

BY SKILL & HARD WORK



**BLACKBURN  
WITH DARWEN**  
A PLAN FOR  
PROSPERITY



2014-2020

# WELCOME



**MO ISAP**

Chair of Blackburn with Darwen  
Local Strategic Partnership

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Isap'.



**KATE HOLLERN**

Leader of Blackburn with Darwen  
Borough Council & Vice Chair  
of Blackburn with Darwen Local  
Strategic Partnership

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Hollern'.

## OUR VISION

“Together we are committed to delivering a more prosperous Borough - by skill and hard work.”

Only by delivering higher rates of economic growth whilst improving opportunities and the quality of life for our residents, will the Borough's future be secured and sustained.

Make no mistake, greater prosperity has to be built upon sustained economic growth. This will come from creating the conditions for growth, through wider housing choice, improved transport and broadband links, modern sites and premises, and by developing our business base by innovating and exporting. Our wealth creators need to feel supported and be allowed to get on with growing businesses and creating employment.

At the same time a more prosperous Borough will deliver greater opportunities for residents, promote a better quality of life, reduce inequalities and support stronger, stable communities.

These outcomes will help deliver a more sustainable Blackburn with Darwen and reduce dependency.

Now more than ever it is important that we lead the way and deliver this ambitious programme between our partner organisations.

We commend the Plan to you.





## OUR PRIORITIES

Blackburn with Darwen's Plan for Prosperity sets out the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) plan for the next six years (2014-2020).

These priorities are underpinned by the need to create the environment for a thriving and competitive business base, leading to improved prospects for our residents.

### Infrastructure & housing

- 100,000 sqm of new commercial floorspace across key regeneration sites including Furthergate, Freckleton Street and Ewood.
- Provision of fibre broadband to over 97% of homes and businesses.
- A half-hourly rail service to Manchester.
- Delivery of the £40m Pennine Reach scheme.
- Widening of the M65 to three lanes.
- 3,250 new homes built during the lifetime of the Plan.
- 20% of new homes built are affordable.
- More people living and working in the Borough.

### Business investment & innovation

- A larger economy with higher levels of GVA.
- A higher business start-up rate, with fewer business closures.
- An increase in the level of private sector investment by the Borough's businesses.
- More patents granted.
- More companies exporting.

### Employability

- 2,700 new jobs during the lifetime of the Plan from key private and public investments.
- More residents in work.
- More students obtaining 5 GCSEs grade A\*-C, including English and Maths.
- More apprenticeship opportunities for local residents.
- More residents qualified to NVQ level 4 and above, and fewer residents with no qualifications.

### Quality of life

- Better resident health and longer life expectancy.
- An increase in life satisfaction.
- Higher earnings and gross disposable income for residents.
- More volunteering and community activity.
- Delivery of the Blackburn Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID) Business Plan.
- More investment in the town centre and leisure & evening economies.

### Image & marketing

- Improved perceptions – residents, businesses, investors and visitors.
- More enquiries leading to increased levels of inward investment.
- A growth in visitor numbers, and footfall in key locations including Blackburn town centre.

# BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN'S LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



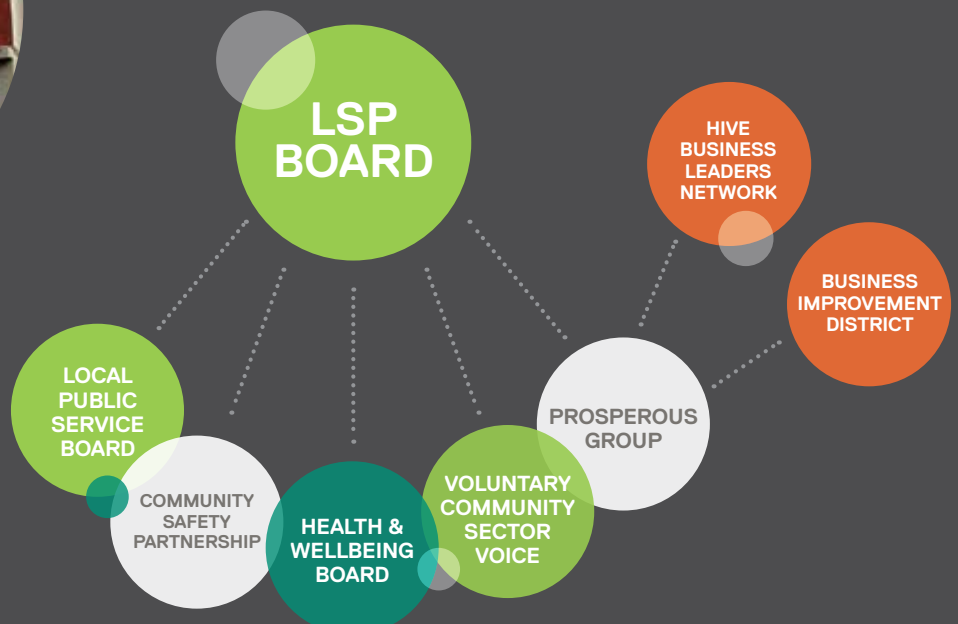
Blackburn Youth Zone – public/private partnership in action

The LSP is the forum for collectively steering resources and reviewing progress to ensure that we successfully deliver against our economic and social priorities.

The overarching LSP Board represents the Borough's strong public, private and third sectors, and is made up of representatives from the area's partnerships shown below. ✓



Renovating Blackburn Central Library





# THE ROLE OF BUSINESS

The business community is central to improving prosperity. The area's 'Prosperous Group' forms a key part of the Local Strategic Partnership structure. It brings together decision makers from across the commercial economy and is representative of our diverse business base.

It is tasked with leading our economic ambitions and has gone on to develop the Hive Business Leaders Network, which exists to ensure that all businesses are able to contribute to achieving a Prosperous Blackburn with Darwen.

## OUR AIM

"We see prosperous areas where residents can achieve their ambitions for education, learning and employment, with thriving businesses creating innovative products for local and international markets."



**HIVE**

BLACKBURN AND DARWEN  
BUSINESS LEADERS  
NETWORK



The multi-million pound Euro Garages Headquarters



The Hive Network continues to grow, boasting an influential group of more than 200 local organisations, with strengths in the manufacturing and professional services sectors. In 2014 it was commended by Government for improving the business environment as part of the Enterprising Britain Awards.

**"Any business that has a desire to transform the town, improve the prospects of local people and has a will to grow and succeed must get involved in this network. Together as Hive we can inspire prosperity into Blackburn with Darwen"**

Khalid Saifullah  
Chairman of the Hive Network  
& Director of Star Tissue UK

Both Hive and Prosperous will work to ensure that strong partnerships exist across all business-led activity. This includes the roles of the Business Improvement Districts in Blackburn Town Centre and the Whitebirk/Furthergate/Greenbank industrial area.

During the lifetime of the Plan, the BIDs will deliver significant outcomes against the LSP priorities of quality of life and image & marketing.

Activities which are progressing through the Hive network include:

- The 'Hive Manufacturing Excellence Group' – sharing expertise and solving business issues together.
- 'Creative Hive' – providing support for the creative industries and opportunities to collaborate.
- 'Hive Finance' – facilitating much needed access to business finance.
- 'Young Hive' – making the worlds of education and employment seamless
- Promoting international trade
- Challenging public sector procurement and encouraging local trading.

Join at [www.business-hive.co.uk](http://www.business-hive.co.uk)

or follow Hive on Twitter  @HiveBwD

# INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING

## OUR AIM

### Infrastructure

“To provide good quality employment sites, serviced by a well-connected and effective transport system”

### Housing

“To widen housing choice by building more quality housing for sale, including family and affordable housing”

Luxury developments within the heart of the borough



Blackburn bus station – completing early 2015



The Royals, Infirmary Road, Blackburn

## WHAT WE MUST DO:

### Infrastructure

- Ensure that sites are available for investment & employment, and that key locations – such as the BAE Enterprise Zone (at Samlesbury) and Whitebirk Strategic Site (at Junction 6 M65) – are accessible to residents.
- Continue the rollout of Superfast Broadband, including Darwen and the rural communities.
- Improve the East Lancashire rail service, and the capacity and frequency of services between the Borough and the Manchester City Region, whilst also improving passenger facilities at smaller stations.
- Build more capacity on the M65, and improve movement and access in/out of the town centres.
- Improve public transport to different areas of the Borough through delivery of ‘Pennine Reach’ in a bid to reverse the declining trend in bus patronage, and continue efforts to promote cycling and walking as more sustainable modes of transport.

### Housing

- Promote Blackburn with Darwen’s housing offer and attract developers.
- Build more houses and deliver greater housing choice.
- Address the gap in the market for larger family housing.

## WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE:

- 100,000 sqm of new commercial floorspace across key regeneration sites including Furthergate, Freckleton Street and Ewood.
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# BUSINESS INVESTMENT & INNOVATION

## OUR AIM

“To grow and diversify the economy, ensuring that Blackburn with Darwen is open for business”

WEC Group Ltd, hand crafting the future one piece at a time



Headquarters of Accrol Papers



Entrepreneurial talent nurtured by local investment

### WHAT WE MUST DO:

- Support and grow the key sectors of business & professional services, advanced manufacturing and creative, digital, ICT & media, aligned to the priorities of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.
- Understand and address barriers to business growth, including premises, competition, access to finance, recruitment challenges and skills gaps.
- Provide accessible advice and support for business which encourages investment.
- Respond to the challenge of increased competition through innovation and international trade with the support of FE/HE institutions and partner organisations.
- Further develop the parts of our economy that provide the highest levels of innovation and added value.

### WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE:

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# EMPLOYABILITY



## ↓ OUR AIM

“To improve the employment prospects of residents and ensure that business skills needs are met”



Regional Automotive Technology Hub  
at Blackburn College



Blackburn Central High School

### WHAT WE MUST DO:

- Work with business to address skills gaps, including key sectors such as construction and manufacturing.
- Address the challenges to local recruitment.
- Break the generational cycle of unemployment/low pay.
- Create more opportunities for young people and graduates to stay in the Borough and achieve their aspirations.
- Assist older people to get back into work or to stay in employment.
- Realise social and economic benefits from public sector procurement and contract opportunities.
- Link businesses with colleges and schools, ensuring that teachers and students understand industry and local opportunities.

### WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE:

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# QUALITY OF LIFE



Ewood Park, the home of Blackburn Rovers

## OUR AIM

“To improve the quality of life for all who live in Blackburn with Darwen”



Blackburn's new multi million pound leisure centre development



King George's Hall

### WHAT WE MUST DO:

- Address poor health and long term health conditions.
- Ensure residents are given opportunities to engage in activities which promote the 'five ways to wellbeing' (connecting with others, being active, giving through volunteering or community activity, keeping learning and taking notice).
- Provide cleaner, greener and safer environments.
- Improve the Town Centres offer and enable the town centres to grow.
- Widen choice in relation to leisure and evening activity and entertainment.
- Maximise the attraction and availability of our key assets, including coordinated promotion.
- Work in partnership to attract a diversity of retailers and provide support packages for small independent retailers and creative businesses.

### WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE:

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Cycle event at Witton Park





# IMAGE & MARKETING



Launch of the Hive Network  
at Blackburn Youth Zone

## OUR AIM

“To improve the internal  
and external perception of  
Blackburn with Darwen as a  
place to live, work, visit  
and invest”



Blackburn is Open Pop-up Art Centre



Church Street

### WHAT WE MUST DO:

- Maximise the potential of the Hive Business Leaders Network to promote the Borough both regionally and nationally.
- Engage with stakeholders from all sectors to understand the Borough's 'USP' and how we can best work together to improve perceptions.
- Work with key partners, such as Marketing Lancashire and the Blackburn Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID), to ensure that the Borough has a strong profile, including vibrant town centres.
- Develop a narrative for Blackburn and Darwen which is shared across the partnership.
- Implement a programme of positive messaging.
- Use key sites and gateways to promote the Borough and generate income for image/marketing activities.

### WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE:

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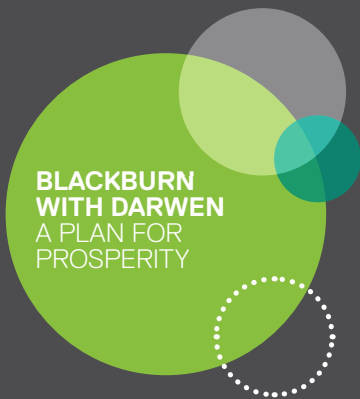
The Mall, Blackburn



Cathedral Quarter – completing 2015







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