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Leading the BID industry

Business Improvement Districts in the British Isles:

THE 18TH ANNUAL BID SURVEY AND REPORT 2024



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20 Years of BIDs

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Business Improvement Districts in the British Isles: The 2024 National Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY HEADLINES

The active BID community in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ireland now totals 341 [335 in the last survey] at the beginning of September 2024, representing 134,098 [132,962] businesses, investing £154,620,538 [£150,316,106] into their local economies.

This is a net increase of six BIDs, 1,136 businesses and £1,633,378; a 2.8% percentage points investment growth over last year.

There is variety in the types of BID, with a continuing move away from the original 'crime and grime' retail-led high street BID to a more nuanced range of BIDs that reflect their different business communities, with industrial BID morphing into mixed area and commercial bodies, and Accommodation BIDs and new larger boundaries becoming evident.

However, it is clear that the initial fast growth has come to an end and a more steady development is now the norm. Each year, as some BIDs fail at ballot, more BIDs come into existence to give a smaller net growth than the number of new BIDs

12 [8 last year] new BIDs came into being in the past twelve months since September 1, 2023, with some different types of BIDs evident. Although this is more than previous years it is clear that the growth of BIDs is slowing.

There are currently 60 [61 last year] BIDs that are in the development stage, with ballots coming up in the next year or so. This is a slight reduction on the number that were developing in the last survey, some of last year's survey have come to successful ballot whilst new developing BIDs have emerged. This still suggests a continued enthusiasm and increasing perceived benefit to local business communities.

There has been a total of 1,057 BID ballots over the past twenty years, of which 104 have been unsuccessful, a failure rate of 9.4%. Some BIDs have gone to ballot at least once, and some several times as they continue for further terms. Some BIDs have ceased mid-term, and others have ceased at the end of a term, by not going to ballot. Of the 104 ballots that have failed, some 20 have then gone on to a successful ballot.

The analysis of ballot outcomes by term of current 341 successful BID ballots suggest that success increases slightly with each term, as BID teams get more confident at meeting the needs of their levy payers.

74 BIDs have come to ballot in the past 12 months, an average of six a month, either new or at various stages of their term, giving a sense of the workload of the national head office levy payers who cast their votes across the whole country.

5 ballots were unsuccessful in the past twelve months, resulting in a failure rate of 6.7%; this failure rate, lower than the 18-year average, is a useful measure of the value that many levy payers put on their BIDs.

Twelve new BIDs came into being during the past 12 months; the turnout figures were 6.1 percentage points below the total 12-month norm, with the votes in favour and by RV were also below the 12-month norm, at 5.7 and 7.6 percentage points respectively.

5 BIDs failed at ballot in the last twelve months, one fewer than last year. Of the 5 all but 1 failed by number of votes, and 4 also failed by the rateable value, suggesting an increased involvement of the national levy payers, for whom BIDs are now a serious investment decision for their head offices.

Most local authorities were very supportive at ballot, with most BIDs [56%] regarding their local authorities as very helpful, 36% were seen as sound and only 9.6% were seen as unhelpful.

57% of BIDs had had problems with ballot papers in their ballot, and the median was some 15% of ballot papers lost, with an upper quartile losing 25%.

Most BIDs [81%] seem to be confident that they were easily able to produce a list of voters from their list of levy payers.

Most BIDs [71%] felt that they were able to engage with national levy payers for the ballot.

Turnout performance is reasonable, with half of all the current BIDs obtaining a turnout of at least 40%, and 25% obtaining a turnout of at least 47.9%. The highest turnout was 82%.

Of 341 BIDs, 305 [89%] were using a % levy rate, with a median at 1.5%.

The distribution of hereditaments suggests that half of all BIDs have fewer than 377 [385, 2023] hereditaments, the largest number is 2,500 and currently eight BIDs have more than 1,000 hereditaments.

The total number of hereditaments across all BIDs in the survey this year is 134,098 [2023, 132,962; 2022, 121,485], an increase of 12,613 from 2022.

From the population of 341 active BIDs, the total BID levy income raised and spent across the British Isles is £154,620,538 [2023, £150,316,106] an increase over last year;

some of this increase is due to RV changes and some is the growth in BID size and number.

Levy income and expenditure varies widely across the BIDs, with the smallest collecting and spending £14,639 and the largest £4,100,000 per annum.

The measures of the levy income of current BIDs continue to show a wide range, with the median figure – that is half of all the BIDs – having a levy income of £295,500 [2023, £294,278; 2022, 285,691] or less; and 75% of all BIDs having a levy income of £529,554 [2023, £522,034; 2022, £486,556] or less.

On the other hand, there are now 31 BIDs with levy incomes of £1million or over; all are in the major cities, where rateable values and thus income is higher; and the highest levy amount is £4,100,000.

Most BIDs [73%] also generate non-levy income from more formal sources, such as entrepreneurial activities, grant income, government funding, or local authority grants.

The median figure for additional external income in a BID is £44,230 [2023, £46,061; 2022, £60,000], amounting to a reduction of 7% of BID income across the country from last year's £21,758,676.

Some 40% [2023, 35%; 2022, 48%; 2021, 51.9%] of the BID industry reported investment income by way of projects and government funding as a direct result of their BID activity, although others recognised investment has been achieved but it is very difficult to quantify. It is now very much part of the role of BIDs to work with Town Fund and levelling up applications, but the amounts of money and the time scales are not easy to track. From the Town Funding alone some £3.6 billion is being spent over a five-year period, affecting some 50% BIDs.

The data suggest that some £563,735,871 [2023, £316,006,806; 2022, £353,846,754] is going into business communities each year from outside investment.

The six-year data for all BID income and leveraged investment expenditure is a positive story, with a current analysis of £734,906,058, showing growth in levy income but reduced additional entrepreneurial income and much increased leveraged inward investment.

This year 36% [2023, 24%] are applying an annual inflation factor, an increase of 12 percentage points. Now that inflation is becoming more evident, we might expect to see an increase in this factor.

Most BIDs aim to ensure that no levy payment is less than the cost of collection, others keep their threshold at or below the level of the current government Small Business Rate Relief threshold of either £12,000 [59%] or the tapered figure of £15,000 [75%].

Many BIDs [43%] also apply a cap to levy payments, protecting some levy payers from larger than normal levy payments, for example, where their properties are disproportionally large compared to others in the BID area.

Most BIDs [45%] opt to give charities and other key players a discount on their levy, although this is becoming less prevalent over time, particularly in relation to discounts on commercially trading charity shops.

From the responses, 12% of BIDs have no collection charge made to them by their local authority. This is a reduction from two years ago year, where some 30% of BIDs were not paying for collection. The median collection costs figure – that which 50% of BIDs are below - is £10,000.

Nonetheless, the data collected show a better picture than anecdotal evidence would suggest, with a median figure of 98% Levy collection rates and the lowest was 70% collected.

BIDs employed some 1,104 full time equivalent staff [2023, 944; 2022, 993.58; 2021,1,040], an increase of 160 on last year.

The gender balance amongst BID chief executives and managers, based on simple forename analysis, has moved very strongly, from almost exactly 50:50 male:female in 2019, in 2024, it is 44:56%.

From the survey response, external staff, that is staff working for the BID but not on payroll, are used by 80% of BIDs [2023, 78%; 2022, 73%; 2021, 60%]; this includes staff working in security, marketing, and general operational activities including rangers and other staff.

One trend is for BIDs to be fully managed by external consultants, thus saving direct staffing costs and ensuring a wide range of expertise that can be called upon. Some 14% [2022,15%; 2021, 20%] of the sample described themselves as being managed in this fashion and it will be interesting to see if BID Boards continue this trend in the future. The shifts are small.

The data suggest that there are 2,901 [2023, 2,988] members of BID Boards across the British Isles [2022, 2,807; 2021, 2,754], whose task is to ensure that each BID is governed according to the normal rules of good corporate governance.

60% [2022, 84%; 2021, 78%] of BIDs reported having property owners involved in their Boards, with a median number of 1 and a maximum of 12; and there are 529 [2022, 522] property owner Board members across the British Isles. This is a flat trend, although there is an increased interest in property owner as a key stakeholder in BIDs.

The data highlights that local authorities are represented on nearly 90% of BID Boards - with 318 local authority Board members across the industry. In addition, there is a strong and growing local community presence on BID Boards: 33% of Boards have specific local community representation on them, such as civic organisations and resident groups, with a median number of 1 representative and a maximum of 6, with 168 such representatives across the country.

It seems that Boards are starting to address the issue of gender in their makeup, with the median number of women on Boards being 3, and an estimated 1,049 [2023, 1,018; 2022, 970; 2021, 882] women Board members across the industry. This still only amounts to 34% of all BID Board members.

On the matter of ethnic diversity, the responses identified 243 [2023, 288; 2022, 213; 2021, 177] Black, Asian and minority ethnic directors across the British Isles, with the highest number on a Board being 6.

94% [2023, 92%] of BIDs make their accounts publicly available to their levy payers. Of course, Companies House requires that all registered companies lodge accounts with them.

95% of BIDs have an operating agreement with its local authority, but some still don't have them.

Some 79% [76%] of BIDs feel that their agreements work well or moderately well; but some 17% feel that they don't, and this clearly is a matter of concern for them and indeed the industry. Others [4%] felt that they were not really used or understood by their local authorities.

40% [44%] of BIDs were engaging with ESG issues for either themselves

46% of BIDs were involved with their local DMO in one form or another and expect to see growth in this activity.

BIDs are still evolving in their thinking on support for professional services, with 67% [2023, 51%; 2022, 55%; 2021, 58%] of the respondents feeling it was relevant. There were examples of BIDs providing support for their service and professional sector levy-paying members, in the areas of utilities cost reduction – waste, power, recycling - and in the areas of free wireless, Wi-Fi support and broadband provision. There has also been a growth in office and administration area BIDs in the last year or so.

Some BIDs very concerned over the impact of the increasingly relaxed permitted development rights, whilst others saw them as a very positive way of bringing residents back into town centres.

Most BIDs 78.4% [68.4%) are involved in their Business Crime Reduction Partnerships, Pub and Shop Watch and other local policing projects. This is a 10-percentage point increase on last year and is indicative of the growing importance of BCRPs.

The types of involvement vary but the majority of support is around Pub and Shop watch, rangers and wardens, street pastors, policing and PCSOs, radios, cameras and software packages etc. Many BIDs are also involved in wider projects around taxi marshals, Betfair support, Best Bar None awards etc.

The survey data suggests that some 70% of all BIDs are engaged in one or another of the government levelling up project lines, with some involved in several, although 30% are not expecting to receive any funding. There is a major concern over the future of this funding, much of which has been vital over the past few years.

The purpose of the 18th National Survey 2024

The twelve months since the last survey continue to be turbulent. A change of government is already showing new possibilities, whilst other major concerns remain or are emerging. Climate change, a war in Ukraine and the Middle East, with a concomitant impact on fuel and food supplies and prices, the impact of Brexit, and a continuing increase in inflation have all had an impact on the business community and thus Business Improvement Districts.

At the same time, the last government indicated that it is considering a review of BID arrangements[1] and set up a new Innovation forum[2] to focus on examining how the BID model in England can be improved for the future, providing government with a set of recommendations for change. The forum will also be asked to recommend a set of voluntary standards for BIDs. This was very much part of the previous governments view that it wanted every BID to be transparent, accountable, and focused on making their local area better for the people living, working and visiting it. The newly renamed MHCLG is "establishing a BID innovation forum to bring together representatives from business, local government, community organisations, as well as high street experts and academics to explore how BIDs can work more innovatively and effectively in their communities".

Thus, and this year in particular, the purpose and uses of this 18th annual National Survey are important. It allows a snapshot to be taken of the BID community in the British Isles for policy makers, both local and more particularly national; it allows chief executives of BIDs to benchmark themselves against their peers and colleagues; it allows Boards of BIDs to both benchmark and identify key performance indicators for their BIDs; it allows levy payers and members of BIDs to ensure that they are getting all the services that they should, and it allows new and developing BIDs to design their services and operations in the most effective fashion.

It is designed to be used by different audiences for different needs; to be dipped into when needed, rather than a continuous piece of text and we hope it gives a sense of continuity to BID colleagues at this difficult time.

The previous fourteen reports, from 2010 onward, are available on the British BIDs [Bb] website[3]. The first three reports for 2007, 2008, and 2009 have not been located and we would be very pleased to complete the set.

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[1] https://www.theyworkforyou.com/lords/?id=2023-07-13a.1973.0
[2] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/business-improvement-district-innovation-forum-launches
[3] https://britishbids.info/services/national-bid-survey

The data sources and methodology 2024

There are two data sources for this survey: the core data for the whole BID industry, and a qualitative sample of the BID industry.

The Core Data for the whole BID Industry

The core data for all BIDs across the British Isles are gathered throughout the year by way of detailed news, social media and literature searching, which is used for the monthly British BIDs Ballot Watch.

These are collated and made available on the BID Index [4] on the British BIDs Website. For BIDs coming up to ballot, the business plans are collected and analysed to ensure the data are as accurate as possible. These data have been gathered consistently since this survey began, and the total population is now 1045 records of individual BIDs and their ballots.

These data sets change regularly, as ballots take place every week, and information is then uploaded as it becomes available, but the survey has tried to bring together as much relevant data as possible at the data collection date of September 1, 2024. Throughout this report, any data from previous year's surveys are provided in the text in [...] for comparative purposes.

A Qualitative Survey

There was also an individual BID questionnaire, collecting more qualitative data, using the on-line service Alchemer. This was issued by personal email in September 2023 to the 335 managers or chief executives of all the BIDs in the British Isles for whom contact details were available. BIDs were also contacted by email and telephone during the survey to remind them of the deadlines and the value of the survey. The final closing date was October 4, 2024.

118 [34.6%] BID managers or chief executives provided these further qualitative data by responding to this on-line questionnaire. Although response rates vary slightly in each of the various sections, as BIDs for a variety of reasons, primarily pressure of work, were more or less able to provide full data, we believe that they provide an accurate picture of the state of the BID industry.

[4] https://britishbids.info/services/bid-index

The analysis

The report is very consciously data focused, showing the means, medians and distributions of key data sets, providing histograms and pie charts of the relevant data so that the distributions can be seen easily and clearly. For many of the data sets the median – the position mid-way along the data distribution and thus representing the level below which half of all BIDs are positioned - is often the most useful.

Active BIDs in the British Isles September 2024

The active BID community in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ireland now totals 341 [335 in the last survey] at the beginning of September 2024, representing 134,098 [132,962] businesses, investing £154,620,538 [£150,316,106] into their local economies.

This is a net increase of six BIDs, 1,136 businesses and £1,633,378; a 2.8% percentage points investment growth over last year.

After the Covid-19 pandemic and the recent economic recession there were clearly concerns about the survival of BIDs, particularly those coming to ballot following the lockdowns. These fears were unfounded and after a dip during the pandemic year the number of BIDs has increased over pre-pandemic levels.

BIDs are distributed widely across the five administrations of the British Isles; a Google map shows this spread; from Lerwick in the Shetlands to St Ives in Cornwall.

Figure 1 Map of BIDs in the British Isles



Types of Business Improvement District

There continues to be an increasing differentiation amongst BIDs, as different communities and groups of business respond to a changing environment. BIDs in tourism, food and drink, and area-wide BIDs, as well as Business Park, Industrial and Cultural and Commercial BIDs are becoming increasingly evident.

There is variety in the types of BID, with a continuing move away from the original 'crime and grime' retail-led high street BID to a more nuanced range of BIDs that reflect their different business communities, with industrial BID morphing into mixed area and commercial bodies, and Accommodation BIDs and new larger boundaries becoming evident.

British BIDs have regular meetings of national groupings of BIDs in both Industrial[5] and Coastal areas[6] which are well attended and very successful in bringing together specific and specialist issues.

Table 1: Types of active BID across the British Isles on September 1, 2024

BID TYPE	NUMBER	NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	LEVY INCOME
Accommodation	**2**	**78**	**£954,000**
Area BID	**11**	**4,091**	**£13,272,559**
Business Park	**13**	**2,565**	**£3,071,140**
City Centre	**34**	**23,487**	**£29,741,782**
Commercial	**4**	**1,769**	**£6,894,143**
Culture & Commerce	**1**	**450**	**£1,302,441**
Destination	**3**	**2,373**	**£1,180,000**
Digital BID	**1**	**386**	**£70,000**
Food & Drink	**1**	**40**	**£14,639**
Industrial	**16**	**3,159**	**£2,688,831**
Industrial Park	**2**	**392**	**£202,000**
Leisure	**2**	**389**	**£2,477,811**
Mixed Area	**19**	**6,642**	**£16,212,114**
Property Owner	**4**	**798**	**£6,979,779**
Retail	**1**	**418**	**£745,623**
Retail & Leisure	**3**	**1,184**	**£5,197,454**
Tourism	**7**	**3,360**	**£2,363,450**
Town Centre	**215**	**82,097**	**£60,647,620**
Town Centre/Tourism	**2**	**420**	**£605,152**
Grand Total	**341**	**134,098**	**£154,620,538**

Countries and Regions

Clearly BIDs are local, reflecting the needs, aspirations, and numbers of their local business communities. Nonetheless, it is useful to see the key distributions across the

[5] https://britishbids.info/industrial-bids-group
[6] https://britishbids.info/coastal-bids-group

British Isles and the more detailed regional data give some sense of the wide geographical spread of BIDs.

Table 2: National and regional data for BIDs

REGIONS & COUNTRIES	NUMBERS	NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	LEVY INCOME
East Midlands	10	5,660	£4,703,355
East of England	30	11,690	£10,086,070
Greater London	76	22,719	£61,761,839
Ireland	5	7,013	£5,211,213
North East England	6	2,808	£3,408,678
North West England	35	11,843	£11,633,594
Northern Ireland	8	3,088	£2,993,228
Scotland	34	11,445	£6,318,392
South East England	43	18,006	£15,592,537
South West England	32	13,679	£10,234,688
Wales	13	3,947	£2,927,024
West Midlands	32	13,339	£11,976,500
Yorkshire and the Humber	17	8,861	£7,773,420
Grand Total	341	134,098	£154,620,538

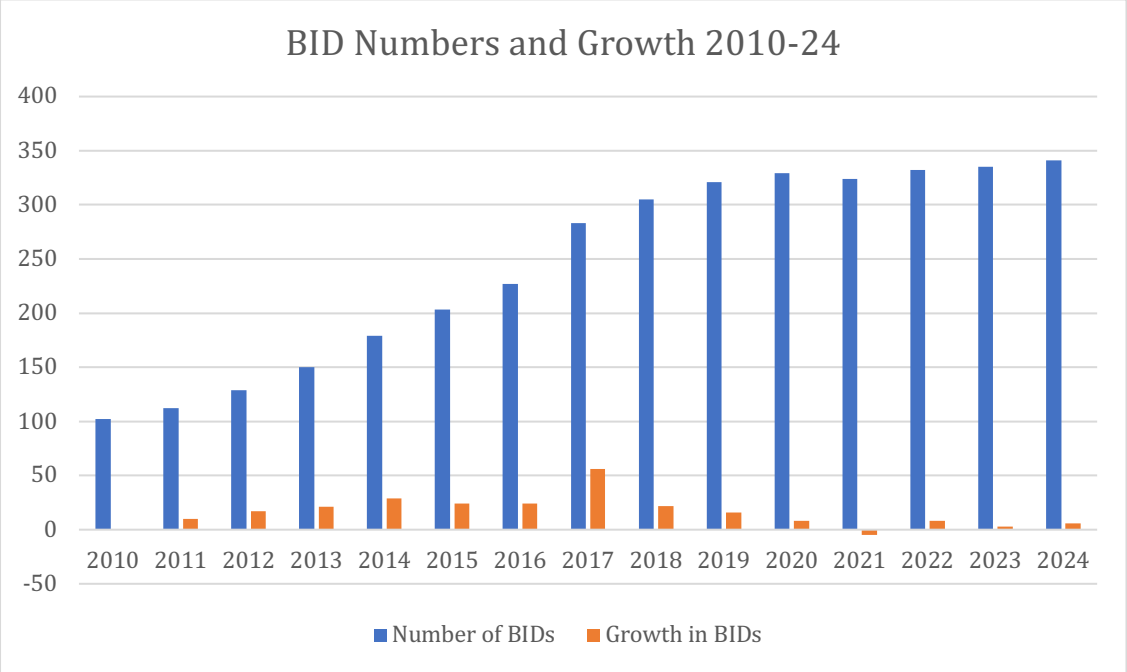
Annual Change in BID Numbers 2010-2024

The emergence of new BIDs has been impressive since the first BID became operational in 2005. In the past twenty years new BIDs have come into existence in every year except the Covid-19 year of 2021, albeit with a slightly varied annual growth rate, and the data are presented here both as a table and a graph. However, it is clear that the initial fast growth has come to an end and a more steady development is now the norm. Each year, as some BIDs fail at ballot, more BIDs come into existence to give a smaller net growth than the number of new BIDs.

Table 3: Growth of BIDs by number 2010-2024

Survey year	Number of BIDs	Growth in BIDs	Total Levy Investment	Total Hereditaments	Investment per Hereditament
2010	102		£23,483,888		
2011	112	10	£22,085,567	19,353	£1,141
2012	129	17	£39,883,454	54,110	£737
2013	150	21	£51,847,486	64,150	£808
2014	179	29	£63,000,000	59,771	£1,054
2015	203	24	£80,124,969	71,703	£1,117
2016	227	24	£78,659,124	78,549	£1,001
2017	283	56	£99,971,741	106,262	£941
2018	305	22	£110,575,380	120,735	£916
2019	321	16	£125,205,608	128,785	£972
2020	329	8	£132,493,286	133,163	£995
2021	324	-5	£134,979,983	125,023	£1,080
2022	332	8	£144,735,669	121,485	£1,191
2023	335	3	£150,316,106	132,962	£1,131
2024	341	6	£154,620,538	134,098	£1,153

Figure 2: Total number of BIDs and net BID growth 2010-2024



New BIDs 2023-24

12 [8 last year] new BIDs came into being in the past twelve months since September 1, 2023, with some different types of BIDs evident. Although this is more than previous years, it is clear that the growth of BIDs is slowing.

Table 4: New BIDs in 2023-4 by type

BID BY TERM	BID TYPE	COUNT	TURNOUT	IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	IN FAVOUR BY RV
1ST TERM	Accommodation	1	41.3	51.6	52.9
	Mixed Area	1	31.6	90.6	94.7
	Town Centre	10	32.9	71.5	71.8
Total		12	33.5	71.4	72.1

Developing BIDs 2024

The number of new BIDs being developed is a key strategic issue and the story here remains strong. There are currently 60 [61] BIDs that are in the development stage, with ballots coming up in the next year or so. This is a slight reduction on the number that were developing in the last survey, some of last year's survey have come to successful ballot whilst new developing BIDs have emerged. This still suggests a continued enthusiasm and increasing perceived benefit to local business communities.

There is always some complexity in identifying a developing BID; for this work, we have taken notifications from the developing BIDs themselves, and have searched the literature, particularly local newspapers, as widely as possible.

These 60 developing BIDs vary by country and region, with both Scotland and Wales seeing them as key drivers of new development.

Table 5: Developing BIDs by Country and Region

REGION	COUNT
East Midlands	4
East of England	3
Greater London	5
North West England	3
Northern Ireland	1
Scotland	16
South East England	9
South West England	6
Wales	5
West Midlands	5
Yorkshire and the Humber	3
Grand Total	60

BID Loan Fund: Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) 2013-2019

The BID Loan Fund was an initiative established in 2013 to assist with the development of new BIDs in town and city BIDs in England. It ceased in 2019 and is currently not available, although British BIDs are pressing for a renewal and the scheme was still being reviewed by the previous Department.

The number of loans that were awarded was 33 and the amount of loans granted was £1,086,135 in total. The scheme was administered on behalf of the then Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by British BIDs through the National BIDs Advisory Board. Funding methods were also available in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, under different funding mechanisms. Upon a successful ballot outcome, loans were repaid from levy receipts and, as repayments were made, further tranches of loans could be made available. Thus, over the six years 11 tranches were allocated.

Ballot matters

Ballots and Outcomes 2004-2024

Under the Local Government Act 2003 Part 4[7] and the appropriate Regulations in England[8], Scotland[9], Wales[10], Northern Ireland[11], and the Irish Republic [12], BIDs are established by ballots, normally quinquennial. In England and Wales each BID must gain a simple majority of the votes cast, as well as a majority of the rateable values [RV] of all those votes cast. The ballot criteria in Scotland and Northern Ireland require four criteria to be achieved; the turnout must be greater than 25% by both rateable value and number of voters, and approval must be greater than 50% by ballot and RV.

The relevant local authority, or its nominated agent, runs the ballot; in order to continue beyond each term, a further ballot is also required, normally, nowadays, every five years. Thus, with 341 BIDs, there will be some 68 ballots a year, an average of just over five per month. Most ballots tend to take place in the spring and the autumn as they are often timed to fit in with the local authority electoral cycle or the start of the financial year.

All Ballots all BIDs 2004 – 2024

The data on Ballots and their outcomes are always complex to map, but since the original legislation in 2004, and the first ballot in November 2004, our data suggest that there has been a total of 1057 BIDs ballots, of which 104 have been unsuccessful, a failure rate of 9.4%. Some BIDs have gone to ballot at least once, and some several times as they continue for further terms. Some BIDs have ceased mid-term, and others have ceased at the end of a term, by not going to ballot. Of the 104 ballots that have failed, some 20 have then gone on to a successful ballot.

[7] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/26/part/4
[8] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/2443/contents/made
[9] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2007/202/contents/made
[10] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2005/1312/contents/made
[11] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2014/143/contents/made
[12] https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2006/act/42/section/6/enacted/en/html

Table 6: All BIDs ballot outcomes 2004-2024 showing outcomes by %

	Count	Average TURNOUT	Average IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	Average IN FAVOUR BY RV
1ST TERM	409	42.5	73.8	76.2
2ND TERM	295	45.9	75.6	80.1
3RD TERM	164	45.6	82.1	84.8
4TH TERM	72	44.3	83.2	88.0
5TH TERM	7	41.2	88.2	90.6
Alteration Ballot	1			
Ballot on hold	1			
Challenge Upheld	1	31.0	68.0	90.0
Challenged and a reballot held	1		51.0	55.0
Did not go to ballot in 2021 for new term.	1			
Successful but void	1		70.7	75.6
UNSUCCESSFUL	104	46.4	47.0	47.8
Grand Total	1057	44.4	73.7	77.0

Ballots for Current BIDs 2024

The analysis of ballot outcomes by term of current 341 successful BID ballots suggest that success increases slightly with each term, as BID teams get more confident at meeting the needs of their levy payers.

However, the data for the current 341 BIDs, show that whilst the ballot outcomes by number are 6.19 and by RV are 6.5 percentage points above the 18-year averages, the turnout is 3.2 percentage points below this long-term norm, reflecting *inter alia* issues with postal delivery of ballot papers, covid and working from home.

Table 7: Ballot data for all the current 341 BIDs, averaged by term

	COUNT	TURNOUT	IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	IN FAVOUR BY RV
1ST TERM	59	36.6	76.8	80.8
2ND TERM	123	40.9	76.8	81.4
3RD TERM	88	42.1	82.7	84.6
4TH TERM	64	43.9	83.4	87.6
5TH TERM	7	41.2	88.2	90.6
Grand Total	341	41.1	79.7	83.5

Ballots during the past twelve months 2023-4

74 BIDs have come to ballot in the past 12 months, an average of six a month, either new or at various stages of their term, giving a sense of the workload of the national head office levy payers who cast their votes across the whole country.

5 ballots were unsuccessful in the past twelve months, resulting in a failure rate of 6.7%; this failure rate, lower than the 18-year average, is a useful measure of the value that many levy payers put on their BIDs.

Table 8: BIDs which have come to ballot in the last 12 months.

BID BY TERM	COUNT	Average TURNOUT	IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	IN FAVOUR BY RV
1ST TERM	12	33.5	71.4	72.1
2ND TERM	12	38.9	75.4	83.8
3RD TERM	25	42.2	81.4	83.3
4TH TERM	17	39.9	85.5	88.1
5TH TERM	2	42.2	83.5	87.3
UNSUCCESSFUL	5	40.6	44.2	39.9
Successful but void	1		70.7	75.6
Grand Total	74	39.6	77.1	79.7

The ballot data for many of the BIDs, particularly those in their fourth and fifth terms give a very positive picture of success – approval ratings of 98% and 99% by both number and rateable value are very positive.

New BIDs ballot data 2023-4

Twelve new BIDs came into being during the past 12 months; the turnout figures were 6.1 percentage points below the total 12-month norm, with the votes in favour and by RV were also below the 12-month norm, at 5.7 and 7.6 percentage points respectively.

Table 9: New BIDs Ballot data 2023-4

BID TYPE	COUNT	Average TURNOUT	IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	IN FAVOUR BY RV
Accommodation	1	41.3	51.6	52.9
Mixed Area	1	31.6	90.6	94.7
Town Centre	10	32.9	71.5	71.8
Total	**12**	**33.5**	**71.4**	**72.1**

Failed BIDs last twelve months 2023-4

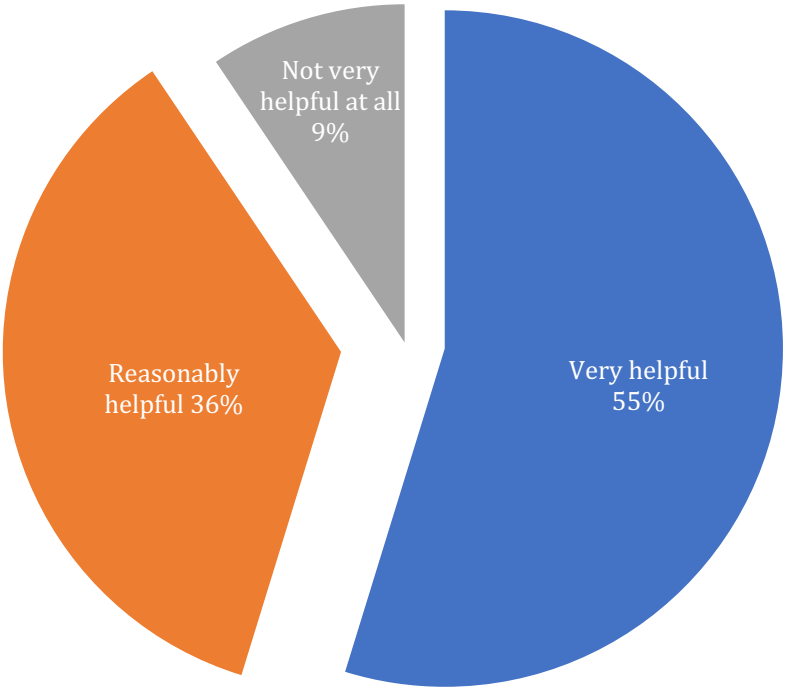
Table 10: Failed ballots 2023-2024

	Count	Average TURNOUT	IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	Average IN FAVOUR BY RV
Accommodation	1	62.9	27.3	24.5
Area BID	1	33.2	45.8	50.4
Destination	2	36.9	50.4	40.8
Town Centre	1	33.4	47.0	43.0
Grand Total	**5**	**40.6**	**44.2**	**39.9**

Local Authority support in ballots

BIDs were asked review how they perceived the level of support from their local authorities in their ballots. Most local authorities were very supportive at ballot, with most BIDs [55%] regarding their local authorities as very helpful, 36% were seen as sound and only 9.6% were seen as unhelpful.

Figure 3 Perceived local authority support in the last year



Ballot papers

BIDs were asked if they had had problems with ballot papers in their ballot. 57% of BIDs had had problems with ballot papers in their ballot, and the median was some 15% of ballot papers lost, with an upper quartile losing 25%.

Figure 4 Ballot paper problems

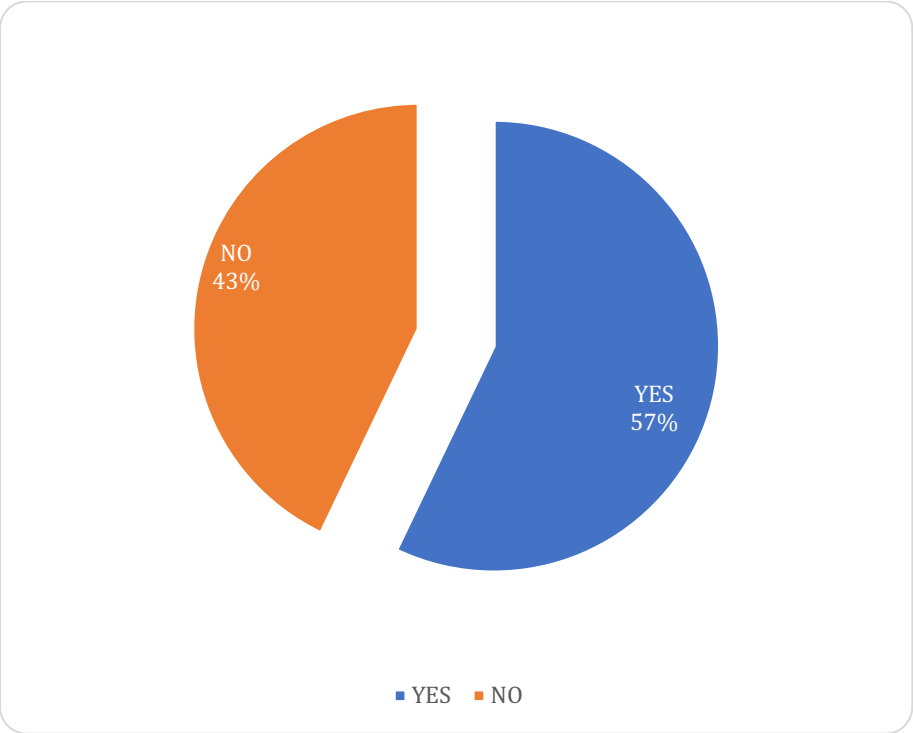


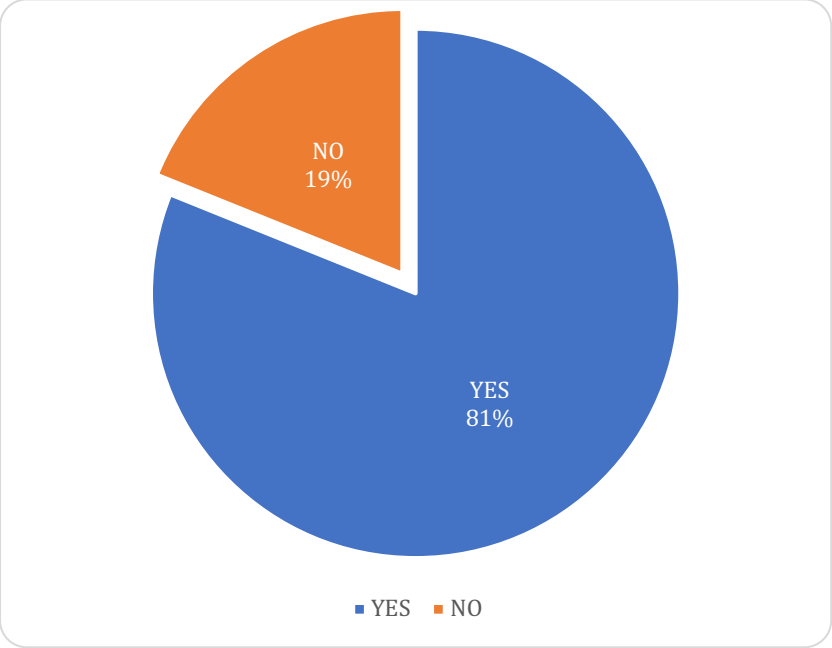
Table 11 Estimated lost ballot papers in ballots this year

Measure	%
Lowest	0
Bottom Quartile	10
Median	15
Upper Quartile	20

Obtaining voter data

Most BIDs [81%] seem to be confident that they were easily able to produce a list of voters from their list of levy payers.

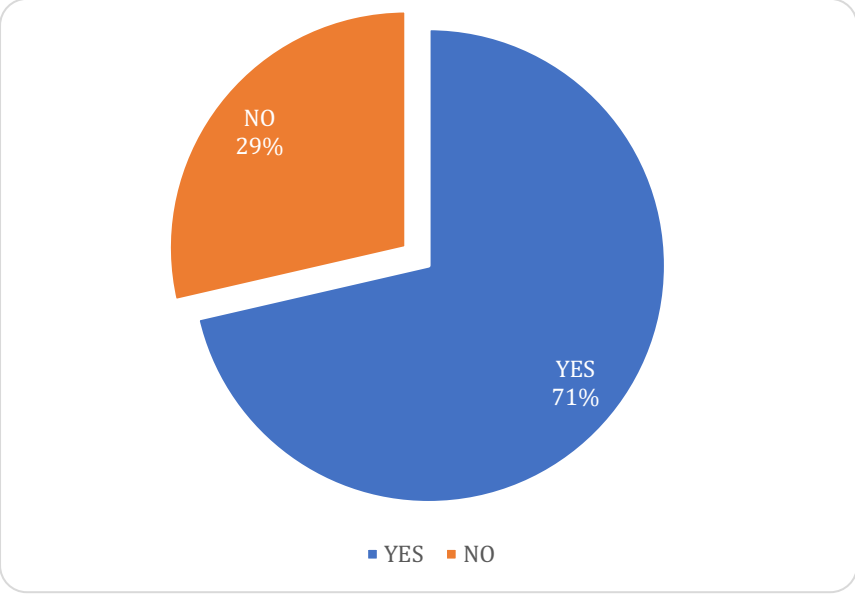
Figure 5 Ease of producing voter lists



Engaging with National levy payers

And similarly, most BIDs [71%] felt that they were able to engage with national levy payers for the ballot.

Figure 6 ease of engaging with national levy payers.



Ballot Turnout for all Current BIDs

A key performance measure for BIDs at ballot is the % turnout, with local and national levy payers keen to ensure transparency and accountability. Whilst the average turnout % for all ballots over the past 20 years is 40%, analysis of the turnouts for the current 341 live BIDs allows a more granular picture to emerge.

Data over the past 20 years suggests that the turnout performance is reasonable, with half of all the current BIDs obtaining a turnout of at least 40%, and 25% obtaining a turnout of at least 47.9%. The highest turnout was 82%.

As a national comparison, the turnout for the English Mayoral elections in 2021 was 26%, similar to the turnout of the other metro-mayor elections held in 2022[13]. The average turnout in local elections in England in 2023 was 32%[14]. The average turnout for BIDs is thus some 10 percentage points better than English local authority elections.

One key factor in this is the number of hereditaments in a BID, along with the decisions on thresholds that each BID can make.

Table 12: Ballot measures % for all 341 current BIDs

Ballot measure	Turnout	Votes by number	Votes by RV
Lowest	**16.0**	**52.3**	**50.3**
Lower Quartile	**32.9**	**75.9**	**72.0**
Median	**40.0**	**85.9**	**80.5**
Upper Quartile	**47.9**	**93.5**	**89.0**
Highest	**82.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Most Successful Ballots 2004-2024

Some outcomes are truly excellent, with some very high figures for all three performance indicators. This table shows the averaged maximum results for the three key performance measures over the past 20 years. Interestingly, as ballot performance.

[13] https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9545/
[14] https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/research-reports-and-data/our-reports-and-data-past-elections-and-referendums/report-may-2023-local-elections-england

improves over terms, turnout reduces, possibly the result of increased confidence and an assumption of a positive outcome.

Table 13: The 'Maximum' ballot data for any BID 2004-2024

CURRENT TERM	NO OF BALLOTS	Maximum TURNOUT %	Maximum IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER %	Maximum IN FAVOUR BY RV %
1ST TERM	409	88	98.1	99.42
2ND TERM	295	83	98.64	99.8
3RD TERM	164	80	100	100
4TH TERM	72	79	98	99.49
5TH TERM	7	51	99.5	99.7
Alteration Ballot	1			
Ballot on hold	1			
Challenge Upheld	1	31	68	90
Challenged and a reballot held	1		51	55
Did not go to ballot in 2021 for new term	1			
Successful but void	1		70.69	75.62
UNSUCCESSFUL	104	81	84	82.18
Grand Total	1,057	88	100	100

Failed BIDs 2004-2023

104 BIDs have failed in their ballots over twenty years, 9.4% of all ballots held. Clearly, those which failed did not gather enough votes either by number and/or by RV. Some 20% of these ballot failures went on to succeed.

Table 14: Failed BIDs at ballot 2004-2024

	Count	Average TURNOUT	Average IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	Average IN FAVOUR BY RV
Unsuccessful at ballot for Third Term	**1**		**59.0**	**30.0**
Unsuccessful at ballot for Fourth Term	**1**			
Unsuccessful at ballot for Second Term	**6**	**39.4**	**41.5**	**45.5**
Unsuccessful at First Term ballot	**69**	**46.8**	**47.0**	**46.7**
Unsuccessful at re-run ballot for a First Term	**1**	**56.0**	**64.0**	**42.0**
Unsuccessful at Second First term ballot	**2**	**46.5**	**44.0**	**41.0**
Unsuccessful at Second Term ballot	**18**	**47.6**	**47.3**	**57.2**
Unsuccessful at Third Term ballot	**1**	**31.0**	**67.0**	**46.6**
Unsuccessful for Third Term	**2**	**33.0**	**47.1**	**49.2**
Unsuccessful Re-ballot for Second Term	**1**		**36.0**	
Unsuccessful Re-Run Ballot for a Third Term	**1**		**47.8**	**40.6**
Unsuccessful Re-run ballot for First Term	**1**	**60.0**	**46.6**	
Grand Total	**104**	**46.4**	**47.0**	**47.8**

Ceasing BIDs 2004-2023

47 BIDs ceased during their term, or decided not to go to ballot, often a result of a loss of Board enthusiasm or even a sense that their job was done.

Table 15 Ballot data for BIDs that ceased 2004-2024

	Count	Average TURNOUT	Average IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	Average IN FAVOUR BY RV
Ceased during 1st Term	**7**	**34.2**	**65.4**	**74.0**
Ceased during 2nd Term	**2**	**48.8**	**87.5**	**88.5**
Ceased during 4th Term	**4**	**35.7**	**73.6**	**72.4**
Ceased end of 1st Term	**23**	**46.8**	**71.1**	**76.1**
Ceased end of 2nd Term	**2**	**42.0**	**71.1**	**63.4**
Ceased end of 3rd Term	**9**	**46.8**	**85.1**	**83.0**
Grand Total	**47**	**44.0**	**74.0**	**76.8**

Financial Matters

There are a range of financial matters that are vital to BIDs. This section presents data on all of them in turn.

Levy Rate % for BIDs in 2024

The BID levy rate is, most usually, the multiplier of the non-domestic rateable value by which the levy amount is worked out and is therefore an important issue for BIDs and their members. This does not apply in Scotland or Ireland, where the legislation is different and more flexible. The Industry Criteria ask that up to 1.5% is the expected norm, with some allowances made for up to 2% in exceptional circumstances or smaller locations where rateable values are lower and therefore require a higher multiplier to achieve a viable budget.

From the current data, of 341 BIDs, 288 [84%] were using a % levy rate, with a median at 1.5%. The averages, maxima and minima of levy % across BIDs are narrow and suggests that the issue has become standardised across the industry with most exceptions being small industrial BIDs. 36 BIDs, 10.5% use a banded approach and 16, 4.6% use a variable approach.

Table 16: % Levy rates of 341 current BIDs by Term

Row Labels	Average BID LEVY	Count
1ST TERM	1.5	59
2ND TERM	1.5	123
3RD TERM	1.5	88
4TH TERM	1.6	64
5TH TERM	1.7	7
Average	1.5	341

Again, the spread and deviation of levy rates shows a median of 1.5%, with the largest at 6%, and 7 BIDs with levy rate of greater than 2%. The larger RVs in London have allowed BIDs there to use lower % levy rates.

Table 17: Range of levy % across 341 current BIDs

Measure	Levy %
Lowest	0.28
Bottom Quartile	1.3
Median	1.5
Upper Quartile	1.8
Highest	6.0

Hereditaments

Hereditaments are those properties or assets owned by business levy payers or voters within the BID area and listed on the non-domestic rating list.

The distribution of hereditaments suggests that half of all BIDs have fewer than 377 [385, 2023] hereditaments, the largest number is 2,500 and currently eight BIDs have more than 1,000 hereditaments.

Table 18: The varying numbers of Hereditaments in current BIDs

Measure	Number of Hereditaments
Smallest	**40**
Bottom Quartile	**266**
Median	**377**
Upper Quartile	**507**
Highest	**2,500**

Different Types of BIDs by Hereditament, Spend and %

Table 19: Distribution of hereditaments and spend across different types of BIDs

BID TYPE	NUMBER OF BIDs	NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	LEVY INCOME	% of TOTAL
Accommodation	2	78	£954,000	0.6%
Area BID	11	4,091	£13,272,559	8.6%
Business Park	13	2,565	£3,071,140	2.0%
City Centre	34	23,487	£29,741,782	19.2%
Commercial	4	1,769	£6,894,143	4.5%
Culture & Commerce	1	450	£1,302,441	0.8%
Destination	3	2,373	£1,180,000	0.8%
Digital BID	1	386	£70,000	0.0%
Food & Drink	1	40	£14,639	0.0%
Industrial	16	3,159	£2,688,831	1.7%
Industrial Park	2	392	£202,000	0.1%
Leisure	2	389	£2,477,811	1.6%
Mixed Area	19	6,642	£16,212,114	10.5%
Property Owner	4	798	£6,979,779	4.5%
Retail	1	418	£745,623	0.5%
Retail & Leisure	3	1,184	£5,197,454	3.4%
Tourism	7	3,360	£2,363,450	1.5%
Town Centre	215	82,097	£60,647,620	39.2%
Town Centre/Tourism	2	420	£605,152	0.4%
Grand Total	**341**	**134,098**	**£154,620,538**	1

Regional Distribution of BIDs by Hereditament, Spend and %

The regional distribution of BIDs and hereditaments is becoming strategically important, as governments and administrations try to address the issues of high street decline and levelling up, and thus see BIDs as very much part of the answer.

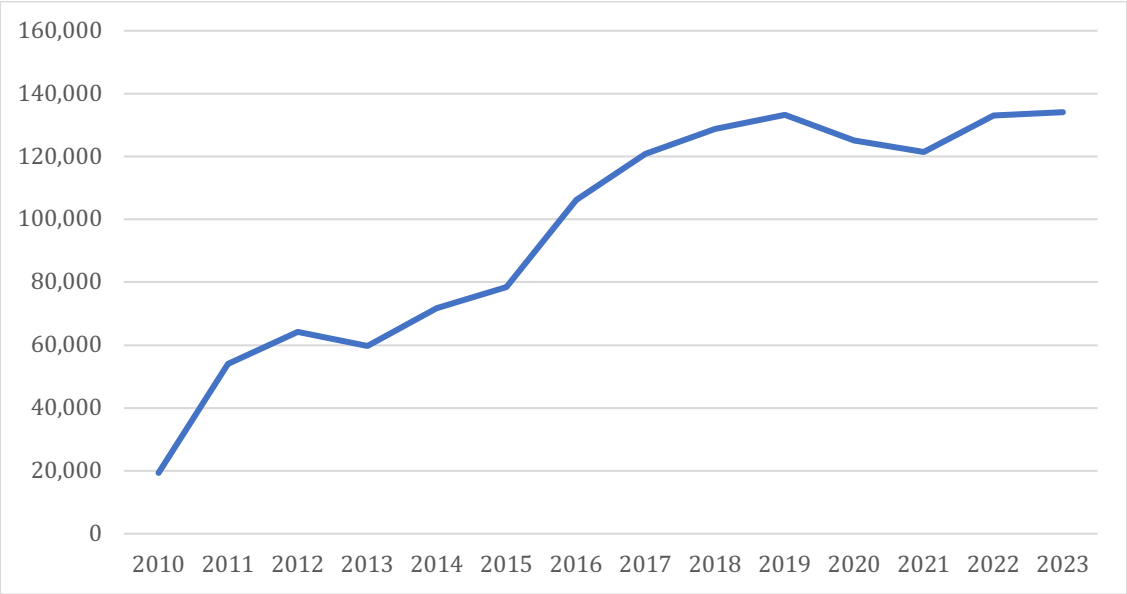
Table 20: Distribution of BIDs, hereditaments, £ spent by region and %

REGION	COUNT	NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	LEVY INCOME	% of NATIONAL LEVY SPEND
East Midlands	10	5,660	£4,703,355	3.0%
East of England	30	11,690	£10,086,070	6.5%
Greater London	76	22,719	£61,761,839	39.9%
Ireland	5	7,013	£5,211,213	3.4%
North East England	6	2,808	£3,408,678	2.2%
North West England	35	11,843	£11,633,594	7.5%
Northern Ireland	8	3,088	£2,993,228	1.9%
Scotland	34	11,445	£6,318,392	4.1%
South East England	43	18,006	£15,592,537	10.1%
South West England	32	13,679	£10,234,688	6.6%
Wales	13	3,947	£2,927,024	1.9%
West Midlands	32	13,339	£11,976,500	7.7%
Yorkshire and the Humber	17	8,861	£7,773,420	5.0%
Grand Total	341	134,098	£154,620,538	

Growth of BIDs by Hereditament Numbers

The total number of hereditaments across all BIDs in the survey this year is 134,098 [2023, 132,962; 2022, 121,485], an increase of 12,613 from 2022.

Figure 7 Annual growth of hereditaments over past 14 years



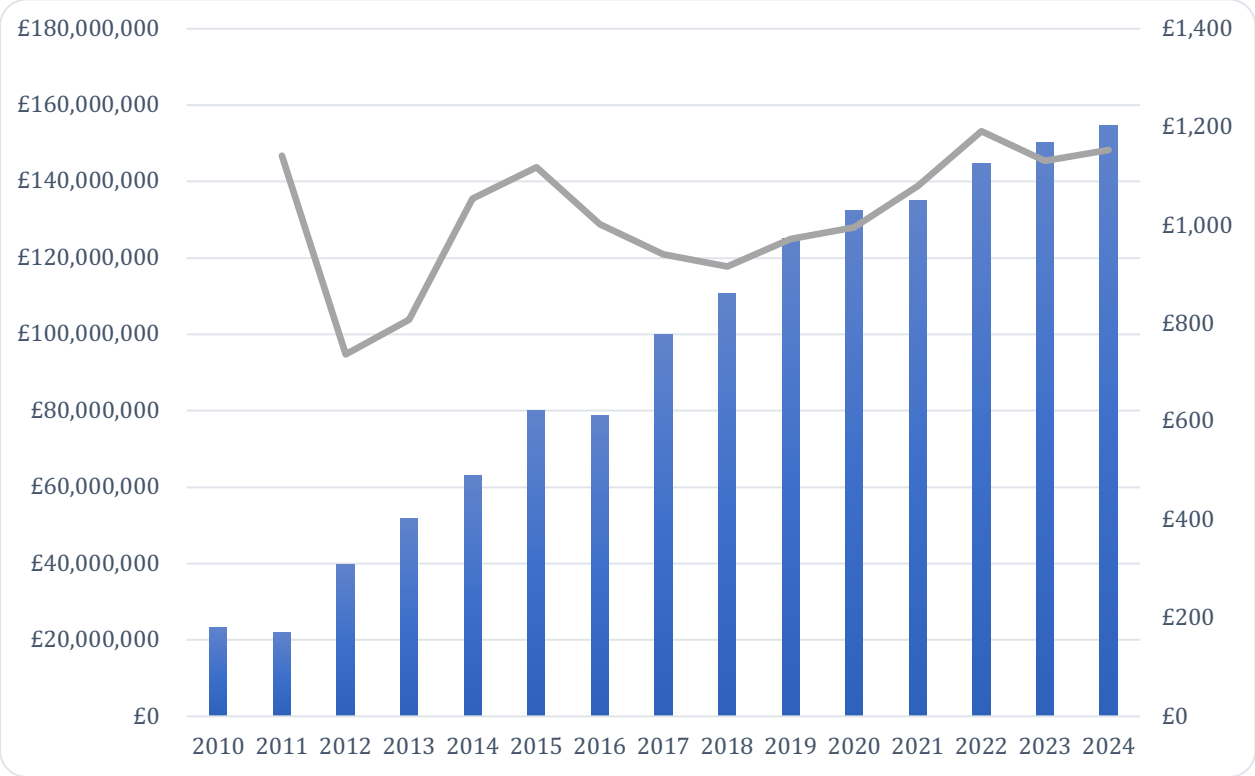
Economic Impact of BIDs

BIDs are about economic impact; improving their business districts so that businesses can perform better. Thus, the amount of money they invest is an important signifier and that amount, which is now considerable, has grown over time and by business. The data show a steady growth in the total BID investment from levy income over the past 15 years, but with some variation in the average amount per hereditament over the same period. It is possible that this variation per hereditament relates to a mixture of BID boundary changes, BIDs lifting their payment thresholds as they increasingly use the small business rates relief figure, growth in the size of BIDs, and improved data collection.

Table 21 BID spending over time 2010-2024

Survey Year	Number of BIDs	Total Levy Investment	Total Hereditaments	Investment per Hereditament
2010	102	£23,483,888		
2011	112	£22,085,567	19,353	£1,141
2012	129	£39,883,454	54,110	£737
2013	150	£51,847,486	64,150	£808
2014	179	£63,000,000	59,771	£1,054
2015	203	£80,124,969	71,703	£1,117
2016	227	£78,659,124	78,549	£1,001
2017	283	£99,971,741	106,262	£941
2018	305	£110,575,380	120,735	£916
2019	321	£125,205,608	128,785	£972
2020	329	£132,493,286	133,163	£995
2021	324	£134,979,983	125,023	£1,080
2022	332	£144,735,669	121,485	£1,191
2023	335	£150,316,106	132,962	£1,131
2024	341	£154,620,538	134,098	£1,153

Figure 8 Total BID investment from levy income 2010-2024 and by hereditament



Levy Income and Expenditure

The BID levy income - which is then spent back in the local business community - is the income collected directly via the mandatory BID levy and does not include any additional income.

From the population of 341 active BIDs, the total BID levy income raised and spent across the British Isles is £154,620,538 [2023, £150,316,106] an increase over last year; some of this increase is due to RV changes and some is the growth in BID size and number.

Interestingly, the income per hereditament over time has fluctuated. There may be a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the RV changes and revaluations over the past few years have resulted in both regional and typological levy income changes; secondly, as individual BIDs have become more tactical in their ballot and governance planning, by way of higher thresholds and capped levy income, the income per hereditament may change at the national level.

Levy Income and Expenditure by Term

Levy income and expenditure varies widely across the BIDs, with the smallest collecting and spending £14,639 and the largest £4,100,000 per annum.

Apart from the 2020 Covid year[15], there was a clear and steady growth in the number of BIDs over the past ten years, with a concomitant increase in hereditaments and thus the total levy income and expenditure,

Table 22: Measures of levy income and expenditure by term

BID TERMS	No	LEVY INCOME	HEREDITAMENTS	Avg. LEVY INCOME	Max. LEVY INCOME	Min. LEVY INCOME
1ST TERM	59	£24,916,740	17062	£444,942	£4,092,320	£25,641
2ND TERM	123	£51,135,526	48809	£415,736	£4,100,000	£14,639
3RD TERM	88	£38,403,242	35336	£441,417	£2,450,000	£37,500
4TH TERM	64	£31,615,554	30169	£518,288	£3,387,025	£55,000
5TH TERM	7	£8,549,476	2722	£1,221,354	£4,100,000	£391,000
Grand Total	341	£154,620,538	134098	£462,936	£4,100,000	£14,639

The measures of the levy income of current BIDs continue to show a wide range, with the median figure – that is half of all the BIDs – having a levy income of £295,500 [2023, £294,278; 2022, £285,691] or less; and 75% of all BIDs having a levy income of £529,554 [2023, £522,034; 2022, £486,556] or less.

Table 23: Measures of BID annual levy spend £ across 341 active BIDs.

Measure	Amount £
Lowest	£14,639
Bottom Quartile	£154,909
Median	£295,500
Upper Quartile	£529,554
Highest	£4,100,000
Number of BIDs over £1,000,000 pa	31

[15] https://www.ajmc.com/view/a-timeline-of-covid19-developments-in-2020

On the other hand, there are now 31 BIDs with levy incomes of £1million or over; all are in the major cities, where rateable values and thus income is higher; and the highest levy amount is £4,100,000.

Mean Levy per Hereditament

Although it is a slightly hypothetical figure, from the data it is possible to identify the average levy per hereditament for BIDs in the British Isles; with 134,098 [2023, 132,962; 2022, 121,485] hereditaments raising and spending £154,620,538 [2023, £150,316,106; 2022, £144,735,669], the average income and spend is £1,153 [2023, £1,131; 2022, £1,191] per hereditament, slightly more than the £1,080 per hereditament three years ago.

Table 24 Mean levy per hereditament over time

Survey year	Investment per hereditament
2011	£1,141
2012	£737
2013	£808
2014	£1,054
2015	£1,117
2016	£1,001
2017	£941
2018	£916
2019	£972
2020	£995
2021	£1,080
2022	£1,191
2023	£1,131
2024	£1,153

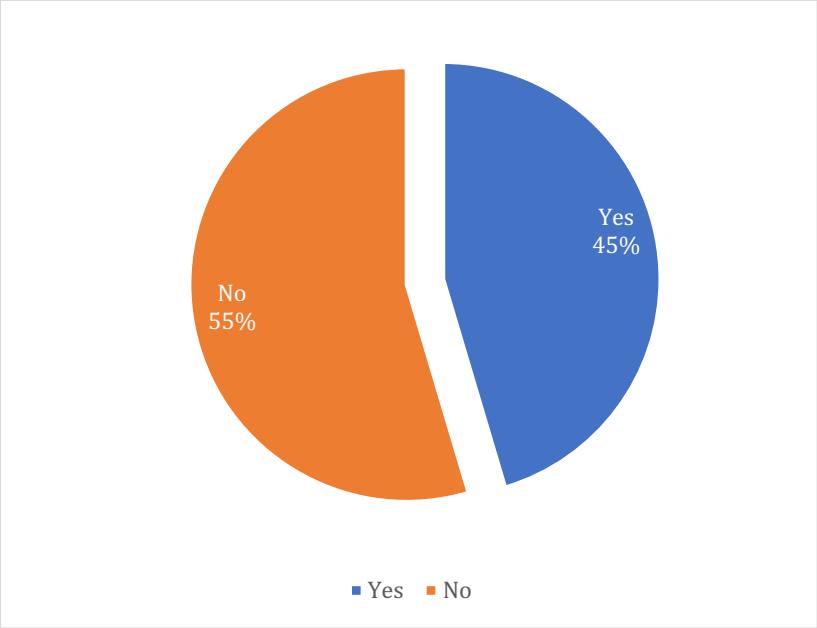
Additional Income

BIDs were asked to identify any additional income, that is a contribution made to the BID over and above the levy income. There is a variety of sources for such income and the report tries to identify some of them. Both last year and this year, during the Covid epidemic, and recently by way of Levelling up funding money was available from both central and local government by way of a range of grants; these have been counted.

Voluntary Contributions

Many BIDs [45%] received extra money from voluntary contributions, including local charities, local businesses outside the BID area, or businesses below the threshold. This is substantially less than previous surveys; in 2021, 61% of BIDs received voluntary contributions

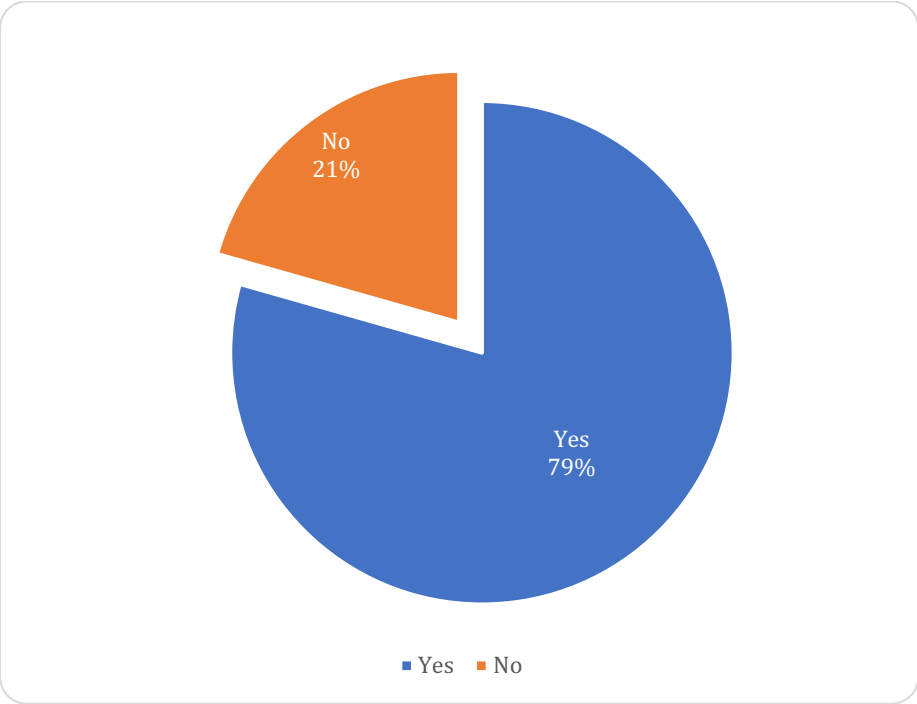
Figure 9 Voluntary financial contributions to BIDs 2024



External Non-levy Income

Most BIDs 79% [2023, 73%] also generate non-levy income from more formal sources, such as entrepreneurial activities, grant income, government funding, or local authority grants.

Figure 10 The % of BIDs generating external income.



The data this year shows a reduction in amounts raised. The median figure for additional external income in a BID is £44,230 [2023, £46,061; 2022, £60,000], amounting to a reduction of 7% of BID income across the country from last year's £21,758,676.

Table 25: Measures of additional income for BIDs

External Income	£
Lower Quartile	**£19,434**
Median	**£44,230**
Upper Quartile	**£113,426**
Maximum	**£1,589,407**
Total	**£16,549,649**

The projects funded by this external income are enormously varied, but this word cloud gives some sense of the sort of projects.

Figure 4 Externally funded BID projects



Total BID Spending 2024

Bringing together the two data sets – BID levy income and external income - allows a picture of the total actual investment by BIDs across the British Isles to emerge.

Table 26: Total BID funding 2024

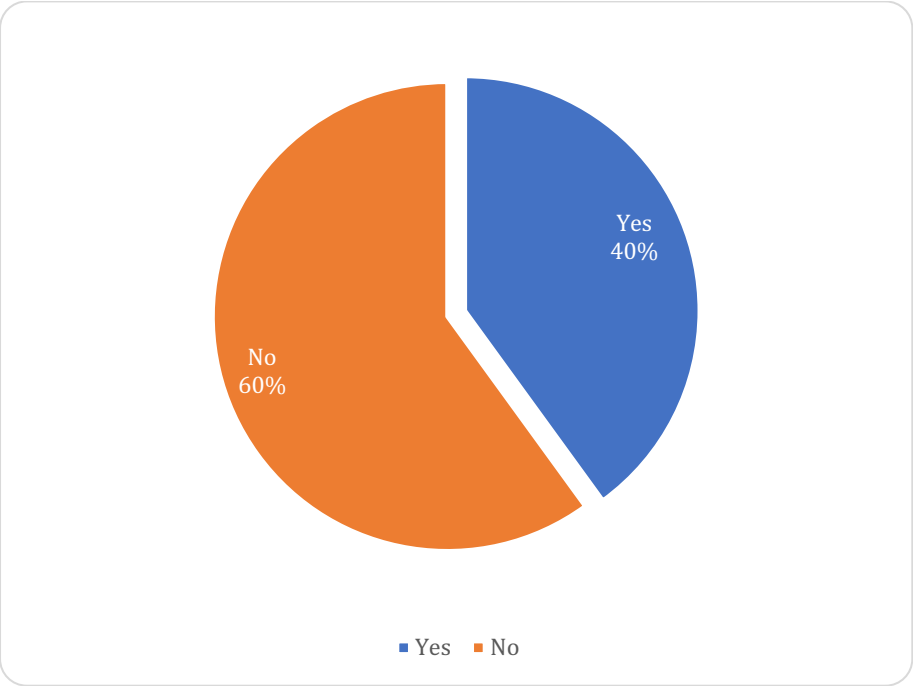
Measure	Levy Expenditure	BID External Monies	Total Investment
Lower quartile	**£154,909**	**£19,434**	**£174,343**
Median	**£295,500**	**£44,230**	**£339,730**
Upper quartile	**£529,554**	**£113,426**	**£642,980**
Highest	**£4,100,000**	**£1,589,407**	**£5,689,407**
Total	**£154,620,538**	**£16,549,649**	**£171,170,187**

Summating this totality of BID levy funding, and additional funding, gives a figure of £171,170,187 [2023, £172,039,529; 2022, £171,847,331; 2021, £152,713,787] as the total direct contribution from all BIDs into their business communities. This does give a slightly reduced, and very prudent view of the direct impact of BIDs as change agents across the British Isles.

Leveraged Investment Income

Finally, beyond the direct additional income, BIDs were also invited to report on any inward investment income, which is financial investment as a direct result of the catalytic activity of the BID.

Figure 11 % of BIDs which leveraged some Inward investment 2024



Some 40% [2023, 35%; 2022; 48%; 2021, 51.9%] of the BID industry reported investment income by way of projects and government funding as a direct result of their BID activity, although others recognised investment has been achieved but it is very difficult to quantify. It is now very much part of the role of BIDs to work with Town Fund and levelling up applications, but the amounts of money and the time scales are not easy to track. From the Town Funding alone some £3.6 billion is being spent over a five-year period, affecting some 50% BIDs.

The data suggest that some £563,735,871 [2023, £316,006,806; 2022, £353,846,754] is going into business communities each year from outside investment.

Table 27: Leveraged Inward investment 2024

Measure	Amount
Lowest	**£10,114**
Bottom Quartile	**£57,797**
Median	**£130,362**
Upper Quartile	**£286,093**
Highest	**£332,330,508**
Total	**£563,735,871**

Types of Investment Projects

BIDs worked on projects that leveraged some £563m this year [£316m last year] again the projects vary, and the cloud map shows some of the outcomes.

Figure 12 Types of leveraged external investment income.



Total BID Funding and Investment 2018-2024

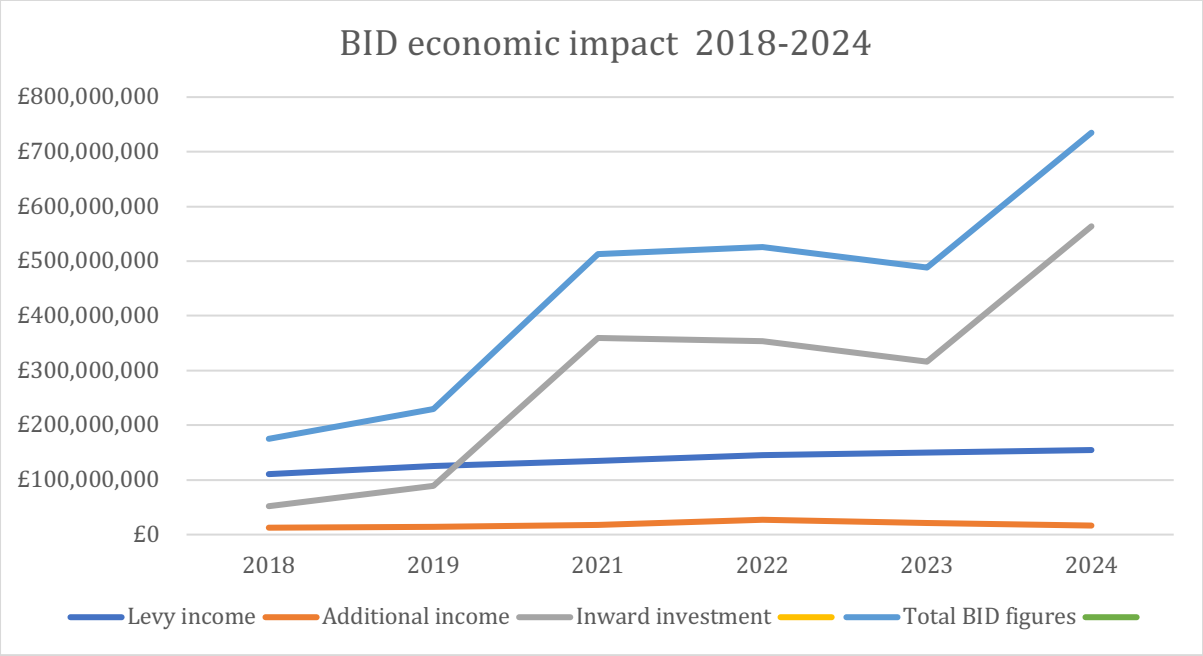
Whilst comparisons over time may not always be useful, because of variations in definitions and individual BIDs data definition, the six-year data for all BID income and leveraged investment expenditure is a positive story, with a current projection of £734,906,058, showing growth in levy income but reduced additional entrepreneurial income and much increased leveraged inward investment. This is a response to a post-covid and financially problematic world.

These data come from an amalgam of all BIDs data, married with the additional and external income projected from the qualitative surveys of the past six years. 2020 data was not collected; at the height of the Covid-19 epidemic the data was just not available.

Table 28: Estimated total BID spending and investment 2018-2023

	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
Levy income	**£110,575,380**	**£125,205,608**	**£134,979,983**	**£144,735,669**	**£150,316,106**	**£154,620,538**
Additional income	**£12,619,714**	**£14,511,719**	**£17,733,804**	**£27,111,662**	**£21,758,676**	**£16,549,649**
Inward investment	**£51,941,026**	**£89,456,390**	**£360,000,000**	**£353,846,754**	**£316,006,806**	**£563,735,871**
Total BID figures	**£175,136,120**	**£229,173,717**	**£512,713,787**	**£525,694,085**	**£488,081,588**	**£734,906,058**

Figure 13 BID economic impact 2018-2024



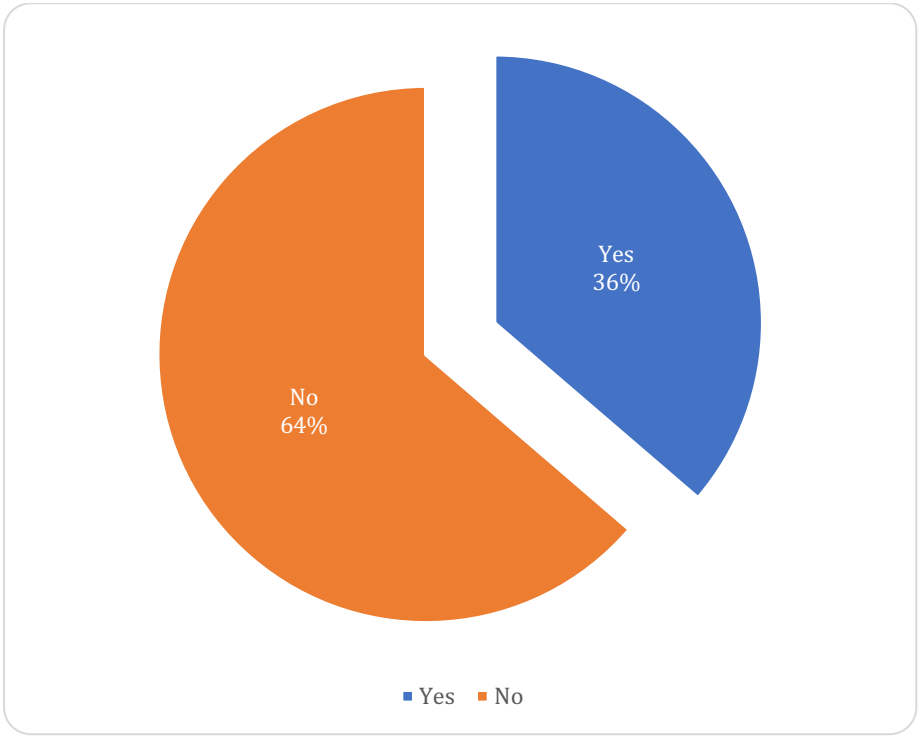
Inflation, Terms, Thresholds, and Caps

Annual Inflation Factor

Some BIDs apply an annual inflation factor to the levy multiplier to ensure their income grows each year as their costs grow. Over the past four surveys the data for this question have shifted slightly; in 2021 37% of BIDs did so and in 2022 28% did so; a reduction of 9 percentage points. This year 36% [2023 24%] are applying an annual inflation factor, an increase of 12 percentage points. Now that inflation is becoming more evident, we might expect to see an increase in this factor.

Some use the Retail Price index whist others use the Consumer Price Index; others use a rate agreed buy their Board. The main difference between the Retail Prices Index (RPI) and the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) is that the CPI is the primary measure of inflation in the UK, while the RPI is no longer a National Statistic.

Table 29: Use of an annual inflation factor 2024



An inflation rate of 3% is the median for those 36% of BIDs that use an inflation factor, but most stressed that this was at the Board's discretion, linked to either the CPI or the RPI.

Table 30: Annual % inflation rate used.

Measure used	%
% used by 50% of BIDs	3%
CPI	5.1%
RPI	1.7%
NNDR	1.7%
Board	0.8%

BID Exemption Thresholds in 2024

A threshold is a rateable value level below which hereditaments are not charged a levy. The two main purposes of a threshold are to ensure that small businesses are not required to pay a levy and at the same time making sure that any business levy collection costs are never greater than the levy itself; this therefore exempts them from the levy whilst still ensuring they benefit from the services.

92% of BIDs make use of an exemption threshold:

Figure x

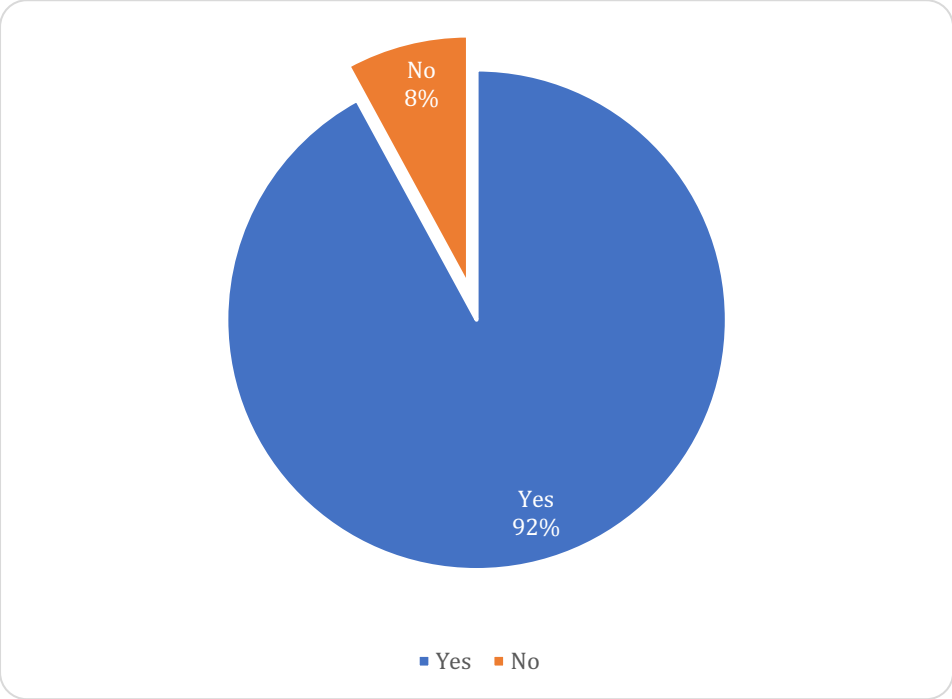


Table 31: Thresholds levels used by BIDs in 2024

Thresholds	
Lowest	**£0**
Bottom Quartile	**£5,000**
Median	**£10,000**
Upper Quartile	**£14,999**
Highest	**£180,000**

Most BIDs aim to ensure that no levy payment is less than the cost of collection, others keep their threshold at or below the level of the current government Small Business Rate Relief threshold of either £12,000 [59%] or the tapered figure of £15,000 [75%].

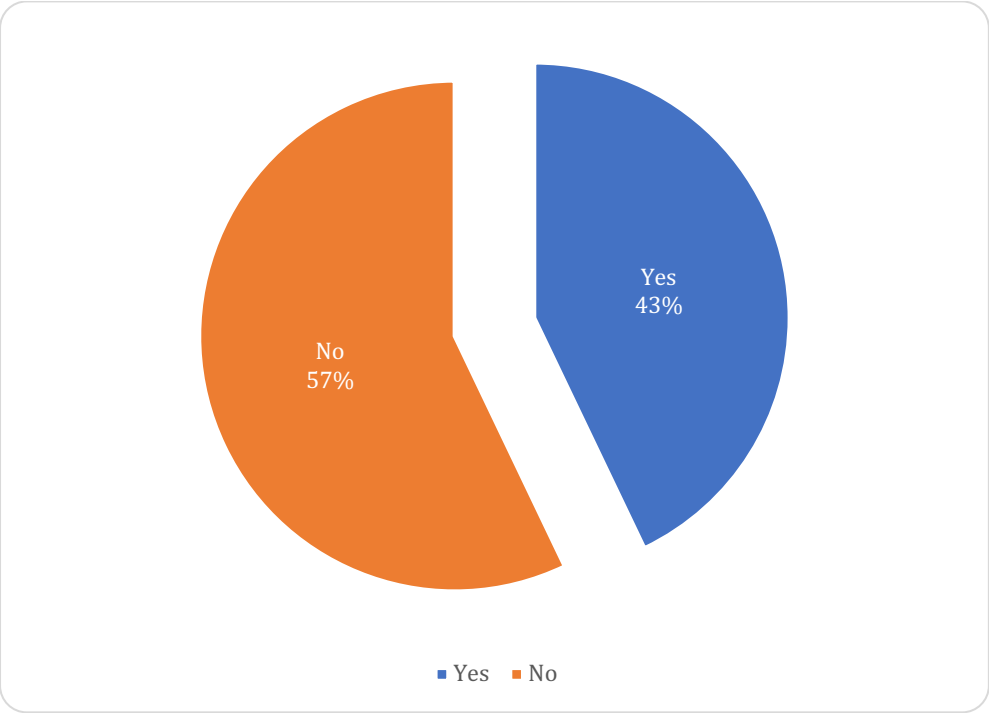
The distributions suggest that the Small Business Rates Relief is a key driver in many of the discussions on levels of any threshold, whilst at the same time some of the large city BIDs have higher thresholds.

This is an area of importance for many BIDs as they come to ballot. Clearly it is tactically valuable to keep the BID population small and with high levels of levy income so that the process of campaigning is simple and cost effective and turnout is high. At the same time, BIDs are about a business community where all are involved, equally represented and form a 'community of practice'.

Caps on BID Levy Payments

As part of this strategic process, many BIDs [43%] also apply a cap to levy payments, protecting some levy payers from larger than normal levy payments, for example, where their properties are disproportionally large compared to others in the BID area. From the survey population 43% do so [44% 2023; 50% 2022; 42% 2021]. The proportion now using them has gone down slightly. These caps can be of two sorts: firstly, to help business with several different properties within the boundary to stop them paying too large an amount; or secondly, to protect particularly large hereditaments in a BID area from paying a disproportionate amount. They can of course be seen as unfair by some median levy payers who don't have such support.

Figure 14: Percentage of BIDs using Caps



This use of caps can be an important strategy for protecting larger businesses from unusually large levy payments, and it is clear that many of the national levy payers expect to see this. The spread of minimum payments suggest that they have an important role in some BIDs.

Table 32: The level of the caps used by BIDs

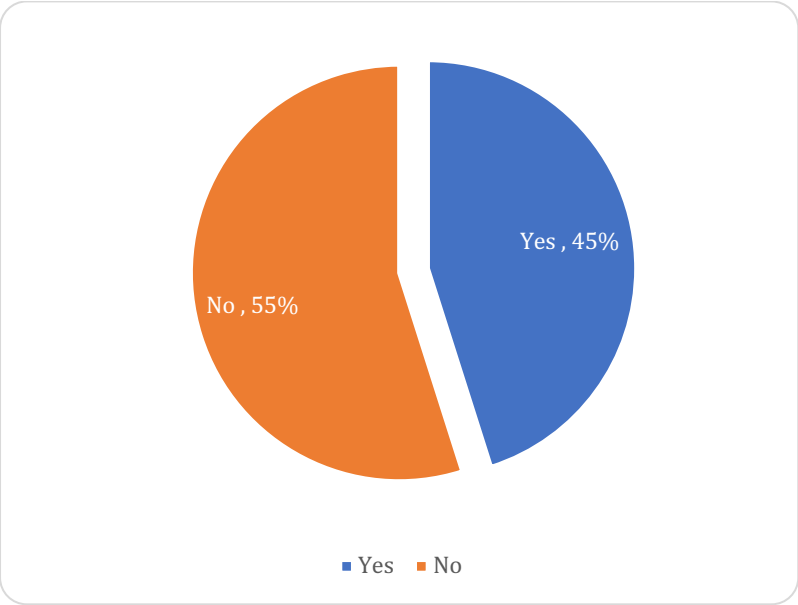
Measure	Amount £
Lowest	£1,460
Bottom Quartile	£4,882
Median	£13,500
Upper Quartile	£20,000
Highest	£100,000

The largest cap on the annual levy collected in the survey was £100,000, with a median of £13,5000.

BID Levy Discounts

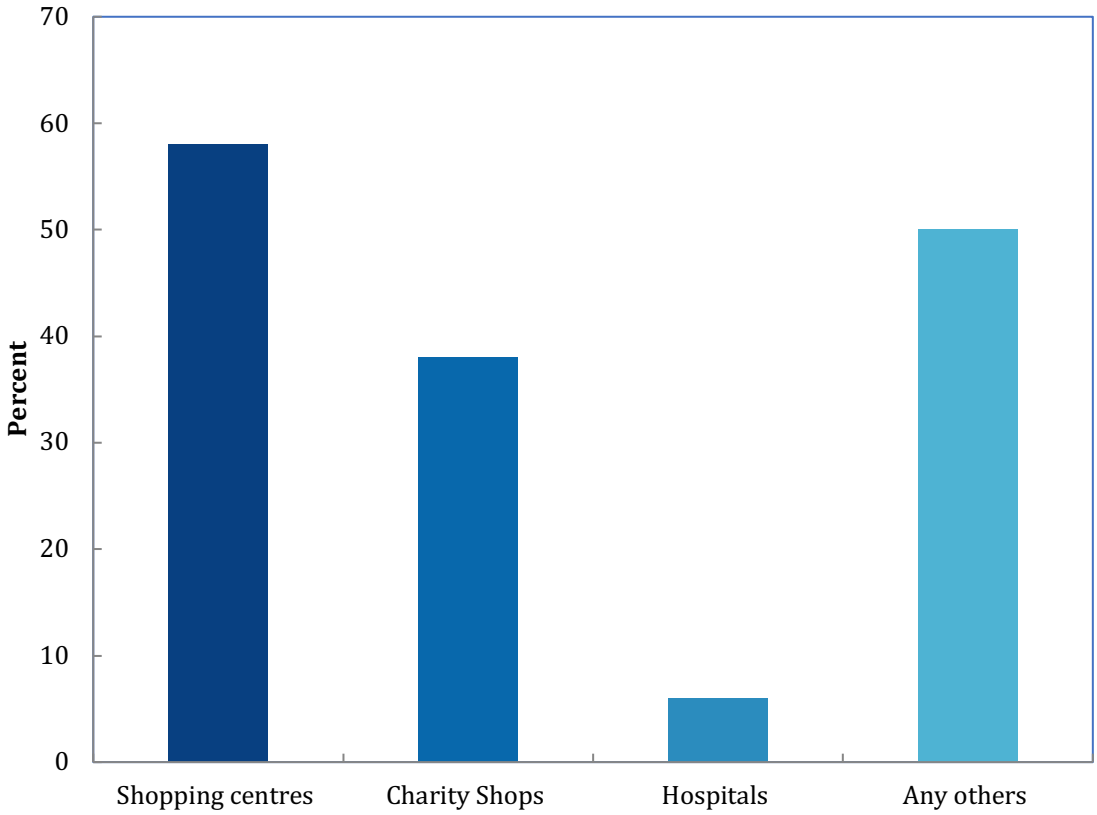
Most BIDs [45%] opt to give charities and other key players a discount on their levy, although this is becoming less prevalent over time, particularly in relation to discounts on commercially trading charity shops.

Figure 15: Levy discounts



From the survey, 45% [51% 2023; 88% 2022] provide some discounts; 4% of the BIDs specify that charity shops – that is those acting as retail outlets - are excluded from their discount rule. Of those who offer discounts, the greatest majority are for charities and shopping centres at 38% and 58% respectively.

Figure 16: Levy discounts by type



The level of discount was little changed over the years, with most offering 100% to non-trading charities, and shopping centres and shopping mall discounts ranging from 10-50%; but this year there has clearly been a slight hardening of the discount offering.

Levy Collection

Levy Collection Costs

The levy collection charge is the sum of money charged by the local authority to the BID for the service of collecting the BID levy. The BID Regulations allow for the cost to the authority in respect of collecting the BID levy[16] to be made for this service and the details of this service should be set out in an operating agreement between the two parties.

[16] 2004 Regs Schedule 3 2.1

Table 33: Levy collection costs

Levy Collection costs	£
Lowest cost	£0
Lower quartile	£4,850
Median	£10,000
Upper quartile	£16,348
Highest	£55,000

From the responses, 12% of BIDs have no collection charge made to them by their local authority. This is a reduction from two years ago year, where some 30% of BIDs were not paying for collection. The median collection costs figure – that which 50% of BIDs are below - is £10,000.

Current Levy Collection Rates

Levy collection rates have been a key issue for many BIDs during and after the Covid-19 lockdown, as local authority teams have engaged with both government grants and support for businesses.

Nonetheless, the data collected show a better picture than anecdotal evidence would suggest, with a median figure of 98% Levy collection rates and the lowest was 70% collected.

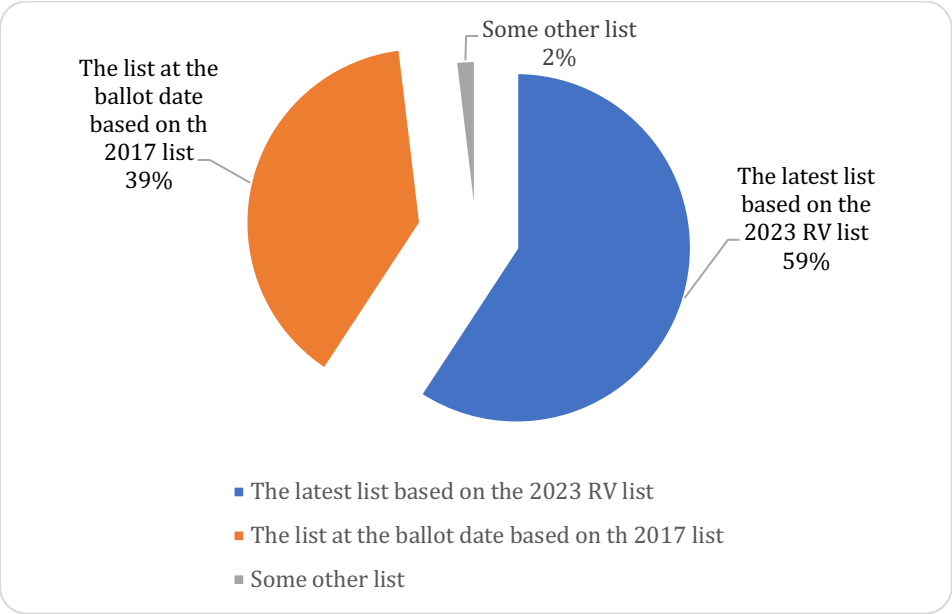
Table 34 Levy collection rates 2024– averages from BIDs

Current Levy collection levels	%
Lowest	**70.0%**
Lower quartile	**93.5%**
Median	**98.0%**

Business Rates List

Most BIDs [59%] use the current non-domestic Ratings list for their levy collection, with some using the list extant at their ballot date. The latter of course allows a constant picture of income for the BID and levy payment for the businesses and is thus often preferred by many.

Figure 17 Ratings list used for levy collection.



Business Rates Revaluation 2023

All non-domestic properties are generally revalued every five years by the Valuation Office Agency. The next revaluation has taken place and was effective as from 1 April 2023[17], and this has already clearly affected many BIDs' levy income as ballots move BIDs onto the latest list. There is also a plan to review business rates more regularly, probably every three years[18], and this was one of the British BIDs requests in our submission to the Treasury on business rates back in[19] 2019. The change of government and a promised review of Business Rates may well change this, although there is little indication that a Labour government will make radical changes to business rates. The King's speech did not specifically mention business rates[20].

The rateable value is assessed by the Valuation Office Agency, which is an agency of HM Revenue and Customs. A property's rateable value is an assessment of the annual rent

[17] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/providing-rental-information-for-revaluation-2023?utm_source=11833c1f-94d9-4fbd-becf-a759f82bd28a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

[18] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/997352/Consultation_More_Frequent_Revaluations.pdf

[19] https://cdn.britishbids.info/publications/British-BIDs-submission-on-business-rates-for-select-committee.pdf?mtime=20190408132313

[20] https://www.geraldeve.com/insights/rating-update-kings-speech-2024/

the property would rent for if it were available to let on the open market at a fixed valuation date.

From April 2023, the rateable values were based on the valuation date of 1 April 2022, and this clearly affected over 60% of BIDs. BIDs are on the whole now using the current list new list; reflecting that for many the two will be the same.

The Central Rating Lists

In addition to local rating lists, the Secretary of State also holds a central list which contains hereditaments which, by their nature, are unsuitable for including in local lists (e.g., utility networks). The central rating lists contain the rating assessments of the network property of major transport, utility and telecommunications undertakings and cross-country pipelines. The central rating list can be viewed on the Valuation Office Agency's website.

Hereditaments appearing on the central rating list do not appear on local rating lists. The business rates bill for central list hereditaments is paid to the Secretary of State and then passed to the Treasury and therefore there is no contribution toward any local BID. The government has moved all telecom networks, railways and mobile networks onto the central list.

BID management and governance

BID Management Teams

Staffing

The staffing levels of BIDs vary widely, as one would expect from organisations so varied in income and service provision.

From the data it is possible to extrapolate total numbers, and this suggests that across the five administrations and countries, BIDs employed some 1,104 full time equivalent staff [2023, 944; 2022, 993.58; 2021, 1,040], an increase of 160 on last year.

Whilst the median staffing level for a BID is now 2, the range is wide, with a high of 17 staff. A number of BIDs are managed by Board members, so have no staffing numbers, and 11% are managed by part-time staff only.

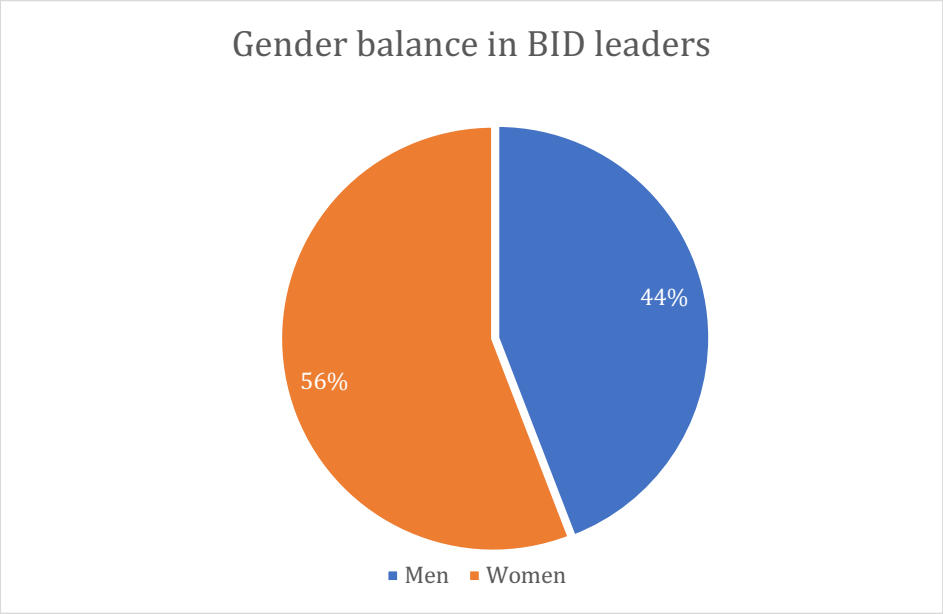
Table 35: Staffing levels in BIDs

Staffing Levels	Numbers
Minimum	0
Lower quartile	1
Median	2
Upper quartile	5
Maximum	17
Total	1,104

Gender Balance in BID Managers

Following interest last year, we continue to look at the gender balance amongst BID managers, using a simple forename analysis.

Figure 18 Gender balance in BID leaders 2024

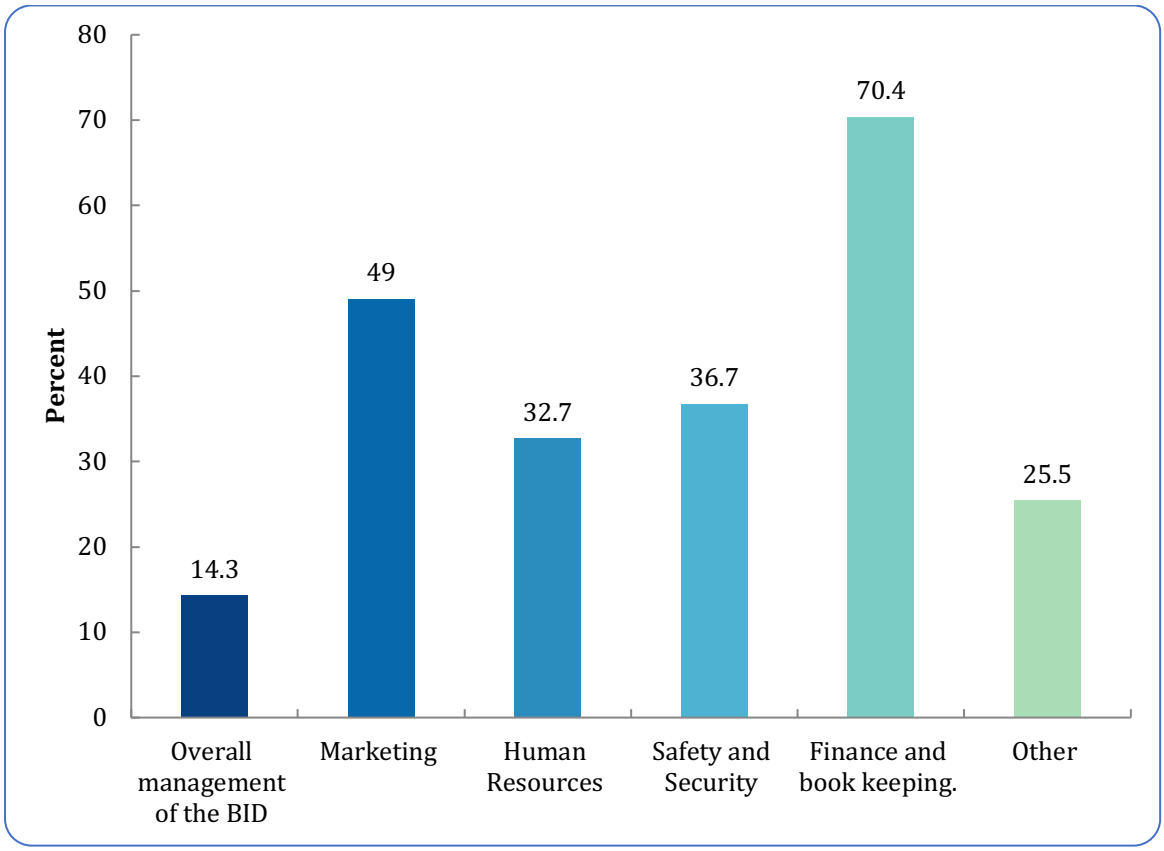


The gender balance amongst BID chief executives and managers, based on simple forename analysis, has moved very strongly, from almost exactly 50:50 male: female in 2019, to 44:56 in 2024. Sadly, our analysis is not yet able to handle gender fluidity.

External Staffing Providers

From the survey response, external staff, that is staff working for the BID but not on payroll, are used by 80% of BIDs [2023, 78%; 2022,73%; 2021,60%]; this includes staff working in security, marketing, and general operational activities, including rangers and other staff.

Figure 19: Use of external staffing % of BIDs



The majority of the support staff brought in are finance and bookkeeping for over 70% of BIDs; with marketing also important at 49%. Many of the 'other' category included Rangers, web designers and event management staff.

Overall BID Management by Consultants

One trend is for BIDs to be fully managed by external consultants, thus saving direct staffing costs and ensuring a wide range of expertise that can be called upon. Some 14% [2022,15%; 2021, 20%] of the sample described themselves as being managed in this fashion and it will be interesting to see if BID Boards continue this trend in the future. The shifts are small.

Shared Staff

Another emerging trend is for BIDs to share staff, either by having one shared manager working for more than one BID, or for a member of one BID team to also work for another in a different role.

BID Boards

BID Boards are a vital part of the BID community as issues of governance and transparency rightly come to the fore, and governance matters are key parts of the British BIDs Industry Guidelines [21]. This year we were particularly interested in both local community, and property owners involvement, along with the usual issues of gender and ethnicity

The data suggest that there are 2,901 [2023, 2,988] members of BID Boards across the British Isles [2022, 2,807; 2021, 2,754], whose task is to ensure that each BID is governed according to the normal rules of good corporate governance.

Table 36: BID Boards by size and distribution

Board Sizes	Numbers on Boards
Smallest Board size	2
Lower Quartile of Board size	7
Median Board size	9
Upper Quartile of Board size	12
Largest Board	22
Total number of Board members	2,901

From the data there is a range of BID Board size and composition, although most range from 7-12, with the largest at 25 and a median size of 9. This is very slightly lower than previous years.

Property Owners

60% [2022, 84% ;2021 78%] of BIDs reported having property owners involved in their Boards, with a median number of 1 and a maximum of 12; and there are 529 [2022, 522] property owner Board members across the British Isles. This is a flat trend, although there is an increased interest in property owners as key stakeholders in BIDs.

[21] https://britishbids.info/publications/business-plan-criteria-for-bids

Table 37: Property owners on Boards

Property owners on Boards	
Lower Quartile	0
Median number of Property owners on BID Boards	1
Upper Quartile	2
Largest	12
Total number of Property owners on BID Boards	529
Percentage of BID Boards with Property owners	60%

The figure is possibly higher than the data show; some BIDs have included their shopping centre BID Board members as owners, but others don't, and some Board members own their business properties. Similarly, local authority representatives are not often recognised as property owners. However, many more BIDs are becoming aware of these differences and are articulating them in their responses.

Local Community Involvement in BID Boards

We were interested in local community involvement in BID Boards, and it is interesting that the data suggests that 33% of BID Boards have local community representation, such as Civic Trusts or Residents Groups, with a median number of 1 representative and a maximum of 6, with 168 such representatives across the country. These community representatives on BID boards sit alongside the Local Authority representation on 88.39% of BID Boards giving a strong local community presence on most BID Boards.

Table 38 Community involvement in Boards

Measures of local community representatives	Number
Lowest	**1**
Bottom Quartile	**1**
Median	**1**
Upper Quartile	**1**
Highest	**6**
Total on Boards	**168**
Percentage of BID Boards with community membership	**33%**

Local Authority Involvement on Boards

Most BIDs also have Local Authority representation on their Boards, reflecting the important relationship between a BID and its local authority; 88.39% of BIDs have

Local Authority representation, and there are 318 Local Authority Board members across the industry. The median membership number is 1 Local authority representative.

Table 39: Local Authority Board members

Local Authority on Boards	
Lower Quartile	0
Median	1
Upper Quartile	1
Largest	12
Total Numbers	318
Percentage of BID Boards with LA representation	88.39

Observers on BID Boards

The balance between directors and observers also varies across BIDs, with most having 10 Directors and 1 Observer, whilst some have up to 20 members on their Board, and up to 6 observers.

Table 40: Observers on BID Boards

Observers on Boards	Numbers
Lower Quartile	0
Median number of Observers on BID Boards	1
Upper Quartile	2
Largest	6
Total observers in sector	399
Percentage of BID Boards with observers	58.47%

Gender Balance of Boards

We remain interested in both the gender and ethnic diversity of Boards.

Table 41: Gender balance on BID Boards

Women on Boards	Numbers on Boards
Smallest	0
Lower Quartile	2
Median	3
Upper Quartile	5
Greatest	11
Total women on Boards	1,049
Percentage of BID Boards with women on them	86.44%

Diversity Balance of Boards

On the matter of ethnic diversity, the responses identified 243 [2023, 288; 2022, 213; 2021, 177] Black, Asian and minority ethnic directors across the British Isles, with the highest number on a Board being 6.

Table 42: Black, Asian and minority ethnic members of Boards

BAME Directors	
Smallest	0
Lower Quartile	0
Median	0
Upper Quartiles	1
Largest	4
Total	243
Percentage of BID Boards with BAME representation	46.61%

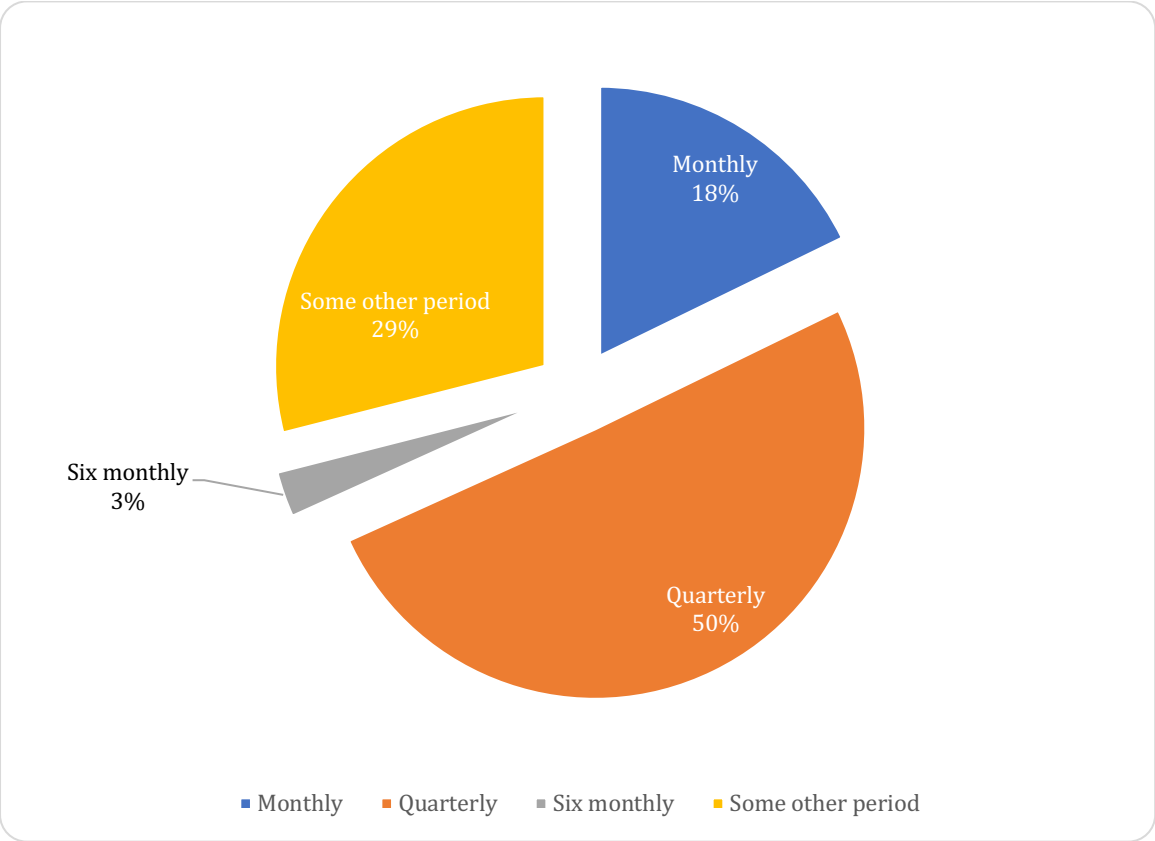
Shared Boards

There are some BIDs with shared or overarching Boards. It may be the local DMO that has gestated a number of BIDs in their area, or a BID that is then approached to set up another BID in a nearby or local community. They are clearly emerging possibilities for new developments.

Board Meetings

Many BIDs are interested in how often Boards meet; the data suggests that there is still a very shared split between monthly, quarterly and various other periods; clearly it is for Boards to decide which suits them best.

Figure 20: Board meeting timings

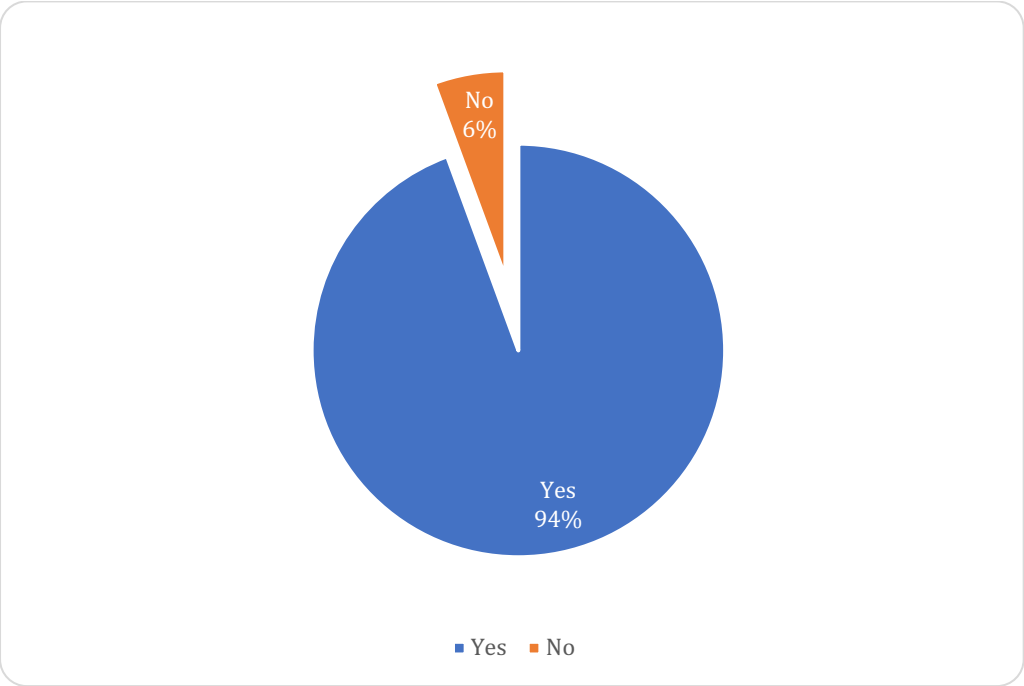


Annual Accounts

The public provision of annual accounts is an important part of good corporate governance. These can range from detailed accounts posted on websites, to more basic ones, linked to the regulatory requirement [22] for every billing authority to supply to each person receiving a demand notice the revenue due to be received the previous year, the amount spent, the matters on which it was spent and the proposed spend for the coming year. From the returns, 94% [2023, 92%] of BIDs make their accounts publicly available to their levy payers. Of course, Companies House requires that all registered companies lodge accounts with them.

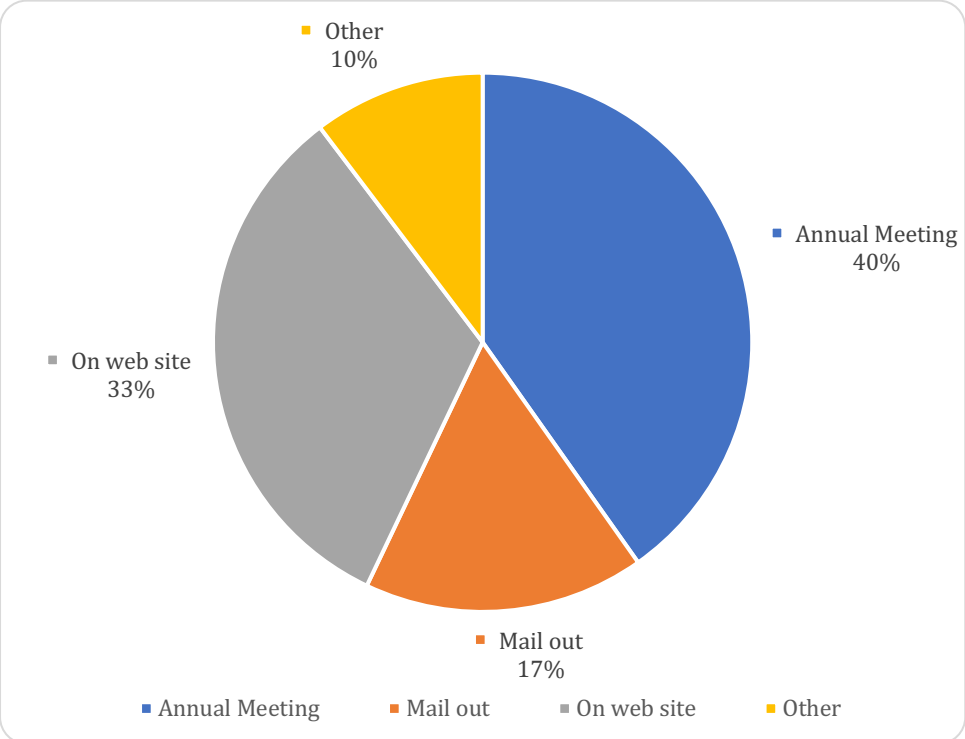
[22] Business Improvement District (England) Regulations 2004 Schedule 4 Regulation 15 3 (2) (a)-(d)

Figure 21: Publicly available accounts



And BIDs use a variety of dissemination tools, with an annual meeting being the most popular with 40% of BIDs using them.

Figure 22: Dissemination of accounts



BID policy matters

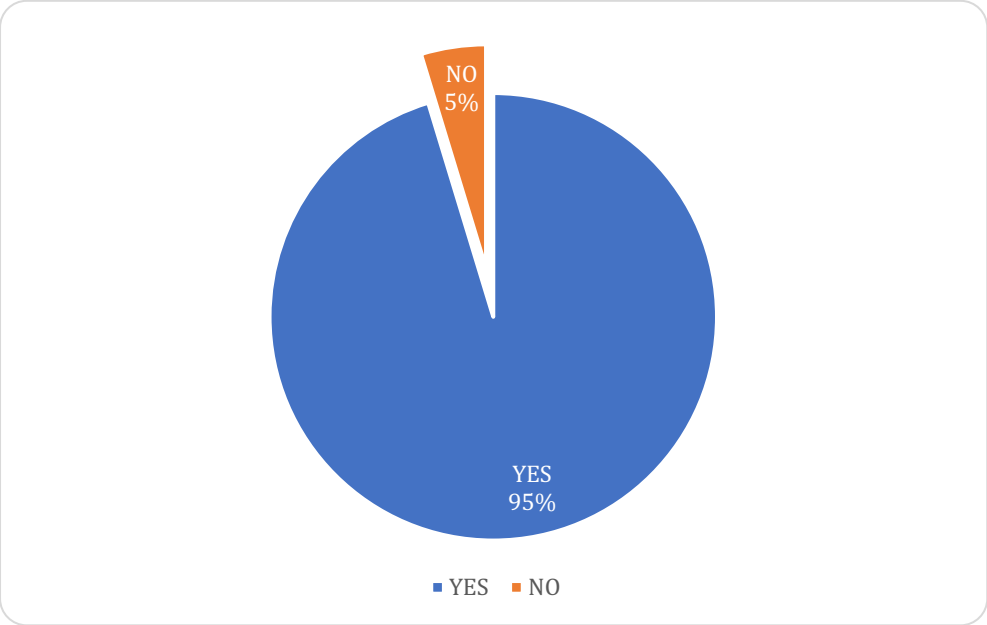
There are a number of policy matters with BIDs involvement and this year the survey focused on eleven of them: operating agreements, baseline statements, community involvement, Economic Social and governance issues [ESG], neighbourhood plans, Local Economic Partnership, DMOs, services to professional levy payers, permitted development rights, and Business Crime Reduction Partnerships and government funding for the high street .

Local Authority Policy Issues

Operating Agreements

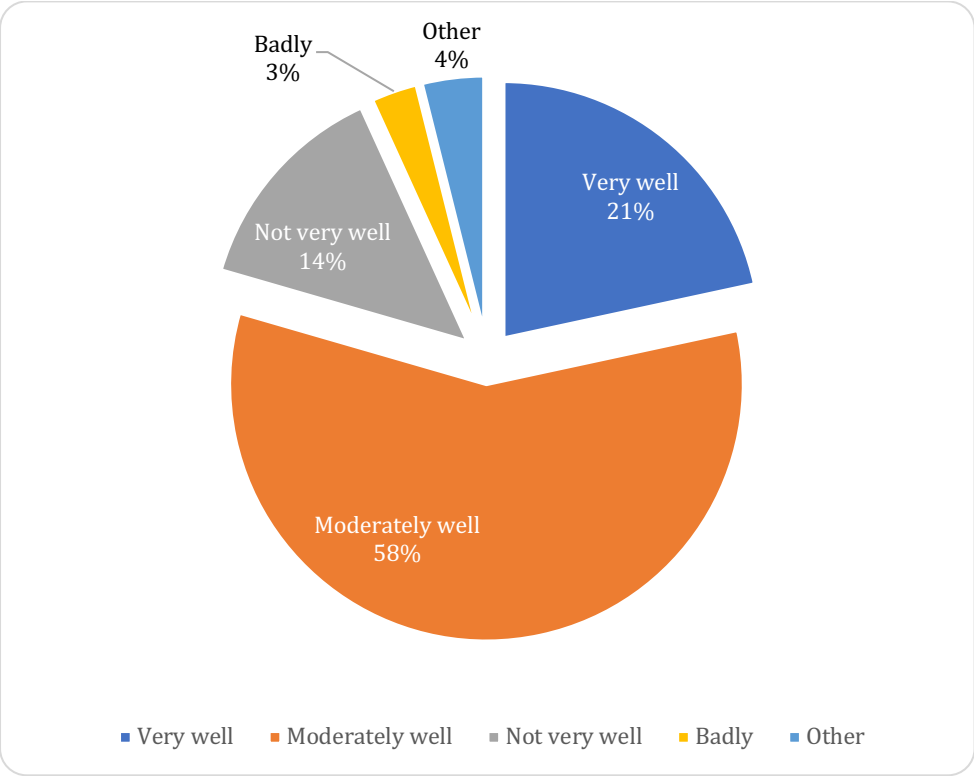
Each BID needs an operating agreement with its local authority; 95% of BIDs have an operating agreement with its local authority, but some still don't have them.

Figure 23: BIDs and operating agreements



Some 79% [76%] of BIDs feel that their agreements work well or moderately well; but some 17% feel that they don't, and this clearly is a matter of concern for them and indeed the industry. Others [4%] felt that they were not really used or understood by their local authorities. Clearly there is work to be done here.

Figure 24: Perceived success of operating agreements.



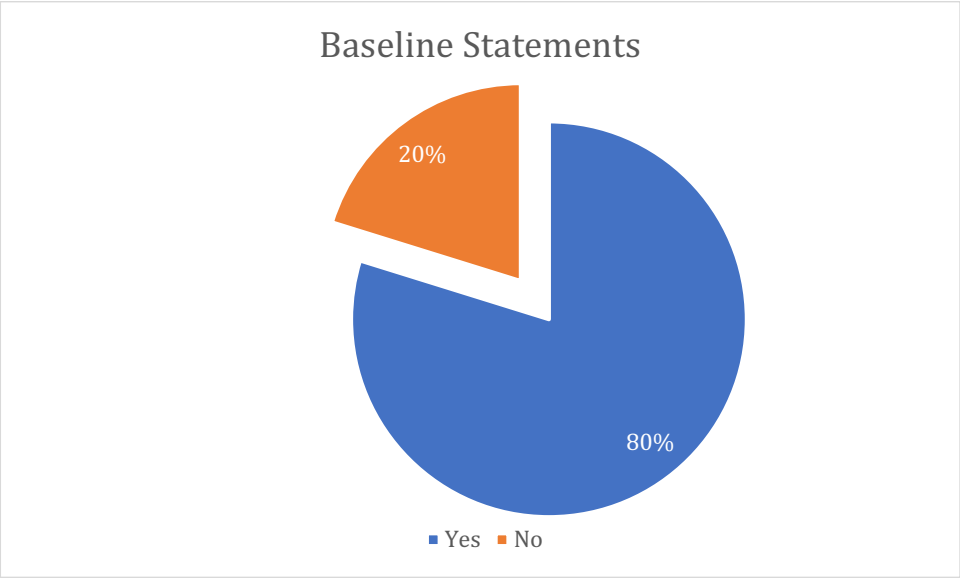
Baseline Services and Statements

BIDs generally need to develop agreements with their local authorities and other public services, such as the police, in order to ensure levels of service, which the BID will then augment rather than replace.

Although these are not mandated by the regulations, these baseline statements are useful elements in the BID proposal process, and *a statement of the existing baseline services (if any) provided by the relevant billing authority or other public authority* is required under the regulations[23]. Although the definition is not precise, it is evident from the survey, that 80% of BIDs had baseline statements, but surprisingly 20% did not. This has not changed over several years.

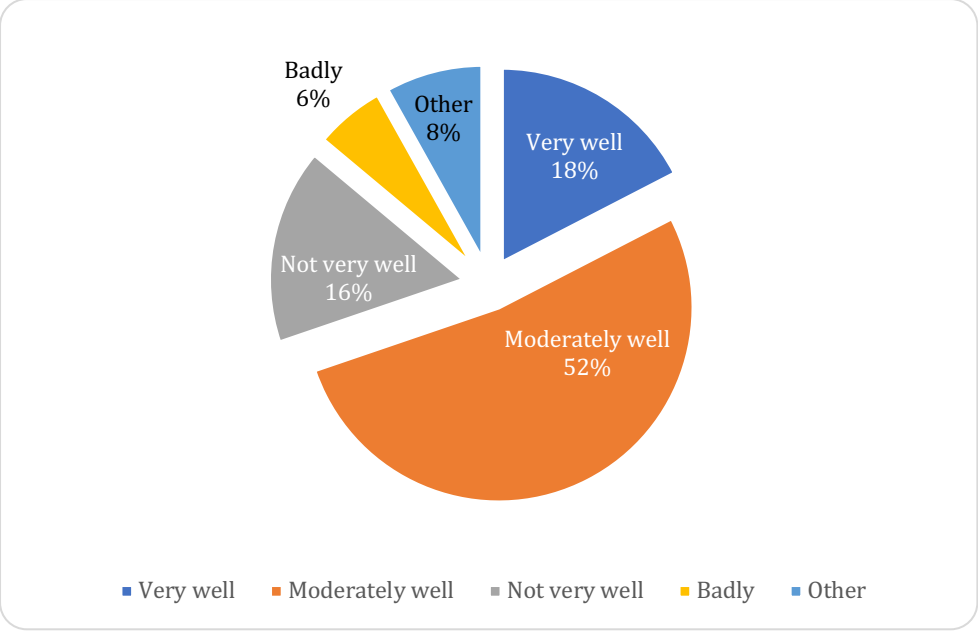
[23] The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004. Schedule 1 Regulation 4 1(1) b.

Figure 25: Baseline statements



On the matter of adherence, although there was a sense of 'slippage' with 22% [20%] of BIDs feeling that baseline statements were being followed badly or not very well, whilst 70% [65%] felt that they were still being adhered to well or moderately well in difficult circumstances for many local authorities. Nonetheless, this is a slight increase in dissatisfaction, from the data collected last year and clearly reflects the declining funding base for many local authorities. Of course, baseline statements have no legal binding force but are useful statements of intent.

Figure 26: Baseline statement effectiveness



Community matters

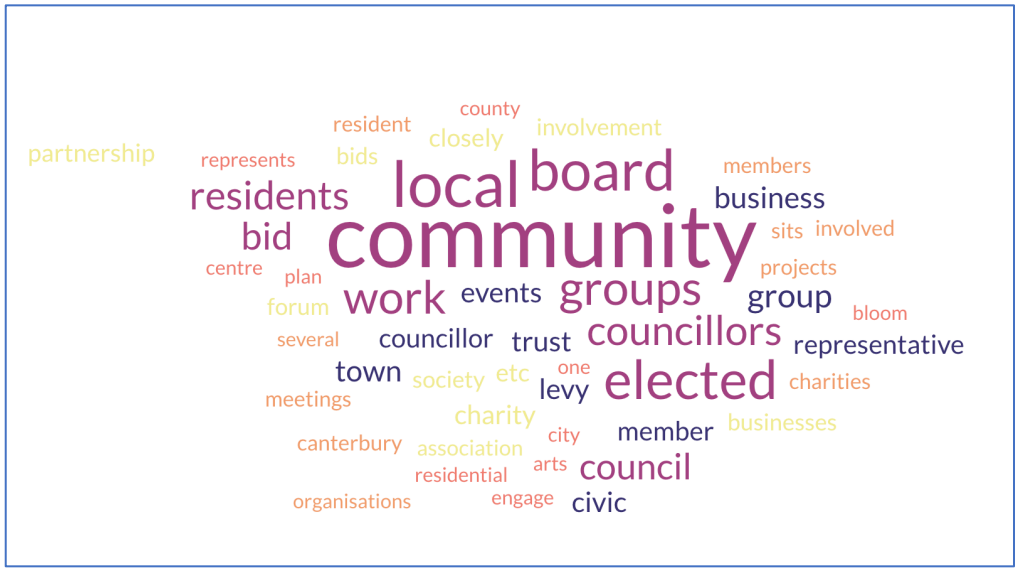
Community Involvement and Community Improvement Districts

There is a suggestion that BIDs should have more community involvement on their Boards, as part of a move toward Community Improvement Districts [CIDs]. BIDs were asked if they had such community membership, for example, Civic Trusts, Residents Groups, elected Councillors, etc.

Interestingly, the data suggests that 33% of BIDs already have local community involvement and 88% were using their local Councillors to fulfil this role.

On the other hand, some BIDs were very committed to the philosophy of businesses paying the levy should be allowed to run the BID as they needed and expected to.

The comments were wide ranging and various



Environmental, Social and Governance issues

There is a growing interest in the Environmental, Social and Governance issues involved in modern business practice and thinking[24]. Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing refers to a set of standards for a company's behaviour used by socially conscious investors. Along with the growing interest and concerns about Corporate

[24] https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/environmental-social-and-governance-esg-criteria.asp

Social Responsibility[25] and the United Nations global compact[26] , it is clear that many national levy payers are keen that BIDs engage with these issues[27].

Environmental criteria consider how a company safeguards the environment, including corporate policies addressing climate change, for example. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, and internal controls. For BIDs these allow both a need to review their own ESG issues, as well as those of their levy payers and some BIDs have already done much work on this[28]. This year the data suggests that 40% [44%] of BIDs were engaging with ESG issues for either themselves or their levy payers and the responses in the survey were wide ranging.

[25] https://www.hec.edu/en/faculty-research/centers/sustainability-organizations-institute/think/so-institute-executive-factsheets/what-corporate-social-responsability-csr#:~:text=Corporate%20Social%20Responsibility%20(CSR)%20is,became%20mainstream%20in%20the%202000s.

[26] https://unglobalcompact.org/

[27] https://inspiredplc.co.uk/who-we-help/retail/?utm_term=esg%20in%20retail&utm_campaign=Retail&utm_source=adwords&utm_medium=ppc&hsa_acc=4211027123&hsa_cam=19780089750&hsa_grp=146976610979&hsa_ad=690432042942&hsa_src=g&hsa_tgt=kwd-1681069545783&hsa_kw=esg%20in%20retail&hsa_mt=b&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwmaO4BhAhEiwA5p4YL8r_aMQACzao1BlwYVjYRydCkjW2DAJvXeLIKO1xSdeNYNm-nCC7_BoCZ0IQAvD_BwE

[28] https://cityco.com/2022-23-bid-esg-review/

Figure 27 Interest in ESG issues

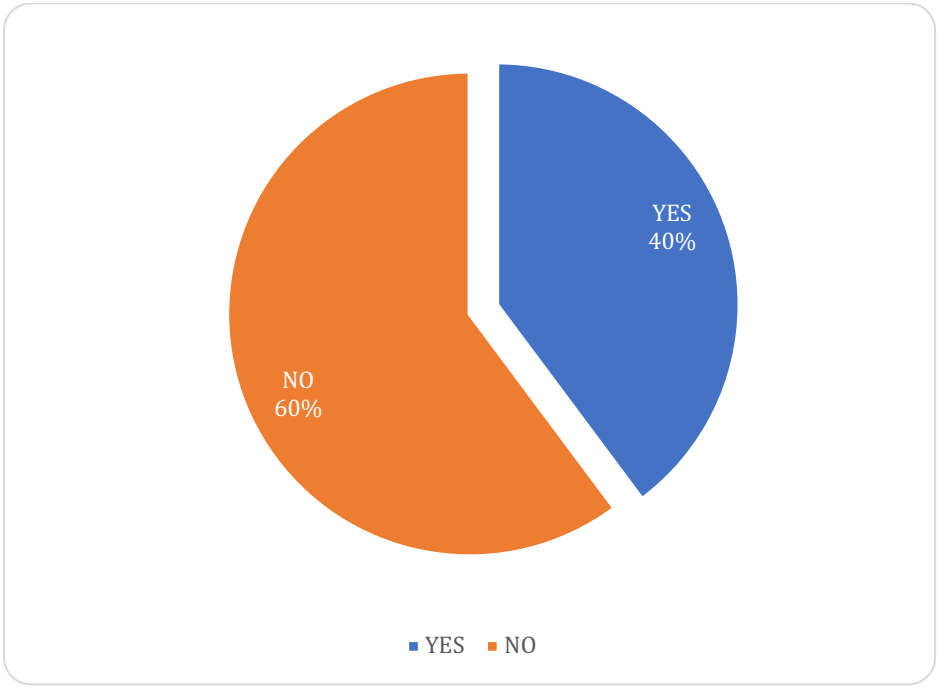


Figure 28 Word cloud of ESG work by BIDs



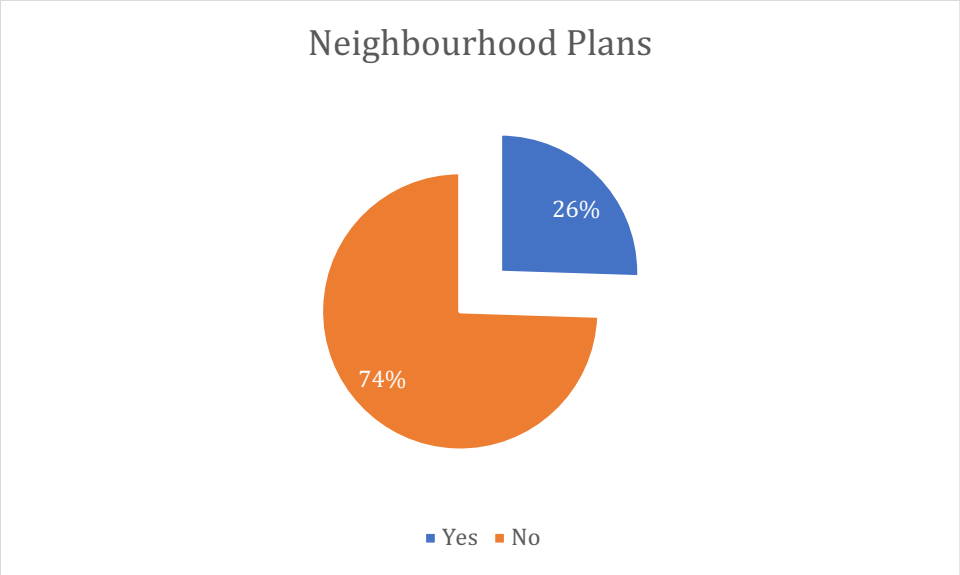
Neighbourhood Planning Forums

Neighbourhood Planning Forums were seen as a key tool under the Localism Act of 2011[29], and many local authorities make use of them, indeed there are some 2,800

[29] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted

known neighbourhood plans in England. BIDs were seen as major players in this agenda; that seems to no longer be the case with only 26% being involved. We will probably not ask further about this in the future.

Figure 29: BID involvement in a neighbourhood planning forum



Local Economic Partnerships

Local Economic Partnerships [LEPs] have now disappeared. There were 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships[30] across England. Despite an attempt to continue their work ***'A Unique Partnership for Economic Growth'*** [31], the Government's sponsorship and core funding of LEPs has now ceased[32].

As private enterprises, LEPs may choose to continue operating, but government will now support local authorities to take on LEPs' functions as set out in the March 2022 LEP integration guidance and previously supported by annual core funding – namely, business representation, strategic economic planning, and responsibility for the delivery of government programmes where directed.

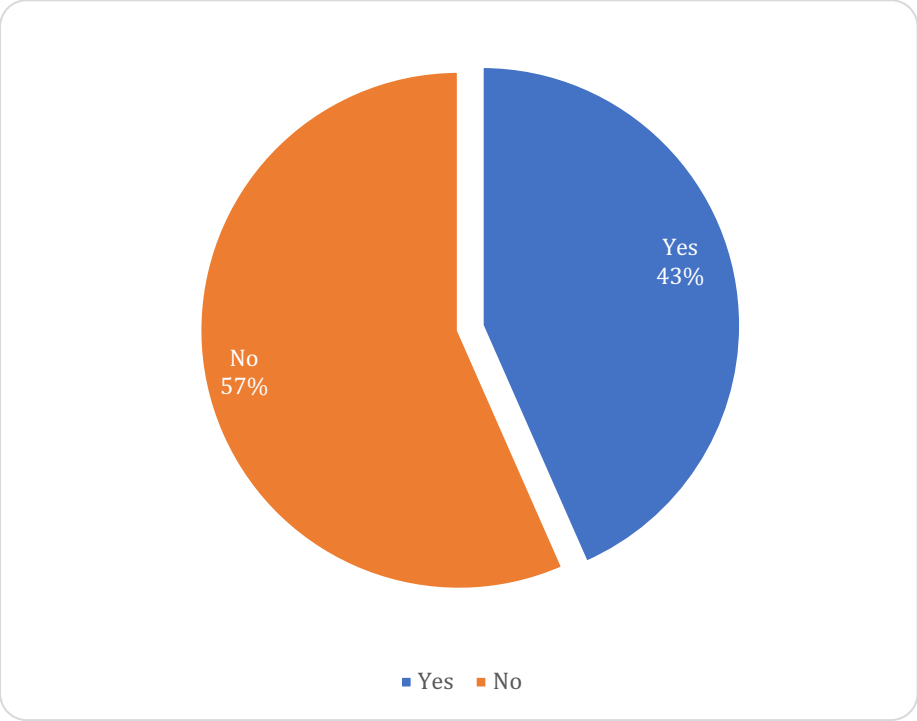
Government expects these functions to be exercised by upper tier local authorities (working in collaboration with other upper tier local authorities as appropriate), where

[30] https://www.lepnetwork.net/
[31] https://www.lepnetwork.net/media/s1uo2qe3/lep-budget-sept-22.pdf"
[32] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-enterprise-partnerships-integration-of-lep-functions-into-local-democratic-institutions/guidance-for-local-enterprise-partnerships-leps-and-local-and-combined-authorities-integration-of-lep-functions-into-local-democratic-institutions

they are not already delivered by a combined authority, or in areas where a devolution deal is not yet agreed.

Some 43% of BIDs were involved in their LEP and were making use of LEP and the growth hub network either for themselves or their levy payers; they will be affected by the changes to LEPs.

Figure 30: BID engagement with LEPs



Destination Management Organisations

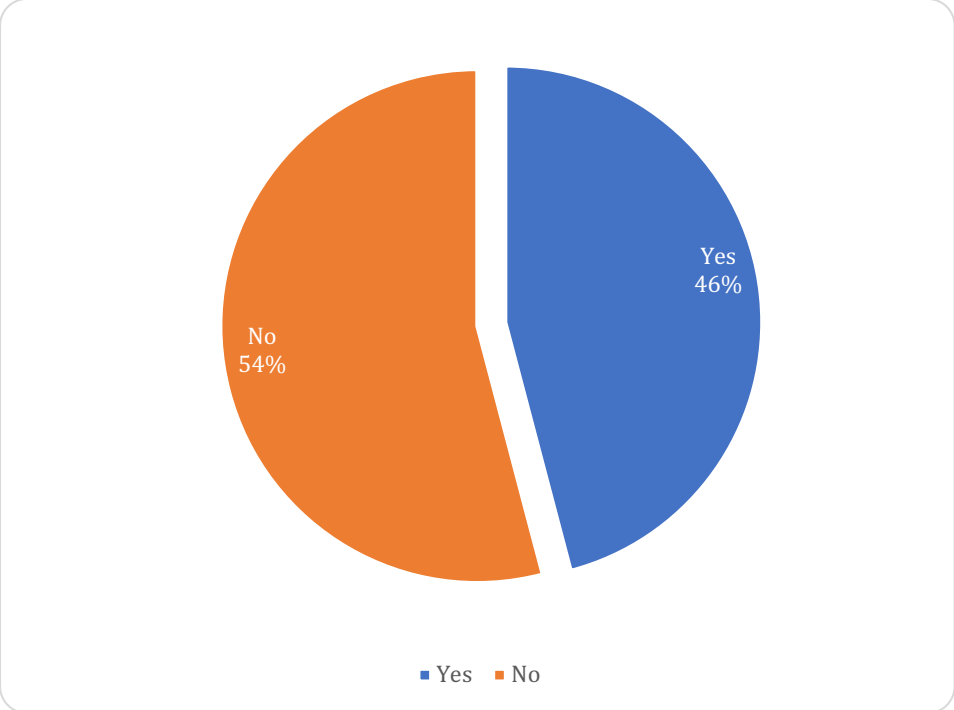
Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)[33] played a key role in developing tourism locally; the framework of England's tourism management is now evolving. After the DMO review in 2021, the new Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEP) Programme is currently being implemented, and Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs) are being trialled. Under the new scheme, DMOs will be renamed Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), and new Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs) will set regional priorities for the visitor economy.

[33] https://www.visitbritain.org/resources-destination-partners/dmo-review

Destinations remain the places that people want to visit and experience; they are the heart and soul of the visitor economy and because they are diverse, they don't always fit neatly into county (or national) borders or within public sector administrative boundaries. They may cover a single destination, e.g. Oxford, or a number of smaller destinations with a strong identity caused by its natural geography or landscape, well-known in its own right, e.g. the Cotswolds.

Many BIDs are closely involved with their Destination Management Organisation, others less so; some fully manage their DMO, others are managed by the local DMO. This year 46% of BIDs were involved with their local DMO in one form or another and expect to see growth in this activity, and the percentage involved has increased slightly [2023, 43%; 2022, 46.15%] since last year. Others were surprised that a DMO had not yet evolved in their area and would be looking to stimulate interest. Others found them less than helpful.

Figure 31 Destination Management Organisations



Service and Professional Sector Support from BIDs

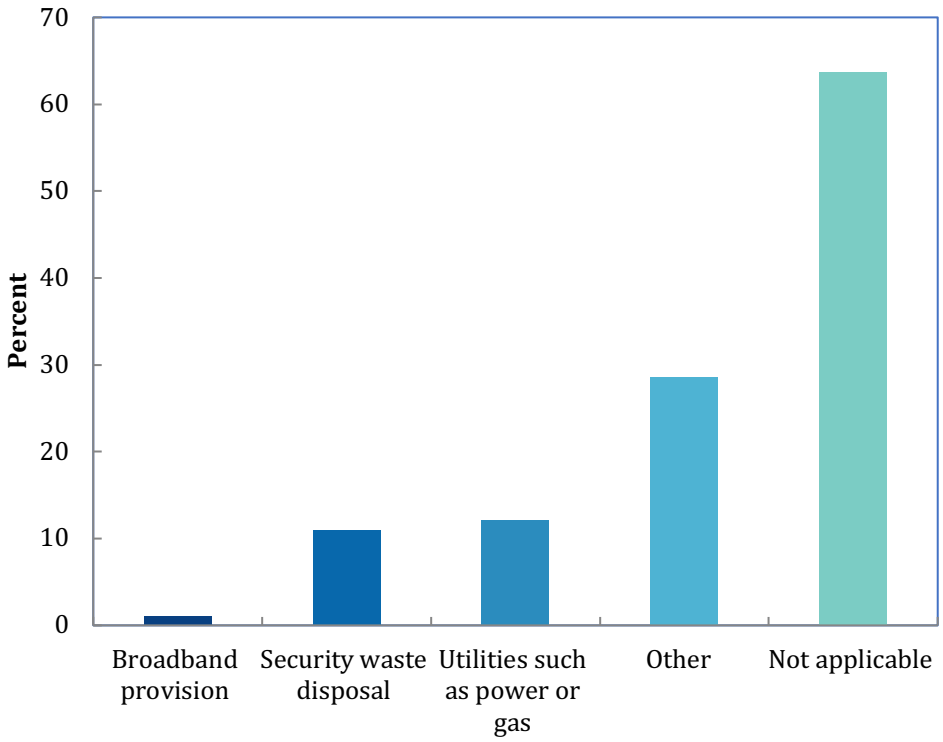
A new question that was suggested by a number of BIDs for previous surveys, and has continued this year, was the level of specific support by BIDs for non-retail activity. It is

evident that many BIDs are starting to focus on their service industries as it becomes clearer how vital they are to the health of the high street.

Work from the BID for Cities has shown how "*the fortunes of the High Street are dependent on the fortunes of the wider BID in which they are based. The debate must be about jobs and city BIDs, not just about shops and High Streets*". They suggest that more than one third of jobs are in knowledge-intensive service activities, such as finance, law and marketing and many of the highest skilled and best paid industries – which have been critical sources of jobs growth in recent years - prefer to locate in city BIDs [34].

The responses to the survey suggest that BIDs are still evolving in their thinking on support for professional services, with 67% [2023, 51%; 2022, 55%; 2021, 58%.] of the respondents feeling it was relevant. There were examples of BIDs providing support for their service and professional sector levy-paying members, in the areas of utilities cost reduction – waste, power, recycling - and in the areas of free wireless, Wi-Fi support and broadband provision. There has also been a growth in office and administration area BIDs in the last year or so.

Figure 32: Professional Services support



[34] BID for Cities. https://www.BIDforcities.org/high-streets/

Permitted Development Rights

The changes in 2020 to the planning system to allow change of use from offices (B1(a)) to residential use (C3), and the new Class E [35,] which more broadly covers uses previously defined in the revoked Classes A1/2/3, B1, D1(a-b) and 'indoor sport' from D2(e), has not been helpful in some instances, effectively reducing the ability of the local planning authority and stakeholders to curate the town BID they need and want. In other instances, it has allowed residents to move back into town and city BIDs.

The responses were very varied, with some BIDs very concerned over the impact of these increasingly relaxed development rights, whilst others saw them as a very positive way of bringing residents back into town centres. The word cloud shows some of these concerns:

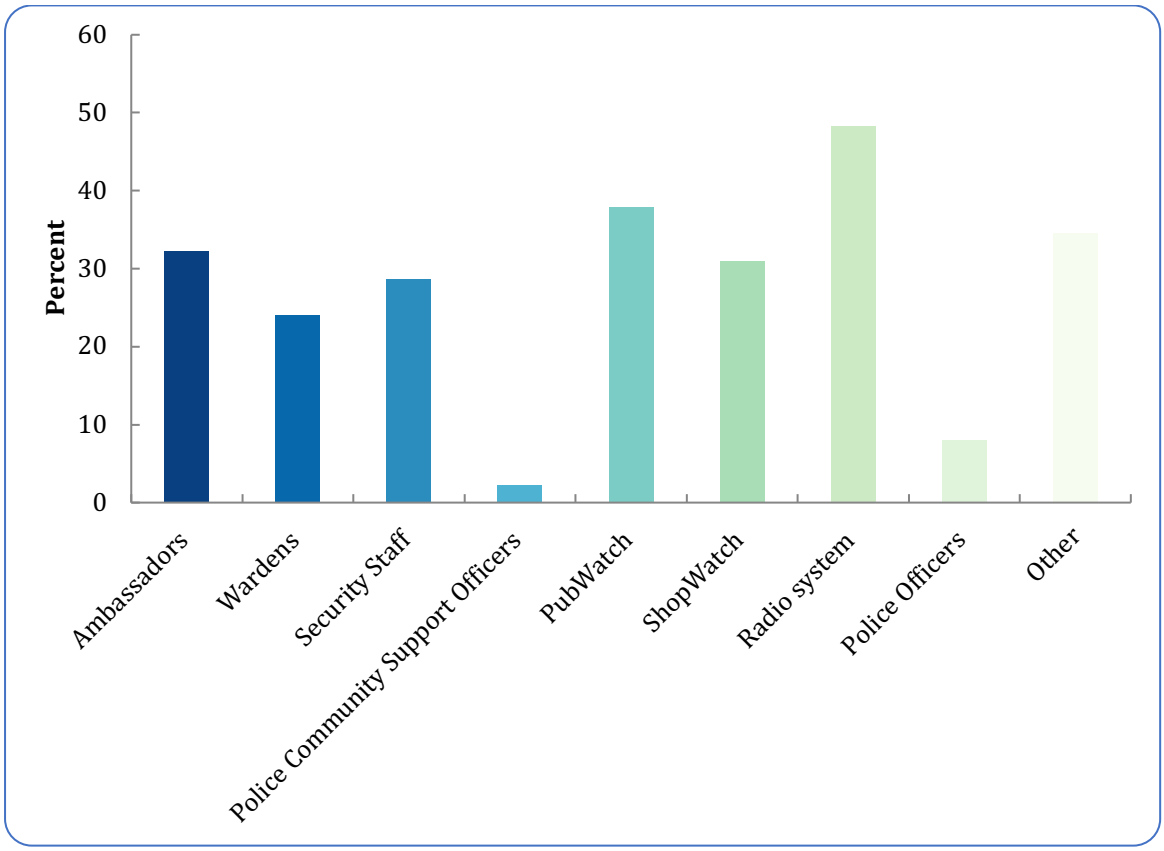


Business Crime Reduction Partnerships

Most BIDs 78.4% [68.4%) are involved in their Business Crime Reduction Partnerships, Pub and Shop Watch and other local policing projects. This is a 10-percentage point increase on last year and is indicative of the growing importance of BCRPs.

[35] https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use

Figure 33 BID involvement in Business crime reduction



The types of involvement vary but the majority of support is around Pub and Shop watch, rangers and wardens, street pastors, policing and PCSOs, radios, cameras and software packages etc.

Many BIDs are also involved in wider projects around taxi marshals, Betfair support, Best Bar None awards etc.

Government Funding and Support for the High Street

The story of the English government funding for developing towns, BIDs and the high street remains complex and very contested[36] [37], with originally three separate funding streams: Towns Fund [38], Future High Streets Fund [39] and then the Heritage Action Zone[40] ; these were worth in total some £3.6 billion, and some overlap in terminology

[36] Soult, Graham. https://www.cannyinsights.com/2020/01/08/explainer-high-streets-task-force-versus-future-high-streets-fund-and-towns-fund/

[37] https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/towns-fund

[38] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-further-guidance

[39] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-billion-future-high-streets-fund-expanded-to-50-more-areas

[40] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/95-million-to-revive-historic-high-streets

and money[41]. This was then augmented by another £50m of EU funding to respond to Covid-19. Very recently, a new Long-Term Plan for Towns was announced for 55 towns that will benefit from a £1.1 billion levelling up investment, as part of a plan for towns that have been 'overlooked and taken for granted'[42]. The third round of the Levelling Up Fund was launched in mid-November 2023 [43].

Thus, overall, some £13 Billion[44] was invested in a very wide range of projects, with very different project titles. This was a vital new and very large source of innovation and growth in our high streets and following the latest government announcement [45] .

The final analysis of the impact and efficacy of this funding is not yet clear[46]

The Scottish, Irish and Welsh administrations are dealing with these matters differently, and for Scotland particularly the Scotland Improvement Districts [47] is providing data.

The database that British BIDs is developing for these projects suggests that there are potentially around 283 projects, with 221 high streets, town, or city BIDs involved in one or other of the funding streams, and thus far 102 of the projects have some BID involvement. We will continue to monitor as best we can the outcomes of these projects, as they clearly will be the key drivers of many of our town and city BIDs in the future.

The survey data suggest that some 70% of all BIDs are engaged in one or other of the government levelling up project lines, with some involved in several, although 30% are not expecting to receive any funding.

Many BIDs found the process of working with their local authorities challenging but ultimately useful.

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[41] https://www.channel4.com/news/factcheck/factcheck-johnson-on-new-3-6bn-towns-fund

[42] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-puts-local-people-in-control-of-more-than-1-billion-with-long-term-plan-for-left-behind-towns

[43] https://dwfgroup.com/en/news-and-insights/insights/2023/10/levelling-up-fund-round-3-to-be-launched-in-november-2023#:~:text=The%20%C2%A34.8%20billion%20Levelling,the%20United%20Kingdom%20since%202021.

[44] https://levellingup.campaign.gov.uk/

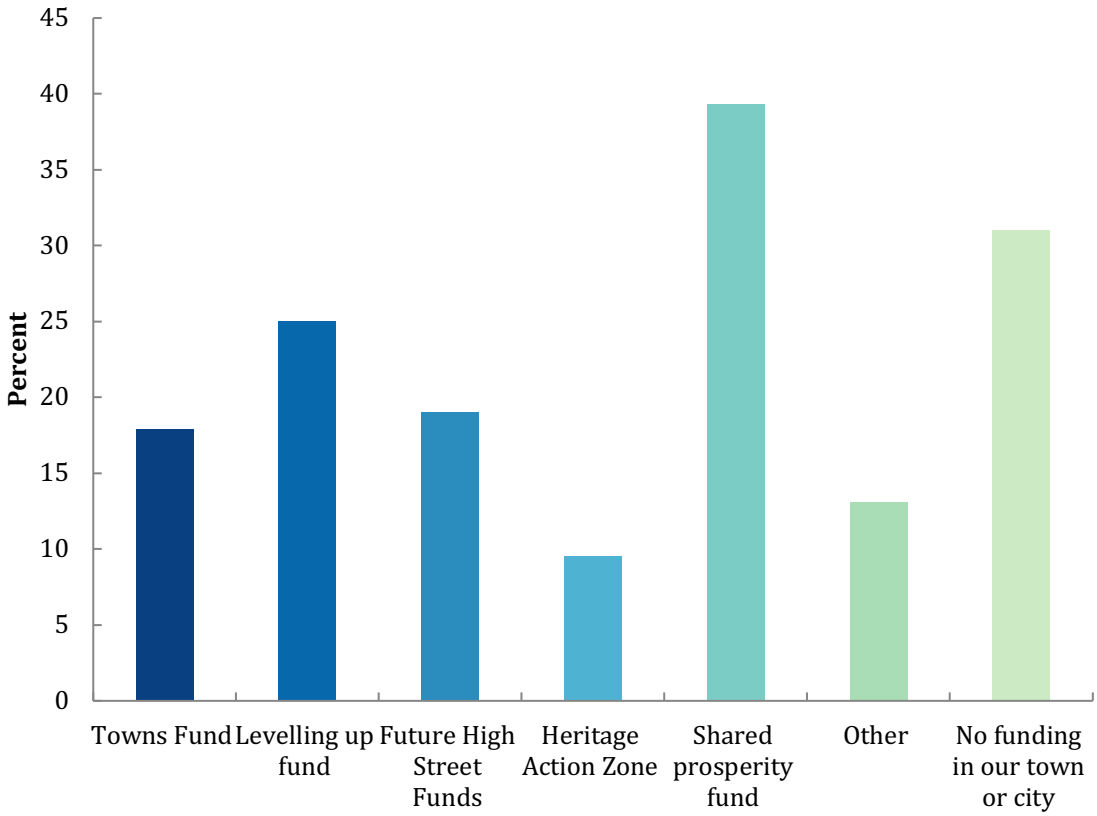
[45] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-further-guidance

[46] https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/which-areas-have-benefited-from-the-levelling-up-fund/

[47] https://improvementdistricts.scot/

There is a major concern over the future of this funding, much of which has been vital over the past few years.

Figure 34: Central government Funding % recipients



Experiential Activities

It was suggested that there is a move toward providing 'experiences' as part of many BIDs current activities and BIDs were asked how far they were involved in this and what sorts of tasks they were engaged in. The responses were very varied but supportive:



Other issues raised

BIDs were asked for any other issues they wanted to raise, and the word cloud gives a sense of the major issues.



Some protocols

This National Survey is both an audit or census, which involves analysing as far as possible the totality of existing data, and at the same time a service evaluation, undertaken to benefit those who use and manage BIDs. It is designed and conducted solely to define or measure current BID services across the British Isles. Our participants are entirely BID staff, the data are aggregated and anonymous, it is not possible to identify individuals from any resulting report and use of the data will not cause substantial damage and distress. All data are either provided by each BID through the on-line questionnaire, or through a phone call to the BID, or by way of publicly available validated sources from each BID by way of their business plans or websites. The final report is anonymised as to individuals, although individual BID companies may be identifiable.

Acknowledgements

I thank all my British BIDs colleagues, particularly Maria Chapman-Beer and Mel Richardson for their time on the data collection for this annual review, and of course I thank the 118 BIDs that responded to the survey and those BIDs that kindly responded to the phone calls checking data.

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