



Living Lerwick Ltd

Annual Report 2016/17

Together Let's Make Lerwick Town Centre Better

Introduction - Living Lerwick Ltd

In 2012 the businesses in Lerwick Town Centre came together and voted to create a Business Improvement District. A BID is an organisation voted for by the businesses in a set boundary and funded by those businesses. The businesses saw that this would allow them to have a bit of control and input into the future development and direction of the town centre. It was also their best chance of making a big enough difference to the town centre to improve trading conditions for all businesses.

So far, 55 areas across Scotland are developing a BID or have an operational BID already in place. The majority of these were started by small business owners or local groups who decided much more could be done to change and improve their area and trading environment. They are designed to bring together businesses and other stakeholders so that they can develop projects and activities which help boost the local economy. The businesses as a whole have a voice on issues affecting the area in which they trade, be it parking, cleansing, safety or the future long term direction of the area.

All properties in the BID area and listed on the Local Assessors Valuation roll are automatically members of Living Lerwick unless exemptions apply.

This annual report is a summary of year five of the first term of the BID.

Management and Board of Directors during year five

During its first term and until January 2018, Living Lerwick Ltd was managed under contract by CU Marketing Ltd and was overseen by a board of directors. At the end of year five the board of directors were:

Gary Bain (LHD), Steve Mathieson (Visit Scotland), Joe Christie (LHD Marine Supplies), Emma Gibson (The Peerie Shop), Gemma Jamieson (Specsavers), Stewart Jamieson (Harry's), Ben Mullay (The Camera Centre), Frances Richardson (KGQ Hotels)

Advisors on the board were: Alistair Cooper (SIC Councillor), Linda Coutts (SIC Development), Allan Wishart (SIC Councillor)

Outgoing directors at year end were Gary Bain (LHD), Joe Christie (LHD Marine Supplies), Emma Gibson, (The Peerie Shop), Gemma Jamieson (Specsavers) and Frances Richardson (KGQ Hotels)

Current Directors

David Coe (Ninian), Edna Irvine (Smith & Robertsons), Stewart Jamieson (Harry's), Steve Mathieson (Visit Scotland - Acting Chair), Ben Mullay (The Camera Centre), Jamie Tonge/Gemma Tonge (Aa Fired Up) Ingrid Webb (Shetland Soap Company), Dave Williams (Mirrie Dancers Chocolatier),

Chairman's comments

The first BID term has been a huge learning curve for all involved in Living Lerwick. A very small number of people started it with big ideas. Unfortunately, this coincided with major cut backs and huge changes within the Council.

The odds on achieving what was in the initial business plan have certainly been stacked against us during the first term. Despite this, if you go through each project line by line, we've achieved the vast majority. Unfortunately the various applications Living Lerwick has made for big funding, have not been successful but the foundations have been put in place for this to be achieved in partnership with the SIC in a second term.

Town centre regeneration is a big job, which takes a long time and a lot of people working together. Now that the partnership issues have been ironed out in term one, we believe the focus for term two has to be on working well together as a united force to give us the best possible chance of improving and enlivening our historic town centre.

We have learnt a lot about how the council and government work, which departments and people to approach for help and support and gathered information on funding, legislation, law and local government.

The Community Empowerment Act recently came into force, which means we are now a "statutory consultee". This enables us to be a much more influential group on

issues affecting our members and their needs.

We have been working with SIC Officials to increase understanding of the possibilities and the great benefits available through supporting Living Lerwick, from communication with the businesses right through to accessing large funds from outside Shetland.

There are big pots of money that SIC and Living Lerwick can access to provide more for the town centre and our members. This money can only be accessed jointly, so is dependent on a good working relationship.

With the changes coming from the shrinking budgets, the school moving and changing policies we are all looking at challenging times for our businesses. We believe NOW is the time we must focus on working together not only to keep what we have but strive to improve it.

As members, we all need to pitch in to make sure our businesses can thrive over the long term. It is clear that if we do nothing, nothing will be done. We can't stand back and expect someone else to sort it out, it isn't top priority for anyone else, it's down to us.

If you want to be part of deciding how we move forward, please get in touch. We need more directors and businesses to come forward and help us take control of the future of Lerwick town centre.

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

Winter Festival 2016

Following on from feedback and experience gained over the first few years, the same format has been used in subsequent winter festivals.



The cold, yet dry day helped to ensure a huge turnout for Living Lerwick's Magical Christmas Light Switch-on Parade. Crowds started to gather around 3pm, with many an expectant little face looking for Santa. He kicked off the parade by arriving at Albert Wharf on the lifeboat to lead it at 3.30pm on Saturday 26th November. The Peerie Foxes nursery bairns had their magic wands and followed behind him aboard beautifully decorated trailers to switch on the Christmas lights with their magic wands as they passed. This year's Jarl Squad were out in force as part of the parade and the brass band provided lovely Christmas music as the parade progressed.

The parade started at Albert Wharf, travelled up Church Road, turned into Commercial Street, down Burns Walk, along the Esplanade and finished up at the Market Cross, where Santa magically switched on the Christmas tree lights with a few rings of his bell. The Brass Band played Christmas

Carols and Santa spoke to the bairns in the crowds. The trailers stood still at the Market Cross so that the crowd got a chance to have a good look at the Peerie Foxes expertly decorated trailers and Christmas costumes. The Jarl Squad were very striking in their outfits.

The Christmas lights, and co-ordinated late night shopping were repeated from previous years.

Living Lerwick again bought a large tree and negotiated with Northlink, Northwards and SIC in order to get the tree to Shetland and erected at the Market Cross. An application for assistance was also made to Lerwick Community Council, which provided funding towards hanging up the lights.

Santa's Grotto was busier this year. Again, it was a joint effort between Living Lerwick and the Lerwick Lifeboat and held over a weekend.

Living Lerwick created a best window display competition with the winners being voted on by the public. Ninian won the trophy with The Shetland Soap Company second and Westside Pine third.

Twenty-seven naughty elves were also creating mischief in town centre shops during December.

Now that the Winter Festival has become an established event, there are more volunteers who work to make it happen. Thanks must go to the Lerwick Lifeboat, Santa, the Peerie Foxes, the Jarl Squad, the brass band, Northlink, Northwards, the SIC and Lerwick Community Council.

1. Small Town, Big Heart - Streets Alive, Talk for the Town

Easter Holiday Hunt competition

Living Lerwick ran a bairns Easter Holiday Hunt competition, which using photos taken by Ben Mulla, encouraged entrants to take a walk around the town centre and note down the location of each photo on the entry form. It was the most popular bairns competition we have ever run with 86 entries. The success had a lot to do with the prizes donated by Mirrie Dancers Chocolatier and Harry's Department Store.



Shopping Week

The third Living Lerwick Shopping Week ran between Saturday's 29th July and 5th August. It entertained and enticed customers with a varied mix of events and promotions. More businesses made full use of the experience they had built up over the previous two years to target their offerings wisely providing entertaining workshops, in-store promotions, demonstrations and great deals.

Shopping Week started with a Lerwick Lanes Family Fun Run and during the week there was a Bairn's Photo Hunt with lots of prizes donated by the town centre businesses.



Goin Tae Da Street video

Living Lerwick commissioned JJ Jamieson to produce a video to showcase the town centre, it's businesses and the community they serve. JJ filmed during Shopping week and used the services of local poet, James Sinclair, to create the voiceover. In just one day, it was viewed over 21,000 times and shared by 340 people. This video provides a taste of what's to come with renewal for another term and marks the start of the shop local campaign.

Facebook page and shares

Living Lerwick has a very active Facebook page and shares posts from all of its members on a daily basis. This is done to provide a central place for customers to find out what's on offer and to increase the member business rankings within Facebook algorithm. The Living Lerwick Facebook page is currently liked by 2,458 people.

2. Park and Bide / 3. Improve What We Have

Park and Bide

In year five, Living Lerwick again assisted SIC Roads to consult with members on their traffic calming proposal using its database. Initially, response levels were extremely low, so directors met as many members as they could face-to-face and encouraged them to make their views known to the SIC Roads department.

Lerwick town centre continues to feel the effects of a decision from Police Scotland regarding no longer taking responsibility for what the traffic warden used to do. Living Lerwick teamed up with the Federation of Small Businesses to lobby on this issue and met with Maree Todd, MSP.

She told us about the upcoming government consultation on traffic management and explained that the Islands Bill should "Island proof" future legislation. Living Lerwick emailed details of the government consultation on traffic management to all members so that they were aware of it and could complete it.

The European Mobility Week project was a partnership between Living Lerwick, SIC and NHS Shetland. Living Lerwick accessed £9000 to fund it through BIDs Scotland. The project was in the town centre where possible and included step challenges, family walks, bike checks, bike maintenance, walking groups and running for beginners.

Improve What We Have

The Heritage Trail Smartphone application was created in year five. It was funded through the Community Development Fund (£3,000) and the Heritage Lottery Sharing Heritage fund (£10,000). The main aims of this project are to increase local footfall and pride in our town centre and cruise passenger footfall.

A project co-ordinator was contracted in for £2,500. It became obvious early on that this project was much bigger than anticipated due to the number of historical buildings in Lerwick town centre and the quantity of information out there that needs to be collated. The project co-ordinator researched the archives, held open meetings, interviewed people, took relevant photos and collated the information gathered. At the end of year five, all the information collected for 93 points of interest was ready to be approved before going on the app. Many more entries are possible and the project co-ordinator has agreed to volunteer some time to further populate the app. which was developed by NB Communication.

During the summer months, 115 floral displays and bunting were provided and maintained throughout the town centre. This cost £5,703 and a Lerwick Community Council funding application brought in £1,000 towards the cost.

4. Give A Little Gain A Lot and 5. Let's Keep it Safe

Reduce Costs

Living Lerwick work with Eyebright, which provides a cost reduction scheme to BID members. This scheme provides businesses with cost savings on utilities.

More bang for our bucks

In year five, £41,121 worth of external funding has been drawn in for investment in the projects outlined in the business plan. Funding was obtained from SIC, the Community Development Fund, European Mobility Week, Sharing Heritage Lottery Fund and Lerwick Community Council.

Say What We Think

The management team and directors regularly have meetings with relevant SIC departments to keep up-to-date with development plans, put forward the views of the members where this is possible and encourage consultation with members when it is not.

A lot of work was done in year five to increase the understanding by SIC staff of what fully partnering with a BID

can actually achieve for Shetland. Very positive links have been made and the SIC are putting new systems in place now to ensure a much easier path to jointly creating big projects in term two.

Improved Information Flow to Members

The management team pass information to members on training course availability and any issues which are believed to be relevant.

Let's Keep It Safe

Members have not expressed any further concerns which have needed the management team to discuss anything with Police Scotland.



Renewal

Legal Requirement

Year five was the last year of the first BID term, which meant Living Lerwick had to go through the renewal process to allow it to legally continue as a business improvement district.

Living Lerwick had put aside some income from each previous year to cover the costs of renewal.

The Process

The renewal process is nearly exactly the same as the BID development process.

Many meetings were held with SIC staff to ensure partnership working in the future. These were very useful as it gave an opportunity for a frank exchange on what has been working and what has not in the first term. Information from these meetings was used to formulate the documentation legally required to get a BID renewal proposal approved by the government.

A questionnaire was created and emailed or posted to all members. Members who did not respond were then sent the questionnaire again and contacted by directors to encourage completion of the questionnaire. The returned questionnaires were analysed and the results used to formulate the projects for the term two business plan.

Directors used the information

received to decide on the BID area and any necessary exemptions.

The management team wrote the BID Proposal, which (with its appendices) is the document which forms the BID arrangements for term two. These appendices include the business plan, the SIC operating agreement and the SIC baseline services.

The BID Proposal was sent to BIDs Scotland for scrutiny and approved. It was then submitted to the SIC, BIDs Scotland and the Scottish Government for formal approval. Approval was received subject to a positive ballot result.

Members were sent ballot papers 42 days prior to the official ballot, which was held on 24th August 2017.

Ballot Results

The results required for a second term to proceed are a minimum 25% turnout, with over 50% (by rateable value and by number) of those voting, being in favour.

The ballot had a 68% return rate in respect of rateable values and a 62% return rate in respect of ratepayers. The total number of votes cast in the ballot was 89, with 49 in favour and 40 against. This equates to 55% in favour and 45% against, so the BID was renewed for a further four years.

The Future

The Team

The majority of the directors left at the end of term one to give others a chance to lead. Additional directors have since joined the board. The board is always keen to hear from members who would like to play their part in shaping Living Lerwick's projects. Any member who has paid their fees is eligible to become a director and there are spaces on the Board.

CU Marketing Ltd left in January 2018 and the BID management contract was taken on by Emma Miller and Selina-May Miller.

For the next year and the remainder of term two, the directors and team will be working towards achieving the objectives in the business plan, which are:

More Footfall

To increase the footfall in the town centre through large and small events.

More Marketing

To increase promotion of Lerwick town centre and particularly its businesses.

More Informed Decision Making on Access

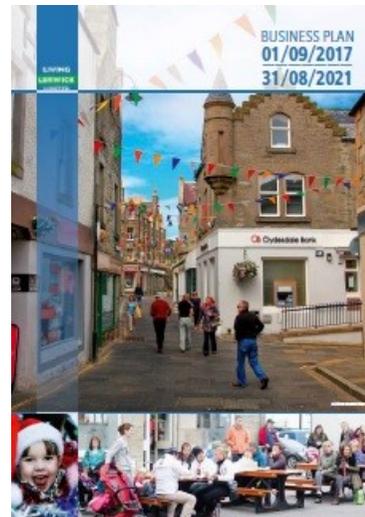
To lobby local and national government for a workable solution to parking control so that our customers can access our premises easily.

More Attractive

To provide more seating, an annual flower scheme and Christmas lights and work with others towards physical improvements, making Lerwick town centre a nicer place to be.

More Business Support

To provide more business information, networking opportunities, training opportunities, advocacy on issues facing businesses and encourage inter-business working.



Income and Expenditure

Income

The income Living Lerwick receives is used to deliver the projects laid out in the business plan. The projects that formed the business plan came from the members' ideas during the consultation phase of the BID prior to it starting in September 2012.

All members of Living Lerwick are required by law to pay a Business Improvement Levy each year to help fund the work that is carried out on their behalf. The Shetland Islands Council invoices and collects the Business Improvement Levy and passes this on to Living Lerwick. This is added to the grants received to give a total income for the year which can be spent in line with the business plan.

In year 5 the SIC continued to support the BID with a core funding grant to partially fund operational and project management costs which means that more of the members levy money is used directly for their projects. Lerwick Community Council also continued their support by awarding grants towards the cost of the Winter Festival and the Summer Scheme. Grants were received for the Heritage Trail project amounting to £13,000 (£10,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £3,000 from the Community Development Fund) and these are being split between year 5 and year 6 when the project will be completed.

Living Lerwick was also awarded a £9,000 grant for a project carried out in conjunction with SIC Sports and Leisure to coincide with European Mobility Week.

By the end of term one, external funding of £161,568 has been secured by the BID for its projects in addition to

the Business Improvement Levy.

Expenditure

The biggest project expenditure this year, as in previous years, has been STBH which includes the Winter Festival, Shopping Week, and the promotion of members' businesses.

The Summer Scheme which consists of the provision of flowers and bunting in the area is included under Improve What We Have. This project also includes the cost of cleaning the gutters on members' properties which is carried out by a contractor. The Heritage Trail project started in the year and is also included under this heading.

Park and Bide includes the costs of the European Mobility Week project which was fully grant funded. See the Park and Bide project page for details. Also included is the cost of dealing with various SIC roads consultations.

As this was the final year of the BID's first term, costs were incurred in going through the renewal process. This included consulting with members and following the detailed statutory process laid out by legislation which resulted in the ballot in August 2017.

Reserves

Overall an operating deficit was made, this was expected due to the cost of renewal. Also contributing to the deficit is the non collection of levies from a small proportion of members which has had to be written off in term 1. As the enforcement of levy collection as set out in BID legislation was not followed by the local authority to the agreed timescales, the write off has been greater than expected.

Income and Expenditure Account

Period 1st September 2016 to 31st August 2017. Full accounts are available to members from the Living Lerwick website.

Income	£	£
Business improvement levy	74,873	
SIC grant	20,000	
European Mobility Week grant	9,000	
Heritage Lottery grant	7,500	
Lerwick Community Council grants	2,000	
Community Development Fund grant	2,250	
Miscellaneous income	369	
Turnover		115,992
Expenditure		
Small Town Big Heart	30,007	
Park and Bide	11,240	
Improve What We Have	27,012	
Give a Little - Gain a Lot	2,515	
Let's Keep Lerwick Safe	30	
BID Management	20,825	
Operational Costs	18,255	
Renewal costs	14,808	
Total costs		124,692
Deficit for the year		-8,700

Living Lerwick Ltd is a 'Not for Profits' company.



Together Let's Make Lerwick Town Centre Better

Living Lerwick Ltd

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