



DORNOCH BID MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

MEMBERS NETWORKING BREAKFAST

2 March 2026



The next BID Members Networking Event will take place on 2 March in the wonderful Links House at Royal Dornoch. Dornoch BID is extremely grateful to Phil Scott, Managing Director, for his generous support with sponsoring the Business Breakfast.

Colin and Simon Thompson will share an update on Dornoch Distillery, including exciting progress on the new Distillery and early plans for Hogmanay 2026. We're also offering **two extra presentation slots** for other BID members to share their story. This is a great opportunity to highlight your business, showcase opportunities, and explore Business-to-Business connections. Please contact the BID for further details.

Invitations will be in your inbox next week. We hope you can join us for a morning of networking, updates and business inspiration.

150th ANNIVERSARY OF ROYAL DORNOCH GOLF CLUB



We were delighted to hear from Neil Hampton, General Manager of Royal Dornoch Golf Club, who set out the scale and significance of the Club's 150th Anniversary celebrations at last week's meeting. This event will bring international attention and opportunities for businesses. For more details please click [HERE](#).

As part of the preparations, a link to our website will be shared with guests when anniversary invitations are issued. All accommodation providers are encouraged to review their listings and let us know of any updates required. Where possible, businesses are encouraged to open their 2027 booking calendars to support what promises to be an exceptional and high-profile event for the entire community!

CHECK YOUR WEBSITE LISTING

As part of our ongoing work to promote Dornoch and your business, we are asking all BID members to check their business listing on the website and advise of any updates needed. This will help to ensure the information on the site is accurate and useful for visitors planning their trip.

We would be grateful if you could take a moment to confirm whether the relevant filters such as wheel chair access have been correctly selected on your web listing to help visitors identify venues that are accessible for example.

SPRING HIGHLAND FESTIVAL 2026

(8 - 22 April)



The Spring Highland Festival 2026 takes place from 8–22 April. This two-week celebration will once again shine a spotlight on Dornoch's history, heritage, local produce, hospitality and culture.

Aimed at attracting new customers and increasing footfall, participating business will be promoted via festival marketing and social media channels. If you'd like to get involved, please email a brief outline of your idea by no later than **Tuesday 12 February** to be included in festival promotions.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!



Ripples of Change – Exhibition Preview
Sunday 8th February 2026 to Saturday 28th February 2026

A collaboration between Britton Scotland and Eco-artist Francesca Busca



Dornoch Gatherings: Chris Manning in Concert
Saturday 7th March 2026

7.30pm, Dornoch Cathedral

There's so much happening in Dornoch! Festivals, exhibitions, concerts, cookery demos, markets, and much, much more! By helping to promote events, you not only support the wider community but also encourage visitors to visit Dornoch and your business! Here's how you can help:

- **Reshare** events from our website and social media to your own channels.
- **Add a link** to [What's On in Dornoch](#) in your welcome letters, emails, or booking confirmations.
- **Distribute leaflets** — pick up the latest "What's On" guides from the Royal Golf Hotel and share with customers, guests, friends and family.

PROPOSED WINTER LIGHTING TRAIL

In January, Dornoch BID submitted a planning application for a proposed Winter Lighting Trail. The intention was to deliver a seasonal initiative running October to March during the darker winter months, aimed at supporting local businesses and employment, encouraging off-season visitors, brightening the town environment, and creating a heritage-inspired walking trail for families and visitors. The concept was designed to be flexible and capable of evolving over time.

Since the proposal was shared, the BID has received a range of feedback from both BID members and the local community. Having listened carefully to the views expressed, the BID has decided to pause the Winter Lighting Trail project at this stage in order to reassess the concept and reflect on community opinion.

We feel it is important to take time to review the feedback received, clarify the project's aims, and consider how any future proposals could better reflect the character of Dornoch and the sensitivities of its historic setting. No further steps will be taken while this review is ongoing.

RECRUITMENT MADE EASIER

WITH LIVE NORTH

Job listings and **Candidate Matching Services** are just some of what is on offer from [Live North](#). Helping employers connect with skilled people in Caithness, Sutherland and beyond, you can list your vacancies on the Live North website completely free of charge [HERE](#).

Live North also has a **Candidate Matching Service** to help reach people who are ready to live and work in the North Highlands. More details on how Live North can help you find candidates are available [HERE](#).

RATES REVALUATION - TAKE ACTION!

Letters have been sent to all BID Accommodation members regarding the Rates Revaluation. If you haven't already checked your draft non-domestic rates, changes come into effect **1 April 2026**. Your appeal will strengthen the North BID's lobbying efforts on behalf of all Northern BID businesses. Key Actions to consider taking:

- **By 16 Feb:** Appeal to the Assessor if your increase seems unfair
- **Challenge the HDL classification:** Submit occupancy figures, off-season pricing, or profitability evidence
- **After 15 Mar:** You can still submit a formal objection if needed

SHORT TERM LICENCES

Short Term Licenses are now open for applications again through **Highland Council**. If you rent out property on a short-term basis, now is the time to review or renew your licence. All renewals and new applications can be submitted **online via the Highland Council website**. For guidance and to apply, please click [HERE](#).

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. Please text the BID on 07471 200103 to have your number added to the relevant group.

'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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