

## **Burnley Road Todmorden for the Great British High Street Award Rising Star – Community category**

*This is a copy of the bid that had to fulfil the criteria for the 2018 campaign, which first got us onto the shortlist and then enabled us to go on and win the award.*

‘OUR PLANET TOD is neat (OPT in)’ – taking community responsibility for our town’s environment and well-being.

Community and Environment are symbiotic strands in Todmorden’s DNA. With roots in the past, hearts in the present and minds on the future, Todmorden has a wonderful quirky community of commerce, culture, countryside, collaboration, connections of people, businesses and borders, our community is definitely a rising star.

Despite Todmorden’s multiple community and environment initiatives: IET, TLC, Lamplighter Festival, Todmorden in bloom, some feel excluded, yet all use our high street to shop and socialise. Improving our high street will be a legacy for inclusion.

We think ‘OUR PLANET TOD is neat’ and would love everyone to (OPT in)’, our latest ambitious community and environmental initiative – inspired by local Mum, Louisa – began with recent community litter picks contributing to the well-being of Todmorden. Creating a community of volunteers, this initiative continues to grow both in numbers and scope. This initiative aims to improve Todmorden for everyone.

Clean streets provide healthy physical, mental and emotional benefits to engage residents, visitors and shoppers in our caring community. We also want to explore the ways we can empower and support individuals to look after ‘Our Planet Tod’.

All community groups will be invited to collaborate in the following strategy:

1. Recover: Starting with cheap, quick and visible wins – continue with regular litter picks in different areas of the town, from Burnley Road and the town centre outwards– engaging new volunteers.
2. Reduce: Engage schools/Beavers/Sporting groups: find teacher and student champions to lead on picking, not dropping litter – incorporate ideas from Eco-Schools, and recycling and social/environmental responsibility into the curriculum. Encourage competitions in inspirational bin design/ social media campaigns and let children enthuse adults, culminating in a pupil led presentation to the town in summer 2019.
3. Re-use: Continue the local ‘plastic free’ push – press our local supermarkets to increase favouring paper (or preferably re-usable) bags over plastic – funds permitting produce OUR PLANET TOD bags, water bottles and re-usable take-away containers.
4. Re-cycle: Aim not just to litter pick, but to re-cycle much more of our town centre litter, having dedicated separating bins. Influence our District Council to improve home, business and public sector recycling.

5. Research: Involve refuse collectors and Todmordians to find out which bins overflow, increase emptying schedules/add bins where required and signage to 'next nearest bin'.

6. Reinvent: Sponsored litter, recycling, gum and butt bins, both by businesses, 'take-aways' (the source of much litter) and artists – who can paint/ decorate our recycling bins with positive images.

7. Renovate & Repair: Encourage shop frontage face-lifts and provide retail incubator and start-up advice/support packages – improve the public realm with future installations to conform to a 'town centre house style'.

**KPIs** – Number of people involved in the initiative, change in wellbeing over time, changes in recycling and fly tipping rates, before, during and after photos, social media activity, pupils' knowledge, shop occupancy rates before and after, new town centre jobs created.

**Impact** – Improvement in KPIs above

**Leadership** – Led by Todconnect, the local business partnership supported by Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR), with Keep Tod Tidy.

**Innovation** – Incorporating Community Well Being and Education into our Town Initiative.

**Official start date** - September 2018. Following several successful and community engaging trial litter pickings this initiative will be formally adopted.

**Challenges** - To understand Todmorden at all, you should know that there are as many opinions as people (15000) – getting collaboration is the challenge! It's also challenging to measure if picking up more litter translates to more being produced or more actually being collected, hence KPIs.