



News from the BID office!

In our last newsletter we welcomed Shona Neil as our new administrator here at the BID office. Shona has lived in Oban all of her life, and is looking forward to taking on her new role. She graduated from the University of Stirling in June this year and is now excited about being the first point of contact in the BID office and ensuring that the communication between the BID office and the levy payers is maintained and enhanced.

What BID has achieved so far...

As we now reach the end of our first year as BID4OBAN LTD I would like to take this opportunity of highlighting some of our achievements in what has been an immensely fast moving and productive year of progressing the business plan and working for the town.

- **By January** the BID board had been elected sub groups had been set up and the office had been staffed.
- **Set up scheme to improve shop frontage**
 - ◇ Up and running by February, the second round takes place in September of each year. It has supported 21 applications to date.
- **Improving the look of empty shop frontage**
 - ◇ "Whale" vinyl in George Street was a success. BID started on 2nd empty shop front but was halted due to a new business taking the lease. We are actively looking for the next empty property for the next design.
- **Improving the look of the seafront.**
 - ◇ Working to facilitate the ongoing development of the CHORD project.
 - ◇ 118 New floral displays installed in June, from Argyll Square to War memorial. These were still looking great in October and we have plans to extend the scheme in 2014.
- **We are going to enhance and extend the Christmas lights of the town to new areas.**
 - ◇ To include in 2013 a new permanent display on the Rockfield tree, and festive lighting on the Black Lynn Burn.
- **Keep the town tidy**
 - ◇ There have been 3 beach cleans organised between March & September
 - ◇ Agreement with local authority including power washing pavements in time for the new season 2013.
 - ◇ Liaison with the local authority over more ways of improving the cleanliness of the town, including a new power sweeper.
- **Welcome visitors**
 - ◇ 4 town ambassadors trained and out and about from May through to October .
 - ◇ They spoke to over 11,000 people. They also represent the town and BID4Oban at specific events.
- **Working to enhance number of cruise ship visitors to Oban**
 - ◇ Working with Argyll and Bute Council, Oban and Lorn Tourism Association, Oban Community Council and others to give a better welcome to cruise ship passengers.
 - ◇ Talking to agents.
- **We have given money to help more events happen, bigger and more often**
 - ◇ £19,360 promised so far for a total of 8 events over 2013 and into 2014 resulting in more footfall for Oban businesses and a significant return to the local economy.
- **Tell people about what's going on in town.**
 - ◇ New Oban Town Diary website - 1000th listing expected by end of 2013
 - ◇ Do new What's On leaflet every fortnight over summer. Ambassadors to help spread the word – handed out and in over 30 outlets in town.
 - ◇ Take over information boards for What's on poster and map, rebranded in black and gold.
- **BID has been getting businesses talking to each other!**
 - ◇ We have had two Business Forum events so far.
 - ◇ Included Oban High School with their very own business forum, as they will be the next generation of Oban entrepreneurs.

Keep up to date with what BID is doing for businesses by liking the BID4OBAN Facebook page!



Plans for next year include...

- **Accelerate the work on empty shops** by looking at engaging more with the council, agents, landlords and owners.
- **Make the street lighting better**, to make this a reality BID is currently in talks with CHORD and the council.
- **Put in welcome features on the roads into the town.**
- **Look to set up a discount scheme to give visitors a good deal.**
- **Complete Black Lynn regeneration.**
- **Keep working to extend season with new events.**
- **Look into getting a town piper in place by the season of 2014.**
- **Continue to look at new procurement initiatives to help offset levy payment.**

Other News...

BID4OBAN'S Second Business Forum

BID4Oban hosted its second Business Forum "Effective Marketing" on the 23rd September 2013. This included an update of the success of Bid4Oban activities so far. There were also fantastic presentations from miCity App's Colin Munro and from the Business Advisory Support Representative.

The miCity App presentation outlined the capabilities of the application that would be available on mobiles/ smartphones/ tablets and the internet community. This will enable BID to shout about Oban and raise the profile of businesses within the town to both visitors and locals. A great way to market the town!

During the Business Forum was also when we introduced the idea of our Love Oban Voucher Scheme to those present.

It's YOUR forum lets hear YOUR voice!

We would like to thank everyone who attended the meeting, however there is always plenty of room for more BID members to participate!

Thanks to the Regent Hotel for providing facilities for the event.

Love Oban

Gift Voucher Scheme



The Love Oban Gift Voucher scheme launched last month has already attracted a significant number of participating businesses. To date forty-three local shops, restaurants and other businesses have signed up and we are looking for more to join in before the public launch later this month.

"Love Oban" is a very straightforward voucher scheme to encourage local people to support local businesses by giving gift vouchers that can only be spent in Oban.

Shoppers will buy £10 or £20 vouchers from a single location in town and give them as gifts for birthdays, weddings, Christmas and anniversaries. The recipients will then be able to redeem their vouchers as full or part payment for goods or services in any of the participating businesses in the town. Vouchers cannot be exchanged for cash. Businesses will then send the redeemed vouchers to BID4Oban and receive the full face value in return.

We want to keep the scheme as simple as possible for all and it will operate at **no cost to the participating businesses.**

As a participating business all you will be required to do is

- ◆ Sign an agreement with BID relating to the management of the scheme
- ◆ Display a poster or a sticker in your window and counter displays advertising that you accept the vouchers
- ◆ Redeem vouchers for good and services, according to the terms and conditions, ensuring that all vouchers are genuine and redeemed before the expiry date.
- ◆ Submit a claim for redeemed vouchers to BID and receive payment

Remember that this is NOT a discount scheme and you receive the full face value of all valid vouchers redeemed.

If you need more information or would like to express your interest in the scheme, please email shona@bid4oban.co.uk or call 01631 569915.



Crowds expected for BID Reindeer Parade

This year the annual traditional reindeer parade is being organised by BID4Oban. The event will have all the elements that have made it a popular date in the Oban Festive calendar over many years. The evening will begin at 5pm with the parade from the Corran Halls with Oban Pipe Band leading Santa and his reindeer sleigh through the town, followed by Eilidh MacInnes' dancers, Spotlight Musical Theatre Group and members of the public.

Once in Station Square, entertainment will be provided by Highland Dancers and Spotlight before the big Christmas light switch on at 6pm. This year the town's Christmas display will be enhanced by more lights purchased by BID4Oban, covering the Black Lynn and the Rockfield tree.

Is your business on the reindeer route?

Why not stay open till 8pm?

Everyone loves some late night shopping on the run up to Christmas!

The parade traditionally attracts large numbers of people into the town for the evening, both following the parade and watching the entertainment and switch on in Station Square. We would like to encourage retail businesses in town, particularly those along the route, to offer evening shopping for the crowds who will be attending the event. This will be an opportunity to give a boost to your sales for Christmas.



We acknowledge the assistance of Davie Findlayson, Oban Lions Club, The Rotary Club of Oban, Oban Express and Tool & Equipment Hire for their support in organising this event.

Another successful round of the Business Frontage Scheme

Round one of the Business Frontage Scheme was very successful. We worked with 12 local businesses on their business frontage improvement works, investing £5100.00 for a return investment of approximately £18000.00. All of the works were carried out by local tradesmen and local firms, thus keeping the money within the town.

I am very pleased that we now had a very encouraging uptake for round two in which we are currently working with 9 businesses and we have so far allocated approximately £4500.00 for an expected final investment in excess of £9000.00.

There are limited budgeted funds still available for this round of the scheme, and the deadline for round three will be 28th February 2014. If you have any questions please contact Shona at the BID office either by phone 01631 569915 or by email shona@bid4oban.co.uk

Business Advisory Support

Business Advisory Support Ltd are still working to try to off-set the cost of the BID levy for BID4Oban members. We would like to encourage as many BID4Oban members to take advantage of this free service as possible. The review comprises cost saving analysis on telecoms, energy and merchant services costs which is carried out by the Business Advisory Support local representative Mike Wilson. Contact details and more information can be found in the leaflet enclosed!

Contact Us:

Nic Jones - Project Manager
Email: nic@bid4oban.co.uk
Mike Rowell—Events Manager
Email: mike@bid4oban.co.uk
Shona Neil - Administrator
Email: shona@bid4oban.co.uk