



# THE EXCHANGE

## BLACKBURN

### Business Plan

2021/22 to  
2025/26

Development of  
The Exchange, Blackburn

Re:Source

Registered charity: CIO 1151318



# INTRODUCTION

## Business Plan 2021 - 2026

**Lord Shuttleworth**  
**HM Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire**

I know from my own experience as a chartered surveyor and property manager that the best way to look after great buildings is to use them. That is why I am so pleased, indeed excited, by the plans for The Exchange in the heart of Blackburn and delighted to have been asked to write this brief introduction to the Business Plan.

The building was opened as the Cotton Exchange in 1865. Blackburn was then at the centre of Lancashire's textile industry, with mills all across the town. Even from the start, the building was used for a variety of purposes, and was the venue for many famous people, such as Charles Dickens, giving readings and talks for the public. As the textile trade went into decline at the end of the 19th century, The Exchange found new life and purpose, becoming a cinema by 1908.

That use continued for much of the 20th century but the building itself deteriorated, and eventually large parts were in serious disrepair and unusable for public events. When I first visited The Exchange, inside it was a sad reminder of past glories, though the superb architecture and façade was still evident. It now faces conservation, transformation and rebirth, and will become a showcase venue for the whole community. It will be another example of the hope and determination for improvement that is running through so much that is now going on in Blackburn, following on from the development of the Cathedral Quarter.

I commend the Business Plan to all who want to play a part in Blackburn's regeneration story, in which The Exchange can be a shining symbol. I congratulate all those people and organisations who have brought the plans forward. I look forward to The Exchange being back in full use again soon. That will ensure the future of this fine building.

**Charles Shuttleworth**



# Contents



Introduction	2
Foreword	5
01. Executive Summary	6
02. Project Overview	16
03. Environmental Analysis	22
04. Market Analysis	28
05. Operations Plan	36
06. Financial Plan	40







## Foreword

### Business Plan 2021 - 2026

As our communities grapple with the challenges of the pandemic, it is ever more important that we have a clear vision of what we want to achieve. Our charitable enterprise needs to be good at dealing with change. Not just reacting to external factors but intentionally growing our team, adding to our skills base, and transforming the way we work to meet the needs of the community of Blackburn with Darwen.

Our vision is to see the area transformed and to provide a place of hope and inspiration. The cultivation of creativity and excellence underpins everything you will read of in the following report. If we have learned anything from our experience of the last year or so, it is that our communities have always been and will always be the beating heart of any town. Ours is no different. Healthy, fulfilled citizens build healthy, fulfilled towns and that is our agenda though the transformation and rebirth of The Exchange.

Our plan is fluid, it will change to meet the changing needs of the town however our determination to succeed is fixed. Our desire is to listen to the needs of the community and to prioritise our resources to where we know they will have the greatest impact. By making responsible choices now, we can support the ongoing recovery of the town and create a desirable, beautiful space that thrives through the Arts, Culture, and Community Cohesion projects that will operate there.

John James McGregor  
Chair of Trustees, Re:Source Blackburn

# 01. Executive Summary

## Our Vision

To play a significant role in the fulfilment, wellbeing and transformation of Blackburn.

## Our Mission

To bring The Exchange back into sustainable use as a vibrant and diverse venue and deliver activities that inspire hope, creativity, and excellence for people and communities.

## Our Values

**HONOUR** We treat others as we would like to be treated! We recognise that each person is unique, has value and should be treated equally with dignity and respect.

**INTEGRITY** We always strive to do the right thing! We value honesty, openness, trust and personal responsibility in all our interactions, behaviour and practices.

**EXCELLENCE** We bring our best! We are committed to continuous improvement to create the best possible outcomes and face challenges with optimism.

**INNOVATION** We think and dream big! We are open to new ideas, embrace change and celebrate bold creativity.

**EMPOWERMENT** We believe in people and their dreams! Creating an environment which helps develop and encourage each person to reach their full potential and achieve their ambitions.

**TEAMWORK** We are stronger together! We value relationships, and encourage a spirit of collaboration, mutual support and fun.

# Objectives

Re:Source's main objective is to restore the Blackburn Cotton Exchange building and ensure the building becomes a showcase venue for the whole community.

**COMMUNITY** Raising hopes and aspirations in the town.

**FACILITIES** To become a high profile multi-use venue used by businesses, charitable organisations, and the whole community.

**COMMERCIAL VIABILITY** Financially successful to sustain the building whilst benefiting the wider community.

**EMPLOYEES** To recruit a team of experienced and passionate employees and volunteers to drive the vision forward.

# Strategy

Re:Source will implement the following tactics to reach our goals:

**PARTNERSHIPS** Engaging with organisations and communities across Blackburn to ensure the building will become a central attraction and can be at the heart of the community.

**LOCAL OUTREACH** Building a team of local volunteers committed to reaching out to all communities in the town.

**MARKETING** Recruitment of a marketing and events manager responsible for executing high-quality local marketing and digital campaigns to raise awareness of the building.

**HIGH QUALITY SERVICES** The focus will be on building our reputation and brand image by providing the best facilities in the area and maintaining a high standard of customer service.

**FUNDRAISING** Recruitment of a fundraising coordinator to prepare applications for specific projects and improvements in building and services.

# History of The Exchange, Blackburn

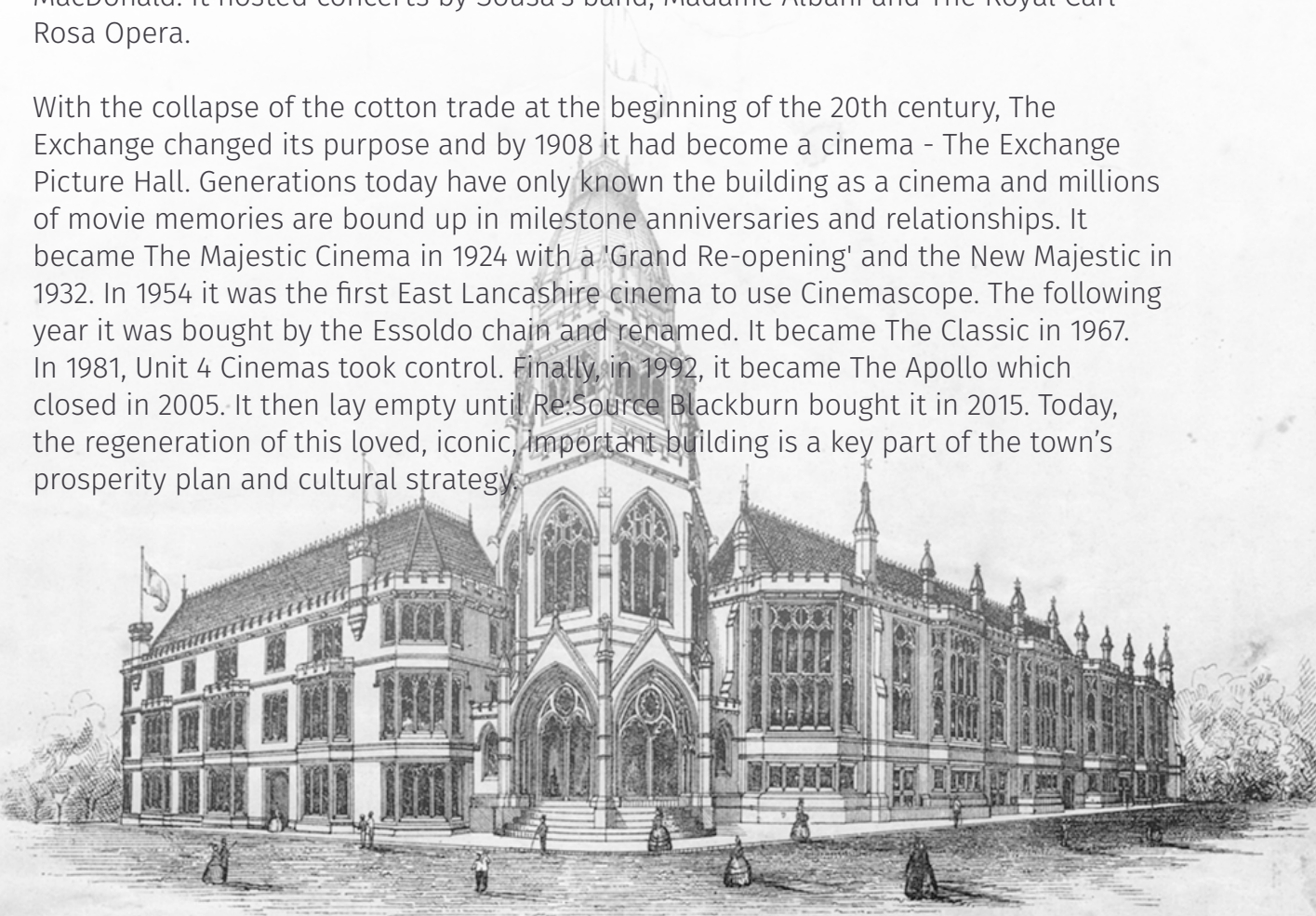
Blackburn's Cotton Exchange is a symbol of the town's prosperity at the height of the Industrial Revolution. This Grade II listed building, with its original central trading hall of immense proportions and distinctive octagonal lantern tower, remains an architectural icon in the heart of Blackburn town centre's conservation area and cultural quarter.

The Exchange flanks the corner of Town Hall Square opposite the town hall, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's administrative centre. Millions of people have gathered in this historic public arena over the centuries for milestone moments, military parades and royal visits. The building looks out on civic events, cultural festivals, and Christmas lights 'switch-ons'. It is a place where the community traditionally comes together in protest, mourning, solidarity and celebration.

Paid for by the Blackburn cotton industry magnates of the day, The Exchange served as a rival to Manchester's more extensive Cotton Exchange on Wednesdays for local traders in cloth. It opened for business on April 26, 1865 shortly after the American Civil War and blockade of cotton.

The Victorian Gothic building was soon a popular entertainment and lecture venue, hosting a performance by Christy's Minstrels in 1866 and a reading by celebrated author, Charles Dickens in 1869 - his last outside London. It was a venue for speeches by David Livingstone, H M Stanley, Conservative Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel, First World War Liberal Premier David Lloyd George, and Labour's first PM Ramsay MacDonald. It hosted concerts by Sousa's band, Madame Albani and The Royal Carl Rosa Opera.

With the collapse of the cotton trade at the beginning of the 20th century, The Exchange changed its purpose and by 1908 it had become a cinema - The Exchange Picture Hall. Generations today have only known the building as a cinema and millions of movie memories are bound up in milestone anniversaries and relationships. It became The Majestic Cinema in 1924 with a 'Grand Re-opening' and the New Majestic in 1932. In 1954 it was the first East Lancashire cinema to use Cinemascope. The following year it was bought by the Essoldo chain and renamed. It became The Classic in 1967. In 1981, Unit 4 Cinemas took control. Finally, in 1992, it became The Apollo which closed in 2005. It then lay empty until Re:Source Blackburn bought it in 2015. Today, the regeneration of this loved, iconic, important building is a key part of the town's prosperity plan and cultural strategy.





## The Story So Far

**As a charity, Re:Source is leading a high profile, grass roots development project and fundraising campaign for local people by local people. We have carried out extensive community engagement and tested the viability and practicalities of the space with major events and thousands of people.**

**We are now bringing stakeholders together to restore The Exchange and transform it into a cultural venue and community hub. The regeneration of The Exchange is part of a wider recovery plan and transformation story for the town centre which began in 2000 with the multi-million pound Cathedral Quarter.**

**The Council's local delivery plan forecasts 7,000 new homes and 5,000 new jobs across Blackburn and Darwen over the next 17 years. The Blackburn Growth Axis could result in over 10,000 new jobs and £500million of private investment.**

**New homes and residents will require new commercial and community facilities. As in all towns and cities, the high street will need to reinvent itself. There are plans to bring more 'vitality' including further commercial businesses with less emphasis on retail and more community hubs, hospitality, leisure and public spaces for people to come together in different ways.**

**The Exchange is at the heart of Blackburn's cultural, commercial and community heritage. The restoration project will take approximately five years to complete, costing £9.3 million including a capital restoration of £7.2 million. The building will be in partial use throughout most of the development project and will continue to host a range of community and cultural meetings and events. Fully restored, based on present booking demand and visitor figures from previous events, The Exchange will host hundreds of heritage, community, cultural and commercial events attracting eighty thousand people each year.**

## Blackburn's New Major Venue for a 'New Normal'

There is a growing need in Blackburn for a more affordable, inclusive venue that can be used for multiple purposes throughout the day. As the town recovers from economic and lifestyle impacts of the COVID-19, we will need to adapt and learn to live with the aftermath and continued challenges of the pandemic. As the population grows, there will be an increased demand for a venue of significant size and with high quality facilities that can accommodate:

- Arts and cultural events
- Live performances and entertainment venue
- Religious and family celebrations
- Business meetings and conferences
- Health and well-being initiatives
- Training and development

King Georges Hall is the only other live cultural venue in Blackburn town centre. As a concert hall it has multiple rooms and is used as an entertainment venue and for arts, culture and community events, managed by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council. Hire costs for the main hall can be up to £3,500, which is often too expensive for many local organisations and individuals.

Blackburn Cathedral also offers a large venue space which has hosted a range of festivals, dinners and exhibitions but there are religious barriers and regular services that prevent it being fully accessible to a large non-Christian part of the local population.

The Exchange benefits from being adjacent to the Blakey Moor Townscape Heritage Project which has created a new leisure area which includes converting historic retail buildings into new cafés & bars around cultural venues such as King Georges Hall, Reel Cinema, Blackburn College and Blackburn Museum.

A restored Blackburn Exchange building has the potential to become an integral part of Blackburn's future place narrative and cultural development – a venue that will put Blackburn on the map. As a unique venue of regional significance and scale, it can contribute to increased town centre footfall with local, regional, national and international visitors. The main hall can currently accommodate up to six hundred people.

## A Heart and Hub of Smaller Spaces

The lower ground floor has several multi-purpose rooms and a cafe/restaurant. These facilities will be used to develop a thriving community hub under the main hall and event space. These basement areas will generate a mixed economy of income from leases and lets with community organisations and partnerships. They will be able to share facilities and services and benefit from being able to work alongside each other.

By utilising and commercialising all these spaces to meet the needs of local people, The Exchange will be a cohesive, multi-use, sustainable venue. By providing an accessible, inclusive building and facilities which provide access to cultural opportunities and events in a magnificent heritage environment, we will be able to bring benefit to the lives of a diverse resident population and accommodate their growing needs.

# A Cohesive Space for the Whole Community

Blackburn is a large, vibrant and diverse town with a rich history. Due to the loss of key industries and previous lack of investment, the town has many social-economic challenges which are now being tackled through healthy-living schemes, regeneration and integration programmes.

## Key Issues

- Some areas of Blackburn are in the top 10% most deprived in England.
- Over a third of the population are between the ages of 0-19.
- Blackburn is a very diverse town. Some districts are densely populated with minorities who prefer to stay in their immediate vicinity and do not travel to the town centre.
- Women, in particular Asian women, are the least economically active social groups.

The Exchange is ideally located on the edge of the town centre, between the high street and the more culturally diverse areas around Sudell Cross and Preston New Road, making it geographically accessible to all communities in the town.

It is a potentially cohesive space bringing people together from all backgrounds as visitors and as volunteers. The strands that connect diverse communities, the Blackburn DNA that unites us is found in the two themes of manufacturing and cinema-going.



# Project Team

The trustees and management team of this development are experienced local professionals from a range of sectors. We are passionate about the restoration of The Exchange and our role in the transformation of Blackburn, the place and its people.

With the launch of this business plan in September 2021, we will continue to grow a team of experienced professionals. These ambassadors will be actively recruited to strengthen the Trustee and Advisory Boards.

## Trustees



### John James McGregor (Chair)

John James has more than twenty years of experience in business leadership and management roles. He led a highly successful Mergers & Acquisitions team in the North-West of England for thirteen years and currently works for a social healthcare charity.



### Nudrat Mughal

Nudrat is Project Manager at Action Factory community arts, a trustee of YMCA Blackburn, a coordinator for Building Bridges Burnley and a Director of Blackburn Festival of Light. Her expertise is in building stakeholder partnerships between communities.



### Jill Mitchell

As a General Dental Practitioner, Jill was an educational supervisor, clinical tutor to undergraduates, a peer appraiser & mentor. She is a driving force in the team who set up the Green Pastures project in Blackburn to provide a solution to ending homelessness.



### Dr Alastair Murdoch

Alastair is the founder of the charity and past Chair. As well as extensive leadership and property development experience, he has been a Doctor in the town for 40 years and is well known for his pioneering work with Cornerstone medical practice.



### Janet Murdoch

Janet has a wide range of experience as a Staff Nurse in A&E, as a qualified Adult Education lecturer and as a ministry course leader. She and Alastair lead Re:Ignite Church.



## Advisors



### Peter Lumsden

A community activist and an interfaith connector who has experience in a wide circle of grass root projects across Lancashire. Peter has chaired the Preston Faith Forum, has set up Citizens UK in Preston and been a trustee with Methodist Social Action Northwest. Through his involvement in Near Neighbours project in Blackburn and Burnley he sees opportunities and brings people together on our behalf.



### Harriet Roberts

With a 22-year BBC career history, Harriet is a freelance communications and event consultant and has extensive experience working with stakeholders in town centres, charity development, community engagement and heritage projects.

## Staff



### Caer Butler (Exchange Manager)

Caer has varied experience working with charities, including churches and sports clubs, and overseeing community projects. Caer has recently gained her MBA and ILM Level 7 Accreditation through the Senior Leader's apprenticeship programme.

## Investment Strategy

A significant level of investment has already been made in rescuing The Exchange from dereliction and further decay. Since 2013, Re:Source has raised £700,000 to acquire the building and carry out temporary roof repairs. The ceiling has been made safe, and the dry rot infestation is now managed. Health and safety initiatives have also been undertaken to increase all areas' capacity and open The Exchange up for ad hoc events.

The building is currently in limited use for selected partnership events which have tested its viability and suitability for a diverse range of events from a Christian youth concert to a global product launch by Adidas.

The goal is to have the building ready for a full range of commercial activities and community usage by the end of 2025/26.

## The restoration project will be broken down into the following phases:

		Timescale	Estimated Cost £
<b>PHASE 1</b>  <b>TOTAL</b> <b>£450,000</b>	Fixing and strengthening the roof to ensure it is watertight and no further damage to the building is caused.	3 - 6 months	350,000
	Restoration of the Cafe	1 - 2 months	50,000
	Installation of a platform lift and disabled access to the building.	1 - 2 months	50,000
<b>PHASE 2</b>  <b>TOTAL</b> <b>£1,750,000</b>	Opening access to all levels of the building	3 - 6 months	1,000,000
	Renovation of the lower ground floor and office spaces. Restoration of all lower ground unused space	3 - 4 months	750,000
<b>PHASE 3</b>  <b>TOTAL</b> <b>£1,500,000</b>	Restoration of the exterior of the building.	3 - 6 months	1,000,000
	Renovation of exterior Land	3 - 6 months	500,000
<b>PHASE 4</b>  <b>TOTAL</b> <b>£3,500,000</b>	Fit-out the top floor with modern equipment to create a multi-purpose venue	up to 18 months	3,500,000

**TOTAL PROJECT COST £7,200,000**

# Implementation Plan

PHASE 01

Restore the cafe, fix and strengthen the roof & install platform lift & disabled access to the building

PHASE 02

Open access to all levels & renovate the lower ground floor and office space

PHASE 03

Restore the exterior of the building & exterior land

PHASE 04

Fit-out the top floor with modern equipment to create a multi-purpose venue

**RESTORATION  
COMPLETE**

## 02. Project Overview

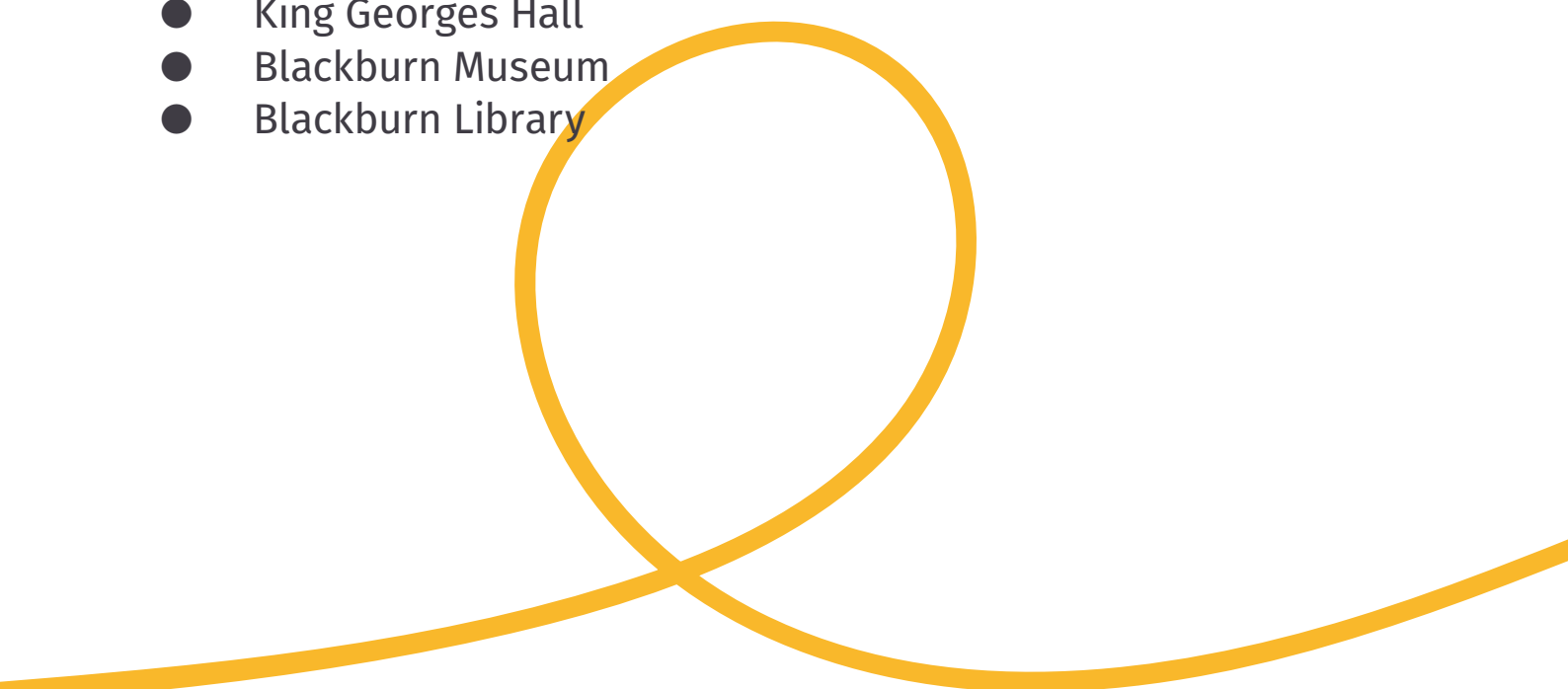
### Conservation Areas

Within the town centre of Blackburn, there are five Conservation Areas:

- Blackburn Cathedral
- Darwen Street
- King Street
- Northgate
- Richmond Terrace

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange is positioned within the Northgate Conservation Area

The Exchange is also nearby key facilities in the town centre, such as.

- Blackburn with Darwen Town Hall
  - Blackburn Mall Shopping Centre and Blackburn Market
  - Blackburn College and University Centre
  - King Georges Hall
  - Blackburn Museum
  - Blackburn Library
- 



# The Exchange Building

## Exchange Hall

The original trading hall is a large open space that has successively been used as an exchange hall, entertainment venue and cinema over the decades.

Because of its sheer size, height and unobstructed sight lines this space hall can be used for a variety of different events, exhibitions and celebrations for up to 600 people.

## Lower Ground - Exchange Hub


The lower ground is split into several smaller exhibition spaces, open plan meeting spaces and a hospitality facility with bar area. This can be used as one large room or two separate meeting spaces for up to 240 people.

## MeeMaws Café

A separate area which has been fitted out as a café and kitchen area. This can be incorporated into the main space within the Lower Ground or kept as a separate venue for up to 60 people.

## Other Rooms

The building also has rooms available to be developed into:

- Exhibition / Meeting Rooms
  - Office Space
  - Storage
  - Extra Utilities
  - Back stage area
- 

# The Vision

Re:Source's vision is to restore The Exchange into a multi-purpose destination venue serving the artistic and creative communities and to become a wellbeing hub for local residents. It will be a place to inspire renewed social and economic prosperity both locally and throughout the region bringing with it employment and training, health and wellbeing benefits for local people

Re:Source's main themes will guide The Exchange's commercial activities.

## ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

As an iconic, awe-inspiring building, providing one of the largest performance and exhibition events spaces in Lancashire, it will be a place to inspire, create, entertain and be entertained.

Potential Uses:

- Exhibition space
- Live event venue
- Rehearsal rooms
- Studios

## COMMUNITY & COHESION

Cotton manufacturing is at the root of our history. Our heritage as The Cotton Exchange links us intrinsically with the diversity of communities and generations that make up Blackburn with Darwen's population.

The Exchange will be a place for projects that bring about cohesion, conversations and collaboration.

The Exchange will become a building where people are valued, where change takes place, and exciting things happen in communities.

It will do this by linking economic regeneration, cultural renaissance, and cohesion. The Exchange will pioneer a performance and exhibition centred community hub supporting the town centre and high street as a place to live, play, meet, collaborate, create, and learn.

Potential Uses:

- Exhibition hall
- Family events & celebrations
- Community events

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

The Exchange aims to become a venue that can host various health and wellbeing organisations, programmes and workshops, including dance, fitness and wellbeing training and education events.

The Exchange will be a healthy setting, enhancing leisure and exercise, healthy lifestyles, self-care, reducing isolation & loneliness and promoting wellbeing.

### Potential Uses:

- Fitness classes
- Socially integrated events/ meetings
- Health and wellbeing classes
- Health screenings
- Child services

## LEARNING & ENTERPRISE

The development of the building and its operation as a working venue aims to create employment and training opportunities with a range of partners, including apprenticeship schemes and local colleges.

### Potential Uses:

- Product launches
- Office space
- Conference room
- Training room
- Training apprentices

# Partnerships

Re:Source has developed many relationships with local organisations and businesses. As the restoration progresses, more organisations will be contacted to host events and develop further collaborative relationships.

## Partnership Board

We are proud to be supported by a team of local organisations who are represented by volunteers on our partnership board

- Blackburn College: Director of Business Development and External Engagement – Nicola Clayton
- Blackburn HIVE: Director - Ian Brown
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Arts and Heritage – Rebecca Johnson
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Economic Regeneration – Clare Turner
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Public Health – Dr Dominic Harrison
- Blackburn Youth Zone: Chief Executive – Hannah Allen
- Community CVS: Chief Executive – Garth Hodgkinson
- Creative Lancashire: Advisor - Ed Matthews Gentle
- IMO: Director of Operations – Mohammed Tayyab Sidat
- Spring North: CEO – Angela Allen
- Super Slow Way: Director – Laurie Peake

## Collaborative Partners

Our collaborative project delivery partners include:

- The National Festival of Making – a landmark UK wide, multi-stakeholder creative event directed by Wayne Hemingway
- Lancashire Women supporting and empowering women in a range of health and wellbeing programmes
- The Wish Centre supporting families escaping from domestic abuse
- Relish English (English courses for non-English speaking women and Eastern European adults)
- The British Textile Biennial which brought us a global product launch with Adidas in 2019; international visitor and celebrity VIPS including Stone Roses' front man, Ian Brown; Happy Mondays' Rosetta Idah and magician, Dynamo.



# Events and Activities

Even in its present vulnerable development state, The Exchange has hosted many well-attended events over the past five years. Investments to secure and stabilise the building, carrying out essential repairs and maintenance have enabled us to market test the space to ensure its viability and understand the practicalities of a range of different types of activities.

## Adidas 2019 Special Exhibition, Gary Aspden, British Textile Biennial

Twenty thousand people from all around the world descended on The Exchange to launch a new Adidas trainer named after the town. The sportswear giant launched the Blackburn SPZL at a major exhibition that featured over 1,000 pairs of Adidas footwear from past and present.

The full programme of events, including gigs, talks and screenings, took place within the exhibition. Workshops were held in the basement studio spaces. Entertainment featured special guests and friends of Adidas such as Stone Roses front man Ian Brown, Happy Mondays, Rowetta Idah and magician, Dynamo.

## The Illicits Music Video

The Illicits are a four-piece rock band from Blackburn, Lancashire. The quartet who recently signed to Alan McGee's Creation 23 label creates a significant buzz with their music whilst paying homage to their Northern Industry roots. They supported Liam Gallagher on tour in 2019. They released the single Left Behind in November and filmed the video in The Exchange.

## Interfaith Festival - November 2019

Near Neighbours and Action Factory hosted a celebration of culture, community and entertainment exploring the ideas of wisdom, faith, tradition and industry as part of Interfaith Week.

## Festival Of Making 2016-2019

The Exchange is a venue for the National Festival of Making, usually a two-day event that takes over the town with a unique celebration of UK making 'from factory floor to the kitchen table', which welcomes more than 40,000 visitors to Blackburn.



## 03. Environmental Analysis

### Demography

In 2018, Blackburn with Darwen's population was estimated to be 148,900, making it the largest borough in the wider Lancashire area. (Office Of National Statistics)

It is estimated that 115,500 people live within Blackburn, 27,200 people live within the Darwen Town Council area, and 6,200 people live rurally. (Office Of National Statistics)

The borough has a higher-than-average proportion of young people compared to the national figure and a smaller proportion of older people.

Blackburn area is home to many people with diverse ethnicities and identities. The Census 2011 suggested that within Blackburn with Darwen, 66% of people identified themselves as White British, 28% as Asian / Asian British and 0.6% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British. (Office Of National Statistics)

Within the majority of non – white residents, most people identified themselves as either; Asian / Asian British: Indian (13%) or Asian/ Asian British: Pakistani (12%). However, the borough is also home to people who identify as Bangladeshi, Chinese, African, Caribbean, Arab and people of multiple ethnicities. (Office Of National Statistics)

Blackburn is also profoundly segregated, with Asian communities concentrated in sections of the town. The Whalley Range area has reportedly 95% Asian residents. They are mainly the families of people from Pakistan and India who came over in the 1960s to work in the cotton mills. (Office Of National Statistics)

Bastwell has 85.7% residents from a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) background in 2011 – primarily people of Pakistani and Indian heritage – a figure only likely to have increased in the past decade. (Office Of National Statistics)

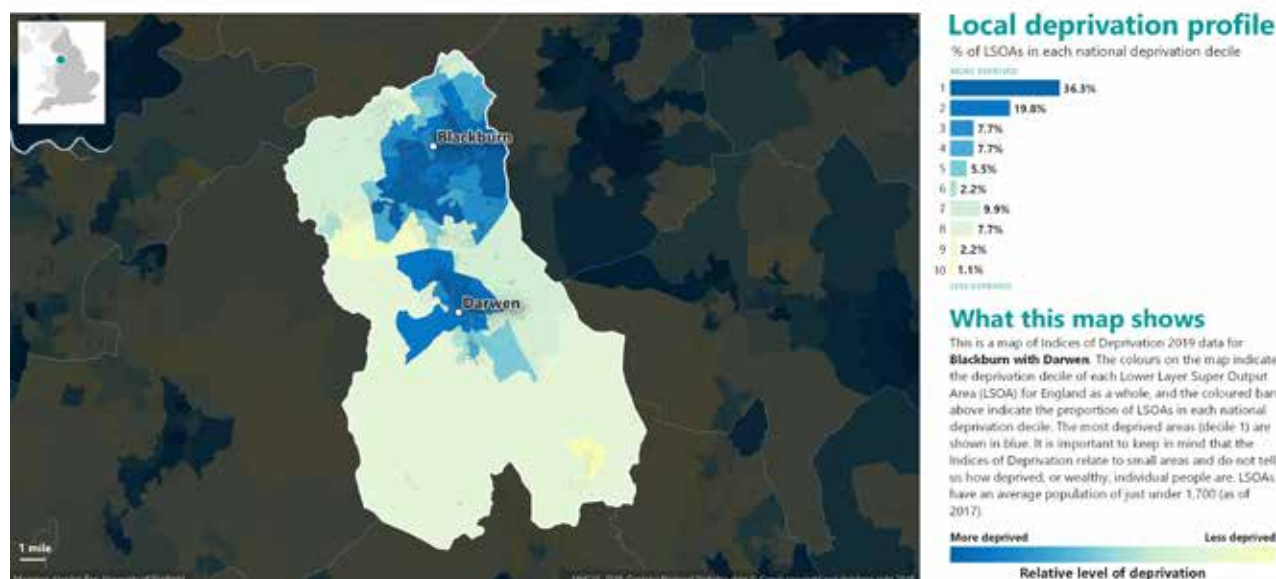
# Deprivation Scale

Some Blackburn areas are in the top 10% most deprived in England. Still, the variation in deprivation fluctuates as some communities, especially those within rural areas, are amongst the least deprived. (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)  
The village of Tockholes is only five miles from Bastwell. Ninety-eight per cent of

## English Indices of Deprivation 2019

Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

### BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN



Tockholes residents are white, compared with 14% in Bastwell, and the average salary is £38,700, compared with £27,300 in Bastwell. (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) Overcrowding is a big problem in deprived areas, with many small terraces housing three or four generations and 18% of residents saying they had too few bedrooms, more than three times the English average. (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)

Blackburn with Darwen has the highest level of economic inactivity of the local authorities in the North West area, 28.4% of people aged 16 to 64, which equates to around 25,400 economically inactive people in this age range. (Office for National Statistics)

#### Economic inactivity (Jul 2020-Jun 2021)

	Blackburn With Darwen (Level)	Blackburn With Darwen (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
<b>All People</b>				
Total	25,400	28.4	23	21.6
Student	7,300	28.6	26.1	28.5
Looking After Family/Home	8,200	32.1	18.6	19.3
Temporary Sick	!	!	1.8	2
Long-Term Sick	6,400	25.3	26.5	23.8
Discouraged	!	!	0.7	0.8
Retired	1,700	6.9	14.6	13.5
Other	#	#	11.7	12
<b>Wants A Job</b>				
Wants A Job	4,200	16.5	19.4	20.7
Does Not Want A Job	21,200	83.5	80.6	79.3

# Health

The health of people in the borough lags behind the England average on a range of indicators. Life expectancy rates for the borough remain below national levels. However, within Blackburn with Darwen itself, there are considerable differences in life expectancy between the borough's most and least deprived areas. (Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council)

Male life expectancy  
at birth

**76.9 years**

Within the borough male life expectancy at birth is lower than that of the Lancashire, North West and English averages.

In 2016-18, the borough had the 11th equal lowest life expectancy for males out of 315 lower-tier authorities

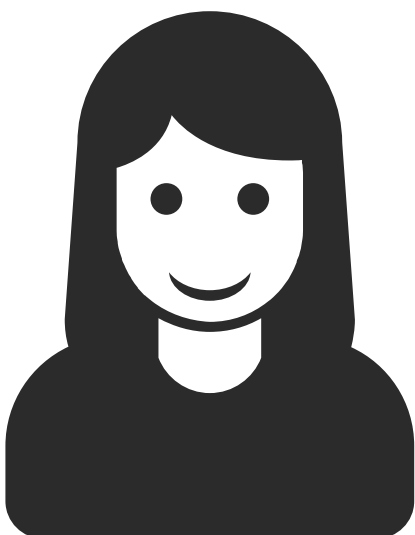


Female life expectancy  
at birth

**80.3 years**

Within the borough female life expectancy at birth is lower than that of the Lancashire, North West and English averages.

In 2016-18, the borough had the 11th equal lowest life expectancy for females, out of 315 lower-tier authorities





# Regeneration Projects In Blackburn

## Cathedral Project

Blackburn Cathedral is part of a larger regeneration plan called Blackburn Cathedral Quarter. The Cathedral Court part of the development, adjoining Blackburn Cathedral, consists of new cathedral offices, library, refectory, housing, underground car park and enclosed cloister garden.

The Cathedral Court Development is a result of 20 years of planning and building. The total project cost is estimated to be £8m.

## Blakey Moor

The work will form the next phase of the Blakey Moor Townscape Heritage project.

Revamping The Baroque - formerly Gladstone's and the Ribblesdale Hotel - was a key first stage in Blackburn with Darwen Council's project, and tenants are now being sought for the location.

The scheme aims to turn the area around Blackburn College and King George's Hall into a quarter of cafés, coffee houses, bars, and public spaces.

Jointly funded by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project will see up to 25 heritage buildings restored over the next four years, including the Blakey Moor Terrace and Northgate and Lord Street West properties.

Other schemes due soon include the renovation of 29 Northgate, a 19th Century building on an inn where celebrated Italian violinist Niccolò Paganini stayed in 1833 on a concert visit to the town.

Work is also due to start in the summer on Blakey Moor Terrace, creating two restaurants or cafe bars.

# Housing Projects

Blackburn Council has announced plans to build 7,000 new homes and create 5,000 new jobs across Blackburn and Darwen over the next 17 years.

The core goal of the Plan is to bring about regeneration recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic, the council says, with the onus on roads, schools, and health facilities.

## North East Blackburn Strategic Housing Site

This will involve building a brand-new neighbourhood in the Roe Lee ward on land between the A6119 and Whalley old Road.

The neighbourhood will provide up to 1,500 new homes.

Thirty homes could be created before 2025, 300 between 2025 and 2030, and 420 from 2030 to 2037. A further 750 will be built after 2037.

## Blackburn Growth Axis

The Blackburn Growth Axis will help link sites from the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and Blackburn town centre, linking with the Haslingden Road corridor and the M65 at Junction 5.

The Axis could result in over 10,000 new jobs and £500million of private investment.

## South East Blackburn Strategic Employment Site

Large-scale employment site at a key motorway location to attract jobs and investment to help improve the qualitative offer of development opportunities.

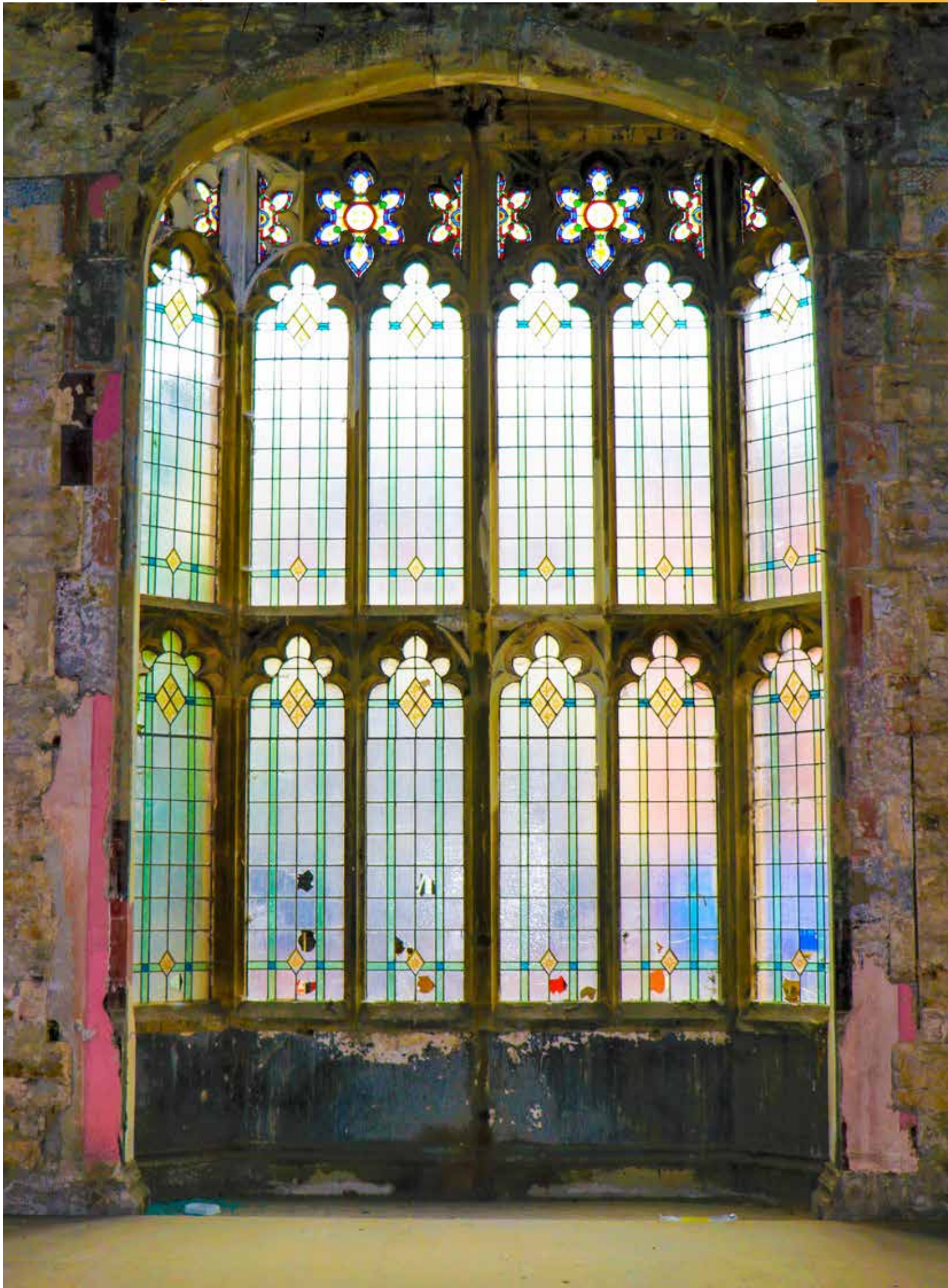
The plan is to build this on land off the B6232 Grane Road, to the southeast of junction 5 of the M65.

Up to 2,410 jobs could be created across 123,000 square metres of the employment area.

## Blackburn Town Centre Major Development Site

This is a general plan to boost Blackburn town centre and bring about more vitality, including further commercial builds and leisure and other main town centre developments.





## 04. Market Analysis

### Blackburn's Existing Venues

#### Arts & Cultural Venues

King George's Hall is the main venue for programmed and private arts in the town centre. This is mainly because of the range of facilities it offers. Event costs can be expensive for many community organisations and individuals.

Venue	Seated capacity	Standing capacity	Day rate from
The Concert Hall	1800	2300	£3500
The Windsor Suite	550	750	£1500
Kathleen Ferrier Bar	80	20	£240
Sponsors' Lounge	40	15-20	£240
BackStage Café/Bar	40	20	£200

#### Other Venues In Lancashire

Preston Guild Hall – seating capacity 2034

Blackburn Cathedral – auditorium seating 900, dinner guests seating 350

Civic Arts Centre & Theatre, Accrington – seating capacity 473

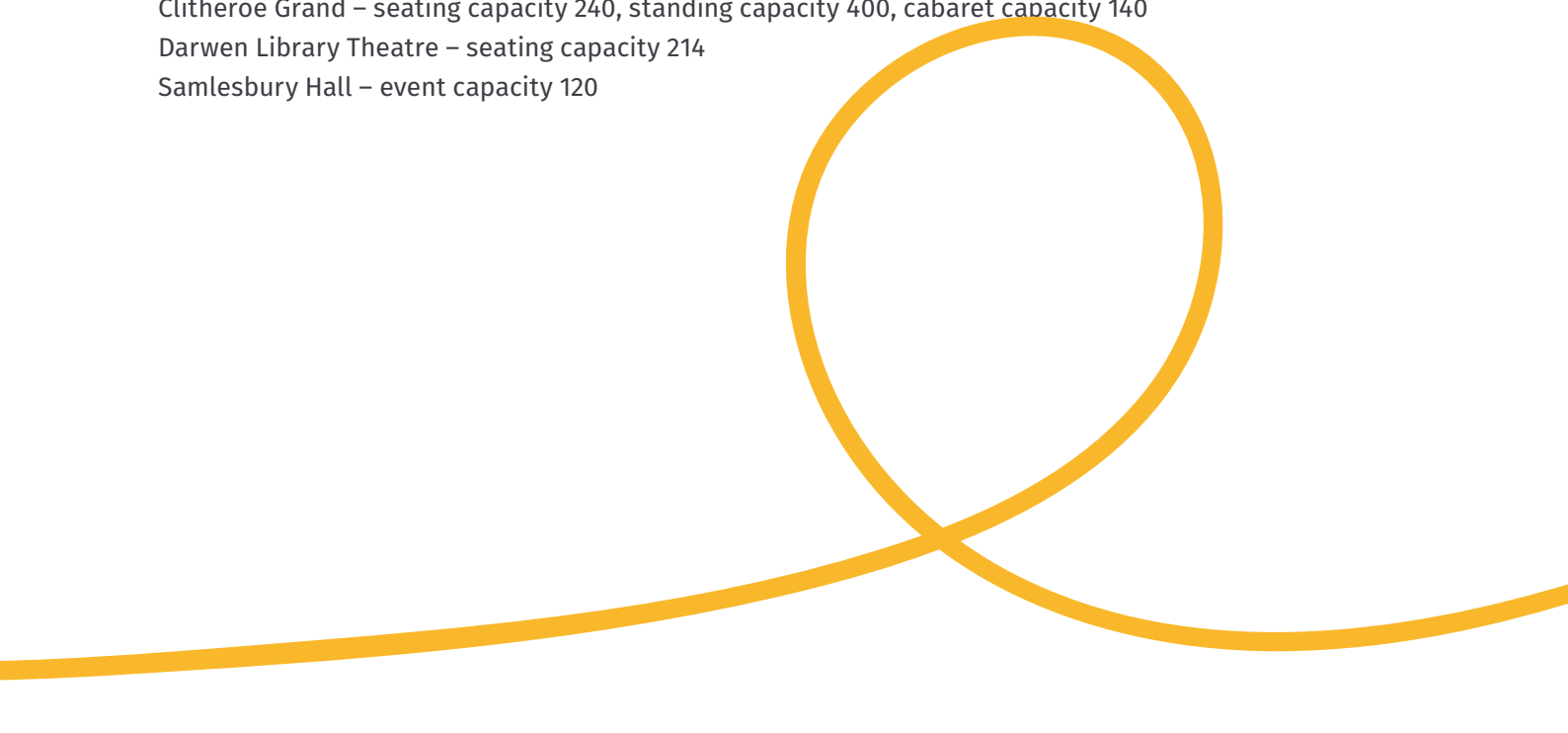
The Lancastrian, Chorley Town Hall – seating capacity 380

Blackburn Empire - seating capacity 320

Clitheroe Grand – seating capacity 240, standing capacity 400, cabaret capacity 140

Darwen Library Theatre – seating capacity 214

Samlesbury Hall – event capacity 120





## Hospitality



The hospitality industry in Blackburn is relatively weak. The only national, fast-casual restaurant chains are Turtle Bay and Nandos. Most restaurants are South Asian and fast-food restaurants. There are also some gastro pubs, but mainly on the outskirts of the town centre.

The cafés sector is competitive with 15-20 cafés located across the town centre many in the Mall shopping centre and Blackburn Market.

## Nightlife

Once known for nightclubs and a vibrant evening and early morning economy, the night time offer now is almost non-existent in the town centre, with nearby areas like Burnley, Darwen, Clitheroe and Preston attracting the younger drinking and dancing, clubbing demographic where the traditional early evening pub crawl also still exists.

In recent years several small, independent craft ale businesses and gin bars have been supported to start up such as The Drummers Arms, Shh Bar and The Rock Box. Sir Charles Napier is a community-run pub offering live music and club nights. Holy Trinity Church is used a pop-up venue for live music festivals. The Cellar Bar and Electric Church Club offer live music and DJs.



King George's Hall provides the town with a major concert venue and has attracted popular tours such as The Mersey Beatles & Jools Holland. It hosts live shows all year round to suit all tastes, from folk to punk, pop to classical. King George's Hall also holds regular club and comedy nights.

During lockdown these venues closed and it remains to be seen which will reopen and reestablish themselves.

## Weddings & Celebrations

There is an extensive range of event venues for weddings and other celebrations in Blackburn. Additionally, Blackburn is close to Ribble Valley which boasts a huge range of beautiful rural and historic country pubs and urban wedding venues including the James' Place chain which includes Holmes Mill.

Venue	Description
Stanley House	17th-century manor house complemented with modern facilities. High-end venue.
Grand Venue	Luxury banqueting, conference, wedding, and events venue located on the outskirts of the town.
Blackburn Rovers Football Club	A multi-purpose venue that can accommodate from 200 to 500 guests with two lounges and two purpose-built auditoriums.
Railway Club	Large modern and adaptable alcohol-free venue for hire in Blackburn. The venue is used for Asian events and celebrations.
Audley Centre	Moderately accommodated event hall, mainly used for Asian weddings.
The Basement Venue	Function room used for Asian weddings.

## PEST Analysis

<b>Political</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• COVID-19 economic support has sustained businesses throughout the pandemic but may affect spending when it ends in Autumn 2021</li><li>• Councils are under considerable financial pressure. This may reduce local funding available to non-profit organisations.</li></ul>
<b>Economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The proportion of economically active people is decreasing. This may level off as new developments are built.</li><li>• Recovery post-COVID-19 is uncertain.</li><li>• Lower disposable income amongst the vast majority of the population</li><li>• Higher unemployment rate</li><li>• The continual decline of the high street may affect footfall in the town centre</li></ul>
<b>Socio-Cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ageing population</li><li>• Possible effects of long Covid may last for many years and dampen demand for events.</li><li>• Diverse population - an opportunity for The Exchange to become a venue for all communities to promote cohesion.</li></ul>
<b>Technological</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Virtual meetings and events may reduce demand for co-working and training rooms.</li><li>• The growth of gaming and Virtual Reality within younger segments of the population may reduce the demand for nightlife venues and entertainment venues.</li><li>• Cashless society - The Exchange will have to ensure we can accept online payments.</li></ul>

# SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iconic building with a commanding presence in the town centre of Blackburn</li> <li>• Committed and passionate trustees with a strong sense of mission and diverse skill set</li> <li>• Strong support from town partners on which to be built – BwDBC, Blackburn BID, Festival of Making etc.</li> <li>• Strong local associations – people want to see it restored and brought back in use!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of finance</li> <li>• Lack of experience of heritage/cultural transformation projects</li> <li>• The building is located in an area of the town currently overlooked in the town – shops closing, low footfall etc.</li> <li>• Lack of time and capacity with the team</li> <li>• Lack of diversity on the board, particularly cultural background</li> <li>• Inaccessibility of the building and lack of visitor facilities severely restricts current use</li> <li>• Ambitions for wider public community engagement in the project yet to be realised</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for town centres and cultural venues due to COVID</li> <li>• The proximity of The Exchange, Making Rooms, Museum and The Bureau gives a rich opportunity for the cultural quarter growth.</li> <li>• The potential for the project to inspire hope and raise aspiration for Blackburn</li> <li>• Heritage of the building offers rich multiple narratives to explore and engage.</li> <li>• A restored venue could offer a centre for the promotion of community cohesion.</li> <li>• Restoration of The Exchange is critical to realising Blackburn's Cultural Quarter ambitions.</li> <li>• Potential for using Tony's Ballroom, which would offer expanded opportunities</li> <li>• Harness the high degree of local support and community ownership of the building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive funding environment</li> <li>• Potential overlap with other cultural projects gives the risk of duplication and confusion.</li> <li>• Lack of strategic plan for the whole of Blackburn town centre</li> <li>• The huge scale of the building</li> <li>• Financial sustainability</li> <li>• Silo working in the town</li> <li>• Other large venues see the project as a threat, e.g., Cathedral, King George's Hall and Blackburn Empire.</li> <li>• Slow progress risks lack momentum and loss of public interest</li> <li>• Long timeline risks loss of key people</li> <li>• Project demands and setbacks resulting in a tired trustee board</li> <li>• Poor health and aspirations of the local community</li> <li>• Ongoing maintenance needs of the significant historic building.</li> <li>• Poor perception of Blackburn from broader community and region</li> <li>• The decline of the High Street</li> <li>• Over-dependence on volunteers</li> </ul>

# Marketing Plan

## Brand development

We aim to develop a clear narrative and future facing story which captures our DNA, supports our journey and delivers the business plan. This will involve developing a strong visual graphic identity, branding guidelines and toolkit. We will use this to create digital assets including a suite of photography and videography and a building 'icon' or badge in order to raise the profile of the development to:

**A**

design and publish our business plan (September 2021)

**B**

become the 'No 1 charity/cause of choice supported, celebrated and shared by the community

**C**

strengthen funding applications

**D**

attract venue bookings

**E**

recruit volunteers and corporate supporters/partners

**F**

establish relationships with other like-minded organisations within the local community.

**G**

grow our online presence by developing our digital channels

**H**

support an initial crowdfunding and other fundraising campaigns

**I**

shape a marketing showroom visitor space to bring people to so that they can literally 'step into the story' and see the timeline of the journey ahead and where they might 'fit'.


**To deliver this we will recruit a marketing manager and volunteers.**

## Identified Audiences

- High profile and high net worth individuals and key stakeholders (movers and shakers) in each of our themed sector areas. (Health and Wellbeing, Education and Enterprise, Arts and Culture, Community and Cohesion).
- 'One off' commercial venue hirers, event organisers, festivals, individuals and organisations which want to hire the main hall and smaller spaces for events and activities
- Community organisations and potential development partners interested in longer term collaborative work.
- Targeted specific audiences linked to the type of events that are staged, e.g., Visual arts, music, sports gear, heritage ...
- Residents and communities within a 45-minute drive of The Exchange – particularly those postcode areas identified in 2015 as having available disposable income and might go to Manchester, Preston or Skipton.

## Marketing Materials

Each audience identified and each diverse programmed event or activities will have its own targeted communications plan. These will utilise mainly digital platforms:

- Website: being developed to include future funding applications.
  - Social media profiles: particularly the development of Instagram and Twitter to develop our younger demographic.
  - Regular e.bulletins/text messages linking traffic back to the website all the time.
  - Annual report
  - Diverse board of Trustees and other volunteer ambassadors
  - Collaborative Partnerships
- 



## Promotions Strategy

**The staff and trustees of the business will be responsible for raising the business profile of The Exchange with local leaders and funding organisations. A multi-platform coordinated approach will include:**

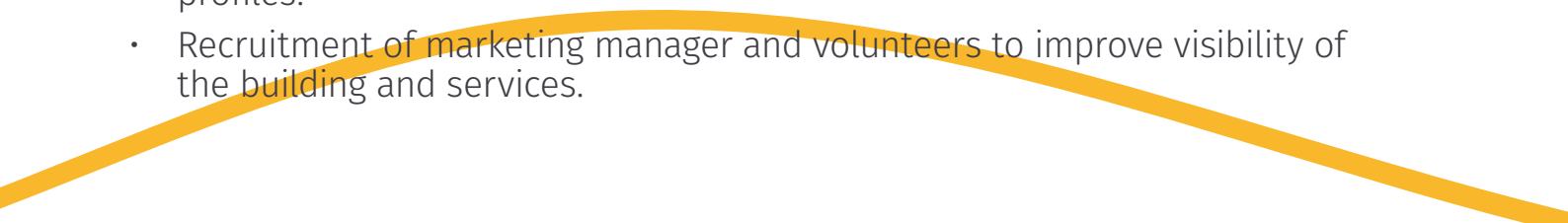
- Community flyer campaign
- Newspapers and traditional media (local radio/tv etc.)
- Partnerships
- Social media including targeted advertising spend
- Search engine marketing
- Digital screens and billboard advertising

## Online Marketing Strategy

**The Exchange Blackburn website is the hub of a digital marketing strategy which serves several purposes:**

- Hosts press releases
- Hosts an e.booking system for ticketed events
- Promotes venue hire
- Explains the past, present and future story of the project for potential partners and funders
- Hosts crowdfunding

## Marketing Objectives

- Establish relationships with other like-minded organisations within the local community.
  - Implement local campaigns with the Company's targeted market via local newspaper advertisements, flyer distribution and word of mouth.
  - Develop an online presence by developing the website and social media profiles.
  - Recruitment of marketing manager and volunteers to improve visibility of the building and services.
- 

## 05. Operations Plan

### Management Structure

#### Trustees

The board of trustees is responsible for Re: Source's governance and ensuring that its activities are within its charitable objectives. It sets the strategic direction for the charity.

#### Staff & Volunteers

Exchange Blackburn will continue to recruit management staff with extensive experience and high levels of qualifications. Staff training needs will be discussed and will support staff to access training relevant to the role that will give them opportunities to develop their practice continually.

When there are staff vacancies available, Exchange Blackburn will recruit staff who most closely align with the job description for the role on an equal opportunities' basis.

#### Staff Requirements & Recruitment

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Full / Part-time staff	3.0	5.0	8.0	11.0	12.0
Volunteers	20.0	20.0	30.0	30.0	50.0
TOTALS	23.0	25.0	38.0	41.0	62.0

## Key Roles

The following roles will be recruited:

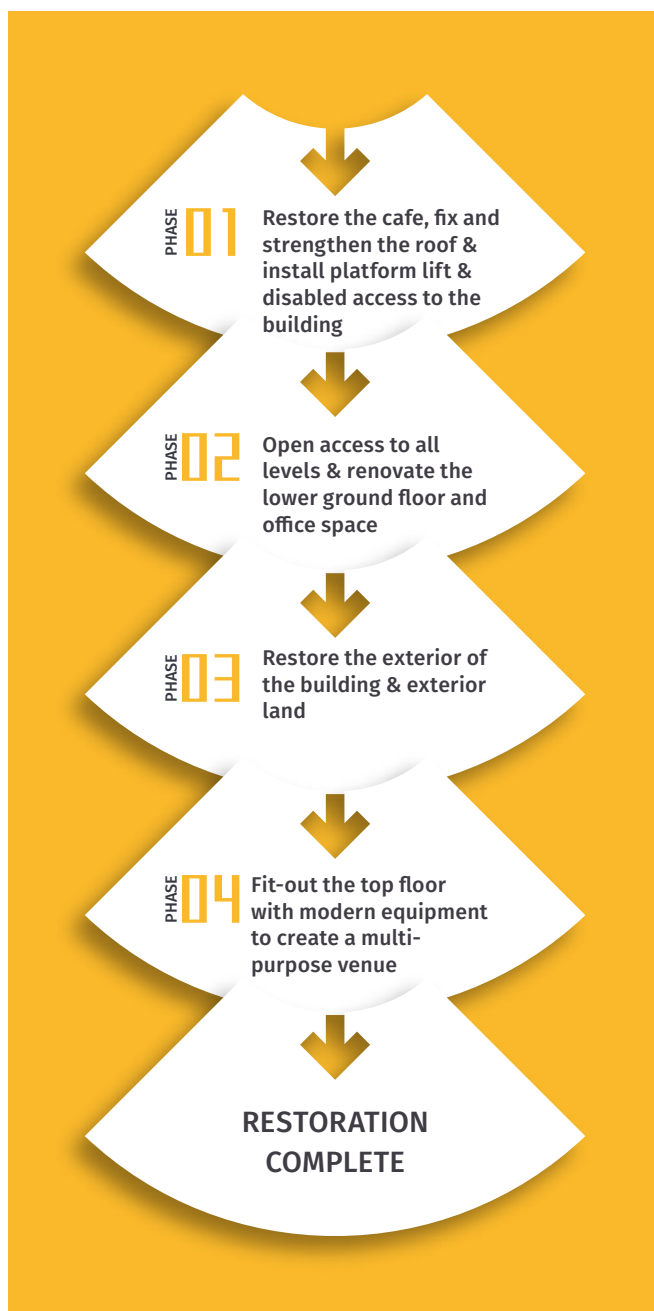
TITLE	ROLE DESCRIPTION	RECRUITMENT YEAR
CEO	Responsible for the strategic direction of Re: Source and commercial viability of The Exchange Building.	2025
General Manager	Will oversee the day-to-day operations in the building and restoration.	2021 Q3
Cafe Coordinator	Responsible for managing operations of the newly refurbished MeeMaws.	2022 Q4
Admin Assistant developed into Events Manager	The role will initially support the General Manager. The role will develop into an event and outreach position and will be responsible for working with the local community.	2022 Q4
Finance Assistant	Initially, a trainee position. They will be responsible for day-to-day bookkeeping and payroll.	2022
Fundraising Coordinator	Responsible for funding applications and managing fundraising events.	2023
Facilities / Building Manager	Will manage construction professionals and contractors working on the restoration. When the building is complete, they will handle maintenance and further development of the building	2022 part time/ volunteer expand to fuller role
Community Engagement Manager	Responsible for the outreach programs amongst all communities in the town and relationships with the press and digital marketing.	2023
HR Officer	They will be responsible for the day-to-day recruitment, learning and development of staff and volunteers.	2025
Marketing Manager	Responsible for managing the local and digital marketing campaigns of The Exchange.	2024
Admin Support	Support for the Events Coordinator	2024







# Implementation Plan



The Exchange will be fully restored by 2026 approximately and will have had extensive repairs and renovations to all exterior stonework and windows, with an historically sensitive fit out, excellently displaying The Exchange's magnificent architectural heritage.

The Exchange will be a sought-after venue which will provide an innovative take within an historically significant building. It will cater for various events and exhibitions ranging from smaller intimate gatherings to community wide festivals to corporate professional launches. With its community nostalgic feel and focus on establishing whole community use, The Exchange will be a venue for all, bridging diversity to celebrate the town's cultural inheritance, collaboratively working together to restore hope in a once prosperous town.

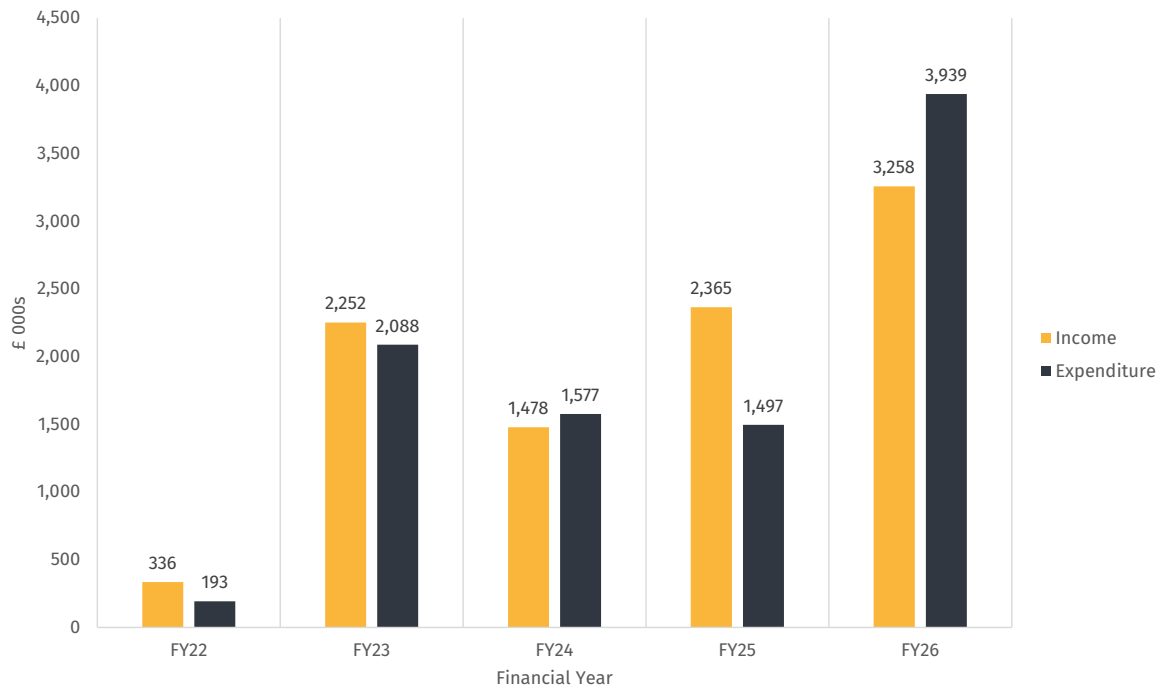
The Exchange will become pivotal to the redevelopment of The Cultural Quarter within Blackburn town centre, pioneering and re-purposing a once derelict architecturally significant building and bringing it back into vibrant, sustainable use. Inevitably, this benefits all town centre and wider ranging stakeholders through increased footfall thus bringing greater prosperity to a town currently placing high overall on the deprivation scale within England.



## 06. Financial Plan

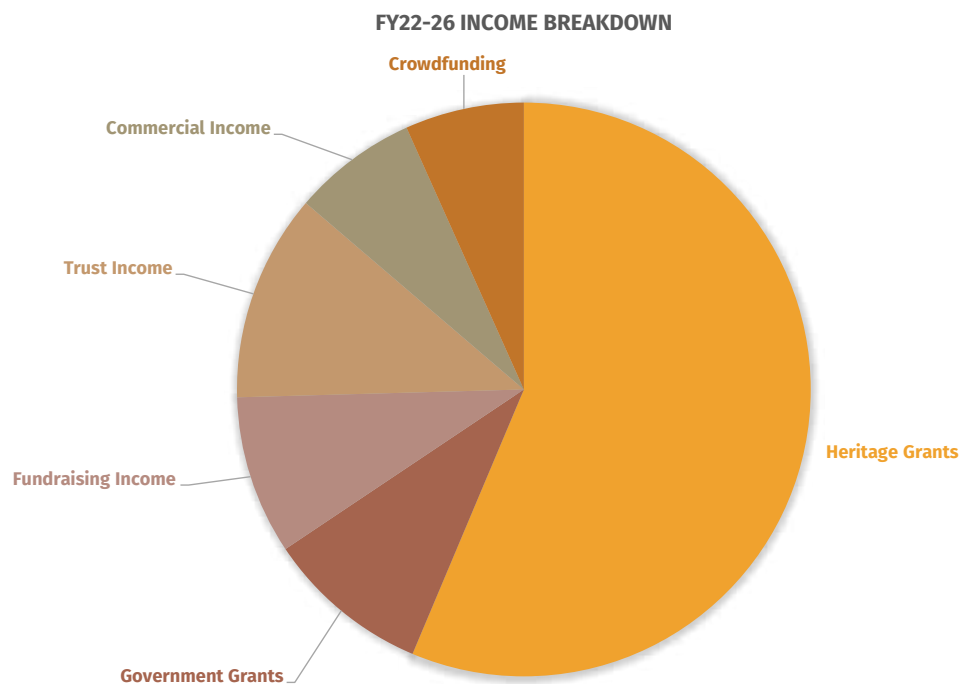
### Financial Performance

#### Income & Expenditure



#### Income Sources

Income generation during 2021/22 is expected to be via a high-profile crowdfunding campaign and heritage grants to fund architectural plans to RIBA 3. Grant applications from National Lottery Heritage Fund and other trusts are expected to be realised in 2022/23 and 2024-2026 to fund subsequent works.



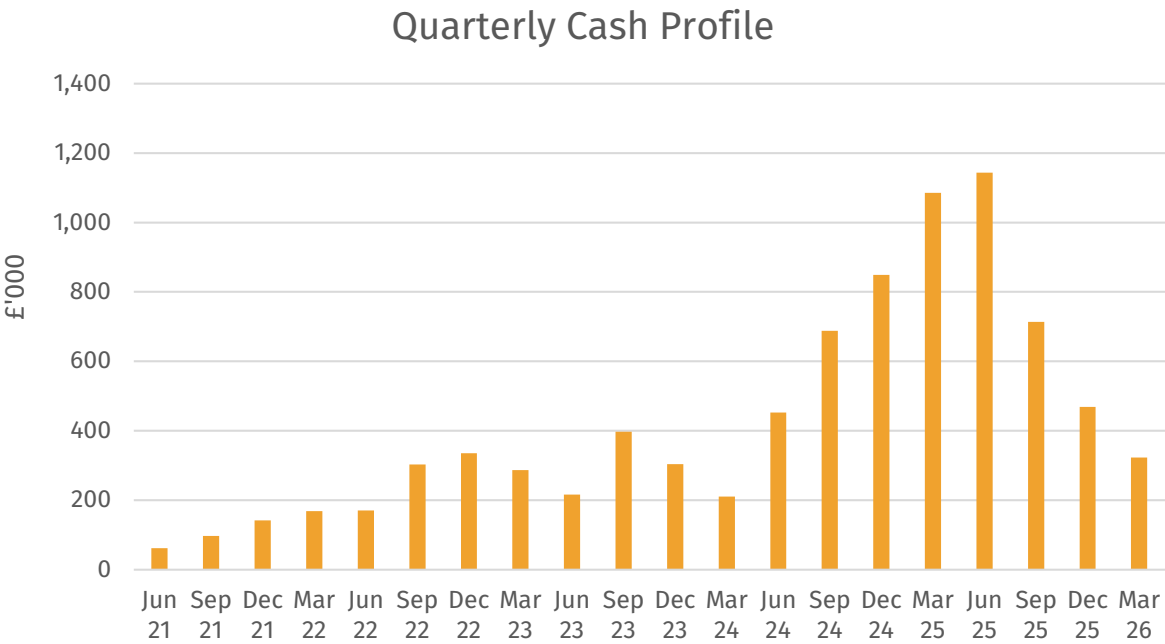
Expenditure

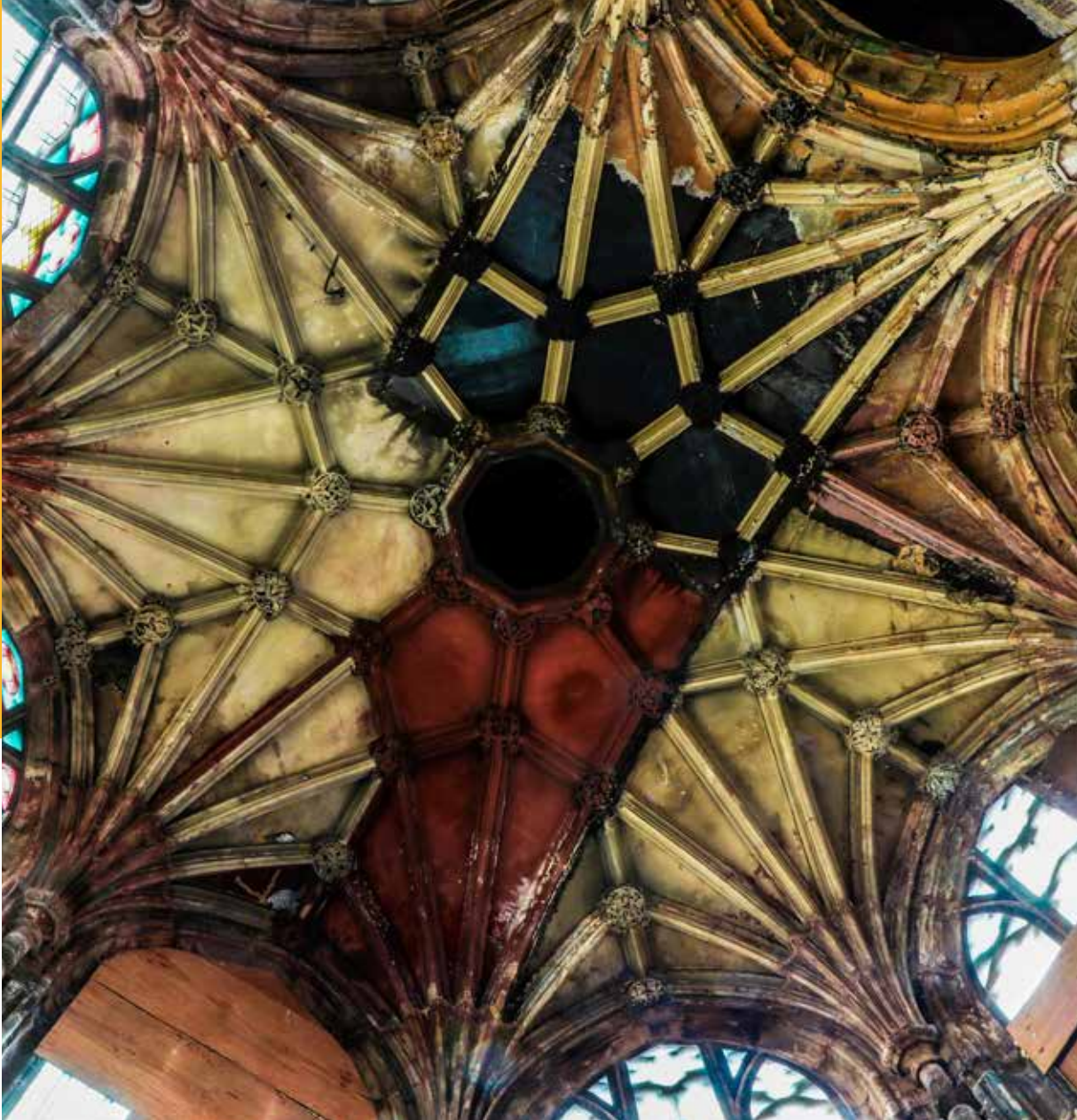
For the first three years of the restoration, expenditure will be focused on major construction works. In 2023/24, expenditure will focus on joint project working from The Exchange to develop community interest and profile for the venue. A final large capital expenditure will occur 2025/26 to see a final decoration and technical fit-out of The Exchange to transform it into a high specification, multi-purpose venue.

Operational costs will be minimised whilst the building is restored.

Cost Analysis

Year end March (£'000)	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Capital Costs	50	1,688	1,157	941	3,364
Operational Costs	143	401	420	555	576
<b>Total Costs</b>	193	2,088	1,577	1,497	3,939





### References:

1. Office for National Statistics - Population Estimate Mid 2019
2. Office for National Statistics - Census 2011
3. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - The English Indices of Deprivation 2019
4. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council – Borough Outcome Measures – Our People
5. Office for National Statistics – Official labour market statistics









71-73 King William Street  
Blackburn  
BB1 7DT

[info@exchangeblackburn.org.uk](mailto:info@exchangeblackburn.org.uk)  
[exchangeblackburn.org.uk](http://exchangeblackburn.org.uk)

THE **EXCHANGE**  
BLACKBURN