

BID Fort William Business Improvement District Ballot

A ballot is to be held on the arrangements to propose a Business Improvement District (BID) for Fort William Business Improvement District for a period of 5 years from 1 December 2024 until 30 November 2029.

A notice of the proposed ballot was published on Thursday 26 September 2024 and issued by post to all eligible owners and tenants for all the properties they own or lease in the BID area.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a BID?	A BID is a not-for-profit company set up by businesses to improve a defined area. It is directed and funded by businesses to make improvements to the trading environment. A BID manager typically deliver's projects, lobbies on behalf of businesses and negotiates collective deals. A BID is a legal body which can only come into being following a successful ballot.
How often are ballots held?	They are held every 5 years.
Who is responsible for the running of the ballot?	The Chief Executive of the Highland Council is the Ballot Holder.
How will this ballot be conducted?	The ballot will be conducted entirely by post by the Independent Scrutineer, Civica Election Services (CES) of 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW on behalf of the ballot holder.
Who can Vote in the BID Ballot?	Persons eligible to vote in the ballot will be those who are eligible non-domestic ratepayers within the geographical area of the proposed BID.
I haven't received a copy of the notice of the ballot; does that mean I won't be eligible to vote?	Not necessarily. The notice has been posted to the person who the BID believes to be the voter for your business. For national businesses, this may have been directed to a head office. If you believe you are the voter and have not received this notice, please get in touch with the BID Proposer. Email: mark@bidfortwilliam.co.uk Telephone: 07804 484650
When will ballot papers arrive?	Ballot papers will be issued on Thursday 3 October 2024 to those eligible to vote, for return to CES no later than 5pm on Thursday 21 November 2024 (the "day of the ballot").

<p>I am unable to vote within the timeframe, can I arrange for someone to vote on my behalf?</p>	<p>Yes, you can appoint someone else to vote on your behalf if you are going to be away at the time of the ballot. You may apply in writing by 5pm on Monday 11 November 2024 to Civica Election Services (CES), The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW if you wish to appoint a proxy.</p> <p>Email: bids@cesvotes.com Telephone: 020 8889 9203</p>
<p>What information is required to appoint a proxy?</p>	<p>An application for the appointment of a proxy must be made in writing (by email bids@cesvotes.com and must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) state the full name and address of the person whom the person entitled to vote (the applicant) wishes to appoint as a proxy; b) state the address of the applicant's property or properties; c) be signed by the applicant; and d) contain a statement by the applicant that the proxy so named has been consulted and is capable and willing to be appointed. <p>You can download the proxy template here.</p>
<p>If my plans have changed and I am now available to vote, can I cancel my proxy?</p>	<p>Yes, it may be cancelled by notifying CES by no later than 5pm on Saturday 16 November 2024.</p>
<p>What should I receive in the post?</p>	<p>You will be issued with ballot paper, pre-paid envelope to return your ballot paper and a copy of the BID Business Plan.</p>
<p>How long do I have to vote?</p>	<p>The ballot closes at 5pm on Thursday 21 November 2024. Your ballot paper must reach CES by then to be counted.</p>
<p>I haven't received my ballot paper. What do I do?</p>	<p>If you or your appointed proxy has not received a ballot paper, you may apply in writing to the Civica Election Services (CES), The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW for a replacement. Their e-mail is bids@cesvotes.com. Evidence in the form of headed paper and a signature as to your identity will be required. You can download the template here.</p>

<p>I have spoilt my ballot paper. What do I do?</p>	<p>If you have spoilt your ballot paper, please return it to Civica Election Services (CES), The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW, for a replacement. On receipt of your spoilt ballot paper, you will be issued with a replacement from CES.</p>
<p>If we are joint voters, does both voters have to complete the ballot paper?</p>	<p>No this is not necessary, one of the joint voters would be eligible to complete the ballot paper.</p>
<p>How does the vote work?</p>	<p>For a BID ballot to be successful there must be a minimum of 25% turnout of eligible business in the area both by number and aggregate rateable value. Of those voting there needs to be a majority of 50% or more in favour both by number and by combined rateable value of the hereditaments voting.</p>
<p>When would my ballot be rejected?</p>	<p>If a ballot paper is duplicated and two are returned bearing the same number or barcode, both will be void and not counted. Any ballot papers that are returned unsigned, unmarked or that are void for uncertainty will also be void and not counted.</p>
<p>When and where will the outcome be announced?</p>	<p>Ballot papers will be counted, and the result declared on Friday 22 November 2024. The result will be published online at www.highland.gov.uk/fortwilliambid</p>
<p>Who do I contact if I require further information on the BID arrangements and proposals?</p>	<p>The BID arrangements and proposals will be described in detail in the BID Business Plan. Further information can be obtained from the BID Proposer.</p> <p>BID Fort William, MacLean House, Belford Road, Fort William, PH33 6BT Website: www.bidfortwilliam.co.uk Email: mark@bidfortwilliam.co.uk Tel: 07804 484650</p> <p>Questions or advice on the Ballot Please contact the Elections Team if you have any questions about the election process. Email: election@highland.gov.uk Tel: 01349 886657</p>