

Since the last newsletter the Steering Group has now become known as the Board of Directors of the City of Elgin Bid Ltd. Our Bid Manager, Jacqui Taylor, has completed her first month in her new post and will report in this newsletter on all her activities to date. David Robertson has also agreed to be Vice Chair.

Unfortunately, due to work and personal commitments, the following members of the Steering Group decided to resign and not take up a Directorship in the City of Elgin Bid Ltd. They are Katherine Mackintosh – Robertson Property Ltd, Karen McHardy – Thunderton House and Vic Flett – Sound and Vision. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their hard work and support in helping us achieve Bid status. All have offered to help us where they can going forward with Elgin Bid.

I am therefore pleased to announce the current list of Directors and Observers of the City of Elgin Bid Ltd as follows:

DIRECTORS

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Chair</i> DAVID A URQUHART | Gordon & MacPhail | MIKE DEVENNEY | Principal Moray College |
| <i>Vice Chair</i> DAVID ROBERTSON | Bijou | ALISTAIR SIMPSON | Ritson's |
| JIM ROYAN | Royan's | ANGUS GUNN | Allied Surveyors |
| JAMES GARDINER | St. Giles Centre | NEIL ROSS | Grigor and Young |
| IAN WIDDOWSON | Beaver Travel | SUPT SHARON MILTON | Grampian Police |
| MARK ANGUS | Gordon & MacPhail Retail | IAN URQUHART | Elgin Fund |
| | | CLLR JOHN RUSSELL | Moray Council |

OBSERVERS

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| CLLR JOHN DIVERS | Moray Council | RENI MILLBURN | Principal Development Officer |
| MAIRI MACKINTOSH | Moray Council | | Moray Council |

At present the full Board is meeting on a monthly basis, with each Director allocated to be a member of one of the following groups: Environment, Marketing and Operations. There is more information on what each of the roles entails later in this newsletter.



As the newly appointed Manager for Elgin BID I am delighted to introduce the second quarterly edition of the Elgin BID newsletter.

Following the successful 'yes' vote in December the Elgin BID company has now been established, consisting of a Board of Directors and 3 working groups who will be responsible for the development of the projects contained in the business plan.

It is important that we continue to work closely with Moray Council in the development of the BID. BID is not about replacing local authority provision – BID is additional investment in services, identified as priorities by local businesses, and forming the basis for the themes and projects in the business plan. The BID company, with the local authority have drawn up an operational agreement which will ensure that any BID investment is additional. The BID company will also carry out a review of the services provided by public bodies to ensure that standards are maintained throughout the duration of the BID.



Progress to date

BID map and business guide

Following discussion with some businesses the BID marketing group will be developing a BID area map and business guide.

This map and guide will promote and raise the profile of city centre BID area businesses and provide an excellent aid for visitors. This guide will compliment the proposed travel guide which is currently being developed through the Urban Freedom project (see relevant paragraph).

The business guide will be produced predominately as an interactive guide and will be available on the i kiosk (soon to be operational in Elgin High Street) and on all relevant websites including the BID website. A number of printed copies will also be available for distribution.

As part of the development of this guide I would be grateful if you could submit the information requested in the enclosed questionnaire (by the date indicated) either by email to jacqui@elginbid.co.uk or return a completed hard copy to Jacqui Taylor, Commerce House Annexe, South Street, Elgin, IV30 1JE.

Information provided by you for the BID guide can be passed to the 'Urban Freedom' project, provided you have indicated your permission for inclusion by ticking the relevant box on the questionnaire.

'Summer Festival'

The BID company has been working on the development of a 'Summer Festival' which will take place in the BID area over August and September, directly involving many of you. The Festival will focus on a number of themes and will link, where relevant, with activities already planned. This includes a weekend heritage 'treasure hunt' in celebration of the history and culture of Elgin, taking in many historical landmarks within the city centre area. We are currently seeking the support from the BID businesses for this event, by volunteering to hold entry forms for distribution. Participants will be directed to the businesses who are able to support in this way through the marketing leaflet for the festival.

If this is something you feel you would like to support please indicate on the enclosed business guide questionnaire.

The BID Chewing Gum Machine and Street Sweeper

The BID chewing gum machine and street sweeper purchased through the Town Centre Regeneration funding has now been delivered and is operational.

Annual Calendar of Events

We are also planning to develop an annual calendar of events for Elgin BID area drawing on existing events, and where required the development of new events. The aim of this is to provide information on regular events/activities throughout the year which will be held in the BID area and establish a single point of access for visitors and locals to find out what is happening in the area. This is a longer-term project and it is hoped that this will be achieved ready for 2011.

In the meantime a city centre events section is contained within the newsletter.

These are just some of the planned activities over the next few months. As the BID develops many more initiatives will be developed, in consultation with and involving you - local businesses.

To see some of the advantages which can be realised through BIDs we have enclosed with this newsletter the national BID quarterly newsletter which provides an overview of the achievements of some of the other Scottish BIDS.

Bathgate BID, which is a town comparable to Elgin, for example has been operational now for 2 years. To review their achievements please see www.bathgatebid.net.

The first levy invoices have now been distributed and there have been some queries raised in relation to these and the Elgin BID initiative. I have now made contact with all the businesses who have raised these queries. In the meantime a reminder of BID and what it aims to achieve:

WHAT IS A BID?

BID stands for Business Improvement District. BIDs are business led initiatives within a specifically defined geographical area. Through a BID, businesses have the opportunity to come together to make decisions on how to improve their business and trading environment.

ELGIN BID

Following 15 months of consultation with businesses, shoppers and young people which took place in Elgin between 2008 – 2009 a number of projects and themes have been developed for Elgin City Centre, with the aim of enhancing the business environment and increasing the economic viability of the area.

These were detailed in the Elgin BID Business plan which was then voted on by the businesses in December 2009, resulting in a 'yes' vote for Elgin City Centre to become a BID area.

Businesses in the BID area pay a levy which provides the necessary funding to make the projects a reality, along with a contribution from the local authority. The levy rates paid by the businesses and service providers in the BID area are based on non domestic rates, and includes businesses and service providers who are currently exempt from non domestic rates. This decision was taken following the consultation and research.

A BID is not part of the local authority and the projects and services the Elgin BID will deliver, are in addition to statutory services and therefore are added value.

By bringing businesses together collectively BID can also act as a strong lobbying voice which can more effectively seek solutions to issues raised by the local businesses with the local authority and other public sector bodies.

I will be contacting other businesses in the area over the coming weeks also, to introduce myself and establish what they see as the key priorities for the BID initiative, as it develops.

For a copy of the Elgin BID business plan and other information related to Elgin BID go to www.elginbid.co.uk.

For information about national BID developments go to www.bids-scotland.com.

In the meantime if you have any queries in relation to any aspect of the BID initiative or indeed anything which you would like to raise please do not hesitate to contact me at: jacqui@elginbid.co.uk or telephone me on (01343) 557137.

I look forward to working with you over the coming months in bringing the vibrancy back to Elgin City centre and create a strong voice for Elgin and businesses both locally and nationally.

Town Centre Regeneration Project Article update: April 2010

In December 2009, Scottish Government funding from the Town Centre Regeneration Fund to which an investment of over £600,000 was to be injected into Elgin City centre to carry out a number of capital projects, was approved. As the time scale for completion was set for 31st March 2010, the race was underway to meet the very tight deadline, when all scheduled works were to be completed and/or legally committed. Some challenges arose as a result of the adverse weather but some of the work is now finished, with the other projects rescheduled for completion in July.

Electrical Units

The recent installation of four Electrical Units located at both the East and West side of the Plainstones will allow a flexible electricity supply for local and visiting markets and it will enable other events to take place. This area served for many centuries as the main trading and market place where merchants did business and it was the central meeting point for social gatherings. This area is still very much a focus today and we hope to continue the tradition in the 21st century by utilising this area for a range of events, which in turn will provide an opportunity to attract a higher footfall to the city centre.

Shop Front Improvement Scheme

Businesses who were successful in securing funding through the Shop Front Improvement Scheme Project also

had to pull out the stops to carry out a range of works to improve the frontage of their businesses. Again due to the extreme weather it was quite a challenge to meet the completion deadline. However, it is very encouraging to see the businesses particularly in this current economic downturn invest their money in the city centre to help make a real visible improvement.

“The Gateways to the Centre”, (including sites Lossie Green, Elgin Town Hall, Northfield Car Park, Batchen Lane and Thunderton Road), A96 Underpass Signage Scheme and Electronic Info Points.

New landscaping including resurfacing and paving, and erection of map boards and signage throughout the city centre and car parks will greatly help direct visitors into the city centre as well as creating a more aesthetic appearance and attractive area overall. The electronic info boards will be a great asset and will be able to deliver real time information as well as general information to the visitor who may be looking for accommodation, places of interest or something to eat. The machines are versatile and can be regularly updated and used to promote a wide range of information.

Elgin has been well documented historically from the 12th century as a medieval market town, it has seen hundreds of years of persistent redevelopment anxious to keep up to the fashion of time and seeing continuous change to meet the ever-demanding market place. It is recognised that regeneration also requires community involvement, social inclusion, redevelopment and commercial competitiveness to improve the health of the city centre overall.

“With the recent success of the Elgin BID and the Town Centre Regeneration Project, this has kick-started a positive way forward and opportunities to capitalise on these recent investments which should now continue to develop. We can all now look to drive forward, towards the creation of a vibrant, more attractive city centre which encases our historical assets and environment, as well as creating a more safe, clean and unique shopping experience for visitors and the community alike to enjoy for generations to come.”

BID Company Structure

Following the successful ‘yes’ vote and the formation of the City of Elgin BID company, a Board of Directors has been appointed and 3 working groups have been formed.

These groups include:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Physical Environment group who will primarily be responsible for *Cleanliness, Safety and Appearance Theme and Traffic Management and Access* as well as 2 additional projects, one under the marketing theme and one under the tourism theme.

MARKETING GROUP

Marketing group who will be responsible for the themes – *Building a Reputation & Marketing Elgin as a Vibrant Destination, with Tourism, Entertainment and Shopping Offerings.*

OPERATIONAL GROUP

Operational group who are responsible for the day to day operations of the company including *Finance, Business and Community Engagement.*

By creating these working groups we can ensure that concentrated effort can be targeted on the development of all the projects.

As the work develops there will be a need to form short life groups responsible for specific projects and we will be seeking your involvement in these groups drawing on your areas of expertise.

The working groups will meet on a monthly basis and as required report to the BID board on activity and developments.

Chewing Gum Removal Machine

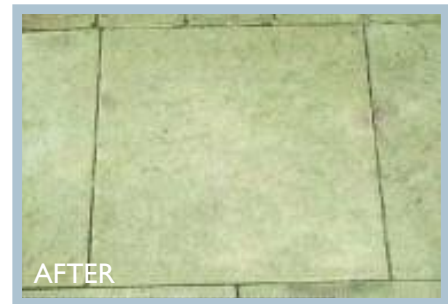
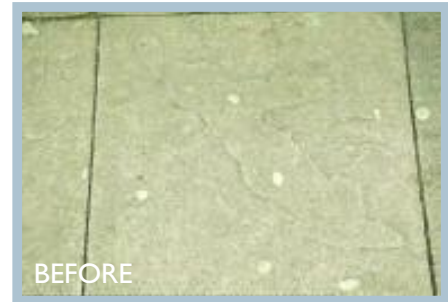
As part of the successful Town Centre Regeneration funded project – ‘Moray Towns Together’, a *Chewing Gum Removal and Street Cleaning Machine* has now been delivered.

Match Funding and assistance for the purchase of the machine was provided by the Moray Council.

The City of Elgin BID Company will take on the responsibility for the ongoing operation of the machines.

Cleanliness of the town centre area, particularly chewing gum on the streets, was one of the key priorities for development, for both the BID businesses and local shoppers during the consultation process of the BID initiative. The BID company have placed this as one of the key priorities and are delighted that the machine is now operational. Some of you may have seen the chewing gum machine out cleaning Elgin City Centre on Monday 10th May. The before and after photos show the significant improvements this machine will make to our city centre. The machine is clearly visible with the BID logo and will be a regular feature in Elgin City Centre.

Chewing gum has become one of the fastest growing environmental problems of the past decade in most towns and cities with Elgin being no exception. A campaign to reduce instances of discarded chewing gum on an ongoing basis will also be developed to achieve a cleaner and more attractive environment for businesses, visitors and local people.



Sustainable Travel – Urban Freedom

New Travel Guide to put local businesses on the map:

Local businesses and organisations located in Elgin town centre (including the BIDS area) are being urged to get in touch with staff at Moray Council to assist with the compilation of a new directory and map of the area.

The listings will be part of the new ‘Urban Freedom’ Travel Guide for residents and visitors to Elgin. The Urban Freedom Project, which will bring major investment in new walking and cycling infrastructure for Elgin during the next two years, is focussed on encouraging more active and sustainable travel within the area.

Recognising that new residents, visitors and even regular shoppers might not be aware of services that are available locally is one of the challenges that the guide’s developers are seeking to address.

Businesses within the designated area, which extends from the Eastern end of the High Street through to the Queen Street/A96 roundabout, North to the A96 and South to Moray Street, are urged to contact Darlene Walker, Moray Council, Environmental services, Telephone: (01343) 562574 (Ext: 2574). Email: darlene.walker@moray.gov.uk to submit information about their service/business.

Alternatively please feel free to contact Jacqui Taylor, Elgin BID manager for more information and to submit the information you would like included. This can include up to 25 words describing in more detail the service/business that you offer.

Businesses who have submitted information to BID for the business guide are not required to resubmit this information for the travel guide. Assuming permission is granted the BID manager can forward this information on your behalf.

Each listing will be indexed to a local map which will also include information on walking, cycling, public transport links and car parking.

For more information on the Urban Freedom project go to www.urbanfreedom.org.uk.

Forthcoming events

Within Elgin BID city centre area:

18th-20th JUNE

Scottish International Festival of Trumpets, performances located within Elgin BID area including St Giles Church, Town Hall, Holy Trinity Church and Elgin Library Gallery.

For more information go to: www.sift-uk.com

31st JULY

Digital UK roadshow – Elgin City Centre Plainstones.

MAY TO SEPTEMBER

Elgin Library (selection of events – for full programme of events please contact Elgin Library):

Elgin Gallery - Art Exhibitions throughout the period.

25th MAY at 7pm

Moray Inter Schools Book Quiz Final

2nd JULY-28th AUGUST

'Space Hop' – Children's Summer Reading Challenge

11th SEPTEMBER

Heritage Open day (Local Heritage Centre)

15th-18th SEPTEMBER

'Get Moray Reading' - Book Festival venues throughout Moray.

St Giles Centre:

MAY TO JUNE

Wedding Exhibition

Joint business initiative involving 16 local city centre businesses.

14th August-4th September

Moray Art Club Exhibition

Summer 'What's on offer' involving City centre shops throughout July.

Elgin Rotary events:

5th JUNE

Music in the Park at 7pm
(in aid of MacMillan Cancer Research)

6th JUNE

Moray Motorfun at Cooper Park – 12 noon – 5pm

For more information go to: www.elginrotary.co.uk.

Food Festival:

6th-19th SEPTEMBER

1st Moray Food Festival

Many events planned in Elgin City Centre.
Information to follow!

Elgin Museum:

For forthcoming events contact (01343) 543675.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 10 am-5 pm and Saturday 11 am-4 pm.

Email: curator@elginmuseum.org.uk.

Markets:

THIRD SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Elgin Farmers Market on the Plainstones.

22nd-24th JULY

Continental Market on the Plainstones

(Please note these dates may be subject to change)

For details of other events in and around Moray go to:

<http://moray-tourism.info/>
www.greaterspeyside.com

Business Training Opportunities



Courses May/June 2010

| COURSE TITLE | DATE | TIME |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| RECORD KEEPING | Thursday 20th May | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |
| UNDERSTANDING FINANCE | Friday 21st May | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |
| 2 DAY BUSINESS START UP | Tuesday 25th & Wednesday 26th May | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |
| UNDERSTANDING FINANCE | Tuesday 8th June | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |
| MARKETING AND SELLING FOR RETAIL | Wednesday 9th June | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |
| 2 DAY BUSINESS START UP | Tuesday 15th & Wednesday 16th June | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |
| MARKETING AND SELLING SKILLS | Thursday 24th June | 9.30 am–4.00 pm |

All courses are FREE

To book a place on any of these courses or to see a Business Adviser contact:
Lynn on 01343 563634 or visit 17 High Street, Elgin IV30 1EG

Moray Chamber of Commerce events

Media Planning and Training (sponsored by Business Gateway)

Date: TUESDAY 25th MAY

Venue: BAXTERS VISITORS CENTRE, FOCHABERS

Course 1 – 'How to harness the media and boost your business'

Course 2 – 'Communicate with confidence on TV and Radio'

Course 3 – 'Crises Communication' (lessons from Glasgow terror attack)

For more information on this training and other proposed events and for bookings contact:
info@moraychamber.co.uk

Public Consultation and Prize Draw on City Centre Improvements

The Elgin BID manager and directors will be out and about on Elgin City Centre on Saturday 22nd May from 10am to meet with shoppers as part of a consultation on the positioning of 6 new benches purchased by the Town Centre Regeneration Fund. It is proposed that these benches be set out across the city centre area from Batchen Lane in the West to Northport in the East.

Shoppers will be asked to plot on a map of the area where they think the benches should be placed.

Those who take part in the consultation will be automatically entered into a prize draw with the opportunity to win one of 3 fabulous prizes donated by the BID members.

Other useful information

Pension Legislation

From 2012 employers will need to automatically enrol all eligible workers into a qualifying pension scheme as defined by the Pensions Act 2008.

More information can be found at: www.padeliveryauthority.org.uk.

Rates Revaluation 2010

You will now have received your new evaluation for your non domestic rates. If you have any queries or concerns or require advice on your new rates you should initially make contact with the local assessor:

Copies of the Scottish Government Business Rates General Information Leaflet which can provide useful information and advice are available through Jacqui Taylor or by contacting the Scottish Government directly.

Other information can be found on the Scottish Government website – www.scotland.gov.uk/revaluation.

In addition Robert Collier, Chief Executive of Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce will be meeting with John Swinney on 24th May to present a dossier with information and concerns raised by businesses from the Grampian area in relation to the rates revaluation in the Grampian area.

The BID newsletter will be delivered to all levy payers on a quarterly basis and in the interim monthly updates will be sent via email to keep you fully up to date with developments as they happen.

For businesses with no access to email we will send information in printed format.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any good news you would like to share or any information you would like to be included in future editions of the BID newsletter:

**Write to: Jacqui Taylor, Elgin BID manager, Commerce House Annexe, South Street, Elgin IV30 1JE
or Email: jacqui@elginbid.co.uk/jacqui.elginbid@moray.gov.uk**



www.elginbid.co.uk