

BUSINESS

REDCAR | CLEVELAND



Business Bulletin

February 2026

Festival of Thrift returns to Redcar and Cleveland



The much-loved Festival of Thrift is returning to Redcar and Cleveland at the Kirkleatham Museum and Grounds this summer, bringing a free, two-day family celebration on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th July.

Each year, the festival attracts 25,000 to 40,000 visitors from across the UK, providing a real boost to the local economy and creating a vibrant showcase for local traders, makers, food producers, artists and community organisations.

A new two-year agreement with festival organisers means even closer collaboration with residents,

businesses, artists and community groups throughout Redcar and Cleveland in 2026 and 2027.

Cllr Alec Brown, Leader of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, said:

"Bringing the nationally renowned Festival of Thrift back to Redcar and Cleveland has been one of our priorities and I'm absolutely delighted that we will host it again."

"The number of visitors it attracts shows it is hugely valued and it brings real cultural and economic benefits, supporting local businesses, artists and traders while attracting tens of thousands of people to see what our fantastic borough has to offer."

"We look forward to local people, businesses and artists getting involved with the festival and receiving the benefit from both the fantastic event and the work which will go on away from it."

For more information on how to take part, trade, volunteer and sign up to the Festival of Thrift newsletter visit www.festivalofthrift.co.uk or follow the festival's social media feeds **@festivalofthrift** on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Threads.

For more details on the festival's return and ways to get involved, click the link below.

FIND OUT MORE

Cyber Security: Key Threats for SMEs

Cyber Security: Key Threats for SMEs Deep Dive

Thursday 12 February

10:00 - 13:00

Teesworks Skills Academy



Small businesses are facing more cyber threats than ever before with phishing, ransomware, and impersonation attacks on the rise. If you want practical, hands-on skills you can apply immediately to protect your business, this masterclass is for you.

Date: Wednesday 12 February 2026

Time: 10:00am to 1:00pm

Venue: Teesworks Skills Academy, Dorman Point Way, Middlesbrough, TS6 6BD

Join us next Wednesday for a focused, interactive session designed to strengthen your organisation's cyber resilience.

You'll learn how to:

- Spot and stop phishing attacks
- Reduce your vulnerability to ransomware
- Take immediate steps to boost your cyber security posture

Fully funded for eligible Tees Valley participants, secure your place below.

Delivered by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council with expert support from Circle Cloud, on behalf of the Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority, and funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

A Taste of Redcar and Cleveland is back!



The popular campaign returns on Wednesday 4th March and ends on Sunday 15th March 2026.

Who can take part?

The campaign is open to all sit-in hospitality venues in Redcar and Cleveland. This includes bars, cafes, bistros, pubs, restaurants and hotels. Whether you serve food, drinks or both, you are eligible to participate.

To view the current participants click the link [here](#).

What's involved?

Taking part is quick, easy and FREE. All we ask is that participating venues offer at least one deal or discount during the campaign, in line with the set price points £5, £10, £15, £20, £25 and £30+.

Offers can be tailored to your business type, for example:

- Food Venues might offer a coffee and cake combo for £5 or a 3-course set meal for £25
- Drinks only venues might offer special cocktail 2 for 1 deals or discounted drinks packages

Offers must be exclusive to this campaign and separate from any current promotions.

Benefits of taking part:

- Increased exposure to new customers
- Free promotion through Enjoy Redcar and Cleveland's tourism platform and social media
- Inclusion in printed and digital marketing

To learn more and sign up to the campaign, click the link below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Business support opportunities

Tees Valley Business Masterclass Series

Tees Valley Business Masterclass Series

January - March 2026



Tees Valley Combined Authority has introduced a programme of over 40 expert-led masterclasses, workshops, and webinars taking place between January and March 2026.

This fully funded series, designed in collaboration with all five Tees Valley local authorities, is here to help businesses access a range of expertise to grow or start a business, improve efficiencies and seize new market opportunities. New workshops and webinars are announced regularly, these are available to all Tees Valley residents.

Masterclass topics include:

- Start-up essentials
- Finance & funding
- Sales, marketing & social media
- HR, recruitment & leadership
- Cyber security
- AI & ChatGPT

Upcoming workshops and webinars include:

CHAT GPT for Small Business

Thursday 5th February

10:00am - 12:00pm

ONLINE

Cyber Security: Strategic Overview – Identifying Risks

Thursday 5th February

10:00am - 1:00pm

Stockton-on-Tees Employment & Training Hub, Wellington Square, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1RG

Future-proofing for the Employment Rights Bill

Thursday 12th February

9:00am - 11:00am

ONLINE

Cyber Security: Key Threats for SMEs – Deep Dive

Thursday 12th February

10:00am - 1:00pm

Teesworks Skills Academy, Dorman Point Way, TS6 6TY

Get Found Online: Using AI for Websites & SEO

Thursday 12th February

1:00pm - 2:00pm

ONLINE

Recruitment & Retention

Wednesday 18th February

2:00pm - 4:00pm

ONLINE

Click the link below to view all announced workshops and webinars or to book your place.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Export funding opportunity reopens

Tees Valley Export Fund

Ready to Take Your Business Global? Access Grant Funding to Kickstart or Grow Your Export Activity.



Are you looking to take your products or services to international markets?

The Tees Valley Export Fund is here to help you do just that, whether you are an SME or a larger business.

This grant programme is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered in partnership with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT). The programme offers financial support to businesses that are either starting out on their export journey or looking to grow/diversify their current export activities.

This could include help with the costs associated with:

- Market research

- International compliance and certifications
- Translation services
- Export-focused promotional materials
- Attendance at international trade shows

The fund allocation for Tees Valley is £200,000 for business grants between £3,000 and £10,000 for eligible businesses. 25% match funding is a requirement of this programme.

Businesses can apply for project activity which will take place and be completed up to the end of August 2026.

For more information and to apply, click the link below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Are you a social enterprise in Redcar and Cleveland?



Voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations in Redcar and Cleveland can still access support via the LARCH (Local Access Redcar and Cleveland and Hartlepool) programme.

The LARCH programme is a £4 million investment and is one of only six areas in the UK to be chosen by Access Foundation for Social Investment and Big Society Capital, the main funders of LARCH, with support of two other partners – The Key Fund and Tees Foundation.

The programme is designed to accelerate the growth of social enterprises by facilitating tailored enterprise development support. This includes helping VCS organisations build sustainable income streams and offering access to blended repayable finance to support long-term growth.

LARCH clients can also access the School for Social Entrepreneurs online workshops for FREE! These workshops are designed to support growing social enterprises.

Future workshops:

Introduction to Social Impact Measurement

12th Feb | half day | online

Impact Storytelling

16th Mar | half day | online

Sources of Funding for Charities and Social Enterprises

31st Mar | half day | online

For more information on LARCH and how it supports Redcar and Cleveland's social enterprises please contact Nicola Wylde - nicola.wylde@vonne.org.uk.

To visit their website click the link below.

FIND OUT MORE

Tees Valley Youth Guarantee Trailblazer



Access fully funded work placements (up to 6 months) for your business through the Tees Valley Youth Guarantee Trailblazer programme. The programme also provides the opportunity for your business to access funding to offer a week long unpaid 'taster session' to young people interested in your industry.

The scheme provides funding for you to employ young people aged 18-21 who are not in education, employment, or training.

To help your business take on a young person, additional support is available including:

- Up to £2,000 is available to help you identify dedicated work-based mentors within your team as part of the taster sessions.
- Training grants are also available with up to £2,500 towards certified training, qualifications, and upskilling.
- Funding for any uniforms, PPE, tools, or digital equipment the young person requires to carry out the role.
- Paid placements will be subsidised for up to 25 hours per week, wages will be fully funded meaning there is no financial cost to your business.

Businesses can also offer flexible unpaid work taster sessions for young people to explore which sectors/roles they're most interested in.

For more information, including FAQs and to sign up, visit the Tees Valley Combined Authority website by clicking below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

New tenders added to £4 billion carbon capture project



Tender opportunities are live for the £4 billion Northern Endurance Partnership project, opportunities in logistics, engineering, manufacturing and services are listed on the Energy Pathfinder platform below.

The Northern Endurance Partnership is a UK joint venture led by BP, Equinor, and TotalEnergies that is building onshore and offshore infrastructure to transport captured CO₂ from industrial sites in Teesside and Humber to permanent storage in the Endurance saline aquifer beneath the North Sea, enabling large-scale decarbonisation of these regions as part of the East Coast Cluster.

To view all opportunities please click the link below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

News

Tees Valley Lithium secures offtake agreement with Glencore



Tees Valley Lithium (TVL) has reached a key commercial milestone. The company has signed a five-year binding offtake agreement with a wholly owned subsidiary of Glencore for the supply of battery-grade lithium hydroxide from its planned refinery in Teesside, UK.

As Vikki Jeckell, CEO of Tees Valley Lithium, explains:

"With a substantial portion of our first Train's capacity now committed under binding terms, we are well positioned as we advance towards final investment decision and construction of the UK's flagship lithium hydroxide refinery."

You can express your interest in being a supplier for the Tees Valley Lithium project, by registering via their supplier portal found [here](#).

To view the full press release click the link below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Community news and opportunities

Be a UK Youth Launch Partner - help kick off Summer Jobs Programme 2026



Summer Jobs Programme – Employers

[The Summer Jobs Programme 2026](#) employer portal is open! If your organisation can offer **5-week placements** for young people (aged 16–20) this summer, register your interest now!

Offer a safe, structured, work opportunity for a young person this summer whilst gaining the following benefits:

- Bring **extra capacity** into your team over the summer months.
- Meeting **social value / CSR goals**.
- Strengthen your local profile and connections in the youth sector.

Open to organisations of all sizes, placements are free for organisations with a turnover of less than £750,000 however there are fees attached for private sector organisations whose turnover is above this threshold.

Interested in getting involved? Here's what to do:

Events

Tees Valley Supply Chain Showcase 2026



Date: Thursday 12th February

Time: 9:00am to 4:00pm

Venue: Hardwick Hall Hotel, Stockton on Tees, TS21 2EH

Join RTC North next week for the Tees Valley Supply Chain Showcase event and take the opportunity to meet with major stakeholders, investors and beneficiaries from across Tees Valley.

Building on last year's success, which saw nearly 200 attendees and excellent feedback, this year's showcase offers even greater value, insight, and practical opportunities to help set your business up for success in 2026 and beyond.

Attendees will gain visibility into emerging projects, collaborate with major buyers, and hear from leading organisations such as Tees Valley Lithium, UK Docks Marine Services and JDR Cable Systems, part of the TFKable Group. The event highlights cross-sector opportunities in advanced manufacturing, energy transition, digital innovation, construction, defence, infrastructure, and the public sector.

Meet-the-Buyer sessions return, providing focused 1:1 meetings with major buyers. Network with suppliers, access funding information, and discover real supply chain opportunities to strengthen your business's position in the region.

Don't miss the chance to network and meet potential customers for your business, spaces are limited and if you are interested we encourage you to book your place by clicking the link below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Procurement in Practice: From Opportunity to Contract



Date: Wednesday 4th March

Time: 9:30am - 1:00pm

Venue: Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough, TS3 6RS

Discover how to access and win public and private sector contracts with expert guidance and practical advice.

'Procurement in Practice From Opportunity to Contract' is a half-day workshop designed to help businesses confidently navigate procurement processes across both public and private sectors.

What to expect:

- Navigating public and private sector procurement
- How to prepare strong bids and meet compliance requirements

- Understanding evaluation criteria and what buyers look for
- Building relationships with procurement teams and decision-makers

This session is part of the Tees Valley Business Masterclass Series, delivered by all five Tees Valley Local Authorities on behalf of the Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority, and funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Click the link below to book your place.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Tees Engineering Network Event with Green Lizard and Boulby Mines



Friday 6th March 2026, 8am-10.30am

Redcar and Cleveland College, Corporation Road, Redcar TS10 1EZ

Sponsored by



With



Date: Friday 6th March

Time: 8:00am - 10:30am

Venue: Redcar and Cleveland College, Corporation Rd, Redcar TS10 1EZ

Local businesses are invited to the next Teesside Engineering Network (TEN) which features two fantastic speakers in Green Lizard and Boulby Mines.

Green Lizard will be there to talk about its plan to deliver a nationally significant Green Energy, Fuel and Chemical Park in Teesside. From its 500-acre site on the North bank of the River Tees, it will manufacture more than 1million tonnes of low-carbon Sustainable Aviation Fuel.

You will also hear from Boulby Mines, and its UK Government science facility. At 1.1km below ground, the facility offers unique capabilities for sensitive particle physics experiments (the search for Dark

Matter and beyond). The facility is an important regional and national asset for multidisciplinary science, innovation and outreach

You will get to meet and network with the key decision-makers and the local supply chain as you find out about future opportunities available to your business.

Places are limited and fill up quickly so register your place now by clicking the link below.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

[Business Engagement Team privacy notice](#)



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