



Extraordinary, Energetic, Enterprising...

Why Bradford's on the cusp of being the next big thing





Extraordinary: the city that's on the

Bradford is brimming with assets and is now well on the way to making the most of them

It takes energy, an enterprising spirit and often extraordinary levels of resilience to turn a city's perceived weaknesses into strengths – but Bradford has managed it and is now reaping the rewards.

Back in the depths of the recession, Bradford became synonymous with 'the hole' – a building site in the city centre where regeneration plans had stalled. The same fate had befallen numerous other places but for whatever reason, Bradford got more criticism than elsewhere.

It was a well-worn means to knock the city by the time the council came forward with plans for a spectacular public realm project with a mirror pool and fountains as its centrepiece. The response? 'It's a waste of money, no one will use it.' Some sections of the media even dubbed it the 'puddle in the park'.

Fast forward to 2016 and 'the hole' is occupied by

the only major shopping centre to open anywhere in the UK last year and that 'puddle' is now the multi award-winning and internationally renowned City Park.

The 570,000 sq ft Broadway shopping centre welcomed a quarter of a million shoppers in its first four days of opening and, along with local entrepreneurs, has kick-started regeneration elsewhere in the city centre.

City Park, opened in 2012, has quickly established itself as Bradford's focal point.

Kersten England, Bradford Council's chief executive, and a resident of the city for over half her life, describes it as 'our beach, our resort, it's where people come



and where we celebrate and commemorate... it's a very flexible space that brings people together, gives us a place to make contact with each other and is very sympathetic to different cultures we have here'. It's apt that the attributes that ensured both Broadway and City Park were completed have become something of a mantra for Bradford: extraordinary, energetic, enterprising.

Having worked at the council from 1993 to 2005, Kersten returned to become chief executive last year following stints at DCLG, Calderdale and York.

She says the council had to put in the 'hard yards' to support developer Westfield and make sure Broadway eventually went ahead. Similarly, the local authority had to weather the storm when it came to City Park: 'It had a significant price tag and we were challenged on it, but it's created a new reason for people to come to the city centre and I believe it played a role in making Broadway viable.'

Both developments have played their part in changing perceptions of Bradford and paving the way for an exciting future. This sizeable city is the youngest in the UK with close to a quarter of the population under 16. It's also one of the most diverse – some 85 languages are spoken.

The latter is perhaps better known, particularly given the fact that Bradford's home to the World Curry Festival and has been named UK Curry Capital five years running. But its youthfulness and scale – the district's population is 528,000, ranking it alongside the likes of Liverpool, Bristol and Sheffield – often go under the radar.

The same goes for the diversity and strength of its business base. Bradford is a hub for areas like advanced manufacturing, digital industries and logistics. It also has a growing culture of entrepreneurialism that has seen more than 100 independent shops, bars and restaurants open in the city centre, particularly around North Parade, in recent years. The University of Bradford is rediscovering its roots as the leading technology higher education institution of the north of England and is shooting up the league tables. Bradford's Digital Health Enterprise Zone is home to cutting edge advancements that could transform the future of healthcare.

Welcome to Bradford: it's Britain at its best

Councils in the future are going to be very different from in the past. By 2020 we will be half the size we were in 2010 because of the scale of the Government cuts.

But that doesn't mean we can't have ambition for the city. On the contrary, residents have high expectations so we just have to work harder to fulfil them.

We can't do it on our own but we can still achieve in collaboration with our partners. That means that in my role as leader, what's important is the relationships Bradford builds, not only within the district but also outside. We are building strong links with other cities and with Government.

They can see from our track record that even with small amounts of funding we can and have achieved an incredible amount. Our relationships across the city-region are vital. All the partners in the Leeds city-region are successful in their own

right. But by combining our strengths we can compete globally as a place of investment and opportunity.

As someone who's Bradford born and bred, I'm excited about the future. We have a young population, we are very entrepreneurial and our cultural scene is dynamic and hugely varied.

I see Bradford as a city where our young people feel able and confident enough to explore their ambitions through entrepreneurship. I see Bradford as a city that's outward looking and globally connected. I see that Bradford can celebrate our rich heritage while still looking to the future as a modern, well connected city. Bradford is essentially modern Britain at its best. If people want to eye the future potential of this country they should come and see what's happening here in Bradford.

Susan Hinchcliffe, leader of the council



e move

Think you know Bradford...?

Little Germany in Bradford city centre, once the home of the world's leading wool merchants, has Europe's highest concentration of listed buildings

Bradford has the highest concentration of advanced engineering and materials jobs in the UK

University of Bradford School of Management, opened in 1963, was the country's first business school

The concept of 'shopping from home' was pioneered in Bradford by Empire Stores

Famous people of Bradford include: authors Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë and JB Priestley, composer Frederick Delius, artist David Hockney, musicians Zayn Malik and Kimberley Walsh and magician Dynamo

The city is home to the National Media Museum whose exhibits include the camera used to take the world's first moving film footage and the earliest surviving photographic negative

Throw in the fact that it's UNESCO's first City of Film and home to the National Media Museum, and its district takes in a world heritage site at Saltaire and the world famous Brontë Country, and it's easy to see why Bradford is feeling confident.

The council and its partners are taking an 'asset based approach' to build on the momentum that's being generated. It's essentially about selling the city as a great place to invest, live, work, study and visit.

Like other major cities, Bradford still has areas with high levels of deprivation. Employment is very much seen as the solution for local people and the area as a whole. It reduces the demands on local services, boosts income from council tax and business rates and enables the council to deliver provision where it's needed most.

'Too often places dwell on the deficit to be closed but we have great assets in this district and we can take its offer to market,' Kersten explains. 'We're one of the youngest cities in Europe and remain a significant manufacturing hub for the global economy – that's on top of a legacy of fantastic cultural, creative and sporting assets.'

She has a kindred spirit in Susan Hinchcliffe, who became the council's new leader in May. Previously working on high street regeneration at Business in the Community, a post she stood down from after being elected leader, she is acutely aware of the challenges facing Bradford. But she is also clear about the role the council can play.

'The reason why we have the only major shopping centre that opened in the country last year was as a local authority we've been very proactive about working with Westfield and their investors to make sure it was an appropriate development which they could sell well.'

The council also intervened to boost the city's independent offer by matching Government funding to create a £35m City Centre Growth Zone. It's so far supported 190 businesses and 600 new jobs by offering business rates discounts and support.

It also stepped in to provide a commercial loan, which has now been repaid, for the Southgate development, home to FTSE 100 firm Provident Financial, when banks were unwilling to lend.

As a result, there's now unprecedented activity across the city.

'It's doing what regeneration should do: the local authority playing its part in creating the right environment, then the private sector having the confidence and initiative to take advantage of the opportunities,' says Susan. 'They have seen the confidence we have in the city – investors need to see the city believe in itself.'



'We're one of the youngest cities in Europe and remain a significant manufacturing hub for the global economy – that's on top of a legacy of fantastic cultural, creative and sporting assets.'

Kersten England, chief executive

'We have always been confident that we have a unique offer and dynamism here. There's real pride in the city across the business community about trading in Bradford. We have a population that wants to shop here and be successful here.'

Like all local authorities, Bradford Council knows it can only achieve its objectives for the city – boosting higher level skills, attracting better quality jobs, improving life chances – in partnership with others.

Sandy Needham, chief executive of West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, believes the city is ideally placed to do that.

'When the Government asked for the creation of local strategic partnerships, it was something that had been done in Bradford for years. We have a longstanding tradition of collaboration.' And she believes the council's interventions have been inspirational.

'Lending money for the Provident Financial building was a really good use of assets. That's what we expect to see from local authorities now – doing things differently. Not just scaling back but thinking about alternative ways of working.'

'City Park has changed people's views of the city enormously. People were saying you can't do it and it took a lot of nerve to go ahead with that – but the council had the vision and faith to invest.'

Bradford has the assets and the momentum – and a council that understands its role.

'For us it's about brokering people's involvement, mediation, challenging, facilitating,' says Kersten. 'It's a big shift for the council. It's now about what everybody else does.'

Entrepreneurial spirit

As well as a brand new shopping centre, Bradford is creating a unique offer thanks to a new generation of young entrepreneurs

'Game changer', the 'major piece in the jigsaw', a 'catalyst for regeneration' – ask around Bradford what the new £260m Broadway shopping centre means to the city and the importance of its £0.5bn boost to the local economy soon becomes clear.

'We have significant investor interest in Bradford from both residential and commercial developers. A lot are now coming through and



are either starting on site or are at the planning application stage,' says Mike Cowlam, strategic director of regeneration.

Bradford's many young entrepreneurs are maximising this priceless opportunity to capitalise on the huge increase in city centre footfall. There has been rapid growth in new businesses opening up in the city centre, including a cluster of independent retailers, bars and cafes in the Independent Quarter.

The exciting £1.5m Sunbridge Wells shopping and leisure development, in converted underground Victorian tunnels in the heart of Bradford's historic trading area, will be another great asset to the city. It will soon provide a unique, independent shopping and entertainment experience and create a host of additional opportunities for the city's numerous young entrepreneurs.

Energetic: a place where there's something for everyone

Whether it's grassroots or elite sport, state-of-the-art cinemas, the best curry outside South East Asia or literary heritage Bradford and its district has it all



City Park and the Cultural Quarter

Since it opened in 2012, City Park has become a focal point for residents and visitors. Stand at its centre and you can see the city centre's cultural offer: the National Media Museum, the Alhambra Theatre, St George's Hall (the country's oldest concert hall, currently being refurbished), two galleries and City Hall. There's also the former Odeon Cinema, which is currently being redeveloped into a live entertainment venue, and a David Hockney gallery is planned to celebrate one of Bradford's famous sons. City Hall itself will be home to a new National Rugby League Museum from 2020 as part

of plans to open up more of this magnificent municipal building to the public.

Taken together, the city has the ideal infrastructure for festivals. The latest to be held at City Park, Bradford Literature Festival, summed up the city in a nutshell. Its vast programme was inclusive, challenging, often quirky and certainly unique.

In an interview with The Bradford Review, festival directors Irna Qureshi and Syima Aslam revealed how they wanted to 'dispel stereotypes about Bradford' and contribute towards 'a cultural regeneration to go

alongside the economic regeneration.'

Haigh Simpson, the magazine's editor, believes Bradford's combination of an attractive physical environment and varied cultural offer is a winner.

'The literature festival is the sort of thing that can bring people in from the outskirts who maybe haven't been in for a few years. Then they see everything else that's going on. City Park has had a big influence on that. When you walk through it's always busy and it's being used as it was intended to be used, which is the best you can hope to achieve.'

National Media Museum

As well as being the world's first UNESCO City of Film, the city's status as a hub for all things film-related is bolstered by the fact that Bradford also has the National Media Museum (NMM).

Part of the Science Museum Group, it originally opened in 1983 as the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television complete with the UK's first IMAX cinema, which recently received a major upgrade.

It chronicles the evolution of all three disciplines through to the digital revolution which continues to transform the way we live, work and play.

Jo Quinton-Tulloch, the museum's director, says the NMM has a national remit as a leading attraction – it's one of the most visited museums in the north of England – and its work ties in with the Government's STEM agenda. A fresh



focus is seeing it play to the strengths of its technology collections so that it connects with the local economy and is a resource and inspiration for local children, students and entrepreneurs.

'I would say many of our collections are more relevant to people than a number of other museum collections. Particularly kids who are born in the digital age – they are always amazed when they see how we used to create still and moving images.'

'We're working with the council and others to see how we can be better aligned with the strategic ambitions of the city – not just culture but also supporting schools in the district and the university and college.'

I want them to use us as a resource to tie in with their research. We can work with our growing digital sector. After all, they are producing our exhibits of the future.'



The diverse district

In many ways Bradford embodies ‘diversity’ in all its forms. There are the physical contrasts – a large urban conurbation set within a district that’s actually two-thirds countryside. There’s the industrial heritage of Saltaire, Keighley and Bradford city alongside the literary and rural tourism magnet that is Brontë Country.

And of course there’s the fact that around a fifth of the population are from an Asian background. It’s the reason why Bradford is synonymous with the greatest curries outside South East Asia.

Zulfi Karim, organiser of the World Curry Festival and the secretary of the Council for Mosques, describes diversity as ‘very much a part of the fabric of the city’.

His family has just welcomed its latest addition – the fifth generation of Karims to be born in Bradford. ‘It’s a welcoming place where you’re made to feel part of the

community. It’s a melting pot that creates great tastes, smells and sights.’

For Zulfi, the future success of Bradford is all about the two Ps: people and place.

Investment in the physical environment is essential – but so too is the work to ensure people are supported.

One of the city’s proudest moments on that front came in 2013 when the Muslim community stepped in to save a synagogue from dereliction.

‘When we have problems in Bradford, different faiths come together. We’ll share samosas and scones! Our diversity is a strength.’

The World Curry Festival exemplifies that ethos, he says. ‘It’s more than a food festival, it’s a way to bring people together to talk about different issues. We call it gastro diplomacy.’

A city and district of sport

It was back in 1994 that Wayne Jacobs came to play for Bradford City. His playing days may now be over but his involvement in the city’s sport scene certainly isn’t.

Wayne now uses Bradford’s rich sporting offer to inspire disadvantaged young people to make the most of their potential through One in a Million, a charity he co-founded.

‘We engage with and enrich young lives by discovering their passion and identifying a pathway to enhance their life opportunities through formal and informal education. Thus helping to break cycles of deprivation.’

‘But we’re just one part of what Bradford has to offer. There’s a very strong third sector here and lots of volunteering. We receive great support from the professional clubs: Bradford City, Bradford Bulls and Yorkshire Cricket.

Chair of Active Bradford, a partnership of

organisations committed to making Bradford a healthier and more prosperous place to live, Wayne adds: ‘There were a lot of things that Bradford wanted to achieve and it’s taken time and effort. It’s the energy of the people that’s created it.’

Bradford has one of the largest grassroots rugby league playing communities in the country and last year hosted the first Mixed Ability Rugby World Tournament. The district is also a hotbed for cycling, hosting the Tour de France and Tour de Yorkshire as well as having one of the biggest cycling clubs in the country at Ilkley.

But as the rugby tournament and Wayne’s charity highlight, the city is keen to make sport inclusive. That’s why it staged the inaugural Bradford Sports Awards this year to celebrate ‘grassroots and community heroes’ from across the district.



Enterprising: the city that's digital by design

Bradford has long been a place of innovation and it's now at the heart of the latest technological leap

It's easy to forget that Bradford was once the dominant economic centre for Yorkshire and arguably the north of England as a whole.

The spirit of innovation that built it into an industrial powerhouse is again coming to the fore in a host of ways that will change lives across the world.

The way we are supported in old age to live independently, the manner in which we deliver and receive local services, fundamental shifts in the healthcare system: all will be shaped by developments in Bradford.

The district and the wider city-region – the largest economy outside London – are already a hotbed of digital innovation. But recent developments are set to take it to another level.

The Digital Health Enterprise Zone (DHEZ), a £13m partnership led by the University of Bradford and backed by the council, Government and BT, is creating space for the area's talent to flourish. The Digital Exchange in Little Germany, once the textile industry hub that drove Bradford's growth in the 19th century, provides space for entrepreneurs setting up in the digital healthcare sector.

Small firms can access ongoing support from the university, industry experts, the council's business, investment and enterprise team and the Digital Catapult Centre Yorkshire, also based in Little Germany.

Essentially it's a place to create, build, test and evaluate new technology and solutions. As the DHEZ's chief executive Ian Sharp explains: 'We want to grow the economy based on innovation and a strong start-up culture.'

With a £7m Health and Wellbeing Centre due to open at the university next year, it seems like all the pieces are falling into place for Bradford to build on its reputation as a digital healthcare pioneer.

The Advanced Digital Institute (ADI), set up in Saltaire by Yorkshire Forward as a research and development innovation agency back in 2006, has been forging ahead with new applications in a variety of sectors. Now an independent business, it views the digital health sector as a high growth area.

For chief executive John Eaglesham, the DHEZ and other developments couldn't have come at a more opportune time.

'The ecosystem of the greater Bradford district has got a real critical mass of talent,' he says. 'The Bradford and Leeds area has really taken the lead in how digital can be used to

transform healthcare.' Examples of his organisation's own pioneering work include video conferencing outpatient appointments, ways to enable clinicians to monitor patients' progress in managing chronic pain, and a new system for NHS England to connect young people with mental health challenges to a range of professionals.

Digital advancements will empower citizens and put them in control of their own health, he says. And Bradford is well placed to be at the heart of that innovation.

between public, private and voluntary sectors will make it easier for the council and NHS to support the sector via procurement.

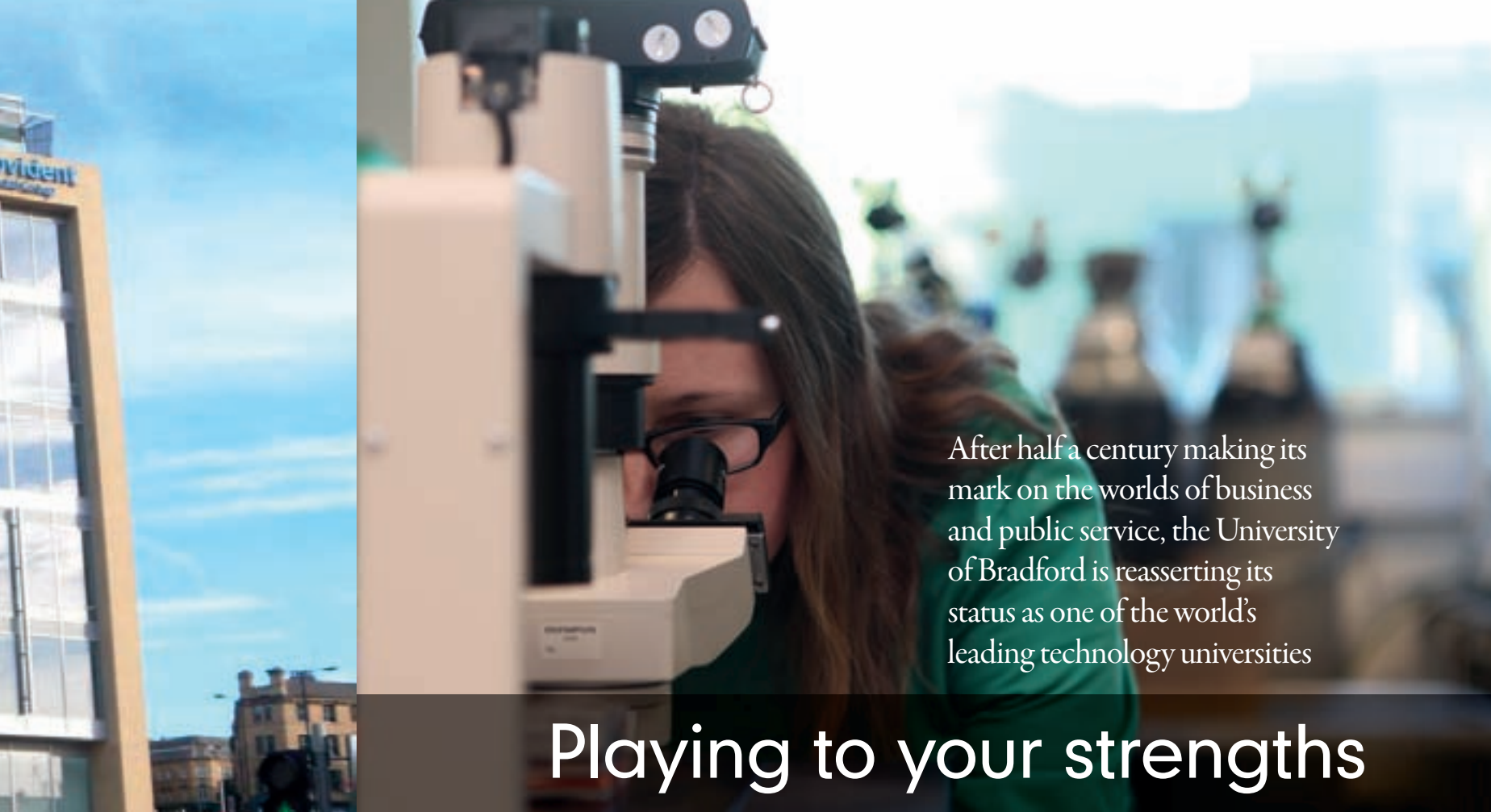
'If they are going to procure something and get IT and digital solutions for transforming healthcare and local government, don't just throw it over to a standard procurement process... look to see what the local ecosystem can provide in terms of NHS and social care.'

The boom in the digital sector is mirrored in advanced



'There's a lot of business to be done,' he says. 'In terms of economic growth there's a huge amount of work for small businesses like ours to get in there and help to make it happen.' He believes the increasing collaboration

manufacturing with the district currently taking in 1,300 businesses and a workforce of 24,700 – the highest concentration in the UK. Aside from the likes of set top box pioneer Pace, much of the sector isn't made up of



After half a century making its mark on the worlds of business and public service, the University of Bradford is reasserting its status as one of the world's leading technology universities

Playing to your strengths

household names. It's predominantly firms that go under the radar but that play a critical role in the supply chain for internationally famous businesses such as John Deere.

In the town of Keighley, one of the district's major centres for manufacturing, the strength of the business community has come to the fore and it recently voted to set up a business improvement district.

Back in the city itself, a sense of growing confidence is also emerging among young entrepreneurs keen to build on Bradford's growing reputation as a place for shopping and nightlife.

Haigh Simpson, editor of The Bradford Review, believes the City Centre Growth Zone helped kick-start a revival that continues to gather momentum.

'During the recession there was quite a bit bubbling under the surface but it was quite barren and nothing was opening up. Not many people were looking to make things happen and do things. There has been a shift in momentum, certainly in terms of small venues opening up.

'The growth zone gave a lot of people the opportunity to give it a try. People who might have had an idea but it seemed out of reach. It's given them that support and the little push they needed.

'It's created more positivity and has started to draw people back into the city at night. I also think one of the reasons it has worked is there's been a culture of mutual support across venues, helping each other out and recognising the scene is more important than the individual bars.'

You don't get brownie points for populating the world's businesses with executives or providing people for ministerial teams and critical public services. Universities don't measure things like that. It's why our league position isn't even higher.'

The University of Bradford is on the up in terms of its national and international rankings – recently rising 20 places to 52nd in The Guardian's UK league table – but vice chancellor Brian Cantor knows it will never reflect the true value of the institution.

Home to the UK's first business school and the original peace studies department, it has made its mark all over the globe. As it celebrates its 50th birthday the plan now is to reaffirm its roots as a technology university and ensure it continues to be a force in the world.

A 10-year strategy was launched last year that has seen some provision dropped in order to allow the university to focus on its strengths. It aims to be a world leader in 'the creation of knowledge through fundamental and applied research' that reaches out to students from all backgrounds.

Critically, the university has a core aim to use that knowledge to promote prosperity and wellbeing – an objective that chimes with the city's focus on digital health innovation. 'We are a world leading technology university applying knowledge to create learning societies,' says Brian. 'That's what we were set up for but in the last 20 years we seemed to be forgetting that.'

The goal is to grow by 30% and raise academic quality

of students. In the last three years the average entry tariff has risen from the equivalent of three Cs to two As and a B.

The university's industry-linked research continues unabated, for example it has long been a pioneer in polymer engineering. Similarly, dementia studies has been a core area for the last quarter of a century and led to the development of Bradford's dementia care mapping system. In the region of 100,000 care homes worldwide use it to gauge and manage the condition. The university received a Queen's Anniversary Prize for its dementia work, the highest honour a higher education institution can receive in the UK.

A thriving and attractive city will be vital to the university's continued success. Brian says he was impressed by both the campus – one of the greenest in the world – and the city itself when he first came to look around the city prior to his appointment in 2013.

'It's a fantastic city in many ways and much under-appreciated outside Bradford. It's also much bigger than outsiders seem to realise.'

He adds: 'There was a substantial period when Bradford felt put upon and not able to compete. I think Bradford is on the cusp and really has the potential to go places.'

'It has real strengths and we're seeing signs of growth. We have a new council chief executive and leader and there are exciting plans for a "Producer City" based around advanced manufacturing, IT, digital health.' If prospective students are persuaded to visit the city the chances are they will enrol, he says.

Producer City

Over the last two years Bradford has harnessed its core strengths to market itself as a Producer City – a city that creates, makes and trades.

The brand – backed by a partnership led board – has become a major tool for inward investment for the local authority and private sector that enables them to relay consistent messages about the district.

When it comes to Bradford's economic

potential, the figures speak for themselves.

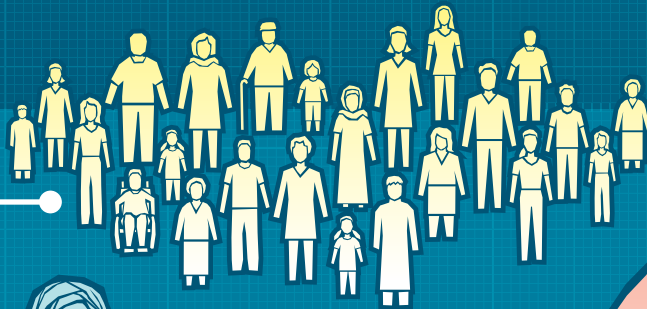
Its economy is worth £9.2bn and ranks as the eighth largest in England. The 'producer' tag is backed up by the fact that production businesses in manufacturing, energy and utilities account for 12.8% of employees compared with the national average of 8%.

Over the next decade the Bradford economy is expected to grow by 25%, largely through the rise of digital industries, IT and advanced manufacturing.



Bradford District

Bradford is the 4th largest metropolitan authority in England.



Bradford is the youngest city in the UK – 23.5% of Bradford's population is under 16.

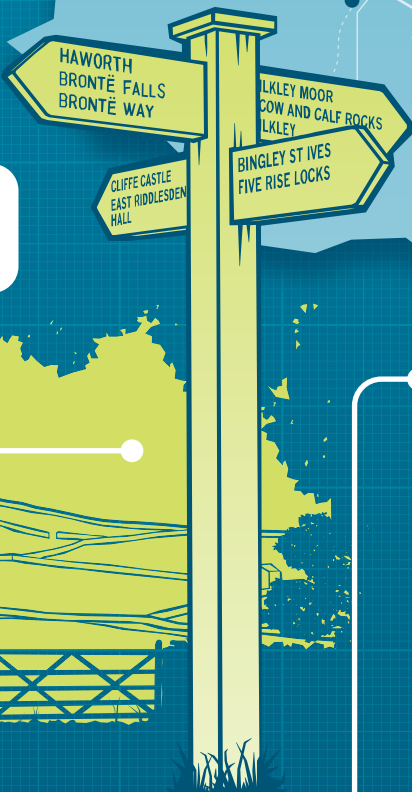


Bradford businesses have the highest rate of international trading in the UK.

Recent survey of FEDEX customers found 86% of Bradford companies are trading internationally.

Bradford has more FTSE 100 companies than any other city in the North of England.

Two-thirds of the district is countryside.



We welcome over 13 million visitors a year.



Bradford District has 16,960 SMEs – 99.5% of all businesses – 9th highest of all cities in the UK.

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Business Investment & Enterprise Team
01274 437727
info@investinbradford.com
www.investinbradford.com

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City of Bradford MDC
www.bradford.gov.uk