



Living Lerwick Limited
info@livinglerwick.co.uk
www.livinglerwick.co.uk
T: 07379 765 020



@livinglerwick



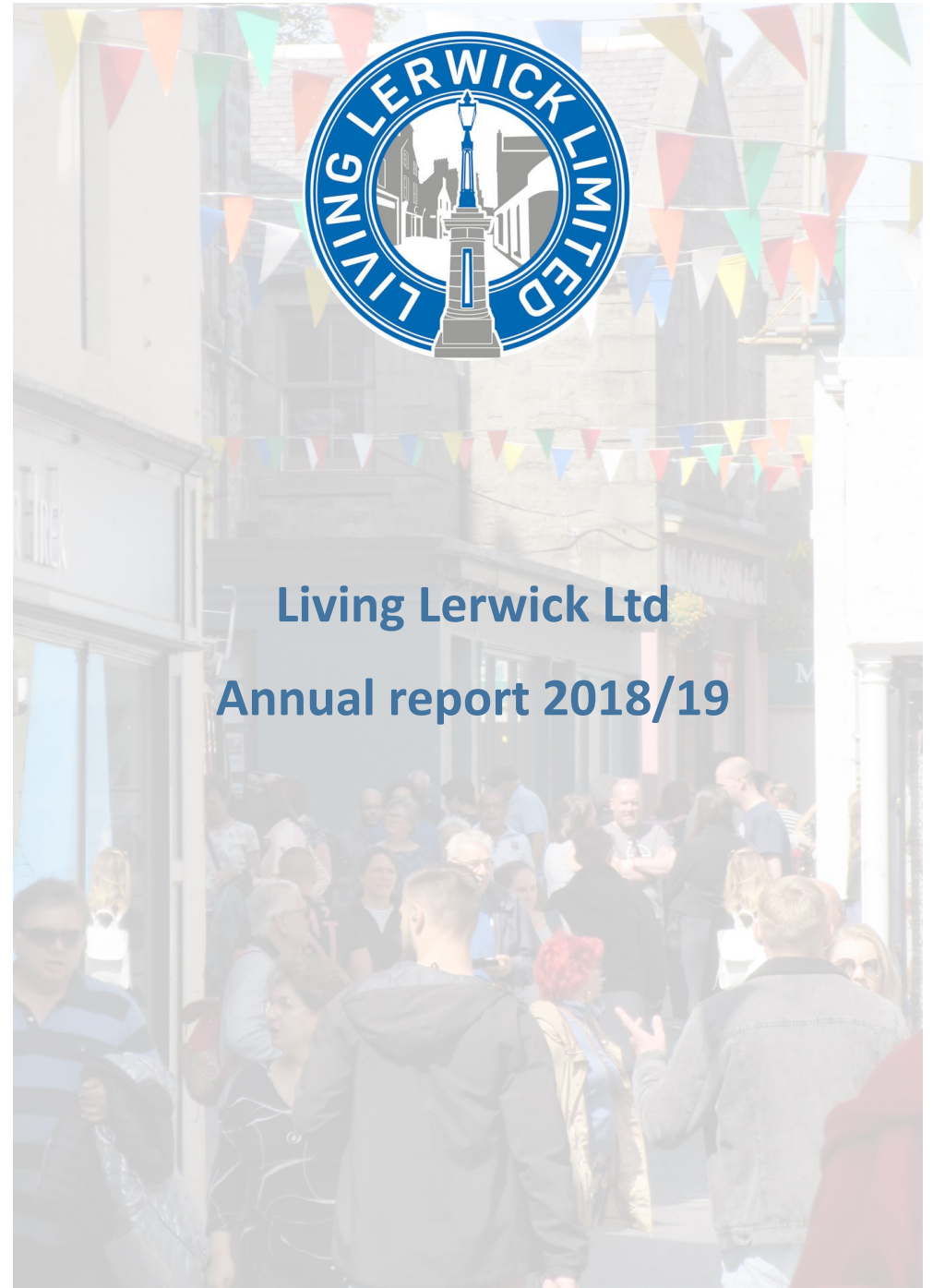
/livinglerwick



SCOTLAND'S
TOWNS
PARTNERSHIP



SCOTLAND'S
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICTS



Living Lerwick Ltd
Annual report 2018/19

Introduction - Living Lerwick Ltd

Lerwick Town Centre businesses voted in favour of establishing a Business Improvement District in 2012. A BID is an organisation voted for by businesses in a set boundary area which operates to improve the physical, trading and community conditions in that area for the benefit of the businesses.

Living Lerwick, the BID management organisation provide support to local businesses, arrange events and promotion of the area, and liaise with other public bodies and stakeholders to develop projects and activities to boost the local economy or address public issues such as parking, cleansing or future developments in the area.

All business properties in the BID area which are listed on the Local Assessors Valuation Role are automatically members of Living Lerwick, unless exemptions, as specified in the BID Proposal, apply.

There are over 40 BIDs across Scotland encouraging collaborative working practices over wider community areas in the public, private and third sectors. These also now extend to Tourism BIDS and Food & Drink BIDS as well as towns.

This annual report is a summary of the second year of the second BID term. Year seven overall for the Lerwick BID.

Management & Board of Directors

Living Lerwick Ltd projects continued to be managed by Emma Miller, contracted through Réalta Events Management. A change in the team saw Selina May Miller move on to a new position and Joanne Williams step in. Joanne works part time as a deputy manger for Shetland Food and Drink so has experience in supporting member based organisations.

In 2018/19 Living Lerwick had 9 registered Directors. (1 as proxy)

Ingrid Webb, Shetland Soap Company, stepped down as a Director in June 2019, and new Director Michael Laurenson of Cee & Jays was appointed.

Current Directors are:

Steve Mathieson (VisitScotland – Chairman), David Coe (Ninian), Edna Irvine (Smith & Robertsons), Stewart Jamieson (Harry's), Ben Mullay (The Camera Centre), James Tonge (Aa Fired Up), Gemma Tonge (Aa Fired Up—proxy), Dave Williams (Mirrie Dancers) and Michael Laurenson (Cee & Jays)

In addition, there were two SIC Elected Members who were invited to attend Board Meetings in an informal advisory capacity. These were Beatrice Wishart and Stephen Leask. Following an election in August 2019 and Ms Wishart's appointment as MSP, this will be reviewed.

Income and Expenditure Account

Period 1st September 2018 to 31st August 2019. Full accounts are available to members on the Living Lerwick website, or on request.

Income	£	£
Business Improvement Levy	71,693	
Lerwick Community Council Grants	2,000	
SIC Core Funding	5,000	
Miscellaneous income	27	
Donations from Events	775	
Donations paid to MRI Scanner Appeal	775	
Turnover		78,720
Project Expenditure		
More Attractive	19,558	
More Business Support	3,474	
More Footfall	8,251	
More Informed Decisions on Access	125	
More Marketing	12,415	
BID Management	13,131	
Operational Costs	14,693	
Total costs		71,647
Surplus for year		7,073

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

Income and Expenditure Summary

Income

The main income for Living Lerwick in 2018/19 was from Business Improvement Levy's paid by member businesses. All businesses within the BID boundary are legally required to pay an amount, based on the rateable value of the property, towards the work of Living Lerwick.

Shetland Islands Council invoices and collects levy payments on behalf of Living Lerwick. There were 142 members in 2018/19 with a total levy amount due of £73,300. A total of £16,068.11 was carried forward being unpaid in previous years and not written off as Bad Debt.

Between previous years payment and 2018/19 levy paid, a total of £71,693 income was received. £12,705 remains outstanding for 2018/19 at year end.

Grant funding of £2,000 was received from Lerwick Community Council towards the cost of Christmas lights and summer flowers.

Additional grant income received included £5,000 core funding from SIC and a second grant which was held over to 2019/20 for project expenditure in the following year.

Expenditure

Expenditure on several areas increased in 2018/19. An extra £3000 was spent on the more attractive budget, which covered the cost of additional Christmas lights to replace older equipment.

Expenditure on Business Support activities almost doubled to £3,474 which was a result of project staff spending more time visiting members and increasing time spent supporting individual members.

Marketing expenditure also increased with the new branding and production of notepads with our very own mascot, Maunsie to encourage buying local.

Expenditure on the more footfall project decreased. This was as a result of sharing Shopping Week event costs with Shetland Boat Week, and reassessing event expenditure generally.

Management charges were significantly reduced, by over £11,000. The previous year's high costs were due to re-ballot costs and handover to the new team.

Bad debts increased significantly again by £7,500. Earlier management of debt collection procedures must be implemented to prevent this in future.

Chairman's Foreword

Year seven of the Lerwick town centre Business Improvement District has seen a more positive outlook on the future of the area. There have been several new businesses opening, and more engagement with the project management team by members.

Statistics from national surveys still indicate that footfall in high streets is declining, with rising numbers of consumers visiting shopping centres. While the more difficult issue facing our own members is online competition, it is positive to note that we are well below the national average when it comes to vacant properties on our high street.

Earlier this year, figures published show an average of 12% vacant properties in town centres. In August 2019, out of 143 'units' there were 7 empty. This is 4.9%. With local knowledge of upcoming changes and plans for building use, our

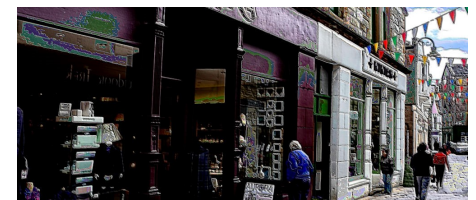
project manager identified that only 2.8% of properties in the BID area were actually available for rental or purchase.

It was a busy summer from a tourism perspective, which does increase footfall in the area. While some ships had to be cancelled for weather reasons, there were still a significant number of additional people in the town. 85 ships arrived up to the end of August, with more expected. We plan to monitor this in a more reliable way in future with funding available from the Scottish Government to install footfall and vehicle counter systems.

It is important for everyone to play their part in supporting our town centre and working together to provide a warm welcome and good service to local folk and visitors alike.

There are spaces for additional Directors to join the board and I would welcome anyone who might be interested to get in touch.

**Steve Mathieson—Chairman
September 2019
Tel: 01595 743141**



Living Lerwick Business Plan

The Living Lerwick Business Plan sets out the areas of work that the project management team work towards. The key areas identified by member businesses at the renewal ballot in 2017 were a focus on:

More Business Support
More Marketing
More Footfall
More Attractive
More informed decision making on Access

Each of the areas has a separate budget and areas of work through the year.

More Footfall Activity - 2018/19

Christmas 2018

The 2018 Christmas Parade was once again a success with hundreds lining the Street to welcome Santa to the town centre. The parade was joined this year by appliances from the Shetland Coastguard and Bressay Fire Service. As always, Living Lerwick is thankful to all those who help make this event such fun.



Mid Term Review

With the end of the second year of the second term, we are now half way through this BID period.

A review will be carried out on the work done to date and progress towards each of the key areas in the Business Plan.

The project management team are awaiting further guidance from national support agency, Scotland's Towns Partnership on the requirements and format for this review. The results will be made available to members at the 2020 AGM if timescales allow.

This includes: Lerwick Lifeboat and the Ladies Guild, Shetland Islands Council, Active Audio, Peerie Foxes Nursery and the Moar Family, Lerwick Jarl Squad, Lerwick Brass Band and... Santa!

Grateful thanks is also extended to Northwards, NorthLink, SIC, Active Audio and Lerwick Community Council for their support and assistance to get the Christmas tree and lights up in the town centre to bring a festive cheer to us all.

Well done also to Ninian for winning the Christmas Window Competition, from 200 public online votes.

More Business Support Activity - 2018/19

Business Communication

The project team are in regular communication with members and have offered a number of ways for businesses to engage with the team, and their fellow members this year.

Drop-in sessions were offered once a month for face to face chats with the project team but this did not result in a high attendance, so door to door visits have, and will be carried out instead.

There were over 500 general emails sent to businesses from the project team throughout the year.

Cruise Tourism Communication

Cruise tourism continues to be a growing market during the summer months. Workshops were hosted by LPA, VisitScotland and SIC in February 2019 to give information about the cruise sector. A specific town centre Q&A session will be planned for the beginning of next season to support businesses in maximising this audience.

There were 85 Cruise ships in port up to the end of August, with a further 14 to come.

60 emails were sent to businesses through the summer with details of ships arriving, passenger numbers and tour numbers.

Recycling Requirements

A change to the way refuse is collected has been implemented by the SIC. The project team looked at areas for increasing the placement of recycling bins without impacting on the appearance or access on Commercial Street, and issued various communications to businesses to help them understand the changes, following up with the SIC on several queries.

Keeping in Touch

Letters were sent to every member business in February asking for updated contact details so that the project team can maintain effective communication.

7 newsletters were issued through the year via electronic and paper format. Those who would rather receive a printed copy should advise the project team.

Each newsletter reminds members of Director meeting dates and contact details.



Christmas Lights

In the lead up to December 2019 a great deal of research and time was spent to identify a new system of Christmas lights for the town centre that could stand up to the harsh weather. A new system was identified however the equipment supplied was of a poor quality, so funds were instead spent on replacing existing lights and installing heavy duty wires to support these.

£8845 was spent on additional Christmas lighting equipment.

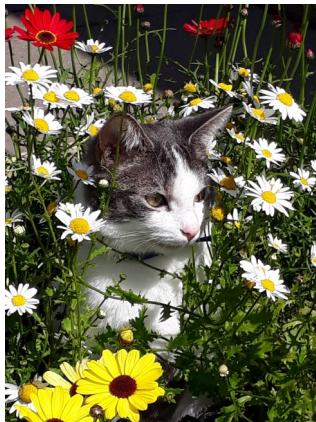
Town Centre Art Trail

Living Lerwick submitted a bid to the Local Authority for a share of the Town Centre Capital Grand funding from Scottish Government. A grant of £63,770 was requested and will be used to install four pieces of public art in the town centre. Work will begin on this from September.

An Attractive Town Centre

The flowers were in spectacular bloom once again this year, with the addition of picnic tables and bunting to brighten up our town centre. Local celebrity, Tommy the Cat, was particularly keen on the planters near Charlotte Street.

Paving slabs were replaced at the north end of the street with improvements to the road and pavement layout made at the same time.



Love and Attention for our Phone Boxes

The iconic red telephone boxes at the Post Office building always attract a lot of attention from visitors. They have been deteriorating in recent years and ongoing requests to BT has now resulted in Living Lerwick receiving permission and official paint to restore these to a more suitable state!

The project team did get the scrubbing brushes out in the summer, and will apply the paint once the spring weather comes.



Shopping Week 2019

Lerwick Shopping Week was planned alongside Shetland Boat Week this year to allow for a crossover of events and provide more opportunity to keep people in and around the town centre, with events at Hay's Dock complementing town centre activities.

51 Events and activities were promoted in the town centre alongside special offers and promotions within businesses.

Live music in Harrison Square, the 5k fun-run and a special exhibition window commemorating 125years of trading at Smith & Robertson's were just some of the highlights.



Stephanie & Victoria Talbot enjoyed the summer face-painting at Harrison Square

117 Living Lerwick Geocache finds were logged on the official geocache website by visitors.

3 town centre trail competitions attracted 159 entries: bairns + adults into shops!

Traffic & Footfall Counters

A grant application for £12,167 was submitted to the Council to purchase and install vehicle and footfall counters along Commercial Street. This data will allow us to see where peak traffic times are for future planning and also give evidence for funding applications which request this specific type of information. Equipment will be installed over the winter.



Fashion shows and live music were just some of the activities that drew crowds to Harrison Square over the summer

More Marketing Activity - 2018/19

**LIVING
LERWICK
LIMITED**



A New Look

The official new branding for Living Lerwick was launched in November 2018. This updated the original logo to one with more of a flavour of the town centre. With Maunsie the Market Cross having been chosen as our new mascot, it seemed only right that the logo depicted this town centre icon.

Living Lerwick Website

As well as a new look for the logo, we updated the website this year too. John Coutts visited a number of businesses to take updated photography to give the home page a new look.

We also developed a programme of blog posts for established businesses, some of which are waiting to be published.

Over the year, the website had 14,132 visits from 11,082 unique users. This is an increase of around 3000 visits and 2300 users from the previous year. The most visited pages were:

1. Homepage, 2. Events, 3. Town Centre and 4. Business Directory.

There were 963 views of Shopping Week events.

A new page was added to the website to promote vacant properties in the town centre.

Further updates and additions are planned for the website and members are reminded that they are able to log in and update their own listings at any time. New members are added when required.

Mapping the Town Centre

In addition to the launch of the town centre App - Discover Lerwick, plans are also underway to install a new town centre map detailing all businesses in a directory format and produce a new Food & Drink trail leaflet. Funding has been secured for this from SIC Development Department and design work has started. The App, which has been under development for some time will be launched before the end of the year.



Other Marketing

Throughout the year press releases and interviews are given to local media to promote the town centre, and these are complemented by paid marketing campaigns for events through print, online and radio advertising.

Social Media

Social Media continues to be an important promotional tool, with daily posts added.

During the year, there were 2054 Facebook posts which reached 1,517,332 people and had 114,663 direct engagements.

Facebook page likes increased from 2610 to 3350 - a rise of 740.

Instagram is still not used as much as it could be and efforts will be made to increase the use of this tool. However, with minimal posting, account follows increased by 473 from 579 to 1052.



More Informed Decision Making on Access Activity - 2018/19

In October 2018, Shetland Islands Council Roads Service asked us to consult all members on their thoughts on a proposed daily 4 hour traffic restriction on Commercial Street.

The survey returned 38 responses from 142 members. There were 19 yes responses, 18 no responses and one declined to answer. The issue of vehicle access to Commercial Street continues to be a divisive one. Living Lerwick take no stance on this either way when members opinions are split so evenly. We will continue to facilitate consultation wherever possible.