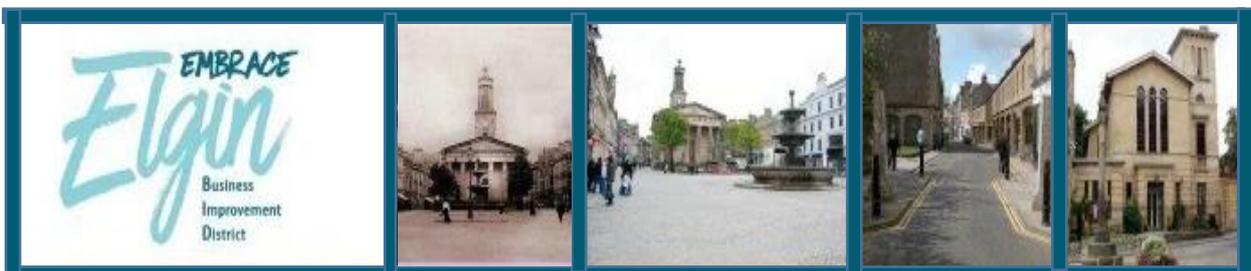


Embrace Elgin Annual Report

October 2015 – September 2016



CONTENT

Introduction	Page 3
Managers Update	Page 4
Business Plan Context.....	Page 6
Case Studies - WorldHost Destination status.....	Page 11
Case Studies – Visit Scotland Tourism Expo.....	Page 12
Case Studies – Social Media Drop In Sessions.....	Page 13
Case Studies – Elgin Comfort Scheme.....	Page 14
Summary of Accounts – To be added	Page 15
Conclusion	Page 17
Contact Details	Page 18

INTRODUCTION - EMBRACE ELGIN

Following the successful renewal ballot in Autumn 2014; the early part of 2015 was spent consolidating what had been learned and ensuring the organisation was well positioned to drive forward the themes, activities and projects identified by the business members and outlined within the business plan.

2016 has seen strong progress made and the Board of Directors are delighted to be able to present the Annual Report which will highlight a selection of the achievements made between October 2015 and September 2016.

Eighteen months into Phase 2, I still believe we have the ability, resources and willingness to continue to rebuild of our beautiful city centre to a place where the current and the next generation's will be able to use and enjoy it in many different ways.

Collaboration and partnership have been key in the activities we have undertaken and has allowed us to maximise our funding contribution to projects. One very clear illustration of this, is our contribution of £125,000 to the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme which has helped generate with partnership funding a project worth £3.3 million – a 26-fold return for our business members.

The Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Heritage project is now well under way with the research and planning phases complete. Placement around the city centre of information panels, statues and interpretive displays is imminent, allowing us, for the first time bring the last 1000 of Elgin's history to life for the enjoyment of local people and for visitors alike.

I have stated before and still believe that as one united voice, we can when used positively make a real and tangible difference in discussions with the local authority and other bodies.

The small team within the office are making real and positive strides in promoting the city centre. Capitalising on the use of Social Media to promote the city as a destination for visitors both local and from out with the area. An increasing number of businesses are now using the Embrace Elgin's social media platforms to promote their businesses, services and special offers.

Positive minds will send the right message to our customers, staff, to developers and other businesses hoping to relocate in Elgin and it is essential that each and every business operating within Elgin City Centre promotes their business and the city in that positive way.

I am really proud to have been a part of the BID journey over the last six years and to have seen so much done in 2016, but the Board of Directors and myself are under no illusions, this is a journey not a destination and we are determined to continue forward and focus our efforts and take advantage of every opportunity that comes along.

I wish each of our business members success in the future and would encourage you to Embrace Elgin and potential available to us.

David Robertson

On behalf of the BID Board of Directors

MANAGERS UPDATE

The later part of 2015 and early part of 2016 saw us continue to take forward the plans and projects identified by the businesses during the Renewal Ballot.

The loss of both David Urquhart and Ian Widdowson, was a huge blow to the organisation. Both of these gentlemen gave a huge amount to Elgin BID, selflessly giving up time for a project that they firmly believed was critical to the success of Elgin City centre and the businesses working within it. We wanted to do honour their memory and the amount of time and effort that they gave so freely. We are therefore delighted to have dedicated the Customer Service Award to Ian and introduced the New Business Award in memory of David.

A large amount has been achieved since the Annual Report in October 2015. Here, I will try to summarise some of those activities and will use a series of Case Studies to provide additional information.

While I feel that good progress has been made I know there is a lot more to do and Sine and I am determined to continue with the work we have started.



For the first time we attended the Visit Scotland Tourist Expo, more details will follow in the Case Studies, but the event was very beneficial in highlighting what Elgin and the wider Moray has to offer to the National and International Tourist Trade. The response that we received from the companies who bring visitors to the United Kingdom was very positive and I feel that we will reap the benefits of engaging them and highlighting what we can offer, in the future.

Our new web site is now up and running and has been laid out to provide information for our business members, to businesses interested in locating to the city and also to visitors. The site holds the Annual reports, business member's bulletins and the Business Plan, allowing everything to be conveniently found in one location. The "Business Opportunities" section holds details and property schedules for vacant properties around the city. Equally important, it is accompanied by sources of support for example Business Gateway.

The new "Visiting Elgin" section hosts a What's On calendar which is populated with details of events taking place in the city centre. While we seek out and highlight these, we would encourage our business members to contact us with any activities they would like added.

We have over the last few months taken a far more direct approach to promoting empty properties and where possible are gaining access to them so we can quickly and conveniently show prospective tenants around. We are determined to continue these types of interventions and will offer support and information to any prospective business wishing to locate to the city.

Communication with the businesses was something that was raised during the Renewal Ballot and we have worked incredibly hard to develop stronger and more effective communication channels. The majority of our members are now receiving our information bulletins electronically, allowing us to send messages quickly, cost effectively and efficiently.

We have had more businesses than ever before getting involved in the event days, not necessarily taking a market stall, but by putting on a special offer's which we can promote on their behalf or getting involved in the Treasure Hunts used to drive footfall across the city.

We live in a rapidly changing world, if we want to grow and prosper we will have to adapt and take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself. Elgin has many advantages; it is a beautiful city located within a beautiful area. Developing our visitor offer provides us with the scope to attract a new audience and provide an exciting offer to those who live locally. However, to take full advantage of this, it is up to each and every business to promote what is available, this can be direct to visitors or to staff members, only by acting as ambassadors for the city can we truly help it grow and flourish.

Your ideas and involvement are critical, if you have a suggestion, or an idea please give us a call and we can have a chat about it, we are your BID, here to work for and with you. We want to make a difference and look forward to working with you in 2017.

For more details of any of the topics touched on in the Annual Report please contact me on 01343 550652 or E mail Gill at gill.neill@elginbid.co.uk

Gill Neill

(Elgin BID Manager)

BUSINESS PLAN CONTEXT

The 2015 – 2020 Business Plan was written following a series of consultations with Elgin BID business members, shoppers and stakeholders in the lead up to the Renewal Ballot which took place in Autumn 2014. The Business plan runs from 2015 – 2020.

A number of Key Themes and projects were identified as being critical to the continued development of Elgin City Centre.



The Themes highlighted above, are underpinned by a series of Projects, which will be used to drive activity forward.

EMBRACE ELGIN'S REPUTATION

BUILDING A REPUTATION AND MARKETING ELGIN AS A VIBRANT DESTINATION

Building a reputation continues to focus highly in our priorities.

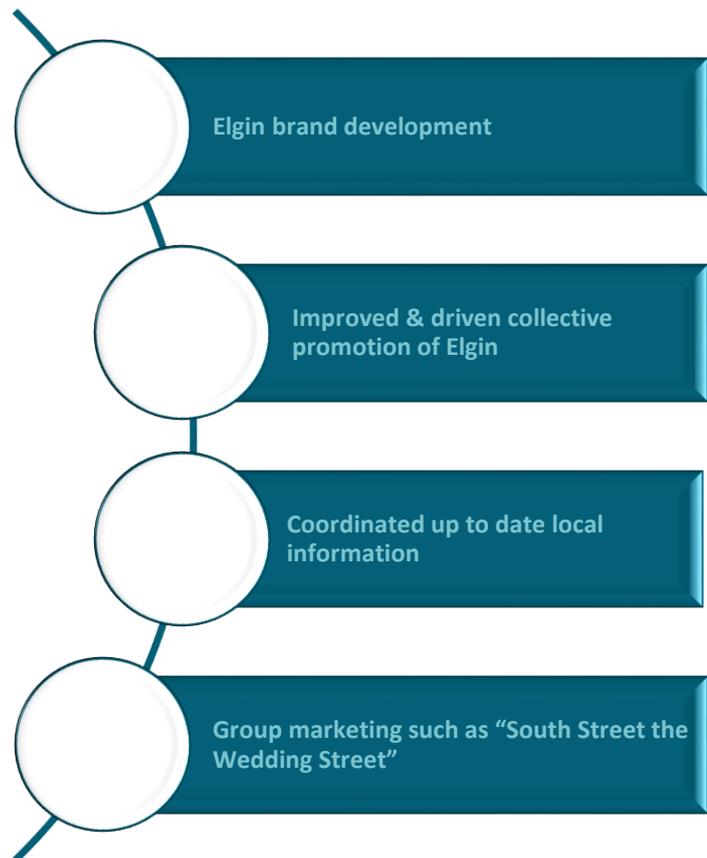
The new web site is now up and running and we are analysing its use and effectiveness.

Elgin was positively highlighted in September 2016 on an STV news special about Town Centre Regeneration.

The Food & Drink Festival was featured in the Herald Best Food & Drink Festival list.

Both of these features have brought a positive national focus to the city and the wide and diverse offer it holds.

We also negotiated the opportunity to promote Elgin and the BID businesses at the RAF Lossiemouth Friends and Family Day and to the 1000 strong audience at the Spirit of Speyside Distilled Event in Elgin Town Hall.



EMBRACE ELGIN'S SHOPPING

SHOPPING OFFER



Elgin is uniquely placed, by offering shoppers a mix of small independent retailers and national chains. 2016 has seen a number of new independent businesses move into the city, diversifying and adding to the offer.

We continue to work closely with retailers and were instrumental in securing Elgin WorldHost Destination Status (see case study below for more details). This provides us International recognition as an area providing excellence in customer service.

We are continuing to work closely with property owners and agents to promote vacant properties within the city centre.

EMBRACE ELGIN'S VISITORS

TOURISM AND ENTERTAINMENT

Tourism and Entertainment was identified by the businesses during the renewal ballot consultation as a key priority.

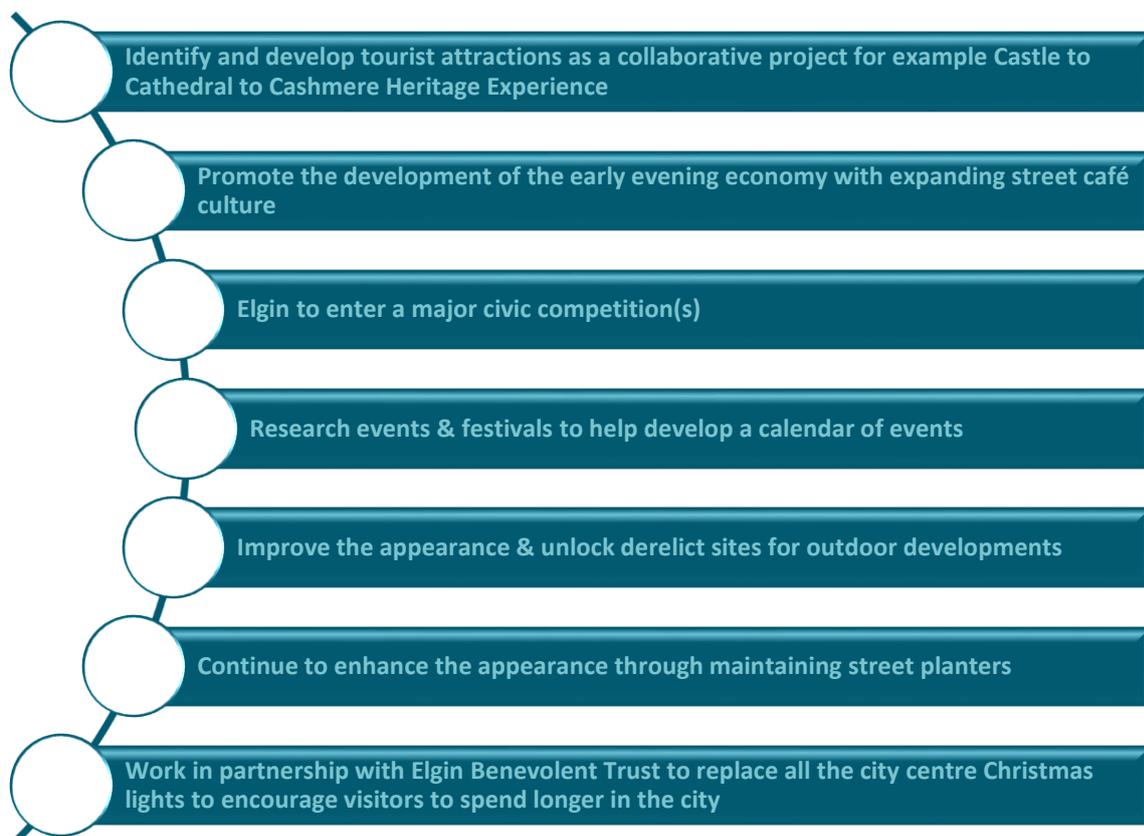
We have focused a lot of effort on this, building the the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere Heritage Experience we have developed a series of Days Out in Elgin leaflets, these are focused on four key themes:-

- Family Days Out
- Outdoor and Active
- Elgin – The Heart of Moray Speyside
- History and Culture

These add to and enhance the offer provided to our visitors, allowing them to make the most of their time in the area.

We have consulted with the Travel Trade to truly understand their priorities and needs and as a direct result we have introduced a Comfort Scheme (see case study for more information) and are in discussions with the Moray Council about the introduction of Coach Drop Off and Pick Up points, allowing us to capitalise on the Coach Tour market.

Further details will be provided in the case Study below.



EMBRACE ELGIN'S BUSINESSES

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT



The last year has seen a high focus placed on communication with our members.

The South Street the Wedding Street, business collaboration was featured in an STV news feature.

We have used this model and are engaging "Health" related businesses in a similar way. Providing them a platform to highlight their services and a networking opportunity with NHS health care professionals. We have plans to develop this approach further in 2017 with the Finance & Property sectors.

Over the last year we have hosted or co-hosted business workshops in Social Media – beginners or advanced, Auto Enrolment & a Hospitality Jobs Fayre. All provided access to keynote speakers/trainers and the opportunity to network with business peers.

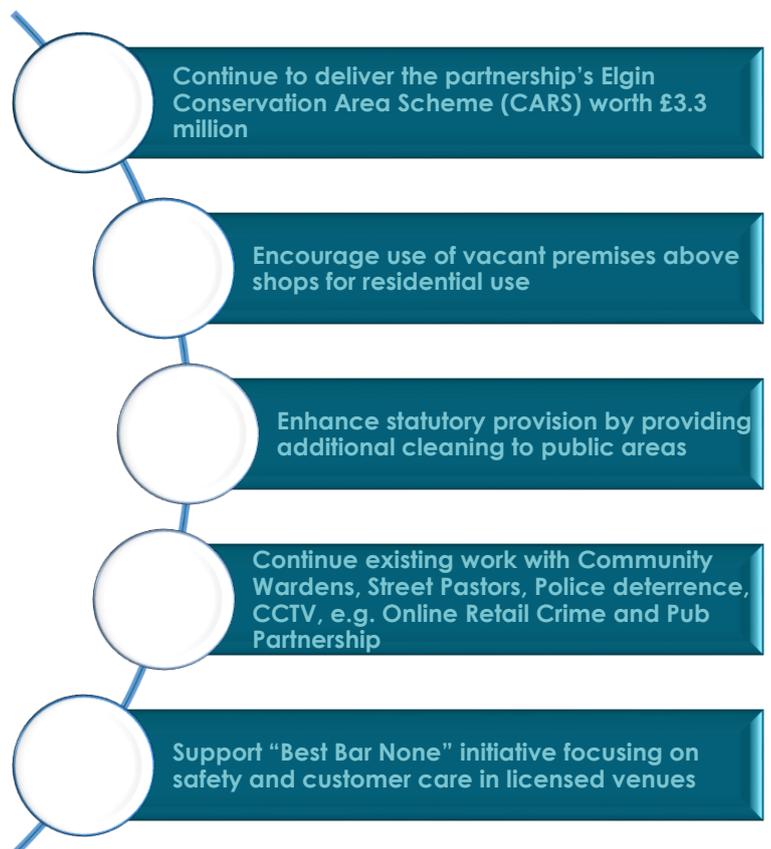
EMBRACE ELGIN CITY

CLEANLINESS, SAFETY AND APPEARANCE

In 2016, we teamed up with the REAP project based in Keith, who planted a number of the City Centre Planters with herbs and fruit. Edible Elgin has been very popular and members of the public are encouraged to pick and use the plants on offer. The remainder of the planters were adopted by City Centre businesses.

The small street sweeper continues to be out in the city centre 3 days a week enhancing the streets appearance.

Best Bar None has been re-introduced and those involved will be presented their awards at the Business Awards in September 2016.



EMBRACE CITY ACCESS

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & ACCESS



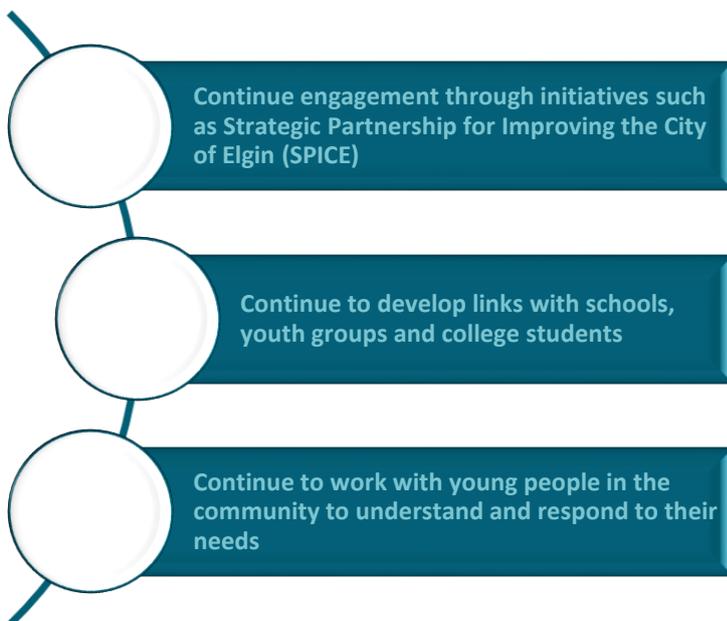
While we were disappointed that the Free After 3.00pm parking initiative was not extended, we continue to work closely with the Moray Council on the Traffic and Parking strategy reviews.

Elgin BID secured access to the Parking Review Consultants for our business members allowing their voices to be heard and proving the opportunity to try and influence strategic plans.

We will continue to positively support and promote the needs of our members on the parking and traffic agendas.

EMBRACE ELGIN'S COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



We continue to work closely with the local community.

This includes speaking at career presentations in school to help raise awareness with pupils of employer's expectations and needs.

We work closely with the Elgin Youth café & Moray College providing volunteering opportunities for the Young People who attend.

This is not only invaluable for us needs but also provides them with work place skills and confidence.

CASE STUDY - WORLDHOST DESTINATION STATUS

(Business Plan theme – Building a Reputation & Shopping Offer)



WorldHost is the internationally recognised benchmark for excellence in Customer Service and has been used to train staff at events as famous as London 2012 Olympics, Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and major and aspirational employers.

Working with the Moray Economic Partnership Tourism and Culture Group we have been promoting and driving forward this training not only in Elgin but across the Region. As a result, in July 2016, Elgin became eligible to gain WorldHost Destination Status for the city.

The training covers a number of key areas including: -

- Why customer service is such an important part of the staff member's role
- How to make an excellent first impression and make customers feel welcome
- How using customers' names can help to create a good rapport, and techniques for remembering names
- Communication skills for success
- How to empathise with customers, and why handling their concerns is so important
- Why listening is an essential part of the customer service process, and how to do it effectively
- The value of tourism, and the important role they play in generating revenue for your business and the wider tourism economy
- How to 'go the extra mile' – including making five commitments on how they will do this in your business

Research has shown that 80% of businesses believe that they deliver high quality customer service but only 8% of their customers feel the same, it has also shown that it costs 5 x more to attract a new customer than keep an existing one. For every one complaint a business is made aware of there are 26 other customers who are unhappy with the same issue.

WorldHost trained staff can help a business not only survive but thrive by providing staff with skills, knowledge and experience to deliver excellent customer service.

In addition to the one day Principles of Customer Service there are other programmes on offer in management and sales. For more details speak to Gill.



CASE STUDY – VISIT SCOTLAND TOURISM EXPO

(Business Plan Theme – Tourism and Entertainment)

In April, Elgin BID joined a delegation representing Moray at the Visit Scotland Tourism Expo. The Visit Scotland Expo is Scotland's flagship business to business travel trade event and the only event which exclusively promotes Scotland. The Expo enables Scottish tourism businesses and regions to promote their products and services to potential buyers from around the globe. The Expo hosted buyers from all sectors of the global tourism industry including coach tour operators, group travel organisers, tourism product wholesalers, specialist and independent tour operators and travel media.

The 2016 Expo had:-

- 401 International Buyers from 31 countries in attendance
 - Plus
- 183 UK based buyers.

The main reasons that international buyers stated they wanted to attend the event was to:-

- Make new contacts (82%)
- Pick up new ideas/updating inspiration (82%)

79% of international buyers have been proven to feature a place they visited in future programmes.

The main reason that UK buyers stated that attended the Expo was to:-

- Make new contacts (76%)
- Meet established contacts (74%)
- New ideas / updating inspiration (70%)

The average anticipated value of sales related to introduced /changed Scottish programme / products from attending expo 2016:

International Buyers £69,700

UK Buyers £20,400

This was the first time that Elgin was able to engage this market and promote our offer to such a wide audience. There was genuine interest from the buyers in attendance who admitted that they were not familiar with the area. Since attending, information has been sent to the buyers met.

As a result of the positive response received Elgin BID have committed to attending in 2017, as part of a wider delegation and have worked to ensure that promotional opportunities will be opened to our members.



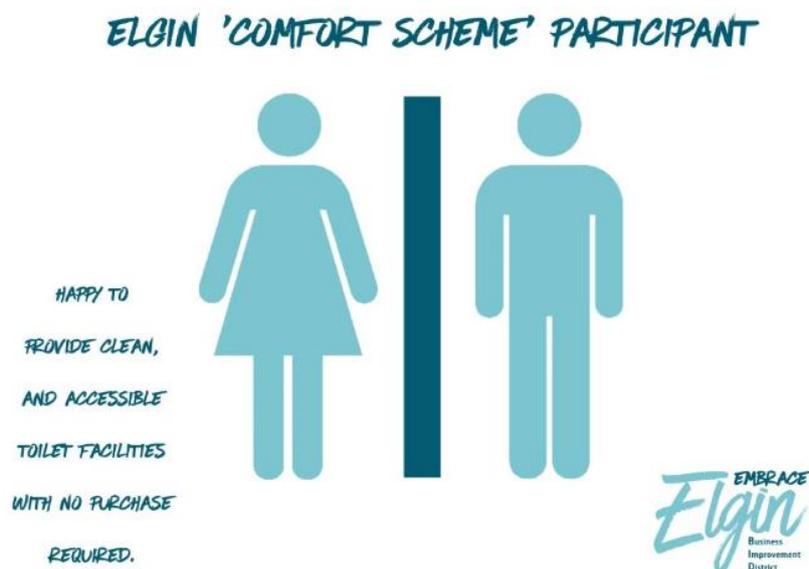
CASE STUDIES – ELGIN COMFORT SCHEME

(Business Plan Theme – Building a Reputation and Tourism & Entertainment)

As stated earlier in the report, we consulted with the Tourism Sector to ensure we genuinely understood their needs. Access to toilet facilities for visitors was deemed essential for any area wishing to develop a strong tourism offer.

Elgin had no public toilets on offer so to address this issue we invited businesses to join the Comfort Scheme, providing clean and accessible toilets for visitors, but with no purchase required.

To date five businesses have agreed to participate in the scheme.



The businesses are supplied with a window sticker that shows their commitment, we promote them on the web site, highlighting their desire to make visitors welcome and comfortable. This has assisted us in providing facilities during the day and in the evenings and weekends.

We are also in discussions with the Moray Council to seek permission to add the toilets in the main Annexe building to the list.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank.

- Parenthood Pathways
- Pizzeria Toscana
- Starbucks
- The Drouthy Cobbler
- The Muckle Cross

For making visitors to the city welcome. If any other BID business is interested in getting involved, please contact the office for more details.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS

CITY OF ELGIN BID LTD. COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

DETAILED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2016

	2016	2015
	£	£
TURNOVER		
Money Council grants	55,000	49,000
Levy income	171,472	136,459
Fundraising income	1,213	-
Visit Scotland grants	4,580	-
Sundry income	420	750
Donation - Elgin Benevolent Trust	32,475	2,900
Donation - TSB	-	100
Elgin Common Good Fund Grant	-	4,500
	<u>265,030</u>	<u>193,709</u>
DIRECT COSTS		
BUILDING A REPUTATION		
Sponsorship	3,000	2,998
Advertising	801	4,946
E-Hospitality	-	7,220
CARS	25,000	25,000
CCC	35,000	-
Business awards	783	781
	<u>64,584</u>	<u>40,945</u>
REBALLOT AND BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT	<u>1,250</u>	<u>7,784</u>
TOURISM AND ENTERTAINMENT		
Scottish theme day	4,473	4,233
South Street Wedding Street	429	-
Halloween event	2,609	2,344
Food and drink event	13,505	4,382
Wedding extravaganza	-	2,786
Pumper evening	766	-
Generic expenses	2,157	-
Christmas lights	67,448	16,197
Christmas lights switch on	-	5,759
Christmas market	-	44
Easter event	2,678	2,332
	<u>94,065</u>	<u>38,077</u>
CLEANLINESS, SAFETY AND APPEARANCE		
Street sweeper	9,461	6,733
Planters	295	-
Hanging baskets	-	1,942
Retail crime	900	780
	<u>10,656</u>	<u>9,455</u>

**CITY OF ELGIN BID LTD.
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DETAILED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT *(continued)*
YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2016**

	2016 £	2015 £
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	170,555	96,261
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
GROSS PROFIT	94,475	97,448
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	76,044	80,880
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
OPERATING PROFIT	18,431	16,568
OTHER INCOME		
Bank interest receivable	-	2
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
PROFIT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR	<u>18,431</u>	<u>16,570</u>

**CITY OF ELGIN BID LTD.
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2016**

	2016 £	2015 £
TURNOVER	265,030	193,709
Direct costs	<u>170,555</u>	<u>96,261</u>
GROSS PROFIT	94,475	97,448
Administrative expenses	<u>76,044</u>	<u>80,880</u>
OPERATING PROFIT	18,431	16,568
Interest receivable	-	2
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
PROFIT ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION	18,431	16,570
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	-	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
PROFIT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR	<u>18,431</u>	<u>16,570</u>

**CITY OF ELGIN BID LTD.
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

BALANCE SHEET

31 JANUARY 2016

	2016 £	2015 £
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	30,447	28,736
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>121,782</u>	<u>93,515</u>
	152,229	122,251
CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year	<u>45,608</u>	<u>34,061</u>
	106,621	88,190
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>106,621</u>	<u>88,190</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>106,621</u>	<u>88,190</u>
RESERVES		
Profit and loss account	<u>106,621</u>	<u>88,190</u>
MEMBERS' FUNDS	<u>106,621</u>	<u>88,190</u>

CONCLUSION

The Case Studies above illustrate a small sample of the activities we have undertaken in the last year, the Board hope it highlights the continued drive and determination to fulfil the activities in the Business Plan and seek out and identify new opportunities as they arise.

The Board of Directors meet once a quarter to oversee the strategic direction of the company and ensure that good governance procedures are in place. This group is chaired by David Robertson – owner of Bijou in Batchen Street.

The Working Group which was formed in 2016 from the Marketing and Environmental Groups meets every eight weeks and drives forward activity at an Operational Level. This group is overseen and chaired by James O’Conner – manager of Boots on the High Street.

If you would like to get more involved with the Working Group to bring your ideas and suggestions forward, please contact Gill – details below.

For more details on any of the projects listed in this report,
or for more details about Elgin BID

Contact Details

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Manager

City of Elgin BID Ltd

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