



Blackpool Business Leadership Group

Business Partnerships Report – 13 June 2025

Top News

BLACKPOOL TOWER TO RETURN TO LOCAL MANAGEMENT



Blackpool's most famous landmark, the Blackpool Tower, will be managed by the council's wholly-owned tourism company, Blackpool Tourism Limited.

In a ground-breaking move the company is announcing that it will take over the operation of Blackpool Tower (including Blackpool Tower Eye, Circus, Ballroom and Dungeons) and Madame Tussauds.

Blackpool Operating Company Limited, which operates Sandcastle Waterpark, has expanded its remit and will now be known as Blackpool Tourism Limited. The company will take over the management of The Blackpool Tower and Madame Tussauds from Friday 1 August, operating them alongside Sandcastle Waterpark and Showtown Museum.

These new arrangements will replace the management of these attractions by Merlin Entertainments, which has operated them on the council's behalf since 2010.

As part of this change, both parties have also agreed to enter a new partnership to enable Madame Tussauds and The Dungeons to continue to operate, marking the first ever UK franchise agreements for the two iconic brands.

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OFFICE BUILDING IN BLACKPOOL'S TALBOT GATEWAY



Construction has begun on a new office building for Ministry of Defence (MOD) civil servants as part of Blackpool's Talbot Gateway redevelopment.

The regeneration programme sees Blackpool Council working with development partner Muse Places and construction company VINCI Building on the new 53,000 sq. Ft MOD building which will hold up to 1,100 staff from Defence Business Services (DBS).

Construction will be managed on behalf of the MOD by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, working closely with Blackpool Council, development partner Muse Places, main contractor VINCI Building and DBS.

The building is scheduled for completion in 2027.

NEW £100 MILLION WORKSPACE OPENED IN BOOST TO BLACKPOOL ECONOMY



A new headquarters for more than 3,000 civil servants has opened in Blackpool, bringing more jobs to the area and boosting the local economy.

The 215,000 square foot Fylde View site will bring together Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Service Delivery teams from across the Fylde Coast into one central location.

The new £100 million hub forms part of the Talbot Gateway development and regeneration of the town to create a Central Business District providing educational and vocational training work placements and community engagement.

The seven-storey building – located at King St near Blackpool North train station – has been designed to incorporate best practice in sustainable building design, construction, and operation. It also uses no fossil fuels for heating or domestic hot water.

The site opened operationally in March 2025 and will be fully staffed by mid-June.

BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COAST EXHIBITED AT UKREIIF 2025

Blackpool and the Fylde coast showcased the area at a major investment conference in May.

Blackpool Council partnered up with both Fylde Council and Wyre Council to showcase the strength of the Coast to over 16,000 delegates at the UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UK REiIF).

Over the three-day event, we shared all about Blackpool's £2bn+ regeneration programme including all the developments currently making progress and those to come in the town.



BUSINESS ACADEMIES TO CONTINUE FOR AN ADDITIONAL YEAR

Blackpool businesses can continue to receive free support thanks to an extension of existing funding. The project extension has received £525,000 from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

In October 2023, Blackpool Council launched two new business academy programmes offering tailored advice to new and growing businesses, and practical help to lower carbon emissions. Since then hundreds of Blackpool businesses across every single ward in the town have benefitted and received free support from at least one of the academies.



The Blackpool Net Zero Business Academy has worked with 120 businesses to develop bespoke decarbonisation plans - on average the plans have identified savings of 47% on energy costs, 59% in emissions and £1m total savings. Some businesses benefitted from Eco-grants to help kick start their net zero journey. Implementations such as lighting sensors, EV chargers, freezer upgrades and solar panels have led to over 1,000 tCO2e of savings.

The Blackpool Growth Business Academy has supported over 300 start-up businesses, provided growth and scale advice to 139 established businesses, developed 279 action plans through 1:1 support with a business advisor and hosted 57 workshops and masterclasses. This has led to the creation of 37 new businesses and almost 100 new jobs in new and existing companies.

The funding, previously allocated through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) until March 2025, has now been extended allowing the business support programmes to remain in place for an additional year.

BUSINESS EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

Blackpool Unlimited is hosting a series of business events in the next few months, listed below. More information on these events can be found at www.blackpoolunlimited.com

June
17 th - Leadership and Management for Growth
18 th – An inspiring morning with Brad Waldron
23 rd – Canva for your Business
26 th - Effectively Hiring and Managing Employees
27 th - SEO masterclass
30 th - Increasing Sales from Existing Customers

Visitor Economy Updates

NATIONAL SEASIDE AWARDS RECOGNISE BLACKPOOL BEACHES



Three of Blackpool's best loved beaches have once again been granted seaside awards.

These prestigious national awards delivered through Keep Britain Tidy celebrate the quality and diversity of England's coastline and are a symbol that visitors can find a clean, safe and well-managed coastal stretch.

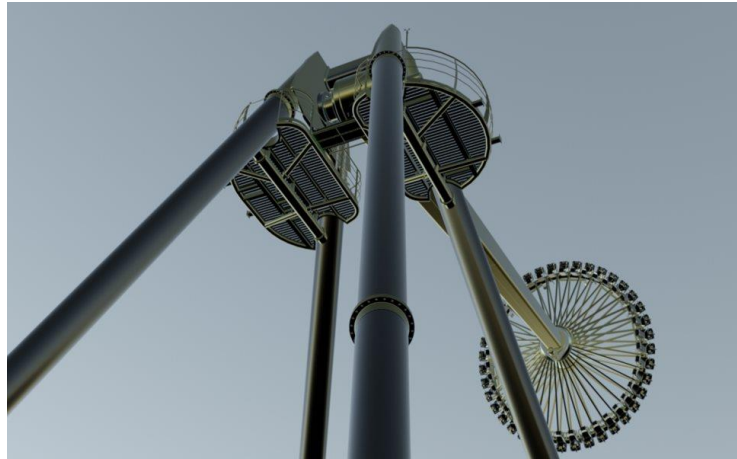
In the announcement by Keep Britain Tidy, Blackpool South, Blackpool Central, and Bispham beaches were recognised for their high standards of beach management, as well as their nearby facilities and water quality.

PLEASURE BEACH RESORT CONFIRM NEW RIDE NAME AS AVIKTAS

Pleasure Beach Resort has teased fans with what's to come by revealing the first details of its new £8.72m ride.

The Blackpool attraction announced 'Project 2026' back in March, and has now confirmed the ride's name: Aviktas.

Aviktas will be the tallest of its kind in the UK, dwarfing similar rides across the country by almost double.



Pleasure Beach Resort has also reduced its ticket prices in June and introduced Non-Rider eTickets.

Much like its UK counterparts, it has operated a pay one price model allowing guests to enjoy unlimited riding. But now, in response to guest feedback, Pleasure Beach has introduced a new Non Rider eTicket, and is the only major UK theme park to do so.

Non Rider eTickets will cost £25 and come loaded with £5 of 'Pleasure Beach Pounds', which can then be redeemed against food and drink on the park.

HERITAGE TRAMS TO RETURN FOR LIGHTPOOL FESTIVAL



Last December, the heritage tram tours were temporarily suspended. Operating the heritage trams alongside the modern fleet had become increasingly challenging, with issues such as depot space, tram movements, general safety and maintenance conflicts making it difficult to continue running the service effectively.

Since then Blackpool Council has been working with Blackpool Transport Services to find a solution that would enable the heritage trams to run out of the Starr Gate depot.

A programme of works has now been agreed which will see the necessary modifications made to enable heritage trams to run from the same depot as the modern fleet.

LIGHTPOOL FESTIVAL TO BE EXTENDED



Blackpool's annual Lightpool Festival will be extended this autumn so more people can visit during the half-term break.

Light-based art installations, live performances, 3D projection shows and family-friendly activities will form an illuminated trail taking visitors on a journey around the town centre.

The free event, now in its 10th year, will run from 15 October to 1 November. As part of Lightpool, emerging Blackpool artists are also invited to take part in DigiLab, a free workshop week (5 days) for anyone who wants to develop skills in projection mapping

£4M PLAN TO IMPROVE RESORT'S BUS SERVICES

More than £4m of funding is set to be spent on improving bus services in Blackpool including upgrading shelters.

It will go towards implementing Blackpool's Bus Service Improvement Plan which sets out a number of priorities including bus lanes on Talbot Road, replacing worn out bus shelters and deep cleaning.

It also includes rolling out more Real Time Information screens at town centre bus shelters.

The cash includes £2.5m of capital funding and almost £1.7m of revenue funding allocated to the council by the Department for Transport.

CAPITAL OF DANCE 2025



Following a successful pilot event last year, Capital of Dance will return as an annual fixture in Blackpool's event calendar from the 1st-31st July.

The festival was borne out of Blackpool's unrivalled heritage in dance that dates back to the late 1890's, when hundreds of people travelled to the resort to dance on the pier. From the early 1900's onwards, 'dance trains' brought thousands of people to Blackpool, to trip the light fantastic in the resorts two spectacular dance spaces: the Empress Ballroom and the Tower Ballroom. Both venues continue to welcome dozens of national and international dance competitions throughout the year, and for every Strictly professional dancer, 'getting to Blackpool' still remains the annual aspiration.

Capital of Dance was created by Martin and Marina Blore, Lytham based festival and theatre show producers. They have set up the Blackpool Dance Board Community Interest Company to promote the resort as the UK's go to place for all things relating to dance or physical theatre.

With over 180 dance related events throughout July, the festival is continuing to gain traction year on year. If you are a dance fan taking your first steps, or a trained professional, there is something for everyone.

SHOWTOWN BLACKPOOL WINS AWARDS

Showtown Blackpool, in partnership with acclaimed exhibition designers Casson Mann Ltd, is overjoyed to announce that it has been awarded Permanent Exhibition of the Year at the prestigious Museums + Heritage Awards 2025.

This national recognition celebrates the exceptional creativity, innovation and deep community engagement behind the development of Showtown's permanent exhibition – a bold, energetic and delightfully playful experience that captures the very soul of Blackpool.



SNOOKER SHOOT OUT RETURNS TO BLACKPOOL

Snooker fans in Lancashire will have the chance to watch the sport's biggest stars later this year as the Shoot Out returns to the famous Blackpool Tower Circus.

The 2025 Shoot Out will run from December 10-13 and tickets are ON SALE TODAY for WST Play subscribers only. Tickets will be on general sale from tomorrow (April 1st) at 10am. For all details click [here](#).



BLACKPOOL RESTAURANT WEEK 2026

Blackpool's very first Restaurant Week has officially wrapped after eight days of packed venues, pop-up events and a clear appetite for more. Following the success of the inaugural event, organisers have confirmed that Blackpool Restaurant Week will return in 2026.

This year's celebration of Blackpool's food and drink scene ran from Thursday 27th March to Thursday 3rd April 2025, with more than 25 venues getting involved through exclusive menus, tasting events and unbeatable deals. The aim was to get people out, explore the town and support local food and drink businesses.

From £20.25 and £25.25 set menus to 2-for-1 offers and live cooking demos, the campaign turned the spotlight on Blackpool's food scene and gave both residents and visitors a reason to try something new.

Regeneration Updates

NEW ROADS NAMED AFTER BLACKPOOL'S AVIATION HISTORY



Two new roads at a major Blackpool business park expansion have been named by local school children.

The roads are expected to open later this year at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, as part of Blackpool Council's £18.5m expansion designed to create more jobs in the area.

The two new road names were picked by school children at nearby St Nicholas Church of England Primary School. The names follow the area's tradition of roads being named along an aviation theme.

A new main road connecting Common Edge Road with the current business park at Amy Johnson Way will be named as Vickers Way.

The Vickers-Wellington Bomber factory was built during the Second World War and manufactured over 2,000 Wellington Bombers between 1940 and 1945. The original factory still stands today on Squires Gate Lane.

A new residential road connecting Vickers Way with Oakwood Close has also been named as Hallett Avenue.

Flight Lieutenant Austin Hallett MBE was well decorated for his efforts during the Second World War including the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Force Cross and French Legion of Honour medal.

After 30 years in the RAF, taking part in over 30 bombing raids including on D-Day, Flt Lt Hallett retired to run a post office in South Shore before moving to School Road.

NEW BUSINESS CENTRE NAMED AFTER INFLUENTIAL 1930S ARCHITECT

The renovation of Stanley Buildings in Blackpool town centre is nearing completion, transforming previously disused space into a contemporary business centre to be named 'The Robinson'.

The name is inspired by Blackpool corporation's former chief architect, John Charles Robinson, who between 1920-1944 designed many of Blackpool's landmark civic buildings including libraries, schools, swimming baths, leisure facilities and tourist infrastructure.

Notable examples of his work include the Derby Baths and South Shore Open Air Baths, the Technical College on Palatine Road, Stanley Park's Art Deco café, Cricket Club Pavilion and Golf Clubhouse. Several promenade features include the Solarium (now Solaris), the middle and lower walk Colonnades, the Cabin Lift and Bispham Tram Stop.

The triangular shaped Stanley Buildings was completed in 1935, replacing terraced housing. It was set back in line with the adjacent Midland Bank to allow new tram lines for Church Street.

The newly refurbished space comprises a range of flexible and affordable offices, meeting rooms and co-working 'hot desks' suitable for entrepreneurs and growth-oriented small businesses.

Modern facilities include ultra-fast fibre broadband, new kitchens, showers, a secure bike store and fully equipped meeting rooms.

Investment in air source heat pumps and solar panels is forecast to save over 64 tonnes of CO2 per annum, demonstrating Blackpool Council's commitment to sustainability.

Wider investment in the building has included renewal of the roof, new windows, façade repairs, and as well as the installation of new shopfronts.

The building offers over 40 private office spaces, ranging from small suites for growing businesses to larger spaces for more established organisations. There are six meeting rooms for hire, perfect for anything from team meetings to client presentations.

CENTRAL HOUSING REGENERATION PROGRESS

Blackpool Council's executive has reaffirmed its commitment to tackling poor housing conditions and deprivation by agreeing, in principle, to consider the use of compulsory purchase powers to secure land for redevelopment if reasonable efforts to buy land and property by agreement are unsuccessful.

This major step is part of Blackpool Council's broader ambition to transform its inner area into a thriving, sustainable community with safe, high-quality housing and enhanced life opportunities.

£90m of investment was secured in March 2024 from Homes England through the Brownfield Infrastructure Land Fund, after years of discussion around Blackpool's unique housing challenges. That money will finance land acquisition, demolition of housing, and the redevelopment of modern, energy-efficient homes.

GLOBAL PROPERTY CONSULTANTS SOUGHT FOR BLACKPOOL CENTRAL



A search is under way for property consultants to bring a major Blackpool leisure opportunity to market.

Blackpool Council has launched a tender exercise looking for a highly experienced property marketing agent to help with finding new international investors for the Blackpool Central site.

The 10-acre Blackpool Central site sits in the shadow of The Blackpool Tower and is accessible via a direct road off the M55 motorway. It is accessible from Blackpool Promenade, seafront and tram stop and as well as facing on to the resort's main area for major events such as Blackpool Illuminations, Blackpool Air Show and the World Fireworks Championship Blackpool.

NEW DEVELOPMENT LANDS FOR BLACKPOOL AIRPORT



The new vehicle security point and administration block development is taking shape at Blackpool Airport following the delivery of eight modular buildings.

Opening in late summer, the facility will offer an enhanced arrival and departure experience and streamline security for the airport's corporate, executive and charter clients.

An application for a new road and hangars at Airport East has also been granted by Fylde Council this week. The application involves full planning permission for a new road into the airport from Amy Johnson Way and outline planning permission for new hangars.

Work on building the new road will now start this summer with detailed plans for new buildings to be submitted shortly.

Future plans for the airport include new general aviation and executive hangars, proposed solar farm and a new fuel farm to offer sustainable and alternative aviation fuels and battery storage.

Business News

BLACKPOOL VISION EVENT – 10 JULY

North West Business Insider is hosting a special Blackpool Vision breakfast on 10th July at The Backlot Cinema and Diner.

Blackpool is undergoing a bold and ambitious transformation—one that positions it as a key driver of economic growth, employment and innovation in the region.



This breakfast event will bring together key stakeholders in Blackpool's regeneration as well as leading local businesses to explore the business growth sectors, developments and investment opportunities in the town.

The event will spotlight Silicon Sands, Blackpool's emerging tech hub, with insights into the vision for the technology park. We'll also look at how Blackpool's urban landscape is being reimaged, with updates on flagship projects including Blackpool Central and the Talbot Gateway masterplan, which is bringing 8,000 new office workers and students to the town centre.

Buy tickets: <https://www.insidermedia.com/event/blackpool-vision>

TOWN CENTRE OCCUPANCY UP AGAIN

There was a net increase of 10 occupied units in the town centre between May and February 2025, bringing the overall total up to 496 and increasing the occupancy rate from 77.3% to 78.6%.

The latest occupancy rate upturn is largely due to a net increase of occupied units in the periphery town centre areas – 7 in the outer core retail area and an additional 4 in the periphery town centre.

Encouragingly since February a number of businesses have occupied previously vacant units, these include: Wendys (Promenade); Grand Accessories, Mag Win Fashions (Corporation St); Butty Junction (Clifton St); Talbot Mini Market, The Community Shop Blackpool (Talbot Rd); Malabar Express, SA Fashion (Abingdon St); Kelvins Afro Caribbean Supermarket (Queen St); Wisk (Deansgate); Kome Shokudo, Lancashire Jackets (Church St); Envy, Kool Cuts and Mug Life Crisis (Topping St).

NEW FAIR EMPLOYMENT CHARTER LAUNCHED TO BOOST EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Blackpool Council has unveiled an innovative fair employment charter, aimed at making the town a better place to work and do business.

Developed with input from residents, employers and trade unions, the charter sets out a bold, inclusive vision to raise employment standards, improve job quality and drive economic growth across the region.

The new charter, designed to be flexible and accessible, offers employers the opportunity to participate at introductory or advanced levels, using a modular framework tailored to their existing strengths and areas for development.

It covers key employment themes including job security, fair pay, flexible working, workplace conditions and training and development - with an aim to create a happier, more skilled and productive community.



Employers can choose modules relevant to their business and apply for different levels (from one to three, with three being the highest accreditation level possible) of recognition based on their current practices. Those achieving the highest standards across all modules will be awarded full accreditation.

Participation in the scheme is free of charge, with no membership or sign-up fees.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Congratulations to all the Blackpool businesses who won and celebrated at last month's Local Business Awards, hosted by Coastal Radio.

The awards ceremony was held at Blackpool Tower Ballroom on 22 May.

A full list of winners can be found here: <https://www.coastalradiodab.co.uk/awards/local-business-awards/>

And finally

Yet again, we are expecting a bumper attendance at this Friday's BBLG. Almost 200 people have registered – a great show of support from the Blackpool business community.

As always, I would like to know your thoughts on the membership and events.

Please do contact me on my email address with any comments, or please complete the post-event feedback form: <https://forms.office.com/e/crQYupTH6F>

I look forward to seeing you all on Friday.

Adam Ogden
Head of Communications
Blackpool Council
adam.ogden@blackpool.gov.uk