

we are

INVERURIE

NEWSLETTER • ISSUE 2

Christmas 2017 wrap up!

Well, the festive season is truly behind us and we are aware that this year's annual spend was, on average, on par with previous years.

This year, we saw the town centre illuminate with new Christmas lights, and the festive feel extended with the introduction of topiary LED balls within the BID area. We will be meeting with Aberdeenshire Council to identify what lampposts within the area which can be extended to accommodate further Christmas lights. The Christmas Switch-on again was hugely well received with approximately 3,000 crammed into our Town Centre to witness the amazing spectacular, the Events team put on year after year.

We witnessed 300 Santas running through the town centre, which was a fantastic sight to behold. Looking forward to continuing and building on this in 2018.

In response to the feedback that the tacky stalls from outwith the area should not return, we encouraged our local Businesses/Retailers to sign up and take a stall within the town centre, however response was poor. The Events team are currently reviewing the master plan for the festivities during December, with a view to outsourcing an offering for the town centre, to complement the retailers within.

We conducted a survey over the Christmas period to identify what folks coming to the

town were interested in. 40% of those interviewed attended the town to see the stalls whilst a staggering 55% said they attended purely for the lights switch-on and fireworks, so there is clearly an opportunity to develop an unique offering to the centre to capitalise on the number of visitors.

Although sales were reflective of previous years, we need to realise that the feedback from our consumers is still extremely positive and of course the weather had a significant negative impact. Of everyone who responded 85% said that Inverurie still has a good variety of shops, 77% stated that the town has a good variety of pubs/entertainment, likewise 81% agreed on the variety of eateries within the town, and an amazing 97% of folks asked, agreed on the high level of customer service. So, we as a town, still have a fantastic offering to give to our community as well as our visitors.

We did hear, from you, our levy payers regarding some of the fundamental issues over this period. Most common was the maintenance of the roads and pavements during this time. Whilst we appreciate the added frustration as a business, Aberdeenshire

Council's remit was to ensure the main roads were clear. From the many number of businesses complaining about the lack of maintenance we have since addressed this with area office and have had a walkabout in the town centre. One of the most striking observations throughout our walkabout was the lack of grit bins available throughout the BID area. We are in the process of compiling a list for the council of identified areas within the town centre. This will allow, you, to implement preventative methods for future.

With limitations in time and resources, Aberdeenshire Council's priority was the main roadways.

If you are interested to find out the winter maintenance remit from Aberdeenshire Council, please refer to the baseline services document on our website <http://www.weareinverurie.co.uk/uploads/inverurie-business-improvement-district-baseline-services.pdf> page 14 on this document.

We are Inverurie and Inverurie Business Association invested in the advertising and promoting of Christmas 2017 on Northsound, Original, The Advertiser and Press and Journal. Of all the media platforms used, Original proved most popular, followed by The Advertiser. Again, lots of promotion on social media, which still has the over arching biggest reach by far.

So, to 2018 and what will that bring to We are Inverurie and the businesses within the town.



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Advertiser

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Supporting Our Local Businesses

INVERURIE EVENTS

In January we successfully launched Inverurie Wedding Weekend event. We quickly established that every business within the town has ability to offer products or services for a wedding. We also calculated of those businesses who actively attended 'arranged' wedding exhibitions an amazing £30,000.00 was spent by our local businesses to have a 'pop-up' at a venue somewhere!

A first of its kind, Inverurie will become a magical, shopping destination where newly engaged couples, can come to the town and see our businesses showcase their wares.

With music serenading couples throughout the streets of Inverurie, it will be the ultimate wedding weekend.

There is no cost to our levy payers, peripheral business who are not Voluntary Contributors will have to pay for a 'pitch' to exhibit within our businesses.

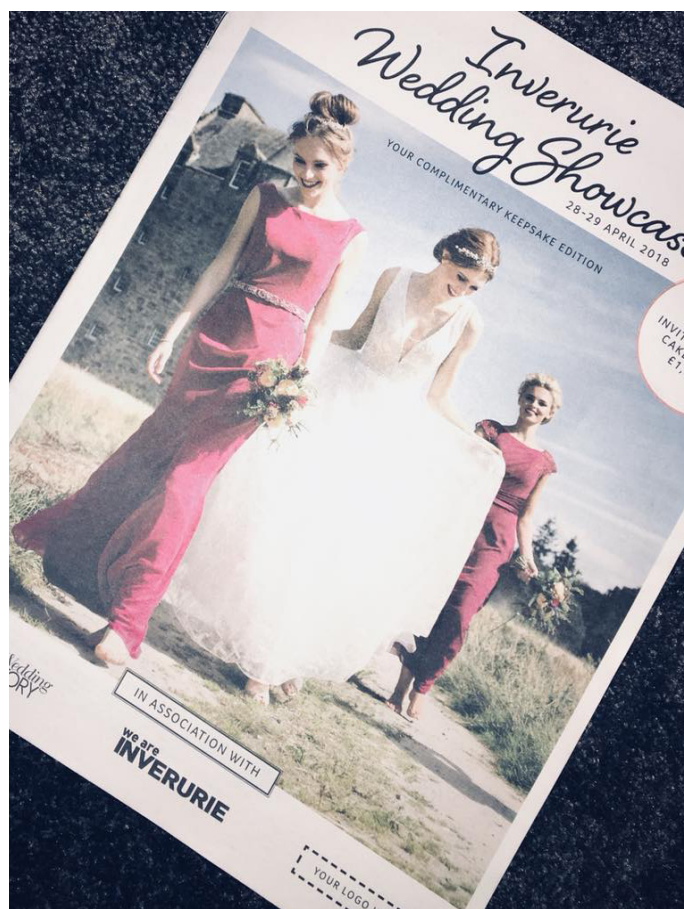
We have received an overwhelming response and cannot wait to see our town transformed.

As we are the first town to run such an event the Scottish

Wedding Directory are hugely supportive of this and are undertaking all our marketing and promotion of the event. All we ask is our businesses are receptive to opening their premises on the Saturday and Sunday to capitalise on this fantastic opportunity.

We will do targeted promotions through social media, in conjunction with the rigorous marketing communications plan, drafted by the Scottish Wedding Directory folks.

This is a great platform to encourage collaborative working, allowing us to create a USP, and it is hoped that, following the inaugural weekend, this event will run for the next five years.



In June, we will be exhibiting at Taste of Grampian.

Following our consultations with the consumer and other businesses, we found that the town centre was adversely affected due to the volume of traffic generated by Taste of Grampian.

We have worked very closely with the Taste of Grampian committee over the last two years, and are delighted to say that this year we have addressed the connectivity issue.

Another of our voluntary contributors, Premier Coaches, will operate a 'park and ride' facility on the day,

to allow visitors to travel between the two areas. Operating every half hour during peak times, there will be a collection/drop off, Kintore and Town Centre.

We will have on the day ambassadors who will meet and greet visitors as they arrive in the town centre and assist wherever possible. We would like our businesses to show their support by adopting a Taste of Grampian window display and also have promotions during the week building up to the event and on the day. We are Inverurie will have a flagship stand on the day, so looking forward to being a part of this spectacular day.

Pride of Inverurie Awards

Following the success from last year, Pride of Inverurie 2018 has officially launched.

We are delighted to have some new sponsors and a tremendous support from everyone involved. Truly this is an exciting event and has already received a great response.

We are introducing a sponsors' night and a Meet the Finalists night as well, in addition to pre-dinner drinks reception for the sponsors and finalists on the night too!

We are also delighted to have our media sponsor for this year, The Advertiser. Special vote of thanks goes out to David and his team at the office, who have been a tremendous support for We are Inverurie. Totally delighted to have our own, local newspaper onboard!



Since our last newsletter we have been extremely busy!

Did you know that none of this would be possible if it wasn't the tremendous efforts of our town centre partners. Without them our jobs would be a lot more difficult.

- Aberdeenshire Council, including Area Office, Inverurie Academy, Active Schools
- Inverurie Environmental Improvement
- Police Scotland
- Garioch Heritage Centre
- Garioch Partnership
- Inverurie Business Association
- Inverurie Events.

These partners are instrumental in our operational meetings, which allow us to formulate smaller sub-groups to focus on delivery of the projects. We have a workshop event in February to discuss project delivery under the prioritised themes as expressed by the We are Inverurie Board. We now have an action plan which is being finalised with an accurate timeline for project delivery.

We have always been clear that it is the We are Inverurie's intention to ensure that the levy fees will be cost neutral to our businesses, through project execution and leveraging external funding too. To give you an indication of what our first year projects are:

Pride in Inverurie – Town Centre masterplan, we have had a number of in-house meetings with Aberdeenshire Council and an external consultant to address the needs for a single vision for the town centre. With three significant new builds coming to the town, the need for collaborative working is imperative. One of the key issues for having BID is to avoid a mass duplication in community services. We have already identified an overlap with parties involved. Having such a framework in operation, will a) avoid such duplication, b) create a single vision c) ensure the overall impact for the town centre needs is addressed.

Marketing and Promotion - we recently attended various tourism workshops and

have since established that Inverurie and the rest of Aberdeenshire/City are scoring extremely poorly in terms of promoting ourselves as a destination to come and visit for business as well as leisure. Working with our partners VisitScotland and VisitAberdeenshire, we will establish a timeline and action plan to identify establishing the town's USP (Unique Selling Point) and offerings. With an anticipated influx of tourists embarking in our area by 2020, due to the cruise liners scheduled to come into Aberdeen Nigg Bay Harbour, we need to ensure as a town we have created the ultimate visitor experience. Working with the Business Association, we will establish what training and development needs are for the businesses to ensure a level playing field for everyone involved. We are in the process of finalising our expression of interest for our first external source of funding with Visit Scotland through the Growth Fund.

Accessibility – In order to promote Inverurie as a destination to visit for both leisure and business tourism, we will need to have a general 'house keeping' plan for the town centre. Following a walk-about in January this year we have quickly determined key areas requiring some TLC. In particular, Garioch Shopping Arcade, where there needs to be a tidy up and some landscaping work done. Working with Inverurie Environmental Improvement group looking to undertake some remedial works as per the Keep Scotland Beautiful assessment conducted 2016. There is the ongoing issue surrounding car parking and we are in the process of identifying ownership of the land there with a view to lobbying car parking in general for the town centre. We are also addressing the accessibility for cycling and pedestrians and again have identified 'key' areas requiring attention and better traffic management.

Environmental – working with Aberdeenshire Council's 2020 policy, will allow us to ensure that our businesses are

fully aware of changes in legislation and how companies will be expected to dispose of waste on all levels. This will also allow us to identify 'quick win' mini-projects for many of our businesses in formation of reduction in utility, waste management, water, broadband etc, costs. In addition, the We are Inverurie are fully supportive of Inverurie Environmental Improvements work towards achieving a 'Gold Gilt' award. All of the above seems very daunting, it's not. Working closely with the Business Association, we are compiling our schedule of events, workshops, training to ensure that all our businesses will receive the appropriate training and development to ensure that we will all be on a level playing field. Once this is established further communication will be circulated to you all.

Digital – Working with our external partners VisitScotland and VisitAberdeenshire creating a digital marketing strategy to ensure We are Inverurie have a cohesive online presence with our identified USP's and encourage longer dwell time to the area. Again with Inverurie Business Association will identify and produce a comprehensive training and development programme for our businesses to ensure everyone is digitally compatible by 2020.

**Taste
of Grampian
Food & Drink Festival**



INVERURIE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Please be aware of changes to the pay and display car parks.

"As a result of the cost to upgrade our chip and pin facilities to comply with new changes introduced by the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards, the Council will be removing the chip and pin card payment facility at pay and display machines. Payment by Cash (at the machine) will still be available, alternatively card payments can be made by using the RingGo App for cashless parking. <https://myringgo.co.uk/>"

Please note that WAI are currently discussing with



Aberdeenshire Council and Police Scotland addressing the issues for our Town Centre car parking. We will be circulating more information on short, medium and long term plans in the very near future.

Opportunity to make your Levy Payment COST NEUTRAL!

We are Inverurie have arranged for a day surgery to occur on Tuesday 17th April, 2018 at the office 1 High Street. This is the first phase of our utility cost savings for our levy payers. In partnership with HighNet we are looking at rolling out fibre broadband into the town centre with a guarantee 100 meg, included in this

is £2,000 voucher towards installation for each business from the Scottish Government to roll this out.

This is the first stage so spaces are extremely limited, if you are interested please contact Ashley on ashley@weareinverurie.co.uk for details and confirmation of appointment.

Business Voices

With changes in committees over the last four months, there is a real need and ultimate desire to new faces coming onboard.

All three of our organisations: Inverurie Environmental Improvement, Inverurie Business Association and Inverurie Events would welcome you onboard the committee. The unique part of being involved in such groups, is a strong voice representation, involved in the hub of delivery! Therefore, if you are a business owner wanting to get involved or have placements who, as part of their professional development need to undertake such a role, please do not hesitate to get in touch, with Ashley Wilson BID Manager at ashley@weareinverurie.co.uk.



The Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS) provided record relief to almost 104,000 recipients in 2017-18.

The increased number of recipients benefiting from total relief under the scheme, which removes or reduces their rates bills rose to £226 million - an increase of £46 million from £180 million last year.

This amounts to an average saving per property of over £2,000.

The number of properties receiving SBBS relief has increased by over 60 per cent since it was introduced in 2008-09.

Welcoming the new figures Finance Secretary Derek Mackay said: "Since its introduction, the Small Business Bonus Scheme has saved businesses in Scotland almost £1.5 billion and offers the most generous package

of reliefs available to small businesses anywhere in the UK.

"To maximise take up I will shortly write to ratepayers potentially eligible for SBBS, but not claiming it.

"We are doing everything within our powers to support our economy and make Scotland the best place for business to invest.

"We have gone beyond the Barclay Review recommendations with new measures to drive investment.

"In addition to the growth accelerator, where businesses pay no rates for the first year on new or improved properties, we will ensure every new build property does not pay a penny in rates until it is occupied for the first time."

Remember

The We are Inverurie BID Company is here for the benefit of the businesses within the BID area, and do encourage as much involvement as possible. Therefore, we are going to have a "Meet the Directors" Q&A session at the Kintore Arms Hotel on Wednesday 4th April between 5.30 and

7.30pm. This allows you the opportunity to meet our board and ask any prudent questions. This is a two-way process; therefore, we encourage feedback, ideas and suggestions so please come along.

Many thanks,
We are Inverurie