



Living Lerwick Ltd

Annual Report 2013/14

Together Let's Make Lerwick Town Centre Better

Introduction - Living Lerwick Ltd

Living Lerwick Ltd, Lerwick town centre business improvement district is at the end of year two. Following consultation with businesses in the area, a five year business plan was drawn up and in June 2012, a ballot of eligible businesses was held. A turnout of 67% was recorded with 82.7% in favour by number and 82.2% by rateable value. A copy of the business plan can be found at www.livinglerwick.co.uk.

The business improvement levy is collected by SIC and passed to Living Lerwick. It is added to other funding streams to assist in the delivery of projects laid out in the business plan. During the second year, £62,502.32 was collected. The SIC have the same collection powers for BID levy as they do for rates. They will enforce these shortly to collect unpaid levy from years one and two. External funding of £31,531 to cover staffing and project costs was applied for and received during the year. There was also a trading income of £702. This gave a total received income of £94,735 for the year.

This annual report describes how the funding has been used towards delivering the main aims of Living Lerwick Ltd in year two, as prioritised by directors. More information is available at www.livinglerwick.co.uk.

Management and Board of Directors

Living Lerwick Ltd is managed under contract by CU Marketing Ltd and is overseen by a board of directors. CU Marketing Ltd staff working on Living Lerwick Ltd during year two were: Christena Irvine (Manager) and Leigh-Ann McGinty (Admin Officer until June).

Board of Directors

Chair

Eleanor Eunson (Boots)

Vice Chair

Cynthia Adamson (M & Co)

Directors

Emma Gibson (The Peerie Shop)
Gemma Jamieson (Specsavers)
Peter Lennon (KGQ Hotels)
Steve Mathieson (Visit Scotland)
Ben Mulla (The Camera Centre)
Ken Rae (J G Rae Ltd)

Advisors on the Board

Alistair Cooper (SIC Councillor)
Linda Coutts (SIC Development)
Laura Fiske (SIC Planning)
Eddie Graham (Northern Constabulary)
Allan Wishart (SIC Councillor)

Chairman's comments

The second year of Living Lerwick has proved to be as challenging as ever. The initial impetus of the BID has been built on and strengthened as a result of the tireless work of the board and management team.

The Winter Festival was again blessed with good weather – who can forget the wonderful fireworks on the last Saturday before Christmas? The BID area was certainly vibrant with live music and shoppers stopping to linger longer.

The Fair Isle Festival was also blessed with summer sun and saw the Living Lerwick open markets. Both of the festival events were supported with outside funding applications worth £10,958.75.

Living Lerwick is not simply “an events team”. This year, we held business forums for retail sector and then for services, food and accommodation sectors. Every BID member was invited to attend and those who could not were given the opportunity for one-to-one sessions. The information from these forums has since been transferred into building networks and entering into meaningful dialogue with various SIC departments, the Police and LPA. All this may not be ‘visible’, but it is essential for the development of the BID as a major player in local decisions.

The team have been working with SIC on a £100,000 grant application to the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme. A separate application has also gone in to the Townscape Heritage Initiative for £304,900. Both of these are for town centre physical improvements and we await the funders decisions in January 2015.

Further applications are due to be submitted, which will take the total amount up to £869,000 for town centre improvement projects. Further details are shown in the Improve What We Have section.

The structure of the BID allows us to apply for external funding from many different sources and invest more within the BID area. It is important that BID members take ownership of the BID and help it to progress further. This is essential for continued sustainability, especially when the present influx of workers begins to diminish in the next 2-3 years and the present buoyant economy will change.

These are exciting but challenging times for businesses within the BID. It is important that we grasp the opportunities available to make our BID area an even better place to work and equally importantly a place where the Shetland residents and visitors feel welcome and appreciated.

1. Small Town, Big Heart - Streets Alive & Shetland Street

Winter Festival

Following the first Winter Festival in 2012, Living Lerwick listened to the feedback received and provided additional elements to improve on the previous year.

Again, the Winter Festival kicked off with an incredibly well attended switch-on event in November 2013. The lights were magically switched on by the children from Peerie Foxes nursery with their magic wands. Two Shetland Ponies, the Peerie Foxes and Santa led the parade, followed by Peerie Jewels toddler group, Staneyhill toddler group, Burra playgroup, Little Tykes, Tingwall under 5s, Lerwick Scouts, Lerwick Cubs, the 1st Lerwick Boys Brigade, the Jarl Squad, the brass band and members of the public.

Living Lerwick repeated the Christmas lights, 50 small Christmas trees, advent boxes, Santa's Grotto and co-ordinated late night shopping from the first Winter Festival.



A temporary stage was constructed in Harrison Square and many of Shetland's top musicians and up and coming acts performed on Saturdays and Thursday nights during the Winter Festival. The local musicians really drew in the crowds and many of them performed for the community free of charge.



The end of the Winter Festival was marked with fireworks on Saturday 21st December.

Lots of volunteers came together to help with the Winter Festival and Lerwick Community Council granted funding of £2,383.75.



1. Small Town, Big Heart - Streets Alive & Shetland Street

Fair Isle Festival

This year the Fair Isle Festival ran from 28th June to 1st July and had a Commonwealth twist.



At Harrison Square, local musicians gave live performances in various styles from the Commonwealth on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday.



In Fort Charlotte, there were:

- Cookery demonstrations by Phusiam Restaurant, Glynn Wright and Hay's Dock using local produce to create dishes from Commonwealth countries.
- Food and craft markets
- A bairns sports day
- A bouncy castle

Throughout the Fair Isle Festival, a flag hunt competition was held, where 20 shops displayed flags in their windows. Participants were asked to find all 20 flags for a chance to win a return trip for two with NorthLink (including car and cabin). The prize was won by Karen (14) and Tom Lobban (4).



The finale of the Fair Isle Festival was the Queens Baton

arriving on the Dim Riv at Victoria Pier and being carried through Lerwick town centre.

Funding of £8,575 from the Celebrate fund supported the Fair Isle Festival.

2. Park and Bide

Park and Bide

Following the business forums, Living Lerwick collated all the information received from the businesses. Several issues were highlighted including:

- Railings and flagstones need maintenance at Fort Charlotte
- Too many cars on the street, driving too fast making it unwelcoming for customers
- Traffic at RBS particularly bad due to parking area and people stopping at the post office
- Cars parking inappropriately and dangerously, sometimes so close to shop doors and windows it makes it impossible to get in or out of the premises
- Suggestion to stop people and do a short survey asking why they are on the street, this would make people realise they shouldn't be there
- No policing means people ignore the pedestrianisation rule. If policing isn't possible then we have to accept that this will keep happening unless something changes.
- Speed limit of 5mph would be good except this would also be ignored
- Bollards at Burns Walk have forced people to drive the full length of the street to access parking under Fort (regardless of pedestrianisation rules)
- Bollards would be fine if other measures were put in place but they haven't been
- Removing bollards would add to the perception that it's okay to drive or park wherever you want
- Removing the bollards would at least split the traffic and stop it from going the full length of the street and especially large and fast vehicles going by extremely narrow areas.

This information was fed into a meeting regarding the bollards held by Alistair Carmichael, attended by selected businesses and SIC representatives.

The board and management team have also met with Eddie Graham, Chief Inspector of Northern Constabulary and Maggie Sandison, director of SIC Infrastructure Services to discuss all of the points raised by the businesses.

During the meeting with Eddie Graham, it became very clear that staffing was the issue regarding policing and that he was making efforts to improve the situation.

The meeting with Maggie Sandison increased their understanding of the issues for businesses and resulted in a report on the bollards which we will further pursue as it does not address concerns raised.

3. Improve What We Have

Improve What We Have

The main focus for Living Lew ick this year has been the development of the large Improve What We Have project. Due to the way large project funding works, it has always been necessary for Living Lew ick to build up a sizeable reserve to use as its contribution. As planned, we have used years one and two to achieve this, so that the big project which will leave a legacy can be tackled in year three.

The team have been working with the SIC Planning department on a £100,000 grant application to the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme, which is intended to run over five years. This application focusses on education and awareness (£10,000) and training and education regarding conservation areas (£20,000), public realm works (£20,000) and grant assistance (£50,000—50% up to a maximum of £2000 per business) for businesses for:

- Sanding and painting of traditional windows and doors
- Repainting of shop fronts
- Repainting of traditional commercial signage.
- Unblocking, realigning and repainting of traditional cast iron or aluminium rainwater goods.
- Replacing slipped or broken roof slates and ridge tiles.

A separate application has also been made by Living Lew ick Ltd to the Townscape Heritage Initiative for £304,900.

This project is split into two phases. The development phase will run from March to August 2015. All activities must be planned and the finer details worked out during this phase. The delivery phase will run from January 2016 until August 2017 and will include:

- Business property improvement grants to remove vegetation, replace rainwater goods, repair or replace window frames, brickwork, signage, removal of redundant fixtures, etc.
- A heritage art trail with a herring industry theme and interactive app.
- Assessment and improvement of the lighting scheme.
- Refurbishment or replacement of lane railings and signage.
- Uniform business signage at the bottom of each lane.
- Conservation workshops
- Development of lane gap sites

Both applications went in for the 31/08/14 deadline. We await the funders decisions in January 2015.

We are working on applications for the rest of the money required. If successful, these will take the total amount up to £869,000 drawn in for town centre physical improvements.

4. Give a little - Gain a lot and 5. Let's Keep it Safe

Reduce costs

Living Lerwick have been working with BID Scotland to introduce the More for Business cost reduction scheme to businesses. This scheme provides businesses with cost savings on utilities and insurance.

Member businesses are entitled to a 20% reduction on adding their products and special offers to www.shetlandhasgotit.com. The system holds product details for businesses who list and this creates a "virtual superstore for Shetland".

More bang for our bucks

In year two, £34,848 worth of external funding has been drawn in for investment in the projects outlined in the business plan. Funding was obtained from SIC, the Celebrate Lottery Fund and Lerwick Community Council.

Say What We Think/ Let's Keep It Safe

Following the business forums, Living Lerwick collated all the information received from the businesses. Several issues were highlighted including:

- Mess of the street, especially after weekends: dog mess, broken glass etc.
- People urinating in doorways and letterboxes
- CCTV not being utilised properly

The board and management team met with the SIC Director of Infrastructure and Chief Inspector of Northern Constabulary to discuss these and other issues.

The SIC have taken on an extra street cleaner to work on a Saturday and Sunday in an effort to improve cleanliness at weekends. We asked why the public toilets are closed in the evenings at the weekend and were told that staff safety was the main reason for this.

The Chief Inspector said that very low staffing numbers are causing them problems. They don't have someone watching the CCTV all the time and don't currently have enough staff to go through the footage. A recruitment drive was in progress and they hoped to be up to full force again soon. This should mean a bigger presence in the area, which will reduce the extent of the issues the businesses had come forward with.

The Future

The Team

There have been changes on the board and the management team during year two. The Chair, Eleanor Eunson resigned from the board due to increased time commitments elsewhere. Cynthia Adamson has taken over as Chair and Steve Mathieson as Vice Chair.

Leigh-Ann McGinty moved away in June, so Christena Irvine has been managing the BID alone since. CU Marketing Ltd has now taken on two new staff, who will assist with BID management from 2015 onwards.

Small Town, Big Heart

The focus for year three under this objective will be increased promotion of the businesses, providing training and improving on existing events.

Park and Ride

In year three, we will continue to work with various other organisations on the improvement of parking in and access to the area.

Improve What We Have

After two years of gathering the information, devising the projects and saving the reserves required to make them happen, year three is

the time where we will start to see the big improvements under this objective.

During year three, we should be able to draw down and invest large amounts of external funding in improving the physical elements of the town centre.

Planning and funding these large projects is extremely complex and time consuming. It is hoped they will serve as a lasting legacy from Living Lerwick and the businesses who contribute.

Give a Little - Gain a Lot

Living Lerwick will continue to search for ways to reduce costs for businesses, bring in external funding, make the views of business owners count where it matters and circulate information on training and support.

Let's Keep Lerwick Safe

Living Lerwick will continue to liaise with Northern Constabulary on safety concerns. The situation will be monitored and action stepped up as appropriate under this objective.

Income and Expenditure

Income

The business improvement levy is collected by Shetland Islands Council and passed to Living Lerwick Ltd. It is added to other funding streams to assist in the delivery of projects and initiatives laid out in the business plan. During year two, £62,502.32 was collected. Procedures are in place to collect the remaining £18,649.00 from years one and two during year three, making full use of the extensive powers available under legislation. External funding of £34,958.75 to cover staffing and project costs was applied for and received during the year. There was also trading income of £702.00. This gave a total income of £98,163.07 for the year.

The SIC Development department gave grant assistance of £20,000 to partially fund operational and staffing costs.

The SIC Community Development scheme part funded a projector with £3,000.

The Celebrate Lottery scheme funded the Fair Isle Festival by granting £8,575.

Lerwick Community Council agreed to partially fund the winter festival and summer flower scheme with £3383.75.

Expenditure

The board of directors rearranged the budgets in order to achieve what had to be achieved in year two and ensure enough was kept in reserves to attract funding for Improve What We Have projects in year three.

The largest expenses were the events under the Small Town Big Heart objective (which also attracted funding of £10,958.75).

The second biggest expense was BID management (which attracted funding of £8,518.44) and included time for applying for external funding drawn in this year.

The Improve What We Have costs were associated with project development and large funding applications as well as the summer scheme (which attracted external funding of £1000).

Reserves

Living Lerwick Ltd have been cautious with spending over years one and two in order to build up reserves for the large Improve What We Have projects.

All large grants for this type of project require the applicant to contribute a percentage. For this purpose, we have built up reserves of £63,890 which will be available once all debts are collected.

Income and Expenditure Report

Period 1st September 2013 to 31st August 2014

Full accounts are available to members from the Living Lerwick office.

Income

Business improvement levy	£75,946
SIC grants	£20,000.00
Lerwick Community Council grants	£2,956.00
Celebrate Lottery grant	£8,575.00
Trading income	£702.00

Turnover **£108,179.00**

Expenditure

Small Town Big Heart	£42,221.00
Park and Bide	£13.00
Improve What We Have	£11,848.00
Give a Little - Gain a Lot	£1,102.00
Let's Keep Lerwick Safe	£274.00
BID Management	£17,037.00
Operational Costs	£9587.00
Total costs	£82,082.00

Net profit **£26,097.00**

Balance carried forward **£26,097.00**

Living Lerwick Ltd is a 'Not for Profits' company and any surplus is carried forward to the following years, where it will be invested in delivering the projects in the business plan.



Together Let's Make Lerwick Town Centre Better

Living Lerwick Ltd

7 Mounthooly Street
Lerwick
ZE1 0BJ

T: 01595 696932

E: info@livinglerwick.co.uk

W: www.livinglerwick.co.uk

F: www.facebook.com/livinglerwick

Opening hours: Mon - Wed, 9am - 5pm

