



BLACKPOOL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP GROUP

Business Partnerships Report – March 29, 2019

Section 1: General News

BLACKPOOL MUSEUM MOVES STEP CLOSER



The planned new Blackpool Museum has moved a step closer to reality following the securing of £1.75m of support from the Coastal Communities Fund.

The award, announced by Coastal Communities Minister, Jake Berry, means that the £13m project now has five of six funding streams confirmed. The final one, a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, was submitted earlier this month and a decision is expected in June.

The museum, which will be a celebration of Blackpool's history as the birthplace of mass tourism and popular culture, is to be built within the resort's first five-star hotel, the Sands Venue Resort, which is currently under construction on the Golden Mile. Planning permission for the hotel was granted earlier this month.

It will feature artefacts, film, music and performance to tell the story of the resort's entertainment history and it is envisaged it will attract up to 300,000 visitors a year. Access to the museum will be free for local people and it will create around 40 full-time jobs.

Other North West projects to benefit from the latest round of CCF grants include £2.35m to create visitor attractions in Morecambe Bay and £772,000 for a scheme to link the coastal economies of Cleveleys and Fleetwood, including a refurbishment of Fleetwood market.

ROYAL DAY TRIP TO BLACKPOOL



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge took a stroll on Blackpool's famous promenade as part of a high-profile visit to the resort on March 6.

The Royal couple arrived at Blackpool Tower for a roundtable discussion where they were briefed about the town's history, its challenges, and the investment and regeneration efforts that are currently underway.

They then stepped out on to the seafront Comedy Carpet, the UK's biggest public outdoor artwork, for a 20-minute walkabout with crowds gathered outside.

The Duke and Duchess then visited a housing project off Lytham Road to learn how Blackpool Housing Company is converting derelict properties into good quality affordable family accommodation, before going to Blackpool Central Library to join two separate discussions.

The first focused on Blackpool's A Better Start programme which is aimed at early years' child development; the second gave the Duke and Duchess chance to meet people affected by problems of mental health, homelessness and addiction, as well as representatives from the emergency services and first responder community who help them.

For the final stop of the day, they visited Revoe Park, a recently revamped community garden and park that has been transformed thanks to investment from A Better Start.

ADULT LEARNING SERVICE PRAISED

Blackpool Council's adult and community learning service has been praised by Ofsted inspectors. Following an inspection in January the service was rated "good" with support provided by staff and tutors described as exceptional.

Each year, around 2,500 local residents benefit from courses provided by the service with topics ranging from IT and digital skills to maths and English to employability and cookery.

Inspectors identified that the vast majority of learners progress on to other courses and a quarter gain employment.

THE HOMECOMING

Blackpool Football Club fans returned to Bloomfield Road in their thousands after a boycott that has lasted almost four years.

The “homecoming”, which included a parade from The Blackpool Tower to the ground, took place on the day of the home game against Southend United and followed a High Court ruling that put the club into receivership and removed the owner Owen Oyston.



Note: A presentation will be made at the March 29 meeting of the BBLG on the future direction of the club.

BLACKPOOL TOWER WORKS

Construction work is underway on a new secure queuing area in front of The Blackpool Tower main entrance.

The development, which is part of a programme of safety enhancements across the resort, is likely to last until the end of April.

The work, which will see a number of bollards erected on the pavement outside The Tower, will be carried out in four phases, starting at the Dungeon end of the building and finishing on the stretch closest to Harry Ramsden restaurant.

Public access to the Tower side of the Promenade will be maintained throughout the project and there will be no disruption to the highway. Pavement works will be suspended over the Easter bank holiday weekend.

FURTHER RAIL DISRUPTION

Blackpool’s rail services are facing further disruption over the Easter and May bank holiday periods.

Network Rail has announced it will be carrying out essential maintenance work over both weekends and is warning bank holiday travellers that they face delays.

London’s Euston Station will be closed over the Easter weekend and the early May bank holiday weekend with no trains in or out of the main line station on those days.

A programme of works is also scheduled on parts of the West Coast line in Lancashire and Cumbria which will potentially impact on journeys to and from the north of the country.

Track foundation improvements and work to overhead electric lines will be carried out at Carnforth and Carlisle, which will disrupt journeys between Blackpool and Scotland. Bus replacement services will be in operation.

PROSPECT OF TOWN DEAL

The Government has announced a £1.6bn fund to boost less prosperous areas, enhancing the prospect that Blackpool will be able to secure a so-called “town deal”.

The Stronger Towns Fund will be used to create jobs, train local people and boost investment over the next six years with the majority of the fund expected to be allocated to areas in the north of England and Midlands. Around £1bn of the fund will be allocated using a needs-based formula with a further £600m for communities to bid for.

Towards the end of last year, Blackpool’s Pride Of Place partnership developed a town prospectus requesting that Government work with them to develop the economy and tackle deprivation.

The prospectus set out a series of asks of central Government including:

- ❖ Working with the resort to develop a new style of Housing Action Zone
- ❖ Ensuring the long-term retention and consolidation of civil service jobs in Blackpool
- ❖ Designating the Fylde Coast a tourism zone under the new industrial strategy
- ❖ Extending the deadline for business rate relief and enhanced capital allowances in the Enterprise Zones to 2030
- ❖ Extending the Opportunity Area programme to 2030
- ❖ Creating a task force to review and improve all mental health provision on the Fylde Coast

Note: In July this year, Baroness Jo Valentine will be handing over the role of leading Blackpool’s Pride of Place partnership to Paul Smith. Jo, who has led the partnership for two years, will continue to sit on the National Advisory Board. Paul recently retired as the global chair of the law firm, Eversheds Sutherland.

SECOND FRACKING SITE REFUSED

The Government has refused energy firm Cuadrilla permission to frack at a second site in Lancashire. An application for Roseacre Wood, near Kirkham, was previously declined by Lancashire County Council and was the subject of a public inquiry. The Communities Secretary ruled that highway safety issues had not been satisfactorily addressed and refused planning permission.

CONGRATULATIONS...

To Blackpool-based company Parkinson’s, which won the Construction Business Award at the Red Rose Awards held at the Winter Gardens.

FINE-FREE

Blackpool libraries are to become fine-free zones in a move aimed at attracting readers back to the resort’s eight facilities.

From April 1, 2019 Blackpool Council will no longer impose fines when items are late being returned or renewed. In addition, all historical fines will be deleted.

It is hoped that the move will increase usage and, in particular, help families and older people on low incomes to continue to enjoy using the library service which is free to join and use.

Section 2: Visitor Economy

2019 TOURISM SEASON TAKES OFF



Europe's premier civilian jet formation team is to make its debut at Blackpool Air Show this summer. The Breitling Jet Team will perform an extraordinary display of high-speed aerobatics on both days of the free weekend event, Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 August.

The French-based team, which has attracted huge audiences all over the world, comprises seven Albatros jets that will take part in a jaw-dropping display of formation flying over the Blackpool seafront. They will be joined over the weekend by some of the world's finest military and civilian aircraft including a Chinook and Typhoon.

The announcement was made at the official launch of Blackpool's tourism season at Blackpool Pleasure Beach when a programme of new shows, events and attractions was showcased to the 500-strong audience including:

- ❖ The opening of the new four-star Boulevard Hotel at Pleasure Beach in late Spring;
- ❖ New weekend festivals at the Winter Gardens including Jason Manford's Comedy Festival in May and the inaugural British Country Music Festival in September, which will be headlined by the UK's leading country artists, Ward Thomas;
- ❖ A year-long programme of events to celebrate the 125th birthday of The Blackpool Tower and the Grand Theatre;
- ❖ The return of Livewire Festival, a four-day programme of music and entertainment over the August Bank Holiday weekend;
- ❖ A new-look Pride Festival on the Tower Festival Headland and the inaugural Night Run, which will take place under the Illuminations on August 28;
- ❖ Investment of almost £1m in events, guides, infrastructure and training to make Blackpool one of the country's most accessible destinations for disabled people.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Blackpool's ambition to maintain its position as the UK's most popular seaside resort is set out in a new version of its destination management plan.

The second edition of Destination Blackpool showcases the huge strides that have been made over the past few years with hundreds of millions of pounds of public and private sector investment in new attractions, events and tourism infrastructure.

Since 2015, the resort has seen its visitor numbers grow from 17m to 18m per annum and the value of its overall visitor economy exceed £1.5bn for the first time.

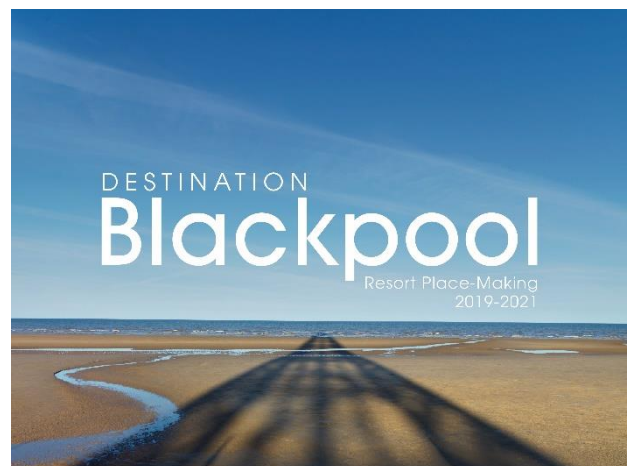
The updated version of the plan sets out the keynote projects over the next three years that will further cement Blackpool's place as the country's most visited resort, targeting new generations of leisure and business tourists. These projects include:

- ❖ The long-awaited development of the Blackpool Central site, a prime location in the heart of the resort that was once earmarked for a Vegas-style casino, but now destined to be the home of a unique collection of world-class attractions, including the UK's first "flying theatre";
- ❖ Completion of the new conference centre adjacent to the Winter Gardens, a development that will bring higher-spending visitors to the resort and play a key role in meeting the ambition for Blackpool to become a year-round destination;
- ❖ Construction of several next-generation quality hotels that will not only complement and enhance the existing offer for leisure visitors, but also form an important part of the jigsaw in winning new conference business;
- ❖ Much-improved transport infrastructure including a tramway extension from North Pier to Blackpool North Railway Station as part of the Talbot Gateway town centre regeneration scheme;
- ❖ Opening of a new Blackpool Museum on the historic Golden Mile which will celebrate the resort's unique place in popular culture as the birthplace of mass tourism and entertainment.

The plan, developed by Blackpool Council's tourism arm, VisitBlackpool, states: "The challenge is to gradually reposition the resort offer so that it evolves into a place that has a rich and unique mix of heritage and contemporary attractions; one that has undoubted appeal to an aspirational family audience and one that is well placed to take advantage of changes in domestic and international holiday trends."

Destination Blackpool can be viewed in full at this link:

https://issuu.com/visitblackpool/docs/bex_pdf_dmp?e=0



NEW 2019 EVENT GUIDE

A new pocket-sized event guide detailing the hundreds of shows and events taking place in Blackpool over the next nine months has been produced by VisitBlackpool.

The guide features month-by-month guide listings for a huge programme of events lined up at the resort's indoor and outdoor venues.

The cover celebrates the 125th birthday of The Blackpool Tower and The Grand Theatre.

The free guide will be distributed throughout the region with copies also available at the Tourist Information Centre on the Promenade.



HAMPTON BY HILTON

The Hampton By Hilton hotel which opened at South Beach less than a year ago, has been recognised by the Hilton Group as its fastest-growing new hotel in Europe over the past 12 months.

PIER TO PIER SWIM

A second Blackpool Pier To Pier Swim is to be staged on July 27, following a highly-successful launch event last year.

This year's event has been opened up to swimmers with some open-water swimming experience. Participants may swim with or without a wetsuit but must wear a safety swim float to ensure they are highly visible in the water.



Registration will take place at the Sandcastle Water Park before participants take a short tram ride to the starting point at North Pier.

The event has been organised by Dr Julie Bradshaw, a world-record marathon swimmer who started her swimming career in the sea in her hometown of Blackpool more than 40 years ago.

For more information or to register for the swim visit the website below and click on the Entry Central link to enter:

<http://www.getset4success.co.uk/blackpool-pier-to-pier-open-water-swim.html>

NEW WEDDING PORTAL

A new online portal has been launched to celebrate Blackpool's status as one of the UK's top destinations for couples getting married.

The resort has a range of unique licensed wedding venues including:

- ❖ The seafront Wedding Chapel, yards from the beach and with spectacular coastal views;
- ❖ Historic venues such as The Blackpool Tower, the Winter Gardens and Blackpool Pleasure Beach;
- ❖ Major hotels including the Imperial and the brand new Boulevard Hotel at Blackpool Pleasure Beach;
- ❖ Couples can even get hitched in the Blackpool Tower Dungeon or while you swimming with sharks in the SEA LIFE Centre!



Blackpool's wedding registrar team can also create bespoke ceremonies for couples where they can get married in a venue of their choice (including the beach) following a legal ceremony in a register office and then enjoy a ceremony tailored specifically to them.

The newly-launched website at visitblackpool.com/weddings, includes details of all licensed wedding locations, reception venues, honeymoon hotels and specialist local suppliers of photography, cakes, decorations and dresses.

SHAKESPEARE TRIPLE BILL

Blackpool's Grand Theatre has been chosen as only one of six UK venues to host a two-week run by the Royal Shakespeare Company.

For the first time, the company is touring three productions – As You Like It, The Taming Of The Shrew and Measure For Measure.

The repertory company will feature 27 actors, who will each appear in two of the three productions. The regional tour will start in Salford in September this year and end at Blackpool from March 25 to April 4 next year.

IT'S COLD INSIDE...

Blackpool's first ice bar is to open on Central Promenade in April.

The themed and fully-stocked bar area will be cooled to Arctic temperatures with admission by pre-purchased wristband.

A neighbouring "warm bar" will include restaurant, coffee shop, ice cream factory and licensed bar.

For more information, including details of how to buy tickets, go to www.icebarblackpool.co.uk



RETURN OF RESORT PASS

The Blackpool Resort Pass is back for 2019 giving visitors the opportunity to make big savings on their favourite attractions.

The Resort Pass and Pass Plus are handy, easy-to-use cards providing access to Blackpool's leading attractions.

The Original Resort Pass gives access to six attractions and costs £57.50, giving a saving of £47. The Pass Plus includes nine attractions and costs £85, a saving of £68.

Passes are valid for seven days and give users one visit to each attraction. Last year, more than 17,000 passes were sold.



ILLUMINATIONS SWITCH-ON

MTV will once again be helping to stage the Blackpool Illuminations Switch-On concert.

The free show will take place on Friday 30 August on the Tower Festival Headland. Details of the acts and Switch-On personality will be released in the coming weeks.

Last year's event attracted almost 20,000 people who enjoyed a star-studded line-up that included Ella Eyre, Jonas Blue, HRVY, Rae Morris, Diversity featuring DVJ and Club MTV DJs R3wire & Varski, culminating in the Switch-On by international music star Alfie Boe.

The Friday night celebration will once again start with a "Blackpool Introduces" showcase featuring the best of local talent. That will be followed by the main show, the Switch-On moment 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 wristbands that will give entry to the arena. Allocation is restricted to four wristbands per household. The ballot closes at midday on Monday 29 July. To register now, [click here](#).

To date, more than 60,000 people have applied for the 2019 event. Watch out for details of how you can guarantee your place at the Switch-On party with special VIP and Golden Circle ticket offers.

COMIC RELIEF

Sainsbury's installed a giant red nose on Blackpool's Comedy Carpet to celebrate its 20-year partnership with Comic Relief.

The supersize noses were put in place over the February half-term at iconic venues throughout the UK including St Paul's Cathedral in London.



NEW SHOWS FOR 2019

BRITISH COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

A new country music festival is to be staged in Blackpool this autumn.

The inaugural British Country Music Festival will take place at the Winter Gardens from September 13-15, showcasing the best of British Country and Americana artists.

The festival, which will feature around 100 performers on five stages in and around the Winter Gardens, will be headlined by some of the UK's leading country stars include Ward Thomas, Catherine McGrath and Sarah Darling. It will also offer a platform for emerging talent.



It will run from 4pm on Friday through to 6pm on Sunday afternoon with weekend passes available. It is anticipated that the festival will become an annual fixture in the Winter Gardens calendar.

For tickets and further information go to www.britishcountrymusicfestival.com or www.wintergardensblackpool.co.uk

SLIMEFEST RESIDENT TALENT

Dance group Diversity, social media stars and singers Max & Harvey, The Voice Kids' winner Jess Folley and YouTube sensations RoadTrip have been announced as resident acts for Nickelodeon's SLIMEFEST shows in October.

Hosted by Jordan Banjo and Perri Kiely from October 19-21 at The Arena, Blackpool Pleasure Beach, the resident acts will perform across all six shows over the weekend.

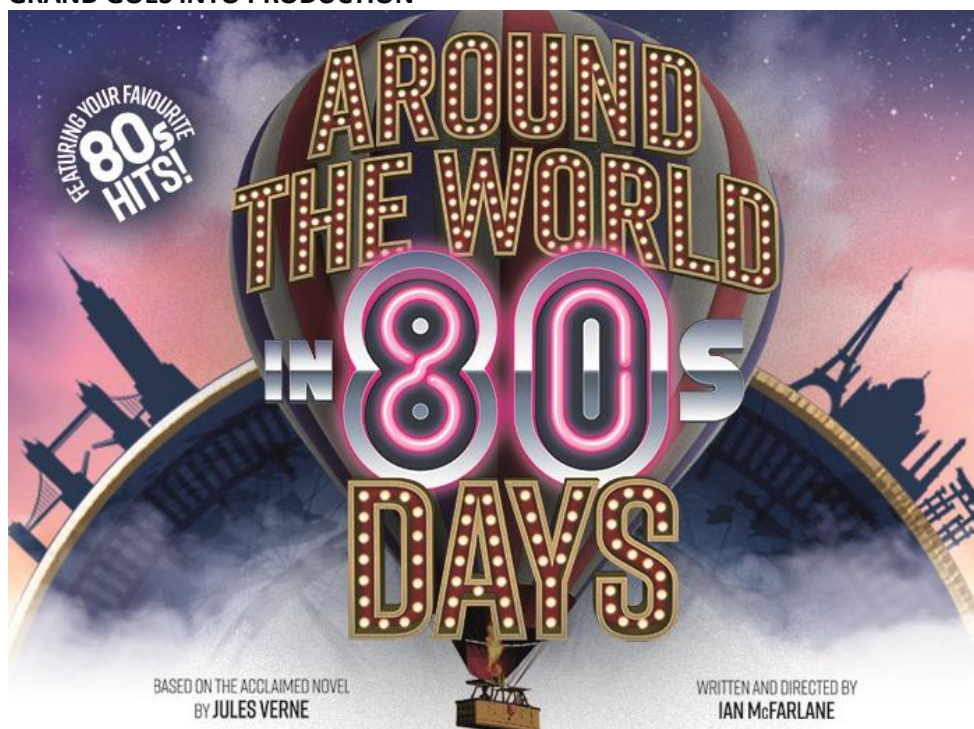


Tickets for the shows, which are produced in partnership with VisitBlackpool, are virtually sold out, with just a few remaining for the Monday performances. Headline talent for each of the shows will be announced over the coming weeks.

GIRL ON THE TRAIN

A stage adaptation of the internationally-acclaimed thriller novel, The Girl On The Train, is coming to the Blackpool Opera House. It will run from November 19-23. The book, which has sold more than 20 million copies worldwide, has already been successfully adapted into a major film.

GRAND GOES INTO PRODUCTION



Blackpool's Grand Theatre has celebrated its 125th anniversary with the launch of its own production company.

The company's first venture will be to produce The Grand's new summer show – Around The World In 80s Days – which will be staged this August.

The musical comedy will combine Jules Verne's epic adventure story with a host of favourite chart hits from the 1980s.

The show will officially open on August 7 and run on selected days/evenings until August 31. A special preview week will be held from Wednesday 31 July to Saturday 3 August where all seats will be priced at £10. A special preview performance will also be held for hoteliers, taxi drivers and local businesses, details to be announced soon.



The Grand is planning to stage a children's comedy show on two midweek evenings during the summer season. Steve Royle's Comedy Chaos will be staged at 7pm every Tuesday and Wednesday from August 6 to 28.

2019 EVENT UPDATES

PRIDE BY THE SEASIDE

Blackpool's annual Pride Festival moves to a new location this year with a large-scale concert taking place on the Tower Festival Headland Arena.

The two-day event on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 June, starts with a Pride parade from South Pier to the Metropole Hotel.

That will be followed by a full day of entertainment on the main stage headlined by chart-topping Claire Richards (lead singer of Steps, *pictured right*) who will be supported by an array of artists including American recording star Ce Ce Peniston, Chesney Hawkes and Blackpool's own Betty Legs Diamond.



The festival continues on Sunday at the nearby Queen Street arena. For festival updates, go to: <http://prideblackpool.co.uk/>

BLACKPOOL MUSIC RUN

Blackpool Music Run has introduced a new concept aimed at keeping participants in town over the weekend of the event, which is being held on Father's Day, Sunday 16 June.

Each runner will receive a Run Rewards card entitling them to a range of discounted offers on the Saturday as well as the day of the race.

Businesses signed up to the reward scheme include Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Merlin, The Bank Bar & Grill, West Coast and Pastels.

RETURN OF LIVEWIRE

The Livewire Festival is to return over four days leading up to the August Bank Holiday.

Organisers have confirmed that the event will take place on the Tower Festival Headland from August 22-25.

The four nights are expected to include a comedy showcase, featuring some of the UK's top acts; a "Best of British" pop concert; a performance by an internationally-renowned singer; and a Hollywood movies and musicals night.



CINEMA EVENTS

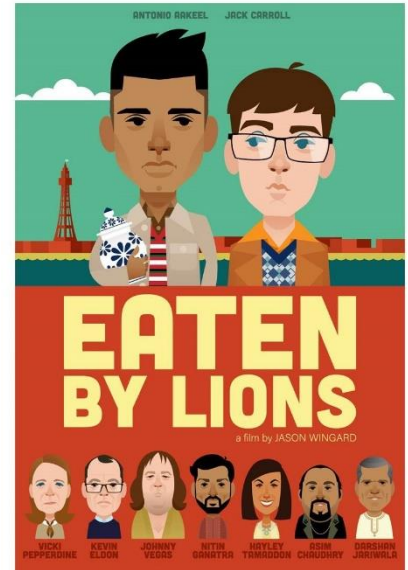
EATEN BY LIONS

The premiere of the new comedy film, *Eaten By Lions*, was to be staged at Blackpool's Opera House on March 27 ahead of its general cinema release.

Filmed in Blackpool, the film tells the heart-warming story of two half-brothers on a journey of self-discovery in the resort. It has been described by critics as "the feel-good movie of the year".

The cast includes Jack Carroll, Antonio Aakeel, Johnny Vegas and Hayley Tamaddon.

The red-carpet premiere was due to be attended by members of the cast and crew.



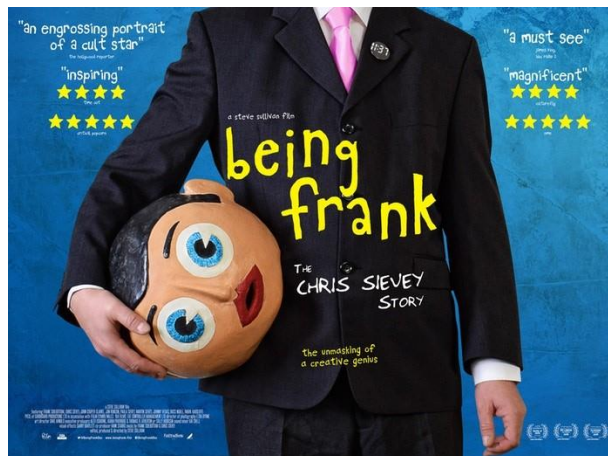
FRANK IS COMING HOME

Comedy icon Frank Sidebottom is making an emotional return to his "second home" on March 31 for a special Blackpool screening of a new feature documentary about the life of his creator, Chris Sievey.

The Greater Manchester-born songwriter and comedian died in 2010 and the new movie "Being Frank: The Chris Sievey Story" has been booked for a one-off showing at Blackpool's historic Regent Cinema.

The star, famous for his maverick brand of music and humour plus his distinctive papier-mâché head, fronted a whole host of popular TV and radio shows in the 80s and 90s and launched the career of iconic comedy character Mrs. Merton (played by Caroline Aherne).

The new film, which explores the extraordinary secret life of Frank's creator Chris Sievey, is being distributed in the UK and the US but Lancashire-born director/producer Steve Sullivan was keen that Blackpool was one of the first places to show the film due to the star's lifelong love affair with the resort.



Frank appeared many times on the Fylde Coast over a period of more than two decades, most recently at Rebellion Festival just a year before he died.

He recorded a song in honour of the town, "Blackpool Fool", and was a regular at the famous Thunderbooks comic shop on Lytham Road.

TOP OF THE LIST

Blackpool has been named as the most popular destination for UK visitors this Easter.

The findings have been revealed in a new holiday report issued by Travelodge which operates more than 500 hotels across the UK and which surveyed 1,500 British adults on their holiday plans.

It found that 67 per cent would be holidaying at home this Easter – almost double the number last year - with Blackpool top of the popularity list followed by London, Cornwall, Brighton and Devon.

ACCESSABLE APP

The disability organisation that provides Blackpool's Access Guides has launched a new mobile app which aims to transform the quality and availability of accessibility information.

AccessAble has worked alongside VisitBlackpool and Blackpool Council for a decade to ensure that people with a disability can get the best possible experience during their visit.

The new app, which is available free, covers 180 venues in the resort including top attractions like the Pleasure Beach, the Winter Gardens and Blackpool Tower, as well as leisure centres, parks and gardens, restaurants, shops and transport.

The app is available for iOS and Android. Users can create a profile, save their favourites and set their own preferences using AccessAble's Accessibility Symbols.

WYLDE COASTERS

Blackpool Pleasure Beach has launched a new residents' discount scheme that will see everyone with an FY or PR postcode receive a money-saving offer at the gate.

The Wylde Coasters scheme will see local residents receive the online price anytime they visit Blackpool Pleasure Beach – a saving of up to £14 per person, or £56 per group, on the gate price.

In order to take advantage of the offer, proof of residence will be required. This can be a utility bill, bank statement or any other official document with the individual's full name and postcode clearly visible. Each person can purchase up to four wristbands in any one transaction and can do this as many times as they like each season.

BLACKPOOL AT CONFEX

Blackpool had a strong presence at Confex, the international trade expo in London, to promote the resort's new conference offer.

A partnership, led by the Winter Gardens and VisitBlackpool, attended the two-day event at London's Olympia to showcase the new £28m conference centre which is due to open in Spring 2020, improved rail infrastructure and several "next generation" hotels which are either planned or under construction.

The delegation included representatives from The Grand Hotel (formerly The Hilton), Blackpool Promotions (which operates several hotels in the resort) and the Blackpool Town Centre BID.

Section 3: Town Centre Economy

TOWN CENTRE VACANCIES

The latest survey of vacant units in Blackpool town centre carried out in February shows a net decrease of two compared to November 2018.

It brings the overall total down to 140 and reduces the vacancy rate from 22.2% to 21.9%. This improving trend is due to a drop in the vacancy rates in the Principal Retail Core (12.4%) and Core Retail Area (20.3%). In contrast, the periphery town centre (up by one) experienced a net increase in the number of vacant units over the three-month period.

The newly-vacant units include: HSL Convenience Store (Clifton Street); Big Woody's (Talbot Road); Flute Hairdressing, IT Components R Us (Church Street); CLC Bookshop and SA Fashion (Abingdon Street).

Since November, a number of businesses have occupied previously vacant units. These include: River Island (Houndshell); Bloom Hearing Specialist, Daisy's (Clifton Street); Queens Nails (Talbot Road); Miss Saigon Nails, Blackpool Community Fundraising, Flute Hairdressing (Church Street); McKenzie and Topping Bakery (Topping Street).

Both River Island and Flute Hairdressing have relocated to alternative units within the town centre over the last three months.

February 2019: Vacant Units

Area	Total Units ¹	Total Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
Principal Retail Core (Local Plan boundary based around Houndshell, Victoria Street, Bank Hey Street, Church Street, Corporation Street and Adelaide Street West)	161	20	12.4%
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)	462	94	20.3%
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, Caunce Street and the new Talbot Gateway area)	639	140	21.9%
Periphery Town Centre Area (the Town Centre Boundary area excluding the units contained within the Core Retail Area)	177	46	26.0%

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).

£400k BAR INVESTMENT

The national Slug & Lettuce chain has invested £400k in a new venue on Queen Street in Blackpool town centre.

The venue boasts a bar with unique birdcage seating areas and a cocktail “master station” with a variety of pre-booked offers available for parties.

It also has an extensive food menu.

The new bar replaces The Litten Tree pub that originally operated there.



FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

Blackpool Council has submitted an Expression Of Interest (EOI) bid into the Government's £675m Future High Street Fund.

Applicants at this preliminary stage were required to outline the key challenges facing their respective town centres and outline a strategic approach to how they would reverse their fortunes with and without funding support.

The Blackpool initial bid sets out some of the issues facing the town centre including comparatively high levels of vacant units; a prevalence of low-value discount stores; a lack of higher quality independent restaurants and national chains; and a poor-quality physical environment that deters new investment in some areas.

The submission follows consultation with a variety of public, private and community organisations including Blackpool BID, Pride of Place Board and private sector companies.

Within the submission, a range of additional interventions are proposed to support the regeneration programme that is already underway to transform Blackpool town centre, including the Talbot Gateway development, the tram extension, new hotels and Blackpool Central leisure development.

These interventions focus around:

- ❖ A fast-track development in the heart of the town centre with the potential to increase footfall and strengthen the night-time economy;
- ❖ Acquisition and land assembly to deliver high-impact schemes;
- ❖ Investment in physical infrastructure to radically reduce the number of vacant units; in the town centre and introduce high-quality public realm and green infrastructure;
- ❖ Adapting the High Street for changing technology;
- ❖ Improvements to car parking and pedestrian access.

A shortlist of applicants from this initial Expression Of Interest stage will be announced in the summer.

Section 4: Enterprise & Economic Development

EVA AWARDS OPEN

The 2019 Enterprise Vision Awards are open for entries and nominations. Established in Blackpool nine years ago, the EVAS recognise the successes and achievements of women in business across the North West.

The EVAS annual awards event will be staged at The Winter Gardens on Friday 27 September. For more information, including business sponsorship opportunities, please contact Coral Horn on 01253 425443 or email coral@pinklinkladies.co.uk

DIVERSE EMPLOYMENT EVENT

Employers are invited to a business breakfast event to learn how to expand their recruitment search to include those with disabilities or health conditions.

The event, to be held at Preston North End Football Club on Thursday 11 April is being staged in association with the Government's Work and Health Programme. This is a fully-funded service that connects local employers with local talent.

Major employers will share their experience of recruiting candidates from a more diverse pool using non-traditional routes and outline the benefits it has brought to their business.

Free tickets can be booked using this link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/open-your-doors-to-more-diverse-candidates-tickets-57719978008>

Section 5: Requests for Private Sector Support

JOIN THE BIG SLEEP OUT

Businesses are being urged to join the 2019 Big Sleep Out event, organised by Streetlife in Blackpool.

The event, sponsored by Beaverbrooks, is aimed at preventing youth homelessness in the resort and keeping open the night shelter on Church Street, which provides a safe haven for young people at risk.

There will be two sleep out events in St John's Square on consecutive nights, Friday 26 and Saturday 27 April, with only 150 tickets available for each.

Around 20 businesses and organisations have already signed up to take part including: Blackpool Council, DWP, BAe Systems, Job Centre Plus, O2, Sainsbury's, Waterloo Music Bar, The Central Hotel, NHS and Moore & Smalley.

Registration costs £10 and includes an entry wristband, Streetlife travel mug and survival pack. Participants are also asked to commit to raising at least £100 in sponsorship. Last year's event raised more than £40k for the charity.

Click here to register → <https://buff.ly/2YbIkow>

CHARITY GOLF DAY

Local businesses are invited to take part in a charity golf day in support of Brian House Children's Hospice.

The event, which will take place at the prestigious Royal Lytham & St Annes Golf Club on Thursday 6 June, includes an 18-hole four-ball fun competition, brunch, individual gift bags, golf clinic, evening dinner and drinks reception, and prize presentation.

There are also opportunities for corporate sponsorship packages with complimentary or discounted entry to the event. Individual and two-ball entry is also possible and the organisers can help find team-mates to make up a four-ball.

At any one time, Brian House looks after 80-100 local children with complex life-threatening and life-limiting conditions. It only receives a fraction of its annual £1.3m funding costs from central government and relies on donations to continue its work.

For more information and to book, please call Linzi Warburton on 01253 359362 or email linzi.warburton@trinityhospice.co.uk or visit <https://www.trinityhospice.co.uk/our-events/detail/charity-golf-day/>

Philip Welsh
Head of Tourism & Communications