



Welcome to the Blackburn BID 2024 Annual Review

2024 was the first year of the third term of Blackburn BID after an overwhelming 'yes' vote to a further £1.5m investment in Blackburn town centre over the next 5 years. I am proud to continue to be the Chair of Blackburn BID, supported by dedicated Executive Board Members from across the BID area.

One of my highlights of the year was our amazing events programme, including the amazing Alice's Adventures in Brickburn LEGO® trail, and very popular Saturday Spooktacular event with free pumpkin carving.

In 2024 we appointed a new Marketing & Communications partner Cunning Plan, and launched Discover Blackburn, a partnership project with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to promote Blackburn town centre as a high-quality visitor destination. Our new website saw over double the number of users and we massively increased our reach and engagement across our rebranded social channels.

The year was rounded off in spectacular style with our biggest Christmas programme to date. To maximise the benefit of the Museum of the Moon light installation coming to Blackburn Cathedral, Blackburn BID worked with partners Blackburn with Darwen BC, Blackburn Cathedral, Blackburn Festival of Light and Culturapedia to secure £72,500 in Arts Council England National Lottery Projects funding to deliver the Festival of the Moon. Events included moon-themed workshops, performances and storytelling, as well as the Circus of the Moon Christmas Lights Switch On event and Blackburn Festival of Light.

We also appointed a new security partner, and we are in the early days of rolling out a new Town Centre Ranger service to support BID members to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in Blackburn.

Celebrations were in order in October when Blackburn BID's Growing Places project and adoption of Blackburn Train Station won the RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Award, Level 5 – Outstanding, in recognition of the hard work and dedication of local charities, schools and volunteers including Purple Patch, Nightsafe, St Michael & St John's Primary School, St Mary & St Joseph's Primary School, and Child Action North West.

I'd like to thank Blackburn BID Executive Board Members and our BID Manager Catherine for all their hard work on behalf of BID members in 2024, and I look forward to another successful year.

I wish you a very happy and prosperous 2025.



Nicola Clayton

Chair of Blackburn
town centre BID



2024 was another brilliant year for Blackburn BID with a huge range of projects and services delivered to benefit Blackburn town centre and our fantastic businesses.

We have worked with new service providers this year to help deliver our key objectives. This has included appointing a new Marketing & Communications service provider and successfully launching Discover Blackburn, our new visitor marketing website and social channels, in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council. We've also appointed a new security services partner to deliver a Town Centre Ranger service and event security support.

We've delivered and supported an amazing event programme in 2024, including our biggest Christmas programme yet, the Festival of the Moon, with town centre partners, the summer LEGO® trail, the Easter Escapades puzzle trail, the National Festival of Making and Blackburn Pride.

We continued to work with local charities, community groups, primary schools and volunteers to improve Blackburn Train Station and our Growing Places planters around the town centre. It was an honour for all our volunteers' hard work to be recognised with a Level 5 – Outstanding RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Awards for the first time.

I'm working hard to make sure the projects and services Blackburn BID delivers and supports have a positive impact on Blackburn town centre and provide the best return on investment for BID members.

It continues to be a privilege to be the Blackburn town centre BID Manager, working with and supporting our brilliant businesses across the town centre and our retail parks.

Here's to another fantastic year for Blackburn BID in 2025.



Catherine Price

Catherine Price

**Blackburn town centre
BID Manager**

What is Blackburn BID?

Blackburn BID (Business Improvement District) was first established in 2013 to bring approximately £1.5m investment into Blackburn town centre over 5 years, driven by the needs of the business community. It was renewed for a third term in 2023 following an overall 92% 'yes' vote by BID Members. 2024 was Year 1 of the third term of Blackburn BID.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a business-led and business-funded body formed to improve a defined commercial area. Within the defined area a levy is charged on all business rate payers in addition to the business rates bill. The levy is based on a small percentage of a business' rateable value for business rates and is used to deliver projects and services which benefit the businesses in the BID area.

There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a BID. The only requirement is that they should be something that is in addition to services provided by local authorities, providing additionality. Improvements are aimed at driving footfall to the BID area because research proves that the more people who visit an area, the more they spend in local businesses. Projects and services often include events programmes, extra safety/security, cleansing and environmental improvements.

BIDs were first introduced in the UK in 2005 and there are now around 350 BIDs across the UK, as more and more business communities see the benefit of taking a greater control over driving footfall into their commercial district.

Some BIDs are set up as Private Limited Companies and others have an accountable body. Newground CIC are the accountable body for Blackburn BID and are responsible for employing the BID Manager, financial management of the BID, administrative support, and producing audited statements of expenditure and progress reports.

Blackburn BID covers Blackburn town centre and three retail parks – Townsmoor, Blackburn and Peel. In 2024 it had approx. 350 levy paying members.

Blackburn BID has 4 priority themes for Term 3:

-  **Marketing and promoting Blackburn as a vibrant town centre**
-  **Creating a safer, more secure Blackburn town centre**
-  **Creating a cleaner, greener & more sustainable environment**
-  **Supporting businesses with information & advice**

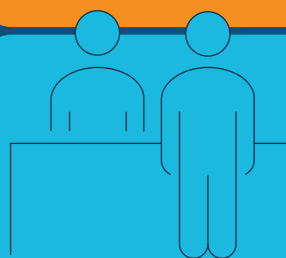




£257k+
INVESTMENT
IN MARKETING & PROMOTING
BLACKBURN TOWN CENTRE

£80k+

EXTERNAL FUNDING
TO DELIVER EVENTS



24.1m

VISITORS TO THE
BLACKBURN BID AREA IN 2024,
+2.44% COMPARED WITH 2023



2.24m

SOCIAL MEDIA
IMPRESSIONS

108,785

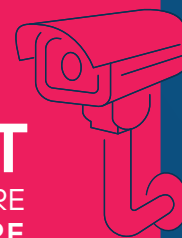
SOCIAL MEDIA
ENGAGEMENTS

12

FREE
TOWN CENTRE
EVENTS DELIVERED
AND SUPPORTED

£57k+

INVESTMENT
IN MAKING THE TOWN CENTRE
SAFER AND MORE SECURE



£17.2k+
INVESTMENT

IN MAKING THE TOWN CENTRE **CLEANER,**
GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE



2,300+
HOURS

OF TARGETED
AND EVENT
SECURITY
PATROLS



90+

VOLUNTEER
HOURS
TO PLANT AND
MAINTAIN PLANTING
SPACES

81

MEMBERS
OF DISC CRIME
INFORMATION
SHARING PLATFORM

5

CHARITIES

2

PRIMARY
SCHOOLS

ENGAGED IN TOWN
CENTRE PLANTING

LEVEL 5
OUTSTANDING

RHS IT'S YOUR
NEIGHBOURHOOD
AWARD

Marketing & Promoting Blackburn Town Centre



HEADLINES

£257k+

Investment in marketing and promoting the town centre

£80k+

External funding to deliver events

12 free

Town centre events delivered and supported

New

Discover Blackburn visitor focused website and rebranded social media channels in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen BC



IMPACT

24.1m

Visits to the Blackburn BID area, +2.44% year on year, and an average of 65,900 per day

105 mins

Average dwell time of visitors, and the majority were monthly visitors, an increased frequency on 2023 when the majority of visitors were quarterly visitors to the BID area

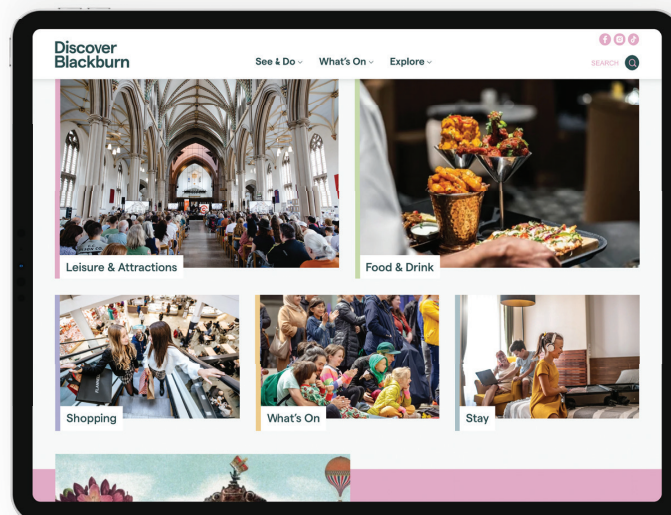
2.2m

Social media impressions (no. of times content is displayed) & **108,785 social media engagements** (no. of times people interacted with content)

7.2k

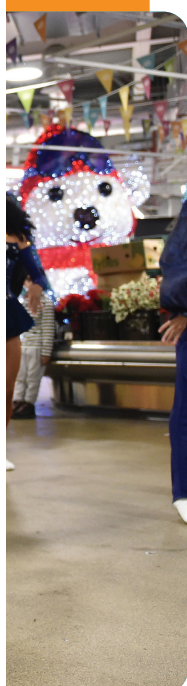
Users of the new Discover Blackburn website in December 2024





WHAT WAS DELIVERED IN 2024

- A new Marketing & Communications provider, Cunning Plan, was appointed to help deliver Blackburn BID's key objective of marketing and promoting Blackburn as a vibrant town centre.
- Cunning Plan have delivered monthly content creation visits to the BID area, a marketing support workshop for BID members, event marketing campaigns, and supported and promoted Blackburn BID members.
- In partnership with BwDC, Blackburn BID and Cunning Plan launched the new visitor focused Discover Blackburn website and rebranded social media channels, providing high quality platforms to promote all that Blackburn town centre has to offer.
- Blackburn BID delivered free, innovative and exciting events to attract people to the town centre, including the Easter Escapade puzzle trail, Alice's Adventures in Brickburn LEGO® trail, and free pumpkin carving as part of Saturday Spooktacular.
- The BID supported the delivery of amazing partnership events with sponsorship, event management, marketing, infrastructure and security, including the National Festival of Making, Blackburn Pride, Not Only A Street Market and Crescent Carnival.
- Working with town centre partners Blackburn with Darwen BC, Blackburn Festival of Light, Blackburn Cathedral and Culturapedia, Blackburn BID secured Arts Council England funding to enable the Festival of the Moon to be delivered. Our biggest Christmas programme yet, inspired by The Museum of the Moon at Blackburn Cathedral, included the Circus of the Moon Christmas Lights Switch On, Blackburn Festival of Light, a huge programme of moon-themed workshops and activities, and the Moon Light Trail.
- Blackburn BID started working with Visitor Insights to obtain not only footfall data for Blackburn town centre, but to capture visitor dwell time, frequency of visits, and demographic information, for the whole of the BID area.
- An Events & Marketing Working Group was established, bringing together all businesses and organisations who deliver town centre events and marketing campaigns with the aim of working together to maximise resources and beneficial impact.



WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2025

- New BBAC & Events Coordinator employed by BwDC will support the delivery of safe, innovative town centre events.
- Continuing to work with partners to support and deliver innovative, creative and unique to Blackburn events aimed at driving footfall into and around Blackburn town centre.
- Continued support for and promotion of Blackburn town centre businesses.
- Growing the partnership Discover Blackburn multi-media marketing programme to promote the town centre as a visitor destination.

Making the Town Centre Safer & More Secure



HEADLINES

£57k

BID investment in making the town centre **safer and more secure**

2300+

Hours of targeted and **event security patrols**

New

Appointment of **new Town Centre Ranger service** & security provider

New

Blackburn BID-led partnership **Safe & Secure working group**

10

Licensed premises supported to take part in the **Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative (Licensing SAVI)**

81

Members of the **DISC crime information sharing systems**



IMPACT

Support

Support for businesses to prevent, reduce and tackle **crime and anti-social behaviour**

Partnership

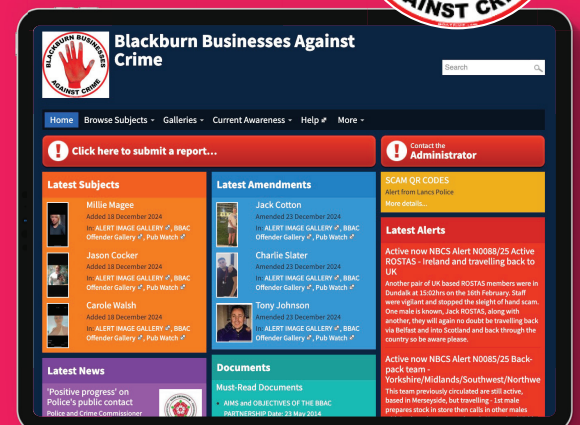
Partnership working to tackle **crime & ASB issues** in the town centre

Safe

Safe delivery of town centre events

Security

High visibility security patrols providing **confidence and reassurance** to businesses and visitors



WHAT WAS DELIVERED IN 2024

- 2024 saw a move away from direct investment in town centre policing, in favour of targeted security patrols and the appointment of a Town Centre Ranger service to provide a visible deterrent to offenders, as well as support and reassurance for businesses and visitors.
- A new Blackburn BID-led partnership Safe & Secure working group was established to identify and work together to tackle key crime & ASB issues in Blackburn town centre.
- Blackburn Businesses Against Crime (BBAC) became an integral part of Blackburn BID, and Blackburn BID has taken over business crime prevention support, the townlink radio scheme, and Disc information sharing system.
- Blackburn BID supported Pubwatch and 10 licensed premises to take part in the Licensing Security and Vulnerability Initiative (Licensing SAVI), designed to help licensed premises provide a safer and more secure environment for their managers, staff, customers and local communities.
- Security patrols were provided in Blackburn town centre during peak periods such as school holidays, focusing on hot spot areas and issues.
- Blackburn BID provided security officers for BID delivered and supported town centre events to ensure their safe delivery, including Blackburn Festival of Light.
- National Business Crime Solution (NBCS) – Blackburn BID continued its membership of NBCS in 2024, a not-for-profit initiative that works with the police and business community to help tackle business crime by gathering data and sharing information across public and private sectors, particularly around travelling criminals.
- The BID worked with BwD Council Community Safety and housing teams, street homeless and substance misuse services, and town centre partners to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in Blackburn town centre.



WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2025

- New BBAC & Events Coordinator employed by BwDC will support town centre businesses to prevent, reduce and deal with crime and ASB.
- Launch of new smart townlink radio scheme
- Revitalisation of the Disc crime information sharing system
- Continued partnership working with BwD Council, Lancashire Police and other agencies with a view to prevent, reduce and deal with crime and anti-social behaviour in the town centre
- Continuing with the roll out of the Town Centre Ranger service and providing security support for events.

Making the Town Centre Cleaner, Greener & More Sustainable



HEADLINES

£17.2k+ Investment in making the town centre **cleaner, greener and more sustainable**

7 Charities and primary schools supported to deliver improvements to Blackburn Train Station and wider Blackburn town centre

3 Guided town centre walks

3 Community created patchwork artworks installed at Blackburn Train Station

2 days Of Tree Buddy Memento Workshops as part of the National Festival of Making

2 Bespoke planters built out of recycled plastic and installed at Blackburn Train Station



IMPACT

90+ Volunteer hours to plant and maintain growing places planting spaces and train station planters

26 Planters and planting spaces created, planted and improved as part of the Growing Spaces project

3 Volunteers supported to gain a community gardening qualification for their work at Richmond Terrace

1 RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Level 5 Outstanding Award for Blackburn Train Station Adoption planting project





WHAT WAS DELIVERED IN 2024

- Blackburn BID worked with partners Nightsafe, Purple Patch, CANW, St Michael with St John Primary School, St Mary & St Joseph's RC Primary School, The Making Rooms, IMO and Rummage Rescuers on the Train Station Adoption and Patchwork Planters project. The project included planting existing planters, installing and planting new bespoke planters, and creating and installing patchwork artwork sewn by members of the community, all with the aim of making the Train Station a welcoming and attractive gateway to Blackburn.
- The hard work of volunteers at Blackburn Train Station was recognised with a RHS It's Your Neighbourhood award of Level 5 – Outstanding
- A group of community volunteers and Purple Patch were supported to deliver environmental improvements at Richmond Terrace.
- Planting and maintenance sessions were delivered at the Growing Places planting spaces including Victoria Gardens and the planter in front of Derian House Childrens Hospice Shop.
- Blackburn BID delivered 3 town centre guided walks covering town centre trees and green spaces.
- Town Centre Tree Buddy workshops at the National Festival of Making showcased and engaged visitors in the trees and nature of the town centre
- Pumpkin pulp, skins and seeds from the free Pumpkin Carving Workshops which were part of the Saturday Spooktacular event, were donated to BID Member Nightsafe to be added to their kitchen menu for the young people they support.



WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2025

- Continuing the adoption of Blackburn Train Station
- Further environmental improvements at Richmond Terrace
- More guided town centre walks
- Working with even more charities, school groups and BID members as part of the Growing Places project
- Partnership working with Lancashire Wildlife Trust to further develop the town centre Growing Places project and deliver environmental improvements

Supporting Businesses



HEADLINES

69

69 BID member updates with information and support for BID members

12

Monthly BID e-newsletters with a round-up of BID member news

4

Blackburn Stories on social media telling the inspiring stories of our Blackburn town centre businesses

4

Blackburn BID Members provided with one-to-one business support in partnership with Boost Business Lancashire

2

Business Support & Marketing sessions provided for town centre businesses



WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2025

— Continuing to provide advice, information and support to Blackburn BID members

Financial Summary

£415k

income

£407.5k

total investment in Year 1
of 2024 – 2028 BID term

In 2024 there were 7 Executive Board Members

Blackburn BID is overseen by an Executive Board, with 7 positions consisting of businesses and key stakeholders operating in the BID area. The Executive Board meets a minimum of 4 times a year, with 5 members required to be present for a meeting to be quorate.

The Board is made up of permanent and elected positions, which allows for representation from all business sectors and key stakeholders in the town centre. BID levy payers are eligible to vote at annual general meetings and nominate individuals for elected board positions.

Blackburn with Darwen Council as the local authority for the area manages the billing and collection of the BID levy, which is then passed to the BID.

Newground CIC is the accountable body for the BID and is responsible for employing the BID Manager, financial management of the BID, administrative support for the Executive Board, and producing audited statements of expenditure and progress reports.

Blackburn BID Account Year Ending 31/12/2024*

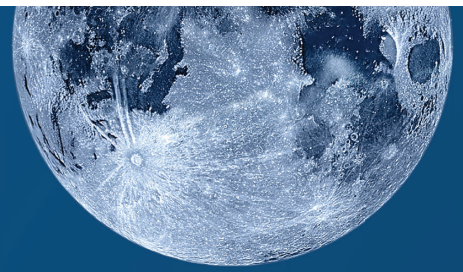
INCOME 2024

Funds b/f from 2023	-£433.81
BID levy collected 2024	£278,114.08
BID Levy Collected 2020 – 2023	£25,810.51
OTHER INCOME	£111,685.5
Total	£415,176.28

EXPENDITURE 2024

Marketing & Promotion	£257,336.96
Safer, more Secure	£56,788.40
Cleaner & Greener	£19,893.73
Supporting Businesses	£0.00
Levy collection Costs	£5,250.00
BID Management Costs	£68,246.39
Total Expenditure	£407,515.47
Funds c/f	£7,660.81

*2024 Financial Summary subject to independent financial review



“

We have loved all of the Festival of the Moon events... having something for families to access for free in the town centre is such a blessing.

BLACKBURN VISITOR

“

We loved having Helen [Moon Themed Jazz, Festival of the Moon]. You even helped our sales today so thank you!

BETHANY HUNT,
Rhode Island Coffee

“

I did feel the [Alice's Adventures in Brickburn] trail improved footfall on the street and it did make the office busier with people calling in when doing the trail. I did feel it was beneficial and would like to be involved in future events.

STEVE LOGAN,
Althams Travel Services

“

[The LEGO® trail was] a lovely family event activity which everyone really enjoyed. Children loved having their photos taken with the model and the Alice theme clearly brought back happy memories of childhood reading for the parents, grandparents etc. We definitely saw some new faces, and signed up some new members who live locally. Some families came in specifically to complete the trail and stayed to enjoy other services or took away information about other holiday activities planned at the library.

ADELE KARWAT,
Service Manager, Blackburn Central Library



“

Definitely more footfall on Darwen street [and] definitely more visitors outside and some inside [as a result of the LEGO® trail]. Some additional sales with some people commenting they did not know we were here and will return.

LINDA SHORE,
Hobkirk Sewing Machines

“

We did see new customers and an increase in footfall and sales during the Easter period so [the Easter Escapade event] was a success as far as we are concerned.

NASER BAT,
The Bat Cave

“

We did have new customers and I did notice a few families either stay or come back for food on the day they were taking part in the [Easter Escapade] trail, which is great!

LINDA HOLDEN,
Geek Retreat



Make the most of being a Blackburn BID Member

We want you to get the most out of being a Blackburn town centre BID member and to feel like you are getting value for money in return for your BID levy. Here are some of the ways you can get involved and keep up to date:

REGULAR BID MEMBER UPDATES

Blackburn BID Manager Catherine Price regularly sends out email updates with news, information, advice, guidance and support relevant and available to Blackburn town centre businesses. These updates are also shared across Blackburn BID social media channels X & LinkedIn and the Blackburn BID website. If you're not on the mailing list, please email your BID manager to be added.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

Blackburn BID send out monthly newsletters to everyone on the Blackburn BID mailing list. Each contains an overview of the updates provided by the BID Manager and a look ahead to what's coming up in Blackburn town centre. If you would like to be added to the monthly newsletter list, please email the BID Manager.

EVENTS

Blackburn BID are always looking for businesses to join in with events and activities that will attract more visitors. If you would like to be involved in BID events, competitions, activities or promotions please keep an eye out for opportunities on the email mailing list, X & LinkedIn social media channels and the monthly newsletter. If you would like support with promoting an event, activity or promotion contact blackburn@acunningplan.co.uk

YOUR BID MANAGER

Your BID Manager is **Catherine Price**. You can contact her at catherine.price@newground.co.uk or phone / WhatsApp **07860952352**

FEEDBACK

We always welcome feedback from BID members – positive or constructive. Our relatively small but dedicated team, like you, wants to showcase Blackburn town centre and our amazing BID member businesses in the most positive light possible and attract new and returning customers. If you have any ideas on how we can continue to improve please contact your BID manager.

WEBSITES & SOCIAL MEDIA

Blackburn BID works in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to deliver the multi-media destination marketing campaign Discover Blackburn, which includes a website www.discoverblackburn.co.uk, and Facebook, Instagram and TikTok channels.

Tag '**Discover Blackburn**' in your socials so that we can help to share and promote your social media content. Our Marketing & Communications service provider Cuning Plan also carry out regular content visits in the town centre.




If you would like to be included on a visit, or you have events or activity that you'd like the BID to help you promote, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your BID Manager or Cuning Plan.

Blackburn BID also has its own website www.blackburnbid.co.uk where you can find out more about Blackburn BID and our latest news and activity.

The BID also shares business and BID related content on LinkedIn and X social media platforms so you have lots of ways to stay up to date with Blackburn BID.



blackburnbid.co.uk

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Catherine Price
Blackburn BID Manager

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