



# The Bacup 2040 Vision

December 2019 Version 1



# Introduction

The Bacup 2040 Vision has been developed by local people – including proactive community organisations, businesses and partners all operating within the Bacup Town centre boundary<sup>1</sup> - in order to understand issues and build ownership of the future. There is a recognised need to intervene to both overcome challenges and make better use of the town's positive features.

The Bacup 2040 Vision focuses on Bacup's potential and how we can build on its current strengths and achievements in the recent Bacup Townscape Heritage Initiative Project; whilst addressing challenges to achieve a sustainable future.

Consultation approaches have included online and face to face surveys as well as attendance at various community events to further expand some of the ideas and take on board a broad range of opinions and priorities.

We now wish to share the Bacup 2040 Vision based on your ideas and engagement.



<sup>1</sup> Rossendale Council, Bacup Business Association, Calico Housing, Police, local primary schools and churches, Transdev bus company, Bacup Natural History Museum, Royal Court Theatre, Friends of the Fountain, Valley Heritage, CAST, BaSE, Bacup Pride, Bacup Now Events and Community group, Bacup and Stacksteads Neighbourhood Forum, The Boo theatre, Rossendale Leisure Trust, Council for Voluntary Service, as well as other local representatives from the area.

# About Bacup

Bacup is the best-preserved cotton mill town in England<sup>1</sup>. It's located to the East of Rossendale in the centre of the South Pennines and is nestled amongst natural landscape, with the River Irwell contributing to its settlement. It is now a desirable location for commuters into Manchester, Preston and further afield. Recognised for its historic character and special architecture, manufacturing prowess, stunning location and traditional past-times, which play a huge part in the charm of the town today, it now attracts creative industries, artists, countryside-seekers and innovative manufacturers.

There are many opportunities for Bacup to cherish and enhance its historic legacy and build on its distinctive character, creating a evolutionary place for all. However, there are also a series of challenges to be overcome if Bacup's town centre is to secure a sustainable future.



**Our vision sets out our ideas  
to transform Bacup  
for future generations.**

<sup>1</sup> proclaimed by Historic England

# Mission Statement

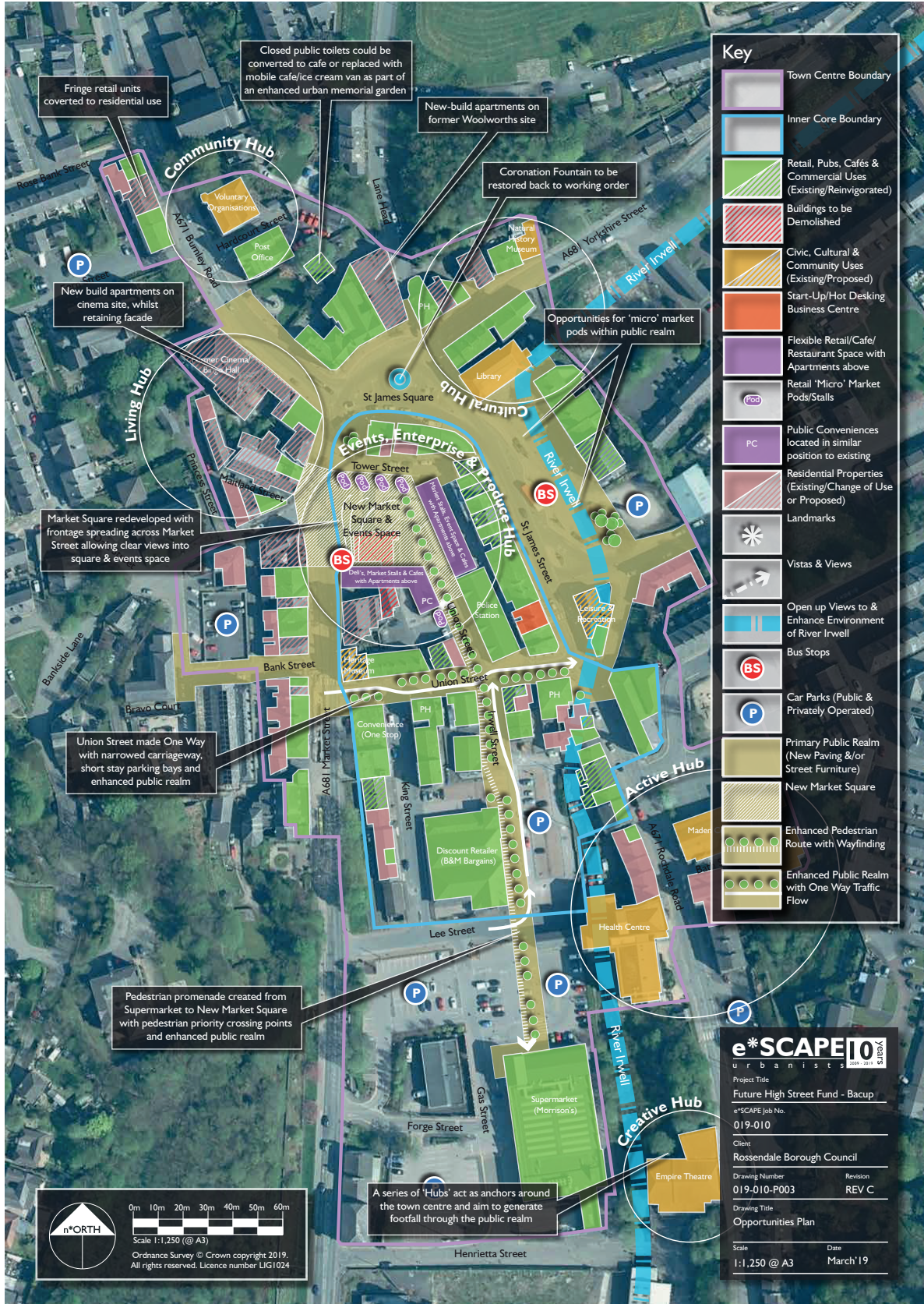
“In 2040 Bacup will be a place where people will want to go, whether it be to live, work and explore, embracing its unique location, heritage and historic legacy, so that old is at ease with the new. Bacup will be a hub for socialising, cultural experiences, work opportunities, leisure and living.”







# Bacup Town Centre Opportunities Map





# Enterprise

Bacup will be known for providing business support for start-ups and growing companies. It will have a strong tourism presence, enticing quality food, drink and cultural experiences from dawn 'til dusk.

## Enterprise Current Challenges:

- 25.86% commercial unit vacancy rate (1)
- Limited evening social activities
- Lack of retail variety
- Heritage and Countryside under-promoted
- Nowhere for start-up businesses and hot desks
- Low footfall rates (2)
- Few opportunities for secondary expenditure
- Underused Market



## How Bacup could look for Enterprise:

- Thriving with a range of unique and shops
- Booming food and drink and creative industry scene
- Known for business support and incubator hubs
- Businesses that can be accessed online as well as in the town centre
- Family, cycle and hiker friendly
- Known to businesses widely for our heritage, traditional past-times and “special” architecture
- Redefined prosperous Market with a strong reputation drawing in visitors

## To get there, we will:

- **Refocus** our core retail area and repurpose properties into viable modern use such as residential, community or leisure
- **Create** an incubator for start-up businesses and flexible working space with business support schemes and explore pop-up shop opportunities
- **Redevelop** the market area to a multipurpose food & drink, events and enterprise zone and community hub. This will involve the purchase and demolition of 12 Market Street
- **Promote** our heritage and connections to the countryside
- **Develop** plans for creative & cultural zones
- **Work** with landlords to encourage businesses into properties
- **Deliver** an online loyalty scheme and “smart city” door to door delivery
- **Ensure** our planning and licencing policies protect our special assets
- **Incorporate** digital technology to ensure businesses remain relevant and provide training to keep knowledge current
- **Support** and manage the needs of existing businesses
- **Evolve** and capitalise on our location and catchment area
- **Develop** opportunities to attract food and drink businesses
- **The Vision actively** supports the growth of the food and drink offer in Bacup town centre
- **The redevelopments** will see the creation of business space for start up businesses. Takeaways will be better suited to the periphery of the town centre
- **Champion** our creative and cultural industries

# Place

Bacup will be a functional, sustainable and attractive town centre, with greater accessibility for all. It will be a place with varied opportunities for living, work, culture, leisure and creativity.

## Current Challenges:

- Town centre retail area that's too vast
- Above average number of derelict buildings attracting Anti-social Behaviour and an unwelcoming feel
- Few opportunities for social interaction
- Transient retail rental market
- Limited housing and leisure offer
- Poor accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
- Lack of properly managed public facilities



## How Bacup could look as a Place:

- Pleasing street design for all
- A town with a focus for community & leisure
- Fully equipped events and public realm spaces
- Welcoming, attractive and accessible for all, with key facilities like Public Toilets and an "obvious" centre
- A town with an exciting food & drink and retail zone
- A place with a range of housing to meet a variety of needs

## To get there, we will:

- **Create** a strong attractive pedestrian and cycle corridor between areas of the town centre and the surrounding countryside. Promote this with quality signage
- **Create** a cycle facility to act as a destination in the town centre
- **Identify** and bring forward proposals to open up and redevelop the current market area, create a new outdoor themed market and public square
- **Create** fully accessible short stay and long stay parking areas with connected routes into the town centre incorporating modern technology
- **Explore** and **Identify** opportunities to make Union Street one way, with extended paving and re-expose traditional cobbles
- **Seek** greater connectivity to wider areas Todmorden, Rochdale and Burnley
- **Inspire** quality developments that complement the conservation area
- **Encourage** social interaction through community centre and community hub on new Market Square and functional public realm, with places to sit and relax incorporating digital technology
- **Develop** community use of A, B and D community centre
- **Refocus** town centre in inner core, reducing retail space, expanding living space and creating leisure, creative and cultural opportunities in the outer core
- **Develop** partnerships with local community groups and leisure trust to promote and support leisure opportunities in the town centre
- **Support** relationships with housing providers to create sustainable residential opportunities
- **Repurpose** empty and derelict buildings finding new & unique ways to bring them into use consider housing, leisure and community solutions
- **Ensure** accessible public toilets are available



# People

Bacup will be a safe town with something for all ages, promoting good physical and mental well-being. Education, employability, voluntary and health provision will be readily accessible.

## Current Challenges:

- Big gap in activities for various generations
- Limited youth provision
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Entrenched worklessness (3)
- Mis-conception of low-level crime, anti-social behaviour and fly tipping
- In the top 10% most deprived communities in UK (4)
- Below average health and well-being statistics



## How Bacup could look for People:

- Known for creating voluntary opportunities
- A town where people feel safe and want to be
- Opportunities and experiences for all age groups, with excellent youth and health provision
- A wealth of employment opportunities and employability support
- A place where people can absorb information whilst having fun

## To get there, we will:

- **Use** the existing community centre for access to courses and skills to enhance employment prospects
- **Provide** pathways to volunteering programme for local people
- **Actively pursue** growth & employment opportunities within the town center and local areas
- **Work** with local partners and government to reduce fly tipping and enhance street cleaning
- **Change** perceptions relating to low level crime and challenge anti social behaviour
- **Create** a youth club and develop programmes to encourage engagement with partner organisation
- **Work** with nearby high schools to link them to town centre businesses
- **Investigate** opportunities to work closely with health providers in the town centre
- **Establish** a community shop run by volunteers with apprenticeships & training opportunities
- **Ensure** sustainability of Bacup library
- **Provide** easy access to “free” activities through the public realm, involve school children to create and input ideas
- **Rossendale Works and Rossendale Futures** to have a permanent base in the town centre and to link in with other partners
- **Explore** the development of a Bacup Ambassadors Group including Youth Ambassadors

# Vibrancy

Bacup will be a booming town with a broad and varied town centre offering and cultural ambience. It will have a fresh approach to enhancing and promoting its heritage, excellent connections to the countryside, art and nature.

## Current Challenges:

- Lack of opportunities for all the family in the town centre
- Little ambience and atmosphere in the town
- Lack of a sense of place and identity
- No central point both physically and online for tourist information
- Areas of the town not linked properly to the centre
- Limited events space

## How Bacup could be Vibrant in the future:

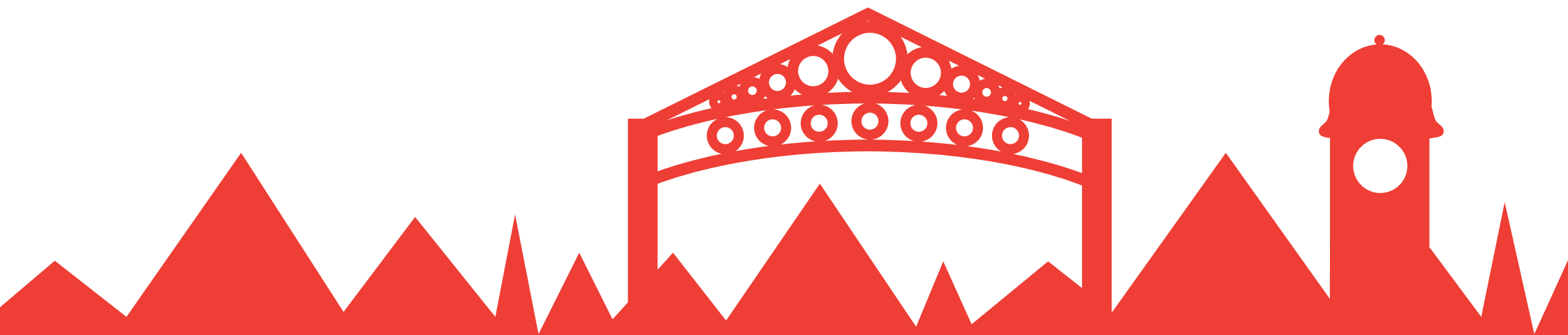
- A place for the whole family to experience with lots of opportunities to interact and engage with heritage, arts, architecture, the countryside and nature
- A place that attracts tourists and supports longer stays
- A characterful town with activities and events at the core
- A town that everyone is proud of
- A friendly place that people of all ages can relate to

## To get there, we will:

- **Explore** opportunities to add architectural lighting to key buildings making features out of them and making them more atmospheric
- **Develop** an interactive promenade from Morrisons to Union St, incorporate fun activities on the route for a range of ages
- **Encourage** nature by working closely with environmental groups and schools, creating habitats and opportunities to connect people to it
- **Develop** a themed ecology plan for the town centre and highlight links to climate change, plastic pollution and recycling
- **Create** a heritage street with traditional shop fronts, old fashioned street lighting and furniture, exposed cobbles to create a unique selling point for Bacup
- **Strengthen** the visitor economy in the wider town centre
- **Dedicate** a space for a Tourist Information Office within the town centre
- **Investigate** opportunities for a town centre public art/statue on Union Court and provide exciting opportunities for street furniture in key locations as part of a wider cultural strategy
- **Develop** a cultural plan that includes places for community art work, sensory and interpretation panels that provide good backdrops for photos and social media
- **Develop** a series of walking trails around the town centre also connecting to countryside, include film sets, mystery walks, nature etc
- **Invest** in town centre greenery and planters to create a welcoming place
- **Consider** the possibility of opening up the river to create a feature on Irwell Terrace
- **Consider** opening up the area behind the REAL building for more green space activity
- **Create** a regular events timetable for the Market Square area
- **Re launch** and re brand Bacup centre and community hub on new Market Square
- **Introduce** better and more inclusive signage throughout the town centre and on the periphery



# The Bacup 2040 Vision



#### References:

- (1) Rossendale Council Commercial Unit Survey Baseline February 2019 reassessed Nov 2019 (Refer to Annex J)
- (2) Footfall Data measured by Rossendale Council (Refer to Annex G)
- (3) Unemployment Statistics from 2011 Irwell and Greensclough Ward Profile: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>
- (4) IMDb Statistics 2015 <http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/idmap.html>

#### For more information, please contact:

Rossendale Borough Council  
Economic Development  
Futures Park  
Bacup  
OL13 0BB

Tel: 01706 252480

Email: [economicdevelopment@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@rossendalebc.gov.uk)