

## FREE TRAINING SESSIONS:

This is challenging time for retailers in the midst of a national recession and continued uncertainty over the future of our local defence bases. Clearly as customers have less disposable income as food and fuel prices continue to rise retailers have to work even harder to differentiate themselves from their competitors and attract the customers through their doors.

In response, we have organised 3 free training sessions which will take place between October – December as a start in a longer term training programme. All courses will be held early evening.

The initial sessions will cover the following areas;

### 1. Crime and Safety (retail crime and shoplifting)

Statistically the time where retail crime rises significantly as Christmas approaches. This session will be presented by Grampian Police and will be held on Tuesday 25th October at 6pm at Elgin Community Centre.

### 2. Window Dressing

How can your window display attract customers across your door. Hints and tips on expert dressing. Date and location to be confirmed.

### 3. Use of Social Media to benefit your business (Twitter, Facebook)

Social media is now regarded as one of the most powerful ways to get your message across. This training course will outline how easy yet effective it is to use Twitter, Facebook and other social media to market and promote your business. Date and location to be confirmed.

If you are interested in attending these free courses then please e mail [Jacqui@elginbid.co.uk](mailto:Jacqui@elginbid.co.uk) or call 01343 550652 to book your place and specify which course you are interested in attending.

## CITY CENTRE CAR PARKING

Elgin BID will, over the next few months, be working on the production of a report which will be presented to Moray Council based on evidence why car parking charges in the city centre need to be reduced. It will be a tough challenge to persuade the Council to change a budget decision mid-way through a financial year. However it may be that the coming consultations on the Moray Economic Strategy will give us a good platform to make our views heard again - more loudly - and win some early action. We also hope that the report can influence the budget making decision for 2012. In the meantime we are looking at temporary initiatives to try and relieve the costs of parking, including the free bus and offering reduced parking a certain key times (ie: Christmas).



We are also asking you to get in touch with us if you have ideas, opinions and evidence on how the rise in parking charges has affected your business/service and your customers. All information is valuable no matter how small. We would also urge you to get in touch with your local Councillor regarding this matter.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

### Toiletfinder

Toilet finder is a new website which allows people to highlight toilets which are publically accessible. People can rate these toilets in terms of cleanliness, ease of location and existence of facilities such as baby changing. With the non-existence of public toilets in the City Centre this is certainly a useful information source for visitors and locals.

<http://www.toiletfinder.org>

business gateway  
slighe gnothachais

FREE  
Courses for Business in Moray 2011

COURSE TITLE	DATE
E-Commerce (Basic)	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> July
DIY Websites	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> July
Record Keeping	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> July
Marketing & Selling Skills	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July
2 Day Business Start-Up	Tues 26 <sup>th</sup> – Wed 27 <sup>th</sup> July
E-commerce (Advanced)	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> July
2 Day Business Start-Up	Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> – Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> August
E-Commerce (Basic)	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> August
Record Keeping	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> August
Marketing & Selling Skills	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> August
E-Commerce (Advanced)	Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> August
2 Day Business Start-Up	Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup> – Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> September
Social Media Marketing	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> September
Overview of Employment Law	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> September
E-Commerce (Basic)	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> September
E-Commerce (Advanced)	Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> September
2 Day Business Start-Up	Thurs 29 <sup>th</sup> – Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> September

All courses listed run from 9.30am - 4pm

We also provide FREE Start Up, Development and Specialist advice to new and existing businesses.

For an appointment with a Business Adviser or to book a place, please contact:  
T: 01343 543434 or visit us at:  
17 High Street, Elgin, N30 1ED  
0845 607 6611  
[www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com)

*“The treasure hunt was good fun and gave the kids something to do. We did not know the little Craft shop (Moray Krafty Kidz) existed, and the kids want to spend their prize money there.”*

Environmental/Healthy theme day treasure hunt 2nd prize winner.

### Healthy Working Lives

Healthy Working lives can help to reduce the costs of staff absence and turnover by providing employers with the tools and resources to create a safer more productive workplace. There are many services offered under the scheme including occupational health advice and an award scheme.

<http://www.healthyworkinglives.com>

Embrace



Business Improvement District  
ELGIN NEWSLETTER

JULY 2011



## RAF IN MORAY

Moray Economic Partnership hosted the Minister's visit to Forres this week. Growing from the close connections formed in the Moray Task Force and the community during the campaign, the partnership has been established to gear up the economy for growth over the next 12 months.

It will drive forward the delivery of the Moray Economic Response Plan, announced by the Minister for Communities at the time, Alex Neil, in March.

MEP Membership includes Scottish Government officials, Highlands and Islands, Enterprise, Moray Council, Moray College, Skills Development Scotland and the Moray Chamber of Commerce.

Jim Royan, Chair of the partnership, said: "The plans for a longer term economic strategy are well under way through Moray Council and HIE. I feel that we are now on the front foot in terms of planning for the future. As we move forward from the impending announcement on our RAF bases, whatever that might mean for Moray, there will be a chance for everyone in Moray to play their part in shaping what we do next."

## CHAIR UPDATE

I hope you are all enjoying the current warm and sunny weather bringing much needed tourists to the area.

So what has been happening in the last 6 months since the last newsletter?

- I am pleased to say that 93.5% of the levy has been paid to date and actions will be taken to the businesses who have not paid.
- We have been attending the Moray Task Force meetings as we await the decision on the future of RAF Lossiemouth.
- Our Board Director Jim Royan has been appointed Chairman of the Moray Economic Partnership and we look forward in working with MEP to strengthen Moray economy.
- To date we have run 3 key events of Back to the Future Fashions, The Scottish Theme Day and Environmental/Healthy Theme Day, which have all been well attended. Thank you to everyone who assisted with these events. In addition we should thank Elgin Rotary for another excellent day with the bi annual Marafun.
- Our Marketing Committee have been working hard with various projects including a new TV advert that will appear shortly on our screen. Ian Widdowson Chair of the Marketing Group will give further details in his own report in this newsletter. The environmental group have also been actively driving forward a number of initiatives including the Business Frontage Improvement Scheme. Details in this newsletter.
- We met with our MSP Richard Lochhead to discuss key issues facing all businesses in the city centre such as parking charges. This dialogue will continue.
- Finally I am delighted to say that we have received additional funding from Moray Council towards a scoping exercise for the implementation of the Heritage Project - Castle, Cathedral to Cashmere.

So please 'lets all EMBRACE ELGIN and put the VIBRANCY back into the CITY CENTRE'



*“I am delighted to say that I received lots of positive comments after the show... I am pleased to say that my shop was very busy on Saturday (the day after). Many people commented on how nice it was see such a wide age group come together to promote Elgin”*

Retailer involved in Back to the Future Fashion event.

# Environmental

Mark Angus - Chair

City Centre Improvement Works Develop.

The Elgin BID team have been active over the last few months developing a number of projects aimed at improving the physical appearance of the city centre. These projects include the Business Improvement Scheme, Vacant Shop Strategy and Shrubbery Removal.

The recently launched business frontage improvement scheme allocated £40,000 over 2 years towards improving the physical appearance of the city centre by encouraging businesses to undertake improvement works on the outside of their premises.

The first round of funding has allocated £34,000 amongst 18 businesses each receiving 40% grant towards their project costs. The type of work undertaken includes replacement of windows, new signage, painting, cleaning of stonework and guttering.

'These grants will support the ongoing physical improvement within the city centre and reflects the investment local businesses are prepared to make. The money will also support our members during this challenging time. The use of the BID levy for this ensures that our members can realise sustainable and long term benefits from BID'

The work has to be completed by the end of the year.

## Rooftop Shrubbery

What has been termed the 'first floor garden' of Elgin City Centre will hopefully soon disappear. A costing has been obtained through a local company to clear all shrubbery in one go. BID will be making contact with landlords to ask them to pay a share of this cost. This should prove more cost effective for the business/property owners affected and it is hoped we will gain a positive response. Shrubbery growth not only affects the appearance of the centre but can be dangerous and in the long term very expensive and costly for the building owners.

## Use of Vacant Premises

The team have also now negotiated with the owners of Next to use the vacant building as a temporary space to show Art Exhibitions in the window. This will be developed with Moray College Art Department. The first exhibition is due to be ready by mid to late August. The team are also attempting to seek similar opportunities with the owners of the other vacant spaces in the City Centre.

# 12th Annual Whisky Festival Scottish Theme Day



Beautiful weather and a holiday weekend attracted over 6,000 people to the Elgin BID Scottish Theme Day on Saturday 30th April.

The event staged as part of the 12th Annual Whisky Festival included a number of local performers including Moray Dance, June Roy School of Dance, Wor's Next, Nae Reel, Feis Mhoireibh (Moray), Lynda Dean (Historical Storyteller) and drama from the Out of Darkness Theatre Company.



*'Survey of people at events indicated that 96% would come into Elgin for events with all undertaking other activities - 76% would shop, and 68% would undertake leisure activities such as eating and entertainment.'*

The day also combined a large number of market stalls, from BID businesses and the Moray Farmers Market, selling a range of products from food, crafts and gift. There was also street entertainment, face painter and a city centre odd one out treasure hunt with 21 retailers from around the whole BID area placing an odd item in their window. Entrants could win prizes of £50, £30 and £25 to be spent in a City Centre retailer. Elgin BID also raised over £150 towards the Elgin BID Charity Fund.

Surely a winning combination with many people staying in the centre for the duration of the day and spin off benefits for a number of BID members.



## ELGIN BID BUSINESS SEMINAR

The next business seminar will be on Tuesday 30th August at the Mansion House Hotel starting at 6pm. The first years' annual report and audit will be presented there will also be an update on the Heritage project, The Moray Economic Strategy and Elgin City Region of the Future. Thanks for those who have intimated that they are able to attend. If you have not already done so can you please advise if you are able to attend by contacting Jacqui (01343) 550652 or e mailing Jacqui on Jacqui@elginbid.co.uk

## NEW BUSINESSES IN ELGIN CITY CENTRE

The last 6 months has seen the introduction of 4 new independent specialist businesses in the City Centre :

**Versatile Stores, 6 Greyfriars Street, Elgin – Gifts and pictures**

**Filobelo, 15 Harrow Inn Close – Gift and crafts shop**

**Golden Grill, 69 High Street – Cafe.**

**Olive Tree Chocolates, 15 High Street – Hand-made Belgian chocolate and carry out coffees and snacks.**

# SECURITY

## Elgin Retail Crime Reduction Partnership

The retail crime partnership was established to provide extra support for Elgin retailers against shoplifting. The group meets once a month for an hour (usually during the first week of the month) at St Giles Centre.

### What does this meeting do?

The group shares information and intelligence on recent instances of shoplifting and ID of offenders. There is also sharing of information in relation to methods of shoplifting and keeping up to date on current shoplifting trends. This allows retailers to pinpoint signs before the offence is committed.

The group members are able to view photos of offenders in order that they can be more easily recognised.

### What are the benefits to retailers?

Clearly being able to easily recognise signs of shoplifting and those offending is of great benefit to busy retailers. Being able to deter shoplifters will counteract loss of income and will also act to deter shoplifters in the longer term, which is obviously of benefit to all.

### What other benefits are available?

The APEX radio system allows retailers to alert each other when shoplifters are on the go in the Centre. This secure system allows the retailer to describe what potential offenders are wearing so that they can be recognised. Grampian Police CCTV also monitors the APEX system.

Retailers can also benefit from regular visits from the Retail Crime office who can offer advice.

If you wish to find out more about these initiatives please contact Alison Thow at Elgin Police Office.



## MARKETING UPDATE

Ian Widdowson - Chair

The Marketing Group meets every 6 weeks in order to drive forward the marketing section of the BID Business Plan. There have been a number of successful initiatives in the first year and much more planned for 2011/2012.

Recent initiatives include the development of a recognised and consistent image for Elgin City Centre which will be featured in a new TV advertising campaign, Stagecoach buses and Moray Firth Radio.

The Summer Festival is now well underway with plans already in place for the Winter Festival. Events include the highly successful Back to the Future Fashion event in March, the 12th Annual Whisky Festival Scottish Theme Day and the 2nd Environmental /Health Theme day. August sees the return of the live music day – aptly names 'Music Mania' and in September we are planning an event to celebrate Scottish Food and Drink Fortnight and the Rugby World Cup.

Collective marketing approaches includes the development of Scottish Golf Open vouchers, an updated and improved business listing map, and sponsorship of the Elgin Pipe Band for the next 4 years and training opportunities for staff. The BID is also a partner in an exciting new Heritage Project which will focus on the heritage of Elgin and its place in Moray.

Through the recently developed Challenge Fund the Marketing group has also been able to offer support to the Moray Book Festival, the Moray Spirit of Brass Festival, the Marafun food tent, and a new and exciting Arts event.

The second round of the challenge fund will be available from October 2011.

## The Second Environmental/Healthy Theme Day

The second healthy/environmental theme day took place on Saturday 25th June. This theme day has a specific focus and is specially relevant in today's challenging times, with the Energy Saving Scotland stall being extremely busy with people seeking advice on how they can save on their fuel bills.

The combination of stalls and mobile information buses meant that there was an extensive range of information and advice available from Recycling, Waste Aware, Health and Sustainable travel. There was also a number of local healthy eating providers and craft stalls. Again the market was a combined effort between Elgin BID and Moray Farmers Market.

The bike games and demonstrations attracted large crowds – especially the challenging slow race where participants had to cycle as slowly as possible round cones – not as easy as it looks!!

The Treasure hunt was focused on the hidden treasures of the City Centre. Involving our independent traders who are offering something unique and special. Something which many of us have forgotten about. There were a large number of entries and again entrants could win prizes of £50, £30 and £25 to be spent with a local city centre retailer.

There was also excellent entertainment from Moray Dance, Focus Martial Arts and Elgin City Band.

Photos of all events and all planned events to the end of the year can be found on:

<http://www.elginbid.co.uk/gallery>  
<http://www.elginbid.co.uk/events>



*Elgin BID Treasure Hunts - 44% of entrants in the Healthy theme day treasure hunt were from outwith Elgin as far as Inverurie.*

