

PRIDE IN PLACE

LED BY YOU – BACKED BY UK GOVERNMENT

Hartlepool's Pride in Place Programme

Open call for proposals - October 2026

Application guidance



Hartlepool
Borough Council

Contents

Introduction	3
About the open call	4
Funding available	4
Funding priorities	5
Targeting areas of greatest need	6
Community Power requirements	6
Support for applicants	7
Who can apply?	8
What can be funded?	9
What cannot be funded?	10
Match funding and additional resources	10
What makes a strong proposal?	11
Assessment process	12-13
Funding agreements and payments	14
Monitoring and reporting	14
Supporting documents	14
Key dates	15
Further information	15

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the first open call for proposals through Hartlepool's Pride in Place Programme.

This forms part of Hartlepool's wider Pride in Place Programme that will invest up to £20million over ten years to support community-led regeneration, stronger neighbourhoods, and improved opportunities for local people in Hartlepool.

This guidance should be read alongside the prospectus and application form. Together, these documents provide information on the funding opportunity, the priorities identified through community engagement and the process for submitting an application for this first open call.

The purpose of this guidance is to help organisations understand:

- Whether they are eligible to apply
- What types of projects can be funded
- How proposals will be assessed
- What information is required
- What support is available throughout the process

If you have not yet read the prospectus, we strongly recommend doing so before starting your application form.



About the open call

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

As outlined in the prospectus, this is a pilot funding round designed to:

- Support visible community-led improvements
- Build confidence in the Pride in Place Programme
- Test the investment and decision-making process
- Generate learning for future funding rounds
- Create a pipeline of future community-led projects for Hartlepool

The open call will remain open for over six weeks, allowing organisations sufficient time to develop proposals, build partnerships and access support through Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership (HOP).

Funding available

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

Applicants are encouraged to request funding that is:

- Proportionate to the scale of the project
- Appropriate for the outcomes being delivered
- Realistic and deliverable
- Good value for money for residents in Hartlepool

Projects may be fully funded, partially funded, or approved subject to amendments being agreed. The Board also reserves the right not to allocate all available funding through this open call.

Funding priorities

All applications must align with one of the two funding priorities which are set out in the prospectus.

Priority 1 – Activating parks, public spaces and beaches

Applications under this priority should demonstrate how the project will:

- Improve or activate outdoor spaces
- Increase community use of parks, beaches, or public spaces
- Encourage participation, physical activity, or community activity
- Improve accessibility, usability, or appearance
- Deliver visible improvements to places used by residents

Applications should clearly explain:

- How the project will improve or activate outdoor spaces
- Who will benefit
- How local communities have helped shape the proposal
- The visible improvements that will be delivered

Priority 2 – Community assets and neighbourhood spaces

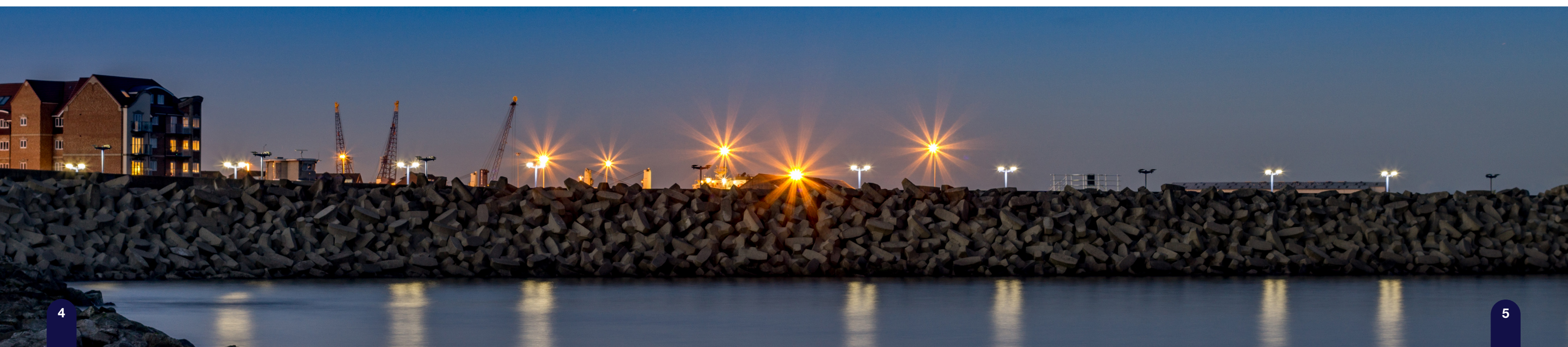
Applications under this priority should demonstrate how the project will:

- Improve community buildings or neighbourhood assets
- Increase participation and community use
- Improve access to facilities and opportunities
- Strengthen community infrastructure
- Support community activity, volunteering, or social action

Applications should clearly explain:

- How the project will improve a community asset or neighbourhood space
- How use of the asset will increase
- Who will benefit
- How the project will strengthen community participation or opportunities

For further context, information and examples, please refer to **pages 13 and 15** of the prospectus.



Targeting areas of greatest need

Applications will be welcomed from across the whole borough of Hartlepool.

In line with Hartlepool's 10-year Regeneration Plan and expectations from Government, the Board has agreed that priority should be given to projects that deliver clear benefits for:

- Mission Critical Neighbourhoods
- Communities experiencing the greatest levels of need
- Areas facing significant social and economic challenges

Projects outside these areas remain eligible and are welcomed but should demonstrate a strong community case and clear local impact for Hartlepool.

A map of Mission Critical Neighbourhoods can be downloaded from the Pride in Place webpage.

Community Power requirements

Community Power is central to the Pride in Place Programme and underpins the delivery of Hartlepool's 10-Year Regeneration Plan.

Applicants should demonstrate how local residents, community groups, businesses, and/or wider stakeholders have influenced the proposal and how they will continue to be involved.

Strong applications will demonstrate how local people have helped shape the proposal, how they will continue to be involved and will show:

- Evidence of community support
- Community involvement in developing the idea
- Ongoing opportunities for community participation
- Community ownership or stewardship where appropriate
- Opportunities for volunteering, social action, or local leadership

Projects developed with communities are likely to score more strongly than projects developed for communities.

Support for applicants

The Hartlepool Board has commissioned Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership (HOP) to lead on the Community Power element of the Pride in Place Programme.

Throughout the open call period, HOP can support organisations with:

- Developing project ideas
- Reviewing draft proposals
- Strengthening community involvement
- Building partnerships and collaborations
- Developing project budgets
- Identifying match funding opportunities
- Advice on completing Application Forms

Applicants are encouraged to engage with HOP as early as possible.

The open call will also remain open for over six weeks to allow sufficient time for communities and organisations to develop proposals within Hartlepool.



Who can apply?

Applications are welcomed from organisations that can demonstrate a clear community benefit and are capable of leading or supporting the delivery of projects within the borough.

Eligible applicants include:

- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- Registered Charities
- Social Enterprises
- Constituted Community Groups
- Parish Councils
- Educational Institutions
- Public Sector Organisations
- 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

Residents who do not have an organisation or project proposal can still participate through the community ideas route outlined within the prospectus.

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

These ideas will help inform future investment opportunities, feasibility studies, and project development activity through the Pride in Place Programme.



What can be funded?

This open call is focused on capital investment.

Generally, capital expenditure creates, improves, or extends the life of a physical asset. Examples include:

- Building refurbishment and improvements
- Accessibility enhancements
- Community infrastructure
- Fixed equipment and fixtures
- Environmental improvements
- Play and recreation facilities
- Outdoor community infrastructure
- Repair, refurbishment or enhancement of historic buildings or heritage assets
- Improvements to historic public spaces and heritage features

Applicants should clearly demonstrate the capital element of their proposal.

Permissions and consents

Applicants should identify any approvals, permissions, leases, or agreements that may be required for the project to proceed. Where a proposal relates to land, buildings or assets that are not owned by the applicant, evidence of support or consent from the relevant landowner, building owner or asset owner should be provided as part of the application.

Whilst planning permission, listed building consent or other statutory approvals do not need to be secured at the point of application, applicants should identify any permissions that may be required if the project is funded. These will be considered as part of the assessment and due diligence process by the Council.

Ownership of assets

Any asset improved, purchased, or created through Pride in Place funding must continue to deliver community benefit for Hartlepool.

Applicants should explain who will own, manage, and maintain the asset following completion of the project. Ownership and ongoing management arrangements will be considered as part of the assessment and due diligence process by the Council.

What cannot be funded?

Funding will not support:

- Ongoing staffing costs
- Revenue activities
- Core organisational running costs
- Existing debts or liabilities
- Retrospective expenditure
- Projects located outside Hartlepool

If you are uncertain on if the expenditure is revenue or capital, please contact HOP for advice before applying for the open call.

Match funding and additional resources

The Hartlepool Board wants Pride in Place funding to act as a catalyst for wider investment into the borough.

Applicants are therefore encouraged to maximise:

- Match funding
- Volunteer time
- Corporate sponsorship
- Charitable and philanthropic funding
- In-kind support
- Professional expertise
- Materials and donated resources

Match funding is encouraged but not mandatory.

Applicants should not be discouraged from applying if they are unable to secure additional investment but proposals that demonstrate an ability to leverage wider resources will be viewed positively during assessment by the Board.

What makes a strong proposal?

Strong proposals will generally:

- Address a clearly identified need
- Demonstrate strong community involvement and support
- Align with one of the two funding priorities of the open call
- Deliver visible improvements
- Be realistic and achievable
- Represent good value for money
- Create lasting community benefits
- Involve local people and communities
- Protect, enhance, or celebrate Hartlepool's heritage and local identity, where appropriate
- Demonstrate realistic delivery arrangements

Applicants should clearly explain:

- What they want to do
- Why it is needed
- How the community has been involved
- What difference the project will make
- How it will be delivered



Assessment process

Applications will be assessed proportionately, taking account of the scale, complexity, and value of the proposal. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criteria	Assessment focus
Strategic Fit	Alignment with the funding priorities for Pride in Place
Community Need	Evidence of need and demand within the borough
Community Power	Involvement and support from residents in Hartlepool
Deliverability	Ability to successfully deliver the proposal
Community Impact	The difference the proposal will make to Hartlepool
Value for Money	Whether the costs are proportionate to the outcomes
Leveraged Resources	Additional match funding, contributions and wider support
Areas of Greatest Need	Benefits to areas with the greatest need in Hartlepool

Assessment process



Stage 1 – Eligibility Check

Applications will be reviewed to ensure they meet the requirements and application eligibility for the open call.



Stage 2 – Assessment and Appraisal

Eligible applications will be assessed against the published criteria and appraised against key themes such as strategic fit, community benefit, deliverability, value for money and alignment with the Pride in Place Regeneration Plan.



Stage 3 – Community Participation & Feedback

Projects progressing through assessment will be shared to allow community participation and feedback, facilitated by HOP, ensuring local people continue to play a meaningful role in shaping investment decisions for Pride in Place.



Stage 4 – Due Diligence and Project Development

Proportionate due diligence will be undertaken by the Council. Depending on the scale and complexity of the project, this may include further appraisal, permissions, financial checks, delivery arrangements, procurement considerations and, where required, the development of a full business case.



Stage 5 – Recommendation & Decision

Recommendations will be prepared taking account of assessment outcomes, community feedback, and due diligence. Decisions will then be made in accordance with the governance arrangements approved by the Hartlepool Board.

Delivery arrangements

Applications will be assessed on the strength of the proposal and community benefit, alongside the most appropriate approach to delivery. Applicants do not necessarily need to undertake every aspect of project delivery themselves.

The Board recognises that some projects may require:

- Contractors
- Specialist expertise
- Technical support
- Partnerships with other organisations
- Alternative delivery arrangements

Applications will therefore be assessed on the strength of the proposal and community benefit, alongside the most appropriate approach to delivery. The delivery arrangements will be considered as part of the assessment and decision-making process by Board.

Project delivery timescales

Projects should be capable of commencing within a reasonable period following funding approval and completion of the funding agreement.

Applicants should clearly identify any key dependencies, permissions, approvals, or other factors that may affect delivery timescales. The Board recognises that some projects may require additional development work following approval and these circumstances will be considered as part of the assessment and due diligence process administered by the Council.

Conflicts of interest

The Programme is community-led and organisations represented on the Hartlepool Board or its subgroups are not prevented from applying for this 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 by the Council.



Funding agreements and payments

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement with Hartlepool Borough Council before any funding can be released.

The timing and method of payments will be proportionate to the size, value and complexity of the project and may include staged payments. Organisations will also have to provide evidence of expenditure and will need to comply with all requirements from the Council.

Further details regarding payment arrangements, grant conditions, monitoring requirements and any conditions arising from community feedback will be discussed with successful applicants during the due diligence and project development stage of the Pride in Place Programme.

Monitoring and reporting

In addition to the financial monitoring requirements, successful applicants will be required to provide information on project delivery, outputs, and outcomes to support programme monitoring and reporting.

Monitoring requirements will be proportionate to the size and complexity of the project and will be part of the funding agreement.

This information will help the Hartlepool Board understand the impact of investment and inform future funding decisions through the Pride in Place Programme.

Supporting documents

Applicants will be required to provide supporting information which may include:

- Constitution or governing document
- Charity or Companies House registration information
- Latest Annual Accounts
- Budget breakdowns
- Quotes
- Evidence of permissions or approvals from land or building owners
- Match funding confirmations
- Lease Agreements

The level of information required will be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the proposal but supporting evidence will be required for all projects funded through the Pride in Place Programme.

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

The Hartlepool Board reserves the right to amend these timescales if required. Any changes will be communicated to applicants through the Pride in Place webpage.

Further information

Hartlepool Pride in Place Programme

Email: prideinplace@hartlepool.gov.uk

Website: www.hartlepool.gov.uk/prideinplace

Hartlepool Opportunities Partnership (HOP)

Email: myprideinplace@hopvcse.org.uk

Website: www.hopvcse.org.uk



