



Oban Business Improvement District
www.bid4oban.co.uk



YOUR OBAN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT 20-PAGE PULLOUT



How does BID4OBAN Work?

The principal aim of the BID is to deliver projects and services that will improve the trading environment of the BID area to the benefit of businesses, their customers and visitors. BID4Oban is clearly focused on improving Oban as a commercial and tourist destination. Our key objectives reflect this.

- *Making the best first impression*
- *Let's shout about what's happening in Oban*
- *Extend the season*
- *Making Oban the place to stay, explore and spend*
- *Working together for a more prosperous future*
- *Making our town easier to visit*

Since the inception of BID4Oban in 2012 and following a successful re-ballot in 2017, we have worked to improve the business and commercial opportunities for Oban. The BID is funded by a small levy that is charged to every business in Oban that has a rateable value of £3000 or above. The smallest levy paid is £150 up to £5000 for the largest businesses. This generates an annual income of £160,000. The levy is used to supplement and fund services and grants for which there would be no funding available if the BID was not in place. In addition to the levy payment BID4Oban generated a further £60,000 in additional grants and funds during 2019.

The BID was originally set up by a group of businesses in Oban. Every five years the business community votes for the continuation of the BID or not. We work to a fluid business plan that can adapt to the economic climate throughout the duration of the BID. Details of the current business plan are available at www.bid4oban.co.uk. We are ideally placed to receive additional funding for key projects from various partners, including Argyll and Bute Council.

BID4Oban has supported not just the business community but other groups and organisations within the town with event funding grants, funding of community projects and offered commercial



support for community organisations.

Since 2018, BID4Oban was the organisation chosen by Argyll and Bute Council to supply and install the festive lights for the town. Oban Electrical Services carried out most of the work with an additional 106 lamp-post Christmas trees supplied by BID4Oban. This funding is now ending and 2020 will be a challenging year to seek funding for the town's festive trees and displays. BID4Oban have now joined forces with Keep Oban Beautiful to raise additional funds for 2020.

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Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



LOVE OBAN VOUCHERS

Love Oban vouchers, the Oban pound, was set up by BID4Oban to encourage spending in local shops, restaurants and businesses.

The initiative has proved very popular and over the past year sales of these vouchers have increased by over 40% compared to the previous year. Over the 2019 Christmas period £8500 of vouchers were sold which is a new record for the town. By buying and using the vouchers, you can ensure that the money spent stays within the Oban business community and local businesses. Throughout the year there have been various promotions where purchasers of the vouchers have saved up to 10% off the face value therefore saving on any goods purchased with them.

The vouchers can be used in over 70 businesses. If your business is not listed on our database, please contact our office to find out how you can participate.

The Love Oban vouchers make ideal presents for weddings, anniversaries, birthdays or just to say thank you to someone. They are available from the BID4Oban office, Oban Phoenix Cinema, The Sports Shop, Oban, Alba Art Shop, Button Nose Boutique and Etive Restaurant.

By purchasing Love Oban vouchers, you are supporting local businesses.

■ **Full details on where to purchase and spend vouchers are available by visiting www.bid4oban.co.uk**

Love Oban Gift Vouchers

Love Oban Gift Vouchers can be redeemed at over 70 businesses throughout Oban and are valid for 12 months! Check out **Love Oban** on Facebook.



You can buy your **Love Oban** Gift Vouchers from:

Alba, Button Nose, Etive Restaurant, Oban Phoenix Cinema, The Sports Shop, Websters of Oban & Bid4Oban office

NOW IT'S EASIER THAN EVER TO LOVE OBAN!



2019 HIGHLIGHTS

BID4Oban have been involved in many events and activities throughout 2019. It is evidence of the support and relationships we have with many local groups and organisations.

The year started with a spectacular fireworks display at the stroke of midnight from McCaig's Tower. Hundreds of revellers lined the streets and vantage points across Oban to take in the spectacle. Along with the sounding of ships' horns and merriment the fireworks were enjoyed by all. Special thanks to Fireworx Scotland our supplier. One of our highlights was visiting Visit Scotland Expo to showcase Oban across the globe. Easter came around quickly with the start of the successful town markets and despite some cold weather plenty of visitors took advantage of the fabulous local produce on offer. April also saw the start of the first cruise ships to visit Oban, each one greeted by our Ambassadors Kay and Joe along with high school pipers and Oban Community Council. In total, almost 18,000 passengers alighted onto the North Pier pontoons. Every cruise ship compliments Oban on the warm welcome they receive. The Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival in May attracts around 1200 participants and numerous family members to our town and this event is supported by BID4Oban.

The Oban Sportive attracted an entry of over 200 with 75% of them from outside the area spending bed nights in Oban. Oban Live and its fringe in June attracted thousands of visitors to the town and, along with a visit from the Queen Victoria cruise ship, the town was packed to capacity. This event shows Oban at its best and we look forward to welcoming back Oban Live in 2021. Summer saw the installation of the town's floral arrangements. These were well received and for 2020 will be even better. The town had a very busy summer season with many visitors taking tours and around 50,000 BID4Oban maps and leaflets handed out. Motorfest in September was a great success along with the Clan Cycle Stunt Team. Thousands visited to view these classic cars. The Black Lynn received new lights and has become an added attraction and improvement to that area of the town. Lots of great comments and photos across social media. November fireworks across the bay were a great success thanks to our partners at Scottish Sea Farms. An estimated 5000 people watched the display. Our thanks go to the auxiliary Coastguard who provide safety cover for this event. The Winter Festival launched in November was a tremendous success showcasing the town at its best with lots of activities for all. This was supported with a generous funding grant



by BID. It culminated in the BID4Oban Reindeer Parade and Christmas lights switch-on. A lovely touch this year was the visit of the reindeer and Santa to Eader Glinn Care Home where presents were provided for all the residents. The festive lights switch on launched us into the Christmas season with lots of promotions and sales of Love Oban vouchers. Finally, 2020 was launched in spectacular fashion with the fireworks from McCaig's Tower. We look forward to doing everything and more again this year.





EVENTS AND GRANTS FUND

BID4Oban uses part of the levy it collects from the business community to help support local events, festivals and community organisations. Since its inception, we have invested £250,000 in the Oban community ensuring events can function and are supported financially. We have supported festivals, clubs and community organisations. We have supported Oban Live since its inception and this event is now generating in excess of £1.4m in economic benefit to the businesses in Oban.

Another event that has benefited from financial and in-kind support is the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival held in May each year. This event generates an economic benefit to Oban of £1.2m. Motorfest is an event that has grown since small beginnings in 2015. The event now held in September attracted in excess of 70 vehicles on display, many from outwith the local area. Combined with a mountain bike stunt show in 2019, the event attracted in excess of

2500 visitors. Oban Sportif 2019 attracted large numbers of entrants from across Scotland for the two-day event. With its new base at Oban Distillery and support from Diageo this event brings many visitors to the town and a great economic impact.

The BID4Oban Reindeer Parade and Christmas lights switch-on has proved one of the best attended events in Oban during the busy festive season. In excess of 5000 Obanites and visitors attended this year's parade and celebration. This event could not take place without the terrific support of the Rotary Club of Oban and Oban Lions Club.

Fireworks displays are al-



ways well attended and 2019 was no exception.

With the help of Scottish Sea Farms who sponsored the November 5 display, huge crowds lined the Esplanade and the North Pier to view one of the biggest displays ever seen in Oban.

A spectacular display also took place to celebrate the New Year from McCaig's Tower.

During 2020 BID4Oban in conjunction with Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance will be launching a Sea Shanty Festival during June. This is a first for Oban and will bring groups from across the UK and further afield.

We are also in the early stages of bringing STORM, a giant 10-metre high puppet, to the town. This will be a spectacular event and it is anticipated that thousands of visitors will be attracted to Oban.

Details on how to apply for grant funding can be found at www.bid4oban.co.uk or contacting our office in Stevenson Street.

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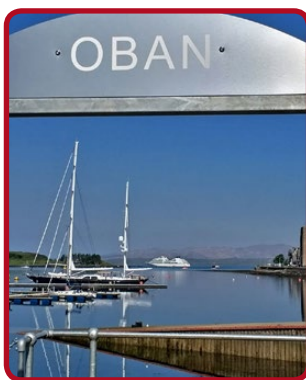


PORT OF OBAN CRUISE GROUP & OBAN GUIDED TOURS

Oban Guided Tours are entering their third year and have gone from strength to strength with a slight tweak to their name to better reflect what they do.

The guides are now a familiar sight in town with their distinctive crooks, introducing groups of up to 15 visitors to the delights of Oban and Kerrera. Two smaller cruise ships will be visiting Oban again this summer and, over the course of the season, 1200 of their guests will take advantage of Oban Guided Tours to make the most of their time here as well as groups from the larger ships which also increasingly seek the services of guides. The work of the guides and Port of Oban Cruise Group are now paying off with stronger links and direct contacts with the companies responsible for organising ship visits,

Oban is now recognised as a welcoming and friendly cruise call by ships and shipping agents. We work closely with Cruise Scotland and will be represented at VisitScotland Expo 2020 in Aberdeen. As a result of this, many of the ships visiting return again and again and we're delighted to be welcoming the Queen Mary II again this summer in August. Her last visit resulted



in a carnival feel in the town as cars queued along as far as Ganavan to get a better view. Port of Oban Cruise Group include members from many different organisations such as Oban Community Council, Oban Distillery, Dunollie Museum, Castle & Grounds, OLTA, BID4Oban, Northern Lighthouse Board, VisitScotland and Argyll & Bute Council who meet monthly and work closely together to promote Oban as a fantastic place to visit and it's not just for cruise ships: the informal title is Oban Welcome Group as they work to welcome everyone to Oban no matter how they arrive, train, ship or road. Every ship is met by pipers courtesy of Oban High School and members of Oban Community Council.

■ For further information visit
www.obanwalkingtours.co.uk
 or www.bid4oban.co.uk



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MARKETS AND IMPROVEMENTS GRANTS

One of the key objectives of BID4Oban is to improve the appearance of the town. This takes many forms and the Business Improvement Grants have proved highly successful. To date BID4Oban have awarded £50,000 to eligible businesses with 2019 being another busy year.

These grants enable businesses to invest in the visual impact of their properties by way of improved signage or redecoration of a shop front. Ensuring the frontage of a business premises looks bright and well cared for can have a major

impact on the look of the town and support the cost to the business. Full details on how a business can apply for a grant can be found by visiting www.bid4oban.co.uk or contacting the office in Stevenson Street.

Oban Town Markets, which take place over the summer months, have proved highly successful. These take place in Station

Square area of the town. There are normally up to 10 vendors providing local produce and goods. We are very keen to attract additional vendors to the markets. BID4Oban supply the market traders licences, gazebos and infrastructure to enable these events to take place. By having one organisation running the markets we ensure that there is no duplication or unwanted vendors setting up adhoc markets. We are keen to take bookings from any interested parties who may want to sell their goods or services.

■ Full details are available on www.bid4oban.co.uk





TOWN AMBASSADORS

There is a busy year ahead for Oban Town Ambassadors, Joe and Kay, as we celebrate the Year of Coast & Waters which puts Oban in an ideal situation being the Seafood Capital of Scotland and a hub for water-based sports and events.

Between welcoming passengers disembarking from visiting cruise ships, welcoming guests leaving on the smaller Majestic Line ships, directing people to ferries and for small boat trips, the amount of people heading out on the water who interact with the Ambassadors is massive. Last year from cruise ships alone over 18,000 visitors were welcomed by Joe and Kay and this year promises to be even busier. Add this to the number of visitors they speak to on a

daily basis from Easter until the end of October and the number rises by hundreds on a weekly basis. It's just as well that they are doing a job they love, and both enjoy nothing more than meeting new people and enthusing about what Oban has to offer. In the seven years that Joe and Kay have worked as Town Ambassadors there have only been a handful of occasions where a complaint has been received or a moan listened to which is a fantastic result for Oban and for the Ambassadors. Happy visitors are what it's all about and, looking ahead to the coming summer months, it's time to get ready for another busy year – new walking shoes, a bag full of maps and timetables and a big smile ready to make everyone feel welcome.

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BID PARTNERSHIP WORKING

BID4Oban work very closely with Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance (OLTA) (www.oban.org). We have a minute of understanding that ensures we support them financially with an annual grant of at least £10,000.

This grant ensures that OLTA can gain access to additional funding through match funding of the grant given by BID4Oban. This is used to promote Oban as a tourism destination not only on their website but by way of billboard advertising across Scotland, taxi-wrap advertising and on the Glasgow and London undergrounds. OLTA play a crucial role in marketing Oban as a must visit destination. Their website is testament to this being the first site you will see if you Google Oban! They are part of the Argyll and the Islands Tourism Alliance ensuring their influence is not just felt in Oban but the greater geographical area. Part of the match funding was used to film the Oban Sportive and this film is available on YouTube and will be used to market the 2020 event. It highlights the town and surrounding area at its best. During 2019 both organisations represented Oban as a destination at the VisitScotland Expo in Glasgow. We had access to over 12,000 tour operators and visitors to showcase what is available in the Oban and Lorn area. From this event numerous enquiries were

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made, and we were able to attract many additional groups and visitors to the town. For 2020 both organisations will participate at the Visit Scotland Expo in Aberdeen on April 1 and 2.

Our relationship with established town organisations continues to go from strength to strength offering support and marketing opportunities for events and festivals. We are always happy to offer grants to enable clubs etc to bring events to Oban that add to the economic benefit to businesses across the town.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

Ensuring the town looks its best is a key priority of BID4Oban.

During times of restraint in council budgets, it is increasingly difficult for the council to fund many of the services previously taken for granted. We are working with Argyll and Bute Council to ensure that the town is maintained to the best possible standard. 2019 saw many meetings with council officials to improve standards across the town. This should have a significant impact on how the town looks for 2020.

Every year BID4Oban install and maintain 256 hanging baskets and planted railing troughs throughout the town. This represents a substantial investment of around £15,000 which covered the installation, maintenance, planting, hardware and delivery. During 2020 we plan to refurbish the planters along George Street and install additional baskets in Albany Street. The costs of supplying not only the plants but the baskets that are used increases every year. We have been working very closely with the Keep Oban Beautiful group (KOB) and 2020 will see even greater partnership working. Plans are being drawn up for the highly successful town tidy-up which is scheduled to



take place on March 28 and 29. We would encourage everyone to participate in some small way to tidy up the area around your house or business. Last year Argyll and Bute Amenities Dept in Oban fully supported this event and will offer the same support this year.

A key project delivered in 2019 was the first part of the Shine a Light on Oban Project. Following a funding award of £11,500 from the Oban Common Good Fund which was match funded by BID4Oban. The result was the illumination of the Black Lynn between Stevenson Street and Airds Crescent. New

lighting was installed that has transformed this area of the town with numerous lovely comments and photos appearing on social media. The Ranald Hotel and Lorne Bar also applied for business improvement grants enabling them to install new lighting outside their premises. These projects used local contractors to ensure our investment was spent with Oban businesses. Our Shine a Light on Oban project will continue into 2020 with other installations being looked at.

■ Full details on how to support or sponsor a basket are available at www.bid4oban.co.uk





YEAR OF COASTS AND WATERS

2020 sees Scotland celebrating the Year of Coasts and Waters and Oban is ideally placed to make the most of this year with its seaside location, lochs close by and its reputation as Seafood Capital of Scotland.

We also have SAMS on our doorstep which is world renowned for the work it does and the fabulous Ocean Explorer Centre which will

hold a Festival of the Sea in May. Other events which run annually also tie in nicely to this special year with West Highland Yachting Week, Scottish Islands Peaks Race, Oban Lifeboat Open Day and the Sea Kayak Race to name a few. There are also special events planned for this year for the first time with Oban International Sea Shanty Festival taking place in June, this will have lots of

local community involvement from choirs to school visits and have Oban ringing to the sound of songs of the sea for the weekend. Later in this year we hope to have a visit from the goddess of the sea Storm, a 10-metre-high puppet made of entirely recycled or natural materials, launched at Celtic Connections this year. Talks have been under way since October to bring this phenomenon to Oban and a date will be confirmed shortly, have a look at the videos on YouTube to find out what to expect when she visits. Have a look at the Events List to find all the events announced so far although I'm sure there will be more announced as the weeks go by and don't forget Oban Town Diary as a way to find out what's going on and a way to publicise events coming up.

■ Full details are available on www.bid4oban.co.uk



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BID AGM

BID4OBAN GOVERNANCE

BID4Oban is managed by a board of directors under the chairmanship of Tony Cave (proprietor Craigard Décor). The board is representative of the businesses and stakeholders in the BID area.

There are two representatives from Argyll and Bute Council on the board of directors. Directors are responsible for the strategic direction of the BID, operating the company in an efficient and transparent manner, financial management and prudence and the delivery of BID projects and services in line with the business plan. They make decisions on grant funding programmes operated by BID4Oban. They are responsible for monitoring the performance of the BID and publishing the company's annual report. The day to day running of BID4Oban is undertaken by the BID chief executive, Andrew Spence. He is accountable and responsible to the board of directors and manages the day to day working of the BID company. The BID employs two part-time Town Ambassadors one of which supports the BID manager with some administration.

■ **BID4Oban are keen to recruit further directors. To be eligible you must be associated with a local business. It is essential that new directors are recruited to ensure the BID remains active and vibrant. Please contact the BID office in the first instance.**



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BID4Oban AGM and annual review is held in March each year. This year's AGM will be held at the Studio Theatre, Corran Halls, Oban at 6pm on the 17th March.



EVENTS FOR 2020

FEBRUARY

- 9th & 10th **129th Highland Cattle Society Spring Show & Sale**
Royal Rumpus
 Music Festival, Royal Hotel
- 29th, 29th & 1st

MARCH

- 28th **Oban Gin Festival**
 28th & 29th **PSA Squash Event**
 28th&29th **Oban Big Spring Clean**

APRIL

- 5th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Magellen**
 10th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Astoria**
 11th **Oban Town Market**
 10th – 13th **Easter Weekend**

MAY

- 1st – 3rd **Highland & Islands Music & Dance Festival Sportif**
- 9th & 10th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Costa Fortuna**
 13th **Scottish Islands Peaks Race**
 15th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Astoria**
 16th **Alzheimer Scotland Memory Walk**
 17th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Silver Wind**
 19th **Oban Town Market**
 23rd Visiting Cruise Ship – **Aida Vita**
 23rd **Festival of the Sea** – Ocean Explorer Centre
 24th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Ocean Atlantic**
 28th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Astoria**
 30th Oban Pride
 31st Visiting Cruise Ship – **Silver Cloud**

JUNE

- 5th – 7th **Oban International Sea Shanty Festival**
Oban Provincial Mod
Charities Day
Oban Lifeboat Open Day
Oban Town Market
 26th – 28th **Markie's Music Festival**
 28th – 5th July **West Highland Tennis Tournament**

JULY

- 5th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Pursuit**
 7th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Europa**
 12th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Silver Whisper**
 14th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Magellen**
 25th **Oban Town Market**
 26th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Hamburg**

AUGUST

- 1st – 7th **West Highland Yachting Week**
 8th **Oban Lorne RFC Tower 10**
 11th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Queen Mary II**
 22nd **Oban Town Market**
 27th **Argyllshire Gathering**
 29th **Sea Kayak Race**

SEPTEMBER

- 11th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Star Legend**
 12th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Magellen**
 18th Visiting Cruise Ship – **Costa Fortuna**
 19th **Oban Town Market**
 20th **Motorfest**

NOVEMBER

- 5th **Oban Fireworks Display**
 TBA **Winter Festival**
 TBA **Reindeer Parade**

For an update list of monthly events visit www.obanwhatson.co.uk



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