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Business Improvement Districts in the British Isles:

The 2021 Annual BID Survey and Report

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Executive summary and key headlines

This executive summary brings together some of the key data headlines of the survey:

- The active BID community in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ireland totaled 324 at the end of September 2021.
- Nine new BIDs came into being in the past twelve months, with a continuing spread of different types of BIDs evident.
- There are currently 53 BIDs in the development stage.
- There has been a total of 822 BID ballots since 2004, of which 710 have been successful.
- 82 BIDs have come to ballot in the past eighteen months, with five failures.
- Turnout performance since 2004 shows half of all BIDs obtaining a turnout of at least 44%.
- The median levy rate is 1.5%.
- Half of all BIDs have fewer than 394 hereditaments, the highest is 3,000 and currently ten BIDs have more than 1,000 hereditaments.
- The total number of hereditaments across all BIDs is 125,023.
- The total BID levy income is £134,979,983.
- Half of all the BIDs have a levy income of £280,790 or less; and 75% of all BIDs have a levy income of £489,160 or less.
- There are 26 BIDs with levy incomes of £1million or over; all are in the major cities, where rateable values and thus income is higher.
- The median figure for additional income is £12,000 and the highest amount £517,805; the total estimated additional income is £17,733,804, amounting to 11.59% of BID income across the country.
- 32% of BIDs have no collection charge made to them by their local authority. The median figure – that which 50% of BIDs are below – is £7,500.
- BIDs employed some 1040 full time equivalent staff, an increase of 2.2% on 2019.
- The gender balance amongst BID managers, based on simple forename analysis, has moved from 50:50 male:female in 2019 to 46:54 in 2021.
- There are 2754 members of BID boards across the country,
- 78% of BIDs reported having property owners involved in their boards,
- There are 465 property owner board members across the country.
- 80% of BIDs have Local authority representation, and there are 255 Local authority board members across the industry.
- 23% of BIDs feel that baseline statements are not being followed, whilst 36% felt that they were still being adhered to in difficult circumstances for many local authorities.
- BIDs are becoming increasingly involved in LEPs, with 59% signalling involvement.
- 78% of BIDs were interested in exploring a national conversation on Property Owner BIDs, a major increase on the 19% only two years ago.

- 87% of BIDs have asked for greater flexibility on Permitted Development Rights, with local authorities retaining greater freedom to use Article 4 direction when appropriate.
- Most BIDs (60%) are very involved in their Business Crime Reduction Partnerships, and local policing.
- There are 283 town fund or similar projects, with 221 high streets, town, or city centres involved in one or other of the funding streams, and thus far, 102 of the projects have some BID involvement.

The purpose of the 15th Annual BID Survey

The last eighteen months, since March 2020, have been turbulent, with the Covid-19 pandemic bringing about lockdowns, varying levels of control across the five countries in the British Isles, and a dramatic impact on the business community. Some of this we tracked and recorded in the research we did with the NEF last year¹; other pieces of relevant research we have announced in our monthly Insight².

Thus, and in particular this year, the purpose and uses of this 15th Annual survey are important. It allows a 'covid snapshot' to be taken of the Business Improvement District [BID] community in the UK and Ireland for policy makers, both local and 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 reports, from 2010 onward, are available on the British BIDs [Bb] website³.

¹ <https://britishbids.info/publications/business-improvement-districts-and-the-new-normal-their-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic-of-2020>

² <https://britishbids.info/search-results?q=insight>

³ <https://britishbids.info/services/national-bid-survey>

2021 data sources

There are two elements to the document, each with its own section:

1. The core data for the whole BID industry
2. A qualitative sample of the BID industry

Section 1 – 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 weekly British BIDs Ballot Watch.

These are then collated and made available on the British BIDs Index on the British BIDs website. For most BIDs, coming up to ballot, the business plans are also collected and analysed to ensure the data is as accurate as possible. This data has been gathered consistently since this survey began, and the total population is now 823 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 on the data collection date of 30 September 2021.

Section 2 – A qualitative survey

There was also an individual questionnaire, collecting more qualitative data, using the online service Alchemer. This was issued by personal email in August 2021 to the 309 Managers or Chief Executives of all the BIDs in the British Isles with contact details. BIDs were contacted by email and telephone during the survey to remind them of the deadlines and the value of the survey. The closing date was September 30th, 2021.

108 [33.3%] BID managers or chief executives provided these further qualitative data by responding to this online 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 a reasonably accurate picture of the state of the BID industry.

The analysis

The report is very consciously data focused, showing the 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.

Section 1 – The core data for the whole BID industry

The core data for all Business Improvement Districts [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 weekly British BIDs Ballot Watch. The data are presented here.

Active BIDs in the British Isles

The active BID community in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ireland totalled 324 at the end of September 2021.



Figure 1 – Map of BIDs in the British Isles

Types of Business Improvement District

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

1 – Types of active BIDs across the British Isles as of September 2021

Types of BIDs	Number of BIDs	Number of Hereditaments	Levy Income
Area Bid	4	1,981	£1,206,826
Business Park	8	1,899	£2,297,378
City Centre	26	19,226	£21,971,541
Commercial	5	1,924	£7,746,821
Destination	3	1,634	£1,730,482
Digital BID	1	386	£70,000
Food & Drink	1	35	£14,639
Industrial	18	2,864	£2,541,062
Industrial Park	6	1,084	£670,797
Leisure	2	370	£1,871,926
Mixed Area	14	3,910	£13,393,124
Propert Owner	4	268	£6,979,779
Retail & Leisure	3	1,633	£5,215,010
Retail & Tourism	1	245	£107,000
Tourism	7	3,619	£2,178,730
Town Centre	217	82,839	£64,480,721
Town Centre/Tourism	3	756	£989,645
Culture and Commerce	1	450	£1,302,441
Total	324	120,023	£134,767,922

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

2 – National and regional data for active BIDs

Regions	Number of BIDs	Number of Hereditaments
East Midlands	10	4,556
East of England	28	11,173
Greater London	69	17,991
Ireland	5	7,486
North East England	6	2,665
North West England	30	10,779
Northern Ireland	8	2,402
Scotland	35	11,760
South East England	37	16,098
South West England	34	15,681
Wales	14	3,639
West Midlands	31	12,408
Yorkshire and the Humber	17	8,385
Total	324	125,023

Annual increase in BID numbers

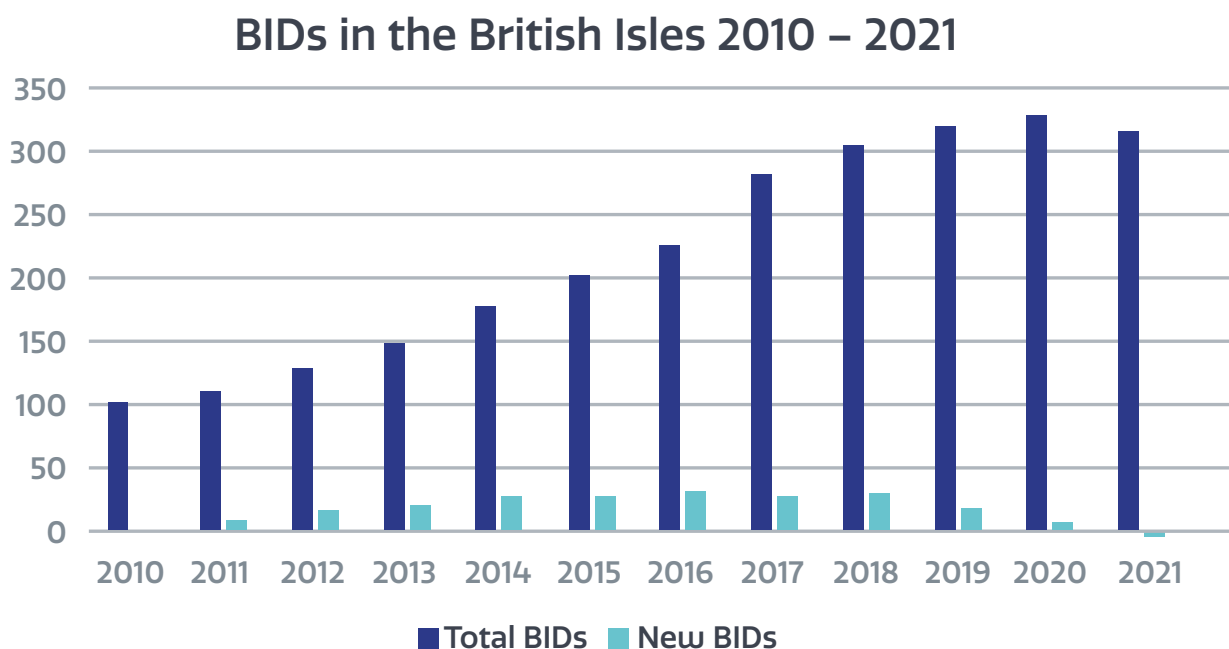
The emergence of new BIDs has been impressive since the first BID became operational in 2005. In the past 16 years new BIDs have come into existence each year, albeit with a slightly varied annual growth rate, and the data is presented here both as a table and a graph.

The Covid-19 pandemic these last eighteen months has resulted in a loss of five BIDs by ballot, and a further two who decided not to go to ballot specifically because of Covid concerns. Some of these have been replaced by nine new BIDs, or BIDs that went back to ballot speedily, so the net loss was five.

3 – Growth of BIDs by number 2010–2021

Survey year	Number of BIDs	Growth in BIDs	Levy Income	Total hereditaments	Income 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	28	£80,124,969	71,703	£1,117
2016	227	37	£78,659,124	78,549	£1,001
2017	283	26	£99,971,741	106,262	£941
2018	305	29	£110,575,380	120,735	£916
2019	321	18	£125,205,608	128,785	£972
2020	329	6	£132,493,286	133,163	£995
2021	324	-5	£134,979,983	125,023	£1,080

Figure 2 – Total and New BID growth 2010–2021



New BIDs 2020–2021

9 new BIDs came into being in the past twelve months, since October 1, 2020, with the continuing spread of different types of BIDs evident.

4 – New BID types in 2021 by type

Type of BID	Number of new BIDs
Area Bid	1
Commercial	1
Destination	1
Industrial	1
Mixed Area	2
Tourism	1
Town Centre	2
Total	9

Developing BIDs

The numbers of new BIDs being developed is a key strategic issue and the story here remains strong. There are currently 53 BIDs that are in the development stage, with ballots coming up in the next year or so. This is an increase of 6 over the 47 that were developing in the last survey, some of which have now come to successful ballot. This suggests a continued enthusiasm and increasing perceived benefit to local business communities.

There is of course 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 53 new developing BIDs vary by country and region, with both Scotland and Wales seeing them as key drivers of new development.

5 – Developing BIDs by Region

Regions or Country	Number of Developing BIDs
East Midlands	1
East of England	4
Greater London	8
North West England	3
Scotland	12
South East England	10
South West England	5
Wales	4
West Midlands	3
Yorkshire and the Humber	3
Total	53

BID Loan Fund: Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

The BID Loan Fund was an initiative established in 2013, to assist with the development of new BIDs in town and city centres in England.

The number of loans that have been awarded thus far is 33 and the amount of loans granted has been £1,086,135 in total. The scheme was administered on behalf of the then MHCLG by British BIDs through the National BIDs Advisory Board. Funding methods are 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 past few years, 11 tranches have been allocated.

The scheme is currently being reviewed by the newly titled Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities.

Ballots and outcomes 2004 – 2021

BIDs are established by ballot; in England, Wales and NI, each BID must gain a simple majority of the votes cast, as well as a majority of the Rateable Values of all those votes cast. The relevant local authority, or its nominated agent, runs the ballot; in order to continue beyond each term, a further ballot is also required every five years. Thus, with 324 BIDs, there will be some 60 ballots a year, an average of five per month, although most ballots peak in the spring and the autumn as they are often timed to fit in with the local authority electoral cycle.

The ballot criteria in Scotland require four criteria to be achieved; a minimum turnout of 25% by both RV and number of voters, and approval must be greater than 50% by number of votes and by RV of those votes cast.

Ballots 2004 – 2021

The data on ballots and their outcomes are always complex to map, but since the legislation in 2004, there has been a total of 822 BID ballots, of which 710 have been successful. Some BIDs have gone to ballot at least once, and some several times as their terms are extended. Some BIDs have not come to fruition, and some have ceased mid-term.

6 – All BID ballot outcomes 2004–2021 showing outcomes by %

Terms	Count	Average % turnout	Average % in favour by number	Average % in favour by RV
1st term	362	43.4	73.6	75.4
2nd term	223	48.0	75.7	79.7
3rd term	95	49.1	81.6	84.2
4th term	28	45.5	84.6	87.9
5th term	1	44.0	99.5	99.7
Alteration Ballot	1			
Ceased end of 1st term	8	39.3	69.0	70.3
Ceased end of 2nd term	1	46.0	76.0	63.0
Ceased end of 3 year term	1	60.0	87.0	93.0
Ceased in 1st Term	8	34.0	64.6	70.6
Ceased In 2nd Term	1	55.0	80.0	86.0
Challenge Upheld	1	31.0	68.0	90.0
Challenged and a re-ballot held	1		51.0	55.0
Unsuccessful	91	47.2	47.2	47.8
Total	822	45.6	72.5	75.2

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

32 of the initially unsuccessful ballots were turned into success at a later date, sometimes within a few months, in other cases some years later.

Ballots during the Covid-19 crisis

82 BIDs have come to ballot in the past eighteen months, since the first Covid lockdown; 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. 5 ballots were unsuccessful.

7 – BIDs which have come to ballot since the first Covid-19 lockdown

Outcomes March 23rd 2020 – 30th September 2021	Number of ballots	Turnout %	In favour by number %	In favour by RV %
1st term	8	38.4	82.6	83.1
2nd term	37	41.2	78.4	81.2
3rd term	15	42.9	82.6	82.1
4th term	15	40.2	86.0	86.4
5th term	1	44.0	99.5	99.7
Ballot suspended due to Covid-19	1			
Unsuccessful	5	33.9	49.0	56.6
Total	82	40.8	79.9	81.6

This failure rate of only 6% is a useful measure of the value that many levy payers put on their BIDs during this difficult time.

New BIDs ballot data 2020–21

Nine new BIDs came into being during the past 12 months, during the Covid-19 pandemic, and their ballot results were very sound.

8 – New BIDs ballot data 2020–2021

Type of BID	Number of BIDs	Average of turnout %	Average in favour by number %	Average in favour by RV %
Area BID	1	79.0	61.7	70.7
Commercial	1	47.6	89.0	93.5
Destination	1	32.5	80.4	65.1
Industrial	1		79.0	74.0
Mixed Area	2	46.8	92.7	99.2
Tourism	1	27.5	92.4	90.7
Town Centre	2	29.0	67.5	71.5
Total	9	44.2	80.3	81.7

Failed BIDs 2020–21

Five BIDs failed at ballot since the lockdown in March 2020. Of the five, two failed by the rateable value count, suggesting an increased involvement of the national levy payers, for whom BIDs are now a serious cost to their head offices, and two failed by number. The fifth went back to ballot within the regulation period and won.

	Number of BIDs	Average of turnout %	Average in favour by number %	Average in favour by RV %
Unsuccessful	5	33.9	49.0	56.6
Total	5	33.9	49.0	56.6

Turnout

A key performance measure for many BIDs at ballot is the % turnout, with local and national levy payers keen to ensure transparency and accountability. Whilst the average turnout % for ballots is 46.7%, analysis of the turnouts allows a more granular picture to emerge.

Data over the past 17 years suggest that the turnout performance is reasonable, with half of all BIDs obtaining a turnout of at least 44%, and 25% obtaining a turnout of at least 52.9%. The highest turnout was 88%

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

9 – Turnout % for all current BIDs

Turnout measure	Turnout %
Quartile 1	38.0
Median	44.0
Quartile 3	52.9
Maximum	88.0

Most successful ballots

Some outcomes are truly excellent, with some very high figures for all three performance indicators. This table shows the averaged best result for the three key performance measures. Interestingly, as ballot performance improves over terms, turnout reduces; possibly the result of increased confidence and an assumption of a positive outcome.

10 – The best ballot data for a BID

Terms	Count	Maximum turnout %	Maximum favour by number %	Maximum in favour by RV %
1st term	363	88.0	98.0	99.4
2nd term	223	83.0	98.6	99.0
3rd term	95	79.0	98.5	99.9
4th term	28	65.0	96.2	99.0
5th term	1	44.0	99.5	99.7

Failed BIDs 2005–2021

103 BIDs have failed in their ballots or ceased by not coming to ballot again in the past sixteen years

11 – Failed or ceasing BIDs 2005–2021

	Number of BIDs	Average % of turnout	Average % in favour by number	Minimum number of hereditaments
Cesased end of 1st term	8	39.3	69.0	70.3
Cesased end of 2nd term	1	46.0	76.0	63.0
Cesased end of 3rd term	1	60.0	87.0	93.0
Challenge upheld	1	31.0	68.0	90.0
Challenged and a reballot held	1		51.0	55.0
Unsuccessful	91	47.2	47.2	47.8
Total	103	46.4	49.7	50.9

Levy rates for BIDs in 2021

The BID levy rate is, most usually, the multiplier of the non-domestic rateable value by which the levy amount chargeable is worked out and is therefore an important issue for BIDs and their members. This does not apply in Scotland 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 and smaller locations where rateable values are lower and therefore require a higher multiplier to achieve a viable budget.

For the current data, of 324 BIDs, 273 [86.4%] were using a % levy rate, with a median at 1.5%. The averages, maxima and minima of levy % across BIDs is narrow and suggests that the issue has become standardised across the industry with any exceptions being small industrial BIDs.

12 – % Levy rates of 324 current BIDs in 2021 by term

BID term	Average rate of BID Levy – % of RV
1st term	1.5
2nd term	1.4
3rd term	1.5
4th term	1.4
5th term	0.7
Average	1.4

Again, the spread and deviation of levy payments shows a median of 1.5%, with the largest at 6%, and 5 BIDs with levies of greater than 2%. The larger RVs in London has allowed BIDs there to have lower % levy rates, and the move toward a higher average levy rate across the British Isles is to some extent a measure of the growth of BIDs outside London.

13 – Range of levy % across 324 BIDs

Measure	Levy Rates in % of RV
Quartile 1	1.1
Median	1.5
Quartile 3	1.5
Maximum	6

Hereditaments

The number of hereditaments represents the number of properties of business levy payers or voters within the BID area, based on rateable business properties on the non-domestic rating list.

The distribution of hereditaments for the BIDs with data is shown. Half of all BIDs have fewer than 394 hereditaments, the highest is 3,000 and currently ten BIDs have more than 1000 hereditaments

14 – Numbers of hereditaments in a BID

Measure	Number of hereditaments
Minimum	29
Quartile 1	265
Median	394
Quartile 3	537
Maximum	3,000

15 – Distribution of hereditaments across different types of BIDs

Types of BID	Number of BIDs	Number of hereditaments
Area BID	4	1,981
Business Park	8	1,899
City Centre	26	19,226
Commercial	5	1,824
Destination	3	1,634
Digital BID	1	386
Food & Drink	1	35
Industrial	18	2,864
Industrial Park	6	1,084
Leisure	2	370
Mixed Area	14	3,910
Property Owner	4	268
Retail & Leisure	3	1,633
Retail & Tourism	1	245
Tourism	7	3,619
Town Centre	217	82,839
Town Centre/Tourism	3	756
Culture and Commerce	1	450
Total	324	125,023

The regional distribution of BIDs and hereditaments is becoming strategically important, as governments and administrations try to address the issues of high street decline.

16 – Distribution and % of BIDs and hereditaments by region

Regions or country	Number of BIDs	Hereditaments	Levy income	% of national figure
East Midlands	10	4,556	£4,506,576	3.3%
East of England	28	11,173	£9,795,652	7.3%
Greater London	69	17,991	£47,563,783	35.2%
Ireland	5	7,486	£5,232,732	3.9%
North West England	6	2,665	£2,987,277	2.2%
North West England	30	10,779	£9,035,612	6.7%
Northern Ireland	8	2,402	£2,786,094	2.1%
Scotland	35	11,760	£6,290,119	4.7%
South East England	37	16,098	£13,291,509	9.8%
South West England	34	15,681	£10,621,606	7.9%
Wales	14	3,639	£3,263,045	2.4%
West Midlands	31	12,408	£10,875,841	8.1%
Yorkshire and the Humber	17	8,385	£8,730,137	6.5%
Total	324	125,023	£134,979,983	

The total number of hereditaments across all BIDs in the survey this year is 125,023, and until this year, there has been some 59% growth over the five years. This year, the annual growth in numbers of hereditaments has slowed because of Covid this year and shows a 6.1% reduction.

17 – Annual growth of hereditament

Survey year	Numbers of hereditaments	Annual growth
2016	78,549	
2017	106,262	35.28%
2018	120,735	13.62%
2019	128,785	6.67%
2020	133,163	3.29%
2021	125,023	-6.1%

Although the number of hereditaments in a BID range from 29 to 3,000, the median is 394; most BIDs are still not large although ten do have over 1,000 hereditaments.

Hereditament measures	Number of hereditaments in BIDs
Minimum	29
Quartile 1	265
Median	394
Quartile 3	537
Maximum	3000
Totals	125,023

Levy income

The BID levy income – which is then invested in the local community – is the income collected directly via the mandatory BID levy and does not include any additional income.

From the population of 324 active BIDs, the total BID levy income raised across the UK is £134,979,983, an increase over last year despite a reduction in both hereditaments and BIDs; some of this increase is due to RV changes and some is the growth in BID size.

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 has resulted in levy income changes; secondly, as 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 global level.

18 – Hereditaments and levy income over time

Survey year	Number of BIDs	Growth in number of BIDs	Total levy income	Total hereditaments	Income 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	28	£80,124,969	71,703	£1,117
2016	227	37	£78,659,124	78,549	£1,001
2017	283	26	£99,971,741	106,262	£941
2018	305	29	£110,575,380	120,735	£916
2019	321	18	£125,205,608	128,785	£972
2020	329	6	£132,493,286	133,163	£995
2021	324	-5	£134,979,983	125,023	£1,080

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

Until this current Covid year, there has been a clear and steady growth in the numbers of BIDs over the past ten years, with a concomitant increase in hereditaments and in the total levy income.

19 – Measures of levy income by term

BID term	Total levy income	Average levy income	Maximum levy income	Minimum levy income
1st term	£36,573,793	£338,646	£1,460,170	£18,690
2nd term	£49,239,593	£403,603	£4,100,000	£14,639
3rd term	£28,601,981	£426,895	£3,728,544	£42,395
4th term	£16,464,616	£633,254	£1,957,000	£124,600
5th term	£4,100,000	£4,100,000	£4,100,000	£4,100,000
Total	£134,979,983	£416,605	£4,100,000	£14,639

The measures of the levy income levels of BIDs continue to show a wide range, with the median figure – that is half of all the BIDs – having a levy income of £280,790 or less; and 75% of all BIDs having a levy income of £489,160 or less.

20 – Measures of BID annual levy amongst 324 active BIDs

Measures	Annual levy
Minimum	£14,639
Quartile 1	£139,119.25
Median	£280,790
Quartile 3	£489,160
Maximum	£4,100,000
Totals	£134,979,983

On the other hand, there are 26 BIDs with levy incomes of £1million or over; all are in the major cities, where rateable values and thus income is higher.

Mean levy per hereditament

Although it is a slightly hypothetical figure, from the data it is possible to identify the average levy per hereditament in the survey; with 125,023 hereditaments raising £134,979,983, the average income is £1,080 per hereditament, slightly more than the £995 per hereditament the previous year.

Section 2 – The qualitative data from the online survey

As we said earlier, there was also an individual questionnaire, collecting more qualitative data. 108 [33%] BIDs provided these further qualitative data by responding to the on-line questionnaire, and this 33% sample is reasonably meaningful, covering as it does all the major sizes and types of BID. Of course, response rates varied slightly in each of the various questions, but a total figure was extrapolated for the whole industry population. This approach is adopted throughout this section; we believe that it leads to a reasonably significant picture.

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. This year, during the Covid epidemic, funding was available from both central and local government by way of a range of grants; these have been counted in but as far as possible the Ministry of Housing Community and Local Government BID support money of £6.1m has been excluded.

The median figure for additional income is £12,000 and the highest amount £517,805; the total estimated additional income is £17,733,804, amounting to 11.59% of BID income across the country.

21 – Additional income for BIDs

BID external income generation	Annual generated £
Lower quartile	£5,000
Median	£12,000
Upper quartile	£35,423
Maximum	£517,805
All industry	£17,733,804

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Covid support fund for BIDs

BIDs were allocated £6.1m of funding to spend on projects to help their local economies through the uncertainty of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic by the Ministry of Housing Community and Local Government in May 2020, and much of this came into BID accounts during the summer and autumn of 2020. The money was allocated on the basis of 5% of the BIDs levy income in the previous year and the money was paid to local authorities and dispersed to Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).

It was gratifying that the government said that many BIDs are now playing a crucial role during these challenging economic times, offering hands-on support to those businesses affected, including advice services, increased security to protect businesses

that have closed, and providing key intelligence to local and central government on the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on their local economies. They went on to say that BIDs are uniquely placed and have a proven track record of success in supporting local businesses, empowering communities, championing our town centres and driving forward the renewal of our high streets.

Total BID investment 2021

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

22 – Total BID funding 2021

	Levy income	Additional income	Total spending
Lowest	£14,639	£0	£14,639
Lower quartile	£12,000	£5,000	£144,119
Median	£35,423	£12,000	£292,790
Upper quartile	£517,805	£35,423	£524,583
Highest	£17,733,804	£517,805	£4,617,805
Total	£134,979,983	£17,733,804	£152,713,787

Summing this totality of BID levy funding, and additional funding gives a figure of £152,713,787 as the total contribution from all BIDs. This does give a reasonably prudent view of the total impact of BIDs as change agents across the British Isles.

Inward Investment Income

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.

Some 51.9% of the BID industry reported investment income as a direct result of their BID activity, although others recognised investment has been achieved but is very difficult to quantify. It is now very much part of the role of BIDs to work with town fund applications; but the amounts of money and the time scales are not easy to track; but from the Town funding alone some £3.6billion is being spent over a five-year period, affecting some 50% BIDs. This suggests some £360,000,000 going into 162 BID communities each year over the next five years from outside investment.

BID funding and investment 2016–2021

Whilst comparisons over time may not always be useful, because of variations in definitions and individual BIDs data definition, the six-year data for BID income and thus expenditure is a positive story, a current projection of £512,713,787, showing growth in levy income, additional income leveraged from activities and inward investment engaged in.

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

18 – Hereditaments and levy income over time

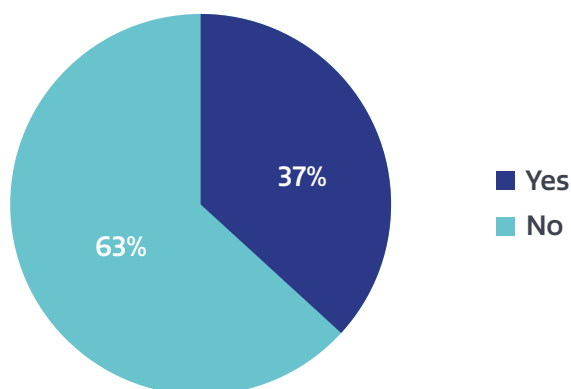
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Levy income from all BIDs	£75,579,270	£99,971,741	£110,575,380	£125,205,608	£132,493,286	£134,979,983
Additional income, estimated from qualitative survey	£13,586,025	£7,973,578	£12,619,714	£14,511,719		£17,733,804
Inward investment, estimated	£20,376,357	£22,361,472	£51,941,026	£89,456,390		£360,000,000
Total BID figures	£109,541,652	£130,306,791	£175,136,120	£229,173,716		£512,713,787

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 is very consistent, with some 37% of BIDs doing so currently.

Table 24 – Use of an annual inflation factor 2021



An inflation rate of 2.5% is the median for those 37% of BIDs that use an inflation factor.

25 – Annual % inflation rate used

Measure of inflation rate used	% rate used
Minimum inflation rate	0.0
Inflation rate used first quartile	2.0
Median inflation rate	2.5
Inflation rate used third quartile	3.0
Maximum inflation rate	3.0

BID thresholds in 2021

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.

26 – Thresholds levels used by BIDs

Measures	Thresholds £
Lower Quartile	£3,875
Median	£7,500
Upper Quartile	£12,000
Maximum	£400,000

Many 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 [68%]; or the tapered figure of £15,000 [76%].

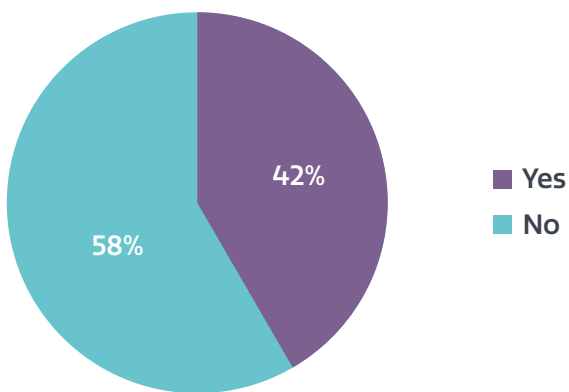
The distributions suggest that the Small Business rates relief is a key driver in many of the discussions on levels of any threshold, whilst at the same time some of the large city centre BIDs have higher thresholds to keep their smaller business community supportive.

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. 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, some BIDs also apply a cap to levy payments, protecting some levy payers from larger than normal levy payments, for example, if their properties are disproportionately large compared to others in the BID area. From the survey population 42% do so. 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 the median levy payers who don't have such support.

Figure 3 – Percentage of BIDs using caps



This use of caps can be an important strategy, protecting larger businesses from unusually large levy payments. The spread of minimum payments suggest that they have an important role in some BIDs.

27 – The level of the caps used by BIDs

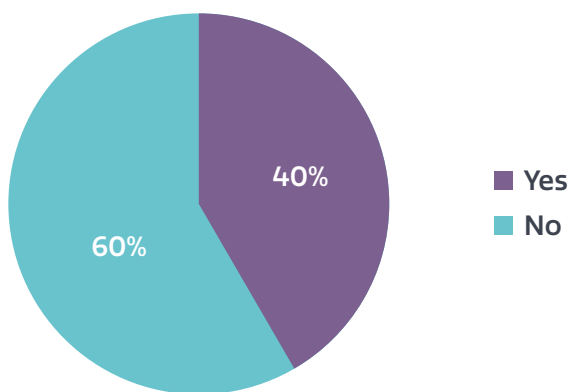
Measure of cap	£ amount of cap
Lower Quartile	£5,500
Median	£12,000
Upper Quartile	£22,500
Maximum	£45,000

The largest cap in the survey was £45,000, with a median of £12,000.

BID levy discounts

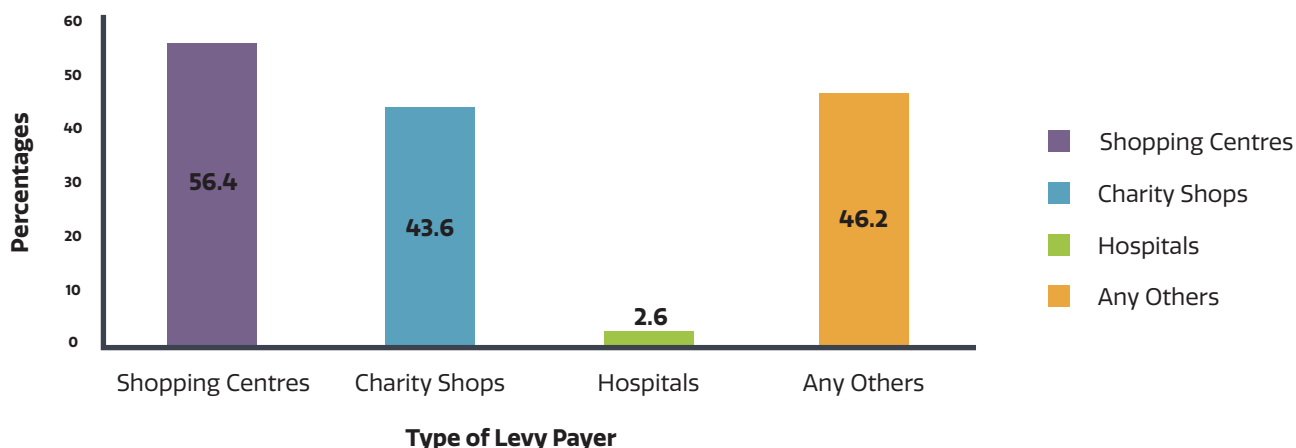
Some BIDs opt to give charities and other key players a discount on their levy, although this is becoming less prevalent over time in relation to discounts on commercially trading charity shops.

Figure 4 – Levy discounts



From the survey, 60% provide no discount; 40% 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 43.6% and 56.4% respectively.

Figure 5 – Levy discounts by type



The level of discount is little changed over the years, with most offering 100% to non-trading charities, and shopping centre and mall discounts ranging from 10-50%.

Levy collection costs

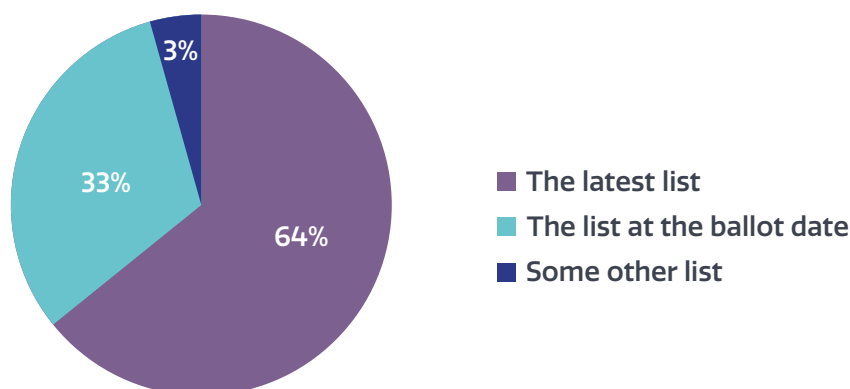
The levy collection charge is the sum of money charged by the local authority to the BID for the service of collecting the BID levy. The BID Regulations allow for a reasonable charge to be made for this service and the details of this service should be set out in an operating agreement between the two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

28 – Levy collection costs

Collection Costs	£
Lower quartile	£0
Median	£7,500
Upper quartile	£15,000
Maximum	£40,000

From the responses 32% of BIDs have no collection charge made to them by their local authority. The median figure – that which 50% of BIDs are below – is £7,500.

Business Rates



Most BID levy collection uses the current Non-Domestic Ratings list for their levy collection, with a third 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.

Business rates revaluation 2023

All non-domestic properties are generally revalued every five years by the Valuation Office Agency. The next revaluation will take place on 1 April 2023⁴, and this will clearly affect BID levy income. There is also a plan to review business rates more regularly, probably every three years⁵, and this was one of the Bb requests in our submission to the Treasury on business rates back in 2019⁶.

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 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 will be based on the valuation date of 1 April 2021, and this will clearly affect over 60% of BID levy collection

The central rating list

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 list can be viewed on the Valuation Office Agency's website.

⁴ 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

⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/997352/Consultation_More_Frequent_Revaluations.pdf

⁶ <https://cdn.britishbids.info/publications/British-BIDs-submission-on-business-rates-for-select-committee.pdf?mtime=20190408132313>

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. The government is proposing to move 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 BIDs employed some 1040 full time equivalent staff, an increase of 2.2% on 2019.

Whilst the median staffing level for a BID is now 3, the range is wide, with a maximum of 20 in one BID.

29 - Staffing levels in BIDs

Average staffing levels	Staffing numbers
Lower quartile	1.00
Median	3.00
Upper quartile	5.00
Maximum	20.00
Total national BID staffing	1,040

Gender balance in BID managers

Following interest last year, we have looked at the gender balance amongst BID managers, using a simple forename analysis.

30 - Gender balance in BID managers

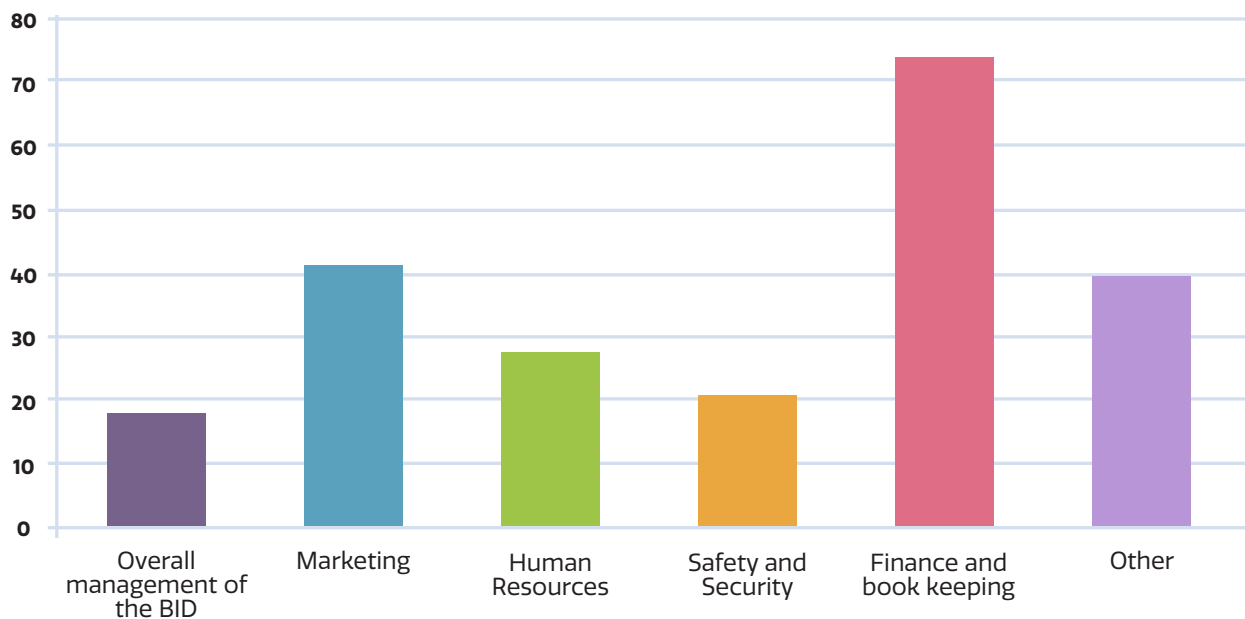
Gender	Number	%
Men	144	46.0%
Women	169	54.0%
Total managers	313	

The gender balance amongst BID managers, based on simple forename analysis, has moved from almost exactly 50:50 male:female in 2019 to 46:54 male:female in 2021.

External staffing providers

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

Figure 6 – Use of external consultants % of BIDS



The majority of the support staff brought in are finance and bookkeeping for over 70% of BIDs; with marketing also important at just over 40%. Many of the 'other' category included Rangers, Web design and event management staff.

Overall management by consultants

One growing 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. Just under 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.

Shared staff

One 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 Guidelines⁷. The data suggests that there are 2,754 members of BID boards across the country, whose task is to ensure that each BID is governed according to the normal rules of good corporate governance.

31 – BID boards by size and distribution

Measures	BID board numbers
Lower quartile	7
Median	11
Upper quartile	14
Maximum	20
Total Board Directors	2,754

From the data there is a range of BID Board size and composition, although most range from 8-13, with the largest at 20 and a median size of 11.

Property owners

78% of BIDs reported having property owners involved in their boards, with a median number of 1 and a maximum of 11; and there are 465 property owner board members across the country.

32 – Property owners on boards

Measures	Property owners on boards
Lower quartile	0
Median	1
Upper quartile	2
Maximum	11
Total Property owners on BID boards	465

The figure is possibly higher than the data show; some BIDs have included their shopping centre representatives 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, most BIDs are becoming aware of these differences and are articulating them in their responses.

⁷ https://cdn.britishbids.info/publications/BB_Business-Criteria-Plan_2020_24062020.pdf?mtime=20200924142114

Local authority involvement on boards

Most BIDs have local authority representation on their boards, reflecting the important relationship between a BID and its local authority, with 80% of BIDs having such representation, and 270 local authority board members across the industry.

33 – Local authority board members

Local authority board members	
Lower quartile	0
Median	1
Upper quartile	1
Maximum	12
Total across the industry	270

Observers on BID boards

The balance between directors and observers also varies across BIDs, with most having 11 directors and 1 observer, whilst some have up to 20 members on their board, and up to 6 observers.

34 – Observers on BID boards

Observers on BID Boards	
Lower quartile	0
Median	1
Upper quartile	2
Maximum	6
Total Observers across the country	333

Gender balance of boards

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

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 882 women board members across the industry, this still only amounts to 32% of all BID board members.

35 – Gender balance on BID boards

Measures of Women on BID boards	Numbers
Lower quartile	2
Median	3
Upper quartile	4
Maximum	9
Total women on BID boards	882

Diversity balance of boards

On the matter of ethnic diversity, the responses identified 177 BAME directors across the counties, with the highest number on a board being 7.

36 – BAME members of boards

Measures of racial diversity on BID boards	Numbers
Lower Quartile	0
Median	0
Upper Quartile	1
Maximum	7
Total BAME members on BID boards	177

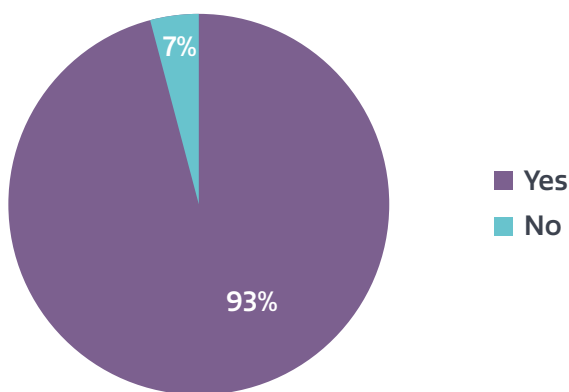
Shared boards

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.

Annual accounts

The public provision of annual accounts is an important part of good corporate governance. These can range from detailed accounts posted on web sites, to more basic ones, linked to the regulatory requirement⁸ 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, 93% of BIDs make their accounts publicly available to their levy payers. Of course, Companies House requires that all registered companies lodge accounts with them.

Figure 7 – Publicly available accounts



BID policy matters

There are a number of policy matters with BIDs involvement and the survey focused on five of them: baseline services, the transfer of services from local authorities, the role of Tourism BIDs, the growing importance of Neighbourhood plans, the impact of the Local Economic Partnership, Property Owner BIDs, and Business Crime Reduction Partnerships.

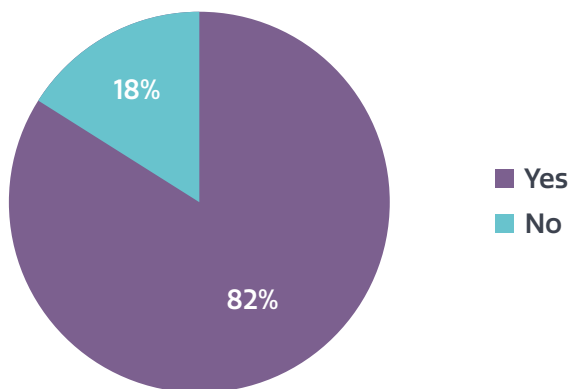
⁸ Business Improvement District (England) Regulations 2004 Schedule 4 Regulation 15 3 (2) (a)-(d)

Baseline services and statements

BIDs can 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.

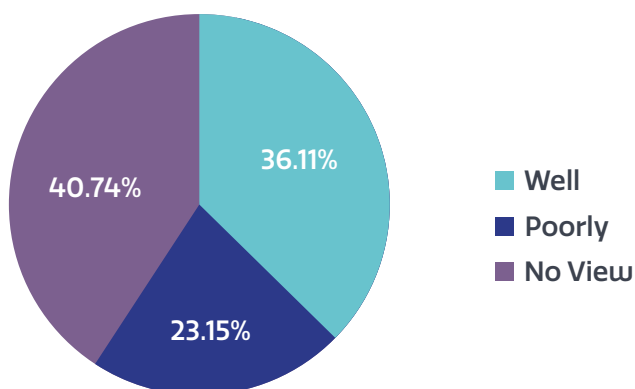
These baseline statements are useful elements in the BID proposal process, and a *statement of the existing baseline services (if any) provided by the relevant billing authority or other public authority* are required under the regulations. Although the definition is not precise, it is evident that from the survey, that 82% BIDs had such statements, but surprisingly 18% did not.

Figure 8 – Baseline statements



On the matter of adherence, although there was a sense of 'slippage' with 23% of BIDs feeling that baseline statements were not being followed, 36% felt that they were still being adhered to in difficult circumstances for many local authorities. Nonetheless, this is a marked reduction 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.

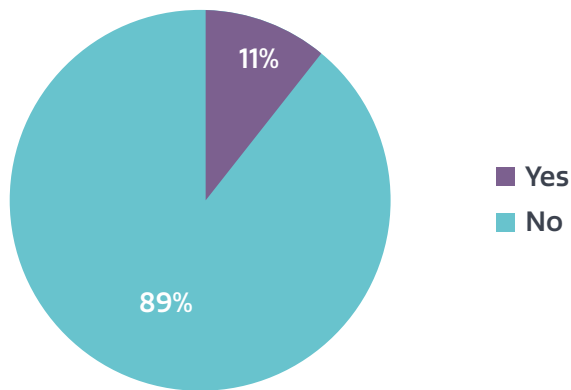
Figure 9 – Baseline statement effectiveness



Transferred services

In recent years, as public-sector finances reduce, and BIDs are becoming recognised delivery models there has been increasing discussion about both the pressure on baseline agreements and the possibility of transferring services from the public sector to BIDs.

Figure 10 – BIDs considering transferring services in 2019



Most of the responses involve taking responsibility for some elements of Christmas lights, hanging baskets, street cleaning, graffiti removal, public toilets, marketing and events, and Purple Flag.

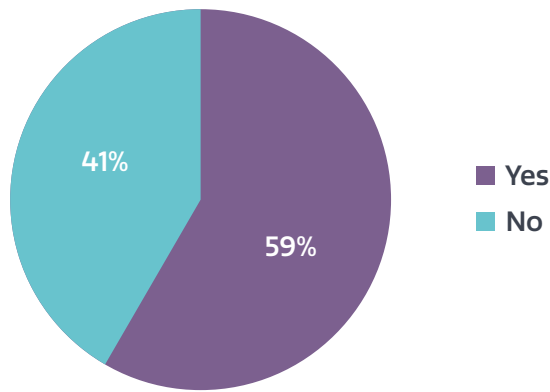
Nonetheless, on whether they are considering taking on transferred services in the future, only 11% BIDs indicated they were considering some type of service transfer, a major reduction from the 19.3% last year. There seems to be less of an appetite for such service transfers.

Local Economic Partnerships

There are 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships¹⁰ [LEPs] across England. They are business led partnerships between local authorities and local private sector businesses. They still play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and job creation, improve infrastructure and raise workforce skills within the local area. LEP boards are led by a business Chair and board members are local leaders of industry (including SMEs), educational institutions and the public sector; there is a LEP for every BID and they are key partners.

¹⁰ <https://www.lepnetwork.net/>

Figure 11 – BID engagement with LEPs



It is clear that BIDs are becoming increasingly involved in LEPs, with 59% signalling some involvement. Two years ago, many found such involvement complex and lacking in focus, particularly as most LEPs are focusing on major strategic projects. The response this year is far more positive and many BIDs are making sensible use of LEP and the Growth Hub network either for themselves or their levy payers. However, the Government is now considering the role, function and structure of Local Enterprise Partnerships with the aim of ensuring that the organisations are positioned to 'support productivity and growth' most effectively and to complement government policy¹¹.

Property Owner BIDs

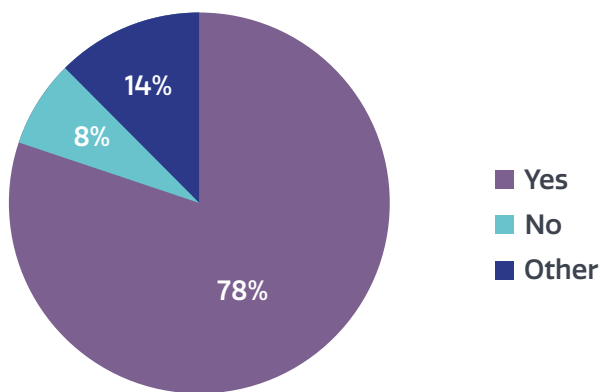
In February 2017, the first draft of the Local Government Finance Bill (2017) was published and included the proposal that Property Owner BIDs should be extended to all areas within England. This would be achieved through the removal of the requirement for a Business Rate Supplement to be in place, although the requirement for there to be an existing BID funded by occupiers remains.

However, the Government still has no clear plans yet on timing or content for a Local Government Finance Bill. As a result, the current plans to introduce Property Owner BIDs across England cannot go ahead.

The survey in the past three years asked a specific question on Property Owner BIDs, this year 78% of BIDs were interested in exploring a national conversation on Property Owner BIDs, a major increase on the 19% only two years ago.

¹¹ <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=06e396c6-e907-453f-b4cf-8c97fa58a006>

Figure 12 – % BIDs interested in Property Owner BIDs



Destination Management Organisations

Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)¹² still play a key role in developing tourism locally; destinations are 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.

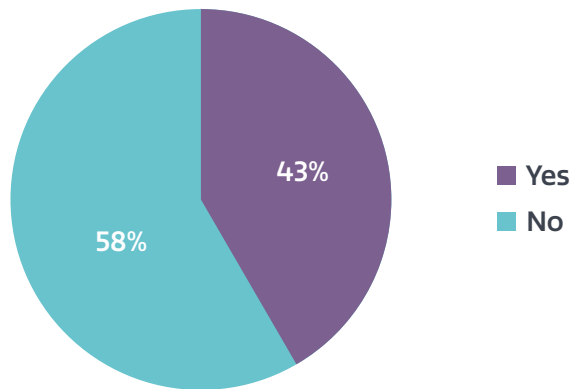
Many BIDs are closely involved with their Destination Management Organisation, others less so; others actually manage or are managed by the local DMO. This year 43% of BIDs were involved with their local DMO in one form or another and expect to see growth in this activity; although the percentage involved has reduced [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.

The de Bois review of Destination Management Organisations in England, commissioned by DCMS has been published¹³. The review examined and assessed how Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) across England are funded and structured, and how they perform their roles, in order to establish whether there may be a more efficient and effective model for supporting English tourism at the regional level, and if so what that model may be.

¹² <https://www.visitbritain.org/destination-management-organisations-england>

¹³ <https://www.visitbritain.org/de-bois-review-independent-review-destination-management-organisations-england-published>

37 – DMO involvement



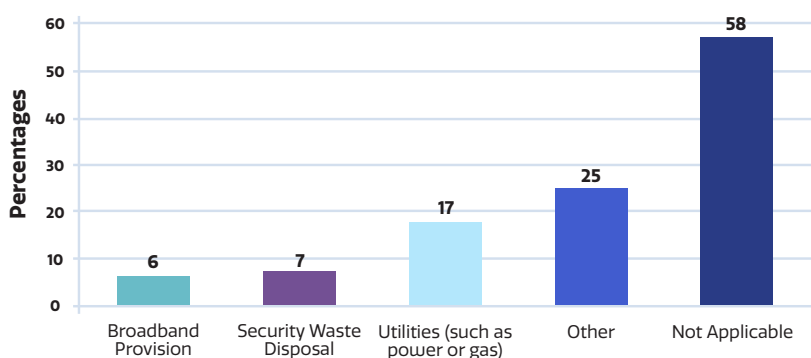
Service and professional sector support from BIDs

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 Centre for Cities has shown how "the fortunes of the High Street are dependent on the fortunes of the wider centre in which they are based. The debate must be about jobs and city centres, 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 centres¹⁴.

The responses to the survey suggest that BIDs are still evolving in their thinking on support for professional services, with 58% of the respondents not feeling it was relevant. Nonetheless, 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 13 – Professional services support



¹⁴ Centre for Cities. <https://www.centreforcities.org/high-streets/>

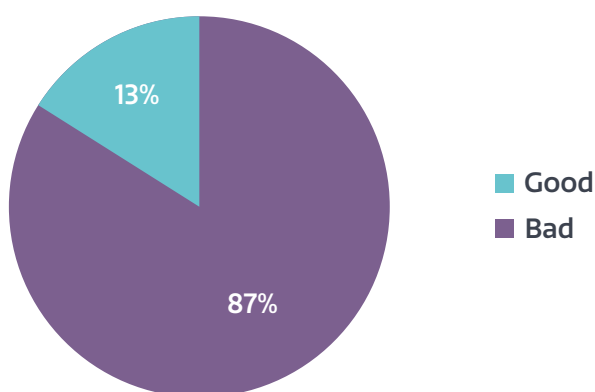
Permitted Development Rights

The recent changes to the planning system to allow change of use from offices (B1(a)) to residential use (C3), and the new Class E class¹⁵ 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 centre they need and want. In other instances, it has allowed residents to move back into town and city centres.

87% of BIDs have asked for greater flexibility on permitted development rights, with local authorities retaining greater freedom to use Article 4 direction when appropriate.

The very recent current government pause and review might be helpful¹⁶ in this instance.

Table 38 – BIDs views on proposed new Permitted Development Rights



Business Crime Reduction Partnerships

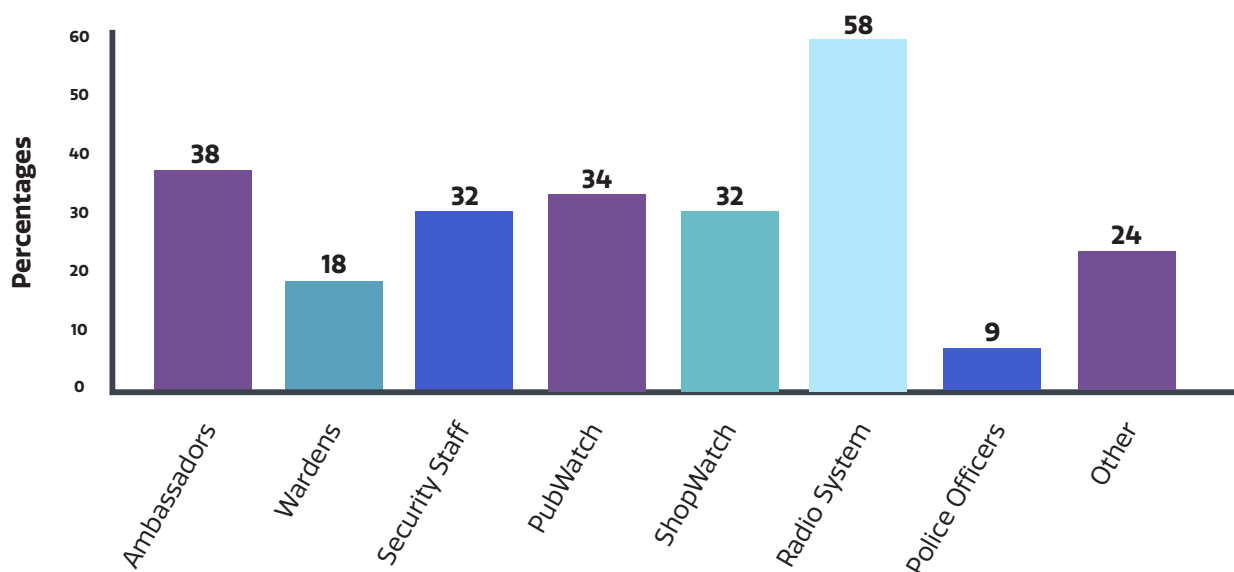
Most BIDs (60%) are very involved in their Business Crime Reduction Partnerships, and local policing.

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

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

¹⁶ <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/mps-call-for-rethink-of-new-permitted-development-rights>

Figure 14 – Types of Crime reduction funded % of BIDs



Town Funding

English Government Funding and support for the high street

The story of the English Government Funding for developing town centres and the high street remains complex and contested^{17,18}, with originally three separate funding streams: Towns Fund¹⁹, Future High Streets Fund²⁰ and then the Heritage Action Zone²¹; these were worth in total some £3.6 billion, and some overlap in terminology and money²². This was then augmented by another £50m of EU funding to respond to Covid-19.

This is a vital new and very large source of innovation and growth in our high streets and following the latest government announcement²³ the time seems right to try and produce a clearer picture²⁴.

¹⁷ Soult, Graham. <https://www.cannyinsights.com/2020/01/08/explainer-high-streets-task-force-versus-future-high-streets-fund-and-towns-fund/>

¹⁸ <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/towns-fund>

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-further-guidance>

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-billion-future-high-streets-fund-expanded-to-50-more-areas>

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/95-million-to-revive-historic-high-streets>

²² <https://www.channel4.com/news/factcheck/factcheck-johnson-on-new-3-6bn-towns-fund>

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-further-guidance>

²⁴ <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2020-0176/CDP-2020-0176.pdf>

The Scottish, Irish and Welsh administrations are dealing with these matters differently, and for Scotland particularly the Scotland Improvement Districts²⁵ is providing data.

The database that Bb is developing for these projects suggests that there are potentially around 283 projects, with 221 high streets, town, or city centres involved in one or other of the funding streams, and thus far, 102 of the projects have some BID involvement.

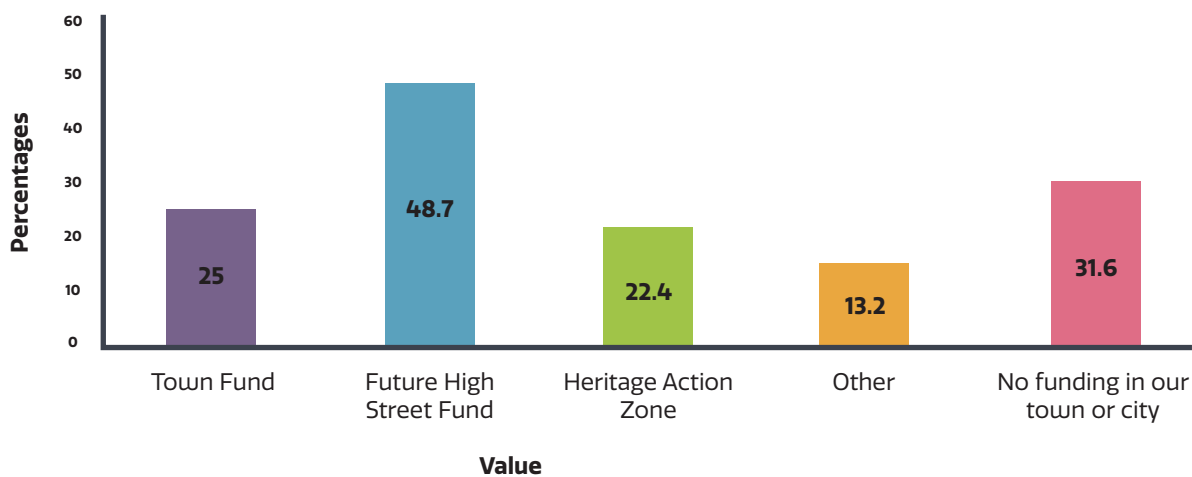
We will continue to monitor as best we can the outcomes of these projects, as they clearly will be the key drivers of many of our town and city centres in the future.

39 – English Town Funding projects

Regions	Project approved or given support
East Midlands	23
East of England	30
Greater London	7
North East England	5
North West England	40
South East England	17
South West England	35
West Midlands	35
Yorkshire and the Humber	29
Total	221

The survey data suggest that some 80% of all BIDs are engaged in one or other of these project lines, with some involved in several, although 30% are not expecting to receive any funding.

Figure 15 – Central Government Funding



²⁵ <https://improvementdistricts.scot/resources-and-materials/>



2021 TOWN CENTRE CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON EVENT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Report insights include:

- Event footfall compared against 2020 and the previous month, including a % growth indices
- The town centre occupancy across the event day i.e. what percentage share of total visitors for whole day are present in the town centre in the morning, afternoon, evening and night
- The of addition of 'significant' visitor origin postcodes the event has generated (a postcode which provides >1% of total unique visitors to the event)

About

Available for the first time, footfall and visitor postcode origin analysis for 139 Business Improvement District town centre Christmas light switch on events across the UK, held during November and December 2021.

Using the event performance analytics tool available in our own town centre footfall and visitor behaviour SaaS insights dashboard – **TownandPlace.AI**, we have been able to measure how each Christmas lights switch on event has impacted:

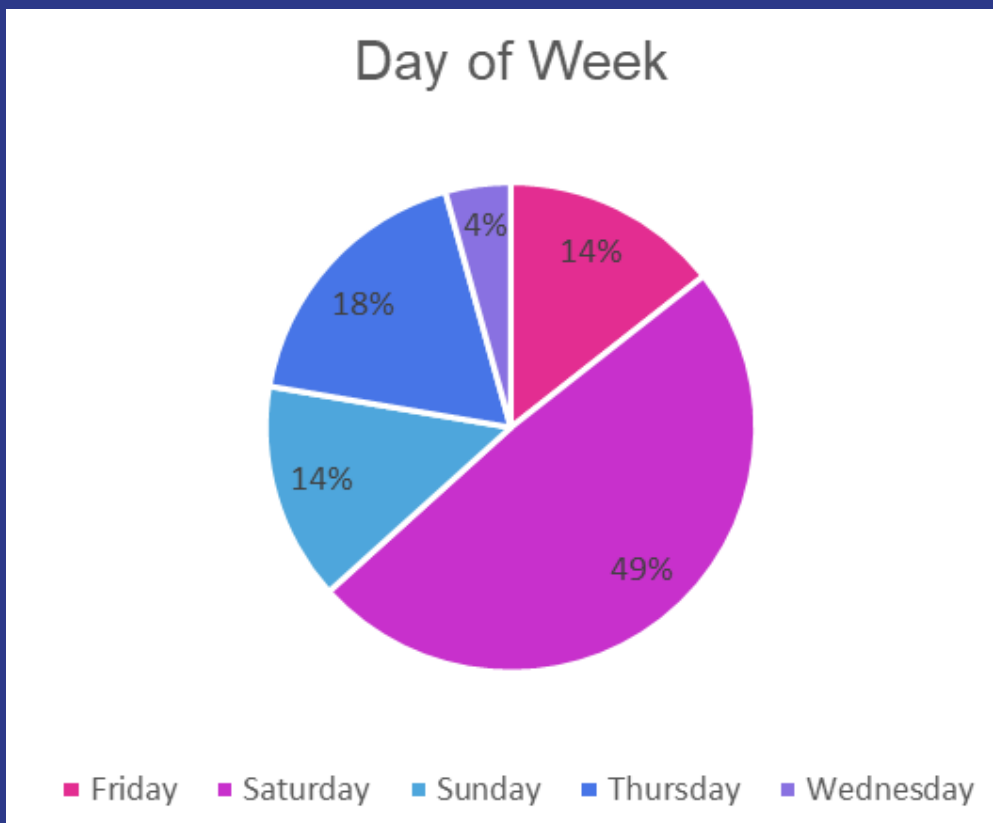
- Footfall
- Town centre occupancy
- Visitor postcode origins

Place Informatics uses mobile location data to provide instant access to footfall, dwell time, visit frequency, catchment and so much more for more than 2,500+ towns across the UK through one online SaaS platform – **TownandPlace.AI**.

With no hardware or infrastructure required, you can access invaluable insights for your town centre today.

Most frequent Event Day

Saturday is the most popular day to hold a Christmas lights switch on event as 49% of events are held on this day.



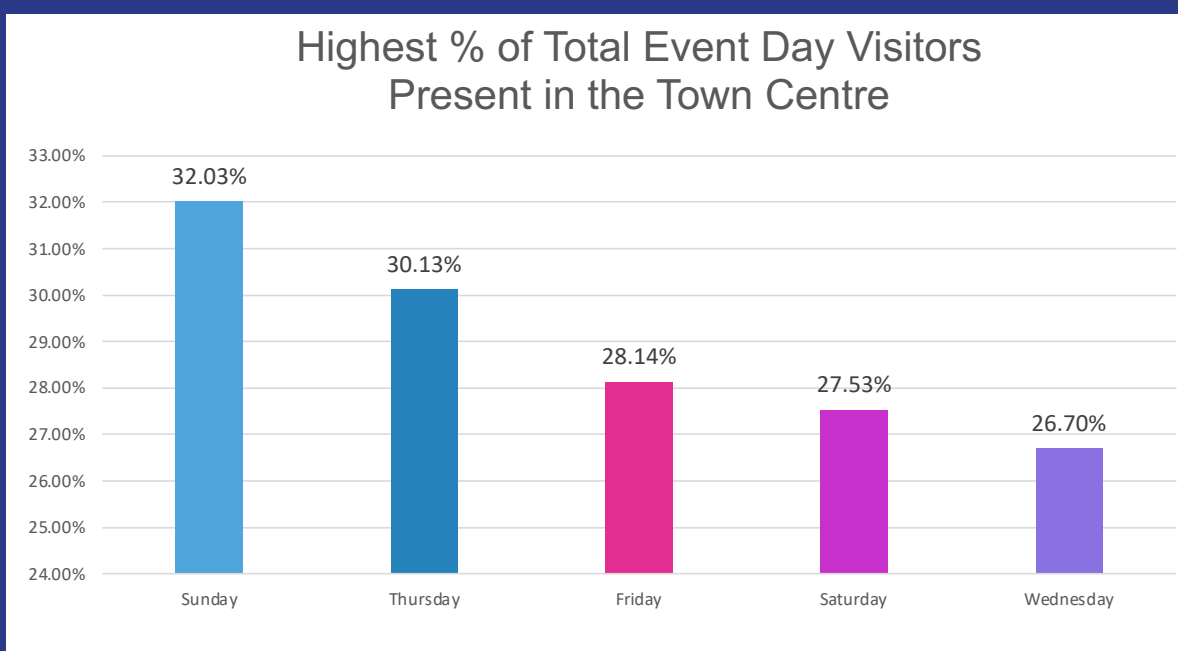
Event Day Footfall Growth

Events held on a Sunday have delivered the largest year on year footfall growth of 256%.



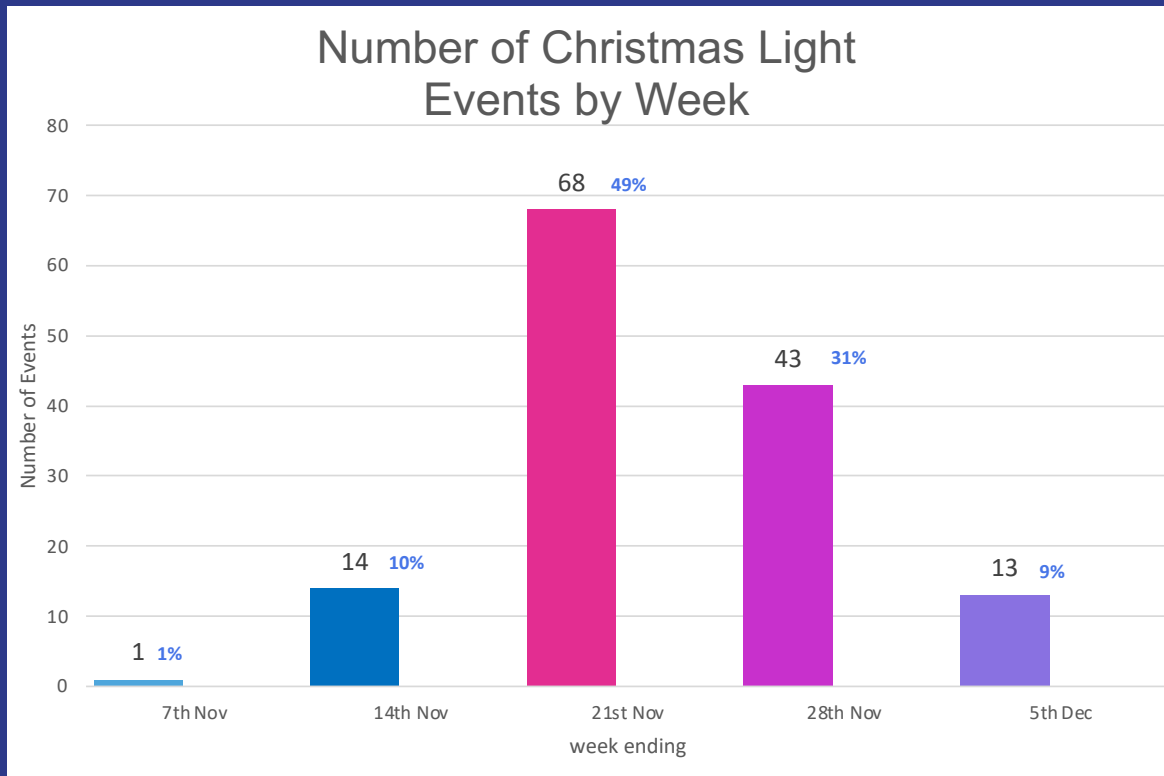
Best Day for Town Centre Occupancy

Sunday is the best day to maximise the total number of visitors in the town centre at any one time. Wednesday is the worst day to achieve a high town centre occupancy level.



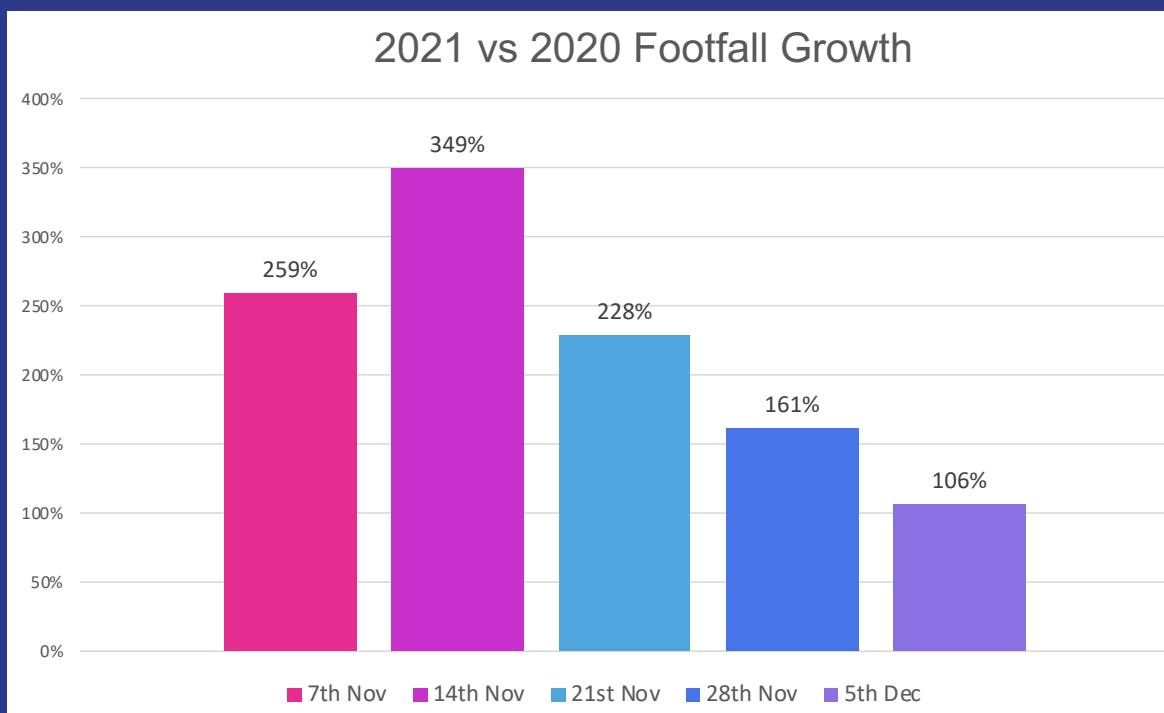
Most Frequent Week of Event

W/e the 21st November was the most popular week for holding a Christmas light switch on, with 68 (49%) events held during this week.



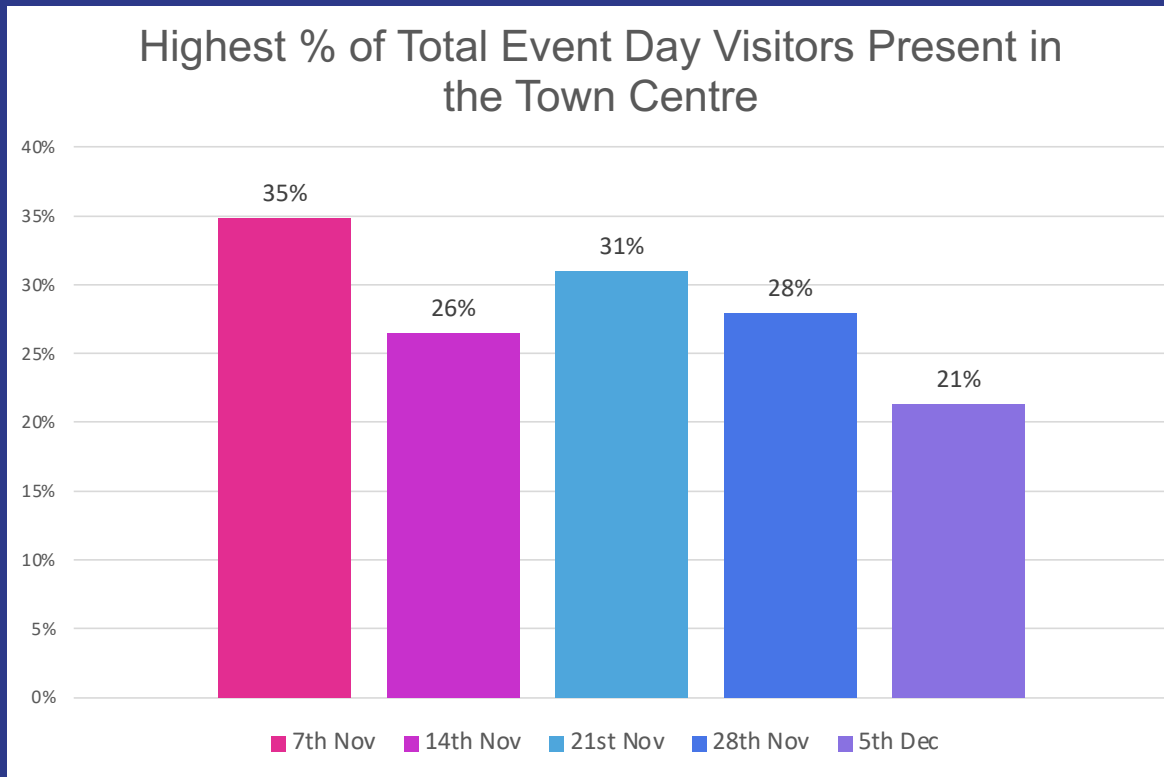
Event Week Footfall Growth

Events held week ending the 14th November experienced the highest 2021 vs 2020 footfall growth – an average of 349%.



Best Week for Town Centre Occupancy

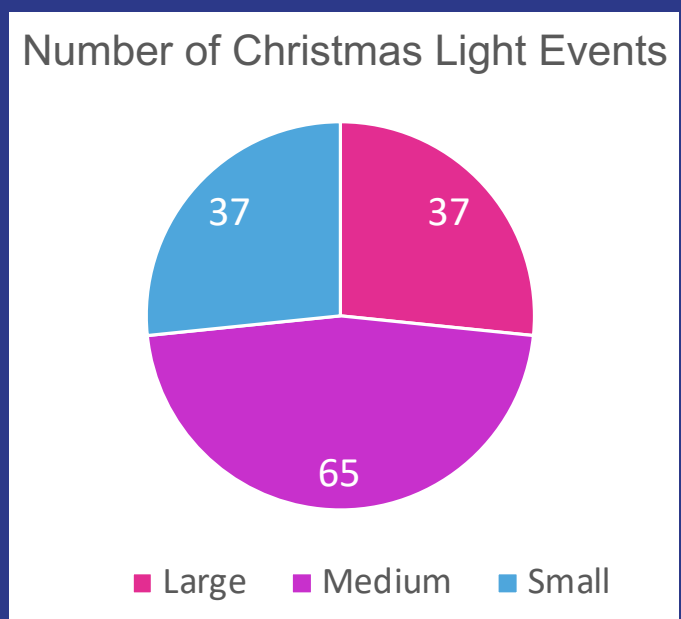
As w/e 7th November had only one event held... the best week for visitor staying longer in the town centre was w/e 21st November – a 31% occupancy level.



Number of Events by Volume of Visitors

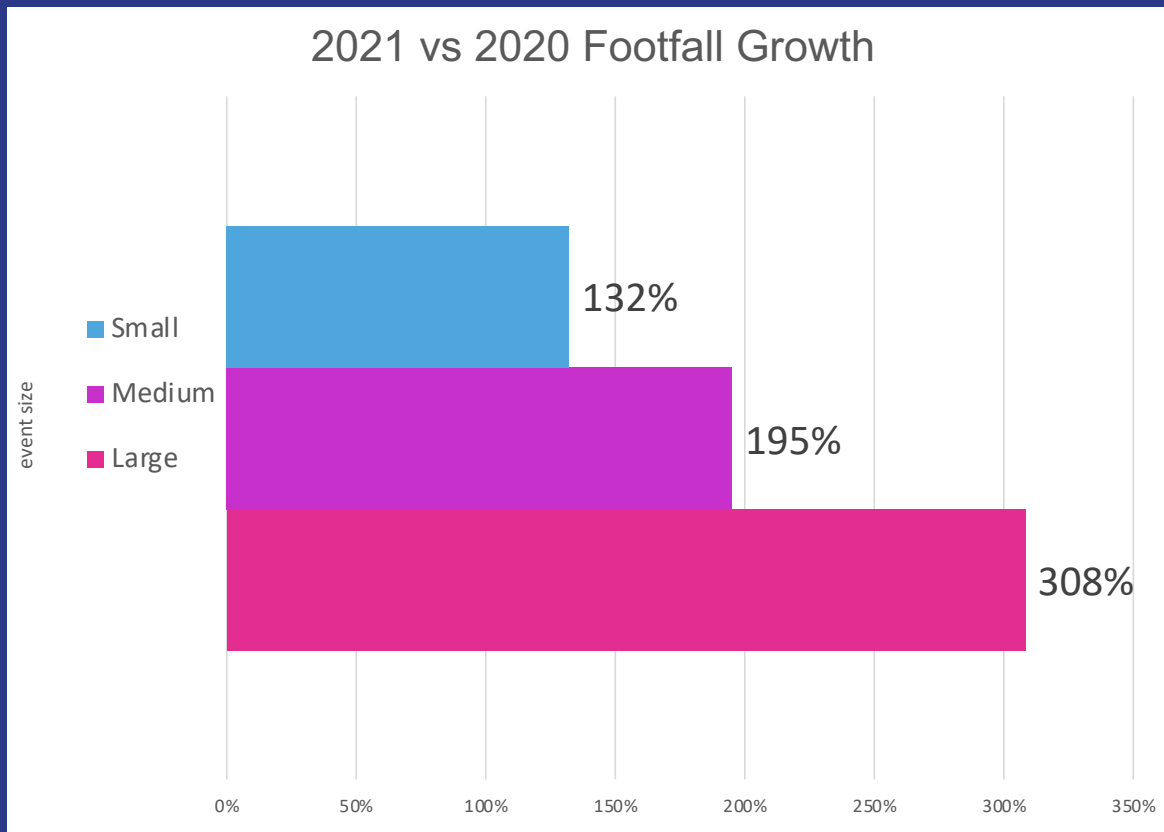
The size of each event day has been split into three groups, measured by volume of unique visitors.

- **Large: > 50,000**
- **Medium: 20,000 to 49,999**
- **Small: < 20,000**



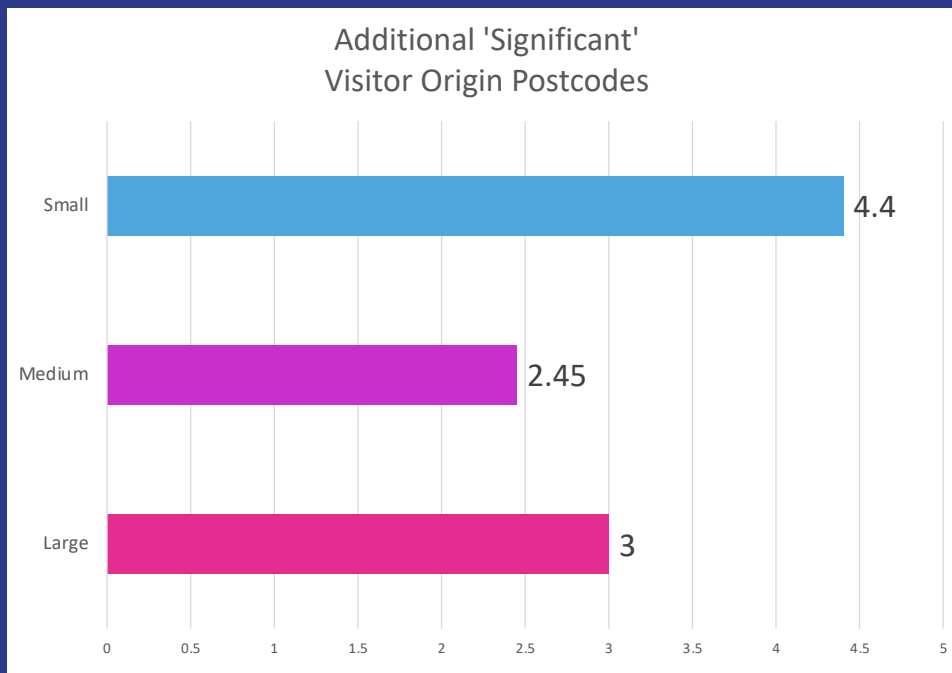
Number Size Footfall Growth

Large event (town centres) have experienced the largest % year on year footfall growth. This is due to larger town centres suffering from significantly higher falls in footfall during November 2020.



Additional Postcodes

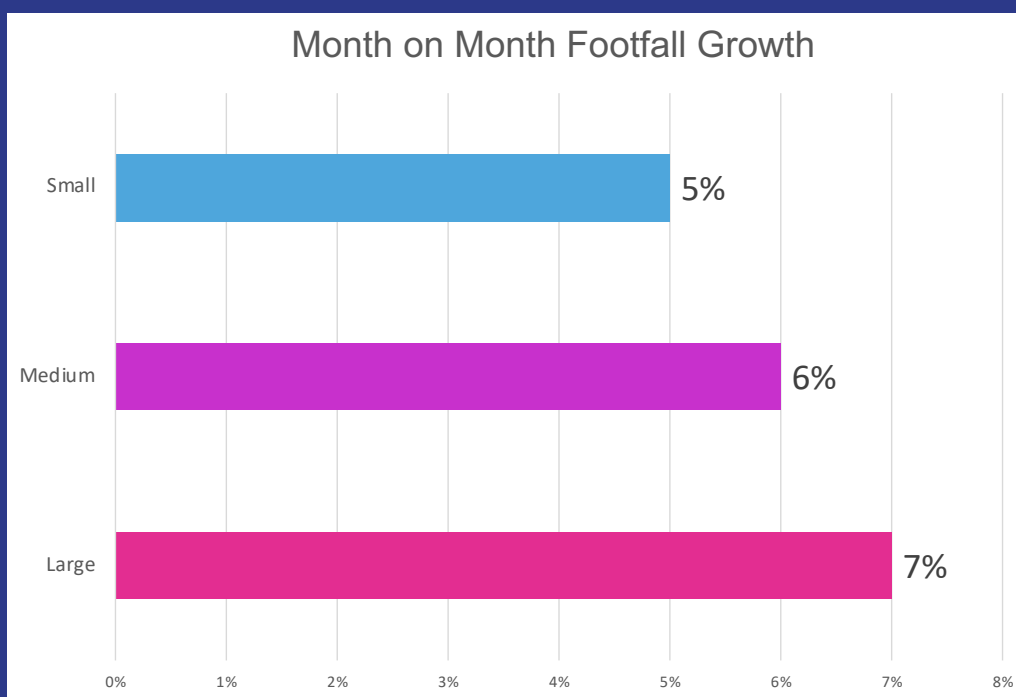
Small event (town centres) achieved an average of 4.4 additional 'significant*' visitor origin postcodes. Attracting more visitors from additional postcode areas.



* A postcode providing <1% of all event visitors

Month on Month Footfall Growth

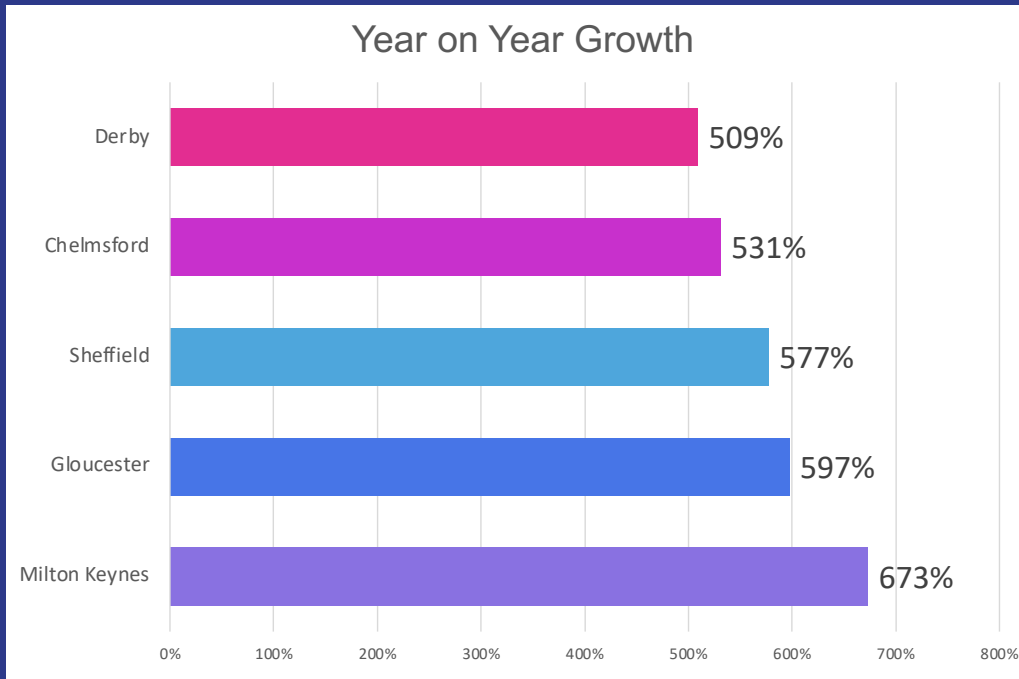
The average month on month growth in day footfall e.g. Nov vs Oct was strongest for large event town centres : +7%.



Top Town Centres Year Growth

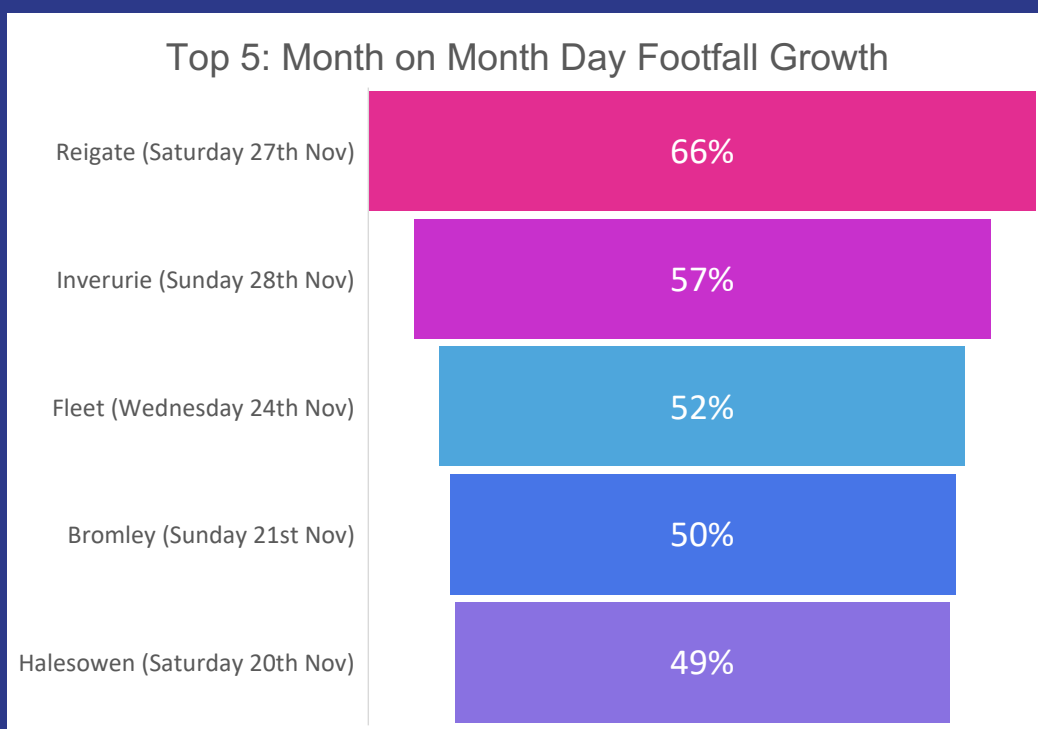
The town centre with the highest year on year footfall growth was Milton Keynes: + 673%.

Each of the top five town centres has a high retail/leisure offer.



Top Town Centres Month Growth

Reigate experienced the largest month on month day footfall growth. Their event was on Saturday 27th November delivering a 66% growth in footfall compared to the Saturday 4 weeks previously.





TownandPlace.AI

A no hardware required, town centre SaaS footfall and visitor dashboard.

Immediately access invaluable data for your town centre including:

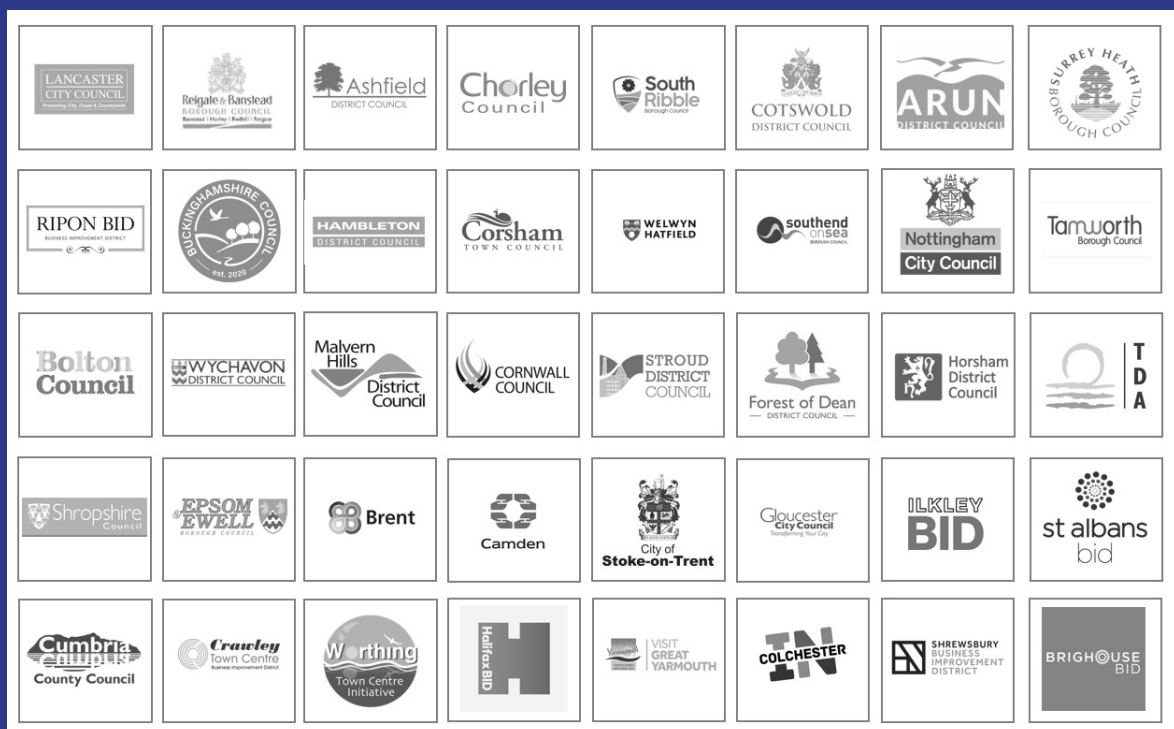
- Footfall data from 2019
- Town centre postcode catchment analysis
- Visitor demographics
- Event performance

Please contact clive.hall@placeinformatics.com to discuss your data requirements.

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