



Blackpool Business Leadership Group

Business Partnerships Report – 24 July 2026

Top News

LET'S BACK BLACKPOOL FOR CITY OF CULTURE



Everybody in the Fylde coast is being encouraged to back a bid for Blackpool to be named the UK City of Culture 2029.

Blackpool is one of nine places across the UK listed by the government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport to be in the running for the prestigious accolade.

If successful, Blackpool would receive £10m from the government towards a year-long celebration of arts and culture, to be enjoyed by local people as well as increasing the tourism economy.

As well as the grant, the title of City of Culture also brings additional funding, sponsorship and investment to support regeneration and events.

As part of it a campaign to back Blackpool's bid is live across the area, with everybody encouraged to visit www.blackpool2029.co.uk to show their support.

We'll be hearing a lot more about the bid and how businesses can support it at Friday's meeting.

FREE CONCERT PLANNED TO CELEBRATE BLACKPOOL'S BID



Blackpool Opera House will host a star-studded FREE live music event, THE PEOPLE'S STAGE, on Sunday 26 July for everyone to Back the Bid.

Blackpool is set to host one of the biggest FREE music events of the year on Sunday 26 July to showcase the creativity, ambition and community spirit behind Blackpool's UK City of Culture 2029 bid. It also looks ahead to the V&A's David Bowie: On Tour heading to Showtown in 2027.

Manchester's renowned Hallé Orchestra and acclaimed singer-songwriter and musician Jack Savoretti will lead a star-packed line-up at the free live concert The People's Stage at Blackpool Opera House from 7pm.

The excitingly eclectic event, which is presented in partnership with Elite Competitions, will also include the All-Star House Band featuring members of iconic northern bands James and The Stone Roses, special appearances from Blackpool's very own Little Boots and Rae Morris, and a whole host of world-class musicians and performers from all across the region.

Hosted by acclaimed Blackpool-born journalist, musician and cultural commentator John Robb, presented by Blackpool Council in association with Showtown and in partnership with top Blackpool company Elite Competitions; the evening promises an unforgettable mix of orchestral music, electronic anthems, spoken word and homegrown talent, sprinkled with a thrilling Ziggy Stardust twist.

The People's Stage event is a free, ticketed event with 2,500 tickets available through a public ballot, which is now open!

[Apply here](#)

BLACKPOOL INSTITUTIONS AWARDED KING'S HONOURS.



Alan Cavill, the council's regeneration director, and Laci Endresz, known as Mooky the Clown, were both awarded honours in the King's Birthday List.

Alan Cavill has been appointed as an MBE (Member of the British Empire) for services to regeneration in Blackpool. Alan, who grew up in Blackpool, has played a major role in the town's £2bn regeneration for nearly 30 years.

Laci Endresz, known as Mooky the Clown, has been awarded a British Empire Medal for services to entertainment.

Laci's relationship with The Blackpool Tower Circus began in 1992, marking the start of one of the most enduring careers in British entertainment. In 1999, he took on the role that would define his legacy: Mooky the Clown. Since then, he has starred as the headline act in every season for an astonishing 27 consecutive years, never missing a single show.

In addition to performing in more than 350 shows each year, he writes and directs the entire circus production.

Congratulations both.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION DECISION FOR LANCASHIRE



The government has announced its decision on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Lancashire.

Under the plans four new unitary councils will be created, replacing all 15 existing councils. The new unitary councils will cover:

- North Lancashire – made up of Lancaster, Preston and Ribble Valley
- West Lancashire – made up of Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool
- East Lancashire – made up of Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley
- South Lancashire – made up of Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire

The changes, which are subject to Parliamentary approval, will see the new unitary councils take responsibility for all local services in their areas.

The government has confirmed that elections to the new shadow councils will take place in May 2027. All councils have been working together to do the necessary preliminary work to prepare for this and there is a team ready to implement the changes needed for the new unitary councils going live on 1 April 2028.

For now, all current 15 councils will continue to provide high-quality services to residents and communities with no immediate changes to how those services are delivered or accessed.

The government has said residents should see no disruption to services as these changes are made, and councillors will continue in their roles representing and supporting their communities throughout the transition.

Further updates, including key milestones and opportunities to ask questions, will be shared over the coming months as plans develop.

More information is available at www.lancashirelgr.co.uk.

Regeneration News

NEW ROAD MAKES A BIG IMPACT FOR GROWING LANCASHIRE BUSINESS



A new access road connecting Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone is already helping local businesses grow. Vickers Way, which links Common Edge Road to Amy Johnson Way, opened last month to improve access to the Enterprise Zone.

One of the first businesses to benefit is Natures Aid, a well-established Lancashire company, which has now opened a new distribution centre on Amy Johnson Way, just at the end of Vickers Way.

Originally based in Kirkham, the business was operating at full capacity and looking to relocate their dispatch operations to a new facility designed to accommodate growing demands.

Six staff have moved to the new site as part of the transition, with capacity to expand the team further as the business continues to grow.

The opening of Vickers Way has created a quicker, more direct route between the new distribution centre and the company's manufacturing base in Kirkham, located approximately 6 miles away, saving valuable commuting time when transferring goods.

Prime commercial land either side of Vickers Way is now available, providing space for businesses to grow and create more jobs in the area.

[Interested businesses can enquire online.](#)

HOUSING PLANS SUBMITTED FOR CENTRAL HOUSING REGENERATION



Blackpool Council has submitted plans to improve housing quality around Central Drive, as part of the wider regeneration of central Blackpool.

The council has submitted a hybrid planning application to demolish up to 300 densely populated properties and build a new neighbourhood, made up of 230 energy efficient homes, new shops, green spaces, community facilities and flexible workspaces.

The proposals cover around 5.4 hectares of land just south of the town centre, focused on Central Drive and surrounding streets and is a major intervention to make Central Drive an area where local Blackpool people want to live and raise their children in.

It also supports the council's wider ambitions to make Central Drive better, including bringing international investors to create a new large leisure scheme to create local jobs, building more social housing at Foxhall Village, a new community sports village at Blackpool Football Club and improvements to Revoe Park.

NEW BUSINESS HUB, THE ROBINSON, CROWNED AT NW REGIONAL CONSTRUCTION AWARDS

Blackpool's new business hub, The Robinson, has won the prestigious Regeneration and Conservation Award at the North West Regional Construction Awards 2026.

The award recognises the £8.3m transformation of Stanley Buildings, one of the town's locally listed buildings which was first opened in 1935.



This transformation includes The Robinson, a new modern business hub, designed to help local companies grow.

The regeneration of the building includes refurbishing disused space in the upper floors of the building to offer 44 private offices, as well as six fully equipped meeting rooms and a vibrant co-working environment all with superfast broadband.

Work to the rest of the Art Deco building has included repairing and replacing faience blocks, refurbishing the roof and installing new windows. Investment has been made in solar panels and air source heat pumps to lower the building's carbon impact.

A key factor in the success of The Robinson was its outstanding social value performance. More than 50% of the project supply chain was sourced locally with 234 apprenticeship weeks being delivered – almost three times the original target. Partnerships with local organisations, including The New Langdale Centre, created opportunities for skills development, inclusion and community engagement.

For more information about The Robinson including available space and membership, or to book a private viewing, visit www.blackpoolunlimited.com

SILICON SANDS PROMOTED AT HOUSE OF COMMONS



Last week, Blackpool Council was invited to Westminster by Maya Ellis MP, chair of the Lancashire All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), to host a session about Silicon Sands.

As one of the key projects within the Lancashire Growth Plan, Silicon Sands will play a key role in driving economic growth, attracting new investment and creating skilled jobs for local people.

The session at Westminster provided an important opportunity to share the vision and opportunities available, and we're looking forward to sharing more about the progress of Silicon Sands in the coming months as we move forward with this exciting development.

FUNDING EARMARKED TO RESTORE LITTLE MARTON WINDMILL



Work is underway to reinstate the windmill sails that have welcomed people to Blackpool for generations.

Blackpool Council has been working with heritage experts and millwrights to develop restoration plans for Little Marton Windmill. The Grade-II listed building is the last remaining original windmill in the town.

Funding for the project has been allocated from Blackpool's Pride in Place Impact Fund. Blackpool has a £1.5m pot from the government's Pride in Place funding, secured by Blackpool South MP Chris Webb and working with the council. The funding is to help areas improve shared spaces, create welcoming environments, and increase local pride.

The windmill, on Preston New Road, has undergone initial repair and restoration works in recent years, supported by The Friends of Little Marton Windmill.

Now £70,000 has been earmarked to pay for the new sails and an essential mechanism needed to extend their lifespan.

NEW MURAL UNVEILED TO CELEBRATE SOUTH SHORE'S HISTORY AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT



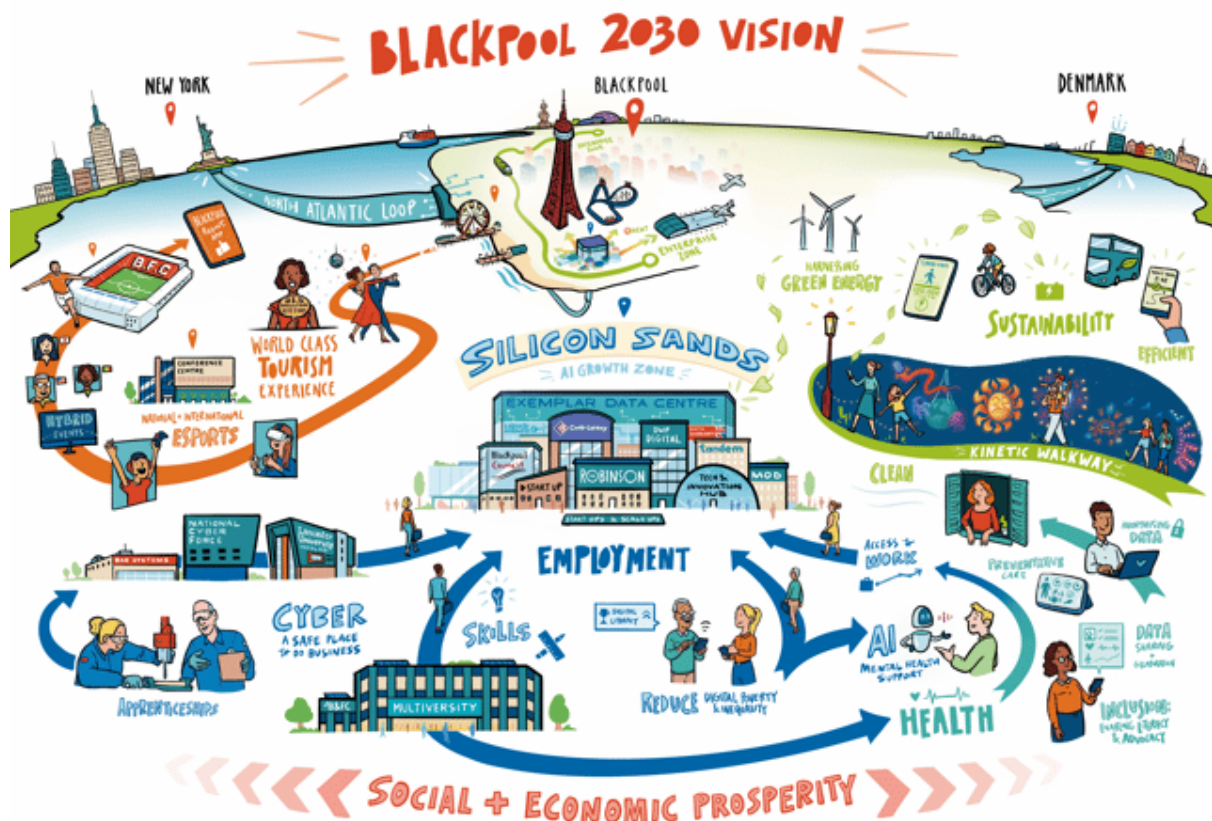
South Shore has a striking new landmark - a 45ft tall mural inspired by the area's heritage, culture and residents.

The piece, titled 'Within Ya Grasp', was sprayed by internationally-acclaimed artists. Christian Fenn and Hayley Garner from The Butterfly Effect CIC worked with local community groups, schools, and historians to develop the piece.

It depicts a giant seaside claw machine filled with objects to represent Blackpool's identity, including sticks of rock, the famous tramway, football, live music, amusement attractions, local landmarks and cherished seaside traditions.

Situated on the corner of Bond Street and Station Road, the mural was funded by Arts Council England, Blackpool's Pride in Place Impact Fund, and contributions from four local businesses; Evolution Ltd, The Small Business Academy, 5AM, and Happy Creative.

BITC'S BLACKPOOL PRIDE OF PLACE PARTNERSHIP UNVEILS 'BLUEPRINT OF OPPORTUNITY'



The updated Digital Vision shows how skills, jobs, health, sustainability, and tourism connect, with Blackpool and its people at the centre.

Blackpool's Digital Vision for 2030 was relaunched at The Robinson, following a meeting of the town's Digital Steering Group.

The Digital Vision refresh marks the next phase of work to drive digital-led growth across the Fylde coast, building on four years of progress and delivery across Blackpool.

The refresh was led by Business in the Community's Blackpool Pride of Place partnership, bringing together organisations from the public, private, and voluntary sectors to drive digital change across the town.

CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LOCAL OPPORTUNITY



More than 80 young people in Blackpool have been supported to build confidence, strengthen their financial literacy and connect with local career opportunities since the launch of an education programme two years ago.

Led by education charity, The Talent Foundry, and supported by Blackpool Council and international savings and investment business M&G plc, the programme has helped pupils from mainstream secondary schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) facing significant barriers to reimagine their futures.

Workshops focused on employability skills and financial literacy, helping students understand budgeting and real world money choices.

The initiative has become a recognised early intervention pathway in Blackpool, ensuring that pupils not only gain skills but also understand how those skills connect to jobs and opportunities available locally, delivering more than £150,000 in measurable social value in 2026 alone.

Visitor Economy Updates

SWITCH-ON 2026



British pop favourites Five are set to make sure Everybody Get Up for the biggest night in the resort's calendar, as they take centre stage at this year's Illuminations Switch-On.

The free outdoor event on the Tower Festival Headland, in the shadow of The Blackpool Tower, takes place on Friday 4 September 2026 and marks the start of the iconic Illuminations season.

Five will be joined by rock quintet The Feeling and chart-topping singer-songwriter Lucy Spraggan.

This year's event sees VisitBlackpool collaborate with the BBC, with the evening hosted by BBC Radio Lancashire presenters Graham Liver and Sharon Hartley.

As part of the collaboration, BBC Radio Lancashire will also showcase some of the region's most exciting up-and-coming talent through BBC Introducing.

How to win tickets:

The Switch-On event is a free, ticketed event with 20,000 tickets available through a public ballot. All you need to do is register your details in the link below to be in with a chance of winning tickets to Blackpool's biggest free party!

The ballot closes at **11pm on Sunday 9 August**. Allocation is restricted to four tickets per household. Please ensure your details are correct as changes cannot be made after the ballot has closed.

If successful, you will have 24 hours to secure your tickets and complete a £5 admin fee. Good luck!

[**ENTER BALLOT NOW \(REGISTRATION REQUIRED\)**](#)

How to guarantee your entry:

Don't want to leave it to chance? If you want to bypass the ballot entirely and secure your spot at the summer's biggest event, our Golden Circle access is back by popular demand!

For just £12.00 (plus admin fee), you can guarantee your place right at the front of the stage. This exclusive area puts you up close and personal with the incredible line-up, offering the best views in the arena. Please note that tickets are strictly limited.

[BUY GOLDEN CIRCLE \(REGISTRATION REQUIRED\)](#)

AIR SHOW LINE-UP



The Blackpool Air Show takes place on Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 August, and the full flying programme has now been revealed.

Crowds will be treated to a display by a MiG-17. The iconic Cold War fighter jet, based in Poland, will make its English display debut over Blackpool with a routine that is sure to entertain aviation enthusiasts

Joining the line-up for the first time in Blackpool are the US fighter aircraft P-47 Thunderbolt and P-51 Mustang, alongside the Suffolk Spitfire, adding even more historic aviation pedigree to this year's event.

On Saturday, visitors will also witness one of the world's most renowned parachute display teams. The Red Devils, the elite parachute display team of the British Army Parachute Regiment, will descend onto the famous seafront in a thrilling demonstration of skill and precision.

Returning favourites include the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, featuring the iconic Dakota, Hurricane and Spitfire, offering a poignant tribute to Britain's aviation heritage.

The packed programme also features a wide variety of aircraft displays, including the Aerosuperbatics Wingwalkers, Hawk, Harvard, The Ravens, Yaks, Calidus Autogyro, Muscle Pitts and XtremeAir.

Crowd favourite RAF Typhoon Display Team will once again bring its trademark speed, power and noise to Blackpool, performing breathtaking displays on both days of the show.

V&A TO BRING DAVID BOWIE ARCHIVE HIGHLIGHTS TO SHOWTOWN



The V&A has announced a national tour of highlights from its incredible David Bowie archive will travel across the UK for the very first time.

DAVID BOWIE: ON TOUR is to be hosted by Blackpool's award-winning museum of fun and entertainment and will be open from Wednesday 30 June to Sunday 26 September 2027.

David Bowie: On Tour at Showtown will be the only chance for North West visitors to experience over 100 highlights from the V&A's famous David Bowie archive in this thrilling celebration of the creativity and enduring

cultural impact of the iconic superstar of Sound and Vision.

Items will include Bowie's legendary costumes, musical instruments, career spanning photography and personal treasures, including the stopwatch he used when songwriting; plus never-before-seen items including Polaroids of make-up tests, a Ziggy Stardust-era acoustic guitar, unrealised scripts, and handwritten lyrics, performance notes and costumes from Bowie's final albums, The Next Day and ★ (Blackstar).

SHOWTOWN HOSTS HAPPINESS! THE KEN DODD EXHIBITION



Happiness! The Kenn Dodd Exhibition was officially opened at Showtown on Tuesday 23 June by Ken's beloved wife Anne, Lady Dodd to enjoy a laughter-filled preview of the tickle-tastic treasures and rare artifacts, which are on public display from Wednesday 24 June to Sunday 3 January 2027.

Happiness! The Kenn Dodd Exhibition was developed in partnership with National Museums Liverpool and The Ken Dodd Charitable Foundation and offers visitors the

thrilling opportunity to explore a carefully curated collection of archive photographs and programmes, admire Ken's colourful stage costumes, iconic props and original puppets.

The exhibition also features exclusive excerpts from Ken's private notebooks - offering a unique insight into the creative genius behind Britain's Master of Mirth - and enjoy an interactive Giggle Map, charting the many places and people Ken encountered during his extraordinary touring career.

Happiness! The Ken Dodd Exhibition is an extra special ticketed exhibition, with entry priced at just £3 for adults aged 16+. Children are FREE of charge. This small admission fee helps support the

presentation of nationally significant exhibitions such as Happiness! and enables Showtown to continue bringing major collections, exciting cultural experiences and world-class entertainment heritage exhibitions to Blackpool for both residents and visitors alike.

NORTH PIER SOLD WITH £10M INVESTMENT PROMISE



Blackpool's oldest pier has been sold, with the new owners promising a £10m investment to restore the attraction.

The Grade II-listed North Pier, which opened on 21 May 1863, has been bought by Okken Limited, a company registered in London.

It was put up for sale last summer by the Sedgwick family, which owns the town's other two piers.

Okken said it would refurbish the structure, improve the theatre and create new media, event spaces and a bar at the entrance.

Okken said its plans were aimed at securing the pier's long-term future as a leading Blackpool attraction.

The current management team will stay in place, with all events and entertainment continuing as normal for the rest of the year.

BLACKPOOL ANNOUNCED AS STAGE TWO HOSTS FOR LLOYDS TOUR OF BRITAIN WOMEN 2026



Blackpool will host the finish of stage two of the 2026 Lloyds Tour of Britain Women on Thursday 20 August 2026.

The 2026 edition, once again part of the UCI Women's WorldTour, will mark a historic first for Lancashire as the women's race visits its communities for the first time.

The promenade at Blackpool has seen some of the greats of cycling race to stunning victories including Sir Mark Cavendish who won the stage in 2012, wearing his rainbow stripes of world champion. Blackpool has hosted three starts and five finishes to the Tour in the modern day, so has a rich heritage in providing a spectacular backdrop to enthralling bike racing.

British Cycling research, delivered by GSIQ, showed the 2025 Lloyds Tours of Britain brought an overall cumulative economic impact of £62.3 million to the local areas which hosted the ten stages, bringing huge social impact to communities across the country as well.

TENPIN OPENS AT FESTIVAL LEISURE PARK

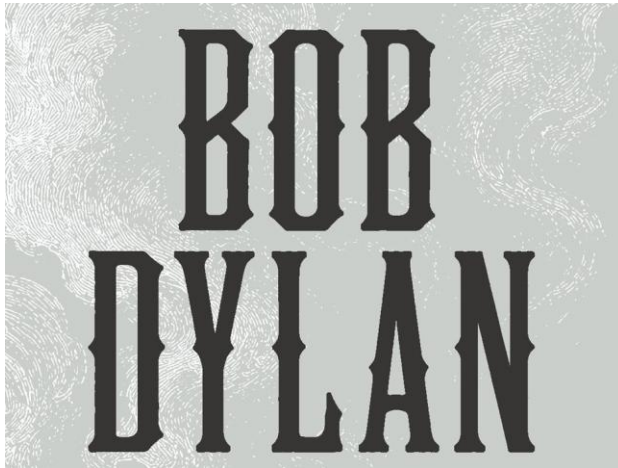


Tenpin, a brand new indoor entertainment venue, has officially opened its doors.

Located at Festival Leisure Park on Rigby Road, Tenpin Blackpool has been designed as a vibrant, year-round destination for the local community. Created with the town at its heart, the new venue will offer families, friends, sports teams and social groups a wide range of high quality activities under one roof.

The new development includes 24 modern bowling lanes, alongside two private karaoke rooms, a thrilling laser tag arena, three immersive escape rooms, soft play and interactive darts. Guests will also be able to enjoy pool tables, a fully equipped arcade and pair the activities with a refreshment from an on-site cocktail bar, where sports fans can enjoy TNT Sports and Sky Sports.

BOB DYLAN ANNOUNCES BLACKPOOL DATES IN 2026 UK TOUR



The inimitable Bob Dylan will be back in the UK in 2026 with an unmissable tour, including dates at Winter Gardens Blackpool on 30 November and 1 December.

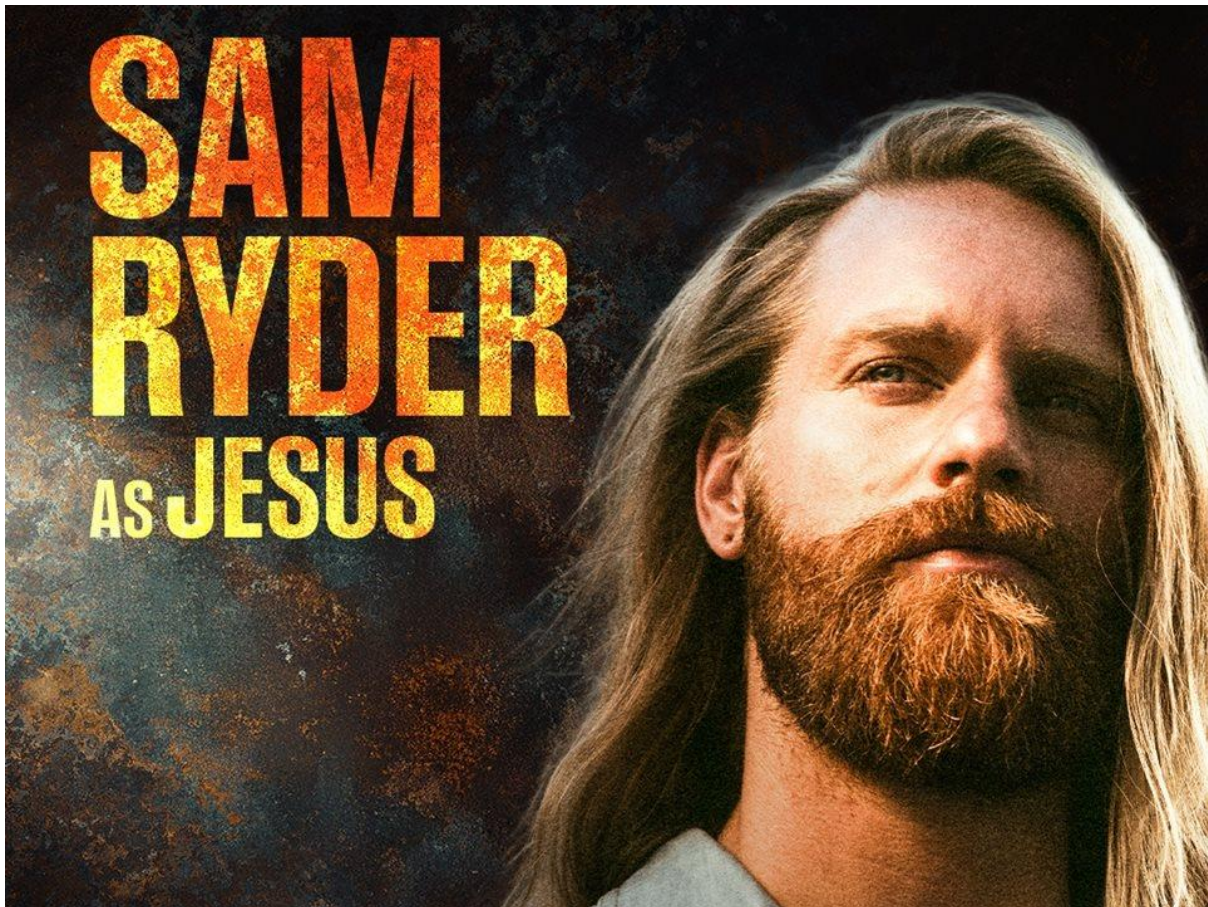
In recent years, the artist's Rough and Rowdy Ways Tour - named for his surprise 2020 album - has met with great acclaim ("Utterly unpredictable'a night of frequent thrills and unconditional pleasures" - The Guardian).

The 2026 Bob Dylan UK shows are in partnership with Yondr, which will prohibit the

use of video cameras and mobile phones, making the occasion even more unique.

Tickets for the latest chapter of an unmatched career are on sale now.

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR HEADS TO BLACKPOOL IN 2027



Jesus Christ Superstar will tour the UK following the conclusion of its West End engagements and will head to the Winter Gardens Blackpool 11-15 May 2027.

Jesus Christ Superstar follows the events of the last days of the life of Jesus Christ, as seen through the eyes of Judas. Reflecting the rock roots that defined a generation, the legendary score includes 'I Don't Know How to Love Him', 'Gethsemane' and the iconic title number 'Superstar'.

Producer Michael Harrison said

"We are absolutely delighted that Jesus Christ Superstar will embark on a major UK tour following the phenomenal response to this extraordinary new production. The tremendous buzz generated by Saturday night's first performance at The London Palladium underlines just how special this iconic musical remains, and we are thrilled that audiences across the country will now have the opportunity to experience Tim Sheader's visionary staging, Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's legendary score, and Sam Ryder's electrifying performance."

Tickets are on sale now at www.wintergardensblackpool.co.uk

HOT ICE XC CELEBRATES 90 YEARS



Blackpool's Pleasure Beach Resort Arena opened its door for its newest production Hot Ice XC, for a historic 90th year - further cementing its place as the oldest running, seasonal ice skating show.

Its opening performance saw 1,500 theatre-goers, from around the country, pack the Arena in Blackpool to watch the show, said to be one of the most physically demanding in the world.

Over 31 world-class skaters and specialist acts form this year's cast, and left the crowd stunned by a performance which combines artistry and athleticism to offer edge of your seat action.

Among the world-class cast include former olympians and champions at both national and international levels, as well as Blackpool-born performers, including: James Horrocks, Nadia Craggs, Francesca Guerin, and Jasmine Robinson - who becomes the third generation of her family to perform in Hot Ice.

Hot Ice will continue its landmark celebrations, running performances throughout the summer, until September 10. Ticket prices range from £5 - £25 and can be booked [here](#).

MONET PAINTING ATTRACTS 4,000+ VISITORS TO GRUNDY ART GALLERY



Blackpool's Grundy Art Gallery has welcomed thousands of art lovers to see a painting by Claude Monet, more than doubling the average visitor numbers for the same period as last year.

Blackpool's place in the National Gallery Masterpiece Tour reinforces the town's position as a thriving hub for arts and culture, as it bids to be UK City of Culture 2029. It also comes as Grundy Art Gallery celebrates its 115th birthday this year.



The Grundy's summer exhibition, 'Linder: The Return of Linderland' is open now until 3 October.

The Return of Linderland offers an illuminating and very personal reflection of this iconic artist's 50 year-long career. A selection of Linder's trailblazing photomontages explores the range of her artistic practice, underscoring the experimental and feminist impulses of her thought-provoking work. Early drawings and ephemera explore Linder's nascent development as an artist, tracing her artistic production to her now renowned visual style.

Rarely seen, atypical drawings by L.S. Lowry, of mannequins and dancers on loan from Lowry, Salford rewrite our understanding of this Northwest painter while a 1952 seascape from L.S. Lowry returns us to familiar ground speaking to Linder's home on the Lancashire Coast.

Brendel plant models on loan from Gallery Oldham trace Linder's early interest and fascination with the botanical world, flowers remain a central motif in her work. A series of Linder's films showcase Blackpool's cowboys, Manchester jack the lads, and Linder's own bodybuilding. In punk paste-up style, a collaboration with BuildHollywood converts gallery walls into billboard size works, bespoke for Blackpool.

Business News

BLACKPOOL RANKED ONE OF THE UK'S STRONGEST HIGH STREETS

Blackpool has been ranked among the UK's strongest high streets in a new study - the town placed 8th overall.

Blackpool has been ranked eighth in the UK for high street strength in a study by small business credit card experts at Capital on Tap.

The resort recorded 15.2 active retail businesses per square kilometre and the highest business birth-to-death ratio in the top 10 at 1.28, indicating strong entrepreneurial activity.

Blackpool Council's data show an increase in occupancy rates in the town centre, up to 77.5%.

TOWN CENTRE SHUTTERS SCHEME



Blackpool BID is working with the council on a new scheme to support town centre shops with security.

Designed to help businesses enhance security while maintaining an attractive town centre, the scheme provides grants for eligible businesses towards the installation of high-quality internal shutters.

By focusing on internal solutions businesses can reduce risks such as crime and vandalism, while ensuring the town centre remains welcoming, active and visually appealing.

All businesses with a ground-floor shop front within the town centre conservation area are eligible to apply for the scheme. Applications are open until 13 July 2026.

For more information or to request an application form, contact regeneration@blackpool.gov.uk

HOTEL OWNERS PROSECUTED AND FINED £120,000

Owners of a hotel where a child died after suffering an electric shock in the lobby have been fined £120,000 over health and safety offences.

Blackpool Council successfully brought charges against Y7 Hotels Ltd, owner of the Tiffany's Hotel on the Promenade, following the incident in September 2023.

Jack Piper-Sheach, 10, suffered an electric shock in the reception area of the hotel and died in hospital four days later. He and his family had been visiting Blackpool from Lincolnshire.

Investigations were launched by Lancashire Police and Blackpool Council. Lancashire Police found no criminal case to answer relating to the death. Blackpool Council later brought charges against Y7 Hotels Ltd for offences contrary to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. None of the charges related to the death of the child.

Representatives of the business attended Preston Crown Court on Wednesday 15 April 2026 and entered a guilty plea to two offences, in relation to the Tiffany's Hotel, Blackpool. At a sentencing hearing on Friday 26 June, Y7 Hotels Ltd was fined £120,000 and ordered to pay £24,000 costs to Blackpool Council.

HUNDREDS OF HAZARDOUS COUNTERFEIT TOYS SEIZED



Blackpool Council's Trading Standards team have removed 372 products from three shops in recent weeks, in a bid to protect shoppers from potentially hazardous items.

Copies of popular, legitimate toys like NeedDohs have flooded shops as the originals have gone viral on social media. Now the government has issued urgent safety warnings over the so-called "squishy dumplings" - tactile, gel-filled items.

Blackpool Council has already seized scores of the counterfeit items.

The products being sold in Blackpool contained harmful solvents or were packaged without any safety warnings or transparency over the materials used, posing risks to users, particularly children.

Laboratory tests on similar items have found toxic substances like phthalates, solvents, formaldehyde and benzene in toy's composition. These can cause skin irritation, nausea, headaches or breathing problems, or pose fire risks.

ENGINEERING FIRM HELPING POWER NEXT GENERATION OF 300MPH HYPERCARS



The next generation of hypercars are being built with a little help from Blackpool.

A Blackpool-based advanced engineering business is helping power the next generation of the world's most exclusive hypercars.

After securing a prestigious contract with renowned engine manufacturer Cosworth, Force Technology, based at Lightworks on Amy Johnson Way, manufactures precision valve springs for Cosworth, whose engines are used in some of the world's most advanced and high-performance vehicles.

The agreement is one of several contracts that have seen the company's specialist valve springs selected for use in supercar and racecar engines produced for globally recognised automotive and motorsport brands.

SOLAR PROJECT HELPS BLACKPOOL BUSINESSES MARK 30-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

Two Blackpool businesses are marking a 30-year partnership, with the milestone coinciding with a sustainability project to help one of the companies benefit from renewable energy.

Thompsons Solar, a division of the Thompsons Contracts Group which is located on Clifton Road, has completed an installation for the Top Gun Group, which includes Top Gun Tools & Fixings and Prestige Hardware & Doors.



The Top Gun Group, located on the Blackpool Enterprise Zone at Blackpool Airport, is celebrating 30 years in business and has been a supplier to the Thompsons Group for the duration.

The solar installation will help the hardware provider reduce its carbon footprint and take control of its energy bills, and is anticipated to reduce the need for grid-sourced electricity by just over 50 per cent each year.

General news

EIGHT BLACKPOOL PARKS WIN PRESTIGIOUS GREEN FLAG AWARD



Eight parks - each jointly managed by Blackpool Council, Enveco and dedicated volunteer groups - have been awarded this year, achieving the international quality mark for well-managed parks and green spaces.

Seven of the parks have retained their flags for a second or third consecutive year, and one has won for the first time.

Highfield Road Park and Devonshire Road Rock Gardens will each fly their Green Flags for the third year running. Anchorsholme Park, Crossland Road Park, Kingscote Park, Watson Road Park, and Stanley Park have all won for the second consecutive year. And Claremont Park has received its first Green Flag Award.

Judges commended the “strong community focus” of the eight parks, which each benefit from active Friends Of groups or volunteers.

The “strong range of recreational facilities” were also praised, including “free access opportunities” which “encourage inclusive participation”. Active management to prevent littering and anti-social behaviour was also commended.

DRONE SHOW TO LIGHT UP STANLEY PARK



A spectacular drone show will illuminate the skies above Stanley Park this October as part of a special anniversary weekend celebrating the park's centenary year.

The display will be created by Celestial, the company behind the acclaimed drone show filmed at Stanley Park for Britain's Got Talent in 2025, and later seen by millions of viewers across the UK.

The Grade II-listed park, which opened in 1926, is marking its 100th anniversary with a programme of events and activities throughout 2026.

While the main anniversary celebrations are scheduled for October to coincide with the park's official opening, a series of activities and events will take place throughout the year.

This will include family-focused activity sessions, heritage walks, a special edition of Love Parks Week, sporting events, and the ever-popular Bandstand performances.

PADEL COURTS SET TO OPEN AT STANLEY PARK

A new padel facility is set to open at Stanley Park offering a new sports option for residents and generating funds to be reinvested in the park.

Soul Padel will take up lease of land next to Blackpool Sports Centre, off West Park Drive. The new four-court facility is due to open early next year.

The council has confirmed that income generated from lease of the site will be ringfenced and reinvested in Stanley Park. Soul Padel has proposed to fund and build a new state-of-the-art facility complete with its own clubhouse, toilets, and changing facilities - subject to planning permission.

The padel courts will also create up to 12 jobs including one apprentice, up to three coaches, and the clubhouse reception manned seven-days-a-week. Padel continues to grow in popularity. Combining elements of both squash and tennis – with players using solid racquets within enclosed courts and typically playing in doubles – the sport is accessible for all ages and abilities.



MAJOR UPGRADES TO ST ANNES ROAD



From Monday 27 July, until Friday 4 September, maintenance and resurfacing works will take place on St Annes Road, between Waterloo Road and Pedders Lane.

The works have been carefully planned to take place during the school summer holidays, reducing disruption for nearby schools, pupils, parents and local residents while essential long-term repairs are carried out.

St Annes Road is a key local route used daily by residents, families, businesses and emergency services. Over time, parts of the road have been damaged by previous utility works, leading to an uneven surface. This programme will address those underlying issues properly, rather than relying on short-term fixes.

The works will involve removing and repairing damaged sections beneath the carriageway, strengthening the road's base layers and resurfacing. This will create a stronger, longer lasting road and reduce the need for further disruption in the years ahead.

To allow the works to be carried out safely, a one-way road closure will be in place from Waterloo Road to Pedder's Lane for approximately six weeks. The road will operate southbound only during this time.

Northbound traffic will be diverted via clearly signed alternative routes, including:

- Northbound via Watson Road, Marton Drive and Waterloo Road
- Northbound via Highfield Road, Hawes Side Lane and Waterloo Road

There will also be a short overnight closure between the Watson Road/St Annes Road junction at certain stages of the works. Advance notice will be provided wherever possible.

The project has been scheduled during the school summer holidays to help minimise the impact on school runs, nearby residents and regular road users, while ensuring the work can be completed efficiently and safely.

Seasiders Way is aimed to be reopened by the end of July. Contractors are working nights and weekends where possible to complete the works as quickly and safely as they can, after work was stalled by nesting birds which are legally protected.

Seasiders Way will remain closed between Parkinson Way and Bloomfield Road until the works are complete. Waterloo Road will continue to remain open throughout.

Works on Waterloo Road section above the bridge are planned for next year.

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