



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Guidance

Plan for Neighbourhoods: prospectus

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Fund summary

Purpose: A £1.5 billion programme to invest in 75 areas over the next decade – a long-term strategy to fix the foundations of those places most left behind.

Type of fund: Un-competed.

Eligibility: [75 local authorities and communities](#) across the UK.

Funding available: Up to £20 million for each place over a 10-year period.

Important dates:

22 April 2025: Neighbourhood Boards confirm finalised membership and any proposals to alter their place boundaries.

Spring 2025 to winter 2025: Neighbourhood Boards submit their Regeneration Plan to MHCLG for assessment and approval.

From April 2026: Programme delivery funding released to local authorities, and delivery phase begins.

Foreword from the Deputy Prime Minister

Across the country this government is delivering our Plan for Change with a relentless focus on economic growth to raise living standards. The impact of 14 years of decline has not been felt equally across the country with too many neighbourhoods starved of the investment and reform they deserve. The result has been worsening deprivation, making the path to good growth all the more difficult in those places. Through the new Plan for Neighbourhoods, we are laying the foundations to make sure that nowhere is left behind in this decade of national renewal, and that everywhere has a role to play in our national prosperity.

Our country has all the raw ingredients to ignite growth. There's untapped talent and potential in every town, city, village and estate. But we also have people without enough to get by, and places and public services which have been hollowed out. Opportunities are not shared out evenly and it's tough to make the most of the ones that are there. Barriers to better living standards

have been put up, not taken down. People feel divided and disempowered, perceptions which are made worse by deprivation that for too long has been tackled with sticking plaster politics.

Communities have come up with their own grass-roots solutions. Opening foodbanks and warm-banks, shopping local to back high street jobs, and raising support through trade unions, charities and civil society bodies. Building strong connections so people have each other to rely on when times get tough. Heartening and impressive though these efforts are, the government has been missing in action for 14 years, leaving communities left behind and forgotten, left to fend for themselves. That's why this new government's driving purpose is delivering growth and raising living standards everywhere. This is why we are now investing up to £1.5 billion through this programme.

Our new Plan for Neighbourhoods is part of this government's plan to ensure that nowhere is left behind. It will help revitalise local areas and fight deprivation at root cause by zeroing in on 3 goals: thriving places, stronger communities, and taking back control.

No more sticking plasters; no more short-term fixes – rather, a 10-year plan that unlocks the potential of the places people call home. John Prescott's New Deal for Communities delivered transformational change, providing the stability of long-term funding, backed by the support of central government, to empower local people to take ownership for driving the renewal of their neighbourhood. Our Plan for Neighbourhoods takes this as inspiration, learning the lessons to tackle the opportunities and challenges presented to us today. It goes hand in hand with everything this government is delivering to rebuild our country: building new, safer social housing for the future, making work pay and ending the 'Whitehall knows best' approach by empowering local leaders to strengthen communities.

We know what works. Local change is best driven by those with the biggest stake. The Burnley Together project has seen a community grocer, cookery school and book exchange open in the former Lancashire mill town. In Hendon, the 'Back on the Map' residents' group has spent 10 years buying and refurbishing 120 of Sunderland's run-down homes and shops, alongside a package of community services to tackle poverty. In Yorkshire, the Live Well Wakefield group has helped 93% of clients improve health outcomes through early interventions and social prescribing.

Together, this government will work in partnership with people on the ground and local authorities to deliver in every corner of the country.

Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister

Introduction

The government is committed to rebuilding the UK and driving growth everywhere. The renewal required is more than just physical infrastructure, but also about repairing fractured communities, bringing people back together and ensuring people see a visible improvement in their communities. This is essential for restoring trust in government and sense of pride in place, ensuring people can meet their full potential. The evidence is clear that those [places with stronger social capital have higher educational attainment](https://demos.co.uk/research/social-capital-2025-the-hidden-wealth-of-nations/) (<https://demos.co.uk/research/social-capital-2025-the-hidden-wealth-of-nations/>), lower crime and faster economic growth.

To fix the foundations of those places most left behind, we need a long-term strategy to regenerate, underpinned by plans that address demographic shifts and cultural change.

No one knows the priorities of the community better than those who live and work there, which is why our Plan for Neighbourhoods will empower local people to take back control of their future with a long-term, flexible funding pot of up to £20 million of funding and support over the next 10 years.

Eligible local authorities

75 places across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have been selected to receive funding through this programme via 2 published methodologies: [methodology for first tranche](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/long-term-plan-for-towns-towns-selection-methodology-note) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/long-term-plan-for-towns-towns-selection-methodology-note>) and [methodology for second tranche](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/extension-to-long-term-plan-for-towns-place-selection-methodology) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/extension-to-long-term-plan-for-towns-place-selection-methodology>). The metrics used for selection included:

- indices of multiple deprivation
- population size
- healthy life expectancy
- Gross Value Added per hour worked
- skill level (NVQ level 3+ in England and Wales and above SCQF level 4+ in Scotland) – this metric was not used in Northern Ireland

The following list includes eligible local authorities for the Plan for Neighbourhoods, ordered alphabetically. The region or county is determined

by [International Territorial Levels \(ITLs\) 1 and 2](https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies/eurostat)
[\(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies/eurostat>\).](https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies/eurostat)

Place	Local authority	Region or county
Accrington	Hyndburn Borough Council	North West
Arbroath	Angus Council	Eastern Scotland
Ashton-under-Lyne	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	North West
Barnsley	Barnsley Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Barry (Vale of Glamorgan)	Vale of Glamorgan Council	South East Wales
Bedworth	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council	West Midlands
Bexhill-on-Sea	Rother District Council	South East
Bilston (Wolverhampton)	City Of Wolverhampton Council	West Midlands
Blyth (Northumberland)	Northumberland County Council	North East
Boston	Boston Borough Council	East Midlands
Burnley	Burnley Council	North West
Canvey Island	Castle Point Borough Council	East
Carlton	Gedling Borough Council	East Midlands
Castleford	Wakefield Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Chadderton	Oldham Council	North West
Chesterfield	Chesterfield Borough Council	East Midlands
Clacton-on-Sea	Tendring District Council	East
Clifton (Nottingham)	Nottingham City Council	East Midlands

Place	Local authority	Region or county
Clydebank	West Dunbartonshire Council	West Central Scotland
Coatbridge	North Lanarkshire Council	West Central Scotland
Coleraine	Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	Northern Ireland
Cwmbrân	Torfaen County Borough Council	South East Wales
Darlaston	Walsall Council	West Midlands
Darlington	Darlington Borough Council	North East
Darwen	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	North West
Derry~Londonderry	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Northern Ireland
Dewsbury	Kirklees Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Doncaster	City of Doncaster Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Dudley (Dudley)	Dudley Council	West Midlands
Dumfries	Dumfries and Galloway Council	Southern Scotland
Eastbourne	Eastbourne Council	South East
Elgin	Moray Council	Highlands and Islands
Eston	Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	North East
Farnworth	Bolton Council	North West
Great Yarmouth	Great Yarmouth Borough Council	East

Place	Local authority	Region or county
Greenock	Inverclyde Council	West Central Scotland
Grimsby	North East Lincolnshire Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Harlow	Harlow Council	East
Hartlepool	Hartlepool Borough Council	North East
Hastings	Hastings Borough Council	South East
Heywood	Rochdale Borough Council	North West
Irvine	North Ayrshire Council	Southern Scotland
Jarrow	South Tyneside Council	North East
Keighley	Bradford Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Kilmarnock	East Ayrshire Council	Southern Scotland
King's Lynn	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk	East
Kirkby	Knowsley Council	North West
Kirkby-in-Ashfield	Ashfield District Council	East Midlands
Leigh (Wigan)	Wigan Council	North West
Mansfield	Mansfield District Council	East Midlands
Merthyr Tydfil	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	South East Wales
Nelson (Pendle)	Pendle Borough Council	North West
Newark-on-Trent	Newark and Sherwood District Council	East Midlands
Newton-le-Willows	St Helens Borough Council	North West

Place	Local authority	Region or county
Orkney Islands (Kirkwall)	Orkney Islands Council	Highlands and Islands
Peterhead	Aberdeenshire Council	North Eastern Scotland
Ramsgate	Thanet District Council	South East
Rawtenstall	Rossendale Borough Council	North West
Rhyl	Denbighshire County Council	North Wales
Rotherham	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Royal Sutton Coldfield	Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council	West Midlands
Runcorn	Halton Borough Council	North West
Ryde	Isle of Wight Council	South East
Scarborough	North Yorkshire Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire Council	Yorkshire and The Humber
Skegness	East Lindsey District Council	East Midlands
Smethwick	Sandwell Council	West Midlands
Spalding	South Holland District Council	East Midlands
Spennymoor	Durham County Council	North East
Thetford	Breckland Council	East
Torquay	Torbay Council	South West
Washington	Sunderland City Council	North East
Wisbech	Fenland District Council	East
Worksop	Bassetlaw District Council	East Midlands

Place	Local authority	Region or county
Wrexham	Wrexham County Borough Council	North Wales

Our approach

The Plan for Neighbourhoods will drive growth over the long-term, a clean break from the competitive pots and sticking plaster cash of the past. The programme provides a new blueprint to bring communities together, allocating funding to improve living standards and give people in the 75 recipient locations more of a stake in their future.

To deliver this, the government will support the establishment of new Neighbourhood Boards, putting power in the hands of local people to address deprivation and regenerate their local area. Each board will, in partnership with their local authority, develop a 'Regeneration Plan', setting out its vision for the next decade alongside a more detailed 'Investment Plan' for the first 4 years of the programme.

This is about more than places simply having a plan, it is backed up by serious investment to turn that plan into action: prioritising funding into some of our most left-behind communities to make everyday changes to build a fairer future for everyone. Many of those anchor institutions that tie communities together, like community centres, youth clubs, sports grounds and cultural venues, are gone. This programme gives communities the opportunity to bring those back to drive social capital and kickstart growth. We have an economy and society that works for some and not others. 49 of the 58 English towns are in the top 20% most deprived built up areas in the country. This programme focusses on those places that have been left behind for too long, which deserve to feel the benefits of investment in their future.

Across the UK, 53% of people feel it is important they can influence decisions affecting their local area, but just 27% feel able to do so. The number of adults involved in civic participation has fallen from 41% in 2020 to 34% in 2022, with those from poorest backgrounds and places the least likely to participate. This programme seeks to change that, giving people control over their local area, and confidence that their needs are being met.

Fostering stronger, more well-connected communities, where people trust each other and feel a common identity improves resilience, cohesion and safety, tackling economic and social marginalisation. This is true at an

individual level and for a community as a whole, [research](https://demos.co.uk/research/social-capital-2025-the-hidden-wealth-of-nations/) (<https://demos.co.uk/research/social-capital-2025-the-hidden-wealth-of-nations/>) has shown that improved social connections will improve economic outcomes for individual children and reduce crime across a community. [Research](https://www.bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/publications/valuing-wealth-building-prosperity/) (<https://www.bennettinstitute.cam.ac.uk/publications/valuing-wealth-building-prosperity/>) is clear that trust in communities and institutions are both the cause and result of high productivity and higher wellbeing. By establishing good governance and greater social trust, this programme could trigger a virtuous feedback loop of higher productivity. A 10% increase in social trust can lead to up to 1.5% increase in productivity.

We need thriving places that support strong, inclusive, local growth, putting money into working people's pocket. This programme will aim to raise living standards, reduce social exclusion, spread opportunities for young people, improve health and wellbeing, build stronger and more cohesive communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in some of the most left-behind areas in the country.

We will provide communities with the resources and capacity to deliver on this, to offer support where it is needed and shift central government's role from one of delivery management to delivery support. Experience suggests more can be achieved when government takes a more proactive, supporting role and further information on this will be provided shortly. This will also reduce the need for towns to procure support individually and from third parties, supporting the government's commitment to curb public sector use of consultants.

Learning from previous programmes

For the last 60 years, successive governments have tried to tackle community tensions and inequalities and improve outcomes in areas facing the biggest challenges.

The programmes have often been overly centralised, not recognising the unique approach needed by each place, and have not addressed how to bring people together, counter deprivation and support people to regenerate their local area. Too often decisions taken have driven a wedge between people and places. This has resulted in growing discontent with top-down decision-making that is out of touch with local priorities.

Whilst recent programmes such as Towns Deals and the Towns Fund sought to support communities and put local people at the centre of decision-making, [polling](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202324-annual-publication/community-life-survey-202324-background-and-headline-findings#headline-findings) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202324-annual-publication/community-life-survey-202324-background-and-headline-findings#headline-findings>) shows that only 11% of people believe their area has got better to live in over the last 2 years, and 29% say that it

has got worse. People feel like there are more tensions between immigrants and ethnic groups in society now, than in recent years. It is therefore essential that this programme draws lessons from what worked best in these previous programmes.

The New Deal for Communities, launched in 1998 across 39 locations around England and which later became part of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, was designed to close the gaps between acutely deprived areas and the rest of the country, focusing on 3 'place' related outcomes and 3 'people' related outcomes.

The 'place' related outcomes included:

- crime
- community
- housing and the physical environment

Whilst the 'people' related outcomes focussed on:

- education
- health
- worklessness

The independent evaluation of the New Deal for Communities found that 'in many respects, these neighbourhoods [were] transformed' over the 10 years the programme ran and its successes are still being felt today. Between 2002 and 2008, communities in receipt of funding saw improvement in 32 out of 36 core indicators, including crime reduction, education and health, and a closing of the gap with the rest of the country. In some areas, the value for money for the programme was rated at [5 times higher than the government's investment](https://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/general/A%20final%20assessment.pdf) (<https://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/general/A%20final%20assessment.pdf>).

There are 3 core pillars of the New Deal for Communities that contributed to its success.

1. Community empowerment and collaboration:

By encouraging local residents to take an active role in the decision-making in their communities, the scheme fostered improved social capital in each place. Bringing together local people with the government agencies, businesses and organisations that deliver change fostered relationships that lasted beyond the scheme's lifetime.

2. Long-termism:

By delivering funding over a 10-year period, the programme ensured that communities could focus on long-term solutions that built a pipeline of jobs and sustained change to local areas, rather than quick fixes. The length of

the programme supported entrenched improvement in communities' capacity and capability to advocate for themselves and drive change. Beyond certainty over funding, this also enabled a long-term shared vision for place, helping to maximise strategic alignment and avoid fragmented investments both within this programme and other sources.

3. Holistic outcomes:

By taking an outcome-based approach, the programme enabled each place to address problems holistically. Communities could find solutions that addressed multiple themes: housing, education, health and employment.

Our Plan for Neighbourhoods emulates and builds on these principles of the New Deal for Communities.

Funding profile

Each community will receive funding and support totalling up to £20 million. The funding will be split 75% capital and 25% revenue, to the following profile:

Grant type	2025 to 2026	2026 to 2027	2027 to 2028	2028 to 2029	2029 to 2030	2030 to 2031	2031 to 2032	2032 to 2033
Total revenue funding	200	382	256	432	432	432	432	437
Revenue funding (capacity)	200	150	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue funding (grants)	-	232	256	432	432	432	432	437
Capital funding (grants)	-	360	1,736	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605
Total	19,537							

Note: For revenue capacity, £250,000 was provided over the 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 financial years.

Delivery funding will be released from the beginning of the 2026 to 2027 financial year, affording communities the time and space to embed the necessary governance structures, grow their presence within the local area and build local capacity and capability to be ready to hit the ground running. To facilitate this, an additional £200,000 of capacity funding will be released at the start of the 2025 to 2026 financial year to all recipient local authorities. This builds on the previous £250,000 grants provided to local authorities to establish Neighbourhood Boards and begin community engagement as part of the previous administration's Long-Term Plan for Towns programme.

Local authorities should consult Neighbourhood Boards on their preference for using this money, which could include:

- establishing and running the Neighbourhood Board, including any process to establish the board as a charity, community interest company, or other bottom-up organisational model, to sustain long-term investment
- performing community engagement, which could include passporting money directly to voluntary and community sector groups to assist with engagement
- developing Regeneration Plans
- securing advice and expertise for Neighbourhood Boards for the technical elements of plan development and delivery, noting that support is available from the department and the guidance to curb public sector use of consultants
- ensuring capital and infrastructure interventions can hit the ground running, for example, by kickstarting the planning application process, securing architectural plans and obtaining legal advice, or any other activity that councils and boards consider will progress their plans

The accompanying technical guidance sets out more detail on the funding and spending rules – and additional information will follow in supplementary guidance to be published shortly. Communities are granted flexibilities with the spend, including the ability to borrow against what is a guaranteed revenue stream and roll underspends into later years of the programme.

Neighbourhood Boards should consider how best to use their funding to crowd in other investment and match funding, from other private and public sources.

We will confirm in due course detail of the additional support provided by MHCLG in the development and delivery of plans.

Timeline

February to April 2025:

- Neighbourhood Boards and local authorities receive a tailored data pack detailing metrics across the 3 strategic objectives, and polling on local sentiment around investment priorities for their area
- Neighbourhood Boards to confirm finalised membership and any proposals to alter the 'default' area boundary for spending in their community to MHCLG by Tuesday 22 April 2025

Spring 2025:

- MHCLG to review membership and boundary proposals and confirm to places whether acceptable
- Further guidance on fund delivery, tailored policy toolkits for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, Regeneration Plan submission, assessment and approval to be published
- MHCLG issues 2025 to 2026 capacity funding payment to all places

Spring 2025 to winter 2025:

- Neighbourhood Boards submit their Regeneration Plan to MHCLG for assessment and approval

From April 2026:

- First programme delivery funding payment to be made to lead local authorities, commencement of delivery phase
- MHCLG issues 2026 to 2027 capacity funding payment to all places

Fund objectives

The Plan for Neighbourhoods has at its core a partnership between the Neighbourhood Board and local government, supported by the UK Government. This partnership will drive growth by improving the physical and social infrastructure of their community and deliver tangible improvements to the everyday lives of these communities. To deliver the greatest impact, we encourage boards to focus the funding and interventions into those neighbourhoods and communities within their boundaries that have the greatest need.

The board, working with the local authority, is responsible for producing a 10-year Regeneration Plan for their area, setting out the activity that will be pursued to achieve the 3 strategic objectives of this programme:

- thriving places
- stronger communities
- taking back control

By making progress on each of these objectives, local areas will drive forward the government's long-term missions.

Thriving places

People take immense pride in their local areas but too many of our high streets and estates have become neglected and left behind. Town centres and neighbourhoods must evolve and regenerate to better reflect the needs and habits of their community, and residents should have a greater say in how they're designed.

Every part of the UK deserves to have vibrant neighbourhoods and communities with busy high streets, a good range of local amenities, and high-quality physical infrastructure.

We also want the UK to be a country with world-class public services that work for everyone from the NHS and social care to schools, children's and youth services.

Take healthcare for example. The most disadvantaged places are most likely to experience the worst health outcomes – according to the Office for National Statistics in 2018 to 2020, [women in the most deprived areas of](#)

England can expect to live 20 years fewer in good health compared to women in the least deprived areas

([https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/bulletins/healthstatelifeexpectanciesbyindexofmultipledeprivationimd/2018to2020#:~:text=In%202018%20to%202020%2C%20male,deprived%20areas%20\(70.7%20years\).](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/bulletins/healthstatelifeexpectanciesbyindexofmultipledeprivationimd/2018to2020#:~:text=In%202018%20to%202020%2C%20male,deprived%20areas%20(70.7%20years).)).

Places should be able to design public services that are accessible, responsive, and tailored to local need. Investing in our young people's futures and in preventative measures now will ease pressure on services over the longer-term.

Case study: integration and co-location of health services

The Community Diagnostic Centre at The Glass Works in Barnsley, supported by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in partnership with Barnsley, the NHS and the Integrated Care Board, has significantly enhanced healthcare accessibility while contributing to the towns economic and social regeneration.

Opened in 2022, the centre has delivered over 100,000 diagnostic appointments, reducing waiting times for tests and screenings and cutting the backlog of appointments.

Strategically located in the town centre, it exemplifies a 'health on the high street approach', integrating healthcare into community spaces to improve access and reduce inequalities. Its proximity to public transport has minimised missed appointments, leading to a 22% increase in attendance for mammograms and a 24% reduction in 'did not attend' rates. By using retail units, the initiative aligns with national recommendations to use high street spaces for health-promoting services, attracting an additional 55,000 visits to the town centre, supporting local businesses.

This is an example for public sector innovation and partnership driving improved health outcomes and economic growth, improving patient care and fostering a greater sense of community.

Stronger communities

Resilience in some of the most disadvantaged communities has been eroded over time, and at its most extreme has opened up the space for the type of disengagement and division that fuelled the violent disorder seen during summer 2024. Recently [polling](https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/three-four-) (<https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/three-four->

[say-britain-divided-public-say-problems-are-less-serious-than-us](#)) has found that 76% of Britons believe 'the UK feels divided' and fewer than half of Britons think of themselves as a member of a community, or part of a local group. We want to empower boards to tackle the root causes, rebuild relationships, and restore a collective sense of belonging to their community, bringing people together so they can feel proud of their area and safe in their neighbourhood.

Tackling this division will have a direct, positive impact on growth. Improving social capital is a virtuous circle across many areas of public life. For example, where parents know each other, children skipping school is noticed and addressed more often, improving education outcomes and future earning potential. If the UK improved social trust to Nordic levels (an increase of around 30%), [research \(https://demos.co.uk/research/social-capital-2025-the-hidden-wealth-of-nations/\)](https://demos.co.uk/research/social-capital-2025-the-hidden-wealth-of-nations/) shows this could generate growth of £100 billion a year.

Case study: a community centre in Sheffield

Zest is a community centre located in Upperthorpe, Sheffield, where people can access leisure and swimming facilities, a volunteer-led library with computers, work and training advice, health and wellbeing services, early years services and youth clubs. The non-leisure facilities are largely free at the point of use, with the option to make 'pay-what-you-can' donations for some services, for example, meals at the Foodworks café, which served 6,000 hot meals last year.

Beyond facilities, Zest also delivers community outreach, support and guidance services, running a support line where residents can receive personalised information and guidance, either in person or over the phone, alongside employment advice, support for vulnerable adults and those with mental health problems and access to foodbank vouchers.

The holiday activities and food (HAF) project, one of Zest's programmes, supported holiday activities but in the Malin Bridge and Loxley area only 30% of eligible children were attending. By partnering with the local school and building on existing trust networks, they increased attendance by 400%, including families that were previously disengaged from school. This highlights the power of trust and collaboration in strengthening community ties.

Between 2023 and 2024, Zest's health and well-being services supported over 1,300 people, and their youth programmes engaged 213 young people, helping them build confidence and life skills. With a 50% increase in volunteering last year, Zest is helping to bridge the gap between the community and wider services, fostering a sense of

belonging and relieving pressures on external resources to create a more cohesive and resilient community.

Taking back control

Talent is spread equally but opportunity is not. People want to be empowered and in control of their lives, to have a say over the future of their community. But this can feel a distant prospect when you are living payslip to payslip or stuck on a waiting list. The life chances of a child born in the North East today should not be so drastically different as to someone born in London.

We want to make sure children have the best start in life and that adults can live the life they want to. Whether that's accessing the skills required for emerging job markets as we transition to net zero or supporting the thousands of would-be entrepreneurs through their first steps into self-employment.

We will empower people to enter the workplace, workers to progress, and businesses to grow. This will in turn help kickstart local economic growth.

Empowered people will also have more of a say in how their local area is shaped, a central component of this programme and this government's vision for communities.

Case study: tackling employment challenges in Grimsby

In Grimsby, a community hub called Centre4 established the Ethical Recruitment Agency to address employment challenges in North East Lincolnshire.

They invest in training, temporary and permanent job placements, and supporting community initiatives aimed at local residents who struggle to find work through traditional means. This not only strengthens the local economy but also promotes social cohesion. Any profits are reinvested into enhancing local skills and personal development, alongside funding various community projects. As a not-for-profit organisation, the Ethical Recruitment Agency ensures that businesses benefit from dedicated and engaged staff through a tailored recruitment approach.

Its "Proud to Care" programme specifically helps people access opportunities in the care sector throughout North East Lincolnshire, providing practical support throughout the recruitment process. To ease the financial and logistical burden on employers, the agency covers the

costs associated with recruitment and training and temporarily subsidises wages for the first 12 weeks of employment. This support system alleviates some of the challenges faced by local businesses, while simultaneously fostering workforce development within the community.

Case study: Coleraine Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership, Northern Ireland

In Coleraine, the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership (NRP) Board are working to address the inequalities that result from deprivation. It does so by making a long-term commitment to communities, working together to jointly identify the best means to resolve the underlying causes of poverty. The Partnership draws members from local communities, voluntary groups, elected representatives, businesses, and public sector organisations. One project delivered by the NRP was the West Bann Regeneration project. This brings together and coordinate services that meet health, education and training needs in the local community. An early years programme, including creches, provides families with the support they need to engage with other services or employment. The project also provided low-cost business units and facilities for the use of the community. By bringing different services, the project better allows West Bann residents to pursue different opportunities.

Our Plan for Neighbourhoods is pursuing a broader set of strategic objectives than seen in the previous administration's Long-Term Plan for Towns. We want to empower boards to think about the challenges and opportunities their communities face in a more holistic way, learning lessons from the New Deal for Communities, with the scope to invest across a wider range of policy areas without needing to tie their activity back to just one rigid investment 'theme.'

Neighbourhood Boards

Neighbourhood Boards put local people at the centre of defining their town's future, with responsibility for developing their Regeneration Plan – in partnership with the local authority - to deliver the strategic objectives of the programme. They should bring together residents, local businesses, grassroots campaigners, workplace representatives, faith, and community leaders and those with a deep connection to their area. In consultation with their community, the board should generate a vision for the future of their area and set out a pathway to deliver that over the course of the 10-year programme (and beyond), considering opportunities to attract and combine new and existing private, public, and philanthropic funding streams.

We know that many communities will have existing board and governance structures already in place, most obviously 'Town Boards' established to deliver the previous administration's Long-Term Plan for Towns programme. Significant work went into setting these up, appointing independent chairs and curating an appropriate membership of engaged and involved local stakeholders. We are clear that we do not want to undo work already undertaken.

All 75 boards must confirm their proposed chair, membership and boundary by 22 April 2025. Instructions and further guidance will be released shortly and we will update this page in due course.

The accompanying governance and boundary guidance (which will be published in due course) focuses on:

- accountable bodies and Neighbourhood Board roles and responsibilities
- governance structure requirements for Neighbourhood Boards
- the process and timelines to confirm their Neighbourhood Board arrangements and boundary to MHCLG
- geographical boundaries for places in receipt of funding
- the associated MHCLG review and approval process

Neighbourhood boards in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

The government has also committed to resetting relations with the devolved governments and close collaboration within communities and with wider government will make boards stronger and more effective.

In Scotland, Neighbourhood Boards should consider the policy objectives of the Scottish Government's [Regeneration Strategy](https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-sustainable-future-regeneration-strategy/documents/) (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-sustainable-future-regeneration-strategy/documents/>), which sets out Scotland's commitment to support the regeneration of the most disadvantaged urban and fragile rural communities and how the interventions delivered can complement Scotland's Town Centre First Principle and Town Centre Action Plan. We recommend that Neighbourhood Boards have early conversations with their respective MHCLG contact and the Scottish Government Regeneration Unit to consider opportunities to align objectives and maximise funding opportunities.

In Wales, boards should consider how their Regeneration Plan interplays with the objectives of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government, The Well-being of Future Generations, the Transforming Towns programme, the Future Wales planning framework, and other relevant programmes and strategies.

In Northern Ireland, boards should consider how their Regeneration Plan interplays with the objectives of the Northern Ireland Executive's [Programme for Government](https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-2024-2027-our-plan-doing-what-matters-most-documents) (<https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/programme-government-2024-2027-our-plan-doing-what-matters-most-documents>), alongside other existing strategies and local development plans such as Council Community Plans and Local Development Plans.

Regeneration Plans

Further detail as to the content, form and submission timetable for Regeneration Plans will be set out in forthcoming guidance.

Neighbourhood Boards must work with local people and the local authority to draft a Regeneration Plan. We know the challenges in places vary, and that it is the people living and working in these areas who are best placed to identify these challenges and inform the solutions. Boards should work in partnership with their respective local authority and, if relevant, ensure their Mayoral Combined Authority have been consulted on the plan.

The plan should outline the community's overarching vision for change over the next decade to deliver the strategic objectives of the programme, developed through grassroots engagement to reflect local people's priorities.

As part of the Regeneration Plan, boards will need to provide a more detailed investment plan for the first 4-year investment period cycle, which will include the interventions the board would like to pursue over the period and how that activity delivers across the 3 strategic objectives of the programme.

We know places have worked hard to engage their communities and develop their 'Long-Term Plan' for the previous administration's Long-Term Plan for Towns. That progress is not for nothing and should not be undone, nor should places undo their governance arrangements. Communities should feel empowered to build and adapt their existing plans - our reforms seek to build on and improve the previous programme with a new set of strategic objectives that are aligned to this government's plan to kickstart growth, to be delivered by a broader range of policy interventions. We

believe this will give communities greater flexibility as to how and what they can deliver, without ripping up what has already been done.

Neighbourhood Boards will want the opportunity to iterate their proposals in response to community feedback, and establishing good governance and trust within the community takes time to build. Rebuilding capability and confidence within communities that decades of inequality, austerity and deprivation have eroded will not happen overnight. A core [learning](https://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/general/A%20final%20assessment.pdf) (<https://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/general/A%20final%20assessment.pdf>) from the New Deal for Communities programme was importance of including a 'year-zero' in all regeneration schemes, to ensure better outcomes at the end of a decade of investment. This means setting aside time to ensure that the foundations of the programme are secure, including employing the right people, selecting effective management systems, and establishing processes for community involvement.

That is why we have confirmed a further capacity payment of £200,000 in the 2025 to 2026 financial year. Recognising the differing levels of local capacity and development work required across the 75 communities, MHCLG will provide a wide window for Neighbourhood Boards to submit their Regeneration Plan to us.

Pre-approved interventions and list of powers

The Plan for Neighbourhoods represents a break from the competitive bidding process and micromanaging of previous regeneration funds. Instead, this is a model whereby Neighbourhood Boards are provided with a list of [pre-approved interventions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-prospectus-and-tools/plan-for-neighbourhoods-pre-approved-interventions) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-prospectus-and-tools/plan-for-neighbourhoods-pre-approved-interventions>) and given the autonomy such that, if that activity can be evidenced as a clear priority of the community, it can be pursued without the need to provide a lengthy business case. MHCLG analysts have assessed all interventions listed and consider them to have a strong case for investment, value for money and benefit-to-cost ratio.

The activities listed range from eye-catching new developments to the bread-and-butter issues raised by people on the doorstep. To give boards as much flexibility as to how and what they can deliver we have more than doubled the number of interventions, providing examples where possible to indicate ideas for spend while empowering the community to come up with their own grassroots solutions. Unlike the previous administration's Long-Term Plan for Towns programme, the interventions listed are not explicitly tied to one theme – instead, we are giving boards the flexibility to consider how the interventions they wish to pursue can apply to any or all of the strategic objectives of the programme: thriving places, stronger

communities and taking back control. Neighbourhood Boards do not need to explicitly link each intervention back to just one specific objective.

Similarly, this list is not exhaustive. We encourage Neighbourhood Boards to think innovatively and creatively about how to deliver the strategic objectives of the programme. Where activities fall outside the scope of the pre-approved interventions but the board, based on their community engagement, believes they are better placed to meet local needs, the board should seek to pursue these. This would require a business case to be agreed with MHCLG.

We are also providing an updated [list of powers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-prospectus-and-tools/plan-for-neighbourhoods-list-of-powers) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-prospectus-and-tools/plan-for-neighbourhoods-list-of-powers>) (or 'policy toolkit'), which outlines existing powers available to communities and local authorities in England (and, in some instances, Wales).

We will separately publish similar toolkits for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, following consultation with the devolved governments.

We want to give boards and communities the tools and information they need to make informed decisions, empowering local people to have ownership over the future of their neighbourhood and local area. This is not about micromanaging, this is real devolution – the transfer of power and investment to where it belongs.

Community engagement

Undertaking meaningful engagement with the local community is a central pillar of the Plan for Neighbourhoods. Building trust and empowering the local community requires consistency, dedication and time, and evidence that people's priorities have been acted upon.

When it comes to communities having more influence over their area, it is important to ensure this is not dominated by those with the sharpest elbows. We are providing the time, space and funding to avoid under-resourced and generic consultation, to ensure Neighbourhood Boards hear from everybody, and include those from marginalised or deprived communities who typically may struggle to make their voices heard. These underserved groups include those whose socioeconomic circumstances, language or culture mean that they struggle to access 'usual' methods of engagement. Examples of this might be those experiencing homelessness, without access to the internet, who do not speak English or the elderly.

Community engagement should be iterative, so that people understand how their priorities are reflected in the plan. It should happen at regular intervals throughout the course of the programme, as the needs and priorities of communities evolve, and reverting to previously engaged groups to set out progress made, how their concerns and priorities were accounted for and enable the board to be held accountable for their delivery. Neighbourhood Boards should build on existing community engagement structures by mapping social infrastructure already present in their community and drawing on that expertise.

Case study: community-led regeneration

Co-operatives UK led the £1.455 million Community Economic Development (CED) programme, which empowered 71 communities in England to create locally driven economic plans. Through partnerships with groups like Locality and the New Economics Foundation, Co-operatives UK provided grants and technical support, helping communities develop sustainable, cooperative-led strategies. Unlike traditional top-down approaches focused on economic growth, CED empowered residents to shape their economies by generating wealth and jobs that stay within their communities.

Safe Regeneration in Bootle, Sefton joined the CED programme with ambitions to extend beyond their existing business incubation hub, aiming to significantly increase their impact and activities to benefit the broader economy. Their projects include:

- acquiring a derelict pub - purchasing from the brewery to create guest accommodation, a music venue and a gastro pub
- partnering with the Canal and River Trust to revitalise the nearby canal towpath, both to boost foot traffic and strengthen the local economy

This model of community-led, asset-based development allowed Safe Regeneration to drive sustainable economic growth tailored to local needs.

Case study: improving community outcomes across Wales

Building Communities Trust (BCT) is a third sector advocacy and umbrella organisation operating across Wales. Its core programme, Invest Local, aims to strengthen vulnerable Welsh communities by empowering its residents through community-led regeneration. Invest Local provides up to £1 million for a 10- year period, and the funding allocation is entirely community-driven as residents are given the opportunity to identify goals and develop activities that will bring positive change to their communities. An officer from BCT is assigned to each place to provide support, help build capacity, and act as an enabler.

Since 2016, Invest Local has helped improve community outcomes in 13 places across Wales. For example, in Trowbridge and St Mellons, residents used some of the funding to create a pantry. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the pantry proved an invaluable asset that made the community more resilient by providing an array of support services.

More than 60 volunteers worked around the clock to:

- purchase and deliver goods to households
- take calls on the helpline
- provide moral support
- help vulnerable individuals in-person when necessary (almost 300 residents were supported in these ways)
- create and deliver more than 350 'activity packs' to support the wellbeing of children and young people occupied during lockdown
- provide tailored assistance to vulnerable households facing various challenges such as bereavement or a risk of homelessness

Best practice for community engagement

As Local Trust notes, 'a one-size fits all strategy' will not work; however, we have set out some best practice that Neighbourhood Boards may wish to consider when planning community engagement.

Focus on those less likely to be heard:

The Plan for Neighbourhoods will be most effective if boards engage those who are not usually engaged in decision-making. At its heart, this programme aims to address deprivation, so consider how you can best engage those who may not usually feel listened to.

Identify local assets:

Use local assets to build on existing strengths, and work with community groups who have existing relationships and expertise in community development to design engagement and ensure sufficient reach. Consider using allocated capacity funding to invest in these organisations to support engagement.

Make time for meaningful engagement:

When planning community engagement, ensure that enough time is allocated to allow for meaningful engagement with all sections of the community.

Actively listen to the local community:

Be comfortable in straying from a list of pre-determined questions. Let conversations flow organically and recognise when people aren't agreeing with diagnoses or preferred solutions - let different groups direct the course of the conversation.

Use your community to identify priorities:

This helps to ensure the plans are co-created with the community from the start.

Case study: Stranraer place plan

Stranraer was chosen as one of the places to be included in the Borderlands Growth Deal Place programme. As part of this, the town required a place plan to identify projects and investments. Many partners and members of the public felt that they had previously been 'consulted to death' with limited outputs, so the Stranraer Development Trust worked with a group of six community partners to broaden reach and build ownership.

They created a 'town team' that drew broadly from stakeholders and sectors in the community to develop the plan. When engaging the public, they also looked widely, building connections with through local activists and organisations. They undertook an inclusive 6-month consultation, meeting people 'where they're at' in schools, existing group activities and clubs and on the street, rather than insisting local people come to scheduled events. This resulted in a 5-strand approach with collaborative decision-making and public voting to identify priority projects. 6 strategic projects are now moving into design for implementation starting in 2025 to 2026.

Target areas where engagement has been weakest:

Use your knowledge of where engagement has typically been weakest, and which groups might have been underrepresented in the past. Leverage relationships with community groups to establish how engagement could be improved to overcome barriers such as income, ethnicity, age, disability and language.

Be creative and present:

Go into the community. Hold engagement events in the spaces where people and communities meet, for example, the local high-street, youth clubs, pubs, schools and community centres. Maximise the opportunity to get the view from a broad set of residents that may not attend consultation events.

Use a participatory approach:

Encourage the community to participate in decision-making processes, such as participatory budgeting. This can act as a hook to engage residents, helping to identify local solutions and bring forward innovative ideas. Local authorities may be able to help advise on other tools they have used in the past.

Delegate roles to community groups:

Identify where ownership of the planning and delivery of Regeneration Plans can be given to community groups, facilitating improved local capability by bringing these groups into the planning and delivery process. Consider how partners of the Neighbourhood Boards, such as community organisations, can have a clear role in the process to drive interest in the programme. This could also include devolving budgets and delivery to community groups for neighbourhood priorities.

Case study: co-operation at the grassroots

Members of the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN) are encouraged to suggest projects where they can work with other members to find cooperative policy solutions to the challenges facing local government. The CCIN work programme is divided into larger projects called Policy Labs, and smaller projects called Policy Prototypes.

Between 2019 and 2021, 4 councils worked together on a Policy Lab project to explore co-operative models for improving community engagement and delivering better local outcomes. The councils involved were:

- Burntwood Town Council
- North Herts District Council
- Stevenage Borough Council
- Sunderland City Council

Each council, despite differences in size and resources, adopted neighbourhood-level strategies to enhance services.

Burntwood focuses on empowering community groups to deliver services, while North Herts created a food network during the pandemic

to ensure equitable food access. Stevenage implemented a Co-operative Neighbourhood Programme for collaborative decision-making, and Sunderland transformed an abandoned golf course into a community park through local engagement.

These models highlight how councils can collaborate with communities for more effective and efficient service delivery.

Case study: resident-led transformation in Lawrence Weston

The Ambition Lawrence Weston (ALW) initiative, based on a post-war housing estate in north-west Bristol, is a community-driven project supported by funding from Big Local and local partnerships.

Through a community development plan and a neighbourhood development plan, residents influenced policies such as ensuring that 50% of new housing is allocated to local families. ALW facilitates a community network of over 45 organisations, fostering collaboration on impactful projects such as a solar farm powering 1,000 homes and a planned wind turbine. These efforts have attracted over £5.5 million in investment, significantly boosting the local economy, and transformed the area through new infrastructure, improved transport links, enhanced facilities for young people and support for local businesses. By circulating wealth locally and empowering residents, ALW has created a stronger, more self-reliant community with lasting benefits.

Ensure continued accountability through ongoing engagement opportunities:

Make sure your community stays informed of developments during key milestones through email, press release, exhibition or in-person events.

Next steps

Placing communities at the heart of the regeneration process has defined previous successful government initiatives, including John Prescott's New Deal for Communities. By consistently investing time in good conversations with residents, leaders built trust and social capital within communities to ensure funding was spent on things that mattered to locals.

The Plan for Neighbourhoods provides the funding and support to build trust, drive growth and release the potential of 75 areas. Through the introduction of Community Right to Buy and further initiatives to support high streets and communities, we will see local leaders take back control,

neighbourhoods revitalised, and communities strengthened up and down the country.

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