

**REBLACKPOOL URC ANNUAL REPORT 2008-09**  
**for Homes & Communities Agency and Communities and Local Government**

Date Established	February 2005
Core Partners	Blackpool Council, North West Development Agency, Homes & Communities Agency
Board members	- 14 In place
Chair	- Sir Howard Bernstein
Chief Executive Officer	- Doug Garrett
Staff Numbers	- 21
Business Plan Period	- 2009-12
URC Area (ha's)	200



Population **31,000 (2004 figure)**

**General Overview**

**Chairman's Review**

This has been a year of review for ReBlackpool. The core plan which created its existence suffered two major blows, with Central Governments' decision not to proceed with its Casino strategy, quickly followed by the disappointment of just failing to achieve full funding for comprehensive development of the Promenade through the National Lottery funded Living Landmarks competition.

These were without doubt major set-backs, which only emphasised the need for government intervention in Blackpool. This position has not changed, and is overwhelming. In the current economic environment, the situation is likely to deteriorate further, with Blackpool rated as one of the Towns most likely to suffer disproportionately, making the case for government intervention and regeneration even more critical.

In these circumstances it was deemed appropriate to review the scope and pace of change needed to make a real difference, and this has occupied a major part of the year. The results of this work will be a revitalised Masterplan that will be the foundation for repositioning the activities of ReBlackpool over the next phase of its development.

The underlying themes of the reviewed plan will underscore and re-focus the core theme of balancing the needs of the residents and the visitors to the town. Key changes to the plan relate to timing, balance between the core interventions, and re-assessing delivery mechanisms.

There is significant work to do to build upon the base which was laid in the early part of the company's' existence, and with the full support of the key partners – Blackpool Council, NWDA and HCA, re-confirmed and minuted at the URC Board meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2009, we approach 2009/10 confident that this can be achieved.

Sir Howard Bernstein

- **Chief Executive's Review**

ReBlackpool have strengthened their team by major appointments this year, establishing a core, highly committed and dedicated team to help deliver projects on the ground. In parallel, there has been a recent reorganisation of the Board to bring in people with experience of hands-on private-sector-led delivery. With the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) now in the process of joining the Board as full Founder Members, ReBlackpool can expect to move rapidly to bring forward opportunities for site acquisitions with a major new focus on housing-led, mixed use regeneration at key sites across the town.

The Strategic Review of ReBlackpool operations and the Blackpool Masterplan, has been a key activity of both the new Chair and myself in the latter part of the year, whilst also requiring us to keep existing delivery on target.

This year we have reacted nimbly to opportunities for funding which have come along, for example with the "Tower Headland" scheme, which has successfully obtained both DCMS funding through the "Sea Change" programme, operated by CABI and ERDF monies through the NWDA. We have also been successful in obtaining funding from wider sources including EU INTERREG IVB for the "Sintropher" Sustainable transport project.

This year ReBlackpool has continued to deliver the vision of Implementing the Blackpool Masterplan. The Masterplan aims to transform the resort into a world class 21<sup>st</sup> century visitor destination that will provide a sustainable year round economy. To make the Masterplan a reality, ReBlackpool needs to continue to attract funding, investors and to bring land forward for development, whilst continuing to consult and communicate about the progress it is making.

Blackpool's case for regeneration remains as overwhelmingly strong as ever. The Masterplan strategy needs to adapt to new circumstances and to develop new ways, responding flexibly and creatively to opportunities in order to achieve long-term objectives.

Working closely with the, Council, NWDA and HCA this year we will build upon the schemes already underway, and undertake a review of the strategic plan to ensure a step change in the investment programme.

Whilst the challenges ahead are clear to see and significant, this has been another year in which we have continued to lay the foundations on which the transformational change needed within Blackpool, can be built.

Doug Garrett

#### Area of Operation

- Strategic Framework Overview

The URC covers a 200-hectare area, with a resident population of 31,000, including Blackpool's sea front, main visitor area, town centre and the inner residential neighbourhoods. Also contained within the URC boundary is Blackpool Airport, which, in response to the Masterplan's new vision for Blackpool, has developed significant expansion plans.

The Company continues to seek to secure and accelerate the redevelopment of key sites by prioritising and co-ordinating public and private investment, geared towards the implementation of the Blackpool Masterplan. It has become the primary focus for all major physical regeneration activity in the area. The URC's key objectives remain to create Blackpool as a "new national and international sustainable, year round entertainment destination. A place with balanced and healthy neighbourhoods, that is also the retail, business, civic and cultural centre for the Fylde coast sub-region".

#### Key projects within the strategic priorities

Project Name & Description	Current Position on Previous Milestones as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	Project Milestones 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2009 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010
Central Seafront I	-Continued construction activity with further phased opening of areas to the public. -3km of revetments installed. -South and Central Pier, St Chads Headlands completed. -Works commenced north of Central Pier.	-Jan 2010 - Waterloo and Manchester Sq Headlands, parade 5 complete.
Central Seafront II	-Continued construction activity with further phased opening of areas to the public. -Parades 1 – 4 opened to the public Dec 08.	-Parades 1- 4 planting and lighting complete Dec 2009.

<p>Central Seafront III (Tower Headland)</p>	<p>-Alternative funding secured to deliver tower event headland further to Peoples Playground bid failure.</p> <p>-Revised funding strategy identified for remaining headlands.</p> <p>-Dec 08 - £14m Cabe, ERDF, NWDA funding secured to deliver Tower Festival Headland and new building.</p>	<p>-May 2009 - Tower Festival Headland enhancements commence construction.</p> <p>-Jan 2010 – Wedding registrar, restaurant and Visitor Information Centre building work commences.</p>
<p>Casino Conference Quarter Site</p>	<p>The Site is still outlined for extensive development with the Council resolved to market the site to developers for a mixed use, leisure based scheme. However, the proposed implementation of marketing has been delayed to await the outcome of ReBlackpool's Strategic Review. Site acquisition in the area has continued however.</p>	<p>-Site assembly work will continue, and dialogue with police and courts services will be progressed to facilitate early relocation.</p> <p>-Works to improve the car park area will take place pending full marketing of site in Summer 2009 to secure development partner for major mixed use leisure scheme</p>
<p>Opportunity Purchases (land &amp; property acquisition fund)</p>	<p>ReBlackpool staff and retained property consultants have worked extensively to undertake continued negotiations with key property owners over acquiring key properties. Focus has been on the Talbot Gateway, Second Gate and Promenade areas. Negotiations have been concluded to acquire 10 properties, which subject to formal NWDA funding confirmation, should all complete prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March.</p> <p>Due to the above activity, a successful approach to NWDA was made to increase available project funding and also to extend the existing project delivery timetable to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009.</p>	<p>-Scheme completion by end September 2009.</p> <p>-Work to commence on developing a further acquisitions project to be funded through the NWDA programme (see reference to forthcoming Strategic Acquisitions Programme (Opportunity Purchases II) below</p>
<p>Talbot Gateway (Wider Development Agreement Activity Only)</p>	<p>Feb 09 – Development Agreement with Muse Developments</p>	<p>-Sep 09 – Outline planning application submitted.</p> <p>-Aug 09 – Statement of reasons approved by the council.</p> <p>-Sep 09 – Detailed resolution to make the CPO</p> <p>-Sep 09 – Make CPO</p> <p>-Dec 09 – Resolution to grant outline Planning Permission.</p> <p>-Jan 10 – Grant of outline permission and highways orders 247 TCPA</p> <p>The development agreement has been signed between Muse Developments, Blackpool Council and ReBlackpool. The on site delivery of the project is anticipated to start late 2011.</p>

<p>Central Corridor II</p>	<p>April 08 - Tender action: obtained and appraised tenders for construction contract  May 08 - Mobilisation: construction contract let; information issued to contractor; arranged site handover to the contractor  May 08 – March 09 - Construction to practical completion:  Jan 09 – Mar 09 -Post practical completion: administration of construction contract undertaken, making final inspections; review of project performance in use.</p>	<p>-April 09 – Construction phase complete</p>
<p>Central Corridor III</p>	<p>The first stage of the project was used to gain an understanding of the area and to determine potential for intervention. A number of initial Key Tasks were carried out in order to provide baseline information to inform the option development including the collection and analysis of information from key stakeholders, an area audit on property values, acquisition costs, ground conditions, parking needs, transport/movement and spatial/physical characteristics. This also included detailed studies into the potential to relocate a railway station and renew infrastructure. The exercise has also identified the opportunity for closer links with key stakeholders in the project area including Pleasure Beach Blackpool. Following an option appraisal exercise a preferred option has been prepared which will be considered by ReBlackpool Board in April 09.</p>	<p>Subject to Board approval and strategic fit with revised priorities emerging from the review period, it is anticipated that a bid for funding to develop the project through the concept stage. The intention would be to appoint a commercially driven team to lead on programme and scheme development. Main areas of activity will include; Programme &amp; content development, South Fylde line station relocation development and joint working formalisation with Pleasure Beach.</p> <p>The work streams will establish public realm interventions, major infrastructure proposals, identify and promote development opportunities including finalising mix and quantum of uses and also confirm acquisition priorities.</p> <p>This activity is likely to continue throughout the forthcoming year.</p>
<p>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation – systems established and ongoing data collation and monitoring activity.</p>	<p>A number of issues have accumulated in the scheme not meeting its objectives and an extension to the current scheme delivery is under discussion with the NWDA.  One of the key issues is due to the URC's new Chair requesting the undertaking of a strategic review to assess Masterplan goals, issues arising and options for going forward. The outcomes are likely to impinge upon how the URC measures success and thus upon this evaluation project. The monitoring &amp; evaluation project has therefore, effectively, been placed on 'hold'.</p>	<p>-The URC is in a period of transformation / awaiting endorsement or revision of the Masterplan as outlined opposite. There is therefore an opportunity in this period, to revise how the evaluation of the URC is approached. The URC will consider the direction and structure of this project when the outcomes of the strategic review are understood (to better inform the objectives within the URC's investment plan - principally target setting and cost effectiveness).</p>

HE Campus	<p>March 08 – Site mobilisation commenced on time</p> <p>April 08 – Construction works commenced on target</p> <p>April 08 – March 09 -main construction activity, refurbishment works, fitting out and landscaping works undertaken on time</p> <p>January 09 to March 09 – College Staff have been heavily engaged in a period of rapid expansion developing new curricula and looking into new facilities, and some relocation activity</p>	<p>-August 09 – project build completion</p> <p>-September 09 - new Campus opening</p> <p>-Output collation exercise will commence from September 09 onwards.</p>
Mecca Building/FE Campus	<p>March 2008 –Purchase of head leasehold interest completed</p> <p>May 2008 – Outstanding leasehold interests were given notice to quit</p> <p>August 2008 – Demolition Contractor procured through competitive process</p> <p>October 2008 – Vacant possession of site obtained</p> <p>October 2008 - Demolition works started</p>	<p>-March 2009 – attached “Firwood” property acquired</p> <p>-April 2009 - demolition of Mecca building completed</p> <p>-September 2009 - site remediation strategy agreed</p> <p>-October 2009 - Full Planning application submitted for FE Campus</p> <p>-January 2010 site remediation to commence in advance of construction work commencing summer 2010</p>
Illuminations Depot /FE Campus	<p>March 2008 - purchase of freehold interest complete;</p> <p>March 2008 - Leaseback of properties to Council completed;</p> <p>September 2008 – Stage C design approval</p> <p>End Feb / March 09 - demolition work commences</p>	<p>-July/ August 2009 illuminations depot demolished</p> <p>-FE Campus Approval in principle received</p> <p>-October 2009 Full planning application submitted</p> <p>-January 2010 site remediation commences</p> <p>-July 2010 council returns site to owner</p> <p>-October - 2010 construction work commences</p> <p>-August 2013 anticipate completion of construction works</p> <p>- September 2013 - FE Campus opens</p>
Regeneration By Light	<p>Planning permission received: February 2008</p> <p>NWDA approved full application: March 2008</p> <p>Installation / manufacturing contractors appointed: March 2008</p> <p>Works began in surrounding (Church, Corporation &amp; Clifton) streets: March 2008</p> <p>Works began in Birley St: June 2008</p> <p>Control equipment installed: July 2008</p>	<p>-Works complete in surrounding streets: April 2009</p> <p>-Works complete in Birley St: June 2009</p> <p>-First 'Brilliance' show: May 2009</p>
Town Centre Strategy	<p>NWDA conditionally approve application: December 2007</p> <p>Streetscape consultants appointed:</p> <p>Commercial / appraisal consultants appointed:</p> <p>Streetscape designs complete:</p> <p>Development proposals defined:</p>	<p>The following activity will be undertaken, but submission dates were not possible at the time of report submission.</p> <p>-Commercial report to be completed:</p> <p>-Draft strategy produced:</p> <p>-Report appraisal to be completed:</p> <p>-Final report published:</p>

St Johns Precinct	<p>Feature planning permissions received: August 2008  NWDA conditionally approve full application: October 2008  Land ownership particulars agreed: November 2008  Construction contractors appointed: November 2008  Vehicle prohibition order (Cedar Square) received: January 2009  Traffic regulation order (Church / Abingdon St.) received: January 2009  Easement land agreement signed: February 2009  Sculpture commission awarded: February 2009  Construction works began: February 2009  Sculpture planning permission (amendment to the existing permission) received: March 2009</p>	<p>-Sculpture manufacturer appointed: April 2009  -Church / NWDA / ReBlackpool sculpture approvals received: May 2009  -Sculpture installed: August 2009  -Construction works complete: September 2009  - First precinct 'event': November 2009</p>
Airport	The proposed funding application was not submitted due to the applicant deciding not to pursue with the project at that time.	N/A
<b>New Schemes</b>		
<p>Blackpool Housing Intervention Programme, comprising of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o North Beach</li> <li>o South Beach</li> <li>o College Site</li> <li>o HMO Pilot</li> </ul>	<p>N/A as new activity.</p> <p>Scheme development and economic appraisals following GO approval at the EP Board in September 2008.</p>	<p>-May 09 – completion of economic appraisals for South Beach(Phase 1) and HMO Pilot projects  -June 09 – HCA Regional Management Team approval anticipated  -July 09 – HCA Programmes Executive approval anticipated  -July 09 – Submission to CPRG  -August 09 – Funding agreements for South Beach (Phase 1) and HMO Pilot projects signed  -August 09 - Commencement of South Beach (Phase 1) and HMO Pilot projects  -October 09 – Commencement of negotiations on HCA Local Investment Agreement</p>
Town Centre Paving project	N/A new activity	<p>-NWDA approve application: May 2009  -Construction contractors appointed: June 2009  -Construction works begin: July / August 2009  -Construction works complete: December 2009</p>
Second Gate (Including Transco site)	N/A new activity	<p>-Acquisition of 5 houses in Princess St to be completed June 2010  -Site cleared and preliminary remediation works begun September 2009  -Transco gas works site to be purchased in June 2010  -Master-plan for second gate completed and agreed with partners</p>
Sintropher (INTERREG Tram Train scheme)	N/A new activity	<p>-April 09 -NWDA and INTERREG Offer letters received and signed  -Project commences, end-March 2009  -Appointment of external consultants, May 2009  -Short-listing of Blackpool scheme options, October 2009  -Choice of preferred option, December 2009/Jan 2010</p>

Seafront Parade 5	N/A new activity	-No timescales available at time of report submission. Scheme at early development stage
Strategic Acquisitions Programme (Opportunity Purchases II)	N/A new activity	-A new application to the NWDA will be made by end of May 09 to support a new programme of Strategic Acquisitions and -an application will be made to NWDA in May 09 for a property management fund to support holding of acquired property -NWDA Approvals anticipated by end June 09
Talbot Gateway "Main project"	N/A new activity	-Submit full application to NWDA early 09 -NWDA Approval by end Sept 09 -Project forwarded to Treasury mid Oct -Treasury approval Mid November
Future Seafront Regeneration schemes (headlands)	N/A new activity	-Scheme Design and development activity will commence from April onwards to support funding applications to provide new public realm areas and visitor attractions on the newly created Headland areas. Activity timetables and project boundaries are yet to be determined
Future Town Centre Projects	N/A new activity	-Scheme Design and development activity will commence from April onwards to support funding applications to provide new public realm areas in the town centre. Activity timetables are yet to be determined
Visitor Information Centre	N/A new activity	-NWDA / LBTB approve full application: June 2009 -Installation contractors appointed: October 2009 -Construction (alteration) contractors appointed: October 2009 -Fit-out contractors appointed: July 2010 -Alteration materials / equipment procured: July 2010 -Alteration works begin: July 2010 -Alteration works complete: August 2010 -Materials / equipment / mobile infrastructure procured: August 2010 -Fit-out works begin: September 2010 -Fit-out works complete: October 2010 -Strategic TIC opens: November 2010

### Value For Money

See attached document outlining activity undertaken / ongoing.

### Good News Opportunities For The Year Ahead

- The timely delivery of the Strategic Review will assist in develop a refreshed regeneration framework to guide the future role and investment programme of the URC and Blackpool Council's wider regeneration and economic development responsibilities
- Talbot Gateway agreement with Muse completed and key activity will begin, e.g. CPO application
- HCA funding will allow the Housing based regeneration activity to commence supported by a strong staffing complement on board
- Second Gate site development proposals – Site put to the market with a view to a mixed use leisure/retail based scheme
- University (HE) Campus for Blackpool opens
- Tramway upgrade works continue
- New seafront development proposals taken forward including the Tower Headland works commencing
- Planning for a new FE College site continues. LSC funding decision is key
- INTERREG IVB funding approval would lead to commencement of sustainable "Tram Train" Initiative
- A number of Town Centre public realm schemes (St Johns, Regeneration by Light etc) will complete leading to a much improved environment for both residents and visitors alike

### Links to Other Programmes

- ERDF funding has been successfully approved for the Tower Headland project and will also be applied for to support the Talbot Gateway scheme.
- "Sea Change" monies have been successfully approved to support the Tower Headland scheme through CABE.
- INTERREG match funding monies have been applied for to support a proposed project called SINTROPHER
- Heritage Lottery Fund "Townscape Heritage" is in the St Johns scheme

## Evaluation and Succession Planning

The 5 year evaluation is due 2010/11

Direct Output	Lifetime	Achieved up to 31/3/09	% of lifetime outputs
Public Sector investment (£m)	No target set	£97.8	N/a as no lifetime target set
Private Sector investment (£m)	No target set	£13.8	N/a as no lifetime target set
Commercial Floor Space (sq m)	No target set	4023m <sup>2</sup>	N/a as no lifetime target set
Jobs Created	No target set	123	N/a as no lifetime target set
Housing Units	No target set	0	N/a as no lifetime target set
Land brought back into use (ha)	No target set	7.4ha	N/a as no lifetime target set

Lifetime gearing

Brokered Output	Lifetime	Achieved up to 31/3/09	% of lifetime outputs
Public Sector investment (£m)	No target set	£4.5m	N/a as no lifetime target set
Private Sector investment (£m)	No target set	£150m	N/a as no lifetime target set
Commercial Floor Space (sq m)	No target set	20,350	N/a as no lifetime target set
Jobs Created	No target set	370	N/a as no lifetime target set
Housing Units	No target set	0	N/a as no lifetime target set
Land brought back into use (ha)	No target set	0.3	N/a as no lifetime target set

## Finance

Income & Expenditure account for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009

	Budget Annual £000	Budget YTD £000	Actual YTD £000	Forecast Outturn £000	
<b>Income/Funding</b>					
EP	351.5	320.4	320.4	320.4	
RDA	892.9	900.0	900.0	900.0	
Council	730.0	730.0	730.0	730.0	
ERDF					
Other					
<b>Total</b>	<b>1974.4</b>	<b>1950.9</b>	<b>1950.9</b>	<b>1950.9</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Staff Costs	1372.1	1286.0	1286.0	1286.0	66.4%
Office/Premises Costs	126.0	158.2	158.2	158.2	8.2%
Management Fees					
Consultants	235.0	319.2	319.2	319.2	16.5%
PR/Marketing	172.7	123.6	123.6	123.6	6.4%
Other	68.8	48.9	48.9	48.9	2.5%
	<b>1974.6</b>	<b>1935.9</b>	<b>1935.9</b>	<b>1935.9</b>	
Surplus/(Deficit)	<b>0</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>	

Average No. of Staff

21

Comments