

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Community Development Committee

Thursday 25 September 2025

Decision Report

Budget 2026/27

Recommendation

Committee to consider the Officers' proposal for events in 2026/27, for further discussion at this committee when recommending a budget to the Governance Committee.

Ward

Not ward specific.

Risk Management

To consider proposals which are in line with Council objectives, for submission to a future Community Development Committee in order to allow further costings to be provided.

Objective

To promote the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community, in keeping with the Council's governance arrangements.

Report

This report covers the Officers' proposals for the 2026/27 budget. They are based upon rolling forward the programme from the current year.

Detailed below are the contents of the events including useful information to give an overview of each event.

The cost of the proposed events for 2026/27 are £171,000, an increase of £25,000 from the previous year. This is due partly to inflation but largely to popularity and demand of the events increasing each year.

Some of the proposed summer and December events may overlap with activities being developed through the Plans for Neighbourhoods programme, or alternatively may be eligible for support from that funding stream. This will become clearer prior to the submission of budget proposals, and the information provided here should therefore be considered as indicative, offering a guide to how the overall events programme may take shape

Easter Family Fun Day
Saturday 4 April 2026 – Ridley Park

The Easter Family Fun Day has become a much-loved tradition in Ridley Park, offering a vibrant mix of activities designed for all ages. Families can enjoy a packed programme including a Easter egg hunt, craft workshops, interactive “have-a-go” sessions with local community groups, and sports activities that encourage participation and fun. The park will be filled with craft stalls, food vendors, and lively entertainment, while the Silent Disco provides a unique attraction that appeals to children, young people, and parents alike. This inclusive, free-to-access day helps bring the community together at the start of spring.

Attendance: Circa 4,000
Indicative Budget: £6,000
2025 Cost £4500

Blyth Harbour Day
Saturday 2 May 2026 – Quayside

Now entering its third year, the Blyth Quayside Festival continues to grow in scale and ambition. Following themes of national significance in previous years, 2026 will mark the 200th Anniversary of the Blyth Lifeboat—a milestone event deeply rooted in the town’s maritime heritage. Harbour Day will be a day full of markets, music, food, history and local interest where people can explore the highlights of the Quayside and enjoy one of Blyth’s most picturesque locations.

Attendance: Circa 5,000
Indicative Budget: £20,000
2025 Cost £23,000

Blyth Live Music Festival
Saturday 20 June 2026 – Blyth Seafront

The Blyth Live Music Festival is firmly established as one of the region’s largest and most popular outdoor events. Returning for its 12th year, the festival transforms the seafront into a vibrant stage, showcasing a dynamic mix of headline acts and homegrown talent. With a funfair, market stalls, diverse food and drink options, and a family-friendly atmosphere, the event draws thousands to the seafront for a full day of music and entertainment.

Attendance: Circa 10,000
Indicative Budget: £60,000
2025 Cost £55,000

Blyth Town Carnival

Saturday 4 July 2026 – Blyth Town Centre

After being relocated during the redevelopment, the Blyth Town Carnival will return to the Marketplace in 2026, bringing colour, music, and community spirit back to the heart of Blyth. Delivered by Leading Link, an external charity, the Carnival is part of a three-year tender agreed in 2023, with two successful years completed and one year remaining. The day will feature the parade, live music, performances, and activities that showcase the talent and diversity of local groups. By animating the town centre with family entertainment, the Carnival will create a memorable experience while boosting local businesses through increased footfall.

Attendance: Circa 4,000

Indicative Budget: £18,000

2025 Cost: £18,000

Blyth Sandcastle Competition

Saturday TBC July 2026 (tide dependent) – Blyth Beach

This long-standing seaside favourite celebrates creativity, family fun, and the natural beauty of Blyth's coastline. Families design and build imaginative sandcastles and sculptures, with prizes awarded for the best creations. The event offers a low-cost day out at the start of the summer holidays, encouraging children and parents to spend quality time outdoors while enjoying the beach environment. It remains a effective way to bring the community together and celebrate Blyth's coastal identity.

Attendance: Circa 300–600

Indicative Budget: £2,000

2025 Cost £1400

Summer Silent Disco

Saturday 9 August 2026 – Blyth Seafront

Launched in 2025, the Summer Silent Disco quickly proved itself to be a popular and innovative addition to the events programme, drawing in enthusiastic audiences and receiving much positive feedback. Building on this success, the 2026 event will be promoted further in advance to maximise attendance and engagement. In partnership with the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, the event will also provide lunches and support families during the summer holidays—making it both entertaining and socially valuable.

Attendance: Circa 2,000

Indicative Budget: £8,000

2025 Cost £7,000

Marketplace Summer Activities

Various days across summer holidays – Marketplace/Town Centre

Following the success of recent summer activities by continuing to animate the town centre with a series of engaging and family-friendly events. From sports demonstrations to dance workshops, the programme is designed to attract families, support local businesses, and create a lively, welcoming atmosphere for visitors and shoppers. By spreading activity across multiple days, the initiative ensures a sustained boost to footfall in the town centre throughout the summer holiday period.

Attendance: Circa 200–300 per day

Indicative Budget: £10,000

2025 Costs £2,000

Halloween Spooktacular Fireworks Show

Saturday 31 October 2026 – Mermaid Car Park

With Fireworks falling on a Saturday 31st October this year, the proposed “Spooktacular show” promises to be a standout event in the town’s calendar. Combining a major fireworks display with immersive Halloween-themed entertainment, the event will feature street theatre, performers, and themed activities to delight all ages. To ensure inclusivity, two fireworks shows are planned: an earlier quieter display for families with young children, followed by a later spectacle at 7pm.

Attendance: Circa 20,000

Indicative Budget: £35,000

2025 Budget £31,000

Christmas Lights On

Saturday 21 November 2026 – Town Centre

The annual Christmas Lights Switch-On marks the official start of the festive season in Blyth, transforming the town centre into a hub of celebration. Across the day, visitors will enjoy live music, stage entertainment, market stalls, and food traders, building excitement in the lead-up to the big moment when the town’s lights are illuminated. This event supports town centre businesses by encouraging footfall and extending dwell time. By animating multiple areas of the town centre, it encourages visitors to explore and shop locally during the pre-Christmas period.

Attendance: Circa 6,000

Indicative Budget: £17,000

2025 Budget £12,500

Christmas Saturdays

Saturdays during December 2026 – Town Centre

Throughout December, Blyth town centre will see festive activities designed to spread Christmas cheer and support local businesses. Gentle, family-oriented attractions such as Mrs Claus craft sessions in the library, reindeer visits, festive window trails, Live music, and food markets will add atmosphere, ensuring every Saturday feels special in the run-up to Christmas. By keeping the festive activities across the month, this programme provides repeated opportunities for families and shoppers to engage with the town centre.

Attendance: Circa 3,000 across month
Indicative Budget: £10,000
2025 £5000

Media Day

February Half Term 2027 – Phoenix Theatre

Now in its fourth year, Media Day offers 50 local children a unique opportunity to step into the world of film, theatre, and performance. Working alongside a professional acting and film company, participants will spend the day developing a script, filming their own production, and gaining hands-on experience in every stage of the creative process. The event also includes an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the Phoenix Theatre, giving young people insight into the technical and artistic roles that bring live performance to life. Media Day inspires creativity, builds confidence, and highlights the vital role of the theatre within Blyth.

Attendance: 50
Indicative Budget: £3,000
2026 cost £2,800

Income

The expected income is £18,000, generated through a combination of stall fees, food traders, sponsorship and donations. This income helps offset delivery costs and demonstrates the programme's ability to attract external financial support alongside the requested budgets.

Indicative Budget £189,000
Expected Income £18,000

Total £171,000

Malcolm Wilkinson

Town Clerk

18 September 2025