

Press release: Crickhowell High Street crowned “UK’s best” in Great British High Street Awards

- Crickhowell High Street has been crowned the overall winner of the government-run Great British High Street Awards 2018, sponsored by Visa
- The Welsh high street, commended for its community-led initiatives and strong network of independent businesses, wins £15,000 for the local community
- The result reflects strong public support on social media, in addition to a panel of judges
- Champion and Rising Star High Streets across all 4 Home Nations also announced

Located in a bustling rural town nestled in the Usk Valley on the edge of the Brecon Beacons, Crickhowell High Street was announced as the overall winner of the Great British High Street Awards 2018 at a prestigious ceremony at Lancaster House, attended by High Streets Minister Jake Berry MP and representatives from the 37 shortlisted high streets.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire said:

Congratulations to Crickhowell and to all of today’s winners at the Great British High Street Awards. I am delighted to see so many people get behind their local high street.

This government has put high streets at the centre of the Autumn Budget and we are determined to support them to adapt and thrive for generations to come.

High Streets Minister Jake Berry MP says:

Congratulations to Crickhowell on being crowned the home of the UK’s best high street in this year’s Great British High Street Awards.

The Awards celebrate the great work that is being done to revive, adapt and diversify our high streets and the quality of entries this year has been outstanding.

It’s a sure sign that, across the whole UK, there’s a determination from local communities to keep their high street alive and kicking and we hope this year’s Awards provides the inspiration for others to follow suit.

Dean Christy of the Crickhowell Corn Exchange nominated the town's high street following the introduction of an ambitious initiative aimed at driving footfall to the high street, whilst maintaining that local people had their say on what was best for their high street.

The community-led Totally Locally Campaign brought over 100 local shops and businesses together to promote one another and run initiatives to both boost their businesses and provide the local community with vital services.

The campaign also inspired 267 people passionate about the future of their high street to collectively purchase and renovate a former High Street pub – the Corn Exchange – into three new shops with three residential properties above.

Crickhowell High Street also boasts strong environmental credentials, being home to the first Zero Waste shop in Wales, whilst establishing Plastic Free Crickhowell – an initiative to reduce the use of plastic.

Awards judge Hemlata Narasimhan, Head of Merchant Services at Visa Europe, commended the community of Crickhowell, saying:

Crickhowell is a fantastic example of a community that has made huge strides in transforming its high street and significantly improving the experience for locals and visitors alike.

The Totally Locally campaign, which has inspired an army of volunteers to ensure the high street and surrounding areas thrive, is a shining example of how independent, family-run businesses can come together to help drive footfall and make the high street a better place for all. In fact, recent research by Visa found that a majority of people (52%) would use their high street more if it opened more shops, whilst four in ten (40%) said a more varied mix of services would make it more appealing.

Speaking at the Awards ceremony, Dean Christy of Crickhowell Corn Exchange, commented:

We are absolutely thrilled to be named the UK's best high street and hugely grateful to both the Great British High Street Awards and Visa for making this dream come true!

None of this would have been possible without the ongoing commitment, hard work, dedication and drive of the whole community of Crickhowell and the surrounding area – it's the people that make our high streets such special places and this Award is for you all!

In addition to the overall winner, 8 high streets, 2 from each home nation, won awards in the Champion and Rising Star categories, whilst High Street Heroes – those individuals who have gone above and beyond for their local

high street – were also recognised.

The full list of winners is as follows:

Overall UK winner

Champion High Streets

- England: Altrincham Town Centre
- Scotland: High Street, Alness
- Wales: High Street, Crickhowell
- Northern Ireland: Portadown Town Centre

Rising Star High Streets

- England: Burnley Road, Todmorden
- Scotland: High Street, Newport-on-Tay
- Wales: High Street, Cowbridge
- Northern Ireland: Bow Street, Lisburn

The shortlisted high streets across all the categories were commended for giving back to their local communities, improving customer experience, protecting the environment and digitally transforming their high streets.

The Great British High Street Awards 2018, which is being run by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, sponsored by Visa and backed by other partners, recognises and celebrates the local achievements of UK high streets and supports the communities in which we all live and work.

For more information about the Great British High Street Awards 2018 and details on all the winners, visit: www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk

To get involved in the conversation, members of the public can support their local high street on social media using #MyHighStreet via:

Research

The research was conducted by 3Gem between 26 April and 8 May 2018 and surveyed 2,000 consumers and 750 independent high street retailers across the UK.

Prizes

The prizes include 4 x £5,000 contribution towards a street party for Champion Award winners; 4 x £5,000 grant towards a local community / technology project for Rising Star Award winners and; 1 x £10,000 grant for a local community project for the Overall UK Award winner. Visit <https://thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk/terms> for Full Terms & prize details.

Contact

For more press information about the Great British High Street Awards 2018, to request high-res images and video footage or to arrange an interview,

please contact Grayling: visahighstreet@grayling.com

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