



APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness BID Ltd

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

City Centre of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2025

Which of the Council's funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for:

£5,000 or under Under £10,000 £10,000 or over

Total amount applied for: £54,272

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £...

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

N/A

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914.....	✓
Other - please specify... ..			

Please remember guidance to completing the application form is available [here](#). Appropriate links to the guidance are situated throughout the form: [This page](#)

For official use only Application reference number			
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PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

Guidance on completing part 1: [ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT](#)

1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

City Centre of Inverness Annual Floral Displays for 2025

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date (month and year).....June 2025.....

End date (month and year).....October 2025.....

Location.....City Centre (and immediate surrounding areas) of Inverness.....

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:.

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

Background and Context

Inverness BID Limited (a not-for-profit company) was established in 2008, including to assist with the marketing and development/improvement of the Inverness City Centre trading economy.

The City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays have been a major feature within the City Centre since 1993 having been originally co-ordinated by the Inverness Project and Highland Council directly with the total cost of the displays historically (including due to the wider economic and community enjoyment/benefit), fully funded by the Inverness Common Good Fund.

In 2009 the Directors of Inverness Project decided to retire and they requested (with the Highland Council's agreement) that BID take on the role of co-ordinating the arrangements for the city-wide displays. From this date, via BID, the business community in the City Centre has also contributed towards overall cost.

In 2015 the floral displays were, at the request of the Highland Council, extended to include Bank Street and Huntly Street which have both had new lampposts installed as part of the streetscaping element of the flood alleviation works - these lampposts hold 2 baskets per post.

In 2018 the project was extended again at the request of the Highland Council to include the upgrading of Drummond & Lombard Streets with the installation of new displays.

The display sites are strategically selected and designated annually to ensure the overall impact is cohesive, harmonious and visually striking as well as providing value for

money.

The displays are widely enjoyed, supported and recognised as being an important element in creating an attractive, green and welcoming city, benefiting residents, the wider region, and visitors alike.

The project achieves direct positive economic impact by supporting local employment, and volunteering opportunities at the Botanic Gardens including for vulnerable individuals and groups.

Behind the scenes, several months of dedicated effort and coordination at scale are required to deliver the project to the high standard consistently achieved. A diverse range of flowers is carefully selected annually via co-design to create colourful, exciting, and visually engaging displays which are robust enough to withstand the elements.

Investment Impact

The project indirectly helps to support the local economy as demonstrable for example, via the high volume of photos of the displays taken each season, which are then often then shared on social media helping to showcase Inverness in an optimally positive light to a global audience which in turn, encourages new and repeat visits to our destination.

In terms of wider economic benefit, studies have found that green spaces and floral displays contribute to an improved sense of community pride and well-being (mental health), may promote an increase active travel and physical activity, and can also facilitate greater social interaction.

The seasonality of the displays further amplifies their impact, transforming their arrival and hosting into a notable 'event.'

Additionally, research indicates that well-placed urban floral displays support biodiversity by providing vital habitats and food sources for pollinators, making them an essential component of any successful placemaking programme or strategy.

High Life Highland, a key project delivery partner, signed the Highland Charter for Climate, Nature, and Health in 2024, to reinforce their commitment to sustainability and prioritising positive ecological and environmental actions across their extensive operations.

With the anticipated opening of the Northern Meeting Park and the Inverness Castle Experience in 2025, floral displays could play a key role in further enhancing the appeal of the city as an attractive and vibrant destination, at a time when it will be particularly important given the expected increase in visitor numbers.

Additional

The current project is viable due to its scale, which reduces unit and operational costs (partner and sub-contractor) as the number of displays increases. Coordination and management are provided in addition to any investment from the Inverness Common Good Fund (ICGF) by Inverness BID. Current project costs are based on the unit and scale costs across City Centre and Wider City applications combined and would need to be revised and updated in the event that only part funding is awarded.

The equipment used for the displays, originally provided by the Inverness Common Good Fund, remains its asset.

In 2024, the stunning floral arrangements in the City Centre (and immediate areas) extended to 413 displays including spares being hosted. ICGF provided a grant of £52,410 including to cover plants, upkeep, watering, installation, maintenance and removal. Inverness City Centre BID and other traders contributed to the city-wide remaining costs +10% in addition.

Proposals for 2025

BID have lodged two applications for the ICGF to consider as was the case for the 2024 arrangements. This current application is for the City Centre core area and BID herein proposes to be responsible for co-ordinating and managing the 2025 arrangements for 400 City Centre floral displays as follows (with 10 additional units including for the Victorian Market):

30	ACADEMY STREET/POST OFFICE AVENUE
46	CHURCH STREET
3	UNION STREET
84	HIGH ST & EASTGATE PRECINCT
75	BRIDGE STREET inc NESS BRIDGE/WALK
7	QUEENSGATE
8	DRUMMOND STREET
2	BARON TAYLOR'S
22	CASTLE STREET
12	TOWN HOUSE
50	BANK STREET
29	MILLBURN ROAD
7	BUS STATION
20	STEPHENS BRAE & ST.
18	OTHER & SPARES
413	

Conclusion/Summary

Project Aims

The City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays (via both applications under consideration) aim to:

1. **Enhance Inverness's identity:** By creating vibrant, strategically placed floral arrangement which enhances the city and provides a welcoming atmosphere for residents and visitors.
2. **Support our local economy:** By increasing footfall, encouraging tourism, and showcasing Inverness as a desirable destination.
3. Foster community pride and enhance well-being: By improving green spaces and

promoting active lifestyles, social interaction, and mental health.

4. **Promote sustainability and biodiversity:** By adopting eco-friendly practices, supporting pollinator habitats, and aligning with the Highland Charter for Climate, Nature, and Health.

Project Delivery

The 2025 floral displays (City Centre and Wider City) will be managed by Inverness BID in partnership with Highlife Highland (Botanic Gardens) and other stakeholders, with key activities including:

- Design and Planning: Selection of flowers for cohesive, attractive, spectacular, weather-resistant displays.
- Installation and Maintenance: Managing 601 displays across the City Centre and Wider City.
- Collaborative Execution: Partnering with Highland Council, HLH, local businesses, staff, sub-contractor and volunteers to ensure effective and timely delivery.

This framework uses BID's experience, partnerships, and economies of scale for effective and impactful delivery.

Funding Request: Running Costs

A funding request of £54,272 from the Inverness Common Good Fund is sought to cover running costs, including:

- Partner and subcontractor services for installation, maintenance, and removal.
- Plants, materials, and upkeep throughout the season.

Additional costs will be covered by contributions from Inverness BID and local businesses.

Project Beneficiaries

The project benefits a range of stakeholders aligned with the objective of 'common good' including:

- Residents: Enhances quality of life, promotes active travel, and fosters social interaction in a more attractive environment.
- Local Businesses: Increases footfall and tourism, benefiting City Centre traders and the wider area.
- Visitors: Improves the visitor experience, showcasing Inverness as a stunning, welcoming city.
- Vulnerable Groups and Workforce: Provides employment and volunteering opportunities, including for those with Additional Support Needs (ASN), and promotes skill development.

- Environment and Biodiversity: Supports pollinators, urban greening, and ecological best practices, aligning with the Highland Charter for Climate, Nature, and Health.

Wider Impact

The floral displays enhance Inverness's appeal and status as the Capital of the Highlands, and are a vital part of the city's cultural, economic, and environmental identity. Continued support from the Inverness Common Good Fund will allow Inverness BID to expand this tradition and provide ongoing and lasting benefits to residents, businesses, visitors, and the environment.

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):
Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

There are no barriers to any group benefiting from the Project and a full equality impact assessment is available upon request.

Public Sector Equality Duty and Advancing Equality Rights and Equality of Opportunity. Tackling Barriers to Participation and Promoting Inclusion.

This project promotes inclusion, equality, and collaboration, aligned to the Equality Act (2010) principles including by offering inclusive volunteering and training opportunities for individuals with Additional Support Needs (ASN), from diverse backgrounds offering dignity, respect, and skills development via HLH (Botanic Gardens). Tailored opportunities, such as horticultural training and life skills development, reduces barriers and improves employability for these disadvantaged individuals and groups.

The project provides a supportive environment for those due to disability facing barriers, offering tailored mentorship and opportunities as outlined which can also lead to attaining recognised qualifications. Partnerships with local organisations ensure diverse community involvement and greater good benefit.

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

N/A

1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

David Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value
N/A	
N/A	
N/A	

1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much **Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:**

Item/Activity	Breakdown of Total Costs £	2025	Actual 2024
Project Co-ordination, FCR, Administration, Personnel & Overheads	Programme planning, coordination, mapping, administration and related (BID)	£4,611	£4,611
Other Costs e.g. property costs, transport, equipment, insurance, marketing (excluding VAT)	Plants and Watering (HLH) City Centre Displays, 423 Units + VAT	£42,682 (423 Units)	£40,820 (423 Units)
	Installation/Removal of Displays (Sub-Contractor), inspection, painting, repair & renovation of baskets, fittings, brackets, remedial, additional and replacement etc.	£13,174 (423 Units)	£13,174 (423 Units)
Total Project Cost		£60,467	£58,605
Total Funding Request or Allocation from ICGF		£54,272	£52,410

1.10 **Other funding relating to this project** Please include other funders and own resources and income. Continue on separate sheet if required.

Organisation and status of application	2024	Actual 2024
Inverness BID Limited (BID/City Centre Business Investment)	£6,195	£6,195
Successful <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Decision		
Totals	£6,195	£6,195

*See guidance notes for specific funding stream to see if you are able to apply for more than one year of funding.

- 1.11 Please tell us how you know that there is a need for this activity or project and how your approach will meet this need. This might include:
- a. Community support for your project (e.g. surveys, etc.)
 - b. Statistics which show the need for your project (e.g. unemployment figures, crime statistics)
 - c. Evidence from similar projects which shows that they have worked (e.g. research from elsewhere or evaluations of previous local work)

The Project has received Common Good Funding for the past 3 years as follows:

2024 £52,410

2023 £64,150

2022 £64,150

NB above allocations, aside from 2024 were for whole city area not just the city centre. For comparison – city centre equates to approx. two thirds of units displayed.

- 1.12 Is this a new or additional activity or project? – Yes No If yes, what change will your activities or project make in your community?

If No, how has your activities or project been funded in the last three years?

Via ICGF and Inverness City Centre BID.

- 1.13 Please tell us how you will know that your activities or project is working and that you are benefiting your community. You only need to provide targets for the years in which your project will operate. See the detailed guidance for examples of targets.

How you will know you have made the change?		
Year 1 Measurable Outcome	Year 2 Measurable Outcome	Year 3 Measurable Outcome
Feedback from individuals, businesses and other users. Number of units displayed and requisite quantitative data. Via Visitor and business surveys.		

- 1.14 If it is intended that this activity or project continue beyond the period of Council support, how will it be funded?

<p>The annual Floral Displays are an integral initiative which helps make Inverness an attractive and welcoming place for both residents and visitors alike. In 2022, approval ratings reflected a 90% 'excellent' response rate, making the project the most popular of all BID/ICGF collaborations.</p> <p>If the current programme, already supported by City Centre businesses via BID, can be maintained for 2025, and given the wider benefits to all, contributions from other organisations will continue to be welcomed and encouraged.</p> <p>In the medium term, should a Visitor Levy be introduced in Highland, any advisory forum may also want to consider in due course whether supporting expenditure on a Highland Capital floral display programme aligns with its core remit and objectives.</p>
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- 3.3 a) When did your organisation start? Month...March.....Year...2008...
- b) What geographic areas and/or communities of interest (e.g. Young people, people with disabilities, older people, people from an ethnic minority background) does your organisation cover?

Inverness BID limited (a not-for-profit company) was established in 2008 including to assist the marketing and economic development of the City Centre area.

The City of Inverness annual Floral Displays have been a major feature within the city since 1993 (over 31 years). The programme is an important part of creating an attractive and welcoming city for the benefit of residents of the burgh and visitors alike which improves the economic area and the mental wellbeing of those who enjoy their presence.

- c) Is there any restriction on who can join your organisation?

Yes No If yes, what are they and why do you have them?

Businesses based within Inverness City Centre who pay BID levy are automatically eligible for membership and entitled to vote at Annual General meetings. Other businesses in the area are entitled to apply for voluntary membership. Some BID projects extend out with the defined area including in respect of the floral displays.

- d) How many people are on your governing body or management committee? ...15...
- e) Are there Highland Council Elected Members or Officers or Community Councillors on or attending your Management Committee or Board? *(please note that this will not affect your application)*

Yes No

If yes, please provide names:

Highland Council Elected Members	Role i.e. Office Bearer, Voting Member, Ex-official / advisory, other
Cllr Ian Brown	Director (Allocated)
Mr A Christie	Director (Co-Opted)

Community Councillors	Role i.e. Office Bearer, Voting Member, Ex-official, other

Council Officers	Role i.e. Office Bearer, Voting Member, Ex-official, other
Mr David Haas	City Manager

3.4 Does or has your organisation receive(d) any other funding from The Highland Council? Please provide information relating to Council funding for the last 3 years:

Yes No

If yes –

a) What is/was it for, and from which Service or Ward budget was it provided?

Year 1: See Appendix A
Year 2:
Year 3:

b) How much funding do/did you receive?

Year 1: See Appendix A
Year 2:
Year 3:

c) Estimated value of existing funding in kind, and from which Service or Ward budget was/is it provided?

Year 1: See Appendix A
Year 2:
Year 3:



APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness BID Ltd

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

Wider City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2025

Which of the Council's funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for:

£5,000 or under

Under £10,000

£10,000 or over

Total amount applied for: £22,872

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £...

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

N/A

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914.....	✓
Other - please specify... ..			

Please remember guidance to completing the application form is available [here](#). Appropriate links to the guidance are situated throughout the form: [This page](#)

For official use only			
Application reference number			

PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

Guidance on completing part 1: [ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT](#)

1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

Wider City Centre of Inverness Annual Floral Displays for 2025

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date (month and year).....June 2025.....

End date (month and year).....October 2025.....

Location.....City of Inverness.....

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

Inverness BID Limited (a not-for-profit company) was established in 2008, including to assist with the marketing and development/improvement of the Inverness City Centre economy.

The City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays have been a major feature within the City Centre since 1993 having been originally co-ordinated by The Inverness Project and Highland Council with the total cost of the displays historically fully funded by the Inverness Common Good Fund. In recent years Inverness BID and other traders have contributed towards and co-invested in the city-wide displays.

The displays are an important part of creating an attractive and welcoming City for the benefit of residents of the burgh, wider region and visitors alike.

In 2009 the Directors of Inverness Project decided to retire and they requested (with the Highland Council's agreement) that BID take on the role of co-ordinating the arrangements for the city-wide displays. The role involved liaising with display venues (both in advance and during the 5-month season), organising for the purchase of plants, their propagation, installation of the displays, their watering (at least twice weekly at unsocial times to avoid disrupting the public and businesses), co-ordinating hosting, remedial action, replacement, invoicing and at the end of the term the removal and disposal of the displays.

For additional background, impact, context and full details please also refer to the additional City Centre ICGF application, which is also applicable to the further supplementary application and not herein duplicated.

Beneficiaries of the project include the public (common good), visitors and businesses in the locality who already contribute to cost.

Proposals for 2025

BID have lodged two applications for the ICGF to consider for the 2025 arrangements. The first covers the area and immediate surround, within the BID area. The current application is in addition to the core City Centre area.

The application herein is for displays, which are out with the BID area (wider City).

If supported, BID proposes to be responsible for co-ordinating and managing the city-wide 2025 arrangements, for the provision of 178 floral displays expected to cover the following areas:

Tomnahurich Street, Cavell Gardens, Huntly Street, Huntly Street lamps, Crown/Kingsmills zone(s) 1 and 2, Harbour Road, Douglas Row, View Place, Ardross Street, Grant Street and spares.

The ICGF is responsible for maintaining, replacing and repairing the display equipment (supports/tubs/baskets/brackets/chains etc). Based on previous years a maintenance budget of c.£3.5k has been provided by the Common Good Fund to meet the ongoing and projected costs of this necessary activity and a pro-rata portion of this should be allocated for 2024 which for the wider City equates to £1155.

For 2025, the Inverness Common Good Fund is requested to contribute the sum of £22,872 with estimated contribution from wider traders >18% of total project costs (subject to confirmation).

A total of 601 displays are proposed to be hosted across the City Centre and Wider City (subject to funding) via the two funding applications submitted. Unit costs for orders under 601 would incur higher per unit expenditure in respect to partner and sub-contractor costs.

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):
Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have “protected characteristics” in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

There are no barriers to any group benefiting from the Project and a full equality impact assessment is available upon request.

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

N/A

1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

David Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value
N/A	
N/A	

N/A	
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1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:

Item/Activity	Breakdown of Total Costs £	2025	Actual 2024
Project Co-ordination, FCR, Administration Invoicing, Personnel & Overheads		£4340.50	£4,340.50
Other Costs e.g. property costs, transport, equipment, insurance, marketing (excluding VAT)	Plants and Watering (HLH) @ 178 Units	£18,037.50 (178 Units)	£20,940.50 (213 Units)
	Installation/Removal of Displays (Sub-Contractor) and related costs, inspection, painting, repair & renovation of baskets, fittings and additional related co-ordination/admin.	£5,995 (178 Units)	£5,600 £1,150 (213 Units)
Total Project Cost		£28,373	£32,031
Total Funding Request or Allocation from ICGF		£22,872	£23,631

1.10 **Other funding relating to this project** Please include other funders and own resources and income. Continue on separate sheet if required.

Organisation and status of application	2025	2024
Estimated contribution from traders outside the BID area, who pay towards wider city displays x c.48 locations	£5,501	£5,500
Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Decision (subject to change) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Totals	£5,501	£8,400

*See guidance notes for specific funding stream to see if you are able to apply for more than one year of funding.

- 1.11 Please tell us how you know that there is a need for this activity or project and how your approach will meet this need. This might include:
- a. Community support for your project (e.g. surveys, etc.)
 - b. Statistics which show the need for your project (e.g. unemployment figures, crime statistics)
 - c. Evidence from similar projects which shows that they have worked (e.g. research from elsewhere or evaluations of previous local work)

The Project has received Common Good Funding for the past 3 years as follows:

2024 £23,361
2023 £64,150
2022 £64,150
2021 £61,100

NB above allocations were for whole city area not just the city centre aside from 2024 which was for 'wider city'.

- 1.12 Is this a new or additional activity or project? – Yes No If yes, what change will your activities or project make in your community?

If No, how has your activities or project been funded in the last three years?

Via ICGF, traders and Inverness City Centre BID.

- 1.13 Please tell us how you will know that your activities or project is working and that you are benefiting your community. You only need to provide targets for the years in which your project will operate. See the detailed guidance for examples of targets.

How you will know you have made the change?		
Year 1 Measurable Outcome	Year 2 Measurable Outcome	Year 3 Measurable Outcome
Feedback from individuals, businesses and other users. Number of units displayed and requisite quantitative data. Via Visitor and business survey.		

- 1.14 If it is intended that this activity or project continue beyond the period of Council support, how will it be funded?

The annual Floral Displays are an integral and important initiative to help make Inverness an attractive and welcoming place for residents and tourists alike to be proud of. The displays improve the City ambience which has a long-term effect of improving the local economy and also the mental wellbeing of those who enjoy their presence. Contributions from other organisations towards costs remain welcome/encouraged and there is scope that any future Visitor Levy advisory forum, may want to assess the city project in the medium term if established.



APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness BID Limited

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

Operation Respect - Task Team Easter, Summer and Autumn 2025

Which of the Council's funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for:

- £5,000 or under Under £10,000
 £10,000 or over ✓

Total amount applied for: £14,804

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £ None.....

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914.....	✓
Other - please specify.....			

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Application reference number			

PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

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1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

Operation Respect - Task Team Easter, Summer & Autumn 2025

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date: April 2025

End date: October 2026

Location: Inverness City Centre.

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:.

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

The Operation Respect – City Centre Programme has operated very successfully in the Easter, Summer, Autumn and Winter holiday periods for the past 14 years. The project originally met the objectives of the 2013 -2019 Single Outcome Agreement and now aligns with and compliments many aspects of the current Highland Community Planning Partnership and its vision for Community Justice and a Safer Highland, the Highland Outcome Improvement Plans for Inverness, and the Scottish Government Criminal Justice and Community Safety agendas in that it acts to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and provides increased public reassurance and safety. The project for 2025, will align with the ICP and Safe Inverness initiatives.

Integral to the success of these programmes, in support of the General Public and Businesses, has been the operation of the BID Security Task Team on the City Centre streets at key operating periods.

The Task Team have contributed and consistently demonstrated the added value and benefits that are derived from such a crime prevention and public reassurance initiative at peak times of City Centre activity, frequently commented on by residents, visitors and businesses alike. At times, particularly in the Summer of 2024, the Task Team were the only dedicated security and support resource available to respond to issues in the City Centre due to temporary redeployment of the City Centre Police to other areas.

During each of the 2024 seasonal deployment periods, the BID Task Team were also deployed on several occasions in support of Businesses, Staff and Police out-with the normal recognised daily rostered duties to respond to growing concerns and operational demands at identified locations and at various retail outlets being targeted by groups of youths intent on causing anti-social behaviour, disturbance and criminal activity involving shoplifting, alcohol and drug abuse, age restricted products such as vapes, cigarettes, alcohol etc.

The associated costs of these additional deployments were absorbed entirely by Inverness BID given the finite funding parameters in place at ICGF, and no increase in funding was requested to support this activity. However, whilst it is hoped that the intensive work carried out by the Authorities and other Partners in response to this protracted behaviour by a small element of youths remains challenging, there is the potential that such unplanned deployments will require to be considered in future in response to any given circumstances.

The value and contribution to Inverness is demonstrated further by the support of Police Scotland for the BID Security Task Team project, due to the initiative providing additional City Centre resource with a continuing strong partnership between the agencies and key stakeholders being successfully established and maintained.

The value of operating a two person Task Team, at key times, has been regularly demonstrated by the results recorded by the Task Team during each operating period of Easter, Summer and October, aligned with school holiday periods when they dealt with a total of 252 recorded incidents over the project equivalent duration in 2024 out-with the Operation Respect Festive Initiative which is at the time of submission ongoing. In addition the Task Team assist with reducing disorder and with a number of other incidents including responding to any reports of nuisance busking in breach of the Busker's Charter or aggressive begging.

The majority of these incidents were either reported via the Shop Safe Radio system, direct to mobile phone, or encountered directly by the Task Team through their pro-active City Centre patrols. These incidents have covered criminal activity, anti-social behaviour, preventative actions as well as generally assisting the public in providing an ambassadorial and point of contact role which has proved invaluable. For 2025, should the project be supported, it is anticipated that businesses will further be able to report incidents remotely via a new City Centre App that BID has recently launched with developers Loqiva.

The continuance of this project in 2025 is supported by Police Scotland who regularly acknowledge the valuable assistance provided by the Security Task Team to the general public, business and to the Police and other Emergency Services at reported incidents.

The Task Team are seen as an integral part of Operation Respect and to the City Centre and they work in partnership with the relevant agencies to provide support, assistance and public reassurance to businesses and those who use the City Centre, with the collective aim to provide a hi-vis presence to assist in reducing street violence, disorder, theft, shoplifting and ASB and the Task Team are invaluable with their local knowledge.

With tourism and hospitality being such a major industry for Inverness & the Highlands, such a programme in the Spring, Summer and Autumn of 2025 will continue to offer both positive benefits for the visitors to the area as well as underpinning this vital economic sector including throughout the recognised UK holiday periods when Inverness attracts the peak number of visitors to the City which via coaches alone equates to over 160k.

It is projected that with the Northern Meeting Park and Inverness Castle Experience opening during the project term, that visitor numbers will increase and the requirement for dedicated City Centre security being deployed during peak times will be an important investment to ensure that public health and safety and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour is supported.

As in previous years, the operating period will be focused on the two-week Easter holiday break, the nine-week Summer holiday period covering the Scottish and UK School holiday periods from late June through to the end of August and the two-week Autumn holiday period in October 2025.

The total cost of this year's scheme is £22,625 and funding support is requested from the Inverness Common Good Fund to the sum of £14,804 with the balance of £7,821 being contributed and invested as match funding by Inverness BID Limited.

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):
Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example, are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

N/A

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

N/A

- 1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

Inverness City Area Manager

- 1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value
N/A	

- 1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much **Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:**

Item/Activity	Breakdown of Total Costs £	Year 1 £	Year 2* £	Year 3* £
Staffing & Management and any other costs	Easter, Summer and Autumn 2025, 86 Patrols x 2 Task Team Operatives. Communications (including Shop Safe Radio for Team and PS); PDA; Induction, Training, Management Clothing, Phone, Management and Coordination (including incident follow up and Police liaison) etc	£22,625		
Total Project Cost £		£22,625		
Total Funding Request £		£14,804		

- 1.10 **Other funding relating to this project** Please include other funders and own resources and income. Continue on separate sheet if required.

Organisation and status of application	Year 1 £	Year 2* £	Year 3* £
Inverness BID Limited	£7,821		
Successful <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Decision <input type="checkbox"/>			
Totals	£7,821		

*See guidance notes for specific funding stream to see if you are able to apply for more than one year of funding.



APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness BID Limited

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

SAFE Inverness Project 2025-2026

Which of the Council’s funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for:

£5,000 or under Under £10,000 £10,000 or over

Total amount applied for: £10,750.

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £ NONE.....

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914.....	✓
Other - please specify.....			

Please remember guidance to completing the application form is available [here](#). Appropriate links to the guidance are situated throughout the form: [This page](#)

For official use only Application reference number			
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PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

Guidance on completing part 1: [ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT](#)

1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

SAFE Inverness Project 2025-2026

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically, those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date (month and year)...1st April 2025.....

End date (month and year)...31st March 2026.....

Location...City of Inverness.....

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:.

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

Project Background and Details

‘SAFE Inverness’ has evolved from a number of previous project inceptions including:

- Pre-2008, ‘Crime Reduction Partnership’ – Scottish Government funded via BIDs predecessor: Inverness City Centre Management (ICCM).
- Inverness City Centre BID replaced ICCM in 2008, and at the request of Highland Council, BID agreed to take over this important function with part-funded support from the ICGF.
- The Inverness Community Safety Partnership was formed in 2010 and the projects core activity, included responsibility for the provision of support and programming of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership (ICSP) which until 2022-2023, co-ordinated a number of community safety initiatives in the wider Inverness area. The project further delivered and was responsible for several community safety projects and initiatives specific to the BID City Centre area. Governance and oversight of the ICSP was provided via the Inverness Area Committee.
- The ICSP continued year on year to take ownership of and provide governance, oversight, and direct support for an expanded community safety agenda and activities in the City Centre and wider Inverness areas. ICSP partners included representatives from all Emergency Services, a nominated Elected Inverness Member of Highland Council and the City Area Manager, NHS Highland, Inverness Prison, Inverness Drug & Alcohol Forum, Voluntary Sector Agencies and others.

- Following the introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, a legislative requirement was placed on Statutory Agencies and local Community Planning Partnerships to provide clear statutory purpose focused on improving outcomes. The act is explicit in respect to how public bodies should work together with the local community to plan for, resource and provide services which improve local outcomes in the authority's area, including with the aim of reducing inequality or other disadvantage.

In 2016 the Inverness Community Partnership led by Highland Council and other key Statutory Agencies, Organisations and others as Core Partners, Chaired by an Elected Member and supported by Senior Council Officers was formed to take forward this new legislative requirement in to account in order to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) which set out the local outcomes which the CPP will prioritise for improvement as well as smaller areas within the local authority area which experience the poorest outcomes, and also to develop, prepare and publish locality plans to improve outcomes on agreed priorities for these communities.

In 2019, an agreed change in governance and oversight arrangements saw the ICSP reporting direct to the Chair of the ICP rather than the Inverness Area Committee to help align and complement the business of both bodies although in practice this was for information purposes only.

In late 2022, it was recognised that there was a need for clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the Inverness Community Partnership (ICP) and that of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership (ICSP) as much of the work emphasis and resources of the Partner Agencies was either being directed towards the LOIP's and the Community Locality Plans with cross-over to reduce duplication of effort and/or resource in maintaining both the ICP and the ICSP structures.

A decision was made at a senior partnership level to look at subsuming the Community Safety agenda of the ICSP into the ICP and in April 2023, work began in integrating Community Safety into the Locality Action Plans and Inverness City Centre BID, were invited to join the Inverness Community Partnership and the ICP – Core Group as a co-opted member to represent the community safety interests of the City Centre community and businesses. This new role continues to be undertaken and managed by the BID Community Safety Manager, who has significant experience in community safety and partnership working having previously served 32+ years working as a Senior Police Officer within Northern Constabulary until his retirement and before taking up his current post.

Throughout the year within the identified ICSP and now the ICP, Inverness BID through their Community Safety Manager has continued to provide a number of key functions in 2024-5 and it is proposed with support, that this will continue in 2025-26 as follows:

Project Proposal

Further to the Partnership's realignment with the ICP, the current SAFE Inverness project has maintained and proposes to continue the provision of partnership management, administration and co-ordination functions on identified projects and initiatives to facilitate wider initiatives and to be responsible for;

- Providing partnership support for funding applications/delivery/co-ordination on a range of community safety programmes for business, residents and visitors to the City Centre including Operation Respect, a joint funded programme in partnership with Highland Council, Police Scotland, BID, Street Pastors, NHS Highland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, MERT Highland, Highland Third Sector Interface and other partners.
- Maintain an overview and raise awareness of relevant Community Safety initiatives that may be undertaken in conjunction with any of the partner agencies that impact on the City Centre within the boundaries of the geographical remit of the Inverness Community Partnership, being the 7 City Wards in agreement with partners.
- Co-ordination of Operation Respect and other Safe Inverness Crime Reduction measures and the activity of the partners of the Inverness Partnership in relation to all relevant Community Safety/Business Crime initiatives.
- In 2024, a new initiative Operation Respect Youth has been developed in partnership with Police Scotland, this has included additional strategic partnerships, an engagement event held in Falcon Square in Summer 2024, and includes the project directly supporting and assisting with a proposal that Focus Groups with young people be an important next step.
- Inverness BID also held a Focus Group with business representatives on 2nd December 2024 to help understand better the issues and impact on business in respect to city centre crime and anti-social behaviour. Businesses are supportive of a SAFE Inverness Steering Group being established Chaired by BID to allow businesses to be involved in finding solutions to any issues identified, meaning should this project be supported this will be a new service embedded into the SAFE Inverness framework also for 2025-2026.
- Through participation in the ICP, contribute and provide guidance and advice to the formulation and review of objectives and initiatives for Community Safety/Business Crime initiatives on an annual basis.
- To assist with the delivery of Community Safety initiatives as agreed in consultation with partners and where relevant to co-ordinate good practice and make best use of development opportunities.
- Deliver strategic analysis - Reports and Evaluations of Operation Respect and other Joint Partnership Initiatives as required to the Inverness Community Partnership, The City of Inverness Area Committee, and where relevant Inverness Common Good Fund Committee on the activities of joint Community Safety & Crime Reduction Partnership initiatives and proposals for future development.
- Maximise opportunities and BID involvement in media engagement in all supported activity to raise awareness of key issues and preventative measures for example.
- Inverness BID will also continue to service the business community through a number of Community Safety Initiatives including co-ordination of the Business Crime Reduction Partnership, sharing information with Business, Retail and Hospitality Industry members, on a web based members only secure online platform, liaising with Retailers Against Crime (RAC), and the Scottish Cyber Centre, formerly the Scottish Business Resilience Centre (SBRC), all in line with Data Protection and GDPR legislative requirements. Inverness BID will issue a monthly update to city centre businesses via the newsletter including to highlight all updates relating to safety within the centre (at present this includes encouraging the reporting of all incidents to Police Scotland). These activities have an overarching aim of reducing crime and increasing a safer and more

secure environment for all.

- Inverness BID via this project will also manage, co-ordinate and Chair the Inverness Retail Security Group, which provides a structure for Retail and other Businesses experiencing retail crime and interested in loss prevention measures and sharing information at a local level. This group meets quarterly and is attended by Police Scotland, Shopsafe Radios, Eastgate Security Management and other Retail Security Representatives from major stores and other premises regularly targeted by shoplifters and those engaged in other retail related crime.

Since 2022, this initiative has been addressing issues pertaining to Anti-Social Behaviour, Shoplifting, and Youth Crime particularly during school holidays and weekends, and with the advent of the free bus passes available this has given rise to a reported increase in shoplifting and anti-social behaviour by some youths resident out with the Inverness area travelling regularly into the City Centre from as far afield as Morayshire, Easter Ross and beyond often on Friday PMs.

Inverness BID through its Community Safety and Partnership Involvement with the ICP continues to support the vital and growing city night-time economy and encourages/facilitates/coordinates participation in the Inverness Pub Watch and the Best Bar None Awards which promotes excellence in standards and matters relating to staff welfare, training, performance, community support and the customer experience in the licensed trade with a particular emphasis on protection of the public from a safety perspective.

The BID Community Safety Manager also provides the Secretariat and Event Co-ordinator role for the pub watch initiative which ensures that the entertainment and hospitality experience and offering in Inverness remains safe and welcoming for all.

The Inverness Community Partnership and the Benefit of Working in Partnership

With the Inverness Community Partnership now having established its overarching priorities within the Inverness Area Locality Plan, including **Community Safety and Resilience** as a dedicated workstream, all Statutory Core Partners focus on activities that build capacity, create opportunities, and reduce inequality. These efforts aim to ensure that the people of Inverness benefit from living in safer, stronger, and more resilient communities where resources and investment drive meaningful, measurable improvements.

As a co-opted member of the ICP, Inverness BID's Community Safety Manager will actively contribute to the Partnership's work where practical. This includes representing the interests of City Centre businesses while also supporting collaborative efforts to enhance community safety, public reassurance, and the delivery of coordinated initiatives. These efforts will benefit residents, visitors, and businesses across Inverness.

Inverness BID seeks through its community safety programmes, to reduce crime and the fear of crime in conjunction with working with its partner agencies to improve the amenity, safety and wellbeing of Inverness for all.

Under the banner of Operation Respect, Inverness BID, jointly funded by Inverness Common Good Fund, also provides the seasonal BID Security Task Teams, which operate during all school holiday periods as well as an extended period from late

November through the Festive period which this investment allows co-ordination/management of.

The aims of the BID Security Task Team are:

- to work closely, in support of the City Centre Businesses, with Police Scotland, Highland Council and all other relevant agencies to provide a co-ordinated response to tackling crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, to improve business confidence and public reassurance.
- to deliver high visibility patrols and be an approachable ambassadorial service for those that use the City Centre, and in support of Businesses, front-line staff, and the general public to increase confidence, public reassurance and provide assistance as required.

It is hoped that through the ICP, Inverness City Centre BID and other Partners will continue to support and progress the Highland Council's aim to deliver increased coverage together with upgraded high quality digital CCTV and Monitoring Systems in Inverness and across Highland. Noting the importance of the CCTV network to the wellbeing of our communities, the role of the ICP will be pivotal in ensuring there is a strong platform for agencies to share ideas, and to support the enhancement of the CCTV network, to attract the necessary funding.

This also provides another level of scrutiny of the significant existing funding allocation towards the delivery of CCTV within the City from the Inverness Common Good Fund which is agreed annually.

Through the Partnership, full support is given to the Safe Inverness Crime Reduction Partnership and to the regular seasonal Operation Respect programmes throughout the year. These initiatives address local issues associated with vulnerability, improved access to services, increased Community and Public Reassurance, with additional and targeted support to business, the night-time economy, and those who frequent the range of hospitality and entertainment on offer.

In 2022, following the successful initiative where BID co-ordinated the efforts of three local business owners, Highland Council and the ICGF, to fully fund and provide Public Access Defibrillators at 5 key locations within the City Centre, these have been accessed on several occasions to provide life saving support at medical emergencies. Inverness BID Community Safety Manager has taken on the role of providing regular weekly inspection and maintenance checks on the facilities as well as acting as Guardian and Co-ordinator to ensure the equipment is checked, and replenished before it is returned to operational service after use alongside the regular updating of the British Heart Foundation website as to its readiness.

Inverness BID further Chair a fortnightly meeting between BID, Street Pastors, Police Scotland (Town House Team), HADASS, Highland Council Ward Manager, CCTV Monitoring, and other City centre stakeholders. The purpose of these regular meetings is to, on a rolling basis share information and assign actions for ongoing issues which cover a broad range from crime to health and safety to ensure non-duplication of effort and to achieve outcomes that singular organisations could not achieve alone.

As part of his role, the Community Safety Manager also represents Inverness BID on the Inverness Emergency Liaison Group (ELG) and is available to assist in the

provision of information and assistance on City Centre business continuity considerations and relevant contacts details of key individuals which has proved extremely helpful in contributing towards delivering support and successful resolution to significant incidents in and around Inverness which impacts on the dynamics and operation of the City Centre on a day to day basis.

This narrative provides an overview of where Inverness BID has developed and continues to play an integral role in the partnership delivery of community safety for all our communities and visitors alike who access Inverness and utilise the services available.

Our major partners within Inverness City, including Highland Council Area Manager, Mr David Haas and Police Scotland Area Commander, Chief Inspector Judy Hill, both of whom were instrumental in the redesign and engagement with BID in bringing the Community Safety Agenda under the auspices of the Inverness Community Partnership have both expressed great support for Inverness BID's continued role within the Partnership and delivery of its Plans.

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):
Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example, are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

There are no barriers to groups benefiting from this Project and full equality impact assessment available upon request.

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

N/A

1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

David Haas, Inverness City Manager

1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value
N/A	

1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much **Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:**

Item/Activity	Breakdown of Total Costs £	Year 1 £	Year 2* £	Year 3* £
Staffing	Employment Costs	£25,750		
Other Costs e.g. property costs, fcr, transport, equipment, insurance, marketing, events, venue hire, other.	Programme Costs	£8,500		
Total Project Cost £		£34,250		
Total Funding Request £		£10,750		

1.10 **Other funding relating to this project** Please include other funders and own resources and income. Continue on separate sheet if required.

Organisation and status of application	Year 1 £	Year 2* £	Year 3* £
Inverness BID Limited - Confirmed	£23,500		
Successful <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Decision <input type="checkbox"/>			
Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Decision <input type="checkbox"/>			
Totals	£23,500		

- 1.11 Please tell us how you know that there is a need for this activity or project and how your approach will meet this need. This might include:
- Community support for your project (e.g. surveys, etc.)
 - Statistics which show the need for your project (e.g. unemployment figures, crime statistics)
 - Evidence from similar projects which shows that they have worked (e.g. research from elsewhere or evaluations of previous local work)

The need for this Project was recognised by the Inverness City Committee in 2010 and its role continues to be supported by successive Partnerships including the current Inverness Community Partnership and the member organisations, which has subsumed the previous remit for the delivery of Community Safety and Resilience from the ICSP although it is agreed that some changes may continue to be required going forward to ensure that the delivery and implementation of the Inverness Locality Plans can develop and be optimally effective.

The Project has received funding from the Common Good Fund as follows:

2024/25	£9,700
2023/24	£9,700
2022/23	£9,700
2021/22	£9,700
2020/21	£9,700

- 1.12 Is this a new or additional activity or project? – Yes No
 If yes, what change will your activities or project make in your community?

If No, how has your activities or project been funded in the last three years?

Jointly funded by Inverness Common Good Fund.

For 2025-2026 the proposal is funding by Inverness Common Good Fund (31%) and Inverness BID (69%).

- 1.13 Please tell us how you will know that your activities or project is working and that you are benefiting your community. You only need to provide targets for the years in which your project will operate. See the detailed guidance for examples of targets.

Year 1 Measurable Outcome(s)

- Number of Safe Inverness meetings held:** 26 annually.
- Number of Retail Security Group meetings held:** 4 annually.
- Number of Steering Group meetings held:** 4 annually.
- Baseline survey completion:** Conducted at the start of the workstream to assess current perceptions of community safety, resilience, and public reassurance.
- Follow-up survey completion:** Conducted at the end of the period to measure changes in safety perceptions and resilience levels.

- **Number of collaborative initiatives implemented:** Projects and initiatives delivered in partnership with statutory and community partners.
- **Attendance levels at meetings and events:** Tracking participant engagement to ensure active collaboration.
- **Reduction in reported safety concerns:** Measured through feedback from businesses, residents, and visitors.
- **Increased participation in public reassurance activities:** Events or campaigns aimed at improving safety and resilience.
- **Training or capacity-building sessions held:** Number of sessions aimed at improving safety practices for businesses and stakeholders.

These outcomes provide a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures to assess progress and impact. In addition, case studies and reporting via the Task Team will ensure that the activities within the project lifespan can be evaluated and reported.

1.14 If it is intended that this activity or project continue beyond the period of Council support, how will it be funded?

The continuation of this project beyond the period of Council support would rely on shared funding and collaborative partnerships. SAFE Inverness, coordinated via Inverness BID, aligns with the goals and objectives of the Inverness Community Partnership and helps the Council deliver on its community safety priorities. To ensure sustainability, we will continue to work closely with the Inverness Community Partnership and statutory partners to pool resources and expertise. This collaborative approach ensures that the project remains impactful and aligned with shared priorities, even as direct Council support evolves.



APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness Business Improvement District

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

Coach & Visitor Ambassador Project 2025

Which of the Council’s funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for:

£5,000 or under Under £10,000 £10,000 or over

Total amount applied for: £23,847

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £.....

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914	✓
Other - please specify.....			

Please remember guidance to completing the application form is available [here](#). Appropriate links to the guidance are situated throughout the form: [This page](#)

For official use only			
Application reference number			

PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

Guidance on completing part 1: [ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT](#)

1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

Coach & Visitor Ambassador Project 2024

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date (month and year) April 2024

End date (month and year) October 2024

Location: Ardross Street/Inverness City Centre

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

Project Background

The joint report of the Director of Community Services and the Inverness City Manager to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 28th January 2016 cited the aim of “Developing Inverness as a Coach Friendly City” and reported on the success of the use of Ardross Street as a designated Coach/Drop Off/Pick up point for visitors during 2015 which included the important role undertaken by the designated BID Coach and Visitor Ambassador/s to:

- “Act as a liaison between residents and businesses on Ardross Street with the Coach Operators and Staff to ensure that any concerns are addressed timeously and effectively.”
- “Welcome visitors to the City, provide directions, answer questions visitors, to promote a positive view of the City and its people to encourage return visits and to facilitate our guests to visit the many points of interest to them in the City Centre.”

In 2015 at the request of the Highland Council, Inverness BID agreed to staff and manage the Coach Ambassador Programme initially on the basis of the costs being fully funded by the Inverness Common Good Fund.

The service involves having a Coach and Visitor Ambassador on hand to co-ordinate parking, traffic management, to provide a knowledgeable and warm welcome (whatever the weather) to the now >3,800 coaches and their visitors and this project operates on a 7-day basis increasing to 2 or 3 ambassadors when a large number of coaches from cruise liners or British/non-British tours are scheduled to visit Inverness.

The Coach and Visitor Ambassadors further provide an important role in assisting visitors with issues such as missing their return coach, obtaining emergency medical

assistance when needed, as appointed persons for first aid purposes and also by being responsive to passenger needs including those pertaining to accessibility and compliance with the PSED.

The project serves as the primary co-ordination and liaison point for cruise and coach companies, in respect to any traffic disruption including to ensure that the facility achieves a safe, welcoming and effective service.

The project co-ordinates any change in location for drop offs as may be occasionally required and regularly works in partnership with other agencies to ensure optimal use of resources.

In recognition of the excellent service provided and following a joint BID/HC application, in Summer 2024, Inverness was awarded official 'Coach Friendly' status by The Confederation of Passenger Transport UK (CPT) due to "the commitment made by Inverness to meet the needs of coaches, their drivers and their passengers to the City Centre".

The accreditation process identified that the Inverness facility did not just meet but exceeded the stated requirements, and due to this, representatives from BID and Highland Council have been liaising with other areas at the request of CPT to share best practice. CPT are currently exploring the option for commencing a 'Coach Friendly Plus' accreditation for Inverness.

For the 2025 season (subject to funding) there will be a number of changes in the operation including:

- May 2025 – Opening of the Northern Meeting Park to include a 'room of requirement' for the Coach and Visitor Ambassador Team which will allow rapid response for incidents, in situ First Aid kit and a quiet space for passengers who may have missed their coach, need a taxi (due to age or disability) or who may require use for example to breastfeed an infant.
- The NMP opening will also provide public WC facilities to be open during Coach and Visitor operating period managed by HLH with the Coach and Visitor Ambassadors taking on the role of guardian for opening, closing and checking status regularly.
- A new Driver and Tour Guide will be designed and produced/distributed to complete the only recommendation from CPT in improving the service.
- Dedicated 'Do Not Feed the Gulls' campaign will be required to meet Nature Scot's criteria for the management of gull populations within the city centre and immediate surrounds.
- In liaison with HLH and HC, new Coach and Visitor Uniforms will be procured and potential that BID/HLH will liaise in respect to any Coach and Visitor Ambassador requirements for the Inverness Castle Experience separately to this project.

The success of the initiative is demonstrated by the numbers of coaches now accommodated across the 11 designated bays:

Table – Coach and Visitor Ambassador Project 2022 – 2024:

Year	Total Coaches	Cruise Liners	% Operating v 2019	Est. Visitors
2022	2672	109	89%	125,000
2023	3804	130	123%	150,000
2024	3874	118	129%	160,000

The Coach Ambassador programme further assists domestic tour coaches with feedback from the drivers and staff stating that Inverness is one the best managed drop off points they visit making the total number of coaches welcomed in 2024 being recorded at 3874, recording visitor numbers of >160k and operating at levels 29% higher than 2019 (pre-pandemic) with over 1000 more coaches assisted in seasons 2023 and 2024.

The project staff have further assisted with additional tasks for the greater good of the City including with the regular assisting with the clean-up of litter or removal of graffiti on Ardross Street to ensure that the area is well managed, kept and optimally presentable.

The team further have excellent relationships with surrounding businesses and residents which helps facilitates the presentation of Inverness and our community as the 'friendly City' at its best and encourages our guests to return for a longer repeat visit at a later stage with feedback to date being extremely positive (as recorded by the 2023 visitor survey) with most common comments citing that Inverness is 'clean, friendly and beautiful'.

For the 2024 season BID provided the Coach and Visitor Ambassador service daily (i.e Monday to Sunday) between 1st April 2024 and 10th October 2024 (27 weeks). The additional project costs, exceeding the projected were paid by BID and incurred due to the increase in demand (requiring increased staffing). Staffing across 3 staff members with 1 relief for the season equalled an average of 58 hours per week in total.

For 2025, it is anticipated that due to change in coach arrival times, volume of coaches and related demand, that projected average weekly ambassador staff hours (in total and shared across 3 staff) will equate to c.60 hours per week/1680 hours for the 28-week season.

In 2024, coach numbers exceeded prior estimates with the same expected for 2025.

The application has match funding via BID of 25% of service costs to reflect the contribution of the business community.

Overall the project represents a successful partnership which sustainably adds value at a vital time for our local economy, including supporting local employment and is aligned with the Tourism and wider Inverness Strategies.

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):

Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public-Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have “protected characteristics” in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example, are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

A full equality impact assessment is available upon request.

To summarise: the project will continue to greatly assist Highland Council with the meeting of the Public Sector Equality Duty as defined in the Equality Act (2010) including as exemplified by the team frequently helping visitors who due to a protected characteristic are disadvantaged or have additional needs such as: ringing for taxis for older people or those who cannot speak English, helping those with a disability or who need medical attention or by helping women who need a quiet space to breastfeed.

The NMP room will allow the Team to respond to equality related issues as they occur in a dedicated quiet safe space.

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

It is proposed that the 2025 Visitor Guide highlight the new Gaelic centre to allow visitors who may be interested in the facility to visit.

1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

David Haas, The City Area Manager

1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value

- 1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much **Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:**

Item/Activity	Breakdown of Total Costs £	Year 1 £	Year 2* £	Year 3* £
Project Staffing	Hours extended to start at 0900 in 2024, to accommodate new coach scheduling.	£24,912		
Other Costs e.g. property costs, transport, equipment, insurance, marketing	55k Visitor Guide/Maps, Clothing, Communications, FCR, First Aid Training & Equipment, Uniforms, Drivers Guide etc	£5,950		
Total Project Cost £		£30,862		
Total Funding Request £		£23,847		

- 1.10 **Other funding relating to this project** Please include other funders and own resources and income. Continue on separate sheet if required.

Organisation and status of application	Year 1 £	Year 2* £	Year 3* £
Inverness BID Limited - confirmed	£7,015		
Successful <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting Decision <input type="checkbox"/>			
Totals	£7,015		

*See guidance notes for specific funding stream to see if you are able to apply for more than one year of funding.

- 1.11 Please tell us how you know that there is a need for this activity or project and how your approach will meet this need. This might include:
- a. Community support for your project (e.g. surveys, etc.)
 - b. Statistics which show the need for your project (e.g. unemployment figures, crime statistics)
 - c. Evidence from similar projects which shows that they have worked (e.g. research from elsewhere or evaluations of previous local work)

Requested by Highland Council Officers and demonstrated by response from local businesses and Coach users Proposed in Report to City of Inverness Area Committee.

- 1.12 Is this a new or additional activity or project? – Yes No
If yes, what change will your activities or project make in your community?

If No, how has your activities or project been funded in the last three years?

Project part funded with ICGF grant of:
£10,800 in 2022
£12,987 in 2023
£19,865 in 2024

- 1.13 Please tell us how you will know that your activities or project is working and that you are benefiting your community. You only need to provide targets for the years in which your project will operate. See the detailed guidance for examples of targets.

Year 1 Measurable Outcome

Quantitative data including coach numbers, type, designation, stay time, and passengers. Number of Visitor guides, and campaign materials issued. Case studies and details of incidents including where the project has assisted with response issues (such as calling for medical assistance or with missed departures).

- 1.14 If it is intended that this activity or project continue beyond the period of Council support, how will it be funded?

The project provides a valuable service that benefits the local economy and BID will continue to support this project via match funding to the extent as is practicable within any budget constraints of our organisation.



APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness BID Limited

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

Inverness Gull Management Programme 2025
City Centre and Immediate Surrounding Area

Which of the Council's funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for: £27,050

£5,000 or under Under £10,000 £10,000 or over

Total amount applied for: £ (with additional options for other measures as outlined and for further consideration).

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £ None.....

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914.....	✓
Other - please specify.....			

Please remember guidance to completing the application form is available [here](#). Appropriate links to the guidance are situated throughout the form: [This page](#)

PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

Guidance on completing part 1: [ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT](#)

1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

Inverness Gull Management Programme 2025 - City Centre and Immediate Surrounding Area

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date (month and year).....1st April 2025.....

End date (month and year).....31st March 2026.....

Location.....City of Inverness

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:.

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

Background and Project Summary

In response to concerns about the impact of the growing gull population in Inverness, a joint report from the Policy and Advice Manager of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Senior Community Development Manager was presented to the Inverness City Committee on 13th February 2012. The report noted a significant increase in gull numbers and projected a 7% annual growth without intervention.

SNH recommended direct action, including nest and egg removal, licensed by the Scottish Government. The City Area Committee approved this and delegated authority to the City Manager to implement the removal programme within the BID area.

Inverness BID reviewed successful schemes and was tasked with delivering the project in the city centre and wider City.

SNH Advisor at the time, Andy Douse confirmed the project's success, stating continued action i.e. egg and nest removal was essential for effective gull management.

The Inverness City Centre BID led Gull Programme has been very successful in reducing the urban gull population over a number of years:

In 2021 the project was carried out in the agreed/established way and a total of 1357 eggs were removed or destroyed (compared with 1456 in 2019).

In 2022, 987 nests and 2098 eggs were removed or destroyed resulting in an increase of egg removal by over one third.

In 2023, 99 licenses were granted by Nature Scot. 1,963 eggs were destroyed from 30th April – 11th June 2023. Visits to properties were conducted by the specialist team on a fortnightly basis with each premise receiving 4 visits each. 19 new premises were included in 2023 programme as per 2022 preliminary survey.

In February 2024 Nature Scot updated their guidance as follows:

[Guidance - gull management | NatureScot](#)

The implications of the application in practice of the change in guidance resulted in less than 10% of eggs/nests being removed in 2024 compared to 2023.

From May 2024 to date there has been additional extensive administrative and strategic input/activity needed including to continue ongoing dialogue and collaboration with Nature Scot to ensure that any Gull Management Programme going forward, can meet the new objective and parameters i.e. that of applying an area, plan-based, collaborative approach in the City Centre (and immediate surrounding area) to gull management.

The updated guidance specifically clarifies what may constitute a H&S risk (licensable for potential egg/nest removal) and what may be deemed to be a nuisance (not licensable) including per the 1981, Town and Countryside Act. 'Divebombing' for example would be classed as nuisance with 'direct strikes' sometimes being considered a H&S risk if vulnerable persons are impacted.

The plan-based approach recommended has been stated by Nature Scot to have the objective of in future minimising license applications being approved for egg/nest removal 'as gulls will have moved elsewhere or will have developed behaviours that don't negatively impact on people'.

It is a further stated aspiration by Nature Scot in terms of the newly applied approach, that people and gulls should be better able to 'co-exist' including with there being potential they state to encourage Gull sanctuaries for example in future.

Nature Scot have confirmed moreover the purpose of the new collaborative plan is to overall reduce the impact of gulls for people and businesses in Inverness whilst not affecting the conservation status of the gull species.

Due to the above, the project over the Summer of 2024 opened a Gull Incident Reporting portal for businesses and the public to capture evidence of current baseline impact: [GULL INCIDENTS IN INVERNESS CITY CENTRE Survey](#)

Full details of survey results will be used to assist with any licence applications for the 2025 Gull Management Programme (subject to funding approval in full or part herein).

Given the greater emphasis and requirement on 'disrupting pre-nesting behaviours' and following the latest meeting with Nature Scot on 13th December 2024, a draft proposal for additional/new activity was worked on in collaboration also with partners.

A separate application for this necessary and revised activity for the period 20th January – 31st March 2025 has been also submitted to ensure that any and all activity in so far as we are able to accommodate and undertake can be put in place and embedded into the measures applied going forward.

Proposed (new) Gull Management Programme 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026:

Activity	Detail
Licence Applications, Submission, Monitoring and Reporting	Egg/Nest removal licences for the area for up to 60 sites. The licence process requires extensive administrative input per premises individually in line with NS guidance and several entries for each premises along with final reporting.
Egg/Nest Removal	Where licences are granted (activity dependent on successful licence application) removal of eggs/nests end April – May 2025.
Bird of Prey	Use of Falcon Bird of Prey three times weekly (in accordance with specialist handler's availability) for the period 1 st April to 31 st July 2025.
Lasering and Human Disturbance	Human disturbance including via Lasering Programme to disturb nesting, 1 st April 2025 – 30 th May 2025. 59 days x 2 operatives.
DO NOT Feed the Gulls Campaign	Campaign via Social Media and traditional media channels recommended by Nature Scot 1 st April – 31 st July 2025.
Rotation of Scaring Devices	Continuation of project scaring devices being rotated regularly in line with Nature Scot recommendations within the area 1 st April 2025 to 30 th June 2025 and impact recording and monitoring.
Gull Incident Reporting Portal	Nature Scot recommend that baseline, and impact data requires to be also quantified and monitored/evaluated throughout the breeding season. Proposal to replicate and expand on 2024 survey to allow ongoing assessment of impact to be ascertained.
Survey and Mapping	There will be a requirement once nests/eggs are in place to survey and map the area (via drone) to provide baseline data and also to shape nest removal site identification dependent on results, activity for future. This would be separate to any mapping or other surveys as may be required by any appointed consultant.

Strategic Liaison	Subject to funding, the project team partners and Nature Scot have committed to continue to work together collaboratively to monitor and assess the impact and efficacy of the new approach throughout the project term.
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Sonics and sonar devices (costing £5,000–£6,000 each) are not currently being considered based on pest control recommendations, the lack of a suitable designated location, and concerns over efficacy. Additionally, if hawking is supported as an intervention, its impact must be measured to ensure effectiveness. If multiple interventions are used simultaneously, it may be difficult to determine which, if any, is producing the observed results.

Nature Scot have confirmed even with these measures 'It is important to note that although we may see benefits within and after the first year of this pro-active and positive shift in managing gulls. We may not have a noticeable difference after one year, and this may take multiple seasons of continued decline in conflict between people and gulls and a slow progression towards [*sic*] co-existence.'

Nature Scot commented further regarding the above proposal:

'We are pleased to see the pro-active nature of this proposal, but we would stress that the measures being used to prevent and deter need to continue where possible throughout the breeding season. So long as any activity that may impact a nest are licenced, all other satisfactory alternatives must be maintained as much as possible.'

Due to the above, the activities proposed herein will require (subject to funding) to be ongoing for a number of years to achieve results such as those such as have been achieved in East Ayrshire which is more congruent with a displacement of gulls to other areas on a year by year basis rather than egg/nest removal aside from as in most cases as an absolute last resort.

There are anticipated to be potential challenges and it may be the efficacy in comparison to previous years therefore could be reduced with negative impact on people and businesses, at least in the short to medium term, increasing.

The proposal constitutes a significant change in the project design and operation. Previously the project operated primarily seasonally. Going forward, in order to comply with the requirements it will require to be a project which is undertaken with annual and year round activity.

Total project cost for 2024, prior to the changes (and using standard measures) = £20,025 with an ICGF contribution of £13,606.

To apply the new programme total project cost (subject to change – for example should the number of licences granted decrease further) = an estimated £31,823, with a 15% contribution from BID meaning that allocation provisionally assigned and requested herein = £27,050 equating to a 50% increase in investment compared to the original 2024 application.

NB: Appointment of a consultant ornithologist/ecologist to be scoped by Highland Council with it further being recommended that initiatives such as gull proof bins and waste management also to be explored and potentially undertaken/progressed by Highland Council.

Aims of the Project

The overarching aim of the project is to mitigate the negative impacts of urban gull populations on businesses, residents, and visitors within Inverness City Centre, and immediate surrounding areas while aligning with NatureScot's updated licensing guidance.

Specific objectives include:

- Reducing health and safety risks associated with aggressive gull behaviour, droppings, and nesting activity.
- Implementing proactive deterrence measures to disrupt pre-nesting behaviour and discourage urban nesting.
- Ensuring compliance with licensing regulations through detailed applications, monitoring, and reporting.
- Engaging the community and businesses in best-practice approaches for mitigating gull-related issues.
- Collaborating with key stakeholders including NatureScot, Highland Council, and other North BIDs to deliver an evidence-based, sustainable management strategy.

How We Will Achieve This

The programme will involve a structured set of activities including:

- Licence Applications, Submission, Monitoring, and Reporting
- Egg/Nest Removal (Subject to Licensing Approval)
- Use of Hawking via Falconry Programme
- Lasering and Human Disturbance
- Public Awareness 'Do NOT Feed the Gulls' Campaign
- Incident Reporting Portal: Expansion of the 2024 reporting system to capture baseline data and monitor impact throughout the season.
- Surveying and Mapping
- Strategic Liaison and Evaluation: Ongoing engagement with NatureScot and other partners to assess programme effectiveness and refine future strategies.

Funding is sought for:

- Operational costs, including specialist contractors for egg/nest and nesting material and nest removal, falconry, and lasering.
- Resource for regular positioning of deterrence measures.
- Administrative and reporting costs for licensing and compliance.
- Public awareness and education campaigns.
- Data collection and analysis, including surveys and mapping.
- Stakeholder engagement and strategic planning activities.

Who Will Benefit?

The project will deliver direct benefits (within the scope of the limitations applied) to:

- Vulnerable individuals and groups accessing the City Centre and immediate surrounding areas.
- Businesses in the BID area by reducing gull-related disruptions, including damage to property, littering, and aggressive behaviour towards customers and staff.
- Residents and visitors who experience improved public spaces with fewer negative disturbances from gulls.
- Public health and safety stakeholders by minimising risks associated with gull aggression and droppings.
- Local authorities and urban planners through improved evidence-based decision-making for sustainable gull management.

Long-Term Impact and Sustainability

The programme is designed to be part of a multi-year strategy, aligning with NatureScot's long-term vision for sustainable co-existence with and reducing the impact of urban gulls.

This includes:

- Refining management and operational techniques based on ongoing evaluation.
- Strengthening partnerships with stakeholders for a coordinated approach.
- Encouraging adaptive strategies to balance urban needs with conservation requirements.

By securing funding, Inverness BID will be able to continue implementing an evidenced approach to managing the urban gull population while ensuring compliance with the latest environmental and regulatory guidelines.

Further detail was also provided to the **City of Inverness Area Committee** by Nature Scot in November 2024 via Chris Donald, Head of Operations Central Highland:

Text below (Author Nature Scot):

Gull Licencing Briefing for The Highland Council – City of Inverness Area Committee.

Gull status changes

The latest Seabirds Count census shows that numbers of breeding gulls in Scotland are down by between 44% and 75% depending on species. The declines are attributed to factors such as changes in food availability and land use, with some species also suffering losses because of recent devastating outbreaks of avian flu.

Birds of Conservation concern: difference between seabird census 1998-2002 and 2015-2021

Herring Gull – **RED – declined by 44%**

Common Gull – **RED – declined by 53%**

Lesser black-back Gull – **AMBER – declined by 48%**

Great Black-back Gull – **RED – declined by 63%**

Black-headed Gull – **AMBER – declined by 75%**

A recent update on the Birds of Conservation Concern categories moved Common gull and Great Black-backed Gull from amber to red list. This move was as a result of a re-analysis of population data after the impact of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).

Update to licencing approach

Since removing gulls from the General Licence in 2019, we have been assessing demand for licenses while working with local authorities, pest controllers and the public to emphasise the requirement for preventative, non-lethal measures.

For the 2024 breeding season, in light of the latest population declines and the ongoing impact of HPAI, the guidance for applicants has been clarified further to ensure that applicants are aware that licences can only be issued for reasons of **clear public health and safety issues**, and **where other alternatives are not effective**.

We communicated the changes that were made with stakeholders through a series of emails directly to licence holders, pest controllers and local authorities.

An issue removed or a managed, positive and collaborative approach?

Gull species are generalists and opportunists and will take advantage of artificial conditions cities provide which meet their needs.

Inverness is a coastal city and therefore will always provide an attractive environment for

gulls to exist. The city is also rich in natural resources which are utilised by gulls of several species.

With these facts in mind the question is: **how can we adapt to live with gulls and minimise the negative impacts they have on residents and visitors.**

There is an opportunity for Inverness city to lead the way for sound practical management without negatively contributing to the conservation status of these declining species.

Points of conflict

Understanding the difference between a risk to public health or safety and a nuisance to the public has been the biggest point of confusion and conflict.

There is no licensable purpose within the legislation to issue a licence for nuisances.

Legal counsel was sought [*sic* by Nature Scot] while carrying out the review of the gull licencing function in 2023.

It was clear from legal guidance that although in some circumstances behaviours exhibited by gulls can constitute a risk to public health or safety, in some cases they will be a nuisance to the public.

As such, our revised guidance document clarifies when a behaviour exhibited by a gull would qualify as a risk to public health or safety and when it would be considered a nuisance.

Despite the communications that were circulate to stakeholders, licence applications continue to fail in terms of provision of required evidence, and as a result a greater number of licences were refused in 2024 compared to previous years.

Additionally, we have encountered a lack of understanding or willingness to carry out satisfactory alternative measure to licenced activities, such as spiking, netting or using a variety of scaring methods.

We do accept that in some cases not every alternative will be satisfactory or appropriate, however, a licencing officer does require the evidence to justify this position.

However, despite a greater number of licences being refused, there were still over 600 licences issued in Scotland during 2024.

Guidance –

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-gull-management>

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-gull-identification-and-annual-cycle-guide>

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/birds-licensing-public-health-and-safety-issues-nesting-birds>

<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/licensing/species-licensing-z-guide/birds/birds-licences-public-health-and-safety-and-air-safety>

City of Inverness – a way forward

A plan-based approach

Population and spatial distribution of nesting gulls by species - baseline
Locations of public health and safety areas –

Hospitals
Health centres
Schools
Food processing and preparation areas

Impact hotspots – baseline

Properties

Species of gull involved

Categorise impacts

Existing deterrents – baseline

Roof deterrents – map

Location of food waste hotspots

Identification of potential gull breeding and roosting sanctuaries - map

Communication and education campaigns

- On going campaigns to general public and businesses on waste management.

Measures

- Provision of THC approved gull proof waste receptacles
- Provision of alternative gull nesting sanctuaries where presence can be tolerated
- Installing roof deterrents to prevent gull nesting and roosting opportunities

Roles and responsibilities

The Highland Council

- Identify public health and safety areas
- Ensuring new buildings and modifications designs do not to provide gull nesting and roosting opportunities
- Advising on approved gull proof waste receptacles
- Provision of THC gull proof waste receptacles for THC managed facilities
- Advice on applying gull deterrents to historic and listed buildings
- Identifying and establishing gull breeding sanctuaries
- Ongoing communication and education campaigns on waste management and application of NatureScot guidance is followed especially key principles and hierarchy of gull management options.

NatureScot

- Advice on categories of impact, deterrents, mitigation,

	<p>hierarchy of gull management options and licencing tests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote guidance especially key principles and hierarchy of gull management options.
Business community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing approved and effective gull nesting and roosting deterrents • Provision of gull proof waste receptacles for THC managed facilities • Ensure NatureScot guidance is followed especially key principles and hierarchy of gull management options.
Property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing approved and effective gull nesting and roosting deterrents • Provision of THC approved gull proof waste receptacles
Gull management contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure best practice as per NatureScot guidance in provision of services to customers
General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the issues with gulls and role in minimising the issues.
NatureScot October 2024	

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):
Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have “protected characteristics” in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

N/A

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

N/A

1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

David Haas, Senior Community Development Manager

1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value
N/A	

1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much **Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:**

Item/Activity	1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026	Total Applied For
Licence Applications, Submissions, Monitoring and Reporting	Egg/Nest removal licence applications, administrative input per premises individually in line with NS guidance and several entries for each premises along with final reporting. c.50-60 (TBC) applications. 125 hours.	£2,525
Egg and Nest Removal	Based on 2024 levels, 40 premises, and cost of Pest Contractor, MEWP hire, staffing and related @ £1,775 per visit x up to 6 visits April/May 2025.	£10,650
Old Nest and Nest Material Removal	Removal of all old nests and nesting material. 2 x days including machine hire, and sub-contractor. Autumn 2025	£1,850
Hawking - Bird of Prey	Use of a Falcon Bird of Prey three times weekly (in accordance with specialist's availability) for period 1 st April – 31 st July 2025 and related activity costs.	£6,150
Lasering Programme & Human Disturbance	Disturbance lasering programme to operate 7 days weekly from 1 st April – 30 th May 2025, 2 operatives x 59 days.	£2,978
Do NOT Feed the Gulls Campaign	Campaign via Social Media and traditional media channels recommended by Nature Scot 1 st April – 31 st July 2025.	£3,750
Premises Guidance	Post-Season Premise guidance and liaison specifically in regard to activity required for 2026 pre-nest disruption activity.	£475
Rotation and provision of additional scaring devices. Monitoring and Reporting.	Rotation of Bird Spiders and Reflect A Bird devices which are to be moved regularly. Monitoring and Evaluation - 1 st April to 30 th June 2025.	£750
Census, Survey and Mapping and Misc.	Required to ascertain area baseline and to allow project planning for 2026 season. Drone hire and survey evaluation.	£1,445
FCR, Strategic Engagement and Activity	Resource required for ongoing liaison with Nature Scot and Partners to build upon the plan based approach at strategic level.	£1,250
Total Project Cost		£31,823
Match Funding Confirmed		£4,773
Funding Request £		£27,050

*See guidance notes for specific funding stream to see if you are able to apply for more than one year of funding.

1.10 **Other funding relating to this project** Please include other funders and own resources and income. Continue on a separate sheet if required.

Inverness BID Ltd @15% = £4,773

1.12 Is this a new or additional activity or project? – Yes No
If yes, what change will your activities or project make in your community?

N/A

If No, how has your activities or project been funded in the last three years?

The project has received part funding from Inverness Common Good Fund in the since 2012.

- 1.13 Please tell us how you will know that your activities or project is working and that you are benefiting your community. You only need to provide targets for the years in which your project will operate. See the detailed guidance for examples of targets.

Activities	Measurable Outcomes
Activities will be measured quantitatively and qualitatively including:	
Egg/Nest Removal: Number of eggs/nests removed, status and outcome of licence applications.	
Old Nest & Nest Materials Removal – Completion of two-day clearance with machine hire and sub-contractors. Reduction in nest rebuilding at key locations, monitored via photographic records and site inspections.	
Bird of Prey Programme – Falconry deployed three times weekly (April to July). Reduction in nesting attempts and roosting activity, measured via site surveys and reported sightings.	
Lasering Programme & Human Disturbance – Extensive activity delivered. Reduction in roosting birds, measured through field observations and comparative nesting data. Number of visits and locations.	
Do NOT Feed the Gulls Campaign – Public awareness campaign rolled out across social media, print, and radio. Engagement/reach measured via social media reach, interactions, and reported feeding incidents.	
Updated Premises Guide and Follow Up – Guidance issued to all programme premises. Uptake of recommended deterrents (netting, spikes, fire gels) tracked via business feedback and site visits with end of season required follow up to build upon pre-nesting season activity.	
Scaring Devices – Deployment of Bird Spiders & Reflect A Bird devices with regular repositioning. Effectiveness monitored through site observations and comparative nesting activity.	

- 1.14 If it is intended that this activity or project continue beyond the period of Council support, how will it be funded?

<p>The report by Scottish Natural Heritage established that it would be necessary for a number of years to intervene in the gull breeding cycle by egg and nest removal in order to reverse the increase in the existing population and then reduce numbers.</p> <p>BID has committed budget to the project for future years and it is proposed that a future application for funding be made to ICGF.</p>
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APPLICATION FORM FOR ORGANISATIONS APPLYING FOR GRANT AND DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND FUNDING IN KIND FROM THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL – Over £10,000 – Common Good Funds

Name of Organisation:

Inverness BID Limited

Name of Project or Activity Requiring Support:

Revised Inverness Gull Management Programme 2024 (City Centre and Immediate Surrounding Area)

Which of the Council's funding streams are you applying to?

(Please provide closing date details where applicable)

Inverness Common Good Fund

Is the amount you are applying for:

Reassignment of **£6,803** to new project activity (previously awarded) and an additional **£9,663**

£5,000 or under Under £10,000 £10,000 or over

Total amount applied for: £ (with additional options for other measures as outlined and for further consideration).

Estimated cost of funding in kind applied for: £ None.....

Please detail what funding in kind has been applied for e.g. Council staff time, use of premises or equipment, waiving of fees or administration support

What type of organisation are you? (please tick all that apply)

Third Sector (voluntary or community) organisation		Community Council	
Registered Charity If yes – Registration number		Company Limited by Guarantee If yes – Company Number SC339914....	✓
Other - please specify.....			

PART 1: ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT

Guidance on completing part 1: [ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES OR PROJECT](#)

1.1 What is the name of your activity or project?

Revised Inverness Gull Management Programme 2024 (City Centre and Immediate Surrounding Area)

1.2 When will your activity or project take place? (specifically those for which you are seeking an award from The Highland Council)

Start date (month and year).....20th January 2025.....

End date (month and year).....31st March 2025.....

Location.....City of Inverness

1.3 What activity or project do you want us to support?

For example:.

- *Aims of the project and how you are going to do it*
- *Help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?*
- *Who will benefit*

Please note that the Council will be unable to provide any resources not specified on this form or supporting information.

Background and Revised 2024 Programme Proposal

Funding of £13,606 was approved for the 2024 Inverness Gull Management Programme 2024 with a match fund of £6,419 agreed to be provided by Inverness BID.

In February 2024 Nature Scot updated their guidance as follows:

[Guidance - gull management | NatureScot](#)

The impact of the changes resulted in less than 10% of eggs/nests being removed in 2024 compared to 2023.

From May 2024 to date there has been additional extensive administrative and strategic input needed including to continue ongoing dialogue and collaboration with Nature Scot to ensure that the programme going forward, and in partnership with other North BIDs can meet the new objective of applying a plan-based approach in the City Centre (and immediate surrounding area).

The updated guidance places a stricter focus on what may constitute a H&S risk (licensable) and what may be deemed to be a nuisance (not licensable) including per the 1981 Town and Countryside Act.

The plan-based approach applied has been stated by Nature Scot to have the objective of minimising license applications as gulls will have moved elsewhere or will have developed behaviours that don't negatively impact on people.

Nature Scot have confirmed the purpose of a collaborative plan is to reduce the impact

of gulls to people in Inverness while not affecting the conservation status of the gull species.

Due to the above, the project over the Summer opened a Gull Incident Reporting portal to capture evidence of current impact: [GULL INCIDENTS IN INVERNESS CITY CENTRE Survey](#)

Full details of survey results will be used to assist with any licence applications for the 2025 Gull Management Programme (subject to funding approval). Given the greater emphasis on 'disrupting pre-nesting behaviours' :

Following the latest meeting with Nature Scot on 13th December 2024, a draft proposal for additional/new activity was worked on in collaboration also with other BID partners.

The current position is therefore as follows:

- There is a project underspend of **£6,803** in respect to the 2024 ICGF allocation.
- Approval is sought herein to reassign the underspend and approve additional funds to allowing the following activities to be undertaken:

Proposed Pre-Nesting Gull Management Programme 20th January – 31st March 2025 (reallocation of funds):

Item/Activity	20 th January 2025 - 31 st March 2025
Old Nest and Nest Material Removal	Removal of all old nests and nesting material. 2 x days including machine hire, and sub-contractor.
Bird of Prey	Use of a Falcon Bird of Prey three times weekly (in accordance with specialist's availability) for period February to March 2025 and related activity costs.
Lasering Programme & Human Disturbance	Training an additional operative, and provision of a disturbance lasering programme 7 days weekly from 3 rd February 2025 to 31 st March 2025. Recommendation: 'as often as possible' to discourage roosting. 2 hours daily (8 weeks) x 2 operatives = 224 hours.
Do NOT Feed the Gulls Campaign	Per the East Ayrshire model, activity recommended and to be included in the 55k BID Eat and Drink Guides and posters/social media. Recommended by NS that the campaign further <u>utilise</u> social media and local radio to help raise awareness.
Updated Premises Guide (including guidance on premise installation of netting, fire gels and spikes etc)	In addition to current guidance and consents sought in advance of licence applications and activity, updated guidance to be collated and issued to all programme premises. Activity required to assist with 2025 licence applications <u>and also</u> to ensure that pre-nesting activity is optimal. Roofs not easily accessed recommended to have nets/spikes installed permanently at cost to premise owner.
Rotation and provision of <u>additional</u> scaring devices.	Recommended use of Bird Spiders and Reflect <u>A</u> Bird devices which are to be moved regularly. Recommended that programme is evaluated and data recorded for efficacy by NS.
East Ayrshire Model and BID/NS Group	Recommended by NS that Inverness seek to replicate the model used by East Ayrshire to displace gulls to other areas, <u>and also</u> requirement for ongoing meetings with NS and partners during the noted period.

Nature Scot have stated even with these measures ‘It is important to note that although we may see benefits within and after the first year of this pro-active and positive shift in managing gulls. We may not have a noticeable difference after one year, and this may take multiple seasons of continued decline in conflict between people and gulls and a slow progression towards [*sic*] co-existence.’.

Nature Scot commented further in regard to the proposal:

‘We are pleased to see the pro-active nature of this proposal, but we would stress that the measures being used to prevent and deter need to continue where possible throughout the breeding season. So long as any activity that may impact a nest are licenced, all other satisfactory alternatives must be maintained as much as possible.’.

Due to the above, the activities proposed herein will require inclusion for funding consideration for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 and ongoing so this initial request in context, should not be assessed as being a ‘one off’ requirement.

NB: Appointment of a consultant ornithologist/ecologist to be scoped by Highland Council with it further being recommended that mapping is undertaken (out with the scope of the current application) and initiatives such as gull proof bins and waste management also to be explored and potentially undertaken by Highland Council.

Further detail was also provided to the **City of Inverness Area Committee** by Nature Scot in November 2024 via Chris Donald, Head of Operations Central Highland:

Text below (Author Nature Scot):

Gull Licencing Briefing for The Highland Council – City of Inverness Area Committee.

Gull status changes

The latest Seabirds Count census shows that numbers of breeding gulls in Scotland are down by between 44% and 75% depending on species. The declines are attributed to factors such as changes in food availability and land use, with some species also suffering losses because of recent devastating outbreaks of avian flu.

Birds of Conservation concern: difference between seabird census 1998-2002 and 2015-2021

Herring Gull – **RED – declined by 44%**

Common Gull – **RED – declined by 53%**

Lesser black-back Gull – **AMBER – declined by 48%**

Great Black-back Gull – **RED – declined by 63%**

Black-headed Gull – **AMBER – declined by 75%**

A recent update on the Birds of Conservation Concern categories moved Common gull and Great Black-backed Gull from amber to red list. This move was as a result of a re-analysis of population data after the impact of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).

Update to licensing approach

Since removing gulls from the General Licence in 2019, we have been assessing

demand for licenses while working with local authorities, pest controllers and the public to emphasise the requirement for preventative, non-lethal measures.

For the 2024 breeding season, in light of the latest population declines and the ongoing impact of HPAI, the guidance for applicants has been clarified further to ensure that applicants are aware that licences can only be issued for reasons of **clear public health and safety issues**, and **where other alternatives are not effective**.

We communicated the changes that were made with stakeholders through a series of emails directly to licence holders, pest controllers and local authorities.

An issue removed or a managed, positive and collaborative approach?

Gull species are generalists and opportunists and will take advantage of artificial conditions cities provide which meet their needs.

Inverness is a coastal city and therefore will always provide an attractive environment for gulls to exist. The city is also rich in natural resources which are utilised by gulls of several species.

With these facts in mind the question is: **how can we adapt to live with gulls and minimise the negative impacts they have on residents and visitors.**

There is an opportunity for Inverness city to lead the way for sound practical management without negatively contributing to the conservation status of these declining species.

Points of conflict

Understanding the difference between a risk to public health or safety and a nuisance to the public has been the biggest point of confusion and conflict.

There is no licensable purpose within the legislation to issue a licence for nuisances.

Legal counsel was sought while carrying out the review of the gull licencing function in 2023.

It was clear from legal guidance that although in some circumstances behaviours exhibited by gulls can constitute a risk to public health or safety, in some cases they will be a nuisance to the public.

As such, our revised guidance document clarifies when a behaviour exhibited by a gull would qualify as a risk to public health or safety and when it would be considered a nuisance.

Despite the communications that were circulate to stakeholders, licence applications continue to fail in terms of provision of required evidence, and as a result a greater number of licences were refused in 2024 compared to previous years.

Additionally, we have encountered a lack of understanding or willingness to carry out satisfactory alternative measure to licenced activities, such as spiking, netting or using a variety of scaring methods.

We do accept that in some cases not every alternative will be satisfactory or appropriate,

however, a licencing officer does require the evidence to justify this position.

However, despite a greater number of licences being refused, there were still over 600 licences issued in Scotland during 2024.

Guidance –

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-gull-management>

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/guidance-gull-identification-and-annual-cycle-guide>

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/birds-licensing-public-health-and-safety-issues-nesting-birds>

<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/protected-areas-and-species/licensing/species-licensing-z-guide/birds/birds-licences-public-health-and-safety-and-air-safety>

City of Inverness – a way forward

A plan-based approach

Population and spatial distribution of nesting gulls by species - baseline

Locations of public health and safety areas –

Hospitals

Health centres

Schools

Food processing and preparation areas

Impact hotspots – baseline

Properties

Species of gull involved

Categorise impacts

Existing deterrents – baseline

Roof deterrents – map

Location of food waste hotspots

Identification of potential gull breeding and roosting sanctuaries - map

Communication and education campaigns

- On going campaigns to general public and businesses on waste management.

Measures

- Provision of THC approved gull proof waste receptacles
- Provision of alternative gull nesting sanctuaries where presence can be tolerated
- Installing roof deterrents to prevent gull nesting and roosting opportunities

Roles and responsibilities

The Highland Council

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify public health and safety areas • Ensuring new buildings and modifications designs do not to provide gull nesting and roosting opportunities • Advising on approved gull proof waste receptacles • Provision of THC gull proof waste receptacles for THC managed facilities • Advice on applying gull deterrents to historic and listed buildings • Identifying and establishing gull breeding sanctuaries • Ongoing communication and education campaigns on waste management and application of NatureScot guidance is followed especially key principles and hierarchy of gull management options.
NatureScot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on categories of impact, deterrents, mitigation, hierarchy of gull management options and licencing tests • Promote guidance especially key principles and hierarchy of gull management options.
Business community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing approved and effective gull nesting and roosting deterrents • Provision of gull proof waste receptacles for THC managed facilities • Ensure NatureScot guidance is followed especially key principles and hierarchy of gull management options.
Property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing approved and effective gull nesting and roosting deterrents • Provision of THC approved gull proof waste receptacles
Gull management contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure best practice as per NatureScot guidance in provision of services to customers
General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the issues with gulls and role in minimising the issues.
NatureScot October 2024	

1.4 Does your activity or project involve building or landscaping work?

Yes No

If yes please answer both a) and b) below.

a) Does your organisation (Please tick):
Have ownership of the land or building

Yes No

OR

Hold at lease of at least 5 years that cannot be ended by the landlord?

Yes No

b) Is planning permission needed for your project? Tick one option below.

Planning permission not required

Planning permission required and has been granted

1.5 Please tell us how your project or activity will help the Council to meet its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Get rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Make sure that people from different groups* are treated fairly and have equal chances to use services and that there is more equality between groups*;
- Make sure that people from different groups* get on together.

*Groups are people who have “protected characteristics” in the Equality Act: age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race and sex.

For example are people with protected characteristics likely to face barriers; how you intend to tackle these barriers; does your project promote inclusion?

N/A

1.6 Where relevant and appropriate please describe any contribution your project may make towards promotion of the Gaelic language?

N/A

1.7 Please tell us if you have spoken to anyone about your application for advice and support – e.g. Local Highland Council Elected Member, Community Council Member, Council Staff, local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) – If yes, please provide details:

David Haas, Inverness City Manager

1.8 Please tell us about any funding in kind you are seeking from the Council:

Detail i.e. premises, facilities, staff time, waiving of fees	Estimated value
N/A	

1.9 Please provide a breakdown of how much will your activities/project will cost and how much Funding you are applying for from The Highland Council:

Item/Activity	20 th January 2025 - 31 st March 2025	Total Applied For
Old Nest and Nest Material Removal	Removal of all old nests and nesting material. 2 x days including machine hire, and sub-contractor.	£1,850
Bird of Prey	Use of a Falcon Bird of Prey three times weekly (in accordance with specialist's availability) for period February to March 2025 and related activity costs.	£3,770
Lasering Programme & Human Disturbance	Training an additional operative, and provision of a disturbance lasering programme 7 days weekly from 3 rd February 2025 to 31 st March 2025. Recommendation: 'as often as possible' to discourage roosting. 2 hours daily (8 weeks) x 2 operatives = 224 hours.	£3,771
Do NOT Feed the Gulls Campaign	Per the East Ayrshire model, activity recommended and to be included in the 55k BID Eat and Drink Guides and posters/social media. Recommended by NS that the campaign further utilise social media and local radio to help raise awareness.	£2,750
Updated Premises Guide (including guidance on premise installation of netting, fire gels and spikes etc)	In addition to current guidance and consents sought in advance of licence applications and activity, updated guidance to be collated and issued to all programme premises. Activity required to assist with 2025 licence applications and also to ensure that pre-nesting activity is optimal. Roofs not easily accessed recommended to have nets/spikes installed permanently at cost to premise owner.	£525
Rotation and provision of additional scaring devices.	Recommended use of Bird Spiders and Reflect A Bird devices which are to be moved regularly. Recommended that programme is evaluated and data recorded for efficacy by NS.	£3,800
East Ayrshire Model and BID/NS Group	Recommended by NS that Inverness seek to replicate the model used by East Ayrshire to displace gulls to other areas, and also requirement for ongoing meetings with NS and partners during the noted period.	N/A
Total Additional Activity Cost £		£16,466
Unspent Project Funds Available/Permission to Reassign		£6,803
Total Additional Funding Request £		£9,663

*See guidance notes for specific funding stream to see if you are able to apply for more than one year of funding.

- 1.11 Please tell us how you know that there is a need for this activity or project and how your approach will meet this need. This might include:
- a. Community support for your project (e.g. surveys, etc.)
 - b. Statistics which show the need for your project (e.g. unemployment figures, crime statistics)
 - c. Evidence from similar projects which shows that they have worked (e.g. research from elsewhere or evaluations of previous local work)

The report to Inverness City Committee from the Inverness City Manager and the Policy and Advice Manager, Scottish Natural Heritage on 13th February 2012 established the need for and benefits of this project which has been ongoing since this date with annual applications to support continuation.

- 1.12 Is this a new or additional activity or project? – Yes No
- If yes, what change will your activities or project make in your community?

N/A

If No, how has your activities or project been funded in the last three years?

The project has received part funding from Inverness Common Good Fund in the since 2012.

- 1.13 Please tell us how you will know that your activities or project is working and that you are benefiting your community. You only need to provide targets for the years in which your project will operate. See the detailed guidance for examples of targets.

Activities Measurable Outcomes

Activities will be measured quantitatively and qualitatively. The current proposal is determined to be therefore a starting point with survey and mapping also being required at a later stage (recommended to assess baseline):

Old Nest & Nest Materials Removal – Completion of two-day clearance with machine hire and sub-contractors. Reduction in nest rebuilding at key locations, monitored via photographic records and site inspections.

Bird of Prey Programme – Falconry deployed three times weekly (Feb–Mar 2025). Reduction in nesting attempts and roosting activity, measured via site surveys and reported sightings.

Lasering Programme & Human Disturbance – 224 hours of disturbance activity delivered. Reduction in roosting birds, measured through field observations and comparative nesting data.

Do NOT Feed the Gulls Campaign – Public awareness campaign rolled out across social media, print, and radio. Engagement/reach measured via social media reach, interactions, and reported feeding incidents.

Updated Premises Guide – Guidance issued to all programme premises. Uptake of recommended deterrents (netting, spikes, fire gels) tracked via business feedback and site visits.

Scaring Devices – Deployment of Bird Spiders & Reflect A Bird devices with regular repositioning. Effectiveness monitored through site observations and comparative nesting activity.

- 1.14 If it is intended that this activity or project continue beyond the period of Council support, how will it be funded?

The report by Scottish Natural Heritage established that it would be necessary for a number of years to intervene in the gull breeding cycle by egg and nest removal in order to reverse the increase in the existing population and then reduce numbers.

BID has committed budget to the project for future years and it is proposed that a future application for funding be made to ICGF.

TABLE A 2022/23/24	
COMMUNITY SAFETY - ICGF	
Easter/Summer/Autumn 2024 Task Team	£13,403
Easter/Summer/Autumn 2023 Task Team	£11,596
Easter/Summer/Autumn 2022 Task Team	£10,795
Safe Inverness	
Inverness Community Safety Partnership period 1.4.24-31.03.25	£9,700
Inverness Community Safety Partnership period 1.4.23-31.03.24	£9,700
Inverness Community Safety Partnership period 1.4.22-31.3.23	£9,700
Gull Project	
Gull Project 2024	£13,606
Gull Project 2023	£12,839
Gull Project 2022	£12,000
Floral Displays	
Floral Display City Centre 2024	£52,410
Floral Display Wider City 2024	£23,631
Floral Displays Summer 2023	£64,150
Floral Displays Summer 2022	£64,150
CITY CENTRE RECOVERY - ICGF	
Here to Help Ambassadors 2020	£5,973
COACH AMBASSADOR - ICGF	
Coach Friendly Project 2024	£19,865
Coach Friendly Project 2023	£12,987
Coach Friendly Project 2022	£10,800
INVERNESS LOVES LOCAL CAMPAIGN - ICGF	
Additional Gift Card Marketing - 2022	£5,900.00
SMART SCAPE - ICGF	
Smart Scape City Centre Project - 2023-24	£8,484.00
Smart Scape City Centre Project - 2022-23	£9,996.72
INVERNESS FESTIVE PARKING - ICGF	
Inverness Festive Parking (Rose St) - December 2022	£9,950.00
OP RESPECT WINTER	
Task Team Winter 2024	£4,539
Task Team Winter 2023	£4,266
Task Team Winter 2022	£4,834

Inverness BID Applications

		Amount Requested	Total Project Costs	%
1	Floral Displays 2025	£54,272	£60,467	89.75%
2	Wider City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2025	£22,872	£28,373	80.61%
3	Operation Respect Easter/Summer/Autumn 2025	£14,804	£22,625	65.43%
4	Safe Inverness Project 2025/26	£10,750.00	£34,250	31.39%
5	Coach & Visitor Ambassador Project 2024	£23,847	£30,862	77.27%
6	Inverness Gull Project 2025	£27,050	£31,823	85.00%
		£153,595.00	£208,400.00	73.70%

Inverness Common Good Fund Applications 2025/26 - (with 2024/25 as comparison)								
	Project Cost	ICGF	BID	Other	Project Cost	ICGF	BID	Other
	2025/26				2024/25			
Floral Displays Summer 2025	£60,467	£54,272	£6,195		£58,605	£52,410	£6,195	
Wider City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2025	£28,373	£22,872		£5,501	£32,031	£23,631		£8,400
Operation Respect Task Team Easter/Summer/Autumn 2025	£22,625	£14,804	£7,821		£21,140	£13,403	£7,737	
SAFE Inverness Project 2025	£34,250	£10,750	£23,500		£33,000	£9,700	£23,300	
Coach & Visitor Ambassador Project 2025	£30,862	£23,847	£7,015		£28,880	£19,865	£9,015	
Gull Project 2025	£31,823	£27,050	£4,773		£20,025	£13,606	£6,419	
Totals	£208,400	£153,595	£49,304	£5,501	£193,681	£132,615	£52,666	£8,400
		73.7%	23.7%	2.6%		68.5%	27.2%	4.3%

*