For the last five years local highlights and Kay MacDonald have been the face of BID4Oban and on hand to meet and greet visitors to Oban.

Every day is different with its own twists and challenges. Almost every morning on the place her spirited nature is on show, at one time or another and between them Joe and Kay have welcomed and directed more than 60,000 tourists arriving by train, coach, ship, bike, and on foot.

One of the joys of being a Town Ambassador is knowing what each day will be like, whether it’s going around shops and businesses to distribute maps and leaflets or being on hand to welcome cruise ship passengers as they arrive in hundreds and thousands.

At one time or another Kay and Joe are likely to know where the nearest facilities are and how the dogs are enjoying their holiday. It is not just visitors to Oban who speak to the Ambassador, many local people enjoy chatting with them to find out what’s happening in the town and which cruise ships are in.

In local shops people often refer to the Ambassadors by calling them by their first names when talking to people they are in negotiation with, such as rubbish collecting, advertising, or publicizing events. This gives Oban another unique reason to visit.

The project was created after requests from some cruise ship companies for Oban-based tours to generalise tour routes and to get people to see more of Oban.

The Oban Common Good Fund this will be match funded by BID4Oban.

The Oban Times
Thursday, 14 February 2019

ENVIROMENTAL IMPROVEMENT

Ensuring the town looks its best is a key priority of BID4Oban.

During times of budget restraint it is increasingly difficult for the Argyll and Bute Council to fund many of the services previously taken for granted. BID4Oban invested in a street cleaning machine (the Green Machine) and this is used to clean streets around the town, operated by Argyll and Bute Council. BID4Oban is working with the council to maintain the town to the best possible standard.

One of the signature projects of the BID is the installation of 256 hanging troughs throughout the town. Last year the overall installation and future projects were made possible through a match funding grant from the council to matchfund the installation, maintenance, and delivery.

The costs of supplying and installing the troughs and delivery all the works undertaken each year is the responsibility of BID4Oban, with the embankment through Argyll and Bute Council.

The Oban Common Good Fund will be improved in future years and as funding becomes available.

BID4OBAN – how does it work?

The principal aim of the BID is to deliver projects and services to improve the marketing environment of the area to be benefited, its customers and visitors.

BID4Oban is clearly focused on improving Oban as a communal and tourism resource, and has strong business representation that reflects this.

• Making the best first impression
• Let’s chat about what’s happening in Oban
• Enrich the town
• Make Oban the place to stay, explore and spend
• Working together for a more prosperous future
• Making out town easier to visit

Since the inception of BID4Oban in 2012 and following a successful re-ballot in 2017 the organisation has worked to improve the business and commercial opportunities for Oban.

The BID is funded by a small levy that is charged to every business in Oban with a rateable value of £3,000 or above.

The smallest levy paid is £150 rising to £5,000 for the largest businesses. The levy is used to supplement and fund services and grants for which there would be no funding available if the BID were not in existence.

The BID was originally set up by a group of businesses in Oban, every five years the business community votes for the continuation of the BID or not, working to a fluid business plan that can adapt to the economic climate throughout the duration of the BID.

Details of the current business plan are available on the www.bid4oban.co.uk. BID4Oban is ideally placed to receive additional funding for key projects from the various agencies, Argyll and Bute Council.

BID4Oban has supported not just the business community but other groups and organisations throughout the town with event funding grants, community funding projects and commercial support for community organisations.

During 2018 BID4Oban was the organisation chosen by Argyll and Bute Council to supply and install the festive lights for the town. Oban Electrical Services carried out most of the work, with an additional 136 lamp posts turned on for the festive season.

BID4Oban has always been keen to promote Oban and the local businesses. The project was created after requests from some cruise ship companies for Oban-based tours to get people to see more of Oban.

Three cruise ship companies used the service and BID4Oban is also negotiating with some of the other cruise ships to promote Oban as a cruise port.

For providing this service it ensures that more of these passengers spend their time in Oban.
BID4Oban works very closely with Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance (OLTA) www.oban.org.uk The two have an understanding that ensures BID4Oban supports them financially with an annual grant of at least £10,000. This ensures that OLTA can gain access to additional monies that are used to promote Oban as a tourist destination not only on their website but also by way of billboard advertising across the country. In 2018 it brought in excess of 2,500 visitors.

BID4Oban has worked closely with Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance (OLTA) www.oban.org.uk for many years. The two have an understanding that ensures BID4Oban supports them financially with an annual grant of at least £10,000. This ensures that OLTA can gain access to additional monies that are used to promote Oban as a tourist destination not only on their website but also by way of billboard advertising across the country. In 2018 it brought in excess of 2,500 visitors.

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