

Press release: Battle for Britain's Best High Street Begins

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns has today (20 June 2018) called on communities across Wales to enter their villages, towns and cities into the Great British High Street competition 2018.

The competition celebrates the great work that is being done to revive, adapt and diversify the nation's high streets and is an opportunity for councils, businesses, community groups and volunteers to learn from the very best.

The last competition in 2016 saw 900 entries from across the UK and over 500,000 public votes with Blackburn's high street crowned Britain's best. Prestatyn's high street in north Wales was a close runner up in the coastal communities category.

In 2014, Colwyn Bay ran out winners in the coastal category.

This year a new award structure has been developed and winners will be named in each of the four UK nations – Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland – across two categories: Champion High Street and Rising Star High Street.

The Champion High Street category will recognise the nation's best high streets while the Rising Star High Street category will recognise the nation's most ambitious high streets, which are taking the lead and working together to revive, adapt and diversify.

An overall High Street of the Year in Great Britain and Northern Ireland will also be named.

So with new categories and new prizes at stake, the Secretary of State for Wales said he expected to see far more competition entries from Wales's high streets this year.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

The Great British High Street competition is a chance to showcase the strengths of Wales' high streets, to bust myths about the long-term future of our town centres and to reward the local talent, team-work and energy that goes into making our high streets great places to visit, work or live.

This is why I am proud to be the advocate for the Great British High Street competition in Wales. We want to find the hidden gems the country has to offer. So whether you're a market town, coastal village or city centre, there are so many high streets across Wales doing fantastic work. Let's get behind them and put Wales' high streets firmly in the running to take the plaudits when the winners

are announced in the autumn.

This year it is easier than ever to enter your high street into the awards.

If you are a local community team, association or authority that represent your high street then [click here](#) to register your interest and receive further information and instructions on how to apply.

If you are a member of the public and you would like your high street to be entered into the Awards then please get in touch with [your MP](#) or [your local authority](#) directly to encourage the council to register on behalf of your community.

Notes to editors.

- Details of how to enter the competition can be found at: www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk or via [@TheGBHighSt](#) on Twitter.
- ENTRIES CLOSE AT 23:59 22ND AUGUST 2018
- Shortlisted finalists will be invited to an awards ceremony in London in November celebrating the high streets that are succeeding and influencing change.
- In addition Visa GBHS Street Teams will be visiting randomly selected high streets during the Awards to promote entered high streets and surprise and delight local businesses and consumers with activities and giveaways

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

[News story: HMCTS Reform Programme](#)

We have started a very ambitious programme of court reform, which aims to bring new technology and modern ways of working to what is – and will remain – the best justice system in the world.

The principles that underpin the system are enduring. But our systems and processes have not kept pace with the world around us. We know we can make justice less confusing, easier to navigate and better at responding to the

needs of the public.

In collaboration with the senior judiciary and the Ministry of Justice, we are investing £1bn to reform our courts and tribunals system. We have made a good start. But we can't do it alone; and we certainly can't do it well unless we involve all those who work within it and care about it.

We are keen to share our plans, listen to those who use our courts and tribunals, and work together with our partners to achieve the best possible outcome.

Further detail can be found in our

[HMCTS reform update](#)

(PDF, 1.08MB, 22 pages)

Reform projects

There are over 50 projects included in the reform programme – [see the descriptions of each project](#).

News and announcements

We will publish our latest news and announcements on our [GOV.UK homepage](#).

Newsletter

We will issue a monthly external email newsletter on our reform progress. To receive the newsletter, please [sign up to our email alerts](#) and select the relevant topics of interest to you. Previous editions of the newsletter can be seen below:

- [June 2018](#)

Inside HMCTS blog

We will use our [Inside HMCTS blog](#) on GOV.UK as a communication channel that encourages two-way engagement on our reform progress, including providing regular updates on our projects and new online services.

Reform roadshows

Over the last six months, we have held a [series of roadshow events](#) to engage and inform legal professionals on the reform agenda, and we [held another event in London on 24 May 2018](#) as part of an ongoing schedule of activities designed to hear your views.



Consultations

All of our consultations (those open and closed) are [published on GOV.UK](#).

Further information

- [Transforming our justice system – joint statement \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Speech by The Right Hon. The Lord Burnett of Maldon: The Age of Reform \(June 2018\)](#)

Online services

As part of our reform programme we have launched new online services, these include:

- [Apply for a divorce](#)
- [Make a money claim online](#)
- [Appeal to the tax tribunal](#)

We want to hear your views

As our reform programme gathers pace, we want to continue the conversation with you. You can find out the latest and tell us what you think in any of the following ways:

- [E-mail us with suggestions, issues or questions, or requests to hear](#)

[more about particular projects](#)

- [HMCTS Youtube](#)
- [@HMCTSGovuk](#)
- [HMCTS LinkedIn](#)

News story: Increasing capacity for genomic analysis: apply for funding

Innovate UK has up to £5 million to support capital investment in equipment that increases the UK's capacity to produce and commercialise genomic analysis technologies.

Genomic analysis can help in the understanding and treatment of diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

The funding is part of government's £210 million data to early diagnosis and precision medicine challenge under its [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#). The funding is provided by UK Research and Innovation and delivered by Innovate UK.

The aim of the challenge is to help business and researchers to create new products and services that diagnose diseases earlier and more efficiently.

[Find out more about the data to early diagnosis and precision medicine challenge.](#)

Projects should help take new products to market

Funding under this competition aims to help businesses working in genomic analysis, nucleic-acid-based diagnostics and related areas by supporting investment in equipment that will help them take new products to market.

Projects must demonstrate that the investment will:

- advance the UK's ability to manufacture genomic analysis technologies
- encourage partnerships between public and private organisations
- maximise further investment

Projects should have a clear plan of how the capital investment will lead to the translation and commercialisation of research including manufacture of new products.

Equipment manufactured could be laboratory-based or deployable in the field.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for registration is at midday on 11 July 2018
- projects must be led by a business with a relevant manufacturing facility either working alone or in partnership with other businesses or researchers
- funding is for capital investment, including refurbishment and equipment
- we expect total project costs to be up to £10 million and for projects to last 3 to 5 months
- businesses could attract up to 50% of their project costs
- a briefing event will be held on 22 June 2018

[Find out more about this competition and apply.](#)

Press release: PM hosts Local Enterprise Partnerships Council

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The Prime Minister began by thanking the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Chairs for their valuable contribution to business and innovation in the UK developing skills, delivering infrastructure, and securing investment.

She noted the steady growth of the economy in recent years and the record levels of employment, crediting this progress to the joint efforts of LEPs, Government and private sector entrepreneurs in driving growth across the country.

Co-chair Mike Blackburn OBE, Chair of Greater Manchester LEP, praised the strong track record of delivery seen from LEPs so far. He welcomed the enthusiasm of the Chairs and the opportunity to build on the success of recent years by furthering the close collaboration between LEPs and government, particularly in delivering the modern industrial strategy across the country.

Guests discussed the particular strengths that LEP business leaders bring to the table, including their ability to broker new partnerships and connections, their importance in delivering the objectives of the industrial strategy within their communities, and their role in fostering strong collaboration between local institutions, individuals and government.

Attendees also reflected on recent successes such as the HS2 College in Doncaster – supported by Sheffield City Region – which is equipping local young people with the skills they need to build our future railways.

Attendees agreed that LEPs have a particularly important role to play in connecting the business and educational sectors. They emphasised the value of the partnerships LEPs bring in helping to enable people of all ages to develop the modern skills that our businesses require to thrive.

Welcoming the government's ambitious technical skills agenda, they also praised the opportunities for local innovation that the industrial strategy has launched.

Looking ahead, the business leaders considered key growth areas for the UK economy, highlighting the example of the medical technologies sector as an area where LEPs can help drive this expansion.

There was also discussion around the LEP review, announced as part of the modern Industrial Strategy last year. It was noted that it would be an opportunity to identify where government can strengthen and support LEPs further in their work across the country.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of ensuring that LEP leadership truly represented the communities they served, pointing to the progress made in the number of women on FTSE100 boards as an example to follow.

She also noted that this council will serve as a regular occasion for Chairs of LEPs to come together and talk openly about how they can work more closely with government to achieve shared aims.

The Prime Minister concluded by reflecting on the opportunities ahead to maximise the convening power of LEPs in delivering the modern industrial strategy for all.

Press release: Highways England gears up for M27 smart motorway upgrade

15 miles of the M27 will have an extra lane created in both directions, with upgraded signs, signals and technology to inform drivers about conditions ahead.

Today (Tuesday 19 June) plans about the upgrade have gone on show ahead of the start of main construction.

Highways England delivery director Mike Grant said:

This upgrade of the M27 between Southampton and Fareham will tackle congestion and improve journey times not only for the tens of thousands of drivers who use the M27 every day, but also holiday makers using this busy stretch of motorway to get to the south coast ports as well as the South West of England.

Smart motorways are central to our ambitious plans for modernising the motorway network and will add 120 miles of new lanes to motorways in the South East by 2020. They add vital extra capacity, improve journey times and maintain high levels of safety. Drivers will also see better information about conditions through new smart motorway technology which helps us to manage incidents, smooth traffic flow and make journeys more reliable. I encourage anyone interested in this upgrade of the M27 to a smart motorway to come to meet the project team at one of the information events, starting this Friday, 22 June in Southampton.

Drivers, business owners and local residents are invited to find out more about the plans, which will add an extra lane in each direction to the M27 from junction 4 near Southampton (the interchange with the M3) and junction 11 for Fareham, to upgrade it to an all-lane-running smart motorway. New

technology will help to manage traffic to reduce delays and give drivers up to date information about conditions on the road ahead.

The M27 is a key strategic road which runs between Cadnam, to the west of Southampton, and Portsmouth and connects the M27 with the M3, and major routes into London and the rest of the UK. Around 140,000 vehicles use the M27 each day.

This stretch of the M27 is heavily used by traffic travelling along the south coast and suffers with heavy congestion, especially during UK holiday periods. The upgrade to a smart motorway will add a third extra capacity on this section, and will improve safety, ease congestion make journey times more reliable.

Under the plans, the hard shoulder will be permanently converted into a live running lane between junctions 4 and 11 in both directions. New signs and signals will be used to vary the speed limit to reduce congestion at busy times, and to control traffic if there is an obstruction on the road ahead.

Preliminary work is already underway, with main construction scheduled to start later this year. The smart motorway will be fully operational in 2021.

Public information events are starting this week (Friday 22 June, West End Parish Centre, Southampton) with a further 10 events running until Friday 11 August. People are encouraged to attend to find out more about the plans and put any questions directly to the project team.

For more information on the scheme including the public information event dates and locations, [visit the scheme website.](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.