

# We Are Calderdale 2025

Information Pack



# Introduction

“We are Calderdale” is our official launch of Vision 34. It is a refreshed long-term vision for Calderdale and builds on the Vision 2024.

It has been developed over two years by the Calderdale Place Leaders group, with input from a multi-agency steering group.

The approach has been strengths-based, collecting stories and images from local people to highlight the best of Calderdale.

## **Vision 2034 narrative:**

In 2034 Calderdale will be an **enterprising** place, full of **opportunity**, where we can all live a larger life.

We will always be **kind** and **welcoming**. Everyone will have reason to be full of **hope** and this will enable us to thrive and get us through testing times.

We will be celebrated for our distinctive **heritage**, **nature** and **creativity** that everyone can enjoy.



# Key successes

## Health and Physical Activity

- 67% of adults are now physically active - ranking 1st among comparator local authorities.
- Independent peer review in June 2024 praised the Council's Public Health efforts.

## Education

- 91% of primary schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted (up from 83%).
- Progress 8 scores have improved, placing the area in the top quartile nationally.

## Adult Services and Well-being

- The '8Ps' strengths-based model is improving care outcomes.
- Fewer older adults (65+) need long-term care post-hospital, outperforming regional and national trends.
- Positive peer review in October 2024 highlighted commitment to quality and outcomes.

## Community Empowerment

- Over £2.8M has been invested in 50+ community-led projects via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Projects addressed health, money skills, youth engagement, and social isolation.



# Key successes continued



## Thriving Towns and Economy

- Business survival rates after 3 years rose to 59.8%, ranking 1st among statistical neighbours.
- Adult learning services has maintained a 'good' Ofsted rating.
- Tourism has grown to 7.6 million visits in 2023, contributing over £600M to the economy and supporting 5,500+ jobs.
- “CultureDale” 2024 celebrated with 550+ events and 100,000+ participants.

## Climate Action

- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita significantly have reduced—top quartile performance.
- Won national award for “Leadership in responding to the climate emergency” in June 2024.

## Council Effectiveness

- Focus on digital transformation and sustainability.
- Shortlisted for 3 national workforce awards in 2024; won “Best Wellbeing Innovation”.



# Key Areas of Achievement Infographic 2024/25





# We're All Active Calderdale

Calderdale



Calderdale's Vision 2034 is to be a place full of opportunity, where we can all live a larger life. Narrowing the gap in physical inactivity will contribute to our aspirations for people to have reason to be full of hope. Physical activity is often a catalyst for people to come together in the natural environment, enjoy the borough's distinctive heritage and to be creative. Through its key contribution to wellbeing, being active creates hope and opportunity.

Calderdale became a Sport England Place Partner in 2018. Since then, partners from across sectors have embedded physical activity into their system, ultimately making it easier for people in Calderdale to be physically active. The focus has been on groups of people and areas where physical activity is lowest. Earlier this year we were awarded a further £3.4million to build upon the progress and impact of the work to date and move forward with the '*We're all Active Calderdale*' programme of work.

*'We're all Active Calderdale'* is a group of partners working together to make physical activity more inspiring, inclusive and accessible for all. The programme of work can be broken down into three themed areas, developed and prioritised by the Active Calderdale Transformation Alliance (senior leadership board): Active Health care and Social care, Active Travel and Active Communities, with a central support function to support and enable partners to deliver successfully.



# Impact of We're All Active Calderdale

The impact of the Active Calderdale work undertaken since 2018 can be seen in the changes in physical activity levels across our population from where we were at the start of this work to where we are today.

4.5% increase in percentage of adults who are physically active  
(150+ minutes per week)

6.4% decrease in percentage of the adult population who are classified as physically inactive  
(less than 30 minutes physical activity per week)

7% increase in the percentage of children and young people who are physically active

13% decrease in the percentage of children and young people who are physically inactive



# Key highlights of work so far

- Created over 40 active primary schools who have embedded new practices and policies to enable creating more positive experiences of physical activity for children.
- Adopted and implemented new policies and processes into the planning system resulting in active environments being embedded into the local plan and subsequent supplementary planning documents ensuring we will deliver active environments.
- Trained over 300 frontline health and social care staff to increase their skills and confidence to have active conversations, ensuring that when people engage with health and social care they are supported to move more and be active.
- Invested in and improved parks and green spaces making them more accessible, safe, and attractive spaces and places to be physically active, creating new free opportunities for people to be physically active;
- Integrated and embedded physical activity promotion into VCSE organisations resulting in organisations routinely supporting their members to be physically active.
- Worked to create more accessible and inclusive formal opportunities for people to be active in their community, from walking groups, to walking football, squash at the Mosque, women's boxing sessions in the Park and many more.
- We are being recognised as a national leader in this way of working due to what we have been able to deliver and achieve, as well as for how we have approached it. We are actively sharing our approach and learning nationally with different parts of the country who are seeking to adopt a similar approach to tackling and addressing physical activity inequalities.



# Stories of Change

We're all Active Calderdale describes how the system is making changes to policy, practice and the physical environment to create the conditions which enable communities to be active in any way they choose. Below are some examples of the changes that have taken place over the last 12 months and the difference these changes have made to individuals and communities.

## Myrtle Park

Myrtle Park sits within Illingworth, a priority place for Active Calderdale's Community Led Approach. The park was identified as a valued community asset which was in decline, leading to the community feeling the space was not welcoming or attractive.

Read our [Myrtle Park](#) blog to discover how the community came together to reimagine the space and create a now vibrant hub for children and adults in and around Illingworth.





### **Women's Activity Centre**

Women's Activity Centre (WAC) is a dedicated community centre that aspires to raise the quality of life for South Asian women in Calderdale. They offer activities and services that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of those attending.

Find out how the Women's Activity Centre create inclusive physical activity opportunities on our [blog](#).



### **Brackenbed Park**

Brackenbed Park, also known locally to some as Shroggs Tip, is a large green space linking central and north Halifax. The space has long been somewhere the local community wanted to see investment in, to make the space more attractive and accessible whilst preserving the wildlife and history.

Read the [Creating an Active Brackenbed Park](#) blog to find out what changes have been made.



# Calderdale The Next Chapter



Right now, we're delivering projects across Calderdale. At the heart of our regeneration agenda, we want Calderdale to be a place where people choose to invest, live, work, visit and study.

## Brighouse

There is a real sense of urgency in Calderdale Council's approach to delivering new homes near **Brighouse**. Soon visitors to southeast Calderdale will discover 3000 new homes, part of two planned Garden Communities at **Thornhills** and **Woodhouse**, with nearby access to the £11 billion TransPennine Route Upgrade, the M62, and within easy reach of the Pennines and the Peak District. 52,000m<sup>2</sup> of high-quality space is planned for business at **Clifton Business Park** too. We're supporting these future developments with projects we're working on now:

- Development work is well underway on the multi-million-pound **A641 improvement scheme** to better connect communities new and old, and business around Brighouse.
- Calderdale Council is the accountable body for the £19.1m **Brighouse Town Deal**.
- We're delivering town centre regeneration too. We're building the new **market** now. Next up work will start to prioritise people and enhance the streetscape for Brighouse as construction on the **Heart of Brighouse** project begins.
- Calderdale College opened the new **industry 4.0 hub**, part of the town deal, in 2024.



## Elland

In Elland, a thriving market town is emerging that provides excellent opportunities for residential and commercial development in a fantastic location.

- In 2024 we completed the project to transform Elland town centre with more than £6m of funding from the UK Governments **Future High Streets Fund**.
- The funding has been used to upgrade Elland's Market Square and Southgate Square to create a new Community Hub, and new walking and cycling connections.
- The West Yorkshire Combined Authority are developing the project to bring a new **Rail Station** to Elland.
- New bridges, walking and cycling connections are planned as part of the **Elland Access Package** project.



## Halifax

Calderdale Council has secured significant investment for Halifax:

- Change on a grand scale for Halifax: the **A629 phase 2 Halifax town centre** project is enlarging the urban centre, connecting communities, and marking out high potential development space. Construction started on the first section in 2024 and is progressing well. The next stage of work will begin next year. The eastern section will feature a smart new gateway from the Rail Station to the Piece Hall and the town centre, and new routes and smart signals to improve journeys around Halifax.
- We've secured investment from the UK Government's **Future High Streets Fund** to build on Halifax's heritage and cultural strengths. We're delivering a huge upgrade for the bustling **Borough Market**, and it's nearing completion. There is a refurbished roof, new paintwork, toilets, upgrades to entrances, and smart new signage. We've upgraded **Albany Arcade** with new features so it can be used as an event venue. We've completed upgrades to **Victoria Theatre** including better access, a new café bar, and a new box office. Finally, an **art trail** with new art installations will connect visitors with Halifax's unique history, art and culture.



## Halifax continued

- Jobs, businesses and students continue to flood into our **Northgate development**: quality office, retail and education space right in the town centre.
- We're bringing a new **Leisure Centre** to Halifax. Work on the final designs, costings and programme before construction starts is well underway.
- The Mayor of West Yorkshire opened our new, award-winning **Halifax Bus Station** in July 2024.
- The Gruffalo opened the new **library** at **Mixenden Community Hub** in March this year. The hub is set to bring some great services and opportunities to north Halifax.



Image supplied by West Yorkshire Combined Authority



## Sowerby Bridge

- Work started on the new multi-purpose **public space** for Sowerby Bridge in 2024. It will link the town and the canal and will be equipped for pop-up market stalls and events, with new street furniture and ramped cycle routes to make access easier.

## Todmorden

- Calderdale Council is the accountable body for seven transformative projects, £17.5 million of investment around Todmorden in partnership with the Todmorden Town Deal.
- Work has started on accessibility improvements and refurbishment for **Todmorden Town Hall**.
- We're gearing up to deliver the **Public Places in the Heart of Todmorden** project and revitalise the town centre. Proposals have been designed to help boost local trade and provide a space to host events, festivals, and specialist markets.
- We've been working with the community to finalise plans for the **Active Todmorden** project – real change to make getting around the town easier.



# Healthy Holidays

For many children, school holidays bring freedom, fun, and fresh opportunities. But for those from low-income households, holidays often mean reduced access to nutritious food, safe activities, and social connection.

The **Healthy Holidays Calderdale Programme**, part of the national Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) initiative, exists to close that gap by providing free, high-quality food and enriching activities during school breaks.

Guided by the government's HAF framework, Healthy Holidays Calderdale delivers:

- Healthy meals
- Engaging, diverse activities
- Nutritional education
- Family support

In 2024/25, the programme reached **6,934 unique children and young people**, with over **30,000 hot meals provided** and thousands of activity sessions attended across Calderdale.

From canyoning to cooking, fencing to forest school, these activities build confidence, keep children active, and help them return to school ready to learn.



# Programme figures 2024/25

Holiday Period	Unique Participants	Holiday Club Places Attended	Providers	Holiday Schemes	Hot Meals Provided
Easter	1,570	3,170	20	24	
Summer	4,108	19,565	28	36	
Christmas	1,256	2,743	17	20	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,934</b>	<b>25,478</b>			<b>30,635</b>



## Inclusive Reach

- Primary aged children accounted for the majority of attendance (e.g. Summer 3,128 primary vs 980 secondary).
- Children with SEND were well supported: 570 attended during Summer 2024, up from previous years.
- The programme serves diverse communities, including children from ethnic minority backgrounds, ensuring no child misses out.

## Spring 2025 Programme Feedback

Sessions booked: 4,691 of 4,919 available

Sessions attended: 4,313 (up 988 from Spring 2024)

Unique participants: 1,491 (just 80 fewer than last year)

Children with SEND: 387 (212 more than Spring 2024)

Average attendance rate: **93%** — surpassing the Department for Education's 80% minimum target



## Impact and Feedback

- **90%** of children reported feeling happier and more confident, making new friends and looking forward to returning to school.
- Teachers notice better transitions post-holiday, with children more settled, engaged and socially connected.
- Parents and carers share stories of children overcoming anxiety and social isolation through the programme's support and activities.



## Innovation: The Healthy Holidays Roadshow

Developed in partnership with West Yorkshire Police and Fire & Rescue Services, the Roadshow brings climbing walls, indoor caving and safety workshops into local communities offering new experiences and strengthening community connections.



## Alignment with Vision 2034

Healthy Holidays Calderdale supports Calderdale's Vision 2034 by:

- Promoting health equity and well-being for all children.
- Supporting families and reducing holiday hunger.
- Building community resilience through strong local partnerships.
- Developing skills and opportunities for young people.

## Looking Ahead

With demand growing, Healthy Holidays Calderdale plans to:

- Expand accessibility, especially for children with SEND and those in underserved areas.
- Diversify activities to include arts, sports, mental health and digital skills.
- Strengthen collaboration with local providers and Vision 2034 partners.
- Enhance data collection and impact evaluation to drive continuous improvement.

To sustain and build on this success, continued funding beyond 2025 from the Department for Education is essential.



# Visitor Economy

Calderdale continues to shine as a beacon of natural beauty, cultural richness and community spirit. Nestled in the heart of West Yorkshire, this borough of six distinctive market towns each with its own charm and character, has become a magnet for visitors, creatives and businesses alike.

From the bustling market of Hebden Bridge to the buzzing streets of Brighouse, Calderdale's visitor economy has seen remarkable growth.



Image credit Alastair Wallace

In 2024, tourism contributed an impressive £650 million to the local economy an 8.3% increase from the previous year, with 7.8 million visitors exploring the area's attractions, landscapes and heritage. Local businesses reaped the benefits, with £438 million in direct spend supporting nearly 6,000 jobs, a 12% rise from 2022.

This success is no accident. It's the result of a bold and collaborative Visitor Economy Strategy launched in 2024, which has brought together local partners, regional tourism bodies and national organisations like Visit Britain via the West Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP). Together, working on national, regional and local projects and campaigns to elevate Calderdale's profile and create a welcoming, inclusive destination.

The borough's heritage sites have seen a rise in visitors, thanks to initiatives like the Heritage Tour Guide Traineeship, which has brought guided tours to Halifax, Sowerby Bridge, Heptonstall and Todmorden. The iconic Wainhouse Tower, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year, has welcomed nearly 2,000 climbers since reopening for the season in March 2025.

Working with Active Calderdale and with support from Sport England, the borough has enhanced the Calderdale Way and joined the AllTrails Public Lands Program, making it easier than ever for residents and visitors to explore the area's stunning scenery.

Meanwhile, the historic Halifax Borough Market is buzzing with new life. The popular Streets in the Sky Tours are set to return, and the newly launched Halifax Market Food Tours led by trained volunteers are drawing food lovers from near and far.



Image credit Ellis Robinson



The borough's cinematic appeal continues to grow, with 33 film productions taking place over the past year. From TV dramas to big-budget films, Calderdale is a go-to location for the screen industry. The success of High Hoops, a CBBC series produced by Hebden Bridge's own CanCan Productions, has led to a second season. And anticipation is building for Sally Wainwright's upcoming drama Riot Women, set to showcase Calderdale's landscapes nationally.

The Year of Culture 2024 was a landmark moment, with hundreds of events happening across the borough. The Anne Lister Birthday Celebrations welcomed international guests for a packed programme of tours, talks, and performances. The Brighthouse 1940s Weekend recently drew audiences of over 50,000 visitors, and events like the Piece Hall's Summer of Music, Hebden Bridge Duck Race and Todmorden Folk Festival continue to attract thousands of visitors, all supported by a dedicated network of over 3,000 volunteers.

As Calderdale looks to the future, the focus remains on sustainable, inclusive growth. By nurturing partnerships, investing in culture and heritage, and promoting green tourism, the borough is building a vibrant, equitable future for all. With its unique blend of creativity, community and countryside, Calderdale is not just a place to visit, it's a place to belong.





# CultureDale



Calderdale's Year of Culture brought over 550 events and 135 projects to Calderdale in a fantastic celebration of our borough's 50<sup>th</sup> year. But while our tentpole events brought communities together throughout the year, CultureDale hasn't stopped there! We still have more projects to come and more talent to showcase from our unique borough.

## **Bringing Communities Together**

Over 100,000 people attended our events throughout the Year of Culture, and many of those witnessed the power of culture to bring communities together and strengthen relationships. Marking South Asian Heritage Month in August 2024, People's Park Festival saw over 11,000 people enjoy a weekend of music, film, and food from local suppliers and artists alike, bringing Bollywood, Bhangra, and an exhibition on South Asian textiles and art. The festival included a showcase of animated films produced by students from local schools (such as Parkinson Lane and Beech Hill) through the *Lights Camera Score* project – highlighting the creative talent of the next generation!



## CultureDale continued

Later in the year, Little Amal visited Halifax as part of the Yorkshire Integration Festival. The internationally acclaimed 12-foot puppet of a ten-year old refugee girl saw adoring crowds meeting her procession between Halifax Town Hall and The Piece Hall, where she was greeted by refugees, schoolchildren and dignitaries from across the region. An estimated 1,000 people took part in the parade with Little Amal, which was held to raise awareness of the experiences of refugees and celebrate the resilience of refugee communities. Performances along the route also included Calder Valley Voices, Beech Hill Primary School, and the Ukrainian Voices Choir, all of which highlighted the inspirational power of Calderdale to celebrate and welcome its diverse communities.



April 2024 and 2025 saw the power of the world-famous story of Anne Lister bring over 650 visitors to Halifax from over 30 different countries – as far afield as Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand! These visitors were empowered by the life and legacy of the remarkable woman herself, who fearlessly led a trailblazing life as an entrepreneur, scholar, and lesbian. Feedback from the two festivals highlighted the power of walking in Anne Lister's footsteps, feeling seen and heard in a worldwide community centred around acceptance, positivity, and reflection on the changing tides of social issues throughout the past few centuries.



## **Harnessing Talent**

CultureDale's core ethos aligns with the Council's goal of harnessing and developing local talent, with the recognition that our borough is full of amazingly passionate artists and creatives. In this vein, many projects presented opportunities for residents to get involved in co-creating ambitious and imaginative projects centred around the celebration of Calderdale's heritage and talent. Northern Broadsides' Iron People project worked with the people of Calderdale to develop a live performance that reflected local voices while addressing vital environmental issues. Free workshops throughout the Year of Culture culminated in an unmissable performance at Eureka! in April 2025, which showcased the incredible local talent on display throughout the borough, all while promoting a positive and highly relevant message.



## CultureDale continued

The music industry can be a hard career to break into, but the schools and colleges throughout Calderdale are undoubtedly full of hard-working and passionate musicians with something to say. This is why CultureDale created its Youth Music Takeover programme, providing 16–19-year-olds with the chance to participate in the grassroots music scene through special workshops with technicians, venue owners, journalists and record labels to provide a comprehensive, invaluable introduction to the world of music. This project led to a programme of events throughout Spring and Summer 2025 with an impressive range of genres and featuring students involved at all levels of production: as musicians, promoters, technicians and more!



Also beginning in Spring 2025, eight local trainees took on the challenge of developing their very own heritage walks. Over twelve weeks, they have worked with local history groups, CultureDale, and Visit Calderdale to hone their research and communication skills while developing unique walks with subjects ranging from Plug riots, Pubs and how Sowerby Bridge is connected to The Beatles. Another opportunity that will bring fresh, enthusiastic spirits to the heritage sector with a wealth of passion and new-found knowledge.



CultureDale continued

## Enterprising Spirit

Finally, the Year of Culture could not have been so influential without the enthusiasm and drive of everyone involved. This includes our volunteers who contributed over 1,000 hours over the course of the year, always ready to help with events no-matter the weather! The multiple CultureDale funding opportunities also displayed the breadth of creative imagination amongst Calderdale residents, with fantastic project ideas that emphasised the power of community and culture as twin fuels for the powering of a long, fulfilling life! There is plenty more to come from CultureDale, and we couldn't have got this far without the help of our incredible residents.



This information pack has been produced by the Performance and Business Intelligence Team.

There are a large number of datasets and dashboards on our Open Data portal, [Calderdale Dataworks](#), which support Vision 2034 and are updated frequently.

If you have additional data which would be suitable for publishing, please contact [Performance.BusinessIntelligence@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:Performance.BusinessIntelligence@calderdale.gov.uk).

