



Hartlepool Board

Thursday 2nd April 2026



Hartlepool
Borough Council

PRIDE IN PLACE
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Hartlepool
Borough Council



Tree Equity for Hartlepool

Scott Watson

Arboricultural Officer

Hartlepool Borough Council

2nd April 2026



Tree Equity

What does Tree Equity mean?

Tree Equity means ensuring that all people regardless of income, race, age or location have access to the benefits that trees provide.

It's all about planting and maintaining trees in the places that need them the most, especially in communities that have historically been underserved and overlooked in urban greening efforts.



Tree Equity Score

The Tree Equity Score UK combines information from a variety of sources to create a single measure from 0 to 100.

TREE EQUITY SCORE UK

Search for a location

LSOA ID **E01011992**
Population: 1,893

Urban area: 1.31 sq-km (99% of LSOA area)
Hartlepool, England

36
Tree Equity Score

Ranked 55th of 56 LSOAs in Hartlepool
Priority: **HIGHEST**

Current canopy cover: 4%
Canopy cover goal: 36%

Score indicators
Priority Index

Income Ranking (IMD): 208 out of 32,844
Air pollution: PM2.5, NO2: 6 µg/m3, 9.7 µg/m3
Health Ranking (IMD): 508 out of 32,844
Heat disparity: 1.46° C
Employment Ranking (IMD): 405 out of 32,844
Children & older people: 37%

36
Tree Equity Score

The lower the score, the greater need for investment

TREE CANOPY INCOME HEALTH EMPLOYMENT AGE HEAT AIR POLLUTION

Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

The Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project is the first of its kind in the UK to use the Tree Equity tool comprehensively and town-wide, to form rigorous plans for change for residents where trees are needed most. The project is being led by **Tree for Cities** and is part-funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Linbury Trust.

- 🌳 Plant trees across at least **10 hectares** in high priority neighbourhoods to improve tree equity.
- 🌳 Involve **1,500 local people** in engagement and education programmes to promote Hartlepool's natural heritage.
- 🌳 Update Hartlepool's previous Tree Strategy.
- 🌳 Become a recognised Tree City of the World.

The project is running between February 2025 to May 2027, advocating for urban trees, developing strategic documents, and increasing canopy cover through tree planting with the community.



Hartlepool
Borough Council

thirteen
Managing and building homes



Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

Public Survey

At the start of the project, Trees for Cities carried out a public survey to help shape the project and understand the desires of the local community.

74% of people said they disagree that trees are spread fairly in Hartlepool

97% of people said they agree that trees, woodland and hedgerows are an important part of Hartlepool

There were no responses from anyone under 18

An initial **579** responses, geographically spread throughout Hartlepool

83% of people said they disagree that there are enough trees in Hartlepool

Over **1000** individual points of data from the question “Where would you like to see new trees planted?”

Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

Opportunity Mapping

Treeconomics carried out opportunity mapping to identify where in Hartlepool we could plant trees. Over 1000 ha of plantable space was identified.

- 🌳 Identified all areas of open space within Hartlepool
- 🌳 Removed existing canopy cover and hard landscapes
- 🌳 Removed unsuitable area of land such as sand, watercourse, bridge, agricultural land etc
- 🌳 Removed statutory designations such as battlefields, SSI's etc
- 🌳 Removed other areas such as allotments, bowling greens etc
- 🌳 Tree equity scores were then overlaid to show areas of most need
- 🌳 The over 1000 data points from the public consultation were added to create a 'Desire Layer'.

What does this tell us?

How did we do this?

Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

Opportunity Mapping



Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

Tree Planting 25 – 26

Total of **4,000 whips**
and **44 standards**
have been planted to
date, totalling **5.38**
hectares.

Nearly **200** volunteers.



Bishop Cuthbert – 2745 trees



Phoenix Centre – 1255 trees



Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

3-30-300

- 🌳 See **3** trees from where they live
- 🌳 Live in a neighbourhood that has at least **30%** Canopy Cover
- 🌳 Live within a **300m** walk of a green open space

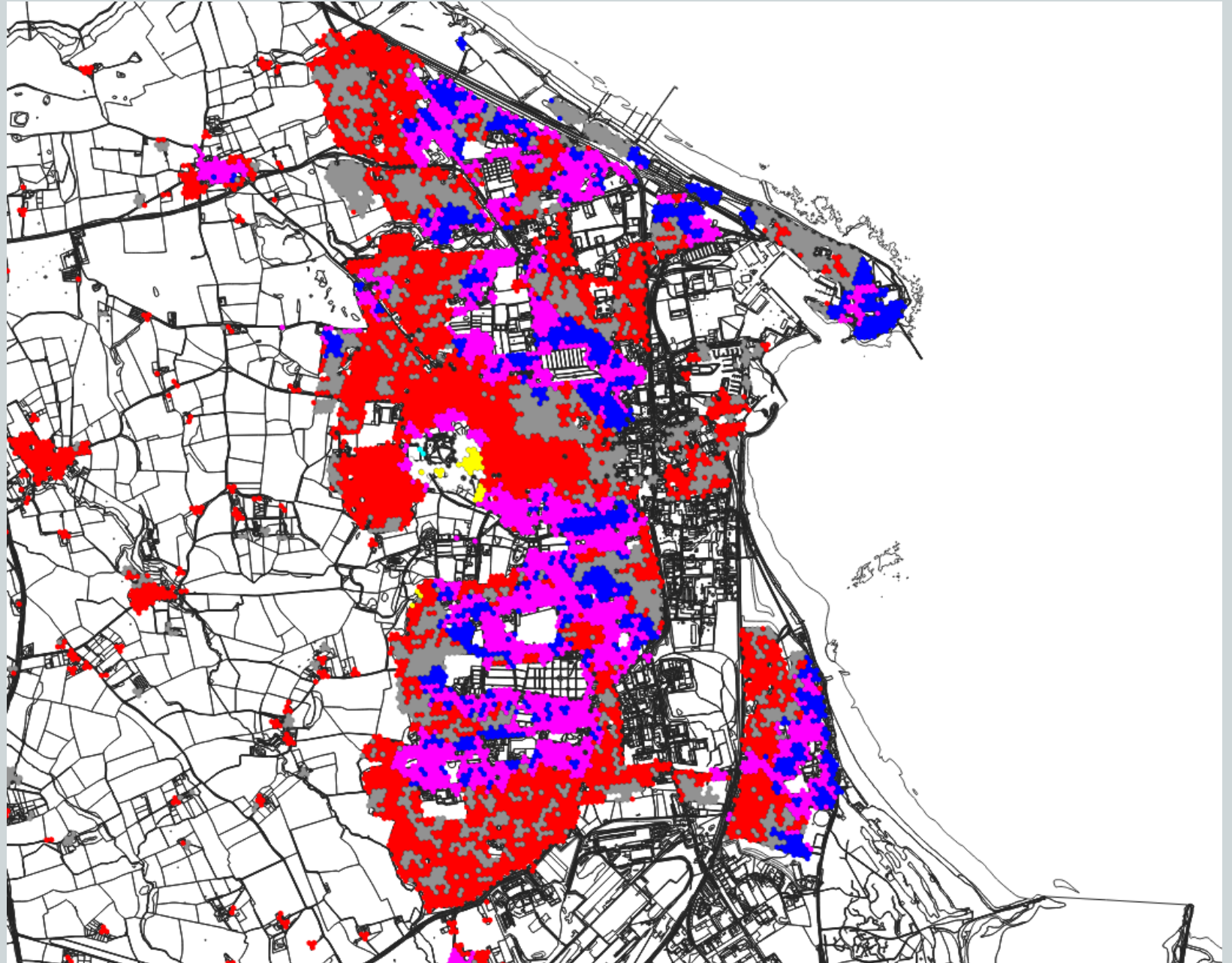
3-30-300 is a simple but transformative rule, proposed by Dr Cecil Konijnendijk, a renowned urban forester from The Netherlands. It is based on the idea that access to nature, particularly trees and green spaces, offers numerous benefits, including improved mental and physical health, increased biodiversity, and better climate resilience.



Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

3-30-300 summary scores

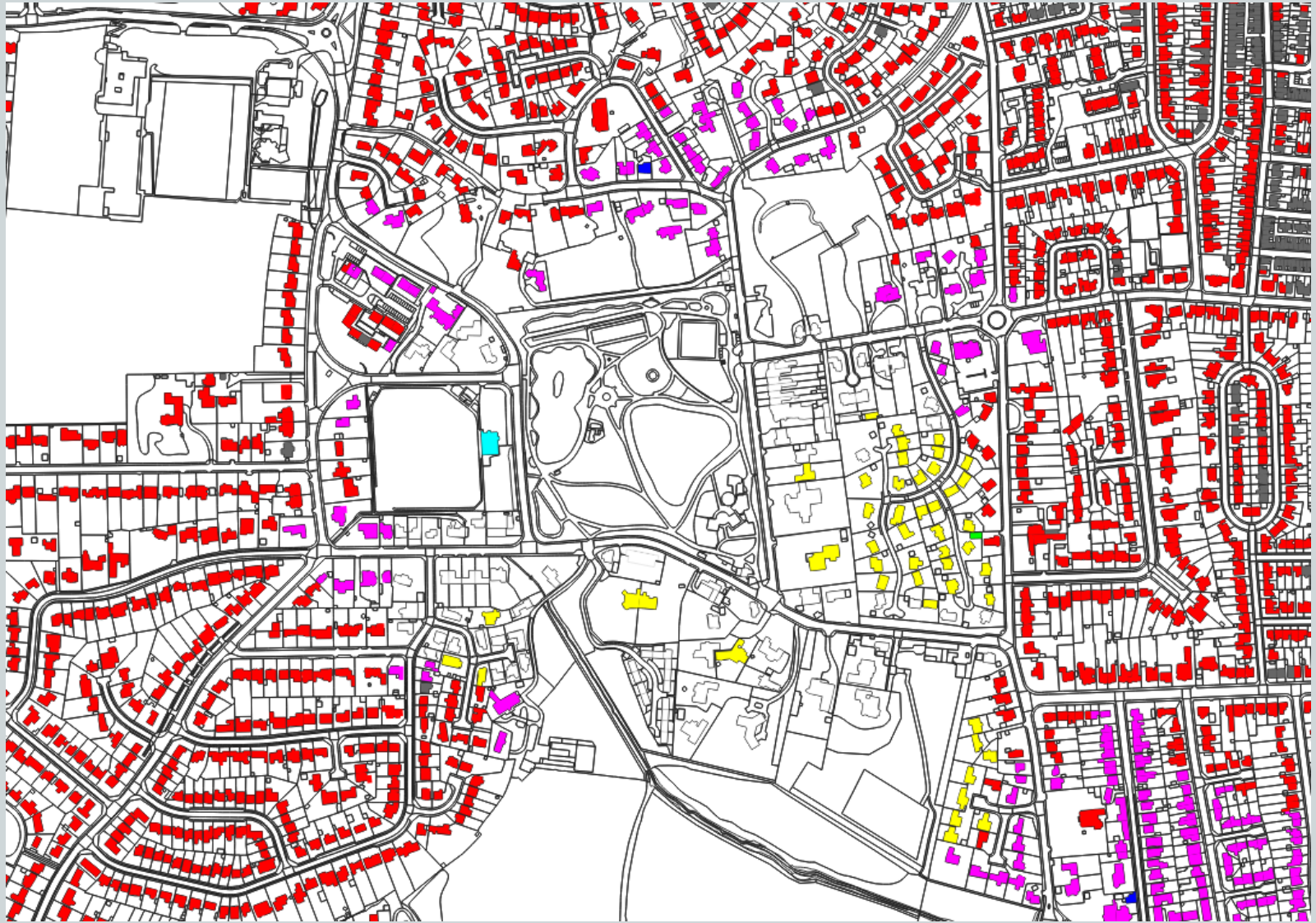
✓	█	0 categories met
✓	█	3 trees only met
✓	█	30% canopy only met
✓	█	300m to greenspace only met
✓	█	3 trees and 30% canopy met
✓	█	3 trees and 300m to greenspace met
✓	█	30% canopy and 300m to greenspace met
✓	█	All categories met



Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project

3-30-300 at a building level

✓	None
✓	3 only
✓	30 only
✓	300 only
✓	30 and 300 only
✓	3 and 300 only
✓	3 and 30 only
✓	All three
☐	Non residential



Urban Forest Master Plan



The Tree Equity for Hartlepool Project the **first of its kind in the UK** to deliver town wide, community driven Tree Equity and that Hartlepool is in a real leadership position here nationally. The community and people of the town have shown real appetite and enthusiasm for this work, and now that we have lit the spark the need to invest in the legacy is key.

The Tree Equity for Hartlepool project is a great catalyst for change; however, short-term interventions alone cannot deliver lasting change. To secure the legacy of this work, the need for a strategic, long-term plan was identified early in the project. **The Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP)** provides this framework and its creation, is funded by the initial funding.

The document has been created with Treeconomics and Hartlepool Borough Council and It sets out a clear vision and actionable priorities for the planting, maintenance, and management of Hartlepool's trees over the coming decades.

Urban Forest Master Plan

Where did we start?



Public consultation

- 🌳 Online survey conducted at the start of the overall project with 579 responses gathered on priorities for trees and green spaces.

Working group

- 🌳 A working group was formed to ensure the UFMP aligns with operational needs. Contributors included officers from HBC, Treeconomics, Trees for Cities and the Woodland Trust.

Internal Consultation with Elected Members

- 🌳 Dedicated Members' Seminar held. Members reviewed and helped shape: The vision, The aims and The strategic direction of the UFMP.

External Stakeholder Engagement

- 🌳 Workshop day with key partners: Parish councils, Social housing providers, Charities and Community groups. Gathered insights and strengthened collaboration.

Urban Forest Master Plan

Outcome & priorities of the consultations



Consultations

There was strong support for planting significantly more trees in:

- 🌳 Urban areas
- 🌳 Deprived communities
- 🌳 Schools
- 🌳 New developments

🌳 Other priorities included:

- 🌳 Wildlife corridors
- 🌳 Community Orchards
- 🌳 Volunteer involvement
- 🌳 Stronger TPO protection
- 🌳 Developer accountability

2.1 Vision & Delivery

Hartlepool will be

PEOPLE

... a place where people live healthier, safe and independent lives.

A town where everyone can enjoy the benefits of trees—cleaner air, cooler streets and greener spaces—and where schools, families and communities feel proud to help plant and care for them.

PLACE

... a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green town.

Neighbourhoods that feel greener, more welcoming and full of life, with trees along streets, routes and local spaces, especially in the areas that need them most.

POTENTIAL

... a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all.

A long-term treescape that grows stronger every year—supporting wildlife, improving wellbeing, and creating new opportunities for learning, working, creativity and community involvement.

ORGANISATION

... a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community.

A council that plans, plants and looks after trees in a smart, consistent and future-focused way, making space for nature in new developments and working with partners to get things done.

... a place where **every** neighbourhood grows, enjoys and takes pride in its trees.



Urban Forest Master Plan

Delivery Framework

Sustainable Resource Management

- 🌳 Funding and staffing
- 🌳 Data handling and access
- 🌳 Trees and development
- 🌳 Tree protection
- 🌳 Reviewing the plan



Urban Forest Master Plan

How will the document be used?

The UFMP should be a shared community vision, not just a council document. It will provide strategic direction for trees.

Offer opportunities for:

- 🌳 Planting
- 🌳 Caring for trees
- 🌳 Community involvement
- 🌳 Shareholders, Businesses & landowners supported with clear standards.
- 🌳 Utilising and sharing data for better outcomes.

3.1 Targets, Priorities & Actions: Tree and Woodland Structure

T1. Tree Canopy Cover

Tree canopy cover is the amount of ground shaded by the leaves and branches of trees when viewed from above. It doesn't show the full health or diversity of the urban forest, but it's a useful way to track how tree cover is changing over time.

Data from 2024 (Google Environmental Insights Explorer) shows that Hartlepool's average canopy cover is 9.4%. Forest Research recommends at least 15% for coastal towns and cities, so there is a clear gap to bridge. Because trees grow slowly—and some will be lost over time to age, disease, or removal—it's important to set realistic milestones to make sure long-term canopy targets can be reached.

Some parts of Hartlepool have canopy cover as low as 3.4%, although areas such as Seaton Common National Nature Reserve or industrial land naturally have limitations on where trees can be planted.




Figure 1. Canopy cover across Hartlepool

Policy Links	Actions	Resp	Review
Pride in Place Hartlepool Regeneration Plan 2026-2036, Environmental Targets (W & TOW) Regulations 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a detailed canopy cover assessment (i-Tree Eco) to establish accurate potential canopy cover and the amount of tree cover also provided by woodland and hedgerows. Agree a long-term borough-wide target for tree canopy cover to include all land public and private. Review every 5 years by carrying out a canopy cover assessment. 	Planning	2026

Priority	Key Performance Indicators showing current position			
	Low	Moderate	Good	Optimal
	The existing canopy cover equals 0-25% of the potential.	The existing canopy cover equals 25-50% of the potential.	The existing canopy cover equals 50-75% of the potential.	The existing canopy cover equals 75-100% of the potential.

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Urban Forest Master Plan

Current public consultation



The purpose of the current public consultation is to:

- 🌳 Validate the vision, aims & actions of the UFMP
- 🌳 Allow residents, businesses & schools to review the draft
- 🌳 Identify gaps before final approval
- 🌳 Strengthen community ownership
- 🌳 Ensure the UFMP is:
 - 🌳 Practical
 - 🌳 Inclusive
 - 🌳 Future-focused

Urban Forest Master Plan

How can the Hartlepool Board help and support?



Promote and take part in the Urban Forest Master Plan Consultation.

Example actions included in the masterplan:

I-Tree Eco Study - £30,000

- 🌳 Provides detailed insight into all public and private trees across the borough.
- 🌳 Typical project duration: 9–12 months (commissioning to final report).
- 🌳 Involves surveying ~300 sample plots, each 400 m² in size.
- 🌳 Surveys are carried out primarily by community groups and supported to do so.

We've created a 25 year masterplan, we now need the help, the allies and the investment to make it reality.

Urban Forest Master Plan

Closing message



- 🌳 The project has already engaged **1,500+** residents in ten months, surpassing the two-year target, demonstrating strong community enthusiasm and a solid foundation for future work.
- 🌳 The Urban Forest Master Plan sets out a long-term vision for a greener, healthier and more equitable Hartlepool.
- 🌳 Planting trees is just the beginning; we're creating a cultural transformation that nurtures an urban forest for generations to come.
- 🌳 We recognise that rapid change is limited, trees simply don't grow fast enough to move Hartlepool from the bottom to the top of national tables within 25 years.
- 🌳 However, we can continue to become a leading example of how a community delivers genuine tree equity, creating a model that inspires other areas across the UK and beyond.

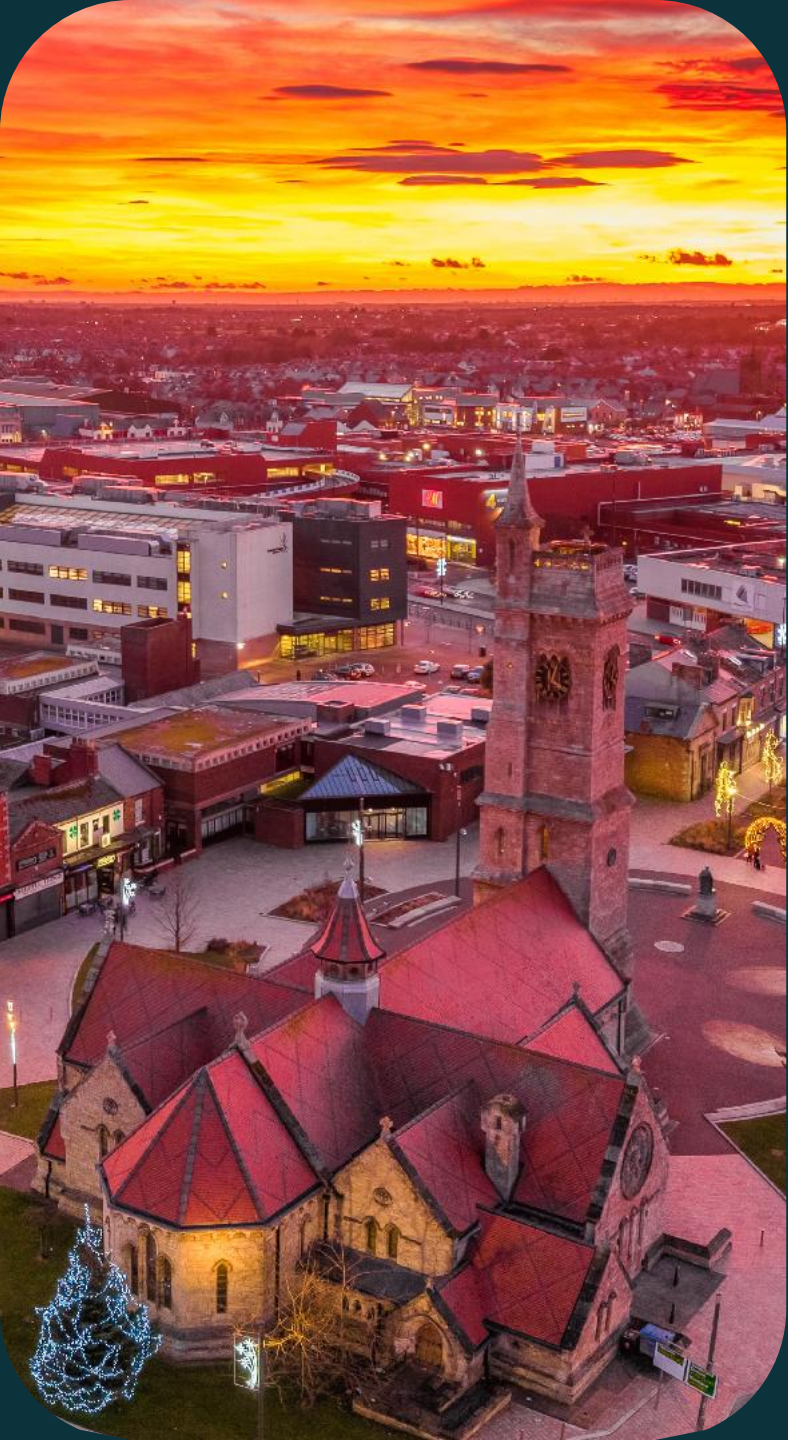
Thanks for listening!



Tree Equity for
Hartlepool
Project



Urban Forest
Master Plan
Consultation



Pride in Place Innovation Days

High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration Interventions

- Funding for Improvements to Town Centres, Neighbourhoods and High Streets
- Creating and Improving Green Spaces, along with incorporating Natural Features into Wider Public Spaces
- Funding for Local Arts, Cultural, Heritage and Creative Initiatives



Emerging Themes

- Repurposing Vacant Spaces: Strong appetite for turning empty shops, unused buildings, and heritage assets into spaces for community, creative zones or SMEs
- Celebrating Local Culture & Heritage: Showcase Hartlepool's identity and history by developing heritage, creative, artistic and cultural opportunities
- Improving Navigation & Connectivity: A need for clearer signage, walking/cycling routes, community-led information points and stronger connections between key assets
- Enhancing Green Spaces with Community Involvement: Desire for more trees, greenery, and improved parks/play areas supported by volunteering and community stewardship
- Better Communication: Strong focus on clear promotion of local activities, events, and assets with collaboration so it is accessible for the whole of Hartlepool
- Animating & Revitalising Public Spaces: Themes of animating parks, beaches, and high-streets whilst improving the appearance of communities and high streets

Slido Vote

Health and Wellbeing Interventions

- Supporting Community-Level Health Provision
- Integration and Co-Location of Health and Wellbeing Services
- Funding for Local Sport & Activity Facilities, Events and Leagues, to Foster Community Engagement and Connection



Emerging Themes

- Establishing Local Health & Wellbeing Hubs: Integration and co-location of services in existing community spaces to improve coordination, and ease of access for residents
- Expanding Community-Led Preventative Support: Growth in schemes focused on social models of health to help people engage and access services such as Active Befrienders
- Improving Access to Sport & Movement: Desire for investment in sports facilities, natural assets such as beaches and fun activities for all ages to make movement part of daily life
- Creating Socially Connected & Welcoming Spaces: Ideas such as chatty benches, pop-up cafés and capital investment in assets to build belonging and support mental wellbeing
- Activating Green Spaces: Strong emphasis on improving parks, beaches, and neighbourhood green spaces with an opportunity for shared community equipment
- Improving Accessibility: Strong desire to make spaces and places more inclusive, easier to navigate, expanding schemes like Bridge Card

Slido Vote

Safety, Security and Cohesion Interventions

- Design of the Built Environment to 'Design Out' Crime and Encourage Positive Behaviour
- Interventions to Target Crime Prevention within Specific Locations
- Interventions to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Minimise Reoffending
- Measures to Improve Community Cohesion



Emerging Themes

- Co-Creating Diversionary Activities with Young People: Provide dedicated budgets, empowering them to shape solutions that reduce risky behaviours and ASB
- Bringing Communities Together: Strong appetite for more events, social action projects, volunteering opportunities and intergenerational activities to build cohesion
- Enhancing the Appearance & Safety of Neighbourhoods: A desire for environmental improvements to make areas, streets and alleyways feel safer and more welcoming
- Improving Communication between Partners, Services & Communities: Focus on making it easy for people to understand what support, activities and opportunities exist locally
- Creating more Opportunities for Children & Young People: Enhance youth facilities, create areas of natural play in communities and provide safe spaces within communities
- Making Public Spaces Safer: Desire to improve lighting and CCTV in public spaces and parks to increase feelings of safety and make areas usable throughout day/evening

Slido Vote

Emerging Cross-Cutting Priorities

- Improve Communication and Access to Information
- Repurposing Vacant/Underutilised Spaces such as Shops or Community Assets
- Activate and Improve Public Spaces, Parks, Beaches and Green Areas
- Investing in Grant Schemes to Improve Existing Infrastructure and Facilities
- Empower Communities and Provide Support within Neighbourhoods including Health, Crime & Safety and Youth Provision

Next Steps

Innovation Days

These creative workshops are designed to generate ideas against our identified challenges and to develop potential approaches for PiP

Industry Engagement

This will allow potential local suppliers to be engaged such as via 'Meet the Buyer' events as part of the development of capital projects

Technical Investment Subgroups

- Safety, Security and Cohesion
- Health and Wellbeing
- High Street, Heritage and Regeneration

Prioritising Investment Ideas into Projects

The subgroups will translate all the ideas into actionable investment projects for Hartlepool

Proposals

This will agree finalised proposals, identify the delivery method(s) and make recommendations to the Hartlepool Board



Pride in Place Impact Fund Year 1 Summary

Play Equipment and Parks - £300k

This investment includes:

- Replacing play equipment in Burn Valley Gardens and King Oswy Play Area
- Replacing play equipment and adding a youth dome at Rossmere Park
- Installation of nine new outdoor games tables including Teqball
- Installation of new furniture within parks/play areas, including accessible picnic benches and more bins
- Contributions which is helping leverage further investment which will improve other play areas such as Clavering, Greatham and Seaton Carew



Burn Valley Lower

Existing flat swing seats moved to existing junior swing frame



KOMPAN Cliff Rider with Steel Slide installed onto New Black EPDM Wetpour



KOMPAN Climber installed onto New Black EPDM Wetpour



2 x Inclusive Springer installed into existing safety surface



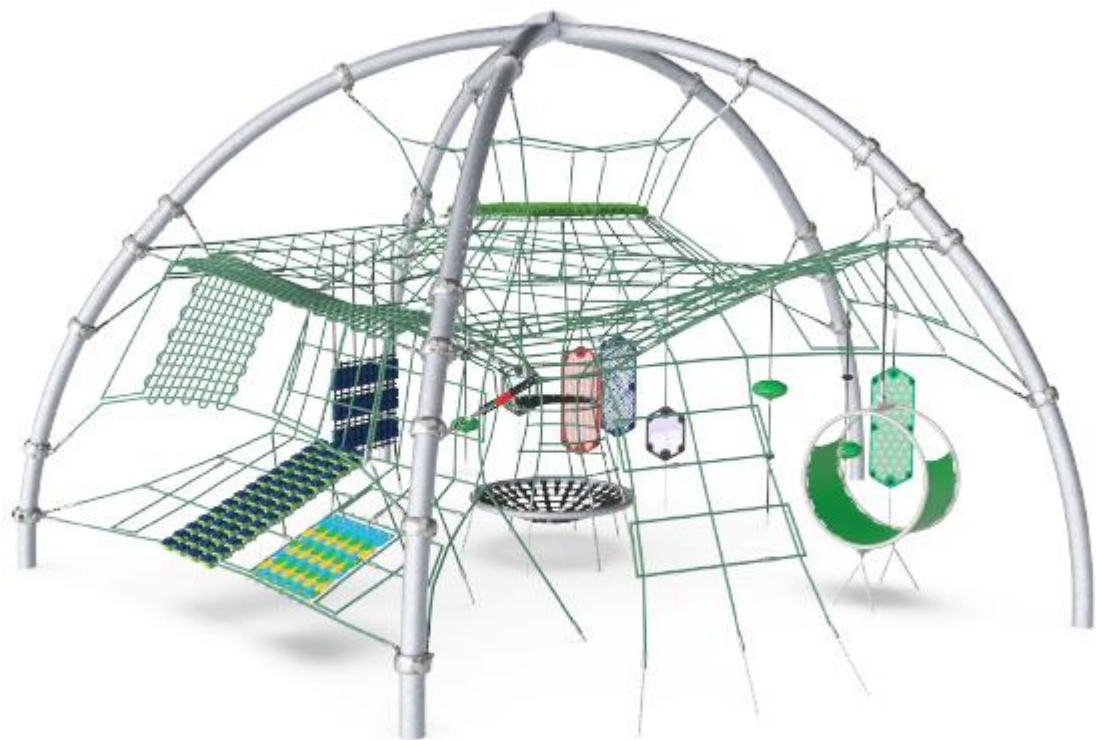
2 x You & Me Swing Seats to attach to existing frame

Burn Valley Upper

KOMPAN!
Let's play



Rossmere Park





King Oswy Play Area

01. FTW008 Fantasy Troll

Features: 18
Users: 13
Age range: 3-8 Years

Accessible from ground level

Play Features:

1.2m high Bedway Slide
Circular Finger Maze
Inclined Climbing Ramp
House with Two Windows, Seat,
Shop with Counter and Sign
Ting Ting Bell
Two Ridge Roofs
Zigzag Climber
Tumpke Climber
Inclined 'Troll' Bridge
Binoculars
Communication Panel
Braille Alphabet Panel
Unicorn/Troll Headthrough Panel



02. PZW682.22 Pole Up, Pole Down

Features: 9
Users: 14
Age range: 6-14 Years



03. FSW001 Four Way Seesaw

Features: 4
Users: 4
Age range: 2-8 Years

Side transfer from wheelchair



Play Features:

Pull Up Ramp
Firemans Pole
Hoop Climber
Single Rung x 2
1.5m high Traditional Slide
Arch Entrance
Scramble Net
Rope Climb

04. SSB620 Inclusive Gnome Springie

Features: 3
Users: 1
Age range: 2-8 Years

Supported seating



05. SWD720 Hula

Features: 2
Users: 2
Age range: 3-14 Years



06. SW1 Modular Swing with 2 x Cradle Seats & 1 x Tango Seat

Features: 3
Users: 4
Age range: 2+ Years



07. SW2 Modular Swing with 4 x Large Flat Seats

Features: 2
Users: 4
Age range: 4+ Years



www.sutcliffeplay.co.uk

Quote No. 4902833 Dwn RMW 14.01.2026
© A3 3D is an artists impression for illustration purposes only.

Wider Neighbourhood Investments



This has supported a range of smaller schemes within communities such as:

- Footpath Works
- Verge Parking Schemes
- Offroad Bike Prevention Measures
- Repairs to Public Rights of Way
- Signing/Lining Works
- Thermoplastic Markings
- And much more ...

These were prioritised based on local need including the community engagement alongside the strategic objectives for the Impact Fund.



Other Impact Fund Investments

CCTV Improvements - £130k

This investment has focused on improving community safety by enhancing the CCTV coverage across the whole of Hartlepool.

Purchased three three additional mobile CCTV cameras and two advanced ANPR cameras. These can be deployed across the borough using data-led intelligence. This will allow us to respond quickly and effectively to issues such as fly tipping, anti-social behaviour and other community concerns.

Community Asset Grant Scheme - £200k

This established a grant scheme to enhance existing community assets across Hartlepool. This focused on helping organisations to:

- Refurbish Spaces
- Upgrade Facilities
- Improve Efficiency/Accessibility

There was significant demand and 15 proposals were awarded funding across seven different wards within Hartlepool.



Looking Ahead to Impact Fund Year 2 ...

Business Grants Scheme

This will offer grants of up to £20,000 to eligible businesses targeting York Road and Raby Road, with applicants providing 25% match. This will fund:

- New or improved shopfronts or signage
- Reinstatement of traditional building features
- Security shutters
- External cosmetic enhancements to premises

The programme is designed to support improvements that enhance the appearance, quality and overall vibrancy of these important retail corridors.

