

WELCOME TO THE GREAT BRITISH HIGH STREET AWARDS 2019

The Great British High Street (GBHS) Awards 2019 celebrate the work and achievements on our local high streets that positively impact and strengthen our communities.

High streets are at the core of communities across the UK. Whether your high street is part of a bustling city, a quiet suburb or a small town, the GBHS Awards are an opportunity to showcase your hard work and be crowned the High Street of the Year or the Rising Star of the Year.

Eligible organisations include Business Improvement Districts, Local Authorities, Town Teams and groups of five or more Independent Businesses. Winners will be announced across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

So, if you think your community is leading the way or is an ambitious up-and-coming community working to overcome challenges and transform their high street, we want to hear from you.



HOW TO APPLY

1. Check you are eligible to enter your high street. You will need to be a representative of a:
 - Business Improvement District
 - Local Authority
 - Parish Council
 - Town Team
 - Coastal Community Team
 - Town Centre Partnership
 - Community Interest Company
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Trading Association
 - Group of five or more Independent Businesses (An Independent Business is defined as any business that has four or fewer stores nationwide or internationally.)

If you think your organisation may still qualify but is not listed please email:

greatbritishhighstreet@communities.gov.uk

2. Decide on the category that you wish to enter your high street for:
 - a. Champion High Street (limited to one entry).
 - b. Rising Star High Street (limited to one entry).Please note that you can only submit one entry in total. We want to receive entries that show excellent joined-up local working and are collaborative in nature, so do get in touch with other organisations on your high street.
3. Read through the judging criteria and prepare examples for your entry that best showcase the work of your local high street against the four pillars of success, which contribute to the overall focus of strengthening and improving your local community.
4. Complete all required fields on the online entry form and submit any supporting materials that you think might support your entry.
5. Ensure you submit your entry before the deadline at **23.59 on 4th July 2019**.



WRITING YOUR ENTRY

1. Choose your category

The **Champion High Street** category awards the best high streets across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland with exceptionally strong local communities leading the way to the high streets of the future. Applications should focus on showcasing how they have worked to build their community through providing exemplary customer service and revolutionary initiatives. Those in this category must be transforming for the future through new technology and digital connectivity whilst implementing sustainability and environment programmes.

The **Rising Star High Street** category recognises the up-and-coming high streets that are putting in the work to overcome the challenges and barriers they face to evolve into a strong high street community. Applications should focus on how they are in the process of providing good customer service and planning projects and initiatives to transform their high street through new technology and digital connectivity. Those in this category must show their efforts to implement some sustainability and environment programmes and provide evidence of innovative fresh thinking in their approach to building a strong community.

2. Prepare your application

Applicants in both categories will be judged on how they have improved their community against four pillars of community success: Customer Experience, Environment, Digital Transformation and Innovation. Please refer to the following judging criteria and information for each category when preparing your application:



THE CHAMPION HIGH STREET AWARD

CHAMPION Entry Summary (100 words): Summarise why you think your high street is a Champion High Street and should be crowned the High Street of the Year in 100 words or less.

CHAMPION Entry (850 words): Showcase examples and evidence of the strong local community around your high street or town centre and how you are leading the way to the high streets of the future.

- Your entry can include successful initiatives you have already achieved as well as future programmes you are planning within the next 12 months (up to June 2020).
- While writing your entry, please provide **evidence of the impact** of your initiatives. This could include recording quantitative metrics such as footfall, revenue, vacancy rates, or number of new businesses on your high street. It could also include recording any qualitative metrics such as customers' perceptions of your high street, changes in buying habits or shifts in how your local community is using your high street.

- The key focus of your entry should be showcasing the **strength of your local community** through examples and evidence. Within this key focus around community, there are four success pillars of preferred criteria: Customer Experience, Digital Transformation, Environment and Innovation.



Customer Experience (20 points)

- How do you improve the overall customer experience on your high street and within your community?
- Do you run programmes that deliver exceptional customer service, community events or unique experiences?
- Do you have community initiatives which reward customers, or provide superior choice and convenience for shoppers?
- Do you have charitable or community programmes which create community pride and integration?
- Does your high street provide more opportunities for people to interact and connect?
- Are all ages catered for on your high street, from young to old? Does your high street promote the full participation of all people?
- Does your high street provide accessibility for all the community, including pedestrian and cycle lanes?
- Do your initiatives help to drive footfall on the high street?
- Do your programmes help to support or promote small local businesses on your high street?



Digital Transformation (20 points)

- How have you used innovative new technologies or digital connectivity to transform your high street community?
- Has a website or retail app been developed for your high street community?
- Do many of the local businesses within your community have digital skills, such as social media presence, e-commerce facilities, or state of the art payment technology?
- Do you have evidence of digital transformation boosting retail performance and footfall in your community?
- Demonstrate how digital has changed the overall high street experience.



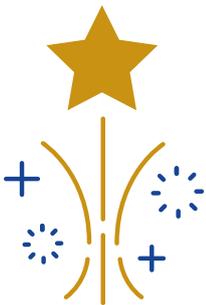
Environment (20 points)

- In what ways does your high street protect or improve the local environment?
- Are there any community initiatives in place to improve the sustainability of your high street, such as cleaning, litter picks, reducing pollution, recycling, reducing plastic use, or protecting wildlife?
- Have any steps been taken to repair the high street or to improve the aesthetic of your local area?
- How are you evolving your high street environment to meet the future needs of your local community and customers?



Innovation (20 points)

- Can you demonstrate how innovative thinking has helped to enhance your high street?
- Can you showcase how fresh thinking has helped you to solve community or local business challenges?
- This might include examples of initiatives where you have challenged convention and developed new innovative ideas to tackle community issues or to create a better high street experience.



THE RISING STAR HIGH STREET AWARD

RISING STAR Entry Summary (100 words): Summarise why you think your high street is a Rising Star High Street and should be crowned the Rising Star of the Year in 100 words or less.

Rising Star Entry (850 words): Showcase examples and evidence of the up-and-coming community around your high street or town centre and how you are working to evolve into a high street of the future.

- Your entry can include successful initiatives you're currently working on as well as future programmes you are planning within the next 12 months (up to June 2020).
- Whilst writing your entry, please provide **evidence of the planning or implementation** of your initiatives. This could include predicted quantitative metrics such as footfall, revenue, vacancy rates, or number of new businesses on your high street. It could also include any expected qualitative metrics such as customers' perceptions of your high street, changes in buying habits or shifts in how your local community is using your high street.
- The key focus of your entry should be showcasing the **growing strength of your local community** through examples and evidence. Within this key focus around community, there are four success pillars of preferred criteria: Customer Experience, Digital Transformation, Environment and Innovation.



Customer Experience (20 points)

- How are you working to improve the overall customer experience on your high street and within your community?
- Do you run programmes that try to deliver exceptional customer service, community events or unique experiences?
- Are you planning community initiatives which will reward customers, or provide superior choice and convenience for shoppers?
- Do you have charitable or community programmes which create community pride and integration?
- Does your high street provide more opportunities for people to interact and connect?
- Are all ages catered for on your high street, from young to old? Does your high street promote the full participation of all people?

- Does your high street provide accessibility for all the community, including pedestrian and cycle lanes?
- Do you expect your initiatives to help to drive footfall on the high street?
- Do your programmes help to support or promote small local businesses on your high street?



Digital Transformation (20 points)

- How have you used innovative new technologies or digital connectivity to work towards transforming your high street community?
- Are there plans to develop a website or retail app for your high street community?
- Do the local businesses within your community have digital skills, such as social media presence, e-commerce facilities, or state of the art payment technology?
- Do you have evidence of digital transformation boosting retail performance and footfall in your community?
- Demonstrate how digital is changing the overall high street experience.



Environment (20 points)

- In what ways is your high street working to protect or improve the local environment?
- Are there any community initiatives being implemented to improve the sustainability of your high street, such as cleaning, litter picks, reducing pollution, recycling, reducing plastic use, or protecting wildlife?
- Have any steps been taken to repair the high street or to improve the aesthetic of your local area?
- How are you evolving your high street environment to meet the future needs of your local community and customers?



Innovation (20 points)

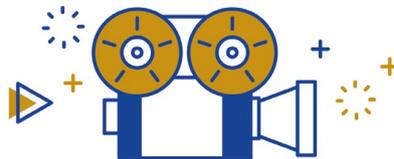
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- Can you showcase how fresh thinking has helped you to solve community or local business challenges?
- This might include examples of initiatives where you are challenging convention and developing new innovative ideas to tackle community issues or to create a better high street experience.

Note that judging of all entries will be at the judging panels discretion but will be informed by the above preferred criteria. View the full terms & conditions [here](#).



HIGH STREET HERO

At the end of July, you will have the opportunity to nominate a shopkeeper, independent business owner or trader for the High Street Hero 2019 Award. This could be someone who stands out for their contribution to the work on your high street, or someone who has been making a positive difference within your community. In 250 words, you have the chance to provide examples of why this person should be recognised by the GBHS Awards.



MAKE YOUR ENTRY STAND OUT

To support your application, we recommend uploading video and imagery of the projects and initiatives that showcase the strength of your community:

Video files:

- These should be uploaded to a third-party video site such as YouTube or Vimeo, or your own servers. Maximum video length is 2 minutes.
- Video files could include vox-pop interviews with the local community about their thoughts on any new high street initiatives and programmes.
- Video files could include a video diary that documents the programmes or initiatives from start to finish or the planning process for a future initiative.

Image files:

- Any images that document the programmes or initiatives from start to finish.
- Screen shots of any marketing materials and/or social media activity.
- Plans or drawings of any upcoming activity.

Please only upload visual imagery, not screenshots of text, as text uploaded as an image will not be considered as part of the entry.



SHORTLISTING: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After the closing date at 23.59 on 4th July 2019, all entries will be passed to an independent judging panel who will then shortlist 40 finalists. There will be 12 finalists in the Champion High Street category (3 each from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) and 28 finalists in the Rising Star High Street category (10 high streets from England, 7 high streets from Wales, 7 high streets from Scotland and 4 high streets from Northern Ireland).

All shortlisted entrants will be sent:

- An invitation for two representatives from each shortlisted high street to attend the Awards Ceremony in November in London.
- A link to downloadable 'Shortlisted' promotional materials including an email signature, posters, and social media assets. You'll also receive tips on how to use these materials to get your community behind your entry and show their support.



JUDGING

The judges will visit and assess the 40 shortlisted high streets:

- The judges will visit the shortlisted high streets throughout August and September 2019.
- Entrants will be notified of the visit days and will be provided with instructions on what the judges will be looking to see based on the final judging criteria.
- The judges will assess the high street based on the original entry and will apply their own independent score against the criteria. The judges final scores are converted into a percentage up to 80%.



SOCIAL SUPPORT

Throughout the GBHS Awards, we fully encourage local communities to help their high street's campaign by showing their support on social media. For information about promoting your entry on your social channels, please refer to the downloadable Social Media Guidelines in the Entry section on the website.

VISA



AWARDS CEREMONY

At the end of the judging process there will be an awards ceremony to celebrate the high streets that are influencing change and strengthening their communities. Two representatives from each of the 40 shortlisted finalists will be invited to London to attend the ceremony in November.

Should you have any issues or questions with your entry please email:
greatbritishhighstreet@communities.gov.uk

We look forward to receiving your application and wish you the best of luck!