

DEALING WITH WINTER WEATHER

Following the extremely disruptive early onset of wintry weather in 2010 Elgin BID will be putting some small measures in place which it is hoped will alleviate the impact of severe weather if Elgin City Centre is hit as hard as it was last year.

The Council have advised they will do their utmost to keep the streets as clear and accessible as possible. However there are specific priorities they are required to deal with first. These include ensuring that the main roads are kept clear and safe, vulnerable people are kept safe and that as much as is feasible schools are kept open. The Council have reported that their stockpiles of salt are full and supplies are under less pressure to meet demand than this time last year.

Elgin BID have negotiated with a local contractor to purchase a pallet of salt for a reduced rate which can be made available free of charge to all BID members to help to clear the area around their retail premises when required. We will also be purchasing a supply of snow shovels which will also be made available as required to BID members. This hopefully can support in keeping the city centre streets as clear and accessible as possible.

The Council have supplied a link to their policies and procedures when dealing with Winter Weather which is www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_40814.html. This may help to reduce any confusion over the Council priorities which arose last year.

ADVICE ON DEALING WITH ICICLES:

We saw the potential danger posed by icicles in 2010 when one fell from a city Centre premises and narrowly missed seriously injuring a pedestrian. The formation of icicles to the degree we saw last year is very unusual however, we have to be prepared that this may occur again.

In view of this Elgin BID have sought the advice of Grampian Police and the Fire Service to establish guidelines on dealing with icicles.

WINTER ICICLES:

In the recent very cold winters some large icicles formed which posed a danger to the members of the local communities. As part of the preparation for this winter it is worth considering the hazard of icicles and the serious risk of them falling or being dislodged and causing injury to those below.

As with all hazards, prevention is better than cure and clearing of guttering, etc. will reduce the possibility of icicles forming. However it is unlikely that you can

completely prevent the formation of icicles and the following advice is provided for your consideration in the reduction of risk from icicles.

Be vigilant and if icicles form it may be possible to remove these either yourself, if this can be done safely considering both people and the fabric of the building, or by securing the services of contractors with height access equipment. The fire service will attend where there is a risk to life, however as this is not a statutory duty a charge may be levied and their action may be no more than identifying the area with warning tape.

If icicles cannot be removed others should be warned of the danger which can be simply done by signs, warning tape, etc. to enable them to avoid the danger area.

As a preventative measure to avoid icicles forming this winter a cable can be fitted on to gutters which is connected to a thermostat which stops ice forming on your gutters. The cables have a lifespan of over 20 years. Contact any local electrician for more information.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS MENTORING.

Business Mentoring aims to work principally with businesses seeking to develop and grow. The mentors are experienced business people from a range of sectors with their own unique blend of business and life experience and crucially, each has a burning desire to 'give something back' and support businesses. Mentors provide their time on a voluntary basis and the service is provided free to businesses that meet the criteria.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or applying to be mentored and would like to find out more, please contact Audrey Sheal by e-mailing asheal@btinternet.com or call 07887982169.

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

BID AGM was held on 30th August and was attended by over 50 businesses. The first annual report and the first years audited accounts were presented. The annual report is available to download on www.elginbid.co.uk

SPOT LIGHT ON BID MEMBERS

QUARRIERS CARER SUPPORT SERVICE

Quarriers was founded 140 years ago by a Glasgow shoe retailer William Quarrier to look after and re home orphaned and destitute children in Scotland. It is now one of Scotland's largest charities with over 100 projects providing care to individuals and families in need.

Quarriers Carer Support Service (Moray) is one of those projects and is based in Batchen Street in Elgin. The service manned by a staff team of 9 offers support across a wide range of needs and ages including support for carers looking after people with a mental and physical disability, long term conditions, drug and/or alcohol misuse, frail or elderly.

Many people in caring roles often do not class themselves as in need of support. This can be particularly the case with young carers who may be looking after a parent suffering from drug or alcohol use. These are known as hidden carers and Quarriers are continually seeking ways to make contact with them.

The current service provided in Elgin includes:

- Support for young people with caring responsibility aged 18 or under. This offers one to one support to help young people with their caring responsibilities, support to identify opportunities and linking the work these young carers do with nationally recognised qualifications.
- Information training and advice is also offered including benefit entitlements, information on various medical conditions and access to short courses.
- This support for adult carers worker provides emotional and practical support to adult carers, will undertake carers assessment to identify the carers needs and support required to help them lead a life of their own.
- The service also offers a confidential helpline which is open normal office hours. There is an answer machine outwith office hours. Helpline number is 01343 555031/text 07792362184.

For more information about the service contact 01343 556031/email carersmoray@quarriers.org.uk or visit the office at 25 Batchen Street, Elgin where you will be assured of a warm welcome by Marion.

IF YOU WISH US TO FEATURE YOUR BUSINESS OR SERVICE IN THE NEXT EDITION OF THE BID NEWSLETTER THEN PLEASE GET IN CONTACT WITH Jacqui (01343) 550652.



CAR PARKING REPORT

Elgin BID recently produced a research report on the effects of car parking charges on the City Centre which was given to every Councillor. The report was completed in response to continued comments and concerns from local BID members that there has been a dramatic decrease in footfall and this was due to car parking charges. A proper survey was required to establish the exact correlation between parking policy and its affects on city centre footfall.

The report which can be accessed via www.elginbid.co.uk contains a number of startling facts gathered from secondary research and primary research including, the results of surveys carried out with local BID members and consumers combined with a separate survey by one BID member, Pizzeria Toscana with their customers. The secondary research includes a number of case studies where trials were put in place to reduce parking charges resulting in, in some cases a dramatic increase in footfall.

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CHAIR UPDATE

It has been a very busy 4 months since our last newsletter and some of the key highlights are as follows.

- The 2011 Town Centre Conference held in Dunfermline brought together people who are committed to seeing city and town centres not only survive this economic crisis but have a long term sustainable future. The clear message from the event was that Town Centres are the mainstay of our local communities and essential to future national economic growth. The conference offered a packed programme including a 20 minute case study presentation on Elgin BID. Other headline speakers included Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Local Government and Planning. Heather Fargo, Executive Policy Officer for the State of California's Strategic Growth Council and former Mayor of Sacramento California and Arthur Potts, founder of The People's Supermarket, London.
- We have been involved with the consultation on the Elgin City for the Future project. Elgin BID are noted as being one of the lead organisations across a number of the initiatives within this.
- Thankfully there was a positive result from the Save RAF in Moray campaign with RAF Lossiemouth saved and the Army coming to Kinloss in Summer 2012 which is earlier than expected.
- We delivered our first annual report at the AGM in August with an excellent turnout from our members. We have noticed a continual increased enthusiasm and support from BID members in our activities especially with our monthly themed events. Many more businesses are now becoming directly involved and this is has been greatly appreciated. Especially when our efforts are being recognised with thank you letters in the Northern Scot commenting on the success of the Halloween event.

I would like to thank all my fellow Directors and Observers for all their support and commitment during 2011 and of course our BID Manager Jacqui Taylor.

On behalf of the Elgin BID Team I would like to wish you a successful trading period in the run up to Christmas and hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Regards
David



CAR PARKING REPORT - CONTINUED

A summary of the stats from the primary research indicates:

Inverness City Centre car parking charges are up to 58% less than Elgin.

Parking ticket sales trends reversed between 2009 and 2010 with up to 1 hour tickets increasing by 73,188 and up to 2 hours and 2-4 hours reducing by 103,107. This is a clear indication that people are only spending as long as necessary in the city centre rather than spending time, having lunch and browsing.

91.7% of local business believed that the parking charges were deterring people from shopping in the City Centre. (they were able to back this up with quotes from their customers)

81.3 % of consumers reported that they now shop at Springfield Retail park rather than the City Centre and this is directly associated with parking charges.

The Council have now recommended immediately and before Christmas to revise the 2 hour parking charge to £1.00 with a view to looking at the longer term charges as part of the 2012 budget setting process.

Elgin BID will continue to monitor this to ensure that the Council do consider the recommendations contained in the report.

Environmental

Mark Angus - Chair

The progress to clear the roof shrubbery is continuing. There has been approx. 50% response from those contacted about the shrubbery. Some are happy for the work to be done on their behalf, some are opting to do the work themselves and we are happy to see that a number of properties have been cleared. There is however a need to now establish the position with those property owners who have not replied and start to clear the areas of those who have agreed. It should be noted that the cost involves not only the clearing of the shrubbery, but treatment of the area and assessment of any damage incurred by the roots growing into the masonry. The process is likely to continue into 2012.

Work on improving City Centre building frontages through the BID frontage grant scheme continues and there has been a number of improvement works undertaken which are making a difference to the appearance of the City Centre buildings. These include improvement works to masonry of buildings, repainting of windows and doors, new signage and new windows. It is planned to run this grant scheme again in 2012.

EVENT UPDATES

The second **MUSIC MANIA** event was held on the 13th August and featured a number of local bands including Fortunate Sun, Fat King George, Roxtone, Third Connection with acoustic sets by Bittersuite, Blair McLeod, Elgin High School Buskers and Fiona Kyle (Inspirational Harping).



There was a large street market again a mixture of Farmers Market and BID members. The hot and sunny weather certainly attracted a large crowd of over 16,900 people into the city centre through the day who enjoyed the music and certainly a fantastic way to showcase our local talent which we should be very proud of.



FOOD AND DRINK EXTRAVAGANZA – the first food and drink event was held in Elgin City Centre on the 17th September. The event which was developed as part of the Scottish Food and Drink Fortnight included a large street market with a number of stalls offering tastings. Many BID members took the advantage of a free stalls and did very well on the day. Not only in terms of sales but through the opportunity to promote their businesses.



The food demonstrations by Olive Tree Chocolates and Wendy Barrie from the Good Food Show produced some mouth-watering results.



Elgin and District Pipe Band, Nae Reel and Bubbles the Clown certainly added to the day which offered something for everyone. Judging by the response from the public it is an event which we would repeat next year.



Saturday 29th October saw the first **HALLOWEEN FAMILY FUN DAY** for many years in Elgin. The day aimed at families and children included a dress up competition for young people aged 5 – 15, a shop window competition, dress up for charity day, Halloween games throughout the day which included dooking for apples, donuts and mystery box.



Moray Dance performed their very own version of Thriller much to the delight of the crowd and of course Elgin and District Pipe Band and Bubbles the Clown entertained people all day in and around the centre. Scribbles Pizza House dressed up on the day and raised £67 for local Elgin charities. Thank you to all who took part.

“ My husband and I took our children to the Halloween Party in Elgin last Saturday, and I wanted to commend the organisers on a job very well done. I have twin daughters that are 5, and they had a marvellous time. My husband and I enjoyed ourselves as well. The market was very nice and diverse, the setting festive, and the good weather helped (you can't have credit for that). Most of all however, I wanted to say how impressed we were with the DJ hired for the event. He was funny, inclusive of all the children, and the embodiment of the festivities. I do hope that you will pass along my regards to him, and the praise he so very much deserves. ”

Letter received from one member of the public:

For more information on Elgin BID or if you wish to submit an article for the newsletter please contact Jacqui on **01343 550652/07859292324** e mail Jacqui@elginbid.co.uk.

MARKETING UPDATE – Ian Widdowson - Chair



The marketing group continue to build momentum. Since the last newsletter there have been 3 highly successful city centre events: 'Music Mania', 'Food and Drink Extravaganza' to celebrate Scottish Food and Drink Fortnight and the 'Halloween Family Fun Day'. All events were well attended with a large number of market stalls including a number from BID members who reported a brisk trade. The markets are commented on by the public as something which would bring them into Elgin.

We produced a Winter Festival leaflet containing a number of events taking place in and around the City Centre and 5,000 were distributed across Moray and Aberdeenshire.

The events for 2012 are already being planned and BID aims to deliver one each month. The 2nd showcase event will take place at Elgin Town Hall on Friday 2nd March and will be developed around the theme of movies. Already we have 15 retailers from the fashion, hair and beauty sectors who have intimated that they would like to take part.

A generic approach to advertising the city centre bears the image of 'Elgin City Centre – It's in the

Bag'. This approach has been used for all the generic advertising. In August we ran 2 weeks of advertising on STV with 3 weeks planned over the Christmas period. We have an advert (mega rear) currently on the Aberdeen – Inverness Stagecoach bus with a specific Xmas one running through December. We have also kept this approach for our specific event advertising on Moray Firth Radio with the aim to establish a recognised image people will associate with Elgin City Centre.

The first Elgin Food Guide was produced for the Book Festival and proved so successful that a reprint is currently underway. These will be

distributed at many of the forthcoming events as well as Elgin Cathedral and other tourist sites.

The second round of the Challenge Fund was launched and although the response was lower than expected we have been able to support a lantern making workshop which took place on the 21st and 22nd November. The finished lanterns will create a magical lantern procession for the Christmas Lights Switch On, on the 26th November.

Finally the Elgin Centre Heritage project - Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere is developing with the draft conservation area appraisal, management and interpretation plan almost complete.

Environmental Improvement Strategy

Over the course of the next 2 years Elgin BID will be leading on the development and implementation of an Environmental Improvement Strategy in partnership with Elgin Area Forums, Elgin Community Council and Grampian Police. The aim is to collectively tackle a number of wider issues affecting all areas of Elgin including litter, street cleanliness and anti social behaviour. In the meantime despite the cutbacks the BID machines are still out cleaning the streets each morning with the chewing gum machine out once a month.

Planters have now been installed at various locations at the West End of the High Street as an interim measure to improve the appearance of the area with a view the rolling out the hanging basket scheme in 2012.

Business listing signage for the East End, West End and South Street will be installed before Christmas and there are plans to update and improve the signage for other streets into 2012.

CRIME & SAFETY

Following the crime and safety training course it was identified that there are a number of local businesses and services who would like to attend the monthly retail crime meetings but due to work pressures have been unable to do so. Historically these meetings which allow retailers to share experiences and intelligence on instances of criminal behaviour (mainly shoplifting) are held once a month.

These meetings are key to reducing shoplifting in Elgin City Centre and therefore it is important that as many retailers as possible are able to attend. For a trial period these meetings will be held, on a bi monthly basis in the early evenings to see if this will increase attendance.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 6th December at 5.45pm in St Giles Centre management suite. If any member wishes to attend please contact Jacqui on 01343 550652/Jacqui@elginbid.co.uk.

In the longer term Elgin BID are working with Grampian Police to identify more effective ways of sharing information including on line resources.

FREE CITY CENTRE EXPRESS MAKES A WELCOME RETURN FOR XMAS 2011

This free eco-friendly electric bus will transport shoppers between Springfield Retail Park and Elgin City Centre Monday – Saturday up to every 30 minutes from 19th November – 24th December. The timetable can be downloaded from www.elginbid.co.uk. **AVOID THE HASSLE AND COST OF PARKING.**

Service Number	324								
Service Description	Elgin City Circular - Retail and Rail link								
Service No.	324	324	324	324	324	324	324	324	324
Elgin High Street East (District Court) depart		10:00	11:00	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	15:00
Elgin Centre, Commerce Street		10:01	11:01	12:01	12:31	13:01	13:31	14:01	15:01
Elgin Retail Park (B&Q)		10:04	11:04	12:04	12:34	13:04	13:34	14:04	15:04
Elgin Retail Park (Matalan) arrive		10:06	11:06	12:06	12:36	13:06	13:36	14:06	15:06
Elgin Retail Park (Matalan) depart	09:53	10:53	11:40	12:23	12:53	13:23	13:53	14:53	15:10
Elgin Retail Park (ASDA)	09:55	10:55	11:42	12:25	12:55	13:25	13:55	14:55	15:12
Elgin Rail Station	09:57	10:57	11:44	12:27	12:57	13:27	13:57	14:57	15:14
Elgin Centre, South Street (Lido Close)	09:59	10:59	11:46	12:29	12:59	13:29	13:59	14:59	15:16
Elgin High Street East (District Court) arrive	10:00	11:00	11:47	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00	15:00	15:17
Trains arriving from Inverness	955		1142			1328			1512
Trains arriving from Aberdeen	955		1142			1327			1511

