

**BID Chairman, Craig Duncan**

BID continue to work hard on your behalf to develop a strong and successful a business district as possible.

We have a varied programme of events planned over the next few months, starting with the Great Easter Egg Hunt in April followed by the Classic Vehicle Show in May.

However, we are also working on longer term initiatives like the City Centre Development Brief in partnership with the Highland Council, which we hope, will highlight development opportunities in the city and attract investment to regenerate certain areas.

This is all part of our next

Welcome to the first BID bulletin of 2011.

15-month business plan from which we are really starting to see some good outcomes. Covering the 6 keys areas of business development, advocacy, safety, communication, marketing and amenity, we aim to deliver the best end result for you.

Under our new Community Safety Manager Malcolm Raeburn, we have seen greater levels of involvement and partnership working. This will be assisted by a new electronic database, which will increase the sharing of information, automatically generate a weekly e crime bulletin and secure access to subject photographs.

We are also undertaking a major marketing thrust led by Vice-Chair Jackie Cuddy including developing a new website to market your business. Read more about this later on in the newsletter.

In terms of amenity, we're looking to give other parts of the city centre a facelift similar to the work

carried out in Baron Taylor's, Drummond and Lombard Streets. As well as this, floral hanging baskets and tubs are soon to be reinstated around the city centre. I would like to thank the Highland Council and The Common Good Fund without which this would not be possible

And, we continue with our advocacy role on your behalf on many issues and particularly with regards Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs). We recognise this is an important issue, affecting business in the City centre but please be assured that BID will not give up on this and I'm confident that we will make progress.

Underpinning all of this is our aim to have more regular, increased communication with you, our members. We hope this bulletin helps to keep you updated on the work we are doing on your behalf.

City Centre Development Brief

We have been working in partnership with The Highland Council to develop a brief highlighting development opportunities and environmental improvements which will benefit the City Centre.

The brief will look at the key strengths and weaknesses in the city and identify potential opportunities. The focus is very much on encouraging developers to regenerate areas of the City Centre rather than build out of town. This will help to strengthen the economy and bring increased benefits for you, the members.

The main points identified in our submission are:

- The need for a quality tourism hub, which meets the expectations of visitors to Inverness. This would help to increase footfall in certain parts of the city.
- A niche retail/arts & crafts complex would again add to the visitor experience and create pathways throughout the business district.
- A consolidated office hub in the city centre would also enable out of date building to be updated and reinvigorate this important market, which in itself supports other elements of the economy.
- We would also like to see a tour coach drop off point in the City centre to encourage out coach tourism trade. The bay in front of the Co-op in Church Street would be ideal for this.
- A student hub is important and would help combat the Beechwood Campus drawing students out of the city centre. We feel this Brief is a very important initiative and will be seeking the best outcome for BID members.

Great Easter Egg Hunt



We are staging a Great Easter Egg Hunt on Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd of April from 11 am – 4pm.

Ten eggs will be displayed in the windows of shops in the High Street, Castle Street and throughout the Old Town

with another ten displayed in shops in the Eastgate Centre. Clues will be available and to be in with a chance of winning, members of the public will need to find 5 of the eggs in the Eastgate Centre and 5 of those in the City Centre.

Everybody who hands in a completed entry will receive an Easter chocolate. All correct entries will go into a prize draw to win one of four £50 Eastgate Shopping Vouchers.

Entry forms and clues will be available shortly - contact the BID office on 01463 714550 for more information.

We are grateful for the support of Eastgate Centre for this event.



eastgate
SHOPPING CENTRE

BID Breakfast



A BID Breakfast will be on Wed. 23rd March from 7.30 - 9am at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel on Church Street to discuss "How business can benefit from the Scottish Open" being held at Castle Stuart Golf Course (7-10 July). FREE - CONTACT BID OFFICE TO BOOK.

Sponsored by
 RAMADA JARVIS

Inverness Community Safety Partnership



Malcolm Raeburn, BID Community Safety Manager

Inverness Community Safety Partnership was formed in December 2010 and is made up of a number of agencies including BID, The Highland Council and the Police together with other frontline services such as Health and Fire.

The organisation has an Inverness wide remit and is serviced by BID through Malcom Raeburn, our Community Safety Manager. We have received £17,000 of funding from the Inverness Common Good Fund to support this role.

At the latest meeting of the

partnership three issues were decided as top priorities.

These are:

- Current Crime Trends
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupancy

We know from talking to BID members that HMOs remain the most important issue for many of you, and for the City Centre as a whole, through reports we have had and data supplied by the Police.

We feel the best way to approach the issue of HMOs is through planning controls and stricter licencing.

We are working not only through the Inverness Community Safety Partnership but also with the Planning Department at Highland Council to find a resolution, which will give the best possible outcome for you as well as creating a safe and reassuring environment for visitors and the local community.

As we progress there will be another BID lunch to discuss progress so far and give you the chance to air your views.

Operation Respect



Malcolm's role as BID Community Safety Manager is to help create a safe and clean environment for you, the members, as well as the public. By working in partnership with the Northern Constabulary, business partners and other agencies to prevent anti-social behaviour we aim to create a safer business district for everybody, which in turn brings economic benefit.

In the last bulletin, we reported our involvement again in the 'Operation Respect' project leading up to Christmas and New Year, working with police and other agencies. This included the BID Security Task Team and Taxi Marshals.

Both initiatives were very well received and we have had a lot of positive feedback from members of the public and BID members.

City Centre Licensee Eric Devenny, who is also the Chair of Inverness Pub Watch, said, "The taxi marshals are a fantastic initiative, they have attended to some very difficult situations admirably and have been true ambassadors for the city."

Vic Rollins, Chair of the Inverness Taxi and Private Hire Association stated, " They have done a great job, preventing trouble in the queue and some of my members have said that they as drivers have felt safer and the Taxi Marshal presence has made the job easier.

An evaluation from the Northern Constabulary indicated that Operation Respect contributed to a 16.6% reduction in crime from the end of November to the last weekend in January.

As a result of this, the BID Board has agreed to fund continuation of the taxi marshals on pay weekends and to also look at the possibility of having the Security Task Team carry out extra patrols during the Easter and Summer holidays.

safeinverness

A meeting of the members of Safeinverness will be held on Wednesday 23rd March (2.30pm) at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel. The new electronic intranet and e-bulletin system will be demonstrated to show the benefit this will bring in the fight against business crime. Training opportunities will be also on the agenda. For further information or to join Safeinverness please contact Malcolm Raeburn, Community Safety Manager on 01463 228961 or email safe@inverness.uk.com.



Representatives from Johnny Foxes and The Den, Love2Love and Lauders attended the first national licensed premises awards ceremony in Dundee recently after scooping gold awards in Inverness'

Best Bar None awards scheme.

The scheme, which recognises responsible licensees and raises public awareness of well run establishments, currently runs in over 80 locations across the UK. Premises are assessed and then awarded either a Gold, Silver or Bronze Award depending on how well they meet the criteria. Gold award winners from cities and towns across Scotland were then invited to the ceremony at the beginning of March to decide upon the best pubs, bars and clubs nationally.

Fourteen premises in Inverness took part in the local scheme in 2010 resulting in three Gold Awards, nine Silver Awards and two Bronze Awards for Inverness.

This scheme is part of the ongoing safety initiative we are carrying out with the licensing trade to make Inverness a safer place to enjoy a night out.



Inverness licensees receiving awards at the Town House.

Marketing of Inverness

In our Business Plan we recognize that working with the other stakeholders to help improve the marketing of the City Centre is an important priority for BID.

The focus of BID's marketing has been to deliver a strong Christmas campaign through radio aimed at delivering the message come for the shopping stay for the day/ weekend promoting Inverness as an all round vibrant City and family based events focused on creating economic benefit for the City Centre businesses.

A recent report from the Inverness Marketing Partnership Group recognised that there are a number of organisations currently involved in marketing Inverness and that a more co-ordinated approach along with additional activities would be of huge

benefit to Inverness and Loch Ness as a whole.

In line with the City Vision themes the overall objectives of the Group are to position Inverness, Loch Ness and the wider area as a vibrant, stimulating area in which to live, work, visit and invest. The group will be chaired by BID Vice-Chair Jackie Cuddy with representations from all other relevant private and public sector groups.

Five main areas have been identified for action: inward investment, P.R. Activity, website and digital media, City brand promotion/ awareness and Events/Festivals/ Conference promotions. The group have received funding of £30,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund and £40,000 from the other partners to undertake this work along with other

contributions in kind which will help deliver the objectives. An action plan is now being put together along with budgets to deliver these objectives.

BID are extremely pleased to be a part of this important initiative and are sure that this type of joined-up working will achieve the best outcomes for both BID members and Inverness as a whole.



Jackie Cuddy,
Vice-Chair of BID



We are delighted that Les Kidger and Kenny Cameron of CK Events have secured the only Scottish date this summer of **Simple Minds** with support from **Big Country**.

The event, which is being billed as Summer in the City 2011, will take place at The Northern Meeting Park on Saturday 16th July. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster at

www.ticketmaster.co.uk.

We supported concerts being staged at the Northern Meeting Park, and welcome the decision of the Highland Council to allow wider use of the Park. Concerts will have a positive impact on the City Centre. We look forward to local residents and visitors alike enjoying these major events.

STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS •
Boyzone and Shane Ward

have just been announced as another CK event concert date at the Northern Meeting Park on Saturday 27th August.

BID Online

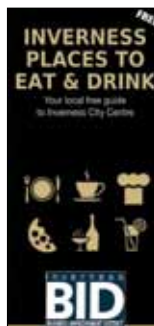
We are currently in the process of developing a new BID website as part of our drive to improve our communication with you, the members. This is an excellent marketing tool for you and allows you to promote your business free of charge.

Each business will have their own web page where you can provide contact details, opening times and images as well as information about your business offers. Your page can also link through to an existing website. Letters will be delivered to you shortly explaining how to register with us prior to the website being launched at the beginning of April.

Food and Drink Guide

The highly successful City Centre Food and Drink Guide is currently in the process of being updated and we look forward to relaunching an updated version at the beginning of April. This is the second reprint of the handy guide to eating and drinking in Inverness and has proved invaluable for visitors to the City.

All businesses are currently being contacted to update their free entry to the guide.



The Inverness Classic Vehicle Show



We will once again be staging the Classic Vehicle Show on Saturday 14th May from 11am – 3pm. City Centre streets will have classic vehicles displayed throughout them along with music and entertainment for all the family, creating something for everyone.

The event will finish with a parade through the City Centre leaving High Street at 2.30pm.

This is a free event and we anticipate a significant turn out as in recent years.

If you have a classic car and would like to take part, please contact the BID office for an entry form.

Victorian Market Traders Association

For the past year BID has been working with the traders in the Victorian Market to help establish them as a fully constituted association. The group had their first AGM in January and will now be working to promote and represent the Victorian Market.

We are pleased to have recently assisted them in submitting a funding application for a marketing project to the Inverness Common Good Fund.

fairtradeinverness

THE CITY in THE HIGHLANDS

BID were proud to support Fairtrade Fortnight, which ran from 28th February to 13th March.

Inverness is already a FairTrade City and we would encourage businesses to consider becoming Fairtrade – for further information please email: invernessfairtradegroup@hotmail.co.uk

Advocacy

One of BID's most important roles is the advocacy work we undertake to promote and reinforce the value of City Centre businesses to Inverness and the wider Highland area.

With your businesses contributing £11m in business rates (13% of the total business rates paid for the whole of the Highlands) it might be thought that their value would be apparent but we still need to ensure that your business requirements are understood by the other City centre stakeholders.

Much of this work is done behind the scenes as we work positively to improve the business district and

bring greater economic benefit to the City Centre.

Some recent examples of advocacy are:

- the City Centre Development Brief follows on from discussion with councillors and officers on the future of the City Centre, the need to create new anchors, to upgrade premises and to engage with potential developers. The aim is to try to get regeneration of areas of the City Centre where there is reduced footfall.
- we want to see Inverness become known as a "coach friendly city" with a dedicated drop off point in the City Centre. With more than 70,000 tourists visiting

on cruise ships alone plus the normal coach tours we need to ensure that we make it easy for them to access and drop off/pick up in the City Centre.

- its acknowledged that bus routing has a major affect on the distribution of people around the City Centre. BID has been advocating maintaining use of the existing purpose built Union Street/Church Street/Queensgate travel loop and against taking any more routes out of that area
- we also helped put forward the views of the majority of the members of Pubwatch on the issue of the midnight entry curfew for



Mike Smith,
BID Manager

the night time economy.

And finally HMOs we continue to advocate to reduce the pressure on the City Centre by these establishments.

BID Levy for 2011/12

We recently announced that the 2011/12 levy would remain at 1% of the 2005 business rates valuation.

Although the terms of BID's remit allows for an annual RPI increase, for the second year running the BID directors have confirmed that this will not be implemented.

BID Chairman, Craig Duncan in announcing the BID levy for 2011/12 said "we are very conscious of the pressures on all business at the moment and the BID Board felt it was right not to seek to implement a RPI increase"

Communications Protocol

We are currently in discussions with the Highland Council to establish a communications protocol to work more efficiently with the council departments and officers.

The protocol would recognise BID as an important partner of the Highland Council and keep us better informed through earlier dialogue on all matters affecting the City Centre.

Such a protocol will bring benefits for both parties in promoting business growth and vibrancy with our area.

Some facts about BID

Value of our businesses

- BID businesses pay £11m in "business rates" which is the equivalent of 13% of the total business rates collected for the whole of the Highlands
- Collectively the City Centre businesses are the largest employer in the Highlands

BID Levy Paid

Analysis of our 900+ City Centre businesses shows that:

- 22% are below the BID Levy threshold of £8k business rateable value
- 35% pay BID levy of less than £100 pa
- 20% pay BID levy of between £100 and £200 pa
- 10% pay BID levy of between £200

and £300 pa

- Thus 87% of City Centre businesses pay less than £300 pa

BID Board of Directors:

Directors are elected by the levy payers to represent the different business sectors in the BID area.

Our current directors are

- Property Owners:
- Garek Begg (Begg Shoes)
 - Jackie Cuddy (Grosvenor Estates)
 - Brian Philip (Music Shop)
- Offices:
- Donald Shaw (Allen & Shaw)
 - Steve Johnstone (MacLeod & Macallum)
- Hospitality/Leisure:

Craig Duncan (McDonalds)

Don Lawson (Johnny Foxes)

Fraser Peterkin (Ramada Jarvis)

Retailers:

Duncan Chisholm (Duncan Chisholm & Sons)

Bill Fraser (Duncan Fraser & Son)

Malcolm Fraser (Duncan Fraser Fishmongers)

John Laidlaw (Ashers)

Graine Riach (Edinburgh Woollen Mill)

Co-opted:

Kim Fearn (Next)

Nick Harvey (Debenhams)

Highland Council:

Provost Cllr J Gray

Inverness
BID
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Inverness BID Ltd was formed in 2008 as a 'not for profit' company to represent retailers, pubs and clubs, hotels, offices and property owners in the Inverness City Centre BID (Business Improvement

District) area. Its remit is to develop in the BID area a strong, successful environment to enable all businesses within the City Centre to maximise their trading potential.

For further information on Inverness BID Ltd, please contact Mike Smith, BID Manager.

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