



## Spring Report

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# Business Improvement Districts in the British Isles April 2025

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## **Executive Summary**

The total BID community in the British Isles at the end of March 2025 totals 347.

BIDs across the British Isles contribute £153,744,134 each year to their business communities and represent 133,154 business hereditaments.

There have been 11 new BIDs coming through successful ballots in the past twelve months, a sign that the business community recognizes the importance of BIDs and what they provide to our business communities.

The number of BIDs at the development stage is an important measure, as it gives a sense of the supply chain and growth of the sector; there are currently 59 developing BIDs across the British Isles.

The numbers of hereditaments are a useful analytical and planning tool for a BID, with the average BID having 413, the smallest number at 40 and the largest at 2500. Interestingly, as individual BIDs mature over their terms, they continue to grow slightly larger, with an increase in their average number of hereditaments.

But again, many BIDs remain small, with an average levy income of £457,572 and the smallest remains £14,639. The largest single BID levy income is £4,100,000.

During the past 12 months, post-covid and during some financial and governmental uncertainty there were major concerns over ballots, which were in the end unfounded; 70 ballots resulted in 61 successful outcomes but nine failures [12.8%]. This is a higher failure rate than twelve months ago, when there were 4 failures out of 80 ballots [5%]

Ballot turnout in the last twelve months, was on average 41.1% and the ballot results by rateable value were 80.4% and by number 76.5%.

This is a better performance than the twenty-year norm, with an average improvement of some 3.2 percentage points in the RV vote and 2.6 percentage points in the vote by number compared to the average 20-year results. Turnout was however less, by 3.1 percentage points.

The first BID ballot was for Kingston First on 16 November 2004, and there have been 1109 ballots over the past twenty-one years as BIDs have grown in number and moved through their various terms. The data suggest that there have been 112 Failures [10.09%] out of the 1109, of which some have gone on to succeed later.

The fifteen-year time series data since 2010 show a steady increase in BID numbers, in both income and hereditaments, until the pandemic year of 2021, when there was a reduction by 5 BIDs and a concomitant reduction in hereditaments. This was reversed by the following year, with an increase by eight BIDs, and a slow but steady increase since then to the current number of 347.

## Introduction

This collection of data on Business Improvement Districts in the British Isles is part of a regular series. It measures the BIDs environment on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2025, and will be mirrored as usual by the annual National Survey Report in November, which also includes a national survey of more detailed, qualitative information about BIDs.

There can be little doubt that economic uncertainty and the recent change of government has had an impact on the places that are the focus of our industry, but BIDs continue to be successful, as demonstrated by both the national ballot results and levy collection rates.

Into the future, we continue to be concerned, but about different issues. The very complex international agenda, the very unresolved issue of business rates, inflation, energy costs, staff costs and shortages, and planning changes are affecting BIDs dramatically and most are changing fast to reflect those concerns.

As we said a year ago, the major industry change brought about by the pandemic and the more recent financial and political challenges has not just been about BIDs, ballots, and the collection of the levy. It continues to be the changes that towns, city centres and out of town trading areas continue to undergo as a very different economy emerges following the growth of online business, e-commerce, working from home, new planning regulations, and people's aspirations for a new way of working.

We have yet to see the full outcome of some of these changes, but many BIDs are already demonstrating voice and leadership in shaping what this future looks like, whilst delivering to the immediate challenges of reopening and recovery.

The purpose and uses of this, the BIDs Report for April 2025, continue to be multiple. It allows a snapshot to be taken of the BIDs community in the British Isles for policy makers, both local and national; it allows chief executives and boards of BIDs to benchmark themselves against their peers and colleagues, and it allows new and developing BIDs to design their services and operations in the most effective fashion.

This Report uses the quantitative data from the Business Plans of each BID as it comes to ballot; the British BIDs team scan BID's websites, local papers and social media continually to make sure that our data is as up to date and accurate as possible. Thus, the report corrects and updates data from earlier years as they become public and recognises that there is also a time lag between each BID's ballot and the term start date.

## **The national picture for BIDs.**

### **The total active BIDs community**

The BID community in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ireland at the end of March 2025 totals 347, [six more than the 341 in the spring last year].

There is clearly a national and regional spread of BIDs, with the major cities having the highest proportion by levy income, but interestingly not necessarily the highest number of hereditaments. This is most plausibly a reflection of differing rateable values across the countries.

**Table 1 BIDs by Country or region, showing hereditaments and income.**

Region or Country	Count	NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	LEVY INCOME
<b>East Midlands</b>	11	6,072	£4,961,025
<b>East of England</b>	32	12,767	£10,632,023
<b>Greater London</b>	75	21,806	£58,236,960
<b>Ireland</b>	5	7,024	£5,211,213
<b>North East England</b>	7	2,857	£3,483,226
<b>North West England</b>	35	11,843	£11,633,594
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	8	2,762	£2,923,228
<b>Scotland</b>	35	11,224	£6,536,355
<b>South East England</b>	43	17,982	£15,765,706
<b>South West England</b>	32	13,519	£10,265,428
<b>Wales</b>	14	4,436	£3,289,594
<b>West Midlands</b>	33	12,191	£11,798,910
<b>Yorkshire and the Humber</b>	17	8,591	£9,006,872
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>133,074</b>	<b>£153,744,134</b>

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

**Table 2 BIDs by type, showing levy spend and hereditaments.**

BIDs TYPE	Count	NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	LEVYINCOME
<b>Accommodation</b>	2	78	£954,000
<b>Area BIDs</b>	17	6,491	£18,092,391
<b>Business Park</b>	13	2,578	£3,217,089
<b>City BIDs</b>	33	21,904	£27,795,653
<b>Commercial</b>	3	1,413	£2,499,257
<b>Culture &amp; Commerce</b>	1	450	£1,302,441
<b>Destination</b>	3	2,373	£1,180,000
<b>Food &amp; Drink</b>	1	40	£14,639
<b>Industrial</b>	16	3,159	£2,688,831
<b>Industrial Park</b>	1	92	£82,000
<b>Industrial/Business Parks</b>	1	300	£120,000
<b>Leisure</b>	2	389	£2,477,811
<b>Mixed Area</b>	21	6,783	£17,838,123
<b>Property Owner</b>	4	584	£7,568,646
<b>Retail</b>	1	418	£745,623
<b>Retail &amp; Leisure</b>	3	1,184	£5,197,454
<b>Tourism</b>	8	3,528	£2,432,600
<b>Town BIDs</b>	215	80,890	£58,932,424
<b>Town BIDs/Tourism</b>	2	420	£605,152
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>133,074</b>	<b>£153,744,134</b>

## Developing BIDs

The number of BIDs at the development stage is an important measure, as it gives a sense of the supply chain and growth of the sector. There are currently 59 in development, two more than this time last year, although some of those have come to successful ballot, and new ones have emerged.

We continue to monitor ballots for developing BIDs and update the industry through our monthly Ballot Watch which is available to members.

**Table 3 Current Developing BIDs by Country or Region**

Region	Count
East Midlands	4
East of England	3
Greater London	8
North West England	3
Northern Ireland	2
Scotland	14
South East England	9
South West England	6
Wales	4
West Midlands	3
Yorkshire and the Humber	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

## **Data on Business Improvement Districts across the British Isles**

The various data for BIDs are shown here to allow BIDs to position themselves against sector benchmarks by way of levy, hereditaments, and income.

### **Levy % rates for BIDs by term.**

The average for levy rates has increased very slightly to 1.55%, with a small spread between BIDs terms, possibly a reflection of early adopters coming from the higher rateable value areas. The occasional very high levy rate reflects some specialist or industrial BIDs



**Table 4 Levy % rates of current BIDs, by term**

<b>CURRENT TERM</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Average BIDLEVY</b>	<b>Highest BIDs LEVY</b>	<b>Lowest BID Levy</b>
<b>1<sup>ST</sup> TERM</b>	54	1.53	2.50	1
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> TERM</b>	121	1.49	2.50	0.5
<b>3<sup>RD</sup> TERM</b>	97	1.57	2.85	0.5
<b>4<sup>TH</sup> TERM</b>	64	1.69	6.00	0.9
<b>5<sup>TH</sup> TERM</b>	11	1.54	3.00	0.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>1.55</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>0.71</b>

### **Banded levies and ranges of levy**

36 BIDs [10.3%] use a banded approach [2023: 36 BIDs [10.7%]]. Others use a range of levy payments depending on type of hereditament or amount of RV; 18 BIDs [5.2%] of BIDs do so.

### **Numbers of hereditaments in BIDs**

The numbers of hereditaments are a useful analytical and planning tool for a BIDs, with the average BIDs having 413, the smallest number at 49 and the largest at 2500.

Interestingly, as individual BIDs mature over their terms, they continue to grow slightly larger, with an increase in their average number of hereditaments.

**Table 5 Numbers of hereditaments in BIDs by term**

CURRENT TERM	Count	Total NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	Average NO OF HEREDITAMENTS	Largest number OF HEREDITAMENTS	Smallest number OF HEREDITAMENTS
<b>1<sup>ST</sup> TERM</b>	54	14,503	279	500	49
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> TERM</b>	121	46,450	418	1593	40
<b>3<sup>RD</sup> TERM</b>	97	38,102	423	800	59
<b>4<sup>TH</sup> TERM</b>	64	28,836	489	2500	62
<b>5<sup>TH</sup> TERM</b>	11	5,183	518	1083	176
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>133,074</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>40</b>

Again, the variety of BIDs is shown by the spread of hereditament numbers across the different types, with some specialist BIDs such as Accommodation, Food and Drink and Industrial showing some very small numbers, and the smallest BIDs having 40 levy payers.

**Table 6 BIDs Hereditaments by type of BIDs.**

BIDs TYPE	Count	Total NO OF HEREDITA MENTS	Average NO OF HEREDIT AMENTS	Max NO OF HEREDIT AMENTS	Min NO OF HEREDIT AMENTS
<b>Accommodation</b>	2	78	78	78	78
<b>Area BIDs</b>	17	6,491	406	1231	49
<b>Business Park</b>	13	2,578	258	766	63
<b>City BIDs</b>	33	21,904	685	2500	346
<b>Commercial</b>	3	1,413	471	820	218
<b>Culture &amp; Commerce</b>	1	450	450	450	450
<b>Destination</b>	3	2,373	791	1593	280
<b>Food &amp; Drink</b>	1	40	40	40	40
<b>Industrial</b>	16	3,159	211	450	59
<b>Industrial Park</b>	1	92	92	92	92
<b>Industrial/Business Parks</b>	1	300	300	300	300
<b>Leisure</b>	2	389	195	213	176
<b>Mixed Area</b>	21	6,783	357	1083	63
<b>Property Owner</b>	4	584	195	429	59
<b>Retail</b>	1	418	418	418	418
<b>Retail &amp; Leisure</b>	3	1,184	395	670	183
<b>Tourism</b>	8	3,528	441	1200	79
<b>Town BIDs</b>	215	80,890	402	1561	67
<b>Town BIDs/Tourism</b>	2	420	420	420	420
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>133,074</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>40</b>

### Levy income and business investment.

Levy income, and thus business investment, is one of the most valuable and varied data sets for BIDs, with the early adopters, primarily in the higher rateable value towns and cities, now into their fourth or fifth terms showing higher average levy incomes and thus investment.

BIDs across the British Isles contribute £153,744,134 [2024: £154,930,018; 2023: £150,107,029] each year to their business communities and represent 135,837 businesses.

But again, many BIDs remain small, with an average levy income of £457,572 and the smallest remains £14,639. The largest single BIDs levy spend is £4,100,000.

**Table 7 Levy income and business investment by BIDs by Term**

<b>CURRENT TERM</b>	<b>Total LEVYINCOME</b>	<b>Average LEVY INCOME</b>	<b>Max LEVY INCOME</b>	<b>Min LEVY INCOME</b>
<b>1<sup>ST</sup> TERM</b>	£22,637,862	£435,344	£4,092,320	£34,390
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> TERM</b>	£46,079,234	£387,220	£4,100,000	£14,639
<b>3<sup>RD</sup> TERM</b>	£44,712,942	£470,663	£3,754,452	£37,500
<b>4<sup>TH</sup> TERM</b>	£28,328,636	£472,144	£3,387,025	£55,000
<b>5<sup>TH</sup> TERM</b>	£11,985,460	£1,198,546	£4,100,000	£391,000
<b>Total</b>	£153,744,134	£457,572	£4,100,000	£14,639

## Key Ballot data for BIDs

Ballot data are one of the most useful BIDs benchmarks, with the data suggesting both an improved turnout and better voting figures at each term, as BIDs become more experienced at satisfying their levy payers' needs.

### All ballots for all BIDs 2004 -2025

The first BID ballot was for Kingston First on 16 November 2004, and there have been 1109 [2024: 1041] ballots over the past twenty-one years as BIDs have grown in number and moved through their various terms. The data suggest that there have been 112 Failures [10.09%] out of the 1109, of which some have gone on to succeed later.

**Table 8 Data on all ballots for all BIDs from 2004 onward**

Row Labels	Count	Average % TURNOUT	Average % IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER	Average % IN FAVOUR BY RV
<b>1ST TERM</b>	418	42.3	73.7	76.1
<b>2ND TERM</b>	308	45.7	76.0	80.4
<b>3RD TERM</b>	178	45.5	82.5	85.3
<b>4TH TERM</b>	76	44.2	83.7	88.4
<b>5TH TERM</b>	11	42.8	89.0	91.8
<b>Alteration Ballot</b>	1			
<b>Challenge Upheld</b>	1	31.0	68.0	90.0
<b>Challenged and a reballot held</b>	1		51.0	55.0
<b>UNSUCCESSFUL</b>	112	46.2	46.3	47.7
<b>Successful but void</b>	2		73.0	79.8
<b>Ballot suspended due to COVID-19</b>	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1109</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>73.9</b>	<b>77.2</b>

Of course, some BIDs have ceased mid-term, and several have not gone to a ballot at the end of their current term. These BIDs are sometimes set up to achieve certain tasks and then cease, others mutate into other types of new BIDs that better reflect the needs of their business communities. In all, 40 BIDs have ceased during their terms or did not go to ballot at the end of their term.

**Table 9 BIDs that ceased during or at the end of their terms by not going to ballot.**

Ceaasing BIDs by term	Count
<b>Ceased during 1st term</b>	7
<b>Ceased during 2nd term</b>	2
<b>Ceased during 4th term</b>	2
<b>Ceased end of 1st term</b>	23
<b>Ceased end of 2nd term</b>	3
<b>Ceased end of 3rd term</b>	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

### Ballot data during the last twelve months

During the past 12 months, post-covid and during some financial and governmental uncertainty there were major concerns over ballots, which were in the end unfounded; 70 ballots resulted in 61 successful outcomes and nine failures [12%]; this is a higher failure rate than twelve months ago, when there were 4 failures out of 80 ballots [5%]

Eleven new BIDs were successful in their ballots during the past year.

**Table 10 Ballot success data % April 2024 – March 2025**

Row Labels	Count	Average TURNOUT %	Average IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER %	Average IN FAVOUR BY RV %
<b>1ST TERM</b>	11	33.3	66.3	73.1
<b>2ND TERM</b>	16	39.8	83.3	85.5
<b>3RD TERM</b>	21	39.9	87.1	89.2
<b>4TH TERM</b>	8	47.4	92.3	94.0
<b>5TH TERM</b>	4	45.6	90.5	93.7
<b>Successful but void</b>	1		75.3	84.0
<b>UNSUCCESSFUL</b>	9	47.0	32.9	43.2
<b>12 month Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>76.5</b>	<b>80.4</b>
<b>Twenty year Total</b>	<b>1109</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>73.9</b>	<b>77.2</b>
Variation		<b>-3.1pp</b>	<b>2.6pp</b>	<b>3.2pp</b>

Ballot turnout in the last twelve months, was on average 41.1% and the ballot results by rateable value were 80.4% and by number 76.5%.

Despite some people's concerns, this is a better performance than the twenty-year norm, with an average improvement of some 3.2 percentage points in the RV vote and 2.6 percentage points in the vote by number compared to the average 20-year results. Turnout was however less, but only by 3.1 percentage points. However, the higher failure rate than twelve months ago, when there were 4 failures out of 80 ballots [5%] is clearly of great concern

### **Outcomes of ballots of current BIDs**

The current BIDs most certainly measure themselves by way of their ballot data, and rightly so. The mean is the most used data measure for each of the key indicators – the % turnout, the % of votes by number and the % of votes by RV. The data suggest on the whole an improvement in each term of a BIDs by a few percentage points at each ballot.

**Table 11 Average ballot data for current BIDs.**

<b>CURRENT TERM</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Average % TURNOUT</b>	<b>Average % IN FAVOUR BY RV</b>	<b>Average % N FAVOUR BY NUMBER</b>
<b>1ST TERM</b>	54	35.0	79.7	76.6
<b>2ND TERM</b>	121	39.9	81.7	77.0
<b>3RD TERM</b>	97	42.0	85.7	83.6
<b>4TH TERM</b>	64	43.3	88.1	83.8
<b>5TH TERM</b>	11	42.8	91.8	89.0
<b>Total</b>	347	40.5	84.0	80.4

### **Maxima of ballot data for BID Ballots**

BIDs are always interested in who has been the 'best' in their ballot. So, the maxima of the measures by BID term are given here: the best turnout for a current BID was 82%, and the best outcomes by RV and by number were 100% and 100% respectively.

**Table 12 Maxima of ballot data for current BIDs**

<b>CURRENT TERM</b>	Count	Max TURNOUT	Max IN FAVOUR BY RV	Max IN FAVOUR BY NUMBER
<b>1ST TERM</b>	54	79.0	99.4	95.0
<b>2ND TERM</b>	121	82.0	99.8	97.9
<b>3RD TERM</b>	97	80.0	100.0	100.0
<b>4TH TERM</b>	64	69.0	99.5	98.0
<b>5TH TERM</b>	11	51.0	99.7	99.5
<b>Total</b>	347	82.0	100.0	100.0

## **Time series 2010-2025**

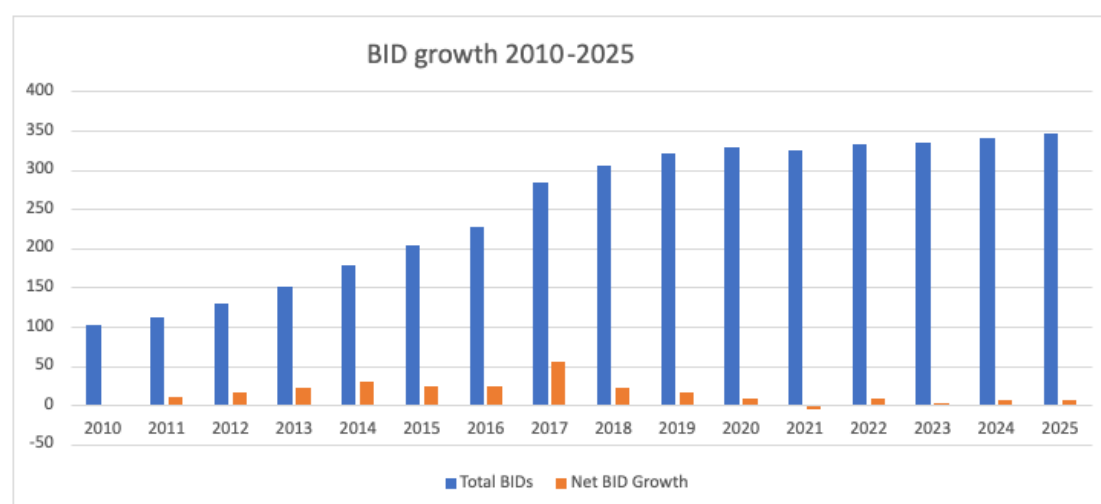
The sixteen-year time series data from 2010 show a steady increase in BID numbers, in both income and hereditaments, until the pandemic year of 2021, when there was a reduction by 5 BIDs and a concomitant reduction in hereditaments. This was reversed by the following year, with an increase by eight BIDs, and a slow but steady increase since then to the current number of 347.



**Table 13 BID DATA 2010-2025**

Survey year	Number of BIDs	Growth in BIDs	Total Levy Investment	Total Hereditaments	Investment per hereditament
<b>2010</b>	102		£23,483,888		
<b>2011</b>	112	10	£22,085,567	19,353	£1,141
<b>2012</b>	129	17	£39,883,454	54,110	£737
<b>2013</b>	150	21	£51,847,486	64,150	£808
<b>2014</b>	179	29	£63,000,000	59,771	£1,054
<b>2015</b>	203	24	£80,124,969	71,703	£1,117
<b>2016</b>	227	24	£78,659,124	78,549	£1,001
<b>2017</b>	283	56	£99,971,741	106,262	£941
<b>2018</b>	305	22	£110,575,380	120,735	£916
<b>2019</b>	321	16	£125,205,608	128,785	£972
<b>2020</b>	329	8	£132,493,286	133,163	£995
<b>2021</b>	324	-5	£134,979,983	125,023	£1,080
<b>2022</b>	332	8	£144,735,669	121,485	£1,191
<b>2023</b>	335	3	£150,316,106	132,962	£1,131
<b>2024</b>	341	6	£154,620,538	134,098	£1,153
<b>2025</b>	347	6	£153,744,134	133,074	£1,155

**Figure 1 Growth in BID numbers 2010-2025**



The levy raised, and then invested back into the business community, per hereditament gives a sense of the average individual business spend in BIDs over the years.

**Figure 2 Growth in BID levy spend and spend per hereditament 2010-25.**

