

**BUSINESS GATEWAY MORAY
QUARTERLY ACTIVITY
&
PERFORMANCE REPORT**

1 October – 31 December 2023

Quarter 3



This quarter remained a busy one for the team at Business Gateway Moray and although there was a dip in enquiries, mainly due to the festive season, we hosted a number of local workshops and events.

Q3 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS									
BG MORAY STATS 2023/24	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Y to D	Target
Business Start-Ups	14	8	5	20	28	27		75	130
Total No. of Enquiries	47	37	22	132	155	106		393	800
Workshops / Webinars									
No. of National S/U Webinars	5	6	5	18	9	16		43	50
No. of Moray delegates	7	5	6	6	11	18		35	200
No. of National Growth Webinars	7	2	4	32	8	13		53	30
No. of Moray Delegates	2	3	2	12	9	7		28	60
No. of National Digital Webinars	21	12	8	58	28	41		127	100
No. of Moray Delegates	23	11	10	25	50	44		119	220
Specialist Advice									
Days 1-2-1 Specialist Growth Support	0	0	3	1	1	3		5	20
Events									
No. of Local BG Workshops/Events	1	2	2	0	2	5		7	5
No. of Delegates attending	6	20	50	0	10	76		86	40
No. of Additional Partner Events	1	0	1	12	3	2		17	10
No. of attendees	6	0	207	1587	440	213		2240	500
Moray Economic Recovery Plan									
Procurement 1-2-1 Specialist Support	0	0	10	0	9	10		19	N/A
Procurement Specialist Workshops	0	1	0	0	0	1		1	N/A
No of Delegates	0	9	0	0	0	9		9	N/A

BUSINESS START-UPS

27 businesses start-ups were recorded resulting in 35 FTE jobs created. A sample of the type of business and locations are noted below indicating the range of sectors represented.

Business Gateway Moray is one of the partners within Moray Pathways, the Moray Council Employability Service. Clients are regularly referred to our service by their Keyworkers for advice and support with becoming self-employed. In October we provided a group session to 6 clients considering this option at The Inkwel in Elgin where the Pathways service is based.

Type of Business	Location	Type of Business	Location
Pub & Restaurant	Forres	Tour Guide	Elgin
Mobile Catering	Elgin	Taxi	Keith
Childminder	Lossiemouth	Male Grooming	Elgin
Climate Consultant	Elgin	Chainsaw Carver	Portgordon
Roofing Contractor	Buckie	Dog Walker	Fochabers
Electrical Engineer	Elgin	Gardener	Elgin
Dog Daycare	Keith	Trade Plate Driving	Keith
Tattooist	Elgin	Beauty	Elgin
Business Coaching	Dyke	Web Designer	Forres

EXISTING BUSINESSES & GROWTH SUPPORT

Funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Business Gateway Moray Growth Programme continued, with a two week break for the October holidays.

The remainder of the sessions included:

- Digital Marketing
- Business Strategy
- Procurement and Tendering for Contracts
- HR and Leadership
- Marketing – Standing Out from the Crowd
- Customer Persona

The final session was held on 29th November with local entrepreneur Sarah Holmes, owner of Pencil Me In and Seasgair retail stores in Elgin. Sarah kindly shared with the cohort a real insight into her business journey which provided a very fitting conclusion to the growth programme. Feedback has been gathered which will be included in the final reporting required for the UK Shared Prosperity Funding. Overall the feedback was very positive and all highlighted that the programme exceeded expectations. This feedback along with lessons learned will be taken into account for the next programmes due to commence in 24/25.

Specialist marketing advice was provided to a local retail business looking to create a marketing strategy and maximise their marketing potential as they look to relocate to more suitable premises and increase their offering.

Budget remaining from the Economic Recovery Fund has allowed us to provide specific procurement support to local businesses. November saw the first of our procurement workshops designed to provide step-by-step guidance on registering with Public Contracts Scotland and the process of tendering for contracts.

Attendees of the workshop were then offered one-to-one appointments for more in-depth support if required.

This service also provided one-to-one specialist support for businesses looking at particular tenders and has received excellent feedback.

LOCAL EVENTS, MARKETING & PR

In October, in partnership with Visit Moray Speyside, we held an Introduction to Social Media workshop which had been requested by some of their members. The number of attendees was limited to allow the session to be fully interactive and supportive. A follow up Video Editing workshop was held to cover the basics of creating and editing videos for social media use in November.

Also in November we held a Lunch & Learn networking event at Elgin Town Hall in collaboration with Scotland Loves Local who facilitate the Moray Gift Card. Elgin BID manage the Elgin Gift Card and were invited to join us at the event to raise awareness of the benefits of using these gift cards as a corporate gift to staff and the tax benefits involved. Attendees included local businesses and partner organisations.

In December we turned to the topic of AI with two presentations. The first was made to 40 students at Moray College UHI who were given an overview of Artificial Intelligence and how it can be applied to business processes. This was followed by an early evening presentation to local businesses entitled Embracing AI for Business Innovation.

The BG Moray Facebook page continues to be an important tool for sharing information on our webinars, support available plus local and partner events. This quarter we have increased our follower count and now have a Facebook reach of 12,000.

This quarter has included posts relating to:

- Core Start-up and Growth webinars
- Planning to Start
- Moray Council tender opportunities including ad hoc Taxi Services and Bakery products
- Our attendance at local events

- Small Business Saturday
- Business Gateway Moray Growth Programme
- Moray Town Centre's Grant Scheme
- Town Centre Perception Survey

The Business Gateway Moray regular newsletter is now available providing a round-up of the latest relevant news, events, support and information for businesses. Anyone is welcome to sign up to receive the newsletter and can do so by emailing business.gateway@moray.gov.uk to make the request.

NATIONAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Business Gateway National highlighted the support available to start-up businesses via webinars, online resources and local Adviser support this quarter. This included local radio, newspapers and promoted social media posts.

World Mental Health Day on 10th October was marked with a free online breath work and meditation session for businesses to attend.

This was followed by Stress Awareness Week from 30th October where the team held two wellbeing workshops exploring tools that can be used to alleviate the symptoms of stress.

The National team continue to regularly post details of upcoming free webinars and local support available via the website and social media channels.

DIGITAL SUPPORT

The DigitalBoost branding is no longer in use as digital support is now provided as a core product for Business Gateway. This support is generally via free webinars and online resources but there is limited specialist advice available for more complex business requirements.

Webinars this quarter included:

- Video Production for Social Media
- Google Analytics – Understand how your website performs
- LinkedIn for Business
- TikTok and Instagram Reels for Business
- Producing engaging online content

ADDITIONAL LOCAL ACTIVITIES

SCOTLAND LOVES LOCAL – MORAY GIFT CARD

Regular posts on the Moray Gift Card Facebook page keep the momentum of this project going helping to promote local businesses and highlighting the 'spend local' message.

This quarter the focus was on the Christmas period but was complimented by the Lunch & Learn event mentioned above which highlighted the tax advantages to purchasing the Moray Gift Card as a gift for staff.

Sales of the Moray Gift Card this quarter totalled £23,946 with £15,710 of local spend redeemed representing some of the highest totals recorded since the introduction of the Moray Gift Card project.

In November the Moray Gift Card Team were delighted to be invited to the Scotland Loves Local Awards at the V&A Dundee. Kirsty Shand, Project Officer for the Moray Gift Card until September 2023 was recognised for her 'outstanding work in supporting the roll-out of the Scotland Loves Local Gift Card – supporting people and local businesses' with the presentation of a Judge's Special Award. The audience heard 'Her work has ensured the gift card has become an integral part of the community – encouraging businesses, charities and community groups to be part of the programme, helping them not just survive, but thrive'

It was great to see the tireless efforts that Kirsty put into the project being rewarded nationally.

Two others from Moray also won awards on the night – Gordon McDonald received the High Street Hero Award, recognising his 40 years of supporting the community in Buckie and Marc Hindley of Moray Local CIC won the Digital Community Award for Visit Forres and Forres Local.

For up to date information see the Moray Gift Card Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/MorayGiftCard>

PARTNER EVENTS

In the first quarter of this year it was mentioned that we delivered a presentation on business start-up to Ukrainian refugees in partnership with Moray College UHI. In November Moray College UHI hosted a celebration event as the cohort completed the programme. Some of the attendees gave heartfelt presentations about their journey, one of which has now started her own tattoo business with additional support from the Business Gateway Moray Team.

In December, we joined various organisations for a public engagement event to gain feedback on the proposals for the South Street project in Elgin which includes the Business Enterprise Hub, Housing Mix and redevelopment of High Street premises including the former Gordon Arms Hotel. Over 200 people attended the drop in to see the information boards and talk to those involved in the project with very positive feedback received.