

Funding boost for high streets and town centres

Four local communities are to receive a funding boost of a share of over £100,000 to help make their areas more attractive for business, High Streets Minister Jake Berry MP has today (1 July 2019) confirmed.

The latest round of the British Improvement Districts (BIDs) Loan Fund will support business owners and local leaders to set-up a BID, bringing communities together to deliver additional local services and transform commercial areas.

This will empower local business communities to undertake the projects they believe will deliver lasting economic benefit.

The four successful applicants to the BIDs Loan Fund are: Armley, Leeds; Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire; Christchurch, Dorset; and Digbeth, Birmingham.

High Streets Minister Jake Berry MP said:

Business Improvement Districts in partnership with local authorities, developers and communities, are working hard to champion town centres, by deciding what improvements they want to see, how these will be managed and what it will cost.

Those high streets and town centres performing strongest often have BIDs at their core, driving improvements that boost footfall, encourage consumer spending and ensure our high streets are fit for the future.

Today's announcement comes during the second Great British High Street Week, a week of activity to celebrate high streets up and down the country and share the work that Government is undertaking to support them. The Great British High Street Awards are part of this work, and entries are due to close shortly.

The Awards not only celebrate the best high streets across the nation, but also champion 'Rising Stars' – the most ambitious high streets which are taking a lead and working together to revive, adapt and diversify.

A selection of 40 shortlisted finalists will be chosen by our independent judging panel. Those shortlisted high streets are eligible to win up to £15,000 for their local community.

From Altrincham to Watford, BIDS serve as a tried and tested model of how

local business can work together to realise the potential of towns and high streets by engaging strategically with local authorities, developers and communities.

The government is fully committed to supporting high streets and town centres and has implemented a number of measures to address challenges being faced in these areas, including cutting business rates by a third to give high street retailers a boost.

On top of the £13 billion rates relief package since 2016, a £675 million Future High Streets Fund was announced last year to help high streets adapt.

1. The four areas receiving funding are Armley (Leeds), Beverley (East Riding of Yorkshire), Christchurch (Dorset), Digbeth (Birmingham).
2. BIDs have been a key tool in the development of local leadership and growth in high streets and town centres since 2004.
3. In 2013, the government launched a £500,000 recyclable loan fund to support the development of Business Improvement Districts, in the recognition that some prospective Business Improvement Districts encounter prohibitive start-up costs during development. The Business Improvement District sector body, British BIDs, has been contracted to operate the fund.
4. For more information, please visit our [BIDs Loan Fund page](#) and the [British BIDs website](#).
5. The Great British High Street Awards 2019, run by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in partnership with Visa and backed by other supporters, recognises and celebrates local achievements on the UK's high streets and supports the communities in which we live and work. For more information see: [Great British High Streets Week](#).