

ISLE OF BUTE NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021

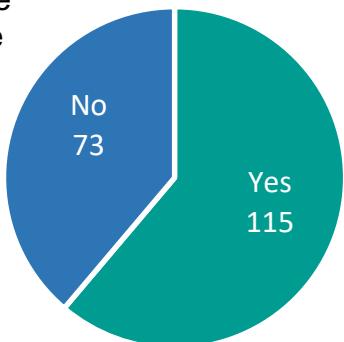
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT



BUTE VOTES YES TO BID

188 businesses returned their ballot giving a turnout of 79%. The results were 115 in favour and 73 voting against. The aggregate total of the rateable value who voted was £1,451,585 with £1,026,500 in favour of the BID. Therefore, the vote was successful on all counts required by law and the BID Company became operational on 1st October 2021

All businesses located within the BID area will now be required to pay the levy on the rateable value of their business premises as detailed in the BID Business Plan. Argyll and Bute Council will issue levy invoices on behalf of the BID company shortly, along with payment details.



FORMING THE BID BOARD

Owners or managers of levy paying businesses on Bute were able to nominate themselves to join the board as a Director of Isle of Bute BID via the Isle of Bute BID website before 28 September.

A seat on the BID Board is by no means be an honorary position; it involves active participation and involvement in all aspects of delivering the BID Business Plan. It requires attendance at meetings and a willingness to work closely with the BID Management team who will be delivering the projects and services on behalf of the BID.

MEET THE BID BOARD



JOHN GLEN, CHAIR

I've worked in the textiles industry for over 20 years and moved to Bute six years ago to take up the Managing Director position at Bute Fabrics. Passionate about textiles designed and woven in Scotland, the business is built on the artisan skills and dedication of our team. Employing 52 staff, the local community and environment is hugely important in keeping young staff on the Island and attracting new skills to re-locate here. A large driver for our support of the BID.

Spending 4 years on the board of Visit Bute it became apparent that although the island has a lot to offer, there is a huge amount needing doing to re-invigorate this lovely island. The BID provides the best route to improving the island offer for the local community, new prospective business owners and visitors alike. When I floated the idea of the BID to our staff and explained the Levy process, they agreed it sounded very fair and a no brainer in developing the town and the island.

The BID is an exciting opportunity for the business and affiliated communities to pull together and create a positive, lasting legacy.



SOPHIE REID, VICE CHAIR

I moved to Bute when I was seven from a small village in the West Midlands in England. I still remember the ferry crossing that day and my excitement as a child to see the most beautiful Island which was to be my home, shining in the spring sun. My brother and I had a wonderful childhood on Bute with freedoms we had never had before, adventures everyday and only going home when we were hungry. BLISS.

I joined Visit Bute as a Director shortly after opening my business The Dressing Room Bute in my first shop premises 10 years ago. I have always been passionate about promoting this beautiful Island so that other families can enjoy what I did as a child. Within this time on the Visit Bute Board I line managed our Tourism Officer and Local Development Officer which I greatly enjoyed.

Our Local development officer started to look at other Scottish towns who were beginning to develop as BID areas. This is when I first heard about BIDs and believed that Bute would greatly benefit from this. An initiative that is funded by Businesses who then decide on the improvements and investments for their own area.

After a lot of hard work, I believe Bute is now in the best position to drive real change that will improve our beautiful Island for Businesses, locals, and of course Visitors. I am delighted to be Vice Chair of the Bute Bid Board and excited to be a part of a new chapter for Bute.

MEET THE BID BOARD



JENNIFER DOUGAL, EVENTS DIRECTOR

Being brought up on Bute, was an adventure; always outdoors- horse riding, sailing, exploring, counting the seals. As many do at 18, I left for the big city to study at Glasgow Caledonian University. I studied Travel and Tourism because I wanted to see the world; and soon found that my favourite place to be was home, on Bute. I have a 4 year-old daughter now, we love to go and discover the island, our scenery is amazing and I feel so lucky that we have it all on our doorstep. With that being said, the facilities on Bute need to be improved for locals and visitors of all ages.

I joined the family business, Bute Tools after leaving university in 2012. The business was established in 1978 by my grandparents; now three generations of our family work together, along with our amazing team. With the shop, we are immersed in the community; it is where you see and hear first-hand what is wanted and needed on Bute. Many a morning I'm taught about the 'good old days' of Bute's past and thriving community. It's where my spark for maintaining our traditions and improving our facilities for all has developed.

I joined the Bute Highland Games committee in 2018 and then the BID steering group. I put myself forward to continue on the BID board of directors as I am passionate about improving Bute for locals and visitors. I believe we will bring Bute forward; there are so many people that want our island to thrive- if we work together, we will achieve our goal.

DUNCAN MARTIN

I am a Bute born and bred individual who has lived on this island for 59 years. I am a director in a blacksmiths fabrication business which was established forty years ago and now employs 14 people. Our work has developed to the stage that we now provide our services throughout the UK. We have also a steel stockholding fabrication business in Glasgow.

I have over the years been involved in local clubs, organisations such as Bute shinty club as both player and treasurer, office bearer and chairperson of Bute pony and riding club and president of Bute agricultural society. I have also served the Bute community for 32 years as a retained firefighter starting with Strathclyde fire brigade and finishing with Scottish fire and rescue service as crew manager.

I believe this island is unique and has so much to offer. However, I do feel it requires support and encouragement from the Bute BID team. That is one of the many reasons why I feel that becoming a director of the BID and working along with the fellow directors, improvements to Rothesay and Bute can be achieved.

MEET THE BID BOARD



SARA GOSS

My love affair with Bute started in 1978, when on a Waverley trip from Glasgow I was unceremoniously dumped at the Taylors amusements for the allotted time with 72p. Two hours later I came out with 73p! Fortuitous Bute had got to me.

Fast forward past 7 years working in Asia, I came back to Bute in 2000. I've three businesses, one husband, two kids & recently a fluffy dug invested now, and I love this place more every year I'm here.

My dream was to win the lottery and get all my many ideas up and running to get Bute just a slightly shinier and more activity led place to come and enjoy as both a tourist or islander. Until that happens, I'm delighted to put some of my free time into the Business Improvement District (Bute BID) as a board director. Watch this space, we may not have the lottery budget, but the ideas and dreams are still my goal!



WILLIAM GLEN

I consider myself very fortunate to have lived and worked on the Isle of Bute for all my 57 years(the sea air has been kind to me). When I left school, I joined the family's retail business which was started when my grandparents moved to the Island back in the days when Bute was a thriving tourist destination.

Over the years there have been a lot of changes on the Island, which is a natural occurrence, however I think our beautiful island has become forgotten and is in need of a little TLC.

That is why I got involved in the steering group which was set up to deliver the Business Improvement District or BID. I believe the BID has the potential to make difference and we all need to work together to get Bute back on track.

MEET THE BID BOARD



ERIN MURPHY

I've been coming to Bute for nearly 20 years and fell in love with the island. I bought my wee flat here in 2014 then spent the next six years travelling back and forth from Bute to work in London during the week until Covid put a stop to that. My fiancé Chris (covid delayed the big Bute wedding plan!) is a film producer and works all over the world but luckily he too fell for Bute and now that we have a five month old baby boy, Argyle, we're excited to have settled here so he can have all the adventures that come with being brought up here on this wonderful wee island.

I have shops here and a holiday let business so I hear a lot of feedback and insights from tourists. As well as driving tourism, I really want to get involved with developing opportunities on Bute to provide employment. Along with two local farmers we have taken on McIntyre's butcher shop which has been established for over 100 years. Having recently closed, we wanted to ensure it was kept as a butcher and we're really excited to be reopening it again, securing its future, providing employment for the butchers, keeping their butchery skills and their pies here on Bute!

I decided to get involved in the Bute BID because the more I learned about it the more I realised it's a great opportunity to attract funding to the island as a collective in order to support all the existing projects and people who already dedicate so much time and effort to making Bute great. I couldn't live here and enjoy all the benefits of everyone else's hard work without getting involved.

FERGUS MURRAY

I am currently the Head of Development and Economic Growth with Argyll and Bute Council serving on the Board as a Non-Executive Director in an advisory capacity. I have over 33 years' experience in planning, economic development, housing and area regeneration activity and I am also currently on the Board of the Scottish Towns Partnership.

I am a frequent visitor to Bute both in the course of my work and also as a visitor enjoying the many qualities of the Island.

For me the BID allows the opportunity for local business people to help prioritise what they want to see happen in the community where they live and work. My aim here is to offer help and advice on how this can be achieved working with a range of different partners based on the island and elsewhere.

MEET THE BID BOARD



ALISTAIR FORSYTH

We originally bought a holiday home in 2013, I just felt very comfortable on Bute and could see that it had great community spirit and a group of volunteers always trying to make Bute better. As it got harder and harder to leave the island to head back to my home town of Carluke, Lynn and I decided to throw our lot in and move to Bute full time. I had various businesses on the mainland, mainly a Retail Carpet Warehouse, a Contract Flooring company and a car MOT station.

I wanted to live and work full time on Bute so when we moved permanently in 2017 we looked at various businesses and settled on Prospect House with its 6 self-catering apartments and thought it would be a great fit for us. It was then that my mum shared with me some facts that I was totally unaware of, namely that I used to come over every summer to see all my aunts and uncles who my mum called the Rothesay People, turns out my Great Grandfather and earlier were all from Bute.

Being on the island opened up other opportunities for me as I always loved the sea and Bute was crying out for a company that could offer our locals and tourists alike something a bit different that helped showcase our island. Bute Boat Tours was then created last year but traded this year for the 1st time.

BID is a wonderful opportunity for Bute and I felt that if I could offer what business experience I've gained over the years then I wanted to be able to give something back to the island that I now call home.

LESLEY PAUL

I came to the Island of Bute when I was a small girl with my family on quite a few occasions and had the opportunity to come here on a short-term basis over 25 years ago and needless to say! Stayed!

I have worked within the Accountancy sector for over 30 years in various positions and started my own business on Bute in June 2002. I have previously been involved within different charities and enjoyed the varied roles, but due to commitments with my business had to sadly cut down on my charitable work.

I've had an Interest in BID and followed its progress and I was delighted to be asked to participate in it, and feel I have more opportunity to commit at the present time. I love the Island and love the community within it, it is a fantastic place to live and work and would be happy to help try to progress the future of Bute and make it a more secure for the future generations.



LIZ MCCABE

I am an independent Local Councillor for Argyll & Bute Council and also part of the Administration Team within the Council. I have been asked to stand on the BID board as a Council Representative. I am very happy to have this opportunity as this will enable me to help make decisions which can help improve our beautiful island and hopefully make it a place people want to live and enjoy living.

I have lived in Rothesay for the past 60 years and have a real interest in bringing Bute up to date and not fade away as it seems to have been doing for several years now. I have had various jobs on the island from being a G.P. Receptionist to Manager of William Hill Bookmakers. I also served as a Special Police Constable and I volunteered to help my town on weekends. I previously owned two businesses on the island, Liz's Cupcake Heaven and Liz's Diner which I retired from in April this year.

It is important for me to ensure that the BID Levy payers are kept at the forefront of what the BID is doing for them, and I will ensure that informative communication is key going forward. I do think ALL businesses need a full explanation of what BID actually means and what it will be bringing to enhance our island and this is what we as a Board plan to do.

Recruitment

Once the volunteer BID board were recruited, their first job was to interview the candidates that applied for the job as BID Manager. The post can *only* be offered to a non Levy payer to ensure there is no conflict of interest. The position was advertised on the BID website, in the local paper and on the council website.

Three strong candidates applied and were interviewed by two of the BID board and an impartial interviewer who has many years of past BID experience within the sector. It was a close run race, but the successful candidate was John Weir. John has many years of expertise in a number of varied businesses and charitable roles. His introduction is on the next page.

The next role we will be recruiting for is an Administration Assistant, we expect to begin advertising for this vacancy by January so keep an eye on the BID website for more information.

MEET THE BID MANAGER



JOHN WEIR

I came to the Isle of Bute in 2018 to support my wife Susan, as she completed a one-year sabbatical at Rothesay Academy, teaching music. Her sabbatical post became permanent, so we took the decision to stay.

I had intended to semi-retire, but I found that I wanted to contribute to the island where I could be useful. I joined the Visit Bute Board and was then invited to become a director of the Bute and Cowal Credit Union and the Bute Advice Centre. I remain a trustee of the latter to this day.

I took part in several Bute Island Alliance meetings, but only as an interested party. The Chairperson of the BIA at that time invited to me a Scottish Towns Partnership meeting at Holyrood purely to observe. At that event I met Phil Prentice, the Senior Officer for the BIDs in Scotland. Having been previously involved in, and led, volunteer groups and Chamber of Commerce groups both of which face challenges in continued support and generating funds I was interested to know more about it as an opportunity for Bute.

Based on my experience, I found the concept of a BID an exciting, challenging, and ideal way of having every business contribute to invest in their district or town. It would allow businesses to take ownership. Until that very day I had not been involved with any previous BID.

I believe the concept to be a great one. There are now of 37 BIDs in Scotland and over 320 throughout the UK with many in their third and even fourth five-year term!

In due course I applied for the role of BID co-ordinator and was successful after being interviewed along with other applicants. I believe I, and the BID steering group delivered a very strong package of events. One in particular; the alfresco seating project was a great asset to the eateries and local shopping district, helped save jobs and contributed to the wellbeing of so many islanders and visitors who now had a safe outside space to meet. Indeed, this has been recognised at a national level, as the project is a finalist in the Scottish Towns Partnership awards 'Street and Spaces' category.

After the success of the ballot in September 2021, I applied for the role of the BID manager and was delighted to be the successful candidate after being interview by the panel.

I believe my corporate experience and previous success, along with my experience in working with various UK and Welsh regional government officers including schools, prisons, and health boards, gives me the experience required to deliver the objectives set out in the Business Plan as directed by the BID Board of Directors on behalf of the businesses on the Isle of Bute.

Whilst it is important to attract more people to our island, it is also vital to ensure our local community and the BID deliver positive and measurable results for the levy raised on behalf of local businesses. This is such a fabulous opportunity for businesses on the island and I look forward to working on behalf of you all.

MONTAGUE ST BANDSTAND

We were delighted to be involved in helping to get the canopy installed at the Amphitheatre on the corner of High St and Montague St. It's quickly become known as the Bandstand and we look forward to seeing it used for years to come.

Having the canopy covered area provides some shelter as well as offering a structure to hang lights and decorations for celebrations throughout the year.

Our local elected representatives and The Community Council were involved in the consultation as well as the BID team so a great example of our local groups all working collectively.

HALLOWEEN BOOGIE AT THE BANDSTAND

We are pleased to have been able to organise and hold a Children's Halloween Event within the first month of becoming a BID town.

This event was only possible due to the support of Liz McCabe and the local council who helped us get the permissions through at speed and with a lot of hard work from the BID Event Director Jennifer Dougal.

Decorations were provided by Bute Tools, Game Stalls were provided by the Bute Project Playpark team and D.J Scott MacGregor did a fantastic job of entertaining all the little Ghouls!





CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2021

With just over one month until Christmas we are busy arranging as much as we can in the little time available and without having had any levy money paid yet we are limited on budget. In order to have the Christmas lights Bute deserves we would have needed to start planning in January 2021 so we're doing as much as we can this year and immediately beginning to plan for Christmas 2022.

The Bandstand over the Montague St Amphitheatre will be beautifully decorated to be this years Christmas focal point. There will be a tree, wreaths, garlands, and lots of lights! Some of these lights will be on the Amphitheatre all year round.

The Christmas lights will be switched on on at the Bandstand on Thursday 25th November at 6pm with entertainment from 5:30 – 7:00pm – We would like to encourage local businesses to stay open late until 7:00pm so that it becomes a lovely late night pre-Christmas shopping event.

We are currently looking for a local business to sell tea, coffee and hot chocolate at the event, a stall will be provided. We would also like a business to provide Mulled Wine if we can arrange the licensing for this. If your business could provide either service please email info@butebid.com.

CHRISTMAS MARKETS

Bute will again be holding Christmas Markets on each Saturday before Christmas in December on 4th, 11th and 18th. If your business would like to have a stall at the market please email info@butebid.com or a copy of the application form is available on butebid.com. Stalls are provided by Project Playpark so thank you again to them for enabling the Bute Christmas Markets to happen.

CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION

The competition for the best festive window display will be held on 11th December 2021, an independent judge will visit all business shop windows that day and identify the best festive window display on Bute! Please We look forward to seeing all the windows decorated!

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2022

Planning for Bute's Big Christmas in 2022 has already begun. We're aiming to deliver a show stopping Christmas Lights experience which will hark back to Bute's days of being illuminated all along the front. We will also invest in marketing this on and off the Island to help bring extra visitors to Bute out of season. This will be organised by a dedicated events team working with our local council. If you'd like to get involved with the Christmas Lights event team please get in touch via butebid.com

LET'S GET READY FOR SPRING 2022

One of the top priorities for the BID team is to ensure Bute always looks it's best for our residents and our visitors.

Over the next few weeks we will be working very hard on bringing together a plan for readying the short term appearance of our street scene, getting Bute looking beautiful in time for next spring and developing a long term maintenance and improvement schedule.

We will be working with businesses, our local council, local charities and tradesmen to implement a schedule of repairs and upgrades that have been highlighted by businesses and locals from a recent survey of areas around the town.

We will ascertain where there are gaps in the existing timetables for street cleaning and what the local council's financial constraints are.

It is important that you as a local business get in touch with us about any areas you feel need attention around the island so that we can add them to the schedule.

We will update you when we have more details on this in our future newsletters and for the most up to date information visit our website.



BUTE'S FIVE YEAR PLAN

The BID Board will develop a five-year plan which will be entirely made up of things you want to see happen on Bute.

The landscape has changed since the Isle of Bute BID was first conceived and the results of original questionnaire detailing the priorities you all had may also have changed. Therefore we want to refresh this data and ensure our five year plan aligns to what our businesses need now rather than the priorities of our businesses a couple of years ago.

We want to meet with all our local businesses to understand what your priorities are in a way that allows us to capture as much information as possible and ensure that we can collate all the insights into a plan.

Much of the feedback so far from you has been that different parts of Bute have different priorities and even different parts of Rothesay, so in the new year we are going to meet with businesses in an area by area or in the town street by street basis to capture what is needed to ensure that proposed solutions can meet the needs of everyone in that area or on that particular street.

We will let you know our plans to do this but there is no need to wait for this to be set up, please get in touch with us with all your ideas and aspirations and even your general bug bares. When advising us of issues please do let us know what solutions you think should be considered if you already have ideas about this. They can be short term or long term. It's important that you as Bute's businesses drive Bute's BID. All suggestions should be submitted via the butebid.com website.

If you any spare time have a look at other BIDs around Scotland to see what can be achieved. Visit improvementdistricts.scot for a list of these.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH YOU

We will be publishing our newsletter regularly and we want to ensure our comms reach everyone who wants to receive updates from the BID Team.

However due to data protection laws, to receive our emails and newsletters digitally we need you to opt into our comms by signing up via our website or by emailing info@butebid.com. Please include your contact info and business name when requesting to be added to our comms list. We will send you a confirmation that we have your request which you must respond to. It's an important step in the process to ensure that we have your email address correctly noted and we're unable to communicate with you if you don't reply to our email to acknowledge it.

We will have social media pages set up too where we will share events and news so that you can still see what we're up to even if you don't want to sign up to our communications.