

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

**1 January – 31st March 2024
Quarter 4**



This quarter was the busiest of the year for the Business Gateway Team as enquiries were high and the final push of procurement support was delivered.

Q3 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS									
BG MORAY STATS 2023/24	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Y to D	Target
Business Start-Ups	6	5	18	20	28	27	29	104	130
Total No. of Enquiries	55	50	71	132	155	106	176	569	800
No. of National S/U Webinars									
No. of National S/U Webinars	4	7	4	18	9	16	15	58	50
No. of Moray delegates	2	9	4	6	11	18	15	50	200
No. of National Growth Webinars	5	5	3	32	8	13	13	66	30
No. of Moray Delegates	2	7	3	12	9	7	12	40	60
No. of National Digital Boost Webinars	9	15	15	58	28	41	39	166	100
No. of Moray Delegates	11	40	23	25	50	44	74	193	220
Specialist Advice									
Days 1-2-1 Specialist Growth Support	-	-	3	4	1	3	3	11	20
Events									
No. of Local BG Workshops/Events	-	-	-	0	2	5	-	7	5
No. of Delegates attending	-	-	-	0	10	76	-	86	40
No. of Additional Partner Events	1	1	1	12	3	2	3	20	10
No. of attendees	19	40	20	1587	440	213	79	2319	500
Moray Economic Recovery Plan									
Procurement 1-2-1 Specialist Support	5	1	-	0	9	10	6	25	N/A
Procurement Specialist Workshops	1	2	-	-	-	1	3	4	N/A
No of Delegates attending	6	20	-	-	-	9	26	35	N/A

BUSINESS START-UPS

The majority of enquiries this quarter related to start-up advice and 29 start-ups were recorded resulting in 42 FTE jobs created. A sample of the type of business and locations are noted below indicating a range of sectors represented.

Type of Business	Location	Type of Business	Location
Gardening & Landscaping	Buckie	Sports tuition	Elgin
Roofer	Buckie	Childminder	Forres
Beauty	Elgin	Freelance Editor	Lossiemouth
Author	Forres	Pub & Restaurant	Dufftown
PT	Forres	Card Designs	Rafford
Tree surgery	Lossiemouth	Virtual Assistant	Elgin
Bakery/Deli/shop	Findhorn	Tour Guide	Lossiemouth
Fishing Boat	Buckie	Sports Massage	Elgin
Holiday Home	Cullen	Removals	Keith

We were invited by DYW Moray to give a presentation to pupils in Speyside High School who were preparing to sit exams in business studies. The aim was to bring to life their learning and let them know about self-employment as a career choice.

Similarly we were invited by HIE to present to a group of approximately 20 UHI students in the creative sector on the support available to them from the Business Gateway service. Other presentations during the session were made by Creative Scotland, Screen Scotland and XpoNorth.

EXISTING BUSINESSES & GROWTH SUPPORT

Enquiries from existing businesses this quarter included guidance on how to sell a business on retirement, funding options for growth, taking on first employees, end of year record keeping, taking on premises, potential joint ventures and tendering for contracts.

Specialist advice to a local retail business looking at an exit strategy was finalised but ongoing support is now being provided by the Business Gateway advisers when required.

As part of the Moray Economic Recovery Plan this year has seen a targeted approach to increase the knowledge and awareness of Public Contracts Scotland to local businesses. This has included one-to-one specialist support and one-to-many workshops.

Those receiving this support recognised the benefits of registering as suppliers and using the system but it became clear during the course of the year that small businesses in Moray find it a very time consuming and complicated process resulting in many of them being unwilling to tender for local contracts.

In March the Business Gateway website introduced the Strengthen Your Business tool. This is a questionnaire similar to the well-established Planning to Start portal and allows businesses to answer a series of questions to receive relevant guidance and information. Businesses also have the option to request contact from their local office and these enquiries are sent directly to us via our CRM system.

<https://www.bgateway.com/strengthen-your-business-tool>

LOCAL EVENTS, MARKETING & PR

In February we held an Eat and Engage event providing lunch and an interactive in-person procurement workshop for businesses based in Moray. 12 local businesses attended and the purpose was to highlight the upcoming contract opportunities arising from the Moray Growth Deal and learn how to use the Public Contracts Scotland portal.

We also held two procurement workshops in partnership with TSI Moray to provide specific guidance to social enterprises on how to navigate Public Contracts Scotland to access tender opportunities.

The BG Moray Facebook page continues to be an important tool for sharing information for our webinars, support available plus local and partner events. The reach of our Business Gateway Moray Facebook page now stands at 16.3k.

This quarter has included posts relating to:

- International Women's Day
- Business Gateway team visit to Speyside High
- Moray Council Trusted Trader Scheme
- Networking events
- Innovate UK Creative Industries Fund
- Moray Council Civil works framework prior information notice.

The Business Gateway Moray regular newsletter continues to share relevant news, events, support and information for businesses. To request to be added to the mailing list please email business.gateway@moray.gov.uk

NATIONAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

On Wednesday 27th March BG National hosted a Women in Business webinar with guest speakers focussing on strategies and support for women in business.

Earlier that month the highlight was on International Women's Day with BG National including a mixture of posts on social media including the results of a Women in Business Survey. Key findings of this survey found that the majority of female business owners in Scotland are confident about their future success.

Other key marketing messages have included:

- Time to Talk Day (1st February)
- Neurodiversity Celebration Week (18th to 24th March)

DIGITAL SUPPORT

74 attendees from Moray businesses joined BG National Digital Support webinars this quarter, topics included:

- How Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help your business marketing
- Video production for social media
- Build your brand and promotional graphics
- Email marketing for business
- Photography for online business

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

Business Gateway Moray continues to support local businesses to become tender ready for local contracts. This quarter we supported a local business in applying for a local tender. We continue to share local procurement opportunities with businesses where relevant.

MORAY ANCHOR NETWORK

As part of the ongoing efforts to deliver Community Wealth Building in Moray key stakeholders came together at UHI Moray on 1st March to discuss the issues of housing and childcare. The workshop was hosted by NHS Grampian, one of the key anchor partners, who were keen to engage with other organisations to gain their views on the issues, to support the ongoing recruitment programme and development of Dr Gray's Hospital and to facilitate partnership working. This was a very successful event providing an insight into each organisations perspective, experiences and the impacts felt, plus ideas and opportunities for developing future plans to tackle the issues.

The workshop was attended by Business Gateway and included representatives from Moray Council, UHI Moray, Moray Chamber of Commerce, FSB, TSI Moray and DYW Moray amongst others. There are plans for an additional workshop which will focus specifically on the issues surrounding childcare as time constraints on the day didn't allow for a full discussion on this topic.

ADDITIONAL LOCAL ACTIVITIES

SCOTLAND LOVES LOCAL – MORAY GIFT CARD

By the end of this quarter an additional 2 businesses had signed up and now 275 local businesses accept the cards as payment. Sales for this quarter totalled £9,356 with over £11,500 of local spend redeemed.

This financial year a total additional amount of over £48,000 has been loaded onto Moray Gift Cards with over £52,500 being spent in our local businesses.

In March we launched our local Mother's Day social media competition. Engagement was high and the post reached almost 9,000 people organically with no ad spend. There were 237 nominations to win a £50 Moray Gift Card.

We also collaborated with Scotland Loves Local to launch the 'More than a Mum' campaign and were delighted that local mum and businesswoman, Helen Smith of Byers Farm, joined the national campaign to encourage people to think about what mums really want for Mother's Day whilst also supporting local. This was picked up by local and national press with a resulting 200% increase in gift cards sales compared to the previous month.

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

PARTNER EVENTS

The Business Gateway Moray team attended the Visit Moray Speyside conference in March which provided an excellent networking event and the opportunity to gain an insight into the past year for the tourism sector in Moray and beyond.

Prosper (formerly SDCI) held a Talent Attraction Workshop at Culloden Battlefield Visitor Centre with the central theme of talent attraction and the challenges currently faced by hospitality businesses in the area.

Over 40 attendees heard presentations by those in the industry, enjoyed a panel discussion and took part in breakout workshops.

Other events attended included the Moray Chamber of Commerce GreenPath Project business breakfast promoting the free consultancy service funded by UKSPF to businesses looking to move towards net zero.

Apprenticeship Week took place from 4-8th March and as well as promoting apprenticeships as a choice to the pupils at Speyside High School and sharing partner events the team attended the DYW Moray Lunch & Learn event in the Laichmoray Hotel to hear from training providers and local businesses about some of the success stories and opportunities in Moray.