



BLACKPOOL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP GROUP

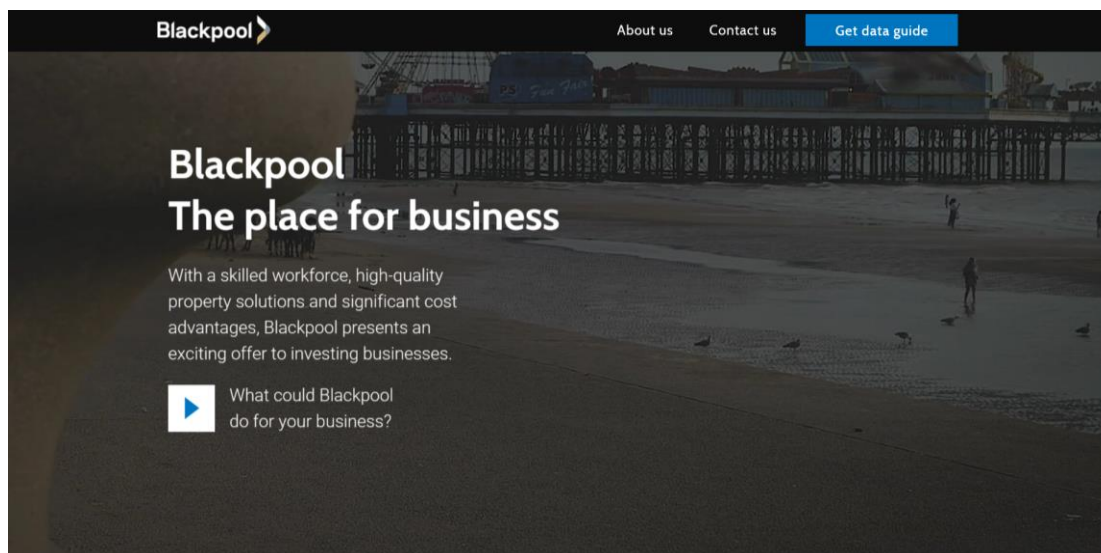
Business Partnerships Report – May 31, 2019

Section 1: Enterprise & Economic Development

BLACKPOOL: THE PLACE FOR BUSINESS

A new marketing initiative has been launched which positions the Blackpool area as a leading location for business investment in the UK.

The launch of **Blackpool: The Place for Business** marked the beginning of a digital campaign that celebrates the town's business strengths and regeneration successes.



Backed by a newly-produced video and website (shown above), the project aims to leverage the online support of the local business community to put Blackpool on a global stage for business investment.

The launch, staged at Blackpool & The Fylde College's Lancashire Energy HQ, highlighted new data revealing significant strengths across industry sectors including aerospace and advanced engineering, energy, advanced materials technologies and food manufacturing.

The event showcased the hundreds of millions of pounds of regeneration projects that were either completed or underway and emphasised Blackpool's transformed town centre offer to service sector businesses.

It ended with a call to action, urging the business community to become advocates for the campaign, sharing messages and online content through platforms including LinkedIn and Twitter. To find out more, visit the campaign website at www.businessinblackpool.com

AIRPORT EZ: PLAN SUBMITTED



Plans for the first phase of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone – which include the creation of business and industrial units, a sports village and an eastern gateway access road – have been formally submitted.

The outline application is an early step to bringing forward the first three-year investment of £28.8m allocated for the redevelopment of the 356-acre site.

The proposals set out a blueprint to relocate the existing Common Edge Playing Field football pitches, including new facilities for AFC Blackpool so that land is unlocked for industrial development to create more jobs. Work is expected to be completed by 2023.

TECH HUB LAUNCH

A group of entrepreneurs either born or raised in Blackpool has launched a new tech hub to encourage growth and innovation in the town.

It has been created by Peter Hargreaves, who has over 30 years' experience in international business. He has returned to Blackpool where he plans to use his passion for incubating high-growth projects and building on their success to create a sustainable tech cluster.

The hub will be open to any company, entrepreneur or professional in the tech sector and will be supported by Blackpool Pride of Place, a cross-sector partnership working under the umbrella of Business In The Community with a vision to help regenerate Blackpool.

The group will be chaired by Blackpool-born Carrie Longton, who is best known for launching Mumsnet, the online parenting network used by 100 million people each month.

ARMS-LENGTH WASTE COMPANY

Blackpool Council has established a new arms-length company to carry out the resort's kerbside waste collections as well as exploring ways to reduce waste and improve recycling rates. ENVECO North West Environmental Services Ltd will take over the service, which was previously contracted to Veolia Environmental Services, from July 1. John Hawkin, currently Chief Operating Officer in the Council's Community & Environmental Services directorate, has been appointed as managing director of ENVECO.

Section 2: Visitor Economy

CASTLE BLACK-POOL

Blackpool was chosen as one of four locations in the UK to be given a Game Of Thrones takeover following the most anticipated finale in television history.

The show's promoters unveiled four signs based on the fictional locations featured in one of the most talked about shows ever produced.

Blackpool was renamed Castle Black-Pool with a specially-made sign placed next to the Comedy Carpet for several days, giving the show's fans the opportunity be pictured alongside it.

At the same time, Covent Garden in London was re-named Highgarden; Essex turned into Essos; and Doune Castle in Scotland became Winterfell.

The signs were created to mark the end of Season Eight of Game Of Thrones and the release of the digital download of the final series.



QUALITY BEACHES

Blackpool has secured Seaside Awards for all four of its beaches – but lost its Blue Flag by the narrowest of margins.

The latest awards announced by Keep Britain Tidy at a ceremony in Margate saw the Seaside Awards presented to 137 beaches including Blackpool North, South, Central and Bispham.

The organisation said there had been an increase in the overall number of awards, fuelled by what it called the “David Attenborough effect” with people surveyed admitting that TV documentaries had inspired them to clear beach litter.

Blackpool South, which was the only beach in the North West of England to hold a Blue Flag, missed out this year after water test results showed a slight drop and the status was changed from excellent to good.

ICON ONE YEAR ON

Blackpool Pleasure Beach is celebrating the first birthday of the £16m ICON rollercoaster.

To date, almost one million people have ridden on what is the UK's first double-launch rollercoaster, with speeds reaching up to 50mph.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY BLACKPOOL TOWER

The 125th birthday of The Blackpool Tower on May 14 was officially marked with an afternoon tea celebration for scores of people in the iconic Tower Ballroom.

The event included a full afternoon of entertainment with music from the world-famous Wurlitzer organ as well as circus performances and an hour of traditional ballroom dancing.

It was announced during the event that lifetime admission would be given to any child born at Blackpool Victoria Hospital on May 14, 2019 and that every child up to the age of 11 in the local area would be given the chance to take a free trip to the top of The Tower during the 125th anniversary year.

The birthday celebrations continued into the evening with a DJ set hosted in The Blackpool Tower Eye by Blackpool-born Radio 1 DJ, Danny Howard.

Meanwhile, a new themed entertainment and event suite is to open at The Blackpool Tower this summer. Work has already started on the new 750-capacity venue, which will be used for unique events and conferences.

Due to open in August, it replaces the long-standing children's adventure play area, Jungle Jim's.



To mark the 125th birthday, a 1960s vintage railway locomotive has been re-named as Blackpool Tower.

Direct Rail Services purchased the Class 37 locomotive, which used to run excursions into the resort, and restored it to full operating condition. The re-naming ceremony took place at Blackpool North Station.

A display plate will also be placed in The Blackpool Tower building.

GRAND APPEAL REACHES HALFWAY

The theatre launched the second half of its 125th anniversary year celebrations along with the summer/autumn/winter programme.

It was revealed at the event that the £125k fund-raising appeal to repair the iconic copper dome had already raised £68k.

The highlights of the new programme is Around The World In 80s Days, the first summer show commissioned and produced by the theatre.

The comedy musical is inspired by the Jules Verne novel and combined with some of the greatest chart hits from the 1980s.

The show will be previewed from July 31 to August 3, before opening for a summer season on August 7.



BLACKPOOL HAS IT ALL

The destination marketing campaign for 2019 is now underway with TV, PR and digital activity running between now and September.

The updated TV ad, which can be viewed here <https://youtu.be/hVsm9g58daU> will run in Scotland from June and the north of England in July and August.

As in previous years, the campaign is a collaboration between VisitBlackpool, Merlin, Pleasure Beach, Winter Gardens, Blackpool Transport and Sandcastle Waterpark, with further contributions from other resort partners.

RIBBY EXPANSION

Ribby Hall is expanding its portfolio with the purchase of a former farm property on the western boundary of the existing 100-acre holiday village at Wrea Green. Set within its own grounds The Farm House will sleep up to 12 people. It will offer luxury accommodation including a farmhouse kitchen with Aga, a cinema room and summerhouse.

ZOO DEVELOPMENT

Blackpool Zoo is preparing to welcome some of the world's most endangered birds in three new developments this summer.

The Silent Aviaries will be dedicated to songbirds whose plight is highlighted in an international Silent Forests fundraising and awareness campaign. Two of the world's most endangered birds, the Bali Myna and the Blue-crowned Laughingthrush will take up residence alongside other vulnerable species.

The zoo is also working on Rainbow Landings, a new interactive experiential walk-through attraction that will allow visitors to get close to its Rainbow Lorikeet birds and the re-imagining of the existing Amazonia attraction into an international aviary, called World Of Wings.

HOTEL UPDATES

TRAVELODGE SALE

The 124-bedroom Travelodge opposite Blackpool Football Club has been put on the market with a price tag of just less than £10m.

The hotel's listing on the open market follows a 2017 High Court ruling, which decreed that the owner – Blackpool Football Club (Properties) Ltd – must divest assets in order to settle a £25m debt to ex-director Valeri Belokon. Travelodge has another 14 years remaining on the lease.

EASY HOTEL

EasyHotel has completed its acquisition of a site on Blackpool Promenade.

The company announced last autumn that it had conditionally acquired a 999-year lease on a plot it hoped to develop into a budget hotel close to South Pier.

Planning permission for a 104-bedroom hotel has been granted and works are due to commence over the summer. It will also include restaurants or cafes on the ground floor. It is set to open in the second half of 2020.

The net cost of acquisition and construction will be more than £7m.

BOULEVARD

The finishing touches are being put to Blackpool's newest hotel, The Boulevard at Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

The stylish new hotel has 120 rooms, including 18 suites, suites and family rooms with a mixture of coastal and park-facing rooms.

Situated on Ocean Boulevard, it also incorporates the Shoreside Conference Centre and a new 90-cover signature restaurant, The Beachside, which will be open to residents and guests.

The hotel, which will open for business with a soft launch in June, is the latest in a series of "next generation" hotels to open in the resort. Both the Sands Venue Resort Hotel and the new Premier Inn in Talbot Square are under construction and expected to open next year.



WINTER GARDENS HOTEL

The site of a proposed hotel opposite the new Winter Gardens conference centre has come to market. The freehold site has outline planning permission for a five-storey building comprising 203 rooms with a gym, spa, restaurant and café facilities. It would also include a car park on the lower ground floor and a second floor link to the conference centre. Savills are marketing the site.

Section 3: Shows & Entertainment

BUSTED LINED UP FOR SWITCH-ON

One of the UK's best-loved pop bands is heading to Blackpool for this year's Illuminations Switch-On concert.

Brit Award-winners Busted will be joined by the multi-talented singer-songwriter Nina Nesbitt, and Sigma, the British drum and bass DJ and record production duo who have twice topped the UK singles charts.

Britain's top dance group, Diversity, and Club MTV DJs R3wire & Varski will also join the line-up at Blackpool's Tower Festival Headland on Friday 30 August.



Formed in 2000, Busted were one of the biggest pop success stories of a generation. They have since sold more than five million records and have just completed a huge arena tour.

The Friday night celebration will start with a "Blackpool Introduces" showcase featuring the best of talent from across the Fylde Coast, prior to the start of the main show, the Switch-On itself, and then an hour-long party under the Lights.

As last year, the Switch-On event will be free for the lucky winners of the 20,000 tickets that will give entry to the Tower Festival Headland arena. Allocation is restricted to four tickets per household. The ballot closes at midday on Monday 29 July. To register, go to www.visitblackpool.com/switchon

VisitBlackpool has announced that the traditional free wristbands are being replaced this year with a secure e-ticketing system and revealed that there will once again be a limited number of guaranteed Golden Circle tickets available for the concert.

The introduction of the e-ticketing system in association with Lancashire-based company, Skiddle, will allow for instant, guaranteed ticket issuing, where people can either print their ticket or download it to the Skiddle app on their phone, preventing third-party selling sites from profiteering from the free balloted element of the event.

The Golden Circle will return to the Switch-On party for 2019 to give a limited number of people guaranteed entry. Tickets, priced at £10 per person, will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis and are available to purchase via www.skiddle.com/e/13540381. VIP packages will be announced in early June.

To view footage from the 2018 Blackpool Illuminations Switch-On click [here](#).

LIVEWIRE FESTIVAL

International singing star Ms Lauryn Hill is to headline this year's Livewire Festival.

She will perform on the Tower Festival Headland on Saturday 24 August.

Originally the lone female member of The Fugees, she went on to launch her solo career with the critically acclaimed album, *The Miseducation Of Lauryn Hill*, which earned a record-breaking five Grammy Awards.



The three-day festival will also feature a Comedy On The Carpet event, showcasing the best of British comedy, a performance of the children's show *Milkshake Live* and will end on Sunday 25 August with a Movies To Musicals night featuring the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and West End stars including Kerry Ellis and Ruthie Henshall.

For updates and ticket details go to www.livewirefestival.co.uk

BLACKPOOL PRIDE

Pride Blackpool has announced the full programme for its annual festival in June.

The celebrations start on Saturday 8 June with the biggest pride parade Blackpool has seen which will depart from South Pier at 11am. The procession will travel north along Blackpool Promenade until dispersing just past the Metropole Hotel.

The main arena this year will be on the Tower Festival Headland, with the Saturday show featuring entertainment Chesney Hawkes, 911, Sybil, CeCe Peniston, Sandi Thom, Urban Cookie Collective and the headline act, Claire Richards from Steps.

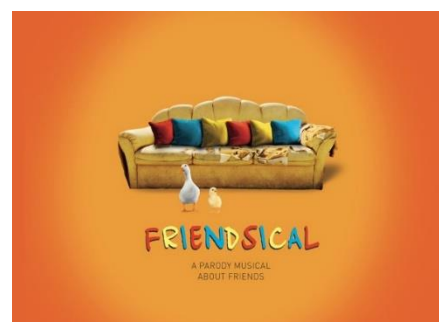
The following day the entertainment moves to Queen Street where there will be free entry on a first come, first served basis.

Tickets for the Saturday event and more details go to www.prideblackpool.co.uk

FRIENDS PARODY

A new show inspired by the iconic TV series, *Friends*, is heading to Blackpool.

Friendsical, a parody musical, will be staged at the Grand Theatre from September 23-28 as part of a UK tour.



ARMED FORCES WEEK

Blackpool will celebrate the work of the armed forces with a week-long programme of events.

This year's Armed Forces Week, which runs from June 24-30, will open with a flag-raising ceremony at Blackpool Town Hall.

It will be followed by numerous events at venues throughout the town including military concerts, dedication services, tea dances and a parade and service on the Promenade.

This year, the Armed Forces Day celebration on June 29 relocates to Stanley Park. In addition, the Music For Heroes concert on the evening of June 24 moves to the Grand Theatre.

For full details of the programme, go to <https://www.visitblackpool.com/things-to-do/events/armed-forces-week/>

FAM FESTIVAL

The Winter Gardens has revealed details of a new festival for autumn 2019, combining food, arts and music.

The FAM festival weekend on September 21 and 22 will feature celebrity chefs showcasing their talents during live cooking demonstrations along with a diverse range of food offerings from across the world.

The programme also includes "One Night of Queen" in the Empress Ballroom on the Saturday. A cast of over 800 local choir performers will combine with a live band and West End stars including Ben Forster to bring the festival to a spectacular climax the following day.

Visitors will also be able to try their hand at creating fine art with resident artists, as well as participating in graffiti-style art, craft making and digital design.

The festival is a co-production between the Winter Gardens and Famous Events, bringing together partners from across the resort including Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Blackpool & Fylde College and Twelve Event Management.

HORRIBLE CHRISTMAS

A festive version of the Horrible Histories series is heading to Blackpool's Winter Gardens this Christmas.

The special production of Horrible Christmas will be staged from December 13-29 at the Opera House.

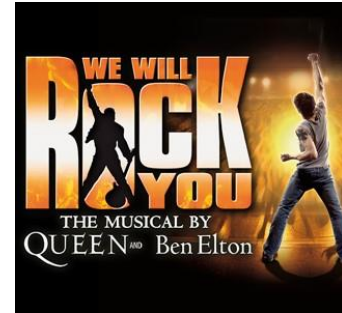


NEW FOR 2020

WE WILL ROCK YOU

The West End hit musical based on the music of Queen is to be staged at the Opera House from January 6-11 next year.

Since it was launched in 2002, We Will Rock You has been seen by more than 16m theatregoers in 19 countries. It features 24 of the group's greatest hits.



BILLIONAIRE BOY

A new production of David Walliams' best-selling children's book, Billionaire Boy, will be staged at the Opera House from March 11-15 next year.

Produced by the award-winning West End producers of Gangsta Granny, it tells the story of 12-year-old Joe Spud, the richest boy in the country in search of a friend.



SOME MOTHERS DO 'AVE 'EM

A stage version of the classic 1970s TV comedy show is lined up for Blackpool Grand Theatre from April 21-25, 2020. Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em was one of the most popular TV shows of a generation. The stage show features comedian Joe Pasquale as the accident-prone Frank Spencer.

Section 4: Town Centre Economy

TOWN CENTRE VACANCIES – MAY

The latest town centre vacancy report shows a net increase of five vacant units compared to February 2019, bringing the overall total up to 145 and increasing the vacancy rate from 21.9% to 22.8%.

The main reason for this worsening trend is due to the periphery town centre area, which has experienced a net increase of four vacant units over the three- month period.

The newly-vacant units include: Foot Asylum (Houndshill); Thornton's (Victoria Street); Blackpool Fashions (Church Street); Royal Bank of Scotland (Talbot Square); Foodface (Birley Street); Greenwoods (Abingdon Street); Nunzio's (Queen Street); MK Property Management, Paolo Hairdressers (Dickson Road); Left Move, Nour Lebanese Restaurant, John Anthoney (Topping Street); Seekers Emporium, Haberdashery and Wings Alterations (King Street).

Since February, a number of businesses have occupied previously vacant units. These include: Surfline (Bank Hey Street); Imbibe (Birley Street); John Anthoney, Paolo's (Clifton Street); Bubbles Den, Bistro Nunzio (Abingdon Street); Jim's Vinyls, Allsorts (Church Street); Fabrik, Urban Spice, Vape Boutique (Topping Street) and Funky Monkey (East Topping Street).

Nunzio's, John Anthoney and Paolo's Hairdressers have all relocated to alternative units within the town centre over the period.

Area	Total Units ¹	Total Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
Principal Retail Core (Local Plan boundary based around Houndshill, Victoria Street, Bank Hey Street, Church Street, Corporation Street and Adelaide Street West)	161	23	14.3%
Core Retail Area (as above but also including Topping Street, Queen Street, Clifton Street, Birley Street, Market Street, Talbot Road, Abingdon Street and Cedar Square)	460	95	20.7%
Town Centre Boundary – this relates to the Core Strategy found in the Local Plan but it excludes the Central Station site and Coral Island (as above but also including the Promenade, Springfield Road, Dickson Road, King Street, Cookson Street, Counce Street and the new Talbot Gateway area)	636	145	22.8%
Periphery Town Centre Area (the Town Centre Boundary area excluding the units contained within the Core Retail Area)	176	50	28.4%

¹ Excluding the properties to the south of the Palatine Buildings; development sites (old Yates's site, Tower Street site, 35 Cookson Street site); internal units within Blackpool North Station & Sainsbury's; community sites (e.g. churches, libraries, schools etc.) and civic sites (e.g. Town Hall).

TOYLAND RELOCATION

The Toyland store in Blackpool town centre has relocated from Birley Street to the former Morrison's convenience store on Church Street. The store was launched with a VIP preview event prior to its official opening.

Section 5: General News

IN MEMORY OF JANE

A statue has been unveiled at Stanley Park in memory of Blackpool resident, Jane Tweddle, who lost her life during the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017.

To mark the two-year anniversary Jane's family and friends held a private ceremony.

The stone statue is inscribed with the words "We love you to the moon and miss you beyond the stars."

Jane's daughters worked with Blackpool Council officers to design the memorial and agree its location in the memorial garden, which can be accessed via Cocker Walk between the Clock Tower and the Italian Gardens.



One of the bees that featured in the "Bee in the City" project in Manchester following the arena bombing has been bought at auction thanks to donations from local residents organised by Pastels Burger Bar in Cedar Square.

The family are currently decorating it and once finished it will be on display at the Solaris Centre on South Promenade.

RECORD FIGURES

Virgin Trains has revealed a record number of journeys taken on its Blackpool route one year after introducing electric Pendolino services.

Latest figures show that more than 150,000 journeys were made on the 36 Pendolino services a week that launched in May 2018, with 34% (51,000) made between Blackpool and London Euston.

The electric services, which launched following Network Rail's work to electrify the line between Blackpool and Preston, have also generated growth in local journeys in Lancashire – with 7,000 journeys between Preston and the resort over the last year.

The inter-city operator now operates eight direct services each weekday and five services on a Saturday between Blackpool and London. A direct service from Birmingham on Saturdays also offers the West Midlands a through service to Blackpool.

SEASIDE REINVENTION

Seaside towns have been neglected for too long and are in desperate need of reinvention, according to a Parliamentary report.

Young people in coastal communities are being "let down and left behind" by issues like transport, housing and post-16 education, the document said.

The House of Lords Select Committee on Regenerating Seaside Towns said it strongly supported the sort of "town deal" that was piloted in Grimsby and suggested a similar deal should be put forward for Blackpool.

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS/MAYORAL APPOINTMENT

Labour retained its control of Blackpool Council following the local elections held on May 2.

The new Cabinet structure is as follows:

Council Leader: Cllr Simon Blackburn

Deputy Leader (Place and Tourism): Cllr Gillian Campbell

Deputy Leader (Children): Cllr Graham Cain

Cabinet Members:

Adult Social Care & Health: Lynn Williams

Projects & Partnerships: Cllr Ivan Taylor

Housing & Welfare Reform: Cllr Neal Brookes

Business, Enterprise & Job Creation: Cllr Mark Smith

Environment, Transport & Climate Change: Cllr Fred Jackson

Community Cohesion & Leisure: Cllr Maria Kirkland

Schools, Education & Aspiration: Cllr Kath Benson

Cllr Amy Cross has been appointed as Mayor of Blackpool for 2019/20. In accepting the mayoralty, Cllr Cross chose Empowerment as her charity for the year ahead. Her consort is Jon Sillis and the Deputy Mayor is Cllr Jim Hobson.

WORLD OCEANS DAY EVENT

LOVEmyBEACH and Lancashire Wildlife Trust's marine team are organising a World Oceans Day event in Blackpool to raise awareness of the importance of the oceans and the Irish Sea.

The free event for adults and children will take place on the Waterloo Headland at South Beach between 10.30am and 3.30pm on Saturday 8 June. It will include games and activities, such as mini beach cleans, a sandcastle competition, eco-friendly face painting and a chance to meet a mermaid! For more information contact: Emily.parr@keepbritaintidy.org

Section 6: Requests for Private Sector Support

CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT

Further to the short presentation at the Blackpool Business Leadership Group meeting in March, Danny Dalton from Brightprint/Music & Mayhem has confirmed details of a quiz night to raise funds for the Blackpool Carers' Centre.

It will be staged in the Spanish Hall in the Winter Gardens on Friday 26 July.

Full details including contact number are on the poster printed here.

The poster is orange with white and black text. At the top, it says 'Music & MAYHEM presents' in a stylized font. Below that, 'BLACKPOOL'S BIGGEST QUIZ' is written in large, bold letters. To the right of 'BIGGEST QUIZ' is 'in aid of Blackpool Carers Centre'. Below this, it says 'FAMILY SMARTPHONE QUIZ plus PRIZE BINGO!!'. The date and location are 'Friday July 26th 2019 in The Spanish Hall, Winter Gardens'. It also mentions 'Doors open at 7pm', 'Minimum of 5 persons per team - £5 per person to register', and 'plus LIVE MUSIC from Singer/Songwriter REBECCA BAINES'. At the bottom, there are logos for 'WINTER GARDENS BLACKPOOL', 'Blackpool Carers Centre', and 'BrightPrint'. A call to action at the very bottom says 'Call 01253 393 748 for further details'.

INVITATION TO BUSINESSES



Businesses are invited to attend the launch of Lancashire's Living Seas, which takes place at the Fleetwood Sea Cadets HQ on the afternoon of Friday 7 June.

The event will give the business community an opportunity to learn more about the Living Seas project, which is funded by the Coastal Communities Fund and led by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust.

Working in partnership with Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool Councils, as well as local businesses and organisations, the project aims to boost tourism along the Fylde Coast through promoting access to and engagement with coastal wildlife.

The project seeks to increase the number of day visits to the coast through events, working with local communities, improving signage and interpretation, as well as involving local businesses in joint marketing opportunities.

Please contact Eleanor Falch, email: efalch@lancswt.org.uk to confirm your attendance.

Philip Welsh
Head of Tourism & Communications