

At the outset of establishing the Bute Business Improvement District (BID) the businesses identified 3 key areas to address and prioritise.

## 77% wanted

better marketing and promotion of Bute with a stronger place in the tourism sector, holding local events and visible branding.

## 78% of the

Bute business community understood that environment and image of the island attracts independent investment, further tourist footfall and can increase visitor and live-in population.

## 65% expects

that working with the Bute BID will deliver increased business support, business facilitation and business advocacy that would be unavailable individually. The Bute BID is a collective business voice for all island matters.

### VISIT BUTE MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Pushing on with Visit Bute brand we have now dipped our toe into the waters of TikTok and social media reels. Social media is by far the biggest growing platform in marketing your destination easily and creatively. Backed by Visit Scotland and Business Gateway who offer a huge variety of free seminars in how to make full use of 'Reel' effectiveness, the Bute BID are hoping for some Bute business collaborations in the future that hook into social trends and that present new ways to show our island to new audiences! Feel free to join our Visit Bute TikTok page and like the reels should you see them on your feed. So far the numbers that are presenting highest interactions are reels that show wildlife, action and local vistas. Our dolphins show had over 6.1k plays on FB reels, and our posting of the local Aurora Borealis clips went up to 2.1k plays. Daily posting on VB Facebook is ongoing with outputs varying from special days commemorated, to local business news highlighted. The example of 'International Women's Day' had over 105 views likes and 25 shares on VB Facebook.



### ARGYLL AND THE ISLES TOURISM COOPERATIVE (AITC), SCOTO AND VISIT BUTE ACTION

Representing both Bute BID and Visit Bute John Weir recently travelled to Oban to attend the Scottish Community Tourism (SCOTO) conference hosted with Executive Director Carron Tobin. SCOTO is a network of community tourism enterprises located throughout Scotland and led by a team of dynamic individuals who each have extensive and varied experience in community tourism. The meetings' purpose illustrated that the Scottish Government are continuing to encourage smaller community groups to step up and take on essential services and much needed buildings such as public toilets and libraries. The take from the day was that areas who do not have a recognised and legally formulated business organisation will be wholly left out of the Scottish Government's remit for areas of improvement and investment.



John Weir also met with the overseas AITC consultant, Yvonne Wagoun. Last years familiarisation trips (fam trips) were very successful in putting Bute on the map for tour groups looking to plan their Scottish itinerary. Behind the scenes on Bute there will be a number of fam trips from March through to September 2023 carrying out further research for the following years tourists itinerary. This is hugely encouraging that Bute as a tourist destination is being regularly hosted by multiple, overseas tour operators.

### Some 2023 Cruise dates announced



The success in 2022 of two cruise liners that docked in Rothesay Bay and that managed to embark over 1000 passengers will hopefully be replicated in 2023. The Seabourn Ovation is expected to sail into our shores again on the 17th of September 2023. Arrival time at present is to be 8am. Visit Bute will of course be putting out reminders to all Bute retailers closer to the time.

### Bute BID Information dissemination!

The Bute BID were asked to give an interview and talks at events held by Bute based community groups and on the radio. Bute Island Radio had a 30 minute long interview with John Weir to elaborate what was being achieved as a BID on behalf of Bute businesses. Mr Weir also attended the Baptist Guild Meeting at the Bank of Ideas where his talk was given a warm reception and had a healthy question and answer session after.

### Children's Corner Playpark Still Ongoing

Behind the scenes things are still progressing for the new themed toddlers play equipment that has been secured for Children's Corner.

## Scotland Towns Partnerships Bute BID in the NEWS!!

The BID Manager was invited to a cross party gathering at the Parliament Building in Edinburgh to represent Bute and the Bute BID. The exposure for Bute was extremely positive, and two invitations have been made to Tom Arthur MSP, Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth and Siobhian Brown MSP, Chair of Towns and Town Centres and Tourism Cross Party Group to come to Bute in the future to discuss strategy and offer their huge experience to the Bute BID.

Community Wealth Minister Tom Arthur was among those who praised the impact of groups across the country in improving local economies and making their areas better places to live and work.

Mr Arthur said: "Supporting the sustainable growth of businesses and communities is a key aim of this Scottish Government. It is good to see Improvement Districts recognised as we continue our drive to create a fairer, greener and more prosperous economy for Scotland. "Encouraging enterprise can help us deliver ambitions set out in the Town Centre Action Plan and the National Strategy for Economic Transformation. We all have a role to play in ensuring our towns enable more people to benefit directly from the wealth generated by local communities."

Phil Prentice, SIDs' national programme director, said:

"It was fantastic to have our improvement districts back in the Scottish Parliament, celebrating the terrific difference they make in their communities.

"This was a chance to shine the spotlight on work which is driving innovation and collaboration – encouraging ambition, investment, boosting businesses and making areas more attractive.

"Scotland is home to the world's most expansive programme of improvement districts – and there's huge potential in developing it further. This is something we should be incredibly proud of as they each play an important part in supporting jobs and creating stronger, more sustainable local economies. "Our thanks go to the Minister and the Scottish Government for their ongoing support for this hugely important work."

John Weir will be following up on the two invites given to the Ministers – update to follow!



## Holiday West Highland Advert for Spring / Summer

Continuing with the promotion of Bute's Business and Bute as a destination, we are finalising the next 6 page insert in Holiday West Highland that will take the magazine into Spring/Summer months. This time the focus has been put on pushing Bute's huge range of a visitor accommodation available and the retail sector. The two paid Bute BID adverts are written in a 'call to action' style which are intended to encourage the reader's interaction with Visit Bute website pages. QR codes that lead the reader straight to both the accommodation and retail pages of the Visit Bute website have also been added. Distributed through The Oban Times, over 50,000 printed copies are distributed in over 500 outlets including airports, high footfall retail outlets and ferry ports across Scotland. Going head to head alongside other popular Scottish holiday destinations, Bute businesses will now have a strong voice in a popular periodical on a regular basis. The Bute BID also negotiated preferential group rates for these inserts, as well as a 10% reduction in ratecard for any adverts our local businesses wish to pay for themselves.



## Working with Council Agreements on Street Scene



Recent meetings with Tom Murphy of the Council has successfully agreed with the BID to continue the painting, cleaning and planting that needs done around the island that is out with the remit or work scope of the ABC.

Firstly a recce of the shelters will be taken by the council as to repairs needing done prior to painting beginning.

It was agreed that the BID will be able to offer businesses the chance to sponsor flower boxes around the island. Details of how your company can apply to sponsor a flower box coming soon!

## Pontoons are GO!

The Bute BID were delighted to be informed that all the 'sign offs' and legal requirements for use has been given by the ABC and that Bute's new step-on, step-off pontoons in Bute's outer harbour are now ready for visitors!





# Plant Pot Sponsorships

We are all aware of the issues faced by the Council in relation to budgets & the purchase of plants for the island. We are offering businesses & members of the public the opportunity to sponsorship the plant pots and brighten up the island once again. £75pa will cover the compost, the plants and the maintenance for a pot, should you be interested please contact Alayne at: [info@butebid.com](mailto:info@butebid.com)



# Bute Christmas Illuminations 2022 - reflection

Bute BID Christmas Switch On event at the end of November 2022 signaled the winter season beginning. The work behind this event was immense and it would not have been so successful if it were not for the incredible coordination of a huge number of 'elves' in the shape for the time spent pulling together the decorations that this year spread all the way out to Children's Corner. Sophie Reid said, 'from what we know, Bute's retail businesses are keen to extend their shopping season and where they can offer shop local for gifts and daily needs. With our new Christmas trees, decorations and projectors that then lit up the town in Bute's darkest months - we let both islanders and visitors know we are still very much open for business! Where possible we hoped to encourage shops to open later on some evenings, and even opening on a Sunday in the run up to Christmas.

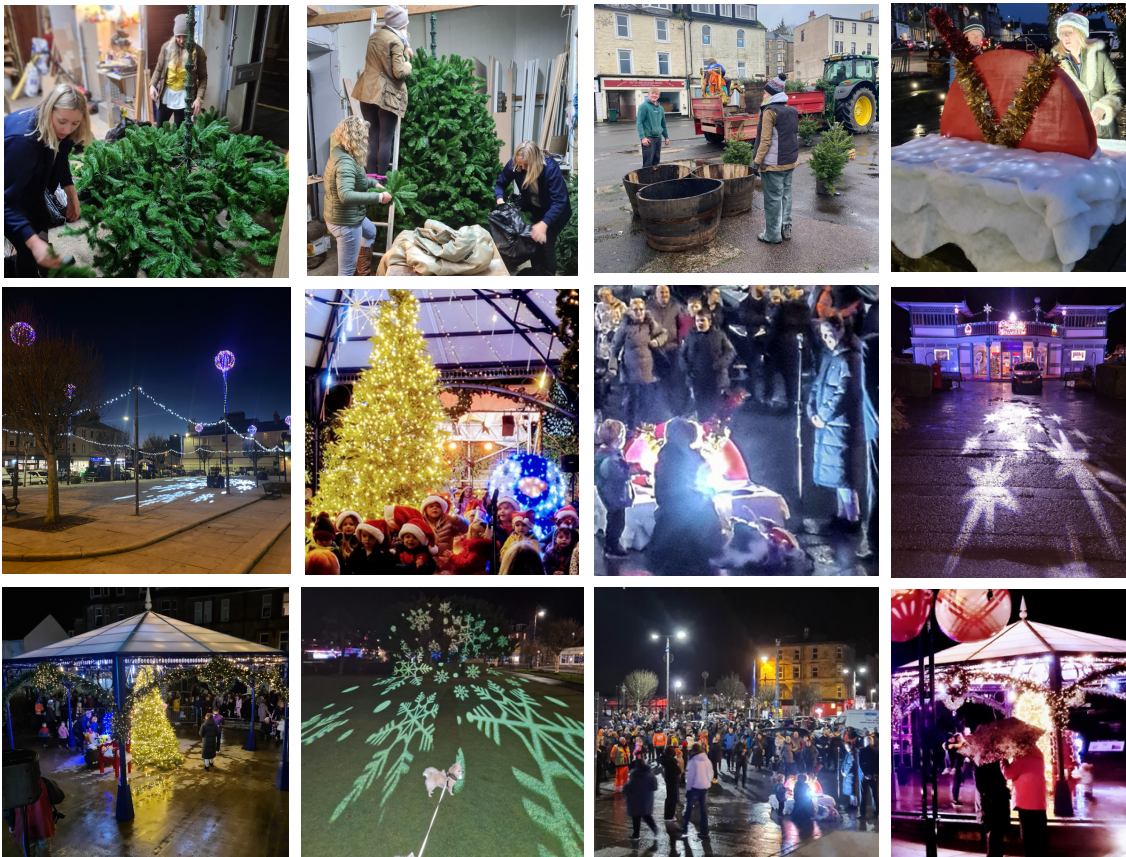
We were delighted some businesses could do that. With the BID being a driver we will only build on this action each year at this time.' Willie Glen said, 'it definitely has an impact on the visibility of Bute being a place to visit even in the darker months if we offer shopping, eating and some interesting themed events.



We created a poster that showed the monthly calendar events that were on in November and December. Pulling together this information offers a simple diary of events for the locals and visitors. The poster was printed for the Prom Board and shared across all social media and Visit Bute portals'.

*Thank you!*

# Teamwork makes our dream work



The BID want to acknowledge these wonderful elves for the Bute Christmas Light Up which kicked off our winter season in style!

- Father Christmas
- Jane Ross
- Emma Grey
- Gray the Dog
- Mount Stuart Trust
- ABC Roads and Infrastructure
- Day Today
- Mill Street Gardens Centre
- Bute Resilience Team
- Ross Malyon & Myles Allan
- Tony Poole
- Bright Nights Ent.
- George Ross
- Victoria Hotel
- Rothesay Pier
- Jen Dougal
- Sophie Reid
- Duncan Martin
- Gillian Dougal
- Joe McCabe & his wonderful team





# Visit Bute Facebook Stats



## Audience

### Age and gender

- Men 28.20%
- Women 71.80%

### Location

Towns/cities Countries

United Kingdom	5,837
United States	188
Australia	71
Canada	55
Ireland	32
Spain	32
Italy	31
Netherlands	28
New Zealand	27
Germany	24

## Page overview

### Discovery

Post reach	13,537
Post engagement	4,401
New Page followers	24

### Interactions

Reactions	999
Comments	79
Shares	121
Photo views	566
Link clicks	307

### Interactions

Reactions	999
Comments	79
Shares	121
Photo views	566
Link clicks	307

### Other

Hide all posts	0
Unfollows	0

## Visit Bute

6.4K followers • 436 following



Rhubodach Ferry to the Isle of Bute Accessible Bute has not one but two, regular roll on, roll off CalMac ferry crossings. The lesser known route, but by far the most picturesque to drive to is the Colintraive-Rhubodach crossing. Taking your drive from further North in Scotland, passing through towns as such as Oban or Inveraray over to the small village of...

Post reach 5,871 Engagement 347



Date for the diary! Isle of Bute Artists' Collective OPEN STUDIO TRAIL 2023 22nd and 23rd July 2023 The popular Isle of Bute Art Trail is back again for the 10th time. This year with more participants than ever. Bute was named last year as one of the best places to live in Scotland and has become a haven for arts and crafts. There will be 43 producers in over 20...

Post reach 5,544 Engagement 310



Happy International Women's Day For all that is noble and right about celebrating International Women's Day today, it should also be a day where we take time to recognise the hardships and difficulties many women faced in the past. The story and life of Jinty Bell was one of Bute's quirks of folklore. Born in Rothesay in 1846 she was an unmarried mother wit...

Post reach 4,259 Engagement 607



New arrival - Simply Delicious Opening tomorrow from 8am- 2pm Pop in and meet Naida and Fraser in Bute's new take away Simply Delicious

Post reach 4,112 Engagement 755

# LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR

The run up to the Christmas period was an incredibly busy time for the Bute BID. Pulling together one of Bute's largest winter light ups had some interesting challenges, but we are proud of just how well Rothesay looked in our darkest season. Each time we approach winter season the Bute BID aims to increase the activities and the opportunities for businesses to open longer and provide some better local festive shopping time.

However, the year end is also a time for reflection.

Myself and the Board members have taken stock as to how much more needs to be understood from the Levy payers as to their needs and wants by the Bute BID. The biggest take from our first AGM was increasing the amount and type of communications we use to collaborate with our Levy payers. We take on board that there needs to be more meetings and have promised an annual survey to go out that will remain a marker for success of the Board's achievements as they happen. To that end we will be holding sector meetings at the earliest opportunity to give our Levy payers an opportunity to firm up their ideas in how to continue to make Bute a better place to live, work and visit.

I have been encouraged in our first year as a BID group, just how enthusiastic our Board and our staff have been to get the projects up and running. Despite some delays and frustrations and the inevitable getting a good working practice established, just know that the Board worked incredibly hard behind the scenes alongside doing their own jobs.

We also take time to say a huge vote of gratitude to John Weir, our first Bute BID Manager. Without his help and guidance we would not have made such an impression and positive relationships with key stakeholders that need to be invested in Bute's success. We wish him well on his new adventures and are quite sure his guidance and solid foundations created will continue as we move forward as a BID into our second year. There is so much to do, and we are excited as to the future plans for Bute. Stay tuned!



*John Glen*

Chairman of the Bute BID