

PRIDE IN PLACE

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Hartlepool's Pride in Place Programme

Open call for proposals - October 2026

Prospectus



Hartlepool
Borough Council

Open call at a glance

Item	Detail
Funding available	Up to £200,000
Open call opens	October 2026
Submission deadline	Monday 30 November at 5pm
Priority 1	Activating parks, public spaces and beaches
Priority 2	Community assets and neighbourhood spaces
Priority areas	Mission Critical Neighbourhoods
Application support	Available through Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership (HOP)
Community ideas	Residents or communities can submit ideas for future consideration at hartlepool.gov.uk/prideinplace



Introduction from the Chair

Welcome to the first open call for proposals through the Hartlepool Pride in Place Programme.

This represents an exciting milestone for Hartlepool and the beginning of a new chapter in our journey towards community-led regeneration. Over the last 18 months, residents, community organisations, businesses, and partners have helped shape a bold vision for the future of our borough. Now, we are moving from planning into the delivery phase of the Pride in Place Programme.

Hartlepool is a proud coastal borough with strong communities, a rich heritage, and significant opportunities for the future. Through the Government's Pride in Place Programme, Hartlepool has secured £20 million of investment over ten years to support long-term regeneration and transformation. This investment is not simply about physical improvements. It is about strengthening communities, creating opportunities, building pride, and empowering local people to shape the future of the places they care about most within Hartlepool.

The Hartlepool Board has developed a long-term vision which places communities at the heart of decision-making. This open call is the first opportunity for organisations and communities to access funding through the programme and bring forward projects that respond directly to local priorities.

Up to £200,000 of capital funding is available through this first round. As a pilot, it will help us test new approaches, support visible community-led improvements, and inform future investment rounds over the coming years.

We look forward to receiving your ideas and working together to create lasting change across Hartlepool.

Malcolm Walker
Independent Chair





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Overview of Pride in Place

A community-led programme

Hartlepool has secured up to £20 million through the Government's Pride in Place Programme between 2026 and 2036. This investment provides a unique opportunity to strengthen communities, improve neighbourhoods, enhance public spaces, and create opportunities for residents across the borough.

The programme is guided by the Hartlepool Board, a partnership of community representatives, businesses, public services, educational institutions, and strategic partners working together to deliver a shared vision for Hartlepool. The Board operates as the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership and has developed a 10-Year Regeneration Plan that places communities at the heart of regeneration and investment decisions within Hartlepool.

The Pride in Place Programme is built around a simple principle:

Communities should have a greater role in shaping the places where they live, work and spend their time.

This open call forms part of that commitment, creating opportunities for local organisations and communities to bring forward projects that respond directly to local priorities while contributing towards the wider vision for Hartlepool.

How local people shaped the programme

The priorities within this open call have been shaped by one of the most extensive community engagement exercises undertaken in Hartlepool.

During Summer 2025, over 1,400 residents were engaged through community conversations, surveys, workshops, and attendance at over 75 community events across the borough. This included more than 900 meaningful face-to-face conversations and engagement with residents in all twelve wards. Alongside residents, engagement was also undertaken with voluntary and community organisations, businesses, schools, colleges, and faith groups. This helped ensure that the programme reflects both the lived experiences of residents and the opportunities identified by organisations working within the borough.

This engagement informed Hartlepool's 10-Year Regeneration Plan which was submitted in November 2025 and was formally approved in March 2026 by the Government.

Building on this engagement, three innovation days were held in March 2026. These brought together over 100 residents, community representatives, businesses and stakeholders to explore solutions, develop ideas, and identify practical interventions that could respond to the priorities emerging from the engagement. Participants worked collaboratively to translate community priorities into deliverable projects and investment opportunities.

Together, this collective insight informed this open call, ensuring that investment is evidence-based, community-led and focused on delivering meaningful change where it is needed most within Hartlepool.

Community Priorities

The collective engagement identified four clear priority themes for the first phase of investment through Pride in Place:

- Safety & Security
- Health & Wellbeing
- Community Cohesion
- High Street, Heritage & Regeneration

Alongside these, both Housing and Education & Opportunity were identified as important foundational themes for future investment by the Hartlepool Board.

The two funding priorities within this open call have been selected because they strongly reflect these themes whilst creating opportunities for visible, community-led improvements during the first year of the programme. This represents only the beginning of the programme, with further funding opportunities and investment rounds being launched throughout the ten-year period which will respond to the ongoing engagement and involvement of communities within Hartlepool.



Communities at the heart of Pride in Place

Community Power

Community Power is a core principle of the Pride in Place Programme and underpins the delivery of Hartlepool's 10-Year Regeneration Plan. The Hartlepool Board believes that lasting change is most effective when it is designed, delivered, and sustained alongside local people. As a result, communities will not simply be consulted on investment decisions but will play an active role in helping to shape priorities, influence investment and deliver change across the borough.

The Pride in Place Programme is committed to creating opportunities for residents, community groups, and local organisations to participate in decision-making, co-design solutions and develop projects that respond to local priorities. This reflects the Board's ambition to create a genuinely community-led model of regeneration, with local people helping to shape the future. Community Power is not an individual project or activity. It is the approach that underpins the Pride in Place Programme, ensuring that local people have a genuine role in shaping decisions, influencing investment, and creating positive change in their communities across the borough.

Through Pride in Place, we will support:

- Meaningful community participation in local decision-making
- Community involvement in the design and delivery of projects and services
- The development of volunteering opportunities and social action projects
- Investment in community leadership and local capacity building
- Strengthening the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector
- Community wealth building and support for community businesses
- Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

The Board's vision is that Community Power becomes a way of working across Hartlepool, ensuring that residents continue to play a central role in shaping priorities, influencing investment, and delivering change across Hartlepool.

Support for applicants

The Hartlepool Board has commissioned Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership (HOP), Hartlepool's Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Organisation, to lead the Community Power element of the Pride in Place Programme. Through this role, HOP will support community participation, neighbourhood involvement, capacity building, volunteering, social action, and the development of community-led proposals across Hartlepool.

As part of this open call, HOP will provide support to organisations and groups wishing to submit proposals. This may include:

- Developing project ideas and proposals
- Building partnerships and collaborations
- Strengthening community involvement and co-design
- Developing project budgets
- Identifying opportunities for match funding and additional resources
- Helping applicants demonstrate community need and impact

The open call will remain open for six weeks, providing sufficient time for organisations and communities to develop strong proposals with support from HOP.

Community ideas

The Hartlepool Board recognises that communities may have good ideas that are not yet ready to become full funding applications.

Alongside this open call, residents and community groups are encouraged to share ideas and opportunities that could improve neighbourhoods, parks, public spaces, or community assets within Hartlepool. These ideas will help inform future investment opportunities, project development activity, and potential feasibility studies through the Pride in Place Programme.

Whilst community ideas will not be assessed through this funding round, they will help inform future investment opportunities, project development activity, and feasibility work through the programme. Where appropriate, communities may be connected with HOP or other partners to help develop ideas into future proposals. This approach ensures that local people can continue to shape future investment priorities, even where an idea is not yet ready for delivery.

Whether you are an established organisation, a community group, a social enterprise or a resident with an idea, the Pride in Place Programme aims to create opportunities for everyone to play a role in shaping the future of Hartlepool.



Our first investment priorities

Funding available

The Hartlepool Board has allocated up to £200,000 of capital funding for this first open call for proposals.

The Board anticipates supporting a range of projects through this funding round and recognises that communities and organisations may have differing levels of need, ambition and capacity. There is therefore no minimum or maximum grant value for applications at this stage.

Applicants are encouraged to develop proposals that are proportionate to the scale of the project, the level of community benefit being delivered and the outcomes they are seeking to achieve. The Board is keen to support both smaller neighbourhood projects and larger initiatives that demonstrate significant impact for communities across Hartlepool.

Proposals should clearly demonstrate why the level of funding requested is necessary and represent good value for money. Organisations are encouraged to discuss early project ideas with HOP if they are unsure whether a proposal is appropriate for this first open call.

Why these priorities?

As the first funding round delivered through Pride in Place, this represents a pilot approach that will support visible community-led improvements whilst helping to shape future investment rounds over the next ten years within the borough.

The open call has been designed to support projects that respond directly to priorities identified through community engagement and Hartlepool's 10-Year Regeneration Plan. Rather than spreading investment too widely, the Board has chosen to focus this first round on two priorities that emerged consistently throughout the engagement process and offer opportunities to deliver meaningful improvements that people can see and experience in their everyday lives.

Through the community engagement, residents repeatedly highlighted the importance of investing in the spaces they use every day. Whether parks, beaches, community buildings, neighbourhood facilities or shared spaces, local people wanted to see investment that improves quality of life, strengthens communities, and creates greater pride in place. Both of these priorities are also cross-cutting and align to all four priority themes for Hartlepool.

The Board also recognises the important contribution that Hartlepool's heritage, historic buildings, and historic public spaces make to local identity, pride, and regeneration. Proposals that protect, reuse, enhance or celebrate heritage assets are encouraged where they contribute to the objectives of the open call.

Targeting areas of greatest need

Applications will be welcomed from across Hartlepool. However, in line with the Regeneration Plan and expectations from Government, priority will be given to projects that demonstrate clear benefits for Mission Critical Neighbourhoods which are the communities experiencing the greatest levels of need in the borough. The Board is committed to targeting investment where it can deliver the greatest impact for local residents and communities in Hartlepool.

The two funding priorities

Projects must align to one of the following funding priorities:

- **Priority 1 – Activating parks, public spaces and beaches:**

Supporting projects that improve, enhance, and activate local outdoor spaces that are important to local communities across Hartlepool.

- **Priority 2 – Community assets and neighbourhood spaces:**

Supporting improvements to buildings and neighbourhood assets that enable residents to access opportunities within their communities across Hartlepool.

The Board is seeking projects that can demonstrate visible improvements within neighbourhoods whilst also contributing towards the longer-term vision of creating stronger communities, thriving places and greater opportunities for local people across Hartlepool.





Priority 1 - Activating parks, public spaces and beaches

Why this matters

The enhancement and activation of parks, beaches and public spaces emerged as one of the strongest recurring themes throughout the development of the Pride in Place Programme. Residents consistently identified the importance of improving green spaces, making greater use of natural assets, and creating welcoming environments. These interventions were also recognised by stakeholders as providing opportunities to deliver visible improvements whilst also supporting wider outcomes relating to health, safety, community cohesion, and local pride.

Parks, beaches, and public spaces have the power to bring people together, encourage healthy lifestyles and improve perceptions of local areas. The Board wants to support projects that help communities make greater use of these assets whilst improving their quality and accessibility of these spaces across Hartlepool.

Example projects

These examples are for illustrative purposes, and organisations are encouraged to bring forward other ideas that align with the funding priority. Proposals may include:

- Improvements to parks and green spaces
- Beach and coastal enhancements
- Outdoor community infrastructure
- Play and recreation facilities
- Community gardens and growing spaces
- Seating, landscaping, and environmental enhancements
- Projects that encourage greater use of public spaces
- Improvements to historic spaces and heritage-related enhancements

We are interested in

- Projects designed with local communities
- Improvements that encourage greater use of outdoor spaces
- Projects that deliver visible improvements
- Initiatives that improve access and inclusion
- Projects that support wider community activity and participation
- Proposals focused on Mission Critical Neighbourhoods

What success looks like

- Increased use of parks and open spaces
- Greater participation in community activity
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Stronger pride in local neighbourhoods and public spaces
- Safer and more welcoming environments
- Increased opportunities for residents to connect, participate and be active within their communities



Priority 2 - Community assets and neighbourhood spaces

Why this matters

Residents consistently highlighted the importance of having places where people can meet, connect, participate, and access opportunities within their neighbourhoods. Community engagement identified a strong desire for improved facilities, enhanced community infrastructure and supporting underused assets across Hartlepool.

Community buildings and local assets play a critical role in supporting stronger neighbourhoods. They provide spaces where people can access support, participate in activities, volunteer, meet new people and become more involved in their communities. Investment in these assets can provide a lasting legacy by strengthening both physical infrastructure and community resilience.

This priority also complements the wider community power approach by creating spaces where participation, volunteering and community-led activity can flourish.

Example projects

These examples are for illustrative purposes, and organisations are encouraged to bring forward other ideas that align with the funding priority. Proposals may include:

- Refurbishment of community buildings
- Improvements to local facilities, community hubs, and meeting spaces
- Improvements to neighbourhood assets
- Bringing underused assets back into use
- Infrastructure to increase community participation
- Refurbishment or enhancement of historic buildings and heritage assets

We are particularly interested in

- Projects that increase community use of facilities
- Improvements that make assets more accessible and inclusive
- Projects supporting volunteering and social action
- Community ownership or stewardship opportunities
- Facilities that support wider community activity
- Proposals focused on Mission Critical Neighbourhoods

What success looks like

- Improved community facilities
- Increased participation and use of community facilities
- Stronger neighbourhood infrastructure
- More accessible community spaces
- Stronger community networks, volunteering, and social action
- Increased opportunities for communities to connect and participate

What makes a strong proposal?

The Hartlepool Board is looking for projects that are community-led, clearly aligned to local priorities and capable of delivering meaningful benefits for residents.

Successful applications are likely to demonstrate:

- A clear understanding of community need
- Strong community involvement and support
- Alignment with one of the funding priorities
- Deliverable and realistic proposals
- Visible and lasting community benefit
- Opportunities for participation, volunteering, or social action
- Good value for money
- Strong partnerships and collaboration

Applications do not need to be complex. However, bidders should be able to clearly explain what they want to do, why it is needed, how the community has been involved and the difference the project will make to the borough.

The Board is particularly keen to encourage partnership working between organisations as this will strengthen proposals, increase impact, and support collaboration across public, private and VCSE sectors in Hartlepool.

Match funding and additional resources

The Hartlepool Board wants Pride in Place funding to act as a catalyst for wider investment and community benefit.

Applicants are therefore encouraged to maximise opportunities to secure additional resources alongside funding from Pride in Place. This helps increase the overall impact of projects and demonstrates wider community support for local ideas and proposals which are seeking funding through the open call.

Additional contributions may include:

- Match funding
- Volunteer time
- Corporate support and sponsorship
- Charitable and philanthropic funding
- In-kind contributions
- Materials and equipment
- Professional expertise and advice
- Donated services

Match funding is not mandatory, and organisations should not be discouraged from applying if they are unable to secure additional investment. However, projects that demonstrate an ability to leverage wider resources and maximise community benefit will be viewed positively as part of the assessment process by the Board.

The Board is keen to support projects that not only deliver improvements but also help build stronger partnerships, increase local capacity, and maximise the value of investment.



Who can apply?

The Hartlepool Board welcomes applications from organisations that can demonstrate a clear community benefit and are capable of leading or supporting the delivery of projects within the borough.

Applications may be submitted by:

- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- Registered Charities
- Social Enterprises
- Constituted Community Groups
- Parish and Town Councils
- Public Sector Organisations
- Educational Institutions
- Partnerships and collaborations between organisations

Organisations are encouraged to work together where this will strengthen proposals, increase impact and provide wider benefits for local communities in Hartlepool.

Residents with ideas

The Board recognises that many residents may have excellent ideas but may not have an organisation through which to submit a funding application.

Where this is the case, residents are encouraged to share their ideas through the community ideas route which is outlined on **page 9**. These ideas will help inform future investment opportunities, feasibility studies, and project development activity through the Pride in Place Programme.



How applications will be assessed

The Hartlepool Board is committed to ensuring that investment decisions are fair, transparent, and community-led through the Board. All applications will be assessed against a range of criteria that reflect the ambitions of the Pride in Place Programme and the priorities identified by local communities in Hartlepool.

Applications will be considered against:

- Strategic fit with the funding priority
- Evidence of local need and community benefit
- Community involvement and local support
- Deliverability and value for money
- Community impact and outcomes
- Alignment with Hartlepool's Pride in Place Regeneration Plan
- Match funding and leveraged investment opportunities
- Contribution to Mission Critical Neighbourhoods

The assessment process has been designed to ensure that communities have a meaningful role in shaping investment decisions whilst maintaining robust governance, appraisal, and due diligence arrangements. As part of the Pride in Place approach, opportunities will be provided for community participation and feedback during the assessment process. This reflects the Board's commitment to Community Power and ensuring that local people continue to have a meaningful role in influencing investment decisions within Hartlepool.

All applications will initially be checked against the eligibility criteria before progressing through the assessment process. Depending on the value and complexity of the proposal, additional appraisal and due diligence may be required to ensure projects are deliverable, represent value for money and comply with the requirements of the Pride in Place Programme.

As part of this process, the most appropriate delivery arrangements will also be considered to ensure projects are deliverable, sustainable and provide value for money. This approach allows communities and organisations to bring forward ambitious ideas, whilst ensuring that appropriate support, expertise, and delivery arrangements are in place, where required.

All investment decisions will be made in accordance with the governance arrangements approved by the Hartlepool Board and Hartlepool Borough Council as the Accountable Body.

The Pride in Place Programme is intended to be community-led, and it is recognised that organisations represented on the Hartlepool Board or its subgroups may wish to submit applications through the open call. Appropriate arrangements will be in place to identify, declare, and manage any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest throughout the assessment and decision-making process which will be administered and coordinated by the Council.

Project outcomes

The Pride in Place Programme is designed to deliver more than physical improvements. Through community-led investment, projects should contribute towards stronger communities, greater participation, and improved quality of life across Hartlepool.

Projects funded through this open call are expected to contribute towards one or more of the following outcomes, helping to deliver the wider vision and ambitions set out within Hartlepool's 10-Year Regeneration Plan.

Stronger Communities

- Increased community participation and involvement
- Greater volunteering and social action
- Stronger community networks and local leadership
- Increased civic pride and community confidence

Thriving Places

- Better parks, public spaces, and community assets
- Improved quality of neighbourhood environments
- More attractive, welcoming, and well-used spaces
- Increased use of community facilities and local assets

Health & Wellbeing

- Increased physical activity
- Greater opportunities for social connection
- Improved access to outdoor and community spaces
- Enhanced wellbeing and quality of life

Community Power

- Greater influence for communities in local decision-making
- Increased community ownership and stewardship
- Stronger local organisations and community infrastructure
- More opportunities for communities to shape future investment

Applicants should clearly explain how their project will contribute towards these outcomes and what difference it will make for local people within Hartlepool.

Key dates

The timetable for this first open call is set out below:

Stage	Date
Open call launch	Early October 2026
Applicant support period	October to November 2026
Submission deadline	Monday 30 November 2026 at 5pm
Assessment and due diligence	December 2026
Community participation and feedback	Early 2027
Funding recommendations	Early 2027
Project delivery	Following Board approval





Further information

Ready to make a difference?

Whether you are a community organisation, social enterprise, faith group, business, or local partnership, we encourage you to consider how your idea could contribute towards a stronger, prouder, and more connected Hartlepool.

Together, we can turn local priorities into action and create stronger communities, thriving places and lasting change across the borough.

Hartlepool Pride in Place Programme

Email: prideinplace@hartlepool.gov.uk

Website: www.hartlepool.gov.uk/prideinplace

Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership (HOP)

For advice, proposal development support, and guidance on developing applications.

Email: myprideinplace@hopvcse.org.uk

Website: www.hopvcse.org.uk

Have a community idea?

Not every idea starts as a funding application.

If you have an idea that could improve a park, beach, public space, community asset, or neighbourhood, we would still like to hear from you.

Community ideas will help shape future investment opportunities, feasibility studies, and funding rounds through the Pride in Place Programme, ensuring local people continue to influence how investment is used across Hartlepool.

Ideas can be submitted online at www.hartlepool.gov.uk/prideinplace

If you would like support to develop an idea, please contact HOP at myprideinplace@hopvcse.org.uk

