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DORNOCH BID NEWSLETTER

UNDERSTANDING THE 2026 RATES REVALUATION JOIN OUR MEMBER SESSION



BID members are invited to attend an important upcoming meeting with the Highland Assessor to discuss the 2026 Non-Domestic Rates Revaluation. The session will take place from **12:00pm – 2:00pm on Friday 24 April at Dornoch Station Hotel**.

This is a valuable opportunity to gain clarity on the draft revaluation of rateable values, which has resulted in notable increases across some sectors—particularly accommodation providers. The Assessor will outline how valuations are calculated, what the changes mean for your business, and the options available if you wish to query or appeal your assessment.

Whether you're seeking reassurance or planning your next steps, this session is designed to provide practical guidance and answer your questions.

Attendance is free, but advance booking is requested for catering purposes. Please register via the button below.

[Register here](#)

BID DIRECTOR CHAMPIONS HIGHLAND BUSINESSES ON RATES CRISIS



Dornoch BID Board Director Ginny Knox, who leads on Advocacy, is speaking out on behalf of businesses across Dornoch and the wider Highlands following the latest Non-Domestic Rates revaluation.

Featured in a recent Press & Journal article — **Highland firms warn soaring business rates will close doors** — Ginny adds a strong and credible voice to growing concerns about the scale of increases facing many businesses.

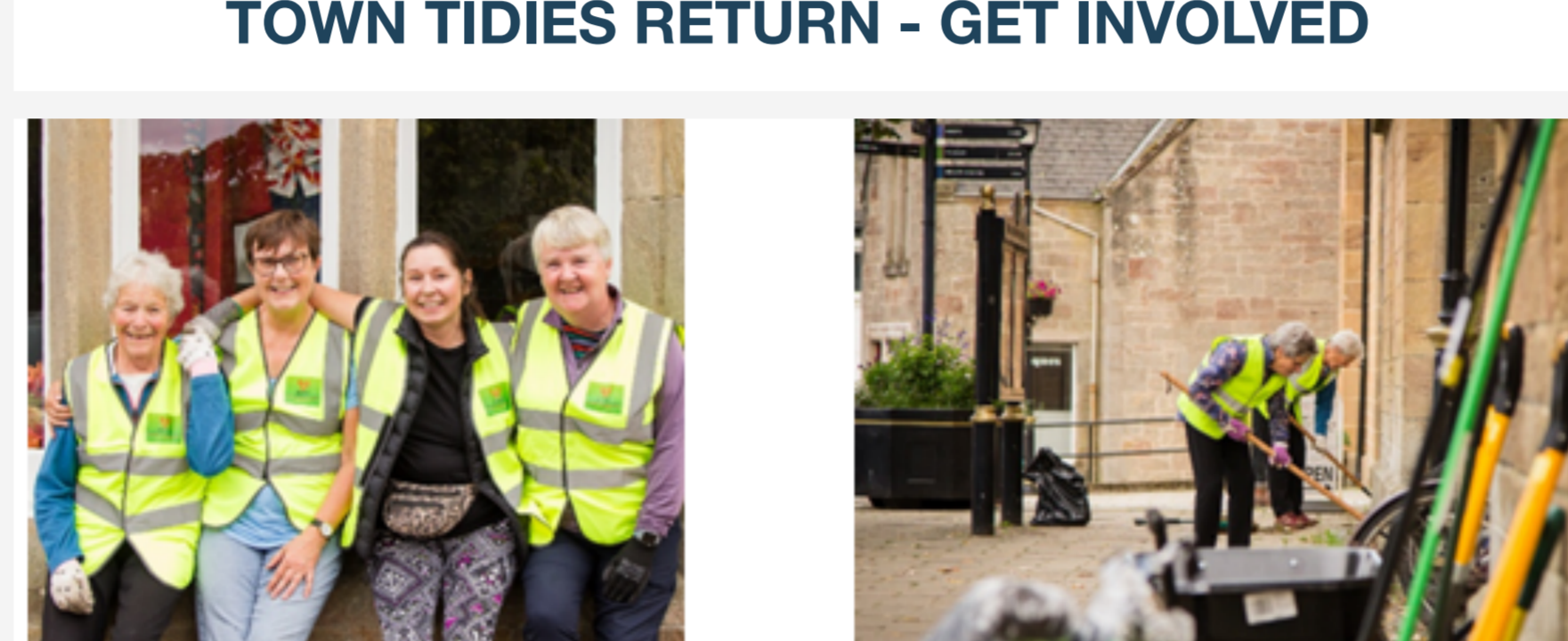
As owner of Embo House and The Meadows, and through her role on the BID Board, Ginny is helping to highlight the real impact these changes could have on the local economy. Reports suggest some firms are facing rateable value increases of up to 400%, a level widely viewed as unsustainable for small and independent operators.

The message from across the region is clear: without careful consideration, these changes risk limiting investment, putting pressure on jobs, and, in some cases, threatening business viability.

Ginny's contribution underscores the BID's active role in championing members' interests and ensuring that the voice of the Highland business community is heard on critical economic issues.

[Read the full article](#)

TOWN TIDIES RETURN - GET INVOLVED



Our popular Town Tidy sessions are back, and everyone is welcome to take part. Join us **tonight (31 March) at 5:30pm**, meeting outside the Jail, to help keep Dornoch looking at its very best.

Whether you can stay for the full session or just pop along for a short while, every contribution makes a real difference. Gloves, litter pickers and bags will be provided, but feel free to bring your own.

It's a great way to get some fresh air, meet others in the community and play a small part in making a big impact. New volunteers are always very welcome.

HELP SHOWCASE DORNOCH SPREAD THE WORD



There's a huge amount happening in and around Dornoch, and by sharing what's on, you can help support local businesses and encourage visitors to stay longer.

A few simple ways to get involved:

- Refresh events from the Dornoch website and social channels
- Include a link to **"What's On in Dornoch"** in guest communications and booking confirmations
- Share seasonal leaflets and the latest guides with your customers and visitors
- Submit your own events for promotion on the website

Printed materials, including Visitor Maps, tear-off desk pads and **Spring Highland Festival** programmes, are available to collect from the Royal Golf Hotel and Historylinks Museum.

VISITSCOTLAND: INSIGHTS, SUPPORT AND FREE WEBINARS FOR YOUR BUSINESS



Staying ahead of visitor expectations is key, and VisitScotland has released its latest insights into **2026 travel trends**, including the growing influence of the "transformation economy" — where visitors are increasingly seeking meaningful, experience-led travel.

Businesses can explore the full report and access a wide range of practical resources through **VisitScotland's Business Support Hub**. There's also the option to sign up for their industry and monthly **Business Support newsletters**, delivering useful advice, updates and tips straight to your inbox.

For those looking to take things a step further, **VisitScotland's Business Essentials: Bitesize Webinars** offer a simple and accessible way to build knowledge and skills. These free 30-minute sessions cover key topics designed to help you improve and grow your business, with expert insights and the opportunity to ask questions.

If you'd like to discuss how these trends could be applied to your own business, you can get in touch directly via:

jason.martin@visitscotland.com or business.support@visitscotland.com.

To explore the trends, access support, or register for upcoming webinars, visit the links above.

ELECTION HUSTINGS: HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE OF HIGHLAND BUSINESS



BID members are invited to attend an upcoming Election Hustings hosted by the North Highland Chamber of Commerce, bringing together candidates standing for the Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross constituency.

Taking place on Tuesday 28 April, 6:00pm – 8:00pm at the Royal Marine Hotel, this business-focused event offers a valuable opportunity to hear directly from candidates on the issues that matter most to the local economy.

Attendees will be able to submit questions in advance and take part in informed, constructive discussion around the challenges and opportunities facing businesses across the North Highlands.

Please note this is a business-only event and not open to the general public. Spaces are limited, and advance registration is required.

To secure your place, please register via Eventbrite on the button below.

[Register here](#)

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS THISTLE AWARDS

in partnership with Royal Bank of Scotland

Entries are now open for the Highlands & Islands Thistle Awards, celebrating the very best of tourism across the region.

If your business has delivered exceptional experiences, innovation or service, this is your opportunity to gain well-deserved recognition. The awards highlight the passion and dedication that make the Highlands and Islands a special place to visit.

The deadline for entries is 27 April 2026, so don't miss your chance to showcase your success.

[Enter here](#)

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS!

MAKE SURE YOU AREN'T MISSING OUT ON YOUR BENEFITS!



BID membership gives you marketing exposure and practical business support but the value comes when you use it. Take five minutes to review your membership and check you are using everything available to you? If not, get in touch. We're here to help you maximise the benefits. The latest list can be viewed **HERE**.

Quick wins include:

- ✓ Check your website listing is up to date
- ✓ Tag @thisisdornoch on social media or reach 19k+ followers
- ✓ Share your special offers, events or late availability
- ✓ Use our professional images to promote your business

Beyond marketing, don't forget:

- Networking events to build connections
- WhatsApp groups for quick updates and support
- Regular newsletters to keep you informed
- Strong lobbying voice representing your interests

MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

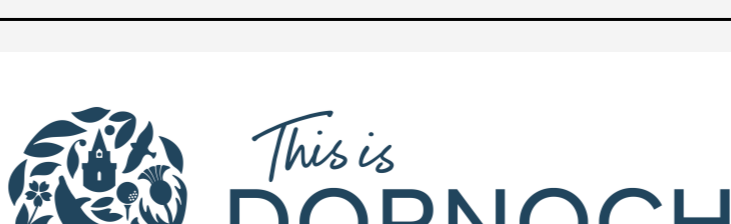
Stay up to date - The Minutes of the BID Board meetings are saved at the base of the website homepage.

WhatsApp Groups - There are Retail, Accommodation, Restaurant and Professional Services WhatsApp groups. **A General BID Group has also been added.**Please text the BID on 07471 200103 to have your number added to the relevant group(s).

'Dornoch BID' Facebook Page - This is for member communications, business updates, funding opportunities, consultations, a behind-the-scenes look at how we support businesses, plus the latest on local projects and ways to get involved in our community. Please follow @dornochbid on Facebook and tag us to re-share your updates. Give this page a like and/or leave a comment.

'This Is Dornoch' Facebook and Instagram - Follow [@thisisdornoch](#) on Facebook and [@visitdornoch](#) on Instagram and discover local shops & services, seasonal events, town news, community celebrations, and tourism campaigns bringing visitors to the town. Remember to tag us to re-share your posts and please share our posts.

Get in touch - Email DornochBID@thisisdornoch.com to discuss any membership matter and/or to arrange a call or meeting with Sharon, Dornoch BID Manager.



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