

# BLACKPOOL TOWN PROSPECTUS



Photo: By Gregg Wolstenholme,  
@wolstenholme pic

## 2030 AGENDA FOR ACTION

# FOREWORD

## BLACKPOOL IS CHANGING

It is now seven years since a unique partnership of businesses, the voluntary sector and Blackpool Council came together under the auspices of Business in the Community to help the town take ownership of its future and tackle its most pressing challenges.

For the first time, the Pride of Place Partnership developed an integrated vision for the future of Blackpool, with input and support from across the town. The people of Blackpool understand the town's problems – and they know how to fix them. In the years since the first Prospectus was launched, Blackpool has benefited enormously from outside support to make change happen, but the solutions have come from within – and they are working.

This is the fourth version of the Blackpool Town Prospectus. Since the Pride of Place partnership set out its initial vision, Blackpool has secured significant regeneration support from central Government through Levelling Up and Town Deal funding, and from agencies including Homes England to pilot tougher enforcement of basic housing standards. In return, the town has proved itself a strong and reliable partner, keeping its promises and delivering real change on the ground.

Blackpool Council has taken an active role in reshaping the centre of the town, with projects underway like the new regional Civil Service Hub and Multiversity FE/HE campus, the relocation of the old Blackpool Central Courts to create a site for the £300M Blackpool Central leisure scheme expected to create 1,000 new jobs, and significant investments in the town's transport infrastructure.

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**Over £1BN investment since 2012 and £1BN more in the pipeline**

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**5,800 jobs delivered against 10,000 target since 2017**

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**750 quality refurbished homes delivered by My Blackpool Home with 1,000 by end of 2024/25**

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As a result of all these initiatives, Blackpool has already attracted millions of pounds of private sector investment, with new four-star hotels, a new conference centre and new ownership for Blackpool Football Club as business confidence in the future of the town grows. In 2024 alone, Blackpool will see the opening of a major new hotel, a new IMAX cinema within a nine-screen multiplex, the Showtown museum of entertainment, and the relocation of 3,000 workers to the regional Civil Service Hub.

As well as physical and economic regeneration, Blackpool has also made progress tackling some of its long-standing social issues. The town's primary schools are transformed, with 94% now rated 'Good' or better, and the reading rate of 'high ability' at Key Stage 3 is up to 73%, with both Further Education colleges in the town rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. In addition, well-established community centres provide a base for a thriving voluntary sector in Grange Park and Mereside.

But while there has been real progress, significant challenges remain. Too many people in the town live with poor, and sometimes very poor, physical and mental health. Secondary school performance has not improved in line with primary and post-16 provision. Most shockingly, a belt of extremely profitable slum housing, directly funded by taxpayers through the housing benefit system and enriching unscrupulous landlords, continues to blight parts of the town centre.

Blackpool needs much better primary and community health intervention to prevent the very high costs of leaving chronic conditions untreated, much more accessible mental health support, a more engaging secondary school environment, and, above all, new powers to take on the slum landlords.

But in the face of these challenges, there are grounds for optimism. Once again, local people understand the problems and are developing solutions that work. The intensive neighbourhood approach piloted by the Claremont Project shows what can be achieved and replicated, with determined, joined up community leadership in one of the country's most deprived wards. Across Blackpool, we need the support and flexibility to pilot new ways of working and deepen the partnership between communities, business, Blackpool Council, the NHS and central Government to deliver joined-up services where they are needed most.

That's why our plan has, at its heart, a proposal to expand the current Pride of Place Partnership to include directly the Department of Work and Pensions, the Department of Health and Social Care, the Department for Education, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, Homes England and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, so that we can deliver joined up solutions alongside the community across Blackpool.

This prospectus sets out Blackpool's vision for the next phase of the town's development – a town with a thriving visitor and digital economy; a good place to visit; a good place to live and work; and a good place to grow up. Blackpool has come a long way in the last few years. With the right support and sustained commitment, we can finish the job and help the people of Blackpool build the town they deserve.

**Lynn Williams**

**John Fallon**

**Leader, Blackpool Council**

**Chair, Blackpool Pride of Place  
Former CEO, Pearson plc**

**Blackpool Council**



The Prince's  
Responsible  
Business Network

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## HEADLINE OUTCOMES BY 2030

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Establish the national perception of Blackpool as a 'can do' place with a buzz, attracting graduates, families, businesses and visitors to a credible business investment location, brimming with local pride

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Create and safeguard at least 10,000 jobs and grow the economy by £1BN through turbocharging tourism, building on existing and emerging economic strengths and innovative opportunities

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Tackle the concentration of deprivation in the inner areas (the worst in England) raising it out of the bottom decile and creating 3,000 new quality homes

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Achieve top quartile employment rates for 16-24-year-olds compared to other Lancashire Local Authorities through a particular focus on health, well-being, resilience and preparedness for work through upskilling and reskilling

# KEY ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

## PRIMARY ASK

Support the expansion of the highly successful Pride of Place Partnership to incorporate direct involvement of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Department for Education (DfE), Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) as well as Homes England (HE) and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), to create solutions to the issues that blight the lives of most citizens and result in unnecessary demand on the social care system.

Use this strategic partnership to drive the development of community-led activities in Blackpool's most deprived communities, putting the Community in the driving seat, and giving the freedoms and flexibilities to allow local decision-making to devise and deliver cross-cutting preventative solutions in health, education, housing, skills and employment.

**I was honoured to lead the Seeing Is Believing visit to Blackpool last summer. The passion, energy and sheer determination to make lasting change happen from the Pride of Place Partnership was both humbling and inspiring to witness. Progress is tangible, but so is the need to do more. I've every confidence that with the dedication of so many brilliant people, teams and businesses, that further great things will be achieved together for Blackpool.**

Dame Amanda Blanc DBE,  
Group CEO, Aviva



## PRINCIPAL ASKS

### Housing

Build on the £90M capital announced in March 2024 and commit to the future phases of Housing Intervention in Blackpool comprising £400M investment in capital funding over 15 years to continue to intervene at scale in the failed housing market in inner Blackpool, with further access to Home England's Affordable Housing Programme.

### Health

Government participation in a 10-year Coastal Community Health Improvement Strategy to reduce health inequalities in Blackpool, piloting the approach proposed by the Chief Medical Officer.

### Communities

Pilot Blackpool as a 'Charitable Action Zone' that supports the creation of a Blackpool Foundation to attract philanthropic investment to support the renewal and regeneration of human capital in the town. This would provide access to, and local management of, Community Wealth funding from Dormant Assets.

### Education, Skills and Employment

Pilot a broader College performance framework in Blackpool to allow our training providers to work in partnership with DWP and DfE to address, at scale, reductions in NEET and economically inactive, together with improved support for young parents. Adding performance protections in terms of student retention and potential drop out rates, supplemented with flexibility to allow full-time training while on Universal Credit, would allow Blackpool and the Fylde College (B&FC) to unleash its full upskilling potential for the most vulnerable and difficult to reach in our communities.

### Sustainability

Support the development of Blackpool becoming a 'District Heat Network Town', which connects social housing and public buildings with renewable heat sources, through long term funding and knowledge transfer that goes beyond the Heat Network Delivery Unit and Green Heat Network Fund offers.

### Digital

Support the development of the proposed innovative Silicon Sands Technology Demonstrator at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone focusing on utilising local sustainable energy, liquid immersion cooling technology, effective re-use of waste heat, reduction of data centre energy use and cost of data centre operations, and significant reductions in carbon emissions so that Blackpool can become a leading innovator in the efficient re-use of data and AI generated heat.

### Transport

Department for Transport (DfT) to support and fund £128M for the Poulton to Fleetwood Tram Train from the Restoring your Railway Fund; and invest in a passing loop on the South Fylde line to double rail frequency for commuters and students – both as part of the Fylde Coast Loop.

### Culture

£10M funding from DCMS for the Blackpool Culture Hub, creating a centre for historic and contemporary art and cultural engagement, community development activities, and displays of world class art.

### Economic Growth and Regeneration

A £20M annual allocation of capital and revenue regeneration funding from DLUHC, for Blackpool's Growth & Prosperity Programme to continue the momentum and also enable the deprived areas of inner Blackpool surrounding the Town centre (including Claremont, South Shore and Revoe) to attract investment and fulfil their potential.





# PLACE

## INTRODUCING BLACKPOOL

The Fylde Coast has a population of around 350,000 residents, with each distinct community area playing its specific part in making this a desirable location to live, work and play.

Blackpool is the heart of the Fylde Coast and one of the most densely developed boroughs in Britain, with around 140,000 residents. Blackpool's past and present are inextricably linked with the tourist industry. The town was originally developed as a health resort and holiday destination following the arrival of the first trains in 1846 and the increased prosperity and leisure time of the working class. This brought with it an epic physical transformation, with the first Illuminations in 1879 and the opening of the first electric tramway in the UK in 1885, catalysing the development of the town's iconic attractions. Despite a decline in visitors prompted by the rise of cheap package holidays abroad from the 1970s, Blackpool has continued to retain a unique place in the nation's imagination and is currently experiencing

growth in its visitor economy, with renewed interest from investors and holidaymakers alike. Blackpool, renowned as famous for fresh air and fun, officially has the second cleanest air in England and Stanley Park was voted the best park in the UK.

Blackpool's international profile as a centre for entertainment means it continues to be one of Britain's most visited destinations. There are over 20 million visitors annually who come to enjoy cultural and visitor attractions such as the historic Blackpool Tower and Winter Gardens conference complex, the three piers, the promenade, a lively events programme including the Air Show and Fireworks Festival, theatre and art through the Grand Theatre and Grundy Art Gallery, family fun at the Blackpool Illuminations and heart-pumping action at the Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

The resurgent visitor economy is creating new opportunities for local residents and the economy is

diversifying. Future growth potential exists within emerging sectors including aerospace and advanced engineering, advanced materials technologies, food manufacturing and digital and cyber technologies, as well as energy-related businesses that draw upon the strength of the North West in this sector.

Blackpool is a true British icon, the only urban seaside resort with over 150 years of heritage, the first working class holiday resort in the world and one with an unshakeable vitality. A town that has a place in the hearts of the British public.

Blackpool's story is one of continual reinvention, notable for its scale, speed and ambition. Driven by the desire for progress and the need to respond to the effects of an ever-evolving society, the town seeks new ways of working and innovating. Blackpool's unmistakable entrepreneurial spirit has endured through a 'can do' culture of tackling problems in a nimble way that

constantly seeks positive change rather than fighting to maintain an archaic status quo. There is a healthy and progressive partnership between Blackpool Council, businesses, investors, and the community which makes things happen in a coordinated way.

Arguably the highlight of the Blackpool calendar is the arrival of the BBC and the Strictly Come Dancing team. Every November, technical vehicles arrive on the Promenade and over a five-day period the BBC creates the famous set within the Blackpool Tower Ballroom, for one of the most popular episodes in the globally iconic series.

The strategic relationship with the BBC is hugely important to the town with the show's positive coverage of the Resort providing a huge endorsement of Blackpool and a significant impact on the civic pride of the local community. Heads are held high when the celebrity and pro dancers talk of their ambition to make it to Blackpool!

# PLACE

## THE CHALLENGES

Blackpool's profile comes with significant social and economic costs. Shorter stay visits have created pressure on the sector to keep costs and wages low and jobs seasonal - disincentivising long-term investment.

Former B&B's are the biggest contributor to Blackpool's mass of thousands of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO), three quarters of which are occupied by transient renters. Significant numbers of often absentee landlords have a poor track record of maintaining these properties, profiteering from artificially high housing benefit levels, whilst enabling the spread of a morass of social and health problems. The result is the greatest concentration of deprivation in England, with an influx of high numbers of low-income and vulnerable people with poor social networks from other towns. Such is the poor quality of this accommodation that those who find a way of improving their lives move away from the resort, creating a continuous cycle for landlords to fill spaces with those who are less fortunate. This is a core intractable problem and one that leads to extreme pressure on local public services.

The statistics are stark. Low wages, low employment rates, high levels of benefit claimants, poor health and high exclusion rates from school mean that child poverty is unacceptably prevalent in the town. In inner Blackpool, 50% of households live in private rented accommodation, further de-stabilising the permanency of communities. Together, this has led to an economic malaise that is further exacerbated by a high proportion of residents with long term debilitating illnesses and some of the poorest mental and physical health outcomes in the country. With young people under-performing at GCSE level, aspirations in the town are frequently low. The corresponding low skills levels and low numbers of graduates remaining or returning to the town, provides little incentive for employers with professional or technical careers to choose Blackpool as a place for growth.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

For most towns, and coastal ones in particular, this story ends with terminal decline into stasis but Blackpool has an energy which even this complex combination of issues cannot suppress.

This Prospectus draws a line in the sand, choosing instead to focus on what Blackpool could become. Whilst Blackpool may be at the epicentre, it takes into account the wider geographic position, our shared social challenges with for example Fleetwood and the economic opportunities and benefits to be realised by working collaboratively across the Fylde Coast.

Starting from afresh, with an inspirational vision and narrative, the Prospectus looks at the interrelated economic and social issues the town faces, the key projects already being delivered and follow-on aspirational projects that require input and investment from other parties. These are balanced against the 'asks' we need for these to happen. Taken together, this is the pathway towards a new flourishing Blackpool with a healthier economy and a thriving community, that plays a significant Place blueprint for reinventing and regenerating deprived areas.

## POSITIVE PROGRESS

Fantastic progress has been made over the last seven years, with The Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership and Blackpool Council working together with national Government, to realise the regeneration aspirations set out in this ambitious Prospectus.

Through Business in the Community's 'Prince's Seeing is Believing' programme, three visits have been made to Blackpool over the last six years. Visit Leaders are the driving force and energy behind the visit's success, each one has shown the unique contribution business can make when working in partnership with others in a Place, on a particular issue, or in a community. These visits have accelerated the regeneration work in Blackpool using the power of business to drive the renewal agenda.

In January 2020, a Town Deal Board was created to encourage residents and civic leaders to create plans for a Town Deal. Led by the Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership, the Town Deal Board secured £40M for seven projects, including: a Youth Hub (The Platform) to support young people into training and employment in the town; relocating the Blackpool Central Courts to enable the full delivery of Blackpool Central; the Multiversity; infrastructure investment at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone;

Revoe Community Sports Village in the Southern Quarter; The Edge – a business hub, and modernisation of the iconic Blackpool Illuminations.

This was in addition to around £60M of Growth Deal and Coastal Communities Funded projects already delivered in recent years, along with the Shared Prosperity Fund. The Government's Getting Building Fund was used for two projects in the town: the revitalisation of Abingdon Street Market and The Houndshill Shopping Centre extension for The Backlot Cinema and Diner with one of the largest IMAX screens in the country.

In March 2022, Blackpool agreed a strategic Levelling Up Partnership with national government and has now benefitted from circa £140M in Levelling Up Funding. This has contributed to strategic schemes across the town that have supported the delivery of the ambitious £2BN Growth and Prosperity programme. The Levelling Up Partnership also funded local initiatives such as enhancing the local enforcement team to pilot tougher inspections against a proposed Decent Homes Standard for the private rented sector. The town has kept its promises and continues to deliver real change on the ground.

We are grateful to the Government for the funding received for economic regeneration and we welcome the continuation and deepening of this relationship to strengthen our economy, grow the private sector and create jobs. We will continue to drive maximum social value through these projects across all sectors of society to ensure that it is targeted at those who need it most. These life opportunities will complement those being created through our Careers Hub, supported by our innovative Responsible Business Network.

It is undeniable that this strategic Levelling Up Partnership with central Government is working. We have already seen 1,000's of new jobs created and improvements in outcomes for young people. Further progress has been made on improving the worst of the housing stock. Whilst the momentum is good, there is much to do and now would not be the time for this partnership to take its collective foot off the accelerator.

We are keen to deepen our highly successful Pride of Place Partnership to incorporate more government departments, that will deliver cross cutting preventative solutions in housing, health, education, skills and employment outcomes.

# PLACE

## THE VISION

Blackpool will be a buzzing, vibrant and attractive town of which residents will be rightfully proud, where businesses thrive and there are career opportunities for all. It will be a 21st century year-round leisure destination that appeals to everyone, from visiting conference delegates and high-income tourists staying in the award-winning 5-star hotels, to a younger hipper crowd in search of a weekend away full of partying, music and fashion festivals. Families will enjoy the rejuvenated promenade, markets and attractions. It will be a green town which is carbon neutral and enjoys the cleanest air in the country.

The town centre will be transformed with extensive covered walkways and an abundance of open, recreational space to enjoy all-weather activities. This has attracted new businesses and increased footfall. There are innovative family entertainment offerings, new and exciting independent retail shops as well as kids' activities, a cinema/music venue and fun food festivals.

Sub-standard buildings have been replaced and there are welcoming fit-for-purpose flexible workspace centres for SMEs and graduate entrepreneurs, attracted by Blackpool's 'Silicon Sands' reputation which is built on its future thinking, town-wide, digital infrastructure, connected to the transatlantic loop from New York. There is high-quality, affordable accommodation, with well-resourced community hubs for adult training, education and drug/alcohol rehabilitation, including specialist help for children coming out of the care system. Local schools are well resourced and flourishing, whilst crime levels have been reduced.

Blackpool remains the mecca for all ballroom dancing fans, and a year-round dance school will attract new and repeat visitors young and old, as well as feeding into the healthy living ethos for the ageing population. A healthy living zone has been developed for those seeking an active retirement with easy-access to new build accommodation designed to encourage communal healthy living and high-quality preventative health care, including gyms and activities that can be shared across the generations, creating two-way beneficial relationships. Blackpool will become the healthiest and happiest place to live.

**I'm a 'Born and Bred' Ambassador because I grew up in Blackpool when the town was ablaze with tourism, theatre and business. It was, and still is, a great place to live, study and work. Like every other town, Blackpool has problems; we recognise them and I want to help solve them.**

Sir Andrew Parmley  
Lord Mayor of the City of London 2016-17





Photo: Look to the stars by I-Am-Sean

# HOUSING

## SITUATION

Inner Blackpool is home to the most intense concentration of deprivation in England, with 8 of the 10 most deprived neighbourhoods in the country, cited in inner Blackpool alone. This is linked to very poor-quality private rented housing and the way the housing market operates. Thousands of people move to the town every year, often running away from problems for a new start at the seaside but find themselves housed in dense, poorly converted small flats, which compounds their personal issues.

In the inner area of Blackpool, over 50% of all properties are now poor quality private rentals, with the area dominated by small flats and bedsits in former guest houses. Over 80% of private rented tenants in this area receive housing subsidy (Housing Benefit/Universal Credit) and 40% of landlords receive rent directly because of tenants' vulnerability. There is no discernible link between housing subsidy and the size or quality of the accommodation other than the number of bedrooms. This system therefore creates perverse incentives for landlords to pack as many small units into their properties as possible. The result is that inner Blackpool now houses the single most vulnerable population in the country and they live in the most inappropriate accommodation, compounding disadvantage. This population commonly has multiple and complex health needs.

This housing failure sits alongside a successful economic growth programme in the town and it is imperative that the poor quality housing and associated social conditions, do not act as a brake or a barrier to greater town wide prosperity.

Thus, the inner Blackpool urban area has been identified by the Council as an area of huge opportunity and a priority in this context – as an area of deep-rooted and multi-faceted community and housing market failure on the doorstep of a major programme of development, investment and renewal.

## VISION

To deliver a balanced housing market, in particular via intervention in inner Blackpool, to raise housing standards and choice significantly, alongside support for the vulnerable in more balanced communities.

## STRATEGY

The Blackpool Levelling Up programme has been developed with Homes England and DLUHC to focus on delivering transformational physical and community regeneration across the inner Blackpool area. Partners acknowledge that it is now time to bring forward radical interventions and investment to reverse the cycle of worsening outcomes. Without intervention at scale, to both improve existing private rental properties and to create new housing choice of the right quality, the market will have no incentive to improve. Interventions planned and under way are:

- Enforcement of a new Decent Homes Standard for private rented property on a par with that applied to social housing - Blackpool is piloting this in advance of changes to legislation. Currently, inspections reveal that 50% are not adhering to minimum standards. Key to success is continued funding for increased inspections, supplemented by a Selective Licensing initiative across Blackpool's most deprived inner wards
- Large scale physical change aimed at removing unsuitable stock that can't meet a decent standard and replacing it with good quality, affordable and stable property choices in new neighbourhoods

- Targeted support for residents aimed at preparing them to take advantage of new housing choices and the opportunities created by the Growth and Prosperity programme including: the new £30M Conference and Exhibition Centre at the Winter Gardens and the mixed-use development at Talbot Gateway; Blackpool Central development, a £300M leisure scheme which includes three indoor entertainment centres, a hotel, restaurants, and other leisure spaces. It is expected to create around 1,000 new jobs and bring in up to 600,000 additional visitors each year; residential development including a new £10M affordable housing scheme at Troutbeck Crescent and the regeneration of Queens Park with the removal of tower blocks and maisonettes into high quality homes; the completion of Foxhall Village by Great Places with the development of 67 new affordable homes

The “Central Arc” Masterplan Framework has identified the potential to deliver over 2,000 homes across the Central and South area, alongside improved amenity through open space delivery, community assets and retail provision, and improved movement and connectivity. It is estimated that the overall level of public funding required to ensure the transfer of risk to the private sector could be up to £400M over 15 years including the initial £90M for the first phase across the Central Arc.

The broader strategy will deliver:

- With partners, 3,000 quality eco homes of mixed tenure in the inner area
- Expand the Foxhall Village development, as people will want to invest, and buy, in the centre of Blackpool if the quality is right. Blackpool Council is now working with partners to take forward and complete the next phases as well as options for the wider area. The Council and its partners such as Blackpool Football Club and the local community have a plan in Foxhall for further residential development and sporting community facilities



- Creating a housing offer that supports community stability and aspiration. There is the opportunity for a wider mix of family homes aimed at a mixture of income groups, close to new town centre employment, leisure attractions and upgraded public transport
- Introduce and implement new area masterplans to tackle public realm and place making, incorporating consideration of wider District Heating Schemes where possible
- Continue to work with Government to remove the current perverse incentives that reward the private market for delivering substandard living in inner Blackpool



# HOUSING

## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

- Blackpool Council is seeking to expand the use of mandatory, additional and selective licensing across the inner area, targeting the poorest private rented housing stock across our most deprived inner wards
- Over recent decades Blackpool Council has explored a number of potential routes to reform with central Government departments (DWP and DLUHC). The purpose of reform would be to remove the perverse existing incentives that drive failure, and lead to the creation of a more balanced market that can support the improvements we seek in health and other outcomes
- The Council formed Blackpool Housing Company Ltd as a wholly owned private housing company in 2016 operating with the brand My Blackpool Home (MBH) to acquire, remodel and manage problematic property in inner Blackpool, creating quality, affordable new homes for rent. To date, MBH has now created over 750 quality new homes out of failed B&Bs, HMOs and private rented accommodation. Within the last year, the Council has worked with MBH to establish a subsidiary registered provider – Lumen Housing Ltd. This subsidiary is now accessing Homes England's Affordable Housing Programme to support investment in the creation of further quality housing
- Supported Housing Pilot runs until July 2025 and continues to contribute to the long-term solution and it is critical that this is controlled as part of the overall strategy, specifically linked to increased selective licensing
- Master Plans have been worked up by the local communities of Claremont and Revoe with Blackpool Council through Homes England's Community Housing Fund. The process has engaged communities leaving us well placed to develop proposals in the context of the Levelling Up pilot but funding is now needed to help deliver on those community ambitions
- Blackpool Council has invested through its Housing Revenue Account in new high-quality social housing with 200 new family units at Queens Park replacing tired and unsuitable tower blocks. 74 new homes have been built at Troutbeck replacing old deck access flats and bedsits with aspirational family homes. In spring 2024 the final homes of 131 eco-friendly properties on Grange Park, the largest social housing estate in Blackpool, will be handed over to tenants
- Foxhall Village is an example of regenerating a deprived area. This scheme of 400 homes with mixed tenure including Homes for Sale and shared ownership has established a distinctive and desirable new neighbourhood in the country's twelfth most deprived ward. The Council is now working with the adjacent Blackpool Football Club to incorporate a Sports Village into this development using the Government's Town Deal funding





## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- Build on the £90M capital announced in March 2024 and commit to the future phases of Housing Intervention in Blackpool comprising £400M investment in capital funding over 15 years to continue to intervene at scale in the failed housing market in inner Blackpool, with further access to Home England's Affordable Housing Programme
- Engage with the Pride of Place Partnership to co-ordinate the Private Rented Sector Decent Homes Standard Enforcement Pilot and Blackpool Housing Renewal and Refurbishment Initiative, testing changes in policy, approach and associated funding, to create a national exemplar housing and social renewal model, including exploring the development of District Heating Schemes
- Cross government departments to continue to work closely with our local Partnership to explore all opportunities to break the link between poor quality housing and rent liability, which is often paid for from the public purse; building on current pragmatic discussions around changes to the Rent Repayment Order process as an example
- Deliver on reforms published in the Renters Reform Bill, including the introduction of a Decent Homes Standard (DHS) to the Private Rented Sector, recognising that special measures are needed to attack the extent of failure in inner Blackpool
- Bring forward the measures proposed in the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act to introduce national minimum standards, and give Councils more local control over quality and supply
- Homes England to provide capital funding for the delivery of Claremont and Revoo Masterplans (which were created via Homes England support)
- Explore the feasibility of providing transition funding of up to a year, from the home authority when those in receipt of social care move into Blackpool lifting the town out of an 'end of the line' perception
- Support for a selective licensing scheme across our most deprived inner wards to complement the Decent Homes Standard inspection pilot



Photo: John Simpson by CJGriffiths Photography

**I spent a fascinating and moving couple of days in Blackpool where I was born as a wartime refugee. It has some of the worst social problems in the UK, but it also has teams of deeply impressive, dedicated people who are working hard to solve them.**

**The Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership's plan to regenerate the town over the next 10 years gives real grounds for optimism.**

John Simpson CBE  
BBC World Affairs Editor

# HEALTH

## SITUATION

Health outcomes in Blackpool are poor for many residents. Factors specific to coastal communities influence health outcomes: coastal areas tend to attract older, retired citizens to settle, who inevitably have more health problems; an oversupply of guest housing has encouraged the conversion to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO), which leads to concentrations of deprivation and ill health. Relatively high prevalence of mental health conditions, poor mental wellbeing, substance misuse and poor-quality housing are common features affecting health in Blackpool. The Chief Medical Officer's 2021 annual report highlighted additional disadvantages caused by coastal location and the "long tail of preventable ill health" and called for a budget and strategy for Blackpool to reduce health inequalities.

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### **375 emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm in Blackpool in 2021/22**

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Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) has been identified as a key outcome measure in assessing the extent to which health is improving and disparities are narrowing. It shows the number of years a person can expect to live in good health (rather than with a

disability or in poor health). HLE in Blackpool is the lowest in the country for both males and females at around 10 years less than the average in England. While HLE has remained relatively stable in males over the last few years there is a falling trend for females meaning more of their lives are spent in poor health.

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### **29% of children live in relative low income families**

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Almost a fifth of the adult population smoke tobacco and smoking in pregnancy rates are the highest in the country. These historically high rates are key drivers of ill health and early mortality. Although smoking prevalence is in decline, the lasting health effects are still evident in the health of residents. Approximately 19% of the adult population continue to smoke compared to 13% across England and mortality from lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is significantly higher than average. Emergency hospital admissions from COPD are double the national average. Blackpool's Stop Smoking Services and Smokefree Blackpool, is effective in helping those who wish to stop smoking with almost 1,600 verified quitters in 2022/23.

Blackpool has a thriving and vibrant night-time economy which is an important part of the character of the town and attracts many visitors, centred around entertainment premises licensed to sell alcohol. While there are economic benefits for the town, it leaves our community with the highest rate of alcohol specific mortality in the country, with alcohol-related hospital admissions double the national average.

Blackpool also has the highest rate of drug related deaths in the country with 30 deaths from drug misuse in 2022.

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### **The drug-related death rate of 19.5 per 100,000 population is four times higher than the England average**

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It is well established that deprivation is associated with poorer health, including mental health. In 2022/23 a fifth (almost 31,000) of adults in Blackpool had been diagnosed with depression and 3,000 with a severe mental illness.

## VISION

Together we will make Blackpool a place where all people can live long, happy and healthy lives.

**There are many opportunities for Blackpool Council, the NHS and voluntary sector organisations to work together to improve health outcomes for people living in Blackpool. During the COVID pandemic we learnt how much can be achieved when we work together in partnership with our communities. Good progress has been made, particularly in the quality and reach of the support we offer to help people with multiple disadvantage, issues with drug and alcohol, or to help people quit smoking. Nevertheless, considerable challenges remain that we shall address collaboratively.**

Dr Arif Rajpura

Director of Public Health, Blackpool Council

## STRATEGY

Blackpool continues to import disproportionate numbers of people with existing and complex issues, so treatment remains a costly necessity that drains the public purse. The Chief Medical Officer's report into Health in Coastal Communities stated that we "need to solve the public health problems of coastal towns if we are to solve the public health problems of the nation as a whole", and he believes that by resourcing coastal communities to deliver their own strategies, we will lift up the health inequalities of the UK faster than any other way. He also links "the unique and interrelated challenges faced by coastal communities, such as quality of housing stock and transport provision". The Blackpool statistics outlined earlier demonstrate that the only effective sustainable approach to improving health in the town is to tackle the causes of poor health, and the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Blackpool identifies four priorities in this regard:

- Starting Well
- Education, Employment & Training
- Living Well
- Housing



On housing, a huge step forward has been made with Government support on the Levelling Up Decent Homes Standard Inspection Pilot, along with confirmation of a £90M clearance and refurbishment pilot in Blackpool's Central area.

A refreshed drugs harm reduction strategy and delivery plan has been developed with partners through the new Combating Drugs and Alcohol Partnership Board and we are exploring establishing a Family Drug and Alcohol Court to help continue the decline in numbers of children in care.

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**27% of 4-5 year olds and 42% of 10-11 year olds are overweight or obese**

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# HEALTH

To build community resilience, reduce social isolation, and facilitate early intervention we are using the Levelling Up housing pilots and the NHS-led Priority Wards initiative as the catalyst to target the most vulnerable communities. We identify those most in need, combining NHS data with community intelligence, build trusting relationships by providing help to tackle immediate issues, and deploy collaborative bespoke support for Individuals and Families.

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**Almost three quarters (72.3%) of adults are overweight or obese**

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Finally, on early intervention, the NHS-led Priority Wards initiative has launched across the most vulnerable communities in the town, with early progress made in the central arc to align with the Levelling Up housing initiative. This initiative, based on a national methodology identifying the most disadvantaged communities with the highest unplanned hospitalisations in England, seeks to tackle the social determinants of health. This supports a holistic approach which combines optimised clinical support with housing, income and employment challenges. The aim is to go “upstream” supporting people with challenges that may lead to early crisis and to reduce the number of people who reach a crisis point. Evidence shows us that, if the number of alcohol-related hospital admissions reduces to regional or national averages, annual savings of £3.6-£4.6M will accrue.

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**The rate of unplanned hospitalisations for chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions in our most deprived wards is twice the national average**

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## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

In the central arc of Revoe and Bloomfield, we have taken the opportunity to wrap the Priority Wards approach into the Levelling Up Housing Pilot. This has strengthened both approaches by bringing together data-driven evidence, conversations with the community about its health, through door knocking and focus groups in community settings, and large-scale transformation planning. This means that local plans are influenced by people who live, work and volunteer in Blackpool. The initial focus is on respiratory conditions and we have begun to join up services including GP, housing and employment, and resident-led initiatives. Partnership with the local resident-led action group, Revoelution, has been key to developing and delivering plans.

In Claremont ward we are exploring how the approach of the Priority Wards initiative can support deep community integration between health and care services and the community. The initial focus of this will be asthma, supporting children and young people, and their families, through tackling unwarranted variation and identifying community champions.

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**A third of all adults do less than 30 minutes physical activity per week**

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Smoking remains the greatest cause of ill-health and premature death in Blackpool and for many people, smoking is a chronic and relapsing addiction. A tobacco control CleaR assessment was carried out in 2023, re-establishing the Blackpool Tobacco Control Alliance to work alongside the Smokefree Lancashire and South Cumbria Strategy to make “smoke free” a reality across Blackpool.

The sheer scale of the challenge relating to drug misuse in Blackpool requires additional focus, and additional investment has been received through Project ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement, Recovery) and the supplementary substance misuse treatment and recovery grant.

A refreshed drugs harm reduction strategy and delivery plan has been developed with partners through the new Combating Drugs and Alcohol Partnership Board aimed at reducing drug-related deaths through early intervention, harm reduction, effective treatment and enforcement. This includes an offer for those furthest away from treatment and recovery, and utilising peers with lived experience to facilitate engagement. Blackpool’s community alcohol and drug treatment support (Horizon) treated 451 residents for alcohol dependence in 2022/23.

Support is delivered in partnership with the Changing Futures programme, a three-year national pilot being delivered in Blackpool, for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. The programme co-produces services with a Lived Experience Team alongside specialist support services, enabling individuals to receive trauma-informed, person-centred support packages. This integrated hub model has supported individuals where services have previously been unable to engage, deemed too complex, fallen through system gaps or simply lost trust due to previous experiences.

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- Government participation in a 10-year Coastal Community Health Improvement Strategy to reduce health inequalities in Blackpool, piloting the approach proposed by the Chief Medical Officer
- Redirecting funding by allowing the Lancashire and South Cumbria Care Board to pilot a broader health performance framework in Blackpool that rebalances the case for significant investment in preventative health alongside acute treatment
- Freedom and flexibility for Blackpool’s Community Partnership to pilot an Overdose Prevention Centre (shooting gallery) to evaluate this policy and contribute to the evidence base
- Support to explore the establishment of a Family Drug and Alcohol Court in Blackpool

# COMMUNITIES

## SITUATION

Blackpool has the highest concentration of deprivation in England, with 8 of the 10 most deprived neighbourhoods in the country cited within inner Blackpool alone. Thriving communities are the focus of all activities outlined in this Prospectus. Housing, health, skills, transport, physical regeneration, and sustainability all impact our residents daily. Residents of the most deprived communities struggle to identify major improvements across the town as theirs; they see new jobs and new buildings as something for other people; the success created by the ambitious Growth & Prosperity Programme has brought £100's of millions of investment into the town and the opportunity now is to maximise the impact on the marginalised communities we are supporting, including: Claremont; Revoe/South Shore/Bloomfield; Talbot and Brunswick; Grange; Tyldesley; and Fleetwood.

The difficult economic environment and cost of living crisis continues to place pressure on social provision at a time when grants and project funding is ever more stretched. The need for accelerated philanthropic support is clear. Blackpool needs the engagement and support of philanthropists with a connection to the town, as well as national funders who support the renewal of deprived and left behind communities, to fulfil its long-term plans for transformation.

The Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership has developed a network of alumni called 'Born and Bred' – a diaspora who act as Ambassadors and champion the renewal of this town. Working with this group, we have explored how Blackpool might attract philanthropic funding to support its ambitious renewal agenda, with a specific focus on the 'people' rather than infrastructure. Our Partnership is currently working to establish a charitable Foundation, attracting philanthropic investment for the benefit of all.

Crime pervades our most vulnerable communities, suppressing their ability to help themselves. Dysfunctional domestic relationships, in particular, contribute to high levels of risk of spousal and child abuse, with young people at a higher risk of Adverse Childhood Experiences than elsewhere in England. Blackpool has the highest rates of children in need and looked after children in the country.

Nevertheless, there is much progress to be proud of and a real opportunity to build on success.

## VISION

To lift the most vulnerable neighbourhoods out of the most deprived deciles in England. There is a positive future for everyone in Blackpool.



Photo: Blackpool Early Years Park Rangers

## STRATEGY

Sustainable improvements for our communities will only be achieved by returning the power to them, with service providers becoming facilitators for community leaders. Collaborative working is fundamental to this success and we have created remarkable foundations on which we can build further improvements. We are at a critical turning point.

We have implemented initiatives across the town and we know what works. Now is the time to deploy this best practice in a coordinated programme that empowers and supports communities to help themselves. To do that, our strategy requires funding and flexibility to accelerate the development of community partnerships in our most vulnerable communities, building on the vanguard approach developed in Claremont. We are using that experience to pilot “early help” community-led initiatives - we will “test and learn” to improve quality of life for residents thereby reducing the long-term burden on the public purse.

We are developing Community Leaders, helping them acquire skills and take charge in their neighbourhoods to implement local ideas. It is vital that we co-ordinate our efforts across housing, health, education and employment to make sure all residents have the opportunity to gain maximum benefit from our regeneration success. To do this, we must develop successful communities. Over the last 6 years working with communities in Claremont, Revoe and Grange, we know the key factors for community success are:

- Premises/hub as the focal point for community engagement
- Community leadership - community entrepreneurs developed through a process starting with “door knocking” followed by community activities ultimately led by the community
- Collaborative support - police/council/third sector/health formed into service delivery group
- Funding - community wealth funds/lottery (communities and young people)

Improving healthy life expectancy is a key focus of our community activity, identifying residents at risk of illness and helping them to manage their conditions to avoid spiralling towards intensive treatment. We teach people healthy habits, have community food programs, and make it easier to see doctors and nurses. Our Early Help Strategy offers support when families struggle, including parenting classes, relationship help, and protecting children. Linked to Early Help, the NHS Priority Wards initiative has provided a focus for improving health in Revoe and Claremont encouraging communities, public health and GP practices to work in partnership with relevant support providers to tackle causes of ill health through early intervention.

In addition to tackling the big issues, it is important that we support locals to create their own opportunities, setting up their own businesses that solve local problems and create jobs. Working with our colleges and other partners to help residents access skills through training and coaching, provides the key to social mobility.

# COMMUNITIES

To tackle crime, we are expanding the work of existing partnerships such as BSafe Blackpool who can lead the way, helping residents, businesses, police, and charities to team up. In doing so, we will ensure young people are at the centre of our solution development, fixing problems before they escalate. This community-led approach will attack the root causes of crime.

Our ambition as a town is centred on recognising the expertise gained through the lived experience of our local communities. People who have endured the greatest hardship have also proved to be the most resilient, full of ideas on how to make Blackpool an even better place to live and work. Our role is to provide an environment in which local people can flourish and be empowered to make the changes they wish to see in their town. A sign of hope is Blackpool's amazing 'Recovery Community', a community made up of people recovering from substance misuse. 79% of this community are actively making a positive contribution to our town through volunteering, which compares to 39% of the general population. Additionally, we will continue to build and support young people's capacity across the town with our successful Youth Parliament and the team of Youth Advisors employed by the Council.



Our Employment and Skills strategy is overseen by a partnership board that crucially includes Youth Advisors with lived experience who help to shape our proposals and, most importantly, lead their own initiatives.

Addressing funding challenges, Onward UK's recent Giving Back Better report recommends the launching of 'Charitable Action Zones' (CAZs) in places such as Blackpool that experience a deficit of charitable activity. It calls upon local leaders to create diaspora philanthropy funds to attract donations from successful "sons and daughters" of UK towns and cities. We have plans underway to develop this in Blackpool to ensure funding is attracted to invest in people as well as the place.

## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

Groundwork and Blackpool Council, under the leadership of the Fairness Commission, partnered to create @TheGrange, which took a rarely used Community Centre and developed a vibrant hub that provides a focus for community life. It comprises a pharmacy, shop, theatre, library and community farm, which grows fresh produce for use in the café. This has been transformational for this community.

We are using this experience to support the community to create its own hub in Claremont. This Ward represents a quarter of Blackpool's inner area and suffers from intense deprivation, facing challenges of high rates of unemployment and crime combined with poor health outcomes and low average household incomes. Its townscape is mainly densely packed streets of poor quality privately rented houses, many of which are of multiple occupancy. Led by the Pride of Place Partnership and chaired by a "Dame with a Campaign", the Claremont Project is an intensive neighbourhood approach which coordinates public service support to address the priority issues for residents.



The last five years has seen The Claremont Project develop a strong team of community, public service agencies, business leaders, civil society organisations, young people and council representatives meeting regularly to tackle issues. It has concentrated on three themes: health, housing and young people, all led by a prominent business leader from within the town. The NHS Priority Wards early health intervention initiative, has been able to tap into this active network, prioritising engagement with asthmatic residents, helping them to manage their conditions effectively and to access support quickly when necessary. We are supporting a community-led initiative to refurbish the community centre, creating a local hub for the community.

Claremont is a shining example of what can be achieved with a collaborative community approach. This pioneering project, an incubator for coordinated service intervention, has resulted in families being pulled back from the brink, vulnerable individuals empowered, and communities beginning to buzz with newfound hope. This model has removed barriers between support services and built bridges of collaboration. Public, private, community – working collectively to make a difference.

Football Clubs are the heartbeat of many towns and cities and Blackpool is no different. Life-long fan Simon Sadler bought the club in 2019 and continues to invest, restoring pride in the local football club, which is an essential part of Place. The brand uses the signature colours of tangerine and white in supporting the club's nickname of 'The Seaside'. Blackpool Council and Blackpool Football Club are developing proposals in the Southern Quarter of Revue, to work with the local community to create a sports village with a mix of sports, educational and residential uses thereby investing further in the future of the club and the town.

The Housing Levelling Up pilots in the central areas of Blackpool provide a huge opportunity to use housing interventions to engage and support the most vulnerable residents. We are using the experience in Claremont to help the Revoelution Community-led partnership to build community resilience and empower the community to deal with their challenges and access opportunities.

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- Pilot Blackpool as a 'Charitable Action Zone' that supports the creation of a Blackpool Foundation to attract philanthropic investment to support the renewal and regeneration of human capital in the town. This would provide access to, and local management of, Community Wealth funding from Dormant Assets
- Funding and flexibility to accelerate the development of community-led partnerships across our most vulnerable communities, piloting cross-cutting early help community-led initiatives to improve quality of life for residents, thereby reducing the long term burden on the public purse
- Commitment to long-term funding of the NHS Priority Wards initiative, linked to the town's Early Help strategy

# COMMUNITIES

## CASE STUDIES

### 1. The Fleetwood Trust

Sponsored by the Pride of Place Board, this '7 for 70' project is one of seven projects undertaken by The King's Foundation, that coincided with HM The King's 70th birthday in 2018.

With the aspiration to be an exemplar Community Hub, The Fleetwood Hospital project has begun to transform an old disused building into a focal point for community, encompassing a broad range of facilities and services to improve the health and wellbeing of Fleetwood residents. Multiple partners involved in this endeavour are taking a holistic approach to community by delivering housing, health and education outcomes, alongside local charities such as The Pantry (a Foodbank) and a Volunteer Centre.

To complete the ground floor vision, a café and community rooms will open soon, along with a new Youth Hub (under construction), which will be run by Fleetwood Town Community Trust. Macmillan Cancer have brought much needed support to the community for both cancer patients and their families. North West Ambulance Service are also moving into the Hub.



Artist Impression: Fleetwood Hospital, Cafe



Photo: Westminster Primary Academy

### 2. Inspiring Claremont

A project was created to provide opportunities for parents from Westminster Primary Academy school to build skills by being employment ready.

Empowerment charity led the project, collaborating with the Family support workers within the school. Building relationships with a small group, they first concentrated on social interaction and confidence by running crafting activities and involved other partners such as Active Blackpool who ran tailored exercise activities at the Claremont Park Community Centre. The project lead identified the multiple barriers that the parents faced and agreed individualised working plans.

#### ***Participant comment:***

*Working with the project lead has been fantastic for me as I have not felt judged or pushed to work on things I find hard. I am looking forward to keeping working with her to continue to gain the confidence I need to get in position to get a job.*

# EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

## SITUATION

### Early Years and Primary

In Blackpool, Early Years and Primary education continues to improve and provide essential support to young families in our town. Over recent years, pastoral support has developed to reflect the scale of need in Blackpool, with early years and primary settings recruiting a bespoke mix of specialist teachers and assistants to ensure our young people are given the best possible start in life. The evidence bears this out with 100% of Providers on the Early Years Register who have had a graded inspection being 'good' or better. 10,200 of 11,000 pupils attend a good or outstanding school.

Children feel and are safe in our schools. Only 1 school out of 45 has any negative comment relating to safeguarding. Attainment continues the improving trend with the gap to national averages decreasing by 2% in 2023. Key Stage 1 outcomes at reading and writing are in line with national levels, with Maths 5% above. Our disadvantaged pupils at Key Stage 2 achieved higher than their national counterparts in all measures.

### Secondary Phase

With such strong outcomes at the end of the primary phase the challenge is to maintain performance through the transition to secondary education and beyond, where pastoral support decreases, academic demands increase, and adolescent challenges dominate. Our secondary schools continue to battle against the challenges of deprivation and high levels of transience, endeavouring to make school the stable environment in which all pupils can thrive. Nevertheless, post pandemic Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 outcomes have been steady, with a quarter of our secondary Academies seeing an improvement in English and Maths outcomes.

We have seen a significant reduction in the number of children in our Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) from over 400 to 120 this year, with a greater diversity of alternative provision options provided to meet the needs of those who are not thriving in mainstream settings. Young people leaving the Blackpool PRU are now 8% more likely to be in education, employment or training than their peers nationally.

More children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are now integrated into Blackpool mainstream secondary schools, but there is more to be done as part of our SEND Strategy 2022-2025.

### Tertiary Phase

B&FC creates exceptional outcomes for its students. Alongside the £80M physical development of the Multiversity, the College is working with our regional universities and schools to create vocational pathways for students that provide routes for all young people into work and further education. With a student population of approximately 6,050 16-19 learners in Blackpool and Fylde region, and 2,720 in Blackpool alone, collaboration between post 16 providers, civic, community and employment partners is central to the curriculum that post-16 organisations produce. In 2023 the College was awarded the lead role in the Lancashire and Cumbria Institute of Technology and has 70% of its students undertaking STEM courses. Along with Blackpool Sixth Form College, which achieved an Ofsted Outstanding status in 2021, post 16 Education in the region is amongst the best in the country.

# EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

## VISION

The whole community will have the tools to live self-sustaining and fulfilling lives, with the key to this being good education and training aligned to stable employment with adequate pay.

## STRATEGY

### Education Improvement Strategy

The Blackpool Education Improvement Board (BEIB) is responsible for setting the strategic direction for improvements in education. This is articulated in the ten-year 2020-2030 Education Strategy which has 3 core strands:

#### 1. Literacy

Blackpool is active in a network of English Hubs in northern towns, sharing ideas for professional development and support around the 3 aims of, early language, early reading and reading culture, as well as an ongoing town-wide literacy strategy.

#### 2. Inclusion

As part of the delivery of the SEND Strategy 2022-25, the following infrastructure projects have been agreed and development is underway:

- £3.8M funding to eradicate the school funding deficit
- £6.2M funding to build new school sites at Highfurlong Special School, Educational Diversity and Park school
- A new post-19 offer at The Oracle, through Valley College
- Enhanced Assessment provision at Revoe Primary Academy
- A new Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) Free School for 56 pupils, funded by the Department for Education, and a bid submitted for an Alternative Provision Academy bid for children with medical needs that prevent them from attending school

#### 3. Employment and Skills

The pandemic has hit young people disproportionately hard in Blackpool. Around 25% of 16-24 year olds in Blackpool are currently classified as NEET and of these, 14% are economically inactive. The Employment and Skills strategy is overseen by the partnership board which brings together 40 organisations and services. Crucially, it includes Blackpool Youth Advisors - young people with lived experience of being NEET who provide support to shape and develop the priorities of the board.



There are 3 key long term goals:

1. Preventing young people from becoming NEET – evidence-based approach to NEET prevention in schools was initially undertaken by the 'Pathways For All' programme
2. Reduction of the number of young people who are currently NEET – The Platform, established to provide targeted support for 16 – 24 year olds who are unemployed. Supplemented with a Lottery/ Rank funded NEET reduction collaborative project comprising 8 local organisations aimed at transforming the lives of 400 long term NEET individuals
3. Sustaining young people in EET (Education, Employment & Training) and develop sustained systemic changes to reduce NEET levels and keep them low – B&FC has introduced a managed moves process for young people with high risk of NEET





# EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

A classroom of 15 girls and 15 boys in Blackpool looks like:

## Primary

**3** children would be from a black and minority ethnic background.



**7** children would be registered as having special educational needs or a disability (SEN Support or EHCP).

**12** children would be overweight.



**17** children would be achieving expected level when leaving primary school.

**3** would be being supported by Children's Social Care (CIN, CP, In our Care).



On average they would be in school **4.5** days per week (90%).

## Secondary

**8** would have been bullied in the last year.



**2** would have used illicit substances in the last month.

**8** would have drunk alcohol in the last week.



**5** would vape at least once a week.

**4** will be a victim of violence or aggression in the area that they live during the last year.



**5** would smoke occasionally or regularly.

**24** would be progressing to further education.



**12** would do five or more hours of physical activity in a typical week.

**4** would have had at least period of exclusion



Our Children and Families Strategic Partnership has 4 overarching priorities giving our children the best possible start in life, the best possible education, keeping them healthy and safe. The Partnership engages wider expertise, providing external support and challenge, building on existing strengths in partnership working, to help create better life chances and stabilise the communities.

## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

### Literacy

The English Hub, which has maintained Blackpool phonics attainment at national levels, is now continuing its support with several schools in wider reading, developing reading fluency and early language. Blackpool Literacy Project, operational since 2020, has ensured focus has been maintained on curriculum development, developing teaching and learning and supporting early years practice.

The next stage in the Blackpool wide literacy journey is implementing whole school effective spoken language strategies using the Voice 21 model. This collaborative work maximises the value of shared resource and represents a lifeline for tackling the exceptional challenges that suppress academic performance; it is clear that Government support to expand the collaboration would achieve a huge return on investment.

### The Platform (Youth Hub)

The Platform, a groundbreaking partnership between DWP and Blackpool Council, is providing vital careers information, advice and guidance to young people aged 16-24, plugging them into local vacancies and training providers whilst delivering 'in-house' basic skills training. This facility is regarded by DWP as a shining example of national best practice. Working with The Platform, B&FC ensures that work-specific pathways are available for students to enter study programmes, apprenticeships and degrees providing English, Maths and "get ready to work" programmes delivered at the Platform centre. Long term funding is essential to support this important transition from school to work.



### Connected Futures Partnership Programme

Blackpool is established as one of the Youth Futures Foundation Connected Futures partnerships, bringing in much needed investment to support the employment and skills strategy.

It aims to create systemic change to enable all young people to flourish by ensuring they can access the right support at the right time and in the right place to enable them to find and sustain employment, education or training.

The delivery strategy prioritises:

1. Youth leadership - ensuring young people's lived experience informs and leads the strategy
2. A 'Connected Curriculum' - a whole town approach to delivering high quality careers education and work place encounters for all young people
3. A method to assess the tiers of young people's needs who are NEET so they can be connected to the most appropriate support
4. Improving data sharing and systems to improve how partners work together and how young people experience their journey from school to post 16 EET opportunities

# EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

## Lancashire Careers Hub

Blackpool has the highest quality universal careers offer, through its Careers Journey, Connected Curriculum, Primary Futures and Lancashire Careers Hub, underpinned by the Start in Lancashire digital platform which allows businesses and young people to share and log their careers support activities. This offer addresses the issue of “work-readiness” which obstructs the progression of a significant group of Blackpool young people and is currently developing through a range of pilot initiatives with local schools.

## Adults

Driven by extensive intelligence of future skills needs, B&FC works with over 1,800 partner employers and spearheads the delivery of the T levels in Health and Social Care, Tourism and STEM, while pioneering Higher and Degree level apprenticeships from aerospace engineering to nuclear engineering. Targeting reductions in NEET and the economically inactive, together with improved support for young parents, requires a fresh approach that can be linked to housing and health pilot projects. To address this at scale in Blackpool, we have to remove perverse incentives for colleges, adding protections for B&FC in terms of retention, potential drop out and impact



on the College performance tables. Aligned to this approach, flexibility for full-time upskilling while on Universal Credit would provide young people with a real incentive to approach the world of work.

Finally, we continue to work across the regeneration landscape to create high quality job opportunities through government relocations, development of the Enterprise Zone, and the maximisation of employment opportunities created by the ongoing capital investment in the town including Town Deal schemes. The digital agenda captured in the Digital Chapter of this Prospectus illustrates just one fantastic opportunity for our community.

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- Pilot a broader College performance framework in Blackpool to allow our training providers to work in partnership with DWP and DfE to address, at scale, reductions in NEET and the economically inactive, together with improved support for young parents. Adding performance protections in terms of student retention and potential drop out rates, supplemented with flexibility to allow full-time training while on Universal Credit, would allow B&FC to unleash its full upskilling potential on the most vulnerable and difficult to reach in our communities
- Support the expansion of the North West English Hub collaboration and associated literacy and reading initiatives beyond the next 2 years
- Support for an Alternative Provision Academy for children with severe medical needs
- Continued funding for the Lancashire Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network
- Continuation of support for The Platform, our groundbreaking partnership with DWP
- Consideration of incentives for employers to recruit and train previously disengaged adults and young people, by continuing to incentivise Apprenticeships in disadvantage areas and for disadvantaged groups

# DIGITAL

## SITUATION

### Connectivity and Infrastructure

Under the banner of 'Silicon Sands', Blackpool's ambition to become a 'Smart Resort' is underway, with great progress being made on its digital transformation. The latest in digital technology continues to support the renewal of the town, creating an enhancing experience for residents, visitors and businesses.

Internationally, Blackpool is at the centre of the North Atlantic loop, an ultra-high-speed data cable, connecting New York, the U.K. and Northern Europe. The cable presents an ideal opportunity for businesses who need access to high speed, low latency connectivity, including data centres, AI, Quantum computing, fintech, electronic gaming and shared business services.

Blackpool has led the UK roll out of Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN), laying fibre optic cables that run the length of the promenade and into the town centre. This network provides cheap direct access to high-speed internet and ultra-low-latency 10 Gigabit connectivity in the town.

The Winter Gardens Conference & Exhibition Centre has world class facilities with 10 Gigabit resilient fibre connectivity and WiFi connectivity capable of supporting 5000+ conference delegates. The digital transformation of venues like the Winter Gardens and Backlot, allow Blackpool to serve the greatest digital demands needed for modern day conferencing and events.

### Sustainability

Situated offshore is one of the world's largest wind farms, Walney Island, generating over 1,000 megawatts of green power. Proposals are being developed for a new windfarm - Mona and Morgan - where the aspiration is for electricity to be brought onshore at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone.

Plans for an initial 4MW 'Demonstrator' data facility to be developed at the Airport Enterprise Zone are also underway. Immersion cooled, this demonstrator becomes the anchor source in a District Heat Network to decarbonise heating for business and residential properties, and will create sustainable solutions around the growth of GPU and AI processing for applications such as large language models, inference or hybrid quantum computing. It is intended for the Data Centre to

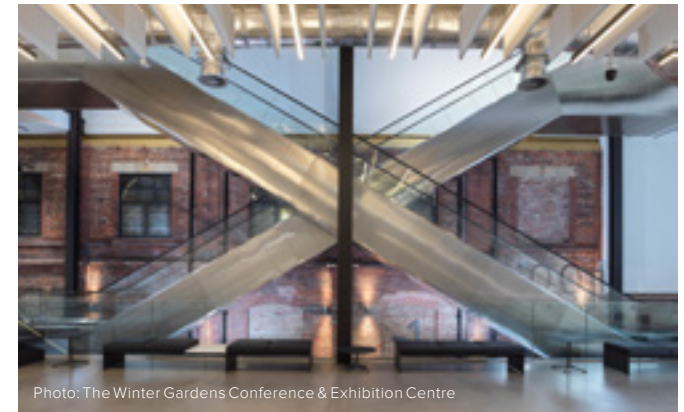


Photo: The Winter Gardens Conference & Exhibition Centre

be co-located with a dedicated research centre operated by Lancaster University.

Blackpool's ambition is to develop a District Heat Network for the whole town that addresses today's challenges on data, AI, energy, social housing and fuel poverty.

### Digital Skills

Blackpool still has too many citizens who are digitally excluded. In Blackpool, 36,761 households are classified in social grades D or E (manual, unskilled or unemployed roles) and are 10% more likely to not access the internet.

# DIGITAL

The pandemic laid bare the digital divide in our communities, hitting low-income families the hardest. Age UK continue to hand out tablets and devices; CAB Social Prescribing Link Workers identify those isolated by digital poverty and link them with the help they need; and the VCFS grants scheme's basic training is giving people the skills they need for their tech, turning devices into valuable tools.

Blackpool Pride of Place works with Groundworks and Lloyds Banking Group's Digital Academy, to support the development of digital skills in communities – and Blackpool Council continue work on their partnership with Libraries around their digital lending library for laptops and connectivity.

Local providers of education and training can equip students with digital skills for life, work and further study. They also support the provision of essential digital skills training for adults in community settings through the Adult Education Budget. They deliver Essential Digital Skills Qualifications (EDSQs), which are based on the new national standards, along with the new digital T-Level.

## Cyber, Technology Hubs and Esports

Designed to keep the country safe, the £5BN National Cyber Force (NCF), a joint MoD and GCHQ partnership, is the new home for national offensive cyber operations. It draws together personnel from intelligence, cyber and security agency GCHQ, the MoD, the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) and the Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), under one unified command for the first time.

The permanent site of the NCF will be established in Samlesbury, Lancashire, cementing the North-West region's position as the cyber centre of the UK, creating thousands of highly skills employment opportunities for citizens of Blackpool and the Fylde Coast.

The last decade has seen innovation and technology hubs popping up around the world. A successful hub can transform a place, driving economic growth, attracting new businesses and increasing living standards. This 2030 digital strategy is exploring how innovation can play a critical role in the regeneration of the town, using the concept of 'Silicon Sands' to position Blackpool on the digital map.

Esports is one of the fastest growing global markets and Blackpool aims to become the destination for Esports in the UK. Its Esports strategy aims to diversify the local product, attract new conference tourism delegates to Blackpool, and put Blackpool on the map as a credible Esports destination. Its recent European event – EuropaHalo Blackpool – was successful in testing the town's capacity and capability to host future international Esports events.

## VISION

In a world where digital is a key enabler, the town's stakeholders have created the 2030 Digital vision to support Blackpool to become the smartest and best-connected town in the UK. This plan will help Blackpool grow its digital economy and improve socio-economic outcomes for its citizens.

This vision builds on Blackpool's key digital infrastructure so it becomes a catalyst for transformation, one that develops, nurtures, and attracts employment and industry to strengthen economic growth.

Blackpool will be a thriving digital business community, with an eco-system for tech skills and a pipeline of talent that encourages investors.



## STRATEGY

As part of their role on the Pride of Place Partnership Board, Atos and Cisco are driving this ambitious digital vision forward. Atos sponsors the digital vision and through a secondment, ensures progress is being made. A business-led steering group is producing results on the ground by bringing the priorities of the digital strategy to life.

Through a Technology Demonstrator and Research Centre, Blackpool aims to innovate with renewable power, Artificial Intelligence and waste heat. This innovation will underpin development of the Tech Hub and Esports ambitions in the town and beyond, using the low latency and high-speed connectivity on offer.

Digital investment into education will produce a pipeline of local talent who will take advantage of digital jobs, such as those on offer at NCF, and the entrepreneurial opportunities at the Blackpool Tech Hub, ending the digital brain drain from the town as ambitious professionals will choose to remain, and return, to work on the Fylde Coast.

## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

- The creation of a Blackpool Tech Hub will explore how innovation can play a critical role in the regeneration of the town. A business case is being developed to launch a Tech Hub that will develop local skills, encourage and support local entrepreneurs, and drive economic regeneration and diversification
- Blackpool Football Club Community Trust are leading the roll out of Esports as extra-curricular activity in high schools, across Blackpool. This ecosystem of gamers will build engagement, skills and knowledge, and create a pipeline of talent and future pathways into Esports. A BTEC offer will follow as part of their FE offer at the BFC Sports College
- A Resort App is being prepared for development, which will link Blackpool's wide-ranging offer of attractions to facilitate the best visitor experience
- Blackpool has recently been awarded DSIT funding through its partner, The University of York, to develop a 5G network and the evolution of 6G communications. The project will enable more reliable and improved data connections in areas that regularly host high numbers of visitors
- Blackpool Council is developing a "pilot" at the Solaris Centre. A small data centre will be immersion cooled to showcase this technology, with the waste heat produced being reused to heat the building and its café. This will become a showcase of immersion technology, providing real time data on the savings of immersion cooling vs air cooling and the savings attributable to reusing heat compared to burning gas
- Cyber Girls First (CGF) has now supported over 400 young girls from Blackpool to learn about careers in the tech and cyber world. CGF aims to play an important role in Blackpool to improve gender diversity in cyber security and encourage uptake in computer science amongst girls
- InnovateHer is committed to preparing girls for the tech industry and the tech industry for girls. It has worked with 1,177 students across Blackpool to provide free training, supported by digital business mentors, for girls aged 13-16 years
- Teachers in some schools are being trained by Primary Goals, an organisation that utilises unused Apprenticeship Levy to deliver flexible learning programmes that support digital teaching and resources for them and their pupils

# 2030 VISION RIDING THE DIGITAL WAVE TO ECONOMIC & SOCIAL PROSPERITY





# DIGITAL

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- Support the development of the proposed innovative Silicon Sands Technology Demonstrator at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone focusing on utilising local sustainable energy, liquid immersion cooling technology, effective re-use of waste heat, reduction of data centre energy use and cost of data centre operations, and significant reductions in carbon emissions so that Blackpool can become a leading innovator in the efficient re-use of data and AI generated heat
- Put Blackpool at the heart of the government's agenda to safely and ethically exploit the promise of AI by making use of Blackpool's unique eco-system of hyper connectivity, renewable power, energy reuse to power a large number of GPUs whilst creating positive and sustainable social impact
- That the new National Cyber Force at Salmesbury, Lancashire, recruits from the local region first, prioritising places like Blackpool to support social mobility. It will build its pipeline of talent and support raising ambition and aspiration by partnership with local Fylde Coast Schools
- DSIT, through Innovate UK, to partner with the Blackpool Tech/Innovation Hub to encourage entrepreneurship, drive regeneration and boost the local economy
- For DCMS to support Blackpool to be the UK Esports destination, leveraging the ultra-low latency transatlantic cable for international competitions, such as Europe v USA
- Work with Blackpool Council to bring a feeder cable for green power to Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, to power digital hubs, artificial intelligence and modern manufacturers with green energy to support the ambition of net zero carbon by 2030
- Long term funding that develops the capacity of the Voluntary Sector to build sustainable solutions and develop expertise that bridges the digital divide for residents and communities who have been left behind
- Enable every child from Y1-Y13 in the town to have a high quality, free digital device so they can engage digitally in their education
- Support all teachers to make best use of these devices through a bespoke CPD programme that is jointly developed by them



Photo: North Atlantic ultra-high-speed data cable by CJGriffiths Photography

- Provide all schools with fully-funded, 10 Gigabit full-fibre broadband to support digital learning
- Fund perpetual software licences for schools so that they can access up-to-date apps, programmes and resources, without being constrained by finances

# SUSTAINABILITY

## SITUATION

Blackpool was the first tourism town for the working populations of the mill towns and cities of the industrial revolution seeking sea, the beaches, and ‘fresh air and fun’. Today, initiatives to maintain and improve the coastal environment are essential for the well-being and prosperity of the area. But our location puts us at the frontline of escalating sea levels and increasingly severe weather events caused by climate change. As a result, Blackpool Council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019 committed the town to tackling the root cause – carbon emissions – whilst also planning to protect residents and tourists through more resilient infrastructure.

### Housing

Working within the constraints of a poor-quality housing stock, decarbonisation has been a key consideration for Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) and My Blackpool Home (MBH). All new housing developments are being delivered to the highest energy efficiency standards, with the Phase 1 housing site on Grange Park being fully electrified via air source heat pumps, solar panels and battery storage. A predicted EPC rating of 97-A places this stock amongst the very best housing in the country.

Refurbishing existing stock in inner Blackpool by MBH preserves embodied carbon whilst improving energy efficiency. Elsewhere on Grange Park, the retrofitting of 75 flats resulted in improved EPC ratings and an annual saving of 108 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.

### Power and Heat

“Eco-coaching” saves households money and carbon emissions by providing advice and small energy-efficient appliances to householders, and is now a mainstay of carbon reduction in Blackpool, saving over 50 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e across 1000+ households since its inception in 2021.

Plans for a 4MW ‘Demonstrator’ data processing facility at the Airport Enterprise Zone are underway. Immersion-cooled, this will be the anchor heat source in a District Heat Network, decarbonising heating for business and residential properties alongside other renewable heat generation technology. The ultimate ambition is to develop a town-wide network that addresses today’s challenges on data, energy, social housing and fuel poverty.

### Transport

Mode shift towards more active travel and increased use of public transportation is essential to reduce carbon emissions, and will also promote the overall health of the local population.

To support the transformation to electric vehicles for all road traffic, Blackpool is making careful and considered provision for Electric Vehicle charging for residents. A series of shared access charging hubs across town will encourage take-up, whilst dedicated electric vehicle charging for visitors will reduce the potential of conflict with residents.

### Business

Blackpool Council recognises the vital role local businesses play in moving the town towards net-zero. As such, the council has used government Shared Prosperity Funding to establish the Blackpool Net Zero Business Academy. This initiative aids businesses in assessing their carbon footprint and creates detailed plans to reduce their emissions; drive down energy costs and develop sustainable business practice. This proactive approach not only contributes to the reduction of environmental impact but also serves to safeguard jobs and bolster the local economy.



## **Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprise (VCSE)**

Blackpool's VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme will support voluntary sector organisations to reduce bills through improving or installing new energy features in their buildings. This assessment will be the gateway to opportunity for capital grants so support the cost of installing the recommended energy efficiency measures. This will lead to lower energy bills for VCSE's, freeing up funds to be spent elsewhere.

## **Climate Adaption and the Natural Environment**

Preparedness for climate adaptation is ongoing through continued investment for sea defences and the design of the built environment by Blackpool Council, the UK government, the Environment Agency and United Utilities. More extreme weather events require greater resilience and earlier planning and strategies to adapt, with the Council's current plans rated A by the international Carbon Disclosure Project. Blackpool is vulnerable to the impact of storms and underscores the pressing need for proactive measures and resilient infrastructure to adapt to the potential risks and challenges posed by the changing climate to this seaside community's population and economy.

Collaboration amongst key stakeholders has improved bathing water quality across Blackpool and the Fylde Coast. Turning Tides – a cross agency partnership – is seeking to protect beaches to ensure excellent bathing water quality status is achieved.

As we experience wetter winters, investment into water drainage continues to ensure water is transported sustainably and more effectively, to minimise local flooding. Partners are working to

ensure less surface water enters the waste water network creating resilience for the future, and providing benefits to the landscape, health and wellbeing. All Blackpool households have been offered a free water butt to mitigate the risk of localised flooding in urban areas during heavy rain events, whilst SUDS (sustainable drainage system) gardens, including one at the Palatine Library Eco Hub, are being developed across the town to slow the rate that rainfall enters into the drainage system.

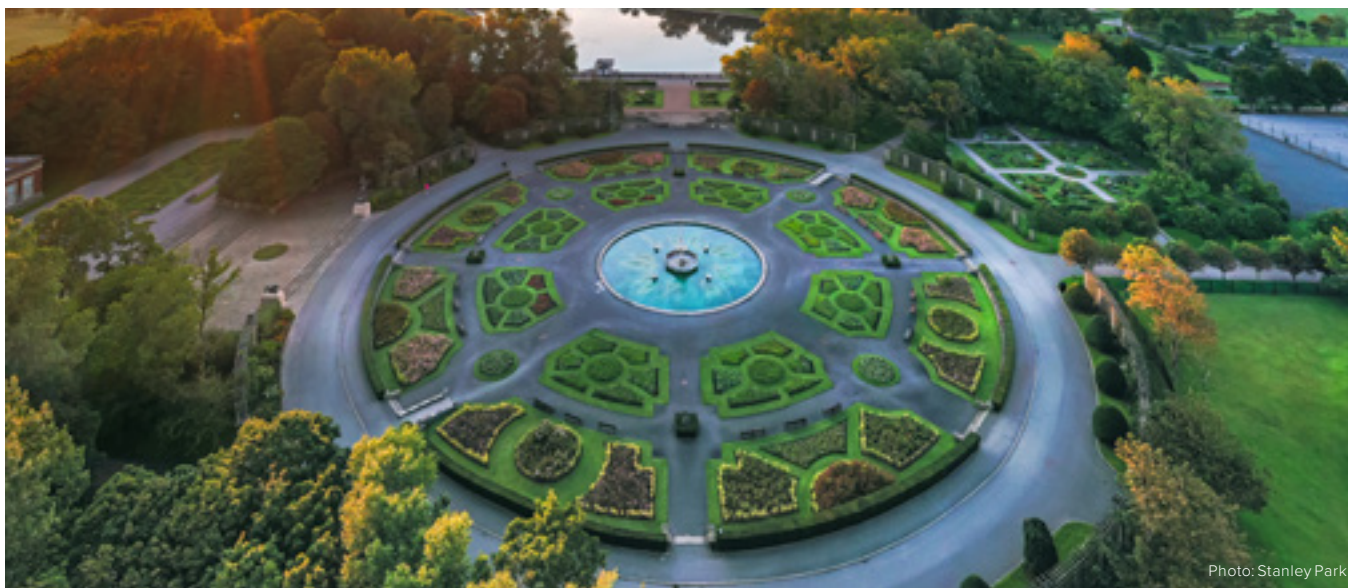


Photo: Stanley Park

# SUSTAINABILITY

## VISION

In 2050, Blackpool is a resilient and environmentally sustainable town. Its sea defences can withstand all but the most serious storms, protecting its residents and businesses. Surface flooding is minimised by the use of sensitive urban design which integrates natural solutions alongside the best engineering.

Increased natural features in the town's streets and neighbourhoods provide shelter from hotter spells, and respite for the increasing number of tourists looking to enjoy a warmer maritime climate year-round.

Blackpool punches above its weight in terms of emissions reduction, generating a high proportion of its own energy through coastal renewables, and acting as a beacon on how to harness the full value of natural resources in the production of local renewable energy. It has innovated to make its energy systems more efficient, at a large scale through a District Heat Network using waste heat and renewable sources, but also through smaller measures such as capturing power from the regenerative braking of our trams in battery storage for local use.

## STRATEGY

Proposals are being developed for new offshore wind farms, Mona and Morgan, which could more than triple the North Sea's existing generation capability. The aspiration is for electricity to be brought onshore at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, with the Silicon Sands development seeking to benefit from a direct supply.

All towns and places want inward investment, job creation and renewal. Blackpool may have challenges in terms of skills, housing and social deprivation because of its peninsular location, but linking these to environmental solutions based around renewable energy and government policy around heat networks will be the catalyst to set it apart.

These opportunities make Blackpool the location of choice for environmental inward investment, job creation and development of an emerging economy. The Lancashire Energy HQ will provide training for a new generation in heat pumps and emerging technologies set to replace gas appliances.



## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

- To support its continued success and link it closely to the pan-County Cosy Homes In Lancashire initiative, Palatine Library is being developed into an Eco Hub that showcases retrofit technologies. Residents will be able to speak with the eco-coaches and to experience and learn about different retrofit options. This initiative will support social and economic objectives as well as progress towards net zero
- As part of the ambition to cut greenhouse gas emissions, Blackpool will have a fully electric bus fleet and green technology by 2027
- Levelling Up Funds are enabling a Town Centre Access Scheme that will improve the transport interchange, ensure electric bus preparedness, reduce traffic congestion in the town centre, and improve infrastructure for walking and cycling
- Plans are underway to develop a 15MW photovoltaic solar farm also on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, which could contribute up to 5% of the Council's carbon reduction target

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- Support the development of Blackpool becoming a 'District Heat Network Town', which connects social housing and public buildings with renewable heat sources, through long term funding and knowledge transfer that goes beyond the Heat Network Delivery Unit and Green Heat Network Fund offers
- DLUHC to work with Blackpool to enable greater delivery of onshore wind and other coastal renewable energy projects cutting through the red tape and planning bureaucracy to pilot the latest generation technology
- The Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to support, via the NW Net Zero Hub, the development of a financial and technological model funding solar panels on every roof in Blackpool, addressing fuel poverty and harnessing the benefits of Blackpool's clear coastal skies, and supporting local energy storage including battery, heat storage, and hydrogen
- Ensure that new housing developments adhere to the SUDS hierarchy, adopting systems that store excess rainwater and allow it to soak away naturally, reducing the likelihood of surface water overwhelming combined systems



- Change the legislation so that water companies, such as United Utilities, are designated as a statutory consultee for housing developments
- Subsidise Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone to renew airport operational infrastructure to enable support for future low carbon aviation fuel (Hydrogen and Battery and SAF)

# TRANSPORT

## SITUATION

Efficient and effective transport is vital for the economic, social and cultural success of Blackpool and the Fylde Coast. Creating environmentally sustainable mobility raises challenges that are well understood and for which some solutions are already being developed.

The last decade has seen enhancements in connectivity to the Fylde Coast, through electrification of the main rail line, the re-opening of Blackpool Airport, and completion of arterial link roads to the north and south. This has improved Blackpool and the Fylde Coast's accessibility to Lancashire and beyond, supporting the business and tourism economies to thrive, with over 20 million visitors reported in 2023.

And within the Fylde Coast, the ability to move people around for work and leisure has progressed through investment into the Tramway and Bus infrastructure, the latter benefitting from the Government's investment in the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) grant together with the £2 maximum fare scheme to increase bus patronage and support social mobility within the town.

Yet, more needs to be done. The pandemic presented major problems to all bus, tram and train services, and whilst passenger numbers are increasing, the pace of change is not delivering income that can support the service frequencies and network density that was previously available.

Investing to improve housing conditions, increase job opportunities, developing skills through training and education, and tackling health and social inequalities, will all need to be supported by mobility offers that will ensure transport services – particularly bus services – are not (or are not perceived to be) a barrier to accessing opportunities that will increase the economic success of the area and the quality of life of its residents.

Some initiatives are already in place. Blackpool Transport continues to develop the social mobility agenda across the Fylde Coast, with emerging partnerships such as that with Blackpool Victoria Hospital. To support both the health priorities of the Fylde Coast and preventative treatment, this scheme encourages (and makes it easier for) vulnerable residents to access healthcare by using subsidised and efficient services, with support from Blackpool Council.

Whilst great progress has been made, there is still more needed to enhance the connectivity of the Fylde Coast to the rest of the UK. Funding from central Government is vital to support rail schemes over the next decade that will decarbonise transport, improve social mobility and promote inward investment.

## Rail

The Fylde Coast is a peninsula which is reliant on major road and rail links running eastwards. Whilst Blackpool has benefited from the £255M electrification of the main line to Manchester, there remain weak rail links to the south (a single-track railway) and the north (the former Fleetwood/Poulton line) of the Fylde Coast.

A Strategic Outline Business Case for a Preston to Fleetwood tram-train (that reopens the Poulton to Fleetwood railway) has been produced by Lancashire County Council and passed to the DfT for consideration within the Government's 'Restoring Your Railway' programme. This has examined the case to re-open the 5-mile line which was closed to passenger traffic in 1970 and freight in 1999. This scheme has the partnership backing of DfT, Blackpool Council, Blackpool Transport, Fleetwood Town Council, Network Rail, Poulton & Wyre Railway Society, and Wyre Borough Council.



The key output of this scheme is to improve rail transport connectivity and accessibility from Fleetwood for people who want to access work, healthcare and leisure facilities locally, and to the major economic centres of Preston, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and beyond. It will provide sustainable travel choices, help to decarbonise the transport system and improve the local environment, whilst reducing congestion on local roads and improving the Fylde economy and value as a place to live.

On the South Fylde line, investigation continues into a passing loop to improve the heavy rail service between Preston, Lytham, St Annes and the key tourism market around Blackpool Pleasure Beach. This would double the number of trains able to use the line, with a half hourly service that creates better access for commuters, students and tourists.

Improvements in the service on this line would reduce car usage and therefore congestion and parking pressures, whilst having a positive impact on employment, education, tourism and commercial development opportunities – as well as improving people’s health, the environment and local communities.

Further potential links to the Blackpool Tramway have also been identified as later phases of potential work, which would enable the full realisation of a Fylde Loop.

## Trams

In April 2012, a £100M investment into the tramway saw new trams take to the rails, giving Blackpool a state-of-the-art Light Rail system. Since then, the tramway has continued to develop, with more tram

stops included, a contactless payment system, and free Wi-Fi on all trams.

Further transport enhancements include a £23M extension of the Blackpool tramway that meets the railway at Blackpool North through an underpass connection to the tram terminus, along with an improved bus interchange. Northern’s partnership with Blackpool Transport allows visitors to purchase a ‘through ticket’ that covers their bus and tram journeys in the town.



# TRANSPORT

## Buses

As part of the ambition to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the introduction of a fully electric bus fleet and green technology will be a reality by 2027, part funded by Blackpool Council and the Government's ZEBRA Fund.

The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) outlines ambitions to make buses more attractive by improving frequencies, improving infrastructure or making them more affordable. Blackpool Transport attracted £355,000 across Blackpool and Lancashire for frequency improvements to enhance connectivity by combining routes that enable end-to-end journeys without changing bus.

BSIP3 aims to take these enhancements further by providing another round of funding. Blackpool Transport has put forward proposals for an all-day service, frequency enhancement to two services, and provision of an evening service.

## Infrastructure

Levelling Up Funding will enable a Town Centre Access scheme that improves the transport interchange, ensures electric bus preparedness, reduces traffic congestion in the town centre, and improves infrastructure for walking and cycling. Opportunities for a permanent park and ride site with charging for electric vehicles is also being explored.

The enabling phase of the £300M Blackpool Central scheme has seen the completion of a 1,300 space car park to replace the equivalent number of surface-level spaces required by the development.

## Roads

Blackpool and the Fylde Coast are connected to the M6 motorway network by the M55, which provides excellent links in and out of the peninsula. Two large road schemes are nearing completion that will improve connectivity from the M55 motorway to the towns on the Fylde Coast, that will reduce congestion, improve safety and reduce the impact of traffic on their local communities.

In the north, the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone will benefit from a £162M scheme to upgrade 5km of the A585 linking Fleetwood to the M55. In the south, the upgraded £27M Heyhouses Link Road between Lytham St Annes and the M55 will provide better links to the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and Whitehills business park.

Also underway is the new access road into the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, that will provide greater connectivity to the Enterprise Zone.

## Aviation

Blackpool Airport is an important hub for aviation and employment for the Fylde Coast, providing a gateway to the North West's business and leisure destinations.

The airport hosts both based and visiting customers including offshore gas support operations, corporate aircraft operations and handling facilities, helicopter maintenance repair and overhaul, charter flights, fixed wing and rotary flight training, military aircraft, medevac operations, the Spitfire Museum and the annual Blackpool Air Show.

Blackpool Airport was the 20th busiest airport in the UK in 2022, according to official aircraft movement figures recently released by the Civil Aviation Authority. The airport is currently on track to handle 39,000 movements in FY '23/'24.

The business is currently undergoing a period of significant, transformational change. Planning applications have been submitted for development of "Airport East" to incorporate new general aviation and MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) hangars, a new Air Traffic Control and Fire Station facility as well as a new fuel farm.

Further development is planned around new corporate aircraft hangars and FBO (fixed-base operator) facility once the physical development of Airport East has commenced. These developments will support the Ten-Year Plan targeting expansion of the corporate aircraft operations, bringing MRO companies and aviation support organisations to the airport, and the likely return of regional scheduled passenger services.

## VISION

To deliver a sustainable transport network for the Fylde Coast.



## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- DfT to support and fund £128M for the Poulton to Fleetwood Tram Train from the Restoring your Railway Fund
- DfT to invest in a passing loop on the South Fylde line to double rail frequency for commuters and students
- £13M to fund four new trams for the whole of the network, along with digital signage and information for Bus and Tram stops that links to the Transport and Resort App. This will improve service to the Tram Interchange and overall frequency of the Tram Network, reducing CO2 and road traffic, whilst increasing passenger confidence and patronage
- A more streamlined, efficient Public Service Obligations (PSO) applications process with greater emphasis on inter-regional routes in and out of Blackpool Airport
- Subsidised travel schemes to help people get to work who have been on targeted programmes to employment, so transport is not a barrier for them beginning work

# CULTURE

Blackpool's cultural offer, ambition, and achievements far outweigh its size as a town. We are an Arts Council England (ACE) Priority Place and one of the Levelling Up for Culture Places designated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The town has struggled in the past to attract national investment to grow its cultural infrastructure due to a lack of critical mass, the entrepreneurial spirit limiting collaboration, and tourism driving the local economy. Over the past decade this has started to change. Evidenced by an award-winning Creative, People and Places programme (LeftCoast), two established ACE National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) delivering ground breaking projects with their communities – the Grand Theatre and Grundy Art Gallery; and a growth in grass-roots creative organisations like House of Wingz (dance), the Old Electric Project (producing performance space), and Aunty Social (community arts). In the last ACE NPO round, Blackpool Illuminations with the Lightpool Festival became the first light art sector NPO in the country.

On the high street, Abingdon Studios provides production space for visual artists and hosts international artists' residencies. The Grundy, in collaboration with Abingdon, has recently brought

the Bloomberg New Contemporaries exhibition to Blackpool for the first time. HIVE café hosts HIVE Arts presenting work by local creatives.

Blackpool's first Cultural Strategy has been written and co-produced by cultural organisations and independent artists in the town, who have come together to form the Cultural Strategy Steering Group. Its vision is that by 2030, Blackpool will be the UK's Coastal Capital of Creativity. Its vibrant communities and rich cultural heritage are at the heart of a culture that shines brightly towards a sustainable future, attracting diverse visitors and creatives and producing world-class art.

The 4 key priorities that will deliver this vision are: developing cultural leadership in the town; developing the cultural sector (creative education, careers, skills and professional development); nurturing creativity in communities (health and well-being); and growing culture's role in regeneration and the visitor economy.



Showtown, Blackpool's new museum, features Britain's first permanent displays of circus, music, variety and ballroom dance, utilising Blackpool's internationally significant collections and loans from national partners and individuals. Located on Blackpool's Golden Mile, it will attract 296,000 visits annually, deliver 39 FTE jobs and provide £14.65M of regional economic benefit.

Further capital investment is needed. The Blackpool Culture Hub is an exciting vision to extend the Grundy Art Gallery and refurbish the current Central Library - where the Showtown History Centre will be based - to create a hub of historic and contemporary arts and cultural engagement. This thriving cultural hub will enable residents and visitors to take part in, learn and engage with the best culture of the day, whilst acting as the catalyst to regenerate Claremont.





The Grand Theatre requires capital development to sustain and safeguard the beautiful Frank Matcham designed theatre, transform the experience for visitors, and support The Grand's award-winning work transforming life opportunities for children and young people.

Heritage trams present a historic presence on Blackpool's seafront enjoyed by residents and visitors alike since 1885. Heritage Tram Tours play a significant role in the tourism offer including the iconic illuminated feature cars that run during the Illuminations. £10M capital investment is required to restore and operate the iconic Blackpool trams in perpetuity by realising plans to re-develop and repurpose the historic 1935 tram shed into a dynamic heritage visitor attraction 'Tramtown'.

Blackpool's new Cultural Strategy will be launched in Spring 2024, with new events launched including a major Dance Festival celebrating all forms of dance from street to ballroom.

Blackpool's cultural development is not merely an investment in the arts, but a strategic move to shape the town's future.

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- £10M from DCMS for the Blackpool Culture Hub to create a centre of historic and contemporary art and cultural engagement, community development activities, and displays of world-class art
- Ensure Blackpool continues as an Arts Council England Priority Place until 2030 to support delivery of the Cultural Strategy

- Support a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver Tramtown. £10M will redevelop and repurpose the historic 1935 tram shed to preserve the nationally significant archive collection of iconic Blackpool Heritage trams in perpetuity
- Increase the number of Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations in the town from 3 to 6 by 2030
- Support a £15M capital bid from Blackpool's Grand Theatre to conserve and future-proof the nationally significant Grade II\* listed building, allowing it to add additional revenue streams, increase employment, and expand The Grand's award-winning work to improve wellbeing and aspirations of children and young people



# ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION

## THE WIDER ECONOMY

Blackpool occupies a unique place in the hearts and minds of the British people. With a magnificent seafront, the biggest portfolio of visitor attractions outside of London, and a hugely impressive programme of shows and events, it retains its place as the UK's most popular seaside resort, with over 20 million visits and a tourist economy of £1.7BN.

Blackpool's £2BN transformational Growth and Prosperity Programme continues to create economic stimulus, encouraging and attracting the greatest private sector investment in the town for more than a century. It is committed to continually improving Blackpool's economy, and especially the quality of life for local people.

This programme acts strategically across the Fylde Coast, working with the adjacent local authorities through the Economic Prosperity Board. Whilst dealing primarily with the needs and opportunities in Blackpool, this work creates a halo effect of benefit for the wider Fylde Coast.

The Growth and Prosperity Programme has three strategic objectives each of which has a major regeneration project as a focal point combined with other investments:

1. Town Centre Regeneration (Talbot Gateway Central Business District)
2. Extending the Tourism Season (Blackpool Central)
3. Creating Jobs in the Growth Sectors (Enterprise Zones)

Over £800M has already been invested in the past decade to regenerate Blackpool and this transformational plan continues apace, with more exciting developments under way. Blackpool's economic renaissance has been turbocharged through its Levelling Up Partnership with central Government which has been a key strategic relationship for the renewal agenda.

Since 2020, Blackpool has benefited from circa £140M in Levelling Up Funding, supporting strategic schemes across the town such as the Multiversity, Blackpool Central Courts relocation, Post Office conversion and a Town Centre Traffic Scheme, as well as additional schemes through Town Deal and Shared Prosperity Fund. This follows around £40M of Growth Deal and Coastal Communities Funding, supporting projects already delivered.

The Government's Getting Building Fund was used for two projects in the town: the revitalisation of Abingdon Street Market; and an extension of The Houndshell Shopping Centre for The Backlot Cinema and Diner, a 9 screen cinema, with one of the largest IMAX screens in the country, gaming and conferencing capabilities, and a food and beverage offer.

Plans to reinvigorate Blackpool as the leading retail and office destination on the Fylde Coast began with Blackpool Council bringing 1,000 office workers into the centre of the town. This has borne fruit, bringing a noticeable difference to the year-round viability of restaurants, shops and attractions in the town centre, attracting private sector jobs and other investments.

Office accommodation continues to be built in the Talbot Gateway Central Business District, with a £100M regional Civil Service Hub to be completed in 2024, which will relocate over 3,000 civil servants providing additional economic stimulus to the Town Centre.



Artist's impression: Backlot Cinema



Photo: The Winter Gardens Conference & Exhibition Centre

Also in Talbot Gateway is the £23M transport enhancement connecting the Blackpool tramway with the railway at Blackpool North. A 4-star Holiday Inn hotel and Marco's New York Italian Restaurant complement the 'look and feel' improvements to this "Talbot Gateway" with an underpass connection from Blackpool North railway station to the tram terminus and an improved bus interchange.

The Winter Gardens Conference & Exhibition Centre boasts world class facilities that continue to deliver exceptional events and is now capable of hosting up to 7,000 delegates. From its inaugural event, the 2022 Tory Party Spring Conference, to the most recent European Esports Tournament in November 2023 - EuropaHalo has now put Blackpool on the map as a credible Esports destination.

Increasing innovation will enhance productivity across the economy, and in turn bring jobs, growth and prosperity to all parts of the UK, including

Blackpool. That is why we are developing a Tech/Innovation Hub in the town to use the UK's Innovation Strategy to make the UK a global hub for innovation by 2035.

Over the last decade, Blackpool has begun to turn the tide of declining business start-up rates, low growth rates and a lack of significant direct foreign investment, and has fuelled the engine of non-tourism related job creation that was needed. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone is now established as a premier business location, attracting 100 new and existing growth-orientated companies, and delivering over 2,500 new jobs in the process, attracting over £50M of private sector investment thus far. As this enterprise continues to expand, it is predicted that jobs will be in excess of 5,000 by 2040. Blackpool also works closely with Wyre in the delivery of the complementary Hillhouse Enterprise Zone which has the potential to bring 1,500 more high skilled jobs to the Fylde coast

in manufacturing and chemicals processing and energy generation.

The Town-wide social value strategy is well established and supports the local economy. It provides community benefit by supporting Blackpool's environmental ambitions, improving health and wellbeing and helping those most distant from the world of work, and strengthening the local voluntary and community sector. The town's Growth and Prosperity programme provides excellent opportunities to deliver social value, evidenced by the Regional Civil Service Hub development partner Muse and main Contractor Vinci, alongside local training provider Skills Construction Centre, who are working with NEETs as part of a live training academy. The young people have completed a range of qualifications including bricklaying, plastering and project management, with seven of them now in full time employment. A second cohort is being funded by Muse and Vinci.

# ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION

## TOURISM

New businesses cite brand recognition, the catchment area, and cost competitiveness as strengths and the team at Blackpool Council provides support and advice to businesses looking to invest in the town, including a £200M Business Loans Fund that is used to support major schemes delivering investment and jobs. The loans fund has already created or safeguarded over 1,500 jobs and has helped to establish 4 new branded hotels much needed to support the aspiring Business Tourism economy. The total investment of over £300M has been crucial to beginning to change the town's fortunes.

This work is showing signs of bearing fruit. Blackpool had one of the top 15 fastest falling unemployment rates in 2023, falling faster than the regional and national averages, while the number of businesses operating in Blackpool grew by 7% in the same time period, compared to a fall both nationally and regionally.

Blackpool's brand is instantly recognisable for tourism, its primary industry. The loyalty of the Northern and Scottish visitors to Blackpool is extraordinary but the deprivation and social issues that sit uncomfortably alongside the visitor economy hinder attempts to attract new business investment. This underinvestment for decades prior to 2010 resulted in a decline in visitor numbers year-on-year.

Tourism also declined because of competition from overseas package holidays in the late 20th century but in recent years, the town has seen a revival with visitor numbers now up to record levels of around 20 million. However, these visitors are less likely to stay overnight and their average spend is low. The recent increase in visitor numbers has seen an upturn in the number of overnight stays, supported by the construction of new quality 3-star and 4-star hotels, with over 1,000 bed places providing top quality accommodation choices for business and leisure visitors.

Blackpool's Christmas By The Sea village devised by the Council's tourism arm, VisitBlackpool, has created a two-month extension to the season, and is delivering record numbers of visitors recorded each year on the promenade.

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**20.3 million visits per year, with an economic impact of £1.75BN, supporting 22,234 jobs.**

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Merlin Entertainments plays a key role in Blackpool, operating the largest cluster of Merlin attractions globally and the only UK Madame Tussauds outside London. They have a clear vision to increase the number of businesses they operate in the resort, driving up the demand for overnight accommodation, further enhancing the appeal of the UK's most popular seaside town with the use of world-famous IP's combined with world class guest experiences.

Merlin Entertainments, together with Blackpool Council and VisitBlackpool, continue their Destination Marketing Campaign, which positions Blackpool at the top of the agenda for families holidaying in the UK. Now in its tenth year, the campaign continues to raise awareness, change perceptions and reminds the British public of the exceptional attractions and amazing experiences to be enjoyed in the UK's favourite Resort.





Photo: The Gruffalo and Friends Club House



Photo: Lollies In Love With Light, by Dr Chila Kumari Singh Burman MBE

The introduction of two globally recognised children's IP Brands on the Golden Mile has been game changing for Blackpool's ability to appeal to the younger family market. Peter Rabbit Explore & Play was launched in 2022, followed by The Gruffalo and Friends Clubhouse in Spring 2023. This attraction is open year-round and supports the overall ambition for Blackpool to be a 52 week visitor destination.

One of the most famous attractions is Blackpool Pleasure Beach, which is the UK's most iconic theme park and home to the legendary Big One and Icon. It was recently voted the best theme park in the UK in new global awards and its Boulevard Hotel was also voted Best Luxury Hotel in Europe by the World Luxury Hotel Awards.

A 'Resort App' is planned, linking Blackpool's wide-ranging offer of attractions to facilitate the best visitor experience.

Heritage Tram Tours play a significant role in the tourism offer and generate a substantial enhancement to the annual illuminations display through the use of the iconic illuminated feature cars.

Plans are underway to retain, restore and operate the iconic Blackpool trams in perpetuity, with capital investment needed to re-develop and repurpose the historic 1935 tram shed into a dynamic heritage visitor attraction called 'Tramtown'.

Blackpool is supported by a Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID), which seeks to improve the quality, maintenance of the public realm, and perceived safety in the town centre and helps to

implement the Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan in a variety of projects including wayfinding, illumination, streetscape and public realm enhancements. A complementary Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) has been created for promenade properties and other tourist attractions to further enhance the tourism offering.

An integrated strategic plan for the marketing and delivery of events has been developed, using £1M of investment over 5 years. Now in its third year, the TBID has become a key funding partner for the Destination Marketing Campaign. It has delivered two large scale events and supported the Christmas by the Sea event, each one creating new reasons to visit the town, driving incremental volume to Blackpool and gaining market share.

# ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION

## INITIATIVES UNDERWAY

- The enabling phase of the new £300M Blackpool Central development is almost complete, which includes a 1,300 space car park to replace the equivalent number of surface-level spaces required by the development. Ultimately, the whole scheme will create 1,000 new jobs and will add £75M pa to the visitor economy. With its private sector partner, the plan is to further diversify Blackpool's tourism economy with year-round leisure and world class attractions including Flying Theatre, various immersive experiences, hotel accommodation and food and beverage
- £40M Levelling Up and a £7M investment of Town Deal Fund monies will assist with the relocation of the Courts' service and the demolition of the existing building to enable the later phases of the Blackpool Central development to proceed. New Law Courts will be relocated across the town that will provide 10 new courts as well as judicial chambers, custody facilities and public waiting facilities
- Blackpool's £65M Multiversity has benefitted from Levelling Up and Town Deal Funding to pave the way for a state of the art education campus within the Talbot Gateway. The Multiversity will offer more than 70 individual courses, enhancing its existing higher education provision which is directly linked to local employment needs, and will bring up to 3,000 students into the town centre, adding further vitality and diversity to the town
- £6.5M of Town Deal Funding will see the Revue Community Sports Village and Blackpool FC East Stand development, regenerating a rundown area of South Shore with community facilities and improved public realm to attract private sector investment
- Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone has received £7.5M Town Deal Funding for investment in a new highway to open up 10.5 hectares of employment land. This is part of the wider c£80M development of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone to create opportunities for new investment and jobs and build on the existing successes including the Growth Deal funded Lancashire Energy HQ Training Centre and Multi-Ply headquarters
- The Edge business incubation centre has benefitted from Town Deal and Shared Prosperity funding and work is under way to renovate the heritage building into 44 serviced offices and co-working spaces for small businesses
- Low-cost office facilities are available at Blackpool Council's Enterprise Centre, and FYCreatives in the town centre, with some privately-owned office/industrial workspaces on the business park. Secured debt finance for growth-oriented companies is available through the Council's £200M Business Loans Fund which facilitates economic growth and regeneration. It has been instrumental in supporting many key hotel, transport and housing renewal investments
- Through the Blackpool Pride of Place, national and local ambassadors from the town have been recruited under the 'Born and Bred' campaign to actively promote the reputation of the town





## PLANNED INITIATIVES

- Creation of a Tech/Innovation Hub that will play a critical role in the regeneration of the town, using the concept of 'Silicon Sands' to transform Blackpool, drive economic growth, attract new businesses, and increase living standards
- Further office development to expand the Regional Civil Service Hub and the development of Multistorey Car Park to support the Hub
- Post Office – conversion of this listed building to an Indigo-branded Hotel and Apart-Hotel in the heart of the Town Centre a private sector led £26M development with £8M of a Capital Regeneration Funding grant to support a viability gap
- It is recognised that social enterprise is a model for better and more sustainable business in Blackpool. It will grow social enterprises by embedding them in the supply chains of public and private organisations, by measuring the impact of social value in procurement. Blackpool will become a beacon of social enterprise, brought about by robust cross sector working and by a bid for Social Enterprise Place status
- Blackpool will play its part in the industrial strategy grand challenge of 'clean growth' as part of the North West's energy coast, working up proposals for an innovation zone with Lancaster University connected to Big Data and new energy technologies

## ASKS OF GOVERNMENT

- A £20M annual allocation of capital and revenue regeneration funding from DLUHC, for Blackpool's Growth & Prosperity Programme to continue the momentum and also enable the deprived areas of inner Blackpool surrounding the Town centre (including Claremont, South Shore and Revoe) to attract investment and fulfil their potential
- Support with funding the Council, and local businesses and communities, to apply the lessons learned from the High Street Accelerator pilot to other areas of the town, such as Bond Street and Waterloo Road area
- Cabinet Office to consider further relocations to the Civil Service Hub in Blackpool Town centre as part of the Government's Places for Growth Programme
- See also related asks in Digital and Sustainability chapters regarding AI, Silicon Sands and District Heat Network Town

# GLOSSARY

**@TheGrange:** A community hub serving the Grange Park area of Blackpool

**B&FC:** Blackpool & The Fylde College, a further and higher education institution in Blackpool

**BCH:** Blackpool Coastal Housing, a provider of social housing in Blackpool

**BEIB:** Blackpool Education Improvement Board, dedicated to enhancing outcomes for children, particularly in Blackpool's secondary schools

**Blackpool Housing Company:** Owned by Blackpool Council, it refurbishes flats and offers tailored services to support tenants in setting up and maintaining their tenancies

**Born and Bred Network:** A network of alumni from Blackpool and the Fylde Coast, influencing nationally and driving local activities

**BSIP:** Bus Service Improvement Plan, aimed at enhancing bus services by improving frequencies, infrastructure, or affordability

**CAZ's:** Charitable Action Zones - a concept taken from Onward UK's recent 'Giving Back Better' report - donations are directed toward high-need areas, with matching funds provided by the government

**CGF:** Cyber Girls First, a charity that boosts girls' involvement in STEM, especially in computer science, maths and physics

**COPD:** Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

**DHS:** Decent Homes Standard, a legal standard regulating housing provided by the social housing sector

**EET:** A young person who is in Education, Employment, and Training

**Lancashire Energy HQ:** Part of Blackpool and The Fylde College, a state-of-the-art energy and engineering training centre supporting the growth of STEM businesses

**Enterprise Zone:** Blackpool Airport EZ, a 144-hectare site encompassing the existing airport and surrounding commercial areas; Hillhouse International EZ, a former chemical production facility located on the Fylde Coast

**HLE:** Healthy Life Expectancy

**HMO's:** Houses of Multiple Occupation, often former bed and breakfasts housing individuals on housing benefit

**Horizon:** A support service offering information, health screening, treatment, and counselling

**IP:** Intellectual Property, encompasses creations of the mind, such as inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, granted legal protection through patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets

**MBH:** My Blackpool Home is committed to creating high quality rental homes in sustainable neighbourhoods, providing a choice of affordable properties in all areas of Blackpool

**NEETs:** A young person who is Not in Employment, Education, or Training

**Blackpool Pride of Place Partnership:** A group comprising individuals from business, voluntary, and public sectors, collaborating to promote economic development and address area challenges

**Responsible Business Network:** Local businesses committed to making tangible interventions in the community, schools, and workforce development, including apprenticeships

**Selective Licensing:** A scheme seeking to enhance the management and condition of rented properties

**SEND:** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

**SEMH:** Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

**Silicon Sands:** A concept where Blackpool becomes a hub for Tech and Innovation that drives transformative change and supports the regeneration of the town.

**SME:** Small and medium-sized enterprises

**STEM:** Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

**The Platform:** A service aiding 16 to 24-year-olds in finding jobs and accessing training or education

**Town Deal:** Collaboration between towns across England and the government to develop innovative regeneration plans

**VCSE:** Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise

**Voice 21:** A transformative educational initiative dedicated to embedding high-quality oracy education into teaching practices and curricula, ensuring that all students, even those at risk of being overlooked, acquire essential communication skills for success in both school and beyond, contributing to a more equitable society where everyone learns the power of their voice

**ZEBRA scheme:** Funding to help Local Transport Authorities introduce zero-emission buses and the infrastructure needed to support them

## BLACKPOOL PRIDE OF PLACE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

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