



HEREFORDSHIRE COUNTY
Business Improvement District

Date: 01 December 2021

Almost 3 Million Secured to Promote Herefordshire over the next 5 Years

County's businesses vote yes to UK's first inland destination BID

Businesses across Herefordshire* have made their voices heard and have voted in favour of setting up a [Business Improvement District](#) (BID) for the county.

Ballot results released by the independent scrutineer, Civica Election Services, revealed that 83% of all those who voted are in favour of the BID. For the BID to be successful, a second trigger 'majority by rateable value' was also required and this was achieved with 89% of those who voted.

The BID company will form in January 2022 for a five-year term, financed through the BID levy, the proceeds of which will be invested into the county's promotion focusing on tourism and independent retail on projects that are identified and agreed as part of the final BID Business Plan. Over this first term it is expected that a levy of £2.85M will be generated.

Since the Government passed the Business Improvement Legislation back in 2004, there have been over 300 successful BIDs in the UK mainly focused on towns and cities with a number of destination BIDs for coastal regions. This makes Herefordshire's BID a landmark as the first destination BID to cover an entire inland county.

Herefordshire County BID Chair and Owner of Crumplebury and Green Cow Kitchens, Joe Evans, who leads the BID Task Group that lobbied in favour of Herefordshire taking this direction to fund its promotion, commented,

"Herefordshire has all the ingredients to make us an incredible destination, passionate, entrepreneurial and environmentally aware businesses offering first class experiences both in hospitality and retail. Yet until recently we have been very much under the radar profile wise, largely due to a lack of funding and a cohesive organisation to manage this process.

The BID secures the funds and provides the structure which allows Herefordshire to truly have its time, to take control of how we move forward to promote this special slice of England in the

very best way possible protecting our precious natural environment whilst allowing business to thrive and develop. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those businesses that took the time to vote in what has been an incredibly difficult time for everyone."

Jo Hilditch, Managing Director, White Heron and Chair of Visitor Economy Group

*"Born and bred in Herefordshire, as a farmer and also as a tourism provider, I've been involved in tourism for the last 15 years, latterly on the Task Group that introduced the BID and most recently heading up the Visitor Economy Group (VEG) that was able to take advantage of extra funds made available for Covid recovery from several sources**.*

"This really gives the BID team a head start to capitalise on the work which has been done over the last 18 months which has seen the relaunching of Herefordshire as a tourism destination with a new brand, website and marketing campaign from which hundreds of businesses have already benefited from. I am so delighted this work can now continue and build.

I have been involved from the BID feasibility stage back in 2019 when this all seemed like a far distant notion. Now it has become a reality it is really exciting what it can bring for tourism, retail and the county beyond," Hilditch added.

The Herefordshire County BID company will be managed by the businesses benefiting from it, working alongside the Hereford BID to ensure integration of efforts.

Herefordshire Council supported this process from the start, securing funds for the feasibility study, through to the voting.

Dr Ellie Chowns, Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy for Herefordshire Council summed up,

" Over the last 18 months we have worked with the Visitor Economy Group to try and reverse the years of neglect the tourism and retail sectors have had. The BID can take this brilliant work forward as a foundation to attract new people to our beautiful county promoting Herefordshire as a wonderful place to visit, live, work - and eat, drink and shop! I encourage everyone involved in the visitor economy and retail sectors to get involved with the BID and help shape its direction and projects - it is your BID after all!"

More information on the Herefordshire Destination BID in addition to the business plan can be found at <https://herefordshirecountybid.co.uk/>

-Ends -

For interviews and images to accompany this release please contact Fiona Reece at Travel Tonic PR, 07702 684 682, fiona@traveltonic.co.uk

Notes to Editors :

*Eligible businesses across the county with a rateable value of and in excess of £12,000 who would be part of the BID were invited to vote. Hereford City BID businesses are exempt

** Since August 2020 there has been two sources of funding for tourism recovery for the county from the **Marches Local Enterprise Partnership** and more recently from Herefordshire Council

Background :

Business Improvement Districts are an effective way in which businesses can take control and improve their trading environment. BIDs are funded and controlled directly by the businesses that pay for them – each eligible business is essentially a ‘shareholder’ of the BID and have a voice in the decisions made and the projects the BID fund focuses on.

Since 2004 when Government passed the Business Improvement Legislation, there have been over 300 successful BIDs in the UK, mainly focusing on towns and cities. There are currently nine destination bids which focus on regions including English Riviera, Isle of Wight and Yorkshire Coast.

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