

As we say goodbye to summer, many in the BID world will be looking ahead to the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, due on 30 October. The Government has been clear on what it believes is the extent of the financial challenges that the country faces, and most expect some tough decisions that will impact personal and family budgets, which will no doubt impact consumer attitudes and spending patterns.

And whilst the debate over the proposed changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance will no doubt continue to dominate the headlines in the coming weeks, we'll be keeping a close eye on whether there'll be any significant change to the business rates system, and anything else that will impact BIDs, our levy payers, and partners.

As such, this year's **British BIDs National Conference - on Thursday 7 November** - is extremely well timed. And we are delighted that **Catherine Bennion, Deputy Director at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government** will be one of our key speakers. Catherine's responsibilities include high streets and communities, and she will provide an overview of the Government's policies and priorities. We are working closely with Catherine and her team, and this will be an important session, framed as an important part of the Conference's focus on the future of BIDs.

I am also delighted to confirm **Wesley Ankrah** as another of our speakers. Wesley is a Director at Savills where he leads on social value, with extensive experience and knowledge across the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) framework that is increasingly important to BIDs, and the diverse communities that we work with. With a background in the property and development industry, Wesley was awarded 'Social Value Creator of the Year' at the inaugural 2021 Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREIIF). He sits on the Social Value UK Advisory board, the national membership body for social value. This promises to be a timing and informative session.

As we approach the end of a year in which we have marked and celebrated 20 years of BIDs - two decades that have been characterised by delivery and growth - at British BIDs, we are now focused on the question of "what's next". This theme sets the context for this year's National Conference, and it's exciting to be coming together, with a mix of influential speakers, panel discussions, audience debates, and the very latest industry research - including the insights from the 2024 National survey.

There are a small number of tickets left for the **National Conference**, so if you haven't yet booked, please do so [here](#).

And if you haven't done so, please do complete this year's **National BID survey**. Now in its 18th year, the survey provides an annual snapshot which is crucial for our work, but also for partners and policy makers.

The survey is the authoritative source of data on the BID industry, and it provides a wealth of information and insight that enables BIDs to benchmark themselves and to identify key performance indicators. It also helps us to advise both national and local government, and it lets national and local levy payers see the bigger picture in terms of the work that BIDs are doing across the UK and Ireland. It is also important in helping new and developing BIDs to design their services and operations in the most effective way and in line with best practice.

Completing the survey is easy and should take no more than 15 minutes. Thank you!

I am looking forward to meeting colleagues at next month's "Big Cities" conference, being held in Manchester. This promises to be a timely discussion on the role that BIDs play in our cities, and I'm very keen to hear how we see our contribution to the growth agenda - especially those that are operating in areas with combined authorities and elected Mayors.



Nic Durston, Chair of British BIDs