conditioning that pumps fresh air into the ice hall to exceed the 25 cubic metre of fresh air per curler standard
- Organising 60 (sixty) Club Covid Officers, a Rink Covid Officer and a Deputy Rink Covid Officer fully trained all as required by the relevant Government and SportScotland and governing body guidance
- Purchasing a portable and a standalone fogger to sanitise our facility
- Ensuring all curlers comply with the latest Government & Scottish Curling guidelines via numerous zoom calls, Club Covid Officers & staff at each session to greet curlers, ensure cleaning of hands, wearing of face masks off the ice and socially distancing on the ice.
- Revising our ice times so that curlers from previous sessions will have left our private car park before the next session curlers start to park their cars
- Repurposing our bar area as a shoe changing/ waiting area for our curlers with partitioned areas for each ice sheet
- Maintaining a one way system for all staff & users

We have left no stone unturned in making our facility Covid safe complying with all Government & Scottish Curling standards & guidelines. Our curlers all say that they felt safe when curling and are very keen to continue to curl.

Unfortunately, last Friday, when both Fife and Perth & Kinross unexpectedly entered Tier 3, the Tier 3 restrictions put upon us were too onerous and we closed our facility with a view to opening in January on the basis that these areas may get back to Tier 2 by then.

We have now had time to review these restrictions and contacted the clubs that use our facility with a view to reopening in January through to April. All who have responded to date are keen to curl again. However, we feel that as no one can guarantee what tier any area will be in from January through to April it is unlikely we will be able to re-open given either of our regions may be in tier 3 which entails the following restrictions which apply to all indoor sports and our sport in particular:

1. The 6 people from 2 households rule – given our curlers adhere to socially distancing rules both on and off the ice why does this apply to curling?
2. Not allowing to travel outwith your area – this is particularly difficult given Kinross Ice rink resides in Perth & Kinross while over half of our curlers reside in Fife. There are also not many curling rinks in Scotland despite it being our National Sport. Could curlers be allowed to travel to and from their rinks? Also given our curlers travel from their homes to the rink and back singly in their own cars where is the risk?

Our governing body, Scottish Curling, support this request.

This afternoon our treasurer confirmed that although we would still be viable if we could open again from January through to April, if we do not open in January, we may not be able to open again due to funding issues caused by our additional expenses to be Covid Safe and reduced income due to a shortened season.

Getting the exemptions detailed above will not only allow your constituents to curl again, but it may also be the difference between the rink surviving or closing for good. I would therefore ask you, as an MSP with constituents who curl and reside in your area, if you could also use your influence within the Scottish Government to allow Curling to be exempt from these two restrictions.

If you require any additional information please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Thank you very much for reading this,

<Name and contact details>

Additional Information on Kinross Curling Trust

Kinross Curling Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Its purpose is the promotion and delivery of the sport of indoor curling and it has done this very successfully since September 2013 at the facility at the rear of the Green Hotel in Kinross. The rink has over 400 members and up to 1000 people curl each week from predominantly Perth & Kinross & the Dunfermline area. During the curling season it is open 7 days a week. The Trust has invested over £1.3 m in improvements supported by grants from SportScotland, Perth and Kinross Council and the members. Running costs are covered by income generated in the playing season from September to April. All was on course for continued success until Covid forced us to close on 17 March. Our only income since has been grants available to businesses, for which we are grateful. We have placed our staff on furlough. We re-opened on 5 October having invested heavily in protection procedures and measures, but were required to close on 13 November when Fife and Perth & Kinross Councils were moved to level 3.