

Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall Area 2026 - 2036





Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall Area

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Board members showing Minister Alex Norris the area



Foreword from the Neighbourhood Board

As the Neighbourhood Board, we are proud to present this 10-Year Vision for Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth; a plan that celebrates the strength, pride and potential of our communities. This document represents the next step in a journey we have been shaping together with residents, businesses and local partners who share a common belief in a thriving Rossendale.

Our places have a proud history built on resilience, creativity and community spirit. Over recent years, collective efforts have shown what can be achieved when we work together restoring confidence, supporting local enterprise and showcasing our heritage and cultural identity. Yet we know there is more to do to ensure that every neighbourhood and every resident can share in the benefits of renewal.

This vision sets out an ambitious goal: to create stronger, fairer and more connected communities where people feel proud of where they live, empowered to shape their future and confident that Rossendale is a place of opportunity for all. It shows how investment in regeneration, skills health and wellbeing and young people can help every part of our area to thrive.

The strategy has been guided by evidence, by community voices and by a shared belief that Rossendale's greatest strength lies in its people. It recognises the challenges we face from the need to bring underused spaces back into

productive use, to improving connections to jobs, education and services whilst also embracing the many opportunities before us: our beautiful landscapes, creative energy, local businesses and the determination of our young people to take Rossendale forward.

Above all, this is a plan about people and pride. It's about creating places that feel lived in and cared for; where neighbours look out for each other, communities take back control and local identity is celebrated. It's about ensuring that future generations inherit not just improved places, but stronger, more confident communities.

We know that lasting change takes time and collaboration. That's why this vision is both ambitious and practical by combining a clear direction with a commitment to work in partnership, build capacity and invest in what matters most to local people.

On behalf of the Board, we thank everyone who has contributed to shaping this plan — our residents, community groups, businesses and young people. Your voices, your pride and your ambitions are the foundation of everything that follows.

This is your plan, your place and together we will make it thrive.

Your Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Board

Executive Summary on a Page

This plan-on-a-page illustrates how we have arrived at the current regeneration and investment plan. It captures the journey from identifying local challenges and opportunities, through engaging stakeholders and shaping strategic priorities, to defining the activities and outcomes that will deliver vibrant, sustainable town centres.

Context	Barriers to Growth	Engagement	Rationale	Strategic Delivery Themes	Project Clusters	Outcomes
<p>Low levels of footfall and large number of empty retail units</p> <p>High level of anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Low number of non-retail jobs in the town centres</p> <p>Key empty buildings blighting the townscape</p> <p>Low visitor numbers</p> <p>Rawtenstall town made progress in recent years</p> <p>Attractive countryside</p> <p>Concentration of creative industries</p>	<p>Historical underinvestment in these towns.</p> <p>Safety, accessibility and connectivity issues (walking, cycling, transport).</p> <p>Limited local economic activity and town centre footfall.</p> <p>Possible challenges in community engagement and aligning multiple stakeholders.</p> <p>Resource constraints and ensuring long-term sustainability beyond initial funding.</p>	<p>Visioning through interactive discussions and activities.</p> <p>Prioritisation by refining ideas through thematic workstreams.</p> <p>Sustained dialogue through forums, surveys and board meetings.</p> <p>Community ownership by mentoring local groups to co deliver and manage projects long term.</p>	<p>Investment is needed to create vibrant, safe and attractive town centres.</p> <p>Supporting local economic growth, health and wellbeing aligns with broader Government regeneration goals.</p> <p>Community engagement ensures projects reflect residents' priorities.</p> <p>Capital funding allows tangible improvements (town centre infrastructure, public spaces, transport links).</p> <p>Evidence from masterplans, surveys and strategic analysis.</p>	<p>Regeneration and Place</p> <p>Healthy Communities</p> <p>Empowering Young People</p> <p>Jobs and Skills</p>	<p>Bacup Road</p> <p>Waterfoot</p> <p>Crawshawbooth</p> <p>Staghills and Edgeside</p> <p>Leisure and Active Travel</p> <p>Empower Young People</p>	<p>Short-term: Increased community participation and cohesion, improved safety and accessible public spaces.</p> <p>Medium-term: Higher town centre footfall, stronger local businesses, improved connectivity.</p> <p>Long-term: Sustainable, vibrant towns blending heritage with modern living, improved health and wellbeing, empowered communities shaping their local areas.</p>

Introduction: Understanding the Pride in Place Programme

Structure of the plan

The 10-Year Vision for Rawtenstall is underpinned by the national Pride in Place (PiP) Framework, which is built around two core components that guide the development and delivery of this plan:

- **PiP Objectives:** These establish the overarching strategic outcomes we seek to achieve.
- **Investment Themes:** These set out how those objectives will be realised through targeted projects, programmes and investments (see figure 1.1.)

All initiatives and interventions within this plan will align with one or more of these interventions, ensuring a clear connection to the broader PiP Objectives. This alignment provides strategic coherence across all activity while remaining responsive to local priorities, evidence-based insights and the aspirations of the community.

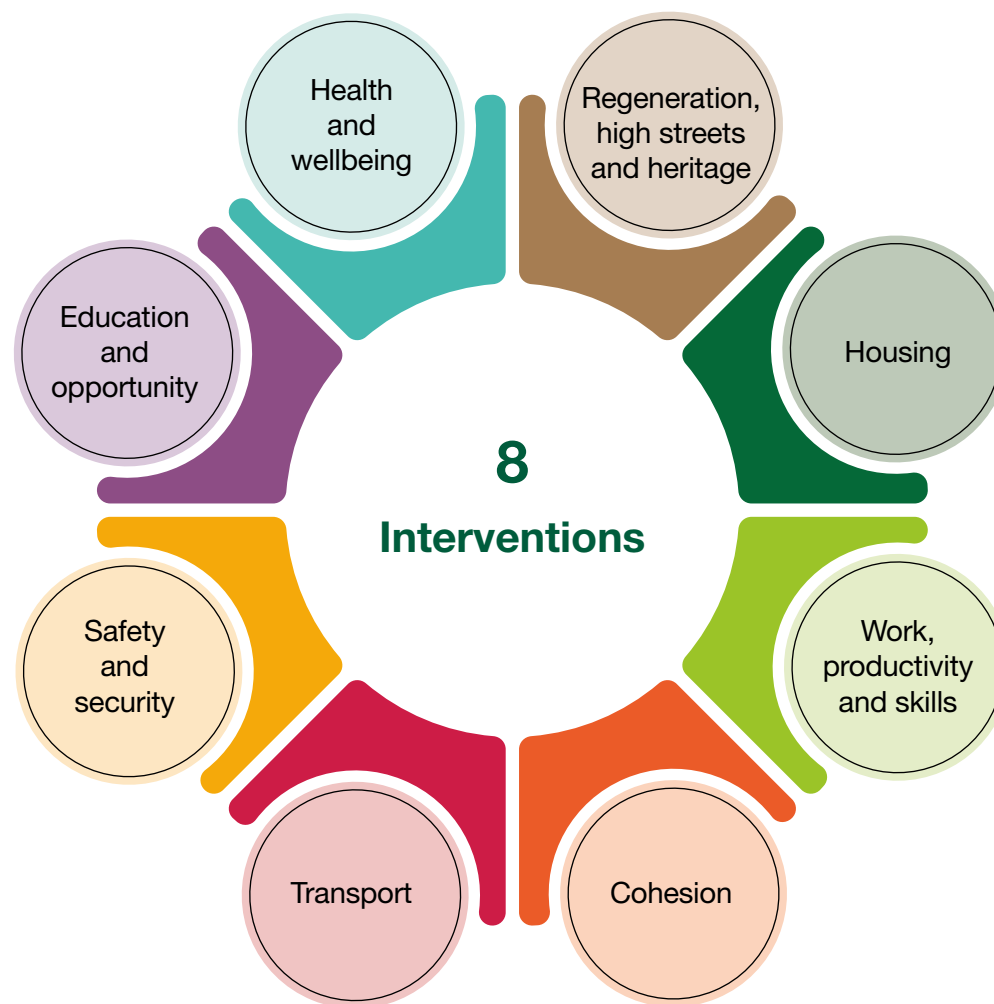


Figure 1.1

Programme Timeline

In Spring 2024, we were awarded up to £20 million in government funding to invest in the long-term renewal of the Rawtenstall area. This investment provides a 10-year funding commitment to support local priorities and drive sustainable regeneration.

Rossendale Borough Council initiated a discovery phase in Winter 2024 to establish baseline data, understand local challenges and identify early opportunities for intervention. Building on this work, the Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Board, began a structured planning phase in Spring 2025.

The outcomes of this approach have informed both a 10-Year Regeneration Plan and an accompanying 4-Year Investment Plan, developed collaboratively. Together, these documents provide a clear, evidence-based framework for investment and delivery that reflects local aspirations while aligning with regional and national priorities.

Implementation will begin from April 2026, structured around three investment cycles:

Investment Period 1

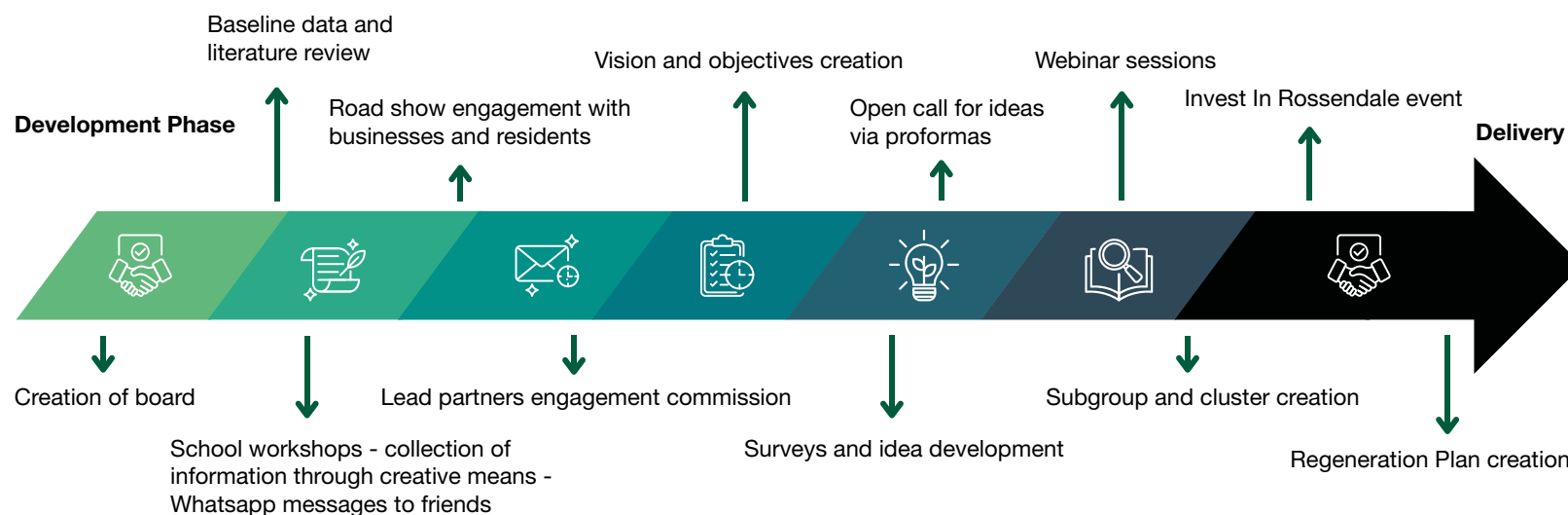
2026/27 - 2029/30

Investment Period 2

2030/31 - 2032/33

Investment Period 3

2033/34 - 2035/36



Section 1

Rawtenstall Area in Context



Section 1: Rawtenstall Area in Context

Our Place

Crawshawbooth, Rawtenstall and Waterfoot are three centres located in the Rossendale Valley, Lancashire. Their histories are deeply rooted in the textile industry and the broader development of the region. Rossendale is a distinctive and characterful part of Pennine Lancashire, Rossendale, with strong communities and a proud history that stretches back through its industrial heritage to its origins as a medieval hunting ground.

Crawshawbooth

Crawshawbooth is a small village that grew during the 17th and 18th centuries as a centre for handloom weaving and farming. It later became associated with the cotton industry, with mills being built along the Limey Valley. The area is also known for the Crawshawbooth Quakers, who established the Friends' Meeting House in the 18th century. Today, it retains its historic charm with stone cottages and scenic surroundings and access to the Pennines.

Rawtenstall

Rawtenstall, the largest of the three centres, developed significantly during the Industrial Revolution. It became a major hub for textile manufacturing, particularly wool and cotton mills. The expansion of railways in the 19th century facilitated its growth. The town is also home to attractions such as the Whitaker Museum and the East Lancashire Railway, which preserve its industrial heritage. Rawtenstall's market and historic buildings reflect its prosperous past.

Waterfoot

Waterfoot, situated between Rawtenstall and Bacup, also thrived due to the textile industry. It was known for its mills, including those producing footwear, which became a significant trade in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Waterfoot has strong links to the arts and creativity with a range of supporting cultural events. The surrounding hills and moorlands add to its picturesque setting.

Each of these towns played a crucial role in Lancashire's industrial history and retains strong connections to their past through preserved buildings, heritage sites and community traditions.





The Area Today

At the heart of "Pennine Lancashire" the Rawtenstall area has a unique position in the region, both nestled in the West Pennine Moors and well connected to major cities and employment hubs by strong road and public transport connections. The town of Rawtenstall is the gateway to Rossendale and has shifted to become the primary town centre in the Valley. This means Rawtenstall's future success as a town centre is important not just to the town itself but to the residents of the Wider Borough who rely on the retail, leisure and employment offer it provides.

Rossendale promotes itself as 'Adrenaline Valley' with its excellent connections to the surrounding wild landscape and numerous adrenaline focused destinations such as The Hill, home of Ski Rossendale, Water Ski Academy and Lee Quarry.

Rawtenstall is not short of attractions to encourage new people to the area. The East Lancashire Heritage Railway brings thousands of visitors to the town each year, as well as other charming venues, such as the Whitaker Museum and Bank Street's famous independent shops. On top of this there are also more hidden gems, such as the Market, St Mary's Chambers events venue and the new Town Square that adds to this rich tourism offer.

Although the area witnessed massive deindustrialisation in the 1960s to 1980s, the proximity to Manchester's economic growth has affected the towns. They have started to change their function to move from a mill town towards a service settlement. This area has a strong culture of independent work, but as new industries have developed, more diversification is needed to create a better-balanced economy.

The Regeneration Story - Recent Investments and Successes

This Regeneration Plan is the next phase in the rejuvenation of our towns which has seen a concerted effort over the last 15 years.



Stage 1 – Tackling derelict town centre – addressing barriers that deter investment in the town centres

Demolition of the Valley Centre - This was the main shopping centre, built between 1965 and 1970. During the recession it became largely derelict and subsequently a haven for anti-social behaviour. Its demolition in 2012 removed this key barrier for investment in the wider Rawtenstall town centre.

Town Square – The removal of the Valley Centre created the space to develop a new town square for events and act as a focal point for the town.

Bus Station – On the site of the former Valley Centre, the relocation of the bus station was completed in 2023 to achieve greater connectivity and improved town centre services. This marked a significant improvement from the former “temporary” bus station which was a makeshift facility that remained in use for decades and had long been viewed as unwelcoming and outdated. The new station has strengthened Rawtenstall’s role as a transport hub for the wider borough, enhancing accessibility to employment, education and essential services.

Town Hall – The refurbishment of the former town hall along with the demolition of the unattractive extension has created a business space and supported job growth.

Ilex Mill - The former Ilex Mill, a prominent but derelict building on Bacup Road, had long been a visual blight on the approach to the town. Its redevelopment into modern apartments has transformed the area, providing new housing and enhancing the overall appearance of one of Rawtenstall’s key gateways.

New Hall Hey - With the loss of the Valley Centre there was a market need for large floor plate retail units and this was provided by an edge of town centre development, with anchor stores such as Marks and Spencer.

The Regeneration Story - Recent Investments and Successes

Stage 2 – Shaping the new town – starting to shape our opportunities

Masterplans – Comprehensive masterplans for Rawtenstall and Waterfoot have been developed to identify each town's long-term potential and to establish a coherent framework for delivering their shared visions.

Gyratory – the Capital Regeneration Fund supported improvements to the gateway to the Valley by increasing road capacity and delivering a better welcome to the town.

Refurbished Market – to revamp a slowly dilapidating market building to provide a restored and more contemporary offer for the day and night-time economy.

Bank Street and Kay Street – using Levelling Up Funding, these two streets will be improved to encourage greater footfall and dwell time with space for street cafes and pocket parks.

Greener Town – Civic Pride Rossendale achieved a milestone by winning gold in the regional RHS Britain in Bloom North West large town category again. In addition, Library Gardens has been awarded Green Flag status, recognising their high environmental and maintenance standards.

Hall Carr Estate – work across the estate to improve the public realm and make the estate safer for pedestrians can act as a template for work across the area.

Developing Arts Scene – The Arts Council has awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status to both The Whitaker and Horse and Bamboo, strengthening the area's cultural presence.

Whitaker Extension – Council and Heritage Lottery funding was used to extend and modernise the facilities at the Whitaker and provide new attractions and activities.



Waterfoot Arts Town – started the journey to redefine Waterfoot by working with the local creative arts community through public art commissions to brighten the village.

Ski Slope Investment – Sport England and Council funding invested to upgrade the site and vary the offer for users.

Valley of Stone Greenway Installation

Welcoming commuter cycle and walking route, connecting Rawtenstall to Waterfoot then to Whitworth.



Section 2

Spatial Targeting



Rawtenstall Plan Area

The Rawtenstall Area follows the three valleys and encompasses the three commercial centres in Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth. These valleys sit within the Pennine hills which frame and define the area.

Following consultation, the Board agreed to focus on the three commercial centres and the estates of Staghills and Edgeside and connections into the Pennines.



Our Towns and Communities

Rawtenstall

Rawtenstall, the largest town in Rossendale, has consolidated its role as the principal town in the Valley. Lying only 15 miles north of Manchester and located off the M66 it is ideally placed to benefit from the wider Greater Manchester City Region. In 2022, the population of Rawtenstall was approximately 23,000.

The town has a rich industrial and cultural history that is reflected in many of the buildings that define its centre. However, that industrial base has gone and a new industrial base needs to be developed further. Bacup Road, one of the main routes into the town, is home to prominent buildings including the Heritage Arcade and the Town Hall. Once a thriving street it is now a through road that detracts from the town's potential.

Rawtenstall market remains a major draw for residents and visitors alike, hosting over 20 local businesses offering high-quality food and retail experiences creating an improved night-time economy. The town's high street also boasts more than 140 independent businesses, protecting this is essential to avoid becoming a future clone town.

Rawtenstall is also home to several cultural and leisure landmarks and facilities including St Marys Chambers, The Whitaker Museum, The Hill Ski Slope and East Lancashire Railway station although the town is not regarded as a visitor destination despite these assets.

The Town benefits from an active civic pride group, whose dedication helps to keep Rawtenstall town centre looking clean, colourful and a friendly place to live and visit.

Focusing the Pride in Place Funding in Rawtenstall provides an opportunity to further enhance the heart of Rossendale, raising the quality of surrounding areas to match the town centre. This investment will help attract new businesses, strengthen the local economy and create additional job opportunities which contribute to the wellbeing and prosperity of the wider community.



Our Towns and Communities

Waterfoot

Waterfoot is a historic mill town situated in the Irwell Valley between Rawtenstall and Bacup. Shaped by a strong industrial heritage in shoe and slipper manufacturing, it retains a distinctive built character of stone mills, terraced streets and narrow valley sides. The River Irwell flows through the heart of the town, where several tributaries meet, providing both a natural focal point and a reminder of Waterfoot's industrial past.

Today, Waterfoot is redefining its role as a creative and connected centre within the Valley. It is home to a growing network of artists, makers and independent businesses, supported by accessible workspace, public art and the nationally recognised Horse and Bamboo Theatre – a key cultural anchor with Arts Council England NPO status.

This creative energy is set against a backdrop of contrasts. While the surrounding hills host affluent and attractive residential communities, the town centre itself shows visible signs of deprivation and underinvestment. Waterfoot is also home to both one of Lancashire's most successful grammar schools and one of its lowest-performing secondary schools – a stark reflection of the area's social and educational inequalities. Isolated pockets of housing on the hillsides leave some residents feeling disconnected from opportunities and amenities in the town below.

Centrally located, Trickett's Arcade stands as a prominent landmark symbolising both Waterfoot's heritage and its potential for renewal.

Once a bustling shopping arcade and social hub, it now sits vacant and deteriorating, a blight on the town but also a major opportunity. Its regeneration offers the chance to create new space for enterprise, culture and community life, while restoring an important piece of Waterfoot's architectural legacy.

Recent investment and partnerships including through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and local arts initiatives, are beginning to strengthen Waterfoot's identity as a place where creativity and heritage drive regeneration. Public art, improved public realm and new uses for underutilised spaces are helping to reconnect the town's physical fabric with its social and cultural energy.

The new Waterfoot Masterplan sets out a long-term vision for the town's evolution over the next decade. It seeks to bridge the divide between the thriving residential areas and the struggling town centre, building on local assets such as its historic buildings, waterways and creative sector to create a more sustainable, inclusive and connected place. Enhanced links between Waterfoot and Rawtenstall will be critical – extending the economic and cultural benefits that have flowed from Manchester living further down the Valley. The plan emphasises environmental enhancement, adaptive reuse of heritage sites and stronger connections between neighbourhoods, supporting Waterfoot's transformation into a thriving, resilient and distinctive community within Rossendale's wider regeneration framework.



Neighbourhoods in Need

There are a range of estates that have been developed around our town centres including Hall Carr, Edgeside and Staghill. These are post war estates and they have mixed tenure. Newer private and social housing have added to the estates in recent years.

Generally, these estates have been underinvested in for many years so the public space has deteriorated, facilities have been removed despite being close to town centres the routes are uninviting giving a sense of isolation.

Recently work has started in Hall Carr to improve the appearance and the safety of the area. Lessons from this approach will now be used to shape the improvements to Staghill and Edgeside.

Although geographically close to Rawtenstall and Waterfoot, Staghill and Edgeside can feel physically and socially disconnected from the town centre. The steep, cobbled paths, unlit and uneven pedestrian routes and lack of clear wayfinding contribute to a sense of isolation. As a result, residents face barriers to accessing local services, employment and amenities; all of which are limiting opportunities for participation and growth. Strengthening these connections is essential to ensuring all parts of Rossendale benefit from regeneration and investment.

Most homes on the estate are managed by social landlords, which play an important role in maintaining properties and addressing local issues such as safety and neighbourhood management. While there are areas of strong community spirit,

the built environment and public spaces require investment to improve quality of life and strengthen pride in place.

Existing assets such as the Edgeside Park and a small park near Stag Drive, are well used by local families and The Hut on Woodside Crescent, a former community venue now standing vacant, provide a foundation for renewal. Both represent opportunities to enhance play, recreation and social activity, supporting healthier and more connected communities.

A focused approach is required in these two areas to help address the following challenges:

- Physical isolation from town centre opportunities despite close proximity.
- A concentration of social housing, where investment can have significant community impact.
- Limited public realm and community infrastructure, restricting social activity and local engagement.
- And untapped potential to build on local pride and strengthen identity.
- Improving confidence and providing job skills to help access sustainable employment.

By concentrating investment and partnership working in Staghill, this will create a demonstrator for neighbourhood renewal: a place where residents feel connected empowered and proud of where they live. The lessons learned here will help inform approaches to strengthening communities across the wider borough.



Section 3

Vision for the Future



The Boards Vision

Crawshawbooth, Rawtenstall and Waterfoot will each forge their own **unique pathways** to becoming **vibrant town centres** where **modern living evolves** in step with our **proud heritage** and **cherished countryside**.

Our town centres will be **attractive, safe, relevant** and **exciting** to serve the needs of all generations.

Our stunning backdrop will be weaved into our story, promoting healthy living through easy to access green spaces, rivers, parks and trails encouraging people to be out and about.

Our changing towns will be shaped by our young people to create areas that are welcoming and interesting places and are able to compete with larger neighbouring towns. People will feel safe to try new retail ventures, activities and events that attract current and future residents and visitors to our towns.

The future success of our towns will be driven by our rich diversity, local businesses, our

cultural and voluntary sectors, community and faith groups who will come together and sustain our bustling town centres by encouraging enterprise and creativity. Our events, arts and culture will be something to shout about, so that more people come to visit our reinvented towns.

Through the promotion of well-designed walking and cycling networks, an attractive built environment, alongside enhanced public transport options and lively town centres, our area will be naturally safer for all, at all times of the day.

Judging Success

In shaping our Vision, we know that our success will be judged through key economic and inclusive growth outcomes including:

- Improved perceptions by residents, businesses and visitors for all the towns
- Business growth and enhanced local employment opportunities
- Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
- Reduction in crime and the fear of crime
- Increased footfall in the town centres
- Increased commercial property occupancy rates
- Residents can safely and confidently move around and between towns and the surrounding countryside
- Young people are empowered to contribute to shaping their towns
- More tech enterprises and jobs located in the town centres
- Residents of estates feeling safer, having access to services and being proud of their communities

The Future of the Rawtenstall Area

By achieving our Vision over the next 10 years, we aim to have a positive impact on our area in the following ways:

Rawtenstall

As the main town centre, Rawtenstall will see a more varied and robust retail, leisure and night-time offer and be the engine for higher value job growth. The appeal of the town centre will be broadened. Events and activities will be tailored to young people's interests where they feel safer at all times of the day.

Waterfoot

The town centre will experience a resurgence in activity, with stronger footfall, a greater mix of occupied shops and creative uses and restored historic buildings hosting events throughout the year. A new town square will create a lively focal point for community life. Through these improvements, Waterfoot will have closed much of the disparity gap with Rawtenstall—emerging as an attractive and distinctive centre within the Valley and an appealing place to live for professionals working in nearby cities such as Manchester.

Staghills and Edgeside

Staghills and Edgeside will start to see the renaissance of their communities. Accessible play parks for all ages, keeping people safe from cars in and around the estates and developing attractive walking routes between their homes and services and opportunities will all contribute to improving pride in their communities. The development of the Hut will see a new focal point for community activities and services and help accessing jobs and building confidence through Rossendale Works will start to support families into the future.

Surrounding hills

Our communities will have access to good quality, affordable sport and leisure facilities. By widening the range of opportunities and bringing them closer to where people live, we will be widening the range of facilities from play areas, to netball courts and also expanding the capacity of local leisure centres to allow more people to use the facilities. New green routes will have the dual benefit of making accessible paths that encourage healthy lifestyles and attract visitors.

Section 4

Strategic Case for Change

Whitaker Museum

Heritage Railway

New Hall Hey Retail Park

Evidence of Needs – Challenges and Potential

This section brings together the key evidence on the social, economic and environmental conditions shaping Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth and the surrounding communities. It highlights the strengths that define local identity and opportunity, the challenges that constrain growth and wellbeing and the strategic opportunities to support regeneration and inclusive prosperity across the corridor.

Challenges

Keeping money in the town - Most users of the town are local residents; however, there is a need to re-engage them with the town centres to encourage more local spending and reduce leakage to other areas.

Deprivation levels - Rossendale ranks 60th out of 296 authorities on the 2025 IMD, reflecting above-average deprivation levels, with 22.4% of children under 16 living in relative low-income households with particular focus on Waterfoot and nearby estates. Lower household spend limits life choices and the prosperity of town centres.

Increasing visitor spend - Currently, too few visitors or daytime workers use the town centres regularly. There is a need to create stronger reasons for people to visit, stay longer and spend more within the towns. Footfall data supports this challenge, with the current index recorded at just 61.6, indicating limited activity throughout the day.

Enhance the offer in Rawtenstall - Rawtenstall has emerged as a key centre within the Valley, but its retail offer remains limited. There is an opportunity to expand and diversify the town's range of shops and services.

Town Centre Competition – other towns and the New Hall Hey development has attracted large-format retail. While retaining provision locally, it has also diverted some activity away from the traditional town centre. Strengthening the mix of independent retail, hospitality and cultural uses could balance this effect and enhance Rawtenstall's appeal as a destination.

Reversing Waterfoot's decline - Waterfoot is facing very high retail vacancy rates, with 44% of units currently empty. Addressing this decline will be critical to restoring the town's vitality and economic activity.

Increase people's safety - Residents' perceptions of safety within the town centres remain a significant issue. Roads are vehicle dominated, anti-social behaviour, particularly around Rawtenstall Bus Station and the Market, undermines confidence and discourages evening activity and in Waterfoot, the high number of vacant units and low footfall contribute to a sense of unease.

Recent indicators reflect these concerns: although Rawtenstall's recorded crime rate (48.2 per 1,000 people) is lower than the wider Rossendale and England averages, levels of anti-social behaviour remain comparatively high at 27 per 1,000, and social trust sits at -4%, signalling persistent worries about safety.

Low wage economy - Rossendale is characterised by a low-wage economy, with around half of the working-age population commuting out of the area for higher-paid employment. This contributes to reduced local spending power and weaker daytime economies.

The data reinforces this picture: Gross Value Added per job in Rawtenstall (£50,058) sits below the North West and England averages, and job density is low at 0.51, indicating fewer local jobs relative to the working-age population. While qualification levels and employment rates are broadly in line with regional figures, the combination of lower economic output and limited local job availability highlights the structural challenges that drive residents to seek higher-paid work elsewhere.

Disconnect between employment areas and town centres - The development of edge of the town centre employment sites, has helped retain jobs in the area. While nearby industrial growth provides valuable employment opportunities, there remains a need to ensure stronger integration between these sites and the town to maximise mutual benefit.

No rail link - The direct rail connection to Manchester was lost in the 1960s. As Manchester continues to grow as a regional employment and leisure hub, the absence of a commuter rail service limits connectivity and economic opportunity.

While the East Lancashire Railway remains a successful and cherished heritage attraction, local stakeholders have expressed interest in exploring a shared heritage and commuter rail solution to improve access and attract inward investment.

Out commuting - Currently, the area provides employment for only 50% of its working-age population and many of these jobs are located on the outskirts of towns. This results in limited lunchtime and after-work trade, reducing the vibrancy of town centres.





Challenges (continued)

No Vocational College - The closure and merger of the local further education college with a neighbouring institution in Accrington has created barriers for young people. It limits access to local skills training and reduces opportunities for young residents to learn and work within their hometowns.

Data shows that in Rossendale, 55.2% of 16–64 year olds hold Level 3+ qualifications, slightly below the Rawtenstall figure of 57%, while 12.4% have no qualifications. Combined with an employment rate of 72.8% and an economic inactivity rate of 39.5%, these figures suggest that young people face challenges in accessing higher-level skills locally, which can restrict their progression and opportunities within the area.

Aging Population – the median age at 42, will start to create greater imbalances in the labour market if we can't attract or retain more younger people.

Healthy life expectancy for males is 60.5 years and for females 61.5 years, slightly above the North West averages but just below the national figures. These indicators highlight that while people are living longer, the proportion of working-age residents is shrinking, which could place additional pressure on the local workforce and the sustainability of services.

Derelict Buildings - historic buildings, such as the Trickett's Arcade and the Heritage Arcade, as well as traditional shopfronts define its character and offer opportunities for heritage-led regeneration and reuse but they are also challenging to redevelop and are drags on the investment potential to the wider towns.

High Levels of Obesity – 65% of adults and 35% of children are classed as overweight or obese which can lead to chronic health issues.

This pressure is reflected in wider primary care indicators: Rawtenstall records 385.8 GP appointments per 1,000 patients, lower than Rossendale, the North West and England totals, while 67% of patients report having a good experience contacting their GP, broadly in line with national feedback. These figures suggest increasing demand on already stretched services, heightening the importance of addressing preventable health conditions linked to obesity.

Low Levels of Physical Activity – a quarter of adults do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week which contributes to high levels of health inequalities.

Potential

Working with Creative Community - There is an opportunity for each town to establish a clear identity and bring new purpose to the high street. Building on local creative networks and community organisations can support cultural programming, meanwhile uses and artisan business growth that activate vacant premises.

Exceptional Countryside - The surrounding Rossendale Valley countryside offers excellent opportunities for accessible walking, cycling and horse riding. However, there is a need to improve connections between town centres, neighbourhoods and rural assets to support healthy lifestyles but strengthen tourism.

Heritage Rich Towns - Rawtenstall and Waterfoot possess a wealth of historic buildings and streetscapes. While these define local character, they also pose challenges in refurbishment and sustainable reuse.

Image of Rawtenstall - The image of Rawtenstall has improved in recent years as regeneration and investment have taken effect. Continued enhancement of the public realm, cultural offer and business mix will be important to maintain momentum and attract new investment.

Attract Tech Jobs - Attracting new high-value, technology and digital businesses to town centres would provide higher-wage employment and generate additional high-spend footfall that supports local retail, hospitality and service businesses and raises aspirations.

Family Orientated Towns - diversifying the offer to meet varied local needs of families will help develop and reinforce the Rawtenstall area's position as the distinctive regional service centre.

Cultural and Creative Assets - The town has a well-established cultural identity, anchored by the Whitaker Museum and Art Gallery and Horse + Bamboo Theatre. Public art, festivals and creative initiatives contribute to local pride, attract visitors and strengthen the creative economy.

Engagement levels reflect this strong cultural base: 90.6% of adults in Rossendale have taken part in arts activities, slightly above the North West average, and around 40.8% have visited a museum or gallery in person. However, participation in theatre (35.3%) and heritage visits (63.8%) sits just below national figures, and library use is notably lower than both regional and national levels at 19.9%. These patterns suggest a solid cultural foundation with scope to broaden engagement and strengthen the sector further.



Civic and Community Spaces - A network of civic and green spaces including the Town Square, Rawtenstall Market, Whitaker Park and Waterfoot's new square supports community life, events and wellbeing. These public spaces are central to town centre activity and identity.

Independent Retailers - our towns have a strong independent retailer core which gives our area a particular image. Providing further support this group can give the towns a competitive edge against neighbouring towns and bring greater footfall to the area.

Increase Level of Physical Activity - Improvements to our facilities and community groups to enhance our leisure offer will provide affordable, varied, opportunities for everyone.



Strategic Objectives

To achieve this vision the following **strategic objectives** have been agreed by the Board that will deliver long term sustainability for the whole of the Rawtenstall Built up Urban Area are:

1

To have vibrant, sustainable and attractive towns centres used by more people for more time

2

To have healthy communities accessing facilities, amenities and countryside

3

To ensure residents, businesses and visitors feel welcome, safe and connected at all times

4

To engage and empower younger people to shape their future

It is important that when developing the investment plan that we are guided by some **Key Principles** that underpin everything we do. The development of our priority projects will consider the following:

Environmentally sustainable

Inclusive growth

Promote well being

Promote our heritage

Delivery Themes

Based on the extensive consultation with our communities and other stakeholders set out in the Plan, the Board have agreed to pursue four delivery themes. These are:



Following agreement on these delivery themes, a series of workshops, webinars and briefings were held to engage partners and identify a range of projects that can contribute to achieving the Plan's objectives.

These ideas were assessed against their ability to be delivered within the first four years, the impact they will have on delivering the objectives, the value for money, their strategic fit and how they contribute to a balanced programme of activity. The following sections set out the rationale for each of the delivery themes and those projects we aim to deliver in the first four years of the programme.

Programme Delivery

Each delivery theme will be led by a designated partner organisation, supported by a wider group of stakeholders and community representatives. Together, they will be responsible for overseeing the development, coordination and delivery of projects within their theme. These leads will report on progress to the Programme Board and share updates with the wider community forum to ensure transparency and accountability.

Rossendale Borough Council will provide overarching support through financial facilitation, risk management, performance monitoring and reporting to Government. The Council will also supply regular management information to the Board and community partners to inform decision-making and delivery progress.

Cabinet will maintain oversight of programme performance and alignment with Council priorities, while ultimate financial accountability will rest with the Council's Section 151 Officer, in line with statutory responsibilities.



Regeneration and Place

Rationale

Rawtenstall has made great progress in recent years, becoming a centre for independent retail with a growing food and drink offer. The next stage is to broaden its appeal to residents, workers and visitors, strengthening its position as a vibrant town centre throughout the week. By increasing footfall, attracting new businesses and giving young people a stronger voice in shaping their town, Rawtenstall will continue to grow and evolve.

Waterfoot, meanwhile, needs to begin a process of renewal — increasing footfall, filling vacant units and revitalising its public realm. Building on its strong base of artists and cultural organisations, the approach will focus on developing Waterfoot Arts Town, driven by events, creativity and improved infrastructure.

Together, these efforts will help reduce inequalities between the distinctive areas of Rawtenstall and Waterfoot, ensuring that the benefits of regeneration, investment and opportunity are shared more evenly across the Valley.

Crawshawbooth also has an important role within the wider regeneration picture. Although the village benefits from excellent links to the surrounding countryside, many people still struggle to access these spaces easily. Improving these connections is not only about recreation — it is a key part of strengthening the village as a destination, supporting local businesses and enhancing the overall sense of place. By making its natural assets more accessible, Crawshawbooth can better contribute to the Valley's wider regeneration story and offer residents and visitors a more connected, welcoming environment.

Key Objectives

- To have a distinct events and animation programme in each of the towns
- To increase the number of workers employed in higher technology industries located in the town centres
- Improve the Bacup Rd area to create a new focal point
- Active promotion of our towns to residents and visitors
- To encourage new retail and creative entrepreneurs to operate in our towns
- To provide the necessary skills to allow communities, groups and entrepreneurs to create strong towns



Healthy Communities

Rationale

It is essential that we tackle the long term health of our communities and support them in their day-to-day life, allowing greater opportunity to access work and avoid chronic illnesses and live a more enjoyable life. The Rawtenstall towns have very high levels of obesity due to lifestyle and although this is a long-term process and involves a multi-agency approach, we will support these aims by focusing on three areas.

Access to sports facilities and clubs is uneven as barriers such as cost, accessibility and confidence all deter people from taking advantage of what is currently on offer. Providing a better range of local activities and outreach support to encourage activity will be introduced to break down these barriers.

Communities need safe, green and attractive streets and paths if they are going to change their lifestyle and increase the amount of walking and cycling. The close proximity of our town centres and estates to each other should support healthier options than the car but currently many routes are unsuitable and we need to address this. The fabric of some of our estates has not been improved in many years and residents do not feel safe. We need to work with communities to tackle problems so that they are more comfortable in their neighbourhoods



Rossendale is fortunate to be surrounded by the Pennine uplands, but for too many these green gyms are inaccessible due to knowledge, habit and physical barriers. We need to make the connections between where people live and the countryside clear, accessible and attainable.

By creating attractive and green routes we can have the dual benefit of attracting more visitors who can add revenue to our towns and wider services. Routes that link into our countryside can be promoted regionally as an accessible family friendly opportunity for exercise. By creating hubs that support walkers, cyclists and equestrian users we can start to gain an economic dividend from our green assets.

Key Objectives

- Establish green corridors within and between our town centres, communities and into the countryside to encourage healthy lifestyle
- Safe and attractive streets, parks, estates and town centres
- Create green streets in our town centres
- Encourage more people to be involved in personal exercise and clubs





Jobs and Skills

Rationale

The long-term future of the Valley is reliant on the prosperity and economic security of all.

A starting point is to try to break the cycle of worklessness by building the confidence and capacity of people to allow them to seek and secure jobs.

We need to encourage more higher value jobs to be located in our town centres. This will help drive footfall and spend to help sustain our towns. The area has low levels of productivity and a high percentage of residents working outside of the Valley which takes expenditure outside of our communities.

If we are to have communities that are self-sufficient and not reliant on short term funding, then we need to be able to support the voluntary and community sector to grow the range and depth of their activities.

Tackling the entrenched patterns of joblessness in the Valley is central to creating the conditions for long-term prosperity. When fewer people are left disconnected from work, the whole area becomes more stable and confident. Strengthening pathways into employment helps ensure that residents can participate fully in the local economy, while encouraging higher-value jobs to settle in our town centres creates a more vibrant and sustainable environment for businesses and communities alike. At the same time, supporting local organisations to grow their capability ensures that change is grounded in the lived experience of the people it affects.



Together, these efforts help keep talent, investment and opportunity within the Valley, building a more resilient economy and more empowered communities.

Key Objectives

- Break the cycle of worklessness
- Connect people to sustainable jobs
- Give the voluntary and community sector skills and experience to shape the area
- Attract more higher paid jobs to our town centres



Empower Younger People

Rationale

The town of Rawtenstall has made tremendous progress in the last 15 years but it is essential that this needs to continue if all our towns are to become vibrant and sustainable places.

At the heart of this is the ability to adapt to the challenges and new opportunities and trends. To achieve this, we need to nurture and embrace the energy, experiences and interests of younger people in our communities so that they can start to shape and deliver the towns of the future.

We will be working with young people to give them the skills and resources to: develop their own events, make it easy for them to access opportunities to be young retailers and advocate for changes that attract and retain opportunities in the Valley. We will make it easier for young people to try new and non-traditional ideas by reducing barriers to change, providing permissions for unconventional spaces and activities.

There is both the perception and experience that the towns are affected by low level anti-social behaviour and unsafe areas in the evening that deter all generations from using our towns. Working with young people we have identified areas of improvement to create safer places for all.







Key Objectives

- Develop the night-time economy so places feel both vibrant and safe after dark
- To encourage new retail and creative entrepreneurs to operate in our towns
- To provide the necessary skills to allow communities, groups and entrepreneurs to create strong sustainable towns
- Improve safety of all through measures throughout the town centres including lighting and CCTV
- To provide young people with a range of activities including arts and sports throughout the week



Programme Alignment

The Delivery Themes align with the PiP in the following way.

		Thriving places	Stronger communities	Taking back control
	Regeneration and Place	✓		✓
	Healthy Communities		✓	✓
	Jobs and Skills	✓	✓	✓
	Empower Younger People	✓	✓	✓

Project Clusters

Following a comprehensive process of gathering ideas and expressions of interest from the community and partner organisations, the Board undertook an open call for project ideas. This open call proved extremely popular, generating a wide range of submissions that reflected the community's creativity, ambition and understanding of local needs. Alongside this, the Board also discussed a range of clear priority areas that had emerged consistently through earlier engagement and local insight.

From this process, several emerging project clusters were identified that can contribute towards achieving our delivery themes during the first investment period. These include:

- Developing the area around Bacup Road in Rawtenstall;
- Creating a new purpose and identity for Waterfoot centre;
- Addressing long-term issues in Crawshawbooth;
- Improving the fabric and liveability of Staghills and Edgeside;
- Enhancing access to leisure facilities and services to support active lifestyles; and
- Providing skills, spaces and resources for young people to help shape the future of the towns.

An essential part of our approach is to strengthen the community and voluntary sector, building the capacity needed for long-term resilience. To help kickstart this, the Board has agreed to establish a Community Grant Fund, enabling local groups to test new ideas, form partnerships and take a more active role in delivering change.

We also have a list of ideas or interventions that fall outside of these clusters and expect to support them in some way as this programme develops.

Bacup Road, Rawtenstall

Vision

This part of town will become the home of new leisure opportunities, town centre living and emerging tech firms. Developing the site of the Heritage Arcade there will be a mix of new residential, retail and business space. This will be complemented with the Town Hall and space above shops to provide good quality business and training space. The block will see shop front improvements with the reintroduction of heritage awnings and bring empty units back into use. A route across the Irwell to the Town Square will see the creation of a park along the side of the Limey providing space for recreation and cafes.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Bacup Road	£25,400	£127,700	£10,100	£636,300	£30,500	£585,100	£30,500	£585,100	£2,030,700

Waterfoot

Vision

The development of Waterfoot will see new reasons to visit the town. Heritage buildings such as Trickett's Arcade that drag on the town will be restored and brought into use. A new Town Square and a linear park will witness communities coming together away from the heavily congested roads, hosting events and gatherings, they will become the new heart of the town. Working with the local creative community, new events, attractions and retail ventures will return footfall to the town.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Waterfoot	£50,900	£64,600	£21,400	£316,400	£60,500	£292,600	£60,500	£292,600	£1,159,500

Crawshawbooth

Vision

Crawshawbooth will form an essential part of the mix for the wider Rawtenstall Area providing a range of housing, retail and leisure and access to rural routes. St Johns Church will continue to define the townscape and become a leisure asset for local communities and visitors and escape total demolition. The main through road to Burnley will see traffic calming that reduces the impact on the pedestrians and leisure activities related to walking and cycling will give a new long-term focus for the village. The attractive fabric of the shop fronts will be enhanced to encourage users and new investment.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Crawshawbooth	£5,000	£13,100	£7,000	£63,300	£10,000	£58,500	£10,000	£58,500	£225,400

Staghills and Edgeside Renewal

Vision

The communities of Staghills and Edgeside will start to see the renaissance of their communities. Accessible play parks for all ages, keeping people safe from cars in and around the estates and developing attractive walking routes between their homes and services and opportunities will all contribute to improving pride in their communities. The development of the Hut will see a new focal point for community activities and services and help accessing jobs and building confidence through Rossendale Works will start to support families into the future.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Staghills and Edgeside	£105,500	£44,600	£61,000	£221,000	£123,500	£205,800	£123,500	£205,800	£1,090,700

Leisure and Active Travel

Vision

We want all members of our communities to have access to good quality, affordable sport and leisure facilities. By increasing the range of opportunities and bringing them closer to where people live, we will be widening the range of facilities from play areas, to netball courts and expanding the capacity of local leisure centres to allow more people to use the facilities.

By creating attractive and green paths we can have the dual benefit of making accessible routes that encourage healthy lifestyles and attract more visitors who can add revenue to our towns and wider services. Connecting our towns and villages with destinations such as the Halo, we can create safe and interesting family friendly routes.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Leisure and Active Travel	£23,400	£72,000	£16,100	£367,900	£28,500	£336,400	£28,500	£336,400	£1,209,200



Empower Young People

Vision

We want our towns and communities to evolve to meet the changing requirements of the day. To help this transition, we will be supporting young people to start to shape the area so that they will find it more exciting, interesting and safe. This will help to attract and retain younger people in the area to work and establish businesses. We'll be supplying the opportunities, skills and equipment to enable young creative people to gain experience of producing and delivering events and activities and start to develop the next generation of retailers. A vibrant night time economy is an essential part of the mix for younger people, but all need to feel safe and welcome so young people will be shaping the whole experience.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Empower Young People	£76,300	£15,400	£45,200	£79,100	£84,000	£74,100	£84,000	£74,100	£532,200

Community Grants

Vision

The long-term future of the area relies on the resilience of our communities and voluntary sector. Small Community Grants are one tool to help the sector try out their ideas but with reduced risk. Piloting ideas, testing long term viability and increasing capacity of service provision are all ways that these grants can support long term change.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Community Grants	£6,600	£22,600	£6,300	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£205,200

Programme Management Costs

The below accounts for the Council management costs allocated for the first 4 years of the programme, equating to 4.2% of the allocation taken from total revenue.

Accounted costs below included for 3% increase a year inflation consideration of salary and running costs for the below required resource.

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Programme Management	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£355,600

Project Role in Achieving Delivery Themes

Delivery Theme	Projects						Community Grants
	Bacup Road	Waterfoot	Crawshawbooth	Staghills and Edgeside	Leisure and Active Travel	Enabling Younger People	
Regeneration and Place	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Healthy Communities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jobs and Skills	✓			✓		✓	✓
Empower Young People		✓		✓		✓	✓

Programme Summary

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Bacup Road	£25,400	£127,700	£10,100	£636,300	£30,500	£585,100	£30,500	£585,100	£2,030,700
Waterfoot	£50,900	£64,600	£21,400	£316,400	£60,500	£292,600	£60,500	£292,600	£1,159,500
Crawshawbooth	£5,000	£13,100	£7,000	£63,300	£10,000	£58,500	£10,000	£58,500	£225,400
Staghills and Edgeside	£105,500	£44,600	£61,000	£221,000	£123,500	£205,800	£123,500	£205,800	£1,090,700
Leisure and Active Travel	£23,400	£72,000	£16,100	£367,900	£28,500	£336,400	£28,500	£336,400	£1,209,200
Enabling Younger People	£76,300	£15,400	£45,200	£79,100	£84,000	£74,100	£84,000	£74,100	£532,200
Community Grants	£6,600	£22,600	£6,300	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£205,200
Programme Management	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£355,600
Total	£382,000	£360,000	£256,000	£1,736,500	£432,000	£1,605,000	£432,000	£1,605,000	£6,808,500

Intended Use of Powers

We know that the success of the interventions we deliver in this regeneration plan, will be so much more impactful when we harness the existing powers of Rossendale Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, the Police, the Diocese, Community organisations to name just a few.

These powers will allow us to confidently deliver our interventions, knowing that there is a strategy to preserve and protect what we intend to do and prevent any further deterioration of our area. The powers will either be used directly, to enable the delivery of an intervention, or will be used alongside our planned interventions in strategies to deal with wider issues that our funding alone cannot address. This partnership approach will make our regeneration work stronger and more successful. With many of these bodies featured on our board, we can ensure that they remain committed and accountable to the success of our plan.

To name just a few examples of powers that we are already utilising to support this plan, we have already:

- undertaken some work to start the development of a Business Improvement District in Rawtenstall. Once established, we believe that this will facilitate a focus with statutory bodies on challenges that our high street faces.
- been preparing the information and development to dedicate areas of our Pride in Place boundary as a Conservation Area. Rawtenstall already

has a Conservation Area and accompanying Management Plan but the focus is now on both the Waterfoot and the Crawshawbooth Area. A dedicated Action Plan under this Article 4 Direction, will be agreed and resourced accordingly, which will mean challenges with derelict buildings, unsympathetic alterations, absent owners to name just a few, will be sufficiently resourced.

- announced publicly a strategy for Trickett's Arcade in Waterfoot, where we intend to use Section 215 powers to encourage important action on the grade 11 listed property and if this action doesn't properly materialise, we will pursue a strategy to CPO the building.

As a board, we also expect to explore any future powers granted to give our community more control. Such as blocking unwanted shops, using powers under the new laws in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill and where we think a power should exist, but doesn't at present, we will work closely with our MP to shape and influence policy.

Our subgroups for each cluster area will consider the Powers Toolkit present by MHCLG and the Programme Manager will work alongside the relevant body to support any actions relevant to supporting, protecting and enforcing the Regeneration Plan.



Section 5

Alignment with Other Programmes and Investments



Alignment with other programmes and investments

Strategic Fit

This section outlines the action points derived from masterplans and strategic documents developed by partners. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how the Pride in Place aligns with existing local and regional priorities, ensuring that investment is targeted, coherent and delivers maximum impact.

By referencing established masterplans, including town centre regeneration plans, physical activity strategies, local plan and economic development strategies, the Pride in Place funding will build on work that has already been carefully researched and planned. This ensures that projects supported through the fund complement wider policy objectives rather than duplicating efforts.

Local Plan

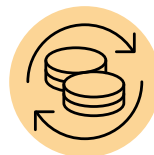
Rossendale's Local Plan provides the long-term framework for how the borough will grow and develop sustainably by balancing the needs of people, the economy and the environment. It sets clear priorities to deliver well-designed, inclusive and connected places where communities can prosper.

Key Focus Areas:



People

Support balanced growth, diverse housing and healthier, better-connected communities.



Economy

Create new jobs, revitalise employment areas, strengthen our centres and grow the visitor economy.



Environment

Protect landscapes, promote sustainable design, tackle climate change and enhance biodiversity.

Strategic priorities include unlocking new housing and employment land, regenerating key town and village centres, improving transport and digital connectivity and advancing clean, green infrastructure across the borough.



Alignment with other programmes and investments

Rawtenstall Masterplan

The Rawtenstall Masterplan sets out a 10-project action plan to make the town a more connected, welcoming and vibrant place. It focuses on:

- **Improved Arrival Experiences:** Enhancing gateways, public realm and wayfinding to create a stronger sense of arrival and civic identity.
- **Better Places and Spaces:** Greening the main routes, improving public areas and creating opportunities for sustainable development while celebrating heritage.
- **Connecting Communities:** Strengthening walking and cycling links, improving access to green spaces and connecting neighbourhoods with the town centre.

Together, these projects aim to create a town that is greener, safer, more inclusive and full of local pride.

Waterfoot Masterplan

The Waterfoot Masterplan builds on the area's creative heritage to revitalise its centre and strengthen community identity. It combines quick wins with long-term transformation:

- **Short-Term Actions:** Street art, façade improvements and creative events to animate spaces and test ideas.
- **Medium- to Long-Term Vision:** New public spaces, riverside routes, sustainable housing and reimagined heritage buildings to create a thriving mixed-use area focused on wellbeing, creativity and enterprise.

Lancashire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The LCWIP establishes a long-term vision for active travel across Rossendale, improving health, access and connectivity between our communities.

It identifies five key strategic cycling corridors linking Rawtenstall, Haslingden, Bacup, Whitworth and surrounding areas, alongside walking improvements in and around key destinations such as schools, health centres and transport hubs.

The aim is to create greener, safer and healthier routes that reduce car dependency and connect people to opportunity.

Lancashire Growth Plan

Rossendale's role in the Lancashire Growth Plan focuses on sustainable economic renewal, innovation and inclusive growth.

Key priorities include:

- **Regeneration and Infrastructure:** Revitalising key centres and improving connectivity within and beyond the borough.
- **Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Growth:** Supporting innovation in low-carbon sectors and building skills for the future economy.
- **Digital and Transport Connectivity:** Expanding high-speed broadband, enhancing public transport and strengthening links to regional economic hubs.
- **Sustainable Communities:** Delivering affordable homes, green spaces and community facilities that support wellbeing and resilience.

Alignment with other programmes and investments

Visitor Economy Strategy

The Rossendale Visitor Economy Strategy positions the borough as a year-round destination built on its natural beauty, culture and creativity.

The vision is to grow tourism through:

- Stronger Branding and Promotion of Rossendale's unique identity.
- Outdoor and Lifestyle Experiences that make the most of our landscape and local food scene.
- Creative and Cultural Development celebrating our artists, heritage and events.
- Enhanced Accommodation Offer to extend stays and boost local business.

The strategy aims to strengthen pride in place while driving local prosperity and opportunity.

Our Place, Our Wellbeing, Our Plan

Rossendale's Health and Wellbeing Plan puts communities at the heart of improving local lives. Developed collaboratively with residents and partners, it focuses on four priorities:

- Community-Led Mental Wellbeing
- Physical Activity and Healthy Weight
- Facilities to Support Health and Wellbeing
- Shaping Local Services

The plan commits to working across sectors — health, housing, leisure and community — to create environments where people can live well, be active and feel connected. It reflects a shared ambition for a fairer, healthier and more resilient Rossendale.

	Intervention Type			Strategic Fit						
Delivery Themes	Thriving Place	Stronger Communities	Taking Back Control	Local Plan	Rawtenstall Masterplan	Waterfoot Masterplan	LCWIP	Lancashire Growth Plan	Visitor Economy Strategy	Our place, our wellbeing, our plan
Regeneration and Place	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Healthy Communities	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Jobs and Skills		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
Empower Young People	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	

Section 6

Match Funding and Leveraged Investment



The Stone Man is dedicated to the memory of the quarrymen of the area who worked in this, the Valley of Stone.

Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall area

Alderman Michael McShea JP (1943-2018)
and Brian Boys (1936-2017)

Match Funding and Leveraged Investment

To maximise the impact of the Pride in Place funding, it is important that it is used to attract additional resources and leverage the contributions of the public, private and the voluntary sector.

Public Sector Match Funding

We will work with funding providers over the lifetime of the programme to align our objectives and maximise the collective impact of the funding. The principal funding sources that we will be engaging are:

	Regeneration and Place	Healthy Communities	Jobs and Skills	Empower Young People
Levelling Up Fund	✓		✓	
National Lottery Heritage Fund	✓	✓		
Arts Council England	✓	✓		✓
Homes England	✓	✓		
Community Ownership Fund		✓		✓
Sport England / Active Travel England / Football Foundation		✓		✓
Landfill Tax	✓	✓		
Local Council	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shared schemes with other authorities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Section 106 contributions	✓			



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Community Ownership Fund
support programme



Working with the Private Sector

The long-term success of the development of our towns requires sustained investment in the area from the private sector. To encourage this, we will implement a range of approaches to create investment-ready projects and a business-friendly environment.

Business Forums: engage with regular roundtables with the Chamber of Commerce, business leaders, developers and housing associations to discuss and align priorities and promote Pride in Place projects.

Incentive Framework: where projects are not financially viable, we will use the following tools such as:

- Local Development Orders (LDOs)
- Business Rate Relief
- Local asset transfer
- Joint ventures

Offer Co-Investment Opportunities:

Invite local investors to co-fund to achieve priority initiatives such as:

- Workspace and co-working hubs
- Digital infrastructure
- Mixed-use developments
- Events and culture-led place marketing
- Establishment of new Business Improvement Districts



Developing the Voluntary Sector

We will work with the voluntary and community sector to support them to develop, manage and own assets and projects, ensuring they are embedded into the needs of our communities.

Strategic Roles for VCS:

- Active leadership role with the Neighbourhood Board
- Stewardship of community assets (e.g., libraries, halls, green spaces)
- Delivery of wellbeing, arts and cultural programs
- Volunteer-led events and public engagement

The first step will be to establish a Community Investment Fund designed to empower communities to build capacity, try new things and attract wider resources by matching public, private and voluntary sector contribution. The fund will be designed to allow easy access and great flexibility.



Telling Our Story

We will work with our partners to tell the story of how we have worked together to develop and deliver successful projects. This will show how the towns are transforming and are attractive places for investment whether it is buying their family home or developing a retail business. We will:

- Share stories of impact
- Promote new developments and events
- Build a sense of local pride
- Show examples of shared investment



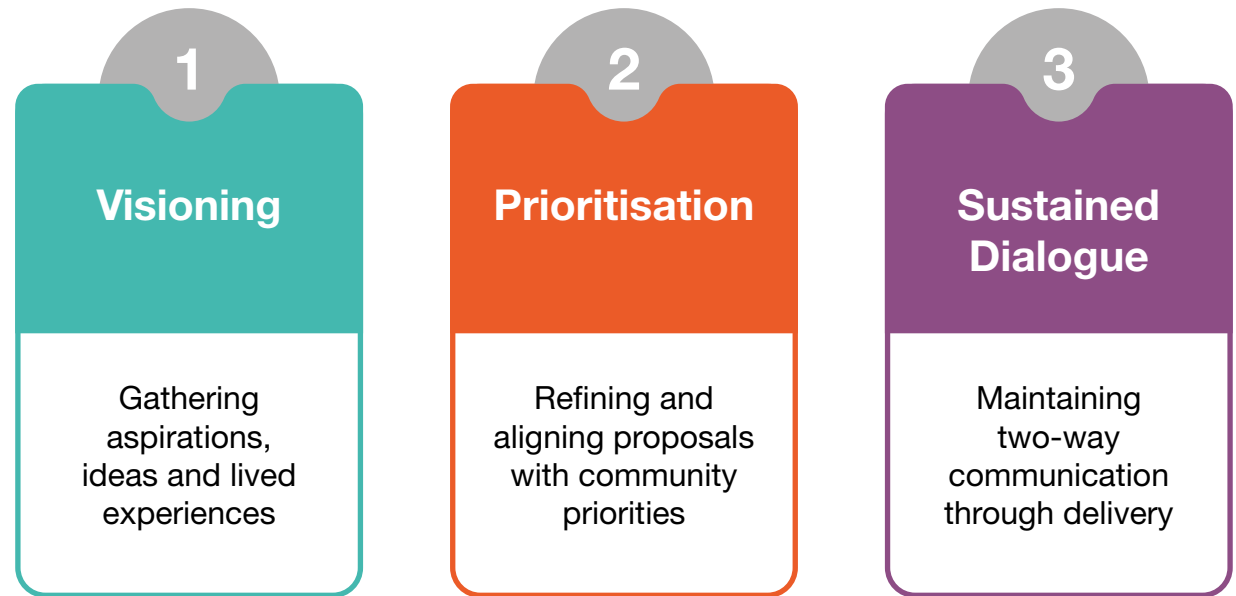
Section 7

Community and Stakeholder Engagement



Engagement and Delivery Overview

The engagement process was structured around three key steps designed to ensure inclusive, meaningful and ongoing participation.



Each step applied different methods to ensure a broad cross-section of voices from across Rossendale were heard and reflected in the Regeneration Plan.

Findings from Layer Research



Inserts are taken from work undertaken with Alder Grange students aged 11–14 and 14–17.



Step 1: Visioning

Step 1: Visioning

The first step focused on capturing aspirations, ideas and lived experiences from across the community.

A series of interactive workshops and discussions were held with Village Associations, local schools, the Youth Council, Civic Pride and local businesses. These sessions created welcoming spaces for participants to explore the challenges and opportunities in their neighbourhoods and consider what would most improve quality of life and community wellbeing.

- With older students, discussions explored how local areas could better support young people's needs and ambitions, particularly around skills, facilities and opportunities for future employment.
- With younger pupils, creative tools such as mapping safe routes, drawing journeys to school and identifying favourite and least-used spaces were used to stimulate engagement and dialogue.
- With Civic Pride and other voluntary groups, conversations focused on the importance of attractive, well-maintained public spaces and how volunteering strengthens local pride, inclusion and wellbeing.
- With local businesses, discussions centred on the vitality of high streets, the need for active and inviting local centres and ways to support small enterprises and encourage local spending.

Recognising the importance of youth participation, members attended a Youth Council meeting to introduce the Pride in Place programme and explain how members could get involved. This led to a borough-wide youth empowerment workshop for professionals and organisations that work with young people, including schools, sports groups, volunteer organisations, councillors and youth services. Participants collaborated to develop ideas around themes such as skills, activities and health and safety, ensuring that future projects reflect young people's needs and priorities.



Link to vision

The initial community engagement captured the aspirations of residents, young people, volunteers and local businesses, providing the foundation for shaping a vision that reflects local needs and ambitions. Insights around the desire for safer, more inclusive public spaces, vibrant town centres and stronger neighbourhood identity directly fed into the vision of towns where people feel secure and connected, with welcoming streets and public areas. Young people's feedback on spaces for social connection and activity helped shape plans for town centres that are engaging, youth-friendly and capable of competing with larger neighbouring towns. Similarly, input from Civic Pride groups and volunteers emphasised the importance of accessible green spaces, parks, rivers and trails, reinforcing the vision's focus on healthy living and encouraging residents to be active and outdoors.



Findings

- Young people consistently expressed a desire for safer, more inclusive and social spaces.
- Civic Pride and community volunteers highlighted the value of shared public spaces and the importance of maintaining and enhancing the local environment as a source of pride and belonging.
- Businesses emphasised the need for thriving, accessible centres with better infrastructure, improved public realm and stronger links between community events and local trade.
- Across all groups, participants supported investment that strengthens neighbourhood identity, encourages collaboration and enables people to live, work and spend locally.
- Cultural venues and community organisations expressed enthusiasm about expanding their reach and partnerships, though often constrained by limited capacity and resources.
- There is a strong sense of community identity and pride across Rossendale, with many residents valuing the distinct character of their neighbourhoods.

The findings from these sessions were formally presented to the Neighbourhood Board to help inform project development and investment priorities.



Targeted Engagement: Staghills Estate

Method

Following discussion by the Neighbourhood Board, Staghills Estate was formally identified as a priority area for focused engagement due to higher levels of deprivation and anti-social behaviour.

An online survey, advertised via a leaflet hand-delivered to each household on the estate. This ensured that residents unable to attend structured meetings still had the opportunity to contribute to the engagement. The survey invited residents to identify specific places that were important to them, including access to facilities and green spaces and to provide suggestions for improvements to the estate.

Alongside the survey, Council officers carried out door-to-door engagement, speaking directly with households who might not otherwise participate through online platforms. This approach captured a fuller picture of local needs and priorities, particularly from residents less likely to engage in formal consultation exercises.

Furthermore, early engagement on the Staghills Estate involved several focused activities to build a deeper understanding of local challenges and opportunities. A joint walkaround with members of the Newchurch Village Community Association allowed Council officers to see first-hand the issues residents described, including unlit areas, lack of shared spaces and the impact of poor transport links on daily life.

This was supported by a full audit of the estate, which mapped physical conditions, access points, key gathering areas and locations linked to anti-social behaviour. A dedicated session with St Nicholas' Primary School brought an important safeguarding perspective, with the headteacher and staff highlighting concerns around trespassing on school grounds, children arriving late due to family pressures and the wider effects of community tensions on pupils' wellbeing.

To capture the views of younger residents directly, we also asked local young people to sketch or describe their ideal youth club, receiving more than 40 submissions that revealed a clear appetite for safe, social spaces and activities.

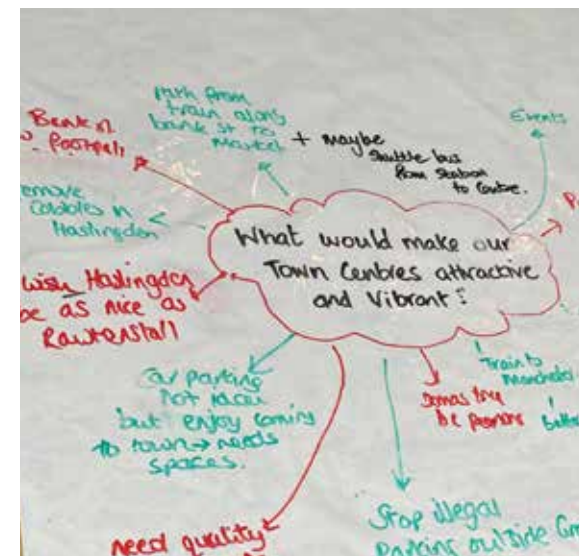
The combined findings from the survey and doorstep engagement were presented to the Neighbourhood Board, which considered recurring themes in detail. Residents consistently raised concerns about the lack of shared community spaces, safety including anti-social behaviour issues and road safety, leisure provision and the condition of existing facilities. The Board recognised these themes as indicating both a clear gap in provision and a wider need to strengthen community cohesion and improve local infrastructure, confirming Staghills Estate as a priority area for investment within the Pride in Place programme.

Link to vision

Feedback from Staghill Estate reinforced the broader Pride in Place vision by highlighting local priorities such as safety, shared community spaces, leisure opportunities and improved infrastructure. These insights informed targeted interventions to create inclusive, attractive and well-maintained public spaces, directly supporting the vision of towns that are naturally safer at all times and where residents feel confident to explore new retail ventures, activities and community events. By addressing the specific needs of Staghill, the programme demonstrates how neighbourhood-level input feeds into a wider, borough-wide vision of vibrant, connected and thriving communities.

Findings

- Residents identified a need for improved community facilities, particularly shared spaces for activities and social interaction including a community garden and dedicated youth spaces;
- Key concerns included safety, youth provision and the poor condition of existing infrastructure;
- These findings indicated a clear gap in local provision and highlighted opportunities to strengthen community cohesion;
- As a result, the Neighbourhood Board identified Staghill as a priority area for investment within the Pride in Place programme.



Step 2: Prioritisation

Method

Building on the findings from Step 1, the Neighbourhood Board reviewed all community feedback and established four thematic workstreams to structure project development:



Each workstream was assigned a lead officer or partner organisation responsible for guiding project development. Community groups were brought together with these leads to refine their ideas and align them with identified priorities.

A consistent proforma process was used to capture and assess proposals. To support this, three webinars were held with partners, businesses and voluntary groups (attended by over 50 participants), providing step-by-step guidance on completing the proforma and submitting high-quality proposals for consideration.

More than 70 expressions of interest were received across the programme, demonstrating strong community appetite to deliver change and significantly exceeding the available funding. This level of demand highlighted both the scale of ambition within the borough and the importance of continued investment beyond the current programme. While only a proportion of proposals could progress, the Council committed to working proactively with groups whose ideas could not be funded at this stage, helping them identify alternative funding routes and further development opportunities. This ensured that valuable community-led ideas were not lost, and that the wider pipeline of future projects remained strong and inclusive.

Link to vision

Thematic workstreams—Healthy Communities, Empowering Young People, Jobs and Skills and Regeneration and Place—ensured that community priorities were developed into deliverable projects aligned with the Pride in Place vision. This process supported the creation of active, well-connected town centres that encourage enterprise, creativity and cultural events, directly linking to the vision of towns driven by local businesses, cultural organisations and voluntary groups. It also empowered young people to shape the future of their towns, ensuring that town centres are dynamic, inclusive and appealing to current and future residents and visitors. Workstream outcomes embedded community priorities into planning and delivery, ensuring the vision of vibrant, engaging and resilient towns is realised in practical, sustainable ways.

Findings

- The workstream model improved collaboration and coordination across sectors.
- Community groups were able to refine early ideas into deliverable projects with clear alignment to local priorities.
- The process generated a range of strong, well-supported proposals for Board consideration.

Step 3: Sustained Dialogue

Method

A long-term Engagement Strategy has been developed to ensure communities remain involved throughout delivery. The approach includes:

- Ongoing engagement through meetings, workshops and forums
- Use of digital platforms, surveys and social media for two-way communication
- Clear feedback loops between the Neighbourhood Board, the Council and local stakeholders

A Communications Plan underpins this, ensuring updates are shared regularly and accessibly through multiple channels, including press, social media and direct correspondence.

Building on this foundation, engagement over the lifetime of the programme will be structured, coordinated and tailored to the needs of different stakeholder groups. Local businesses, community groups, residents, partners and the Neighbourhood Board each have preferred communication channels and specific information needs. This ensures people receive relevant updates in a format that suits them, and at a pace that supports ongoing involvement without overwhelming stakeholders.

Engagement moving forward will blend consistent communication with opportunities for meaningful participation. Email newsletters, social media, community newsletters and workshops will be used to keep residents, businesses and community groups informed and actively involved.

Formal reports and presentations will continue to update the Neighbourhood Board and partners at appropriate points in the programme, supporting transparency and accountability as work progresses.

The Communications Plan sets out the communication channels to be used throughout delivery, including:

- Email updates and newsletters to provide project information and highlight opportunities to engage
- Workshops and community events to gather input, showcase progress and encourage participation
- Social media campaigns to share news, milestones and success stories
- Press releases and local media coverage to highlight major developments and community impact
- Reports and presentations for formal updates to the Neighbourhood Board and partners

Key messages across all channels will remain consistent and clear, focusing on:

- The purpose and benefits of Pride in Place for Rawtenstall
- How local businesses, residents and community groups can get involved
- The project timeline, milestones and expected outcomes
- Opportunities for feedback and continued input
- Contact points for queries, support or further information

Link to vision

The long-term Engagement Strategy ensures that residents remain central to the delivery of the Pride in Place vision. Ongoing dialogue through workshops, meetings, digital platforms and feedback mechanisms allows communities to guide improvements to green spaces, town centres, streetscapes and public transport networks. This continuous engagement directly supports the vision of towns that are safe, attractive and well-connected, with lively streets and town centres throughout the day and night. By promoting transparency, accountability and community ownership, the strategy ensures the vision remains a living, community-led process where residents, businesses and cultural and voluntary sectors collectively sustain thriving, healthy and creative towns.

Findings

- Continuous engagement promotes transparency and strengthens trust between the Council and communities.
- Residents remain active participants in shaping regeneration priorities.
- The Neighbourhood Board provides an effective mechanism for community influence and accountability.

From Community Design to Community Ownership

Community Design

Residents, local groups and stakeholders co-designed ideas through the visioning and prioritisation stages. Workshops, surveys and forums ensured that the Regeneration Plan reflects genuine local needs and aspirations.

Community Management

Governance structures embed community representation in decision-making. While the Council provides strategic oversight and funding support, communities are central to project delivery and long-term stewardship.

Capacity Building

Ongoing training, mentoring and support will enable local groups to take on leadership roles. Workstream leads connect community partners with resources and expertise, helping translate concepts into deliverable projects.

Community Ownership

The goal is to enable community-led sustainability — empowering voluntary and community organisations to manage assets and services, ensuring they reflect local priorities and are financially viable for the long term.

Case Study: The White Horse Project

The White Horse Project is an organisation supporting young people aged 11 to 18 in Rossendale, aiming to improve their life chances and empower them to participate fully in their local community. The project illustrates a clear progression from community design to community ownership.

A representative from the WHP contributed as a board member, providing strategic input that shaped the organisation’s vision and aims, ensuring that the voices of young people were central. As workstream leader under the Empowering Young People initiative, the project manager was commissioned to research ways to engage young people in local events and entrepreneurial activities.

The White Horse Project is currently piloting initiatives that link young people with local businesses to create and sell merchandise while receiving skills training and mentorship. This pilot phase is helping to test and refine approaches, demonstrating the progression from co-designed ideas towards sustainable, youth-led, community-owned initiatives.

Section 8

Governance



Governance Structure

The Governance of the programme is designed to engage with a wide range of people, organisations and interests to gain the best insight into our towns, develop the right projects and embed them into our communities for lasting impact.

The agreed governance structure comprises of the Neighbourhood Board, Accountable Body, Delivery Groups and the Community Forum. Together, these bodies provide leadership, oversight and collaboration to ensure the programme delivers on its vision. The relationship between these groups is here:



Governance Roles

Neighbourhood Board

The Neighbourhood Board will provide strategic direction into the challenges and opportunities facing the area. Its role is to:

- Champion Rawtenstall's economic vision and promote bold, deliverable interventions that will underpin the Investment Plan;
- Communicate clearly with the business community, residents and partners around economic growth and delivery of the interventions;
- Share knowledge, good practice and intelligence within the area and beyond;
- Approve projects for investment following recommendations from the cluster subgroups;
- Oversee the delivery of the Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Investment Plan;
- Promote Rawtenstall as a prime location for investment and innovation.

Board Composition

The Neighbourhood Board brings together representatives from across the public, private, education, voluntary and cultural sectors. The representatives may change as the programme develops and people will be co-opted to bring their knowledge and skills to the Board.

An independent chair leads the board meetings, ensuring effective discussion and decision-making. The chair also acts as the primary spokesperson for the Board in communications with Government, partners and external stakeholders.



The present composition is:

- Iain Taylor - Independent Chair
- Council Leader - Rossendale Borough Council
- Councillor - Lancashire County Council
- MP for Rossendale and Darwen
- Accrington and Rossendale College
- Department of Work and Pensions
- Arts organisation
- Rawtenstall Chamber of Trade
- Rossendale Leisure Trust
- Rossendale Civic Pride
- Valley Heritage
- Together Housing
- Youth Organisation

Governance

Accountable Body

Rossendale Borough Council will be the Accountable Body, responsible for ensuring financial and legal compliance. Its key functions include:

- Providing the secretariat;
- Monitoring spend;
- Making claims;
- Carrying out risk assessment;
- Managing cash flow for the programme;
- Evaluating the overall programme to ensure value for money and impact.

Cluster Delivery Groups

Cluster Delivery groups are task focused partnerships that have been established to focus on the achievement of our objectives. Each comprises of organisations on the Board and other partners that are interested in tackling our shared challenges. They are responsible for developing and prioritising projects, supporting delivery and engaging stakeholders throughout the process. Each group reports progress, risks and outcomes back to the Board and the Accountable Body.

Community Forum

To ensure transparency, inclusivity and accountability, a Community Forum will be created. This forum provides an open platform for new ideas, constructive challenge and public scrutiny. It will receive regular communications and consultation opportunities and will meet formally at least once a year. Membership will be broad, covering local businesses, public sector partners, voluntary and community organisations, cultural bodies and sports clubs, ensuring that the widest possible range of voices is heard.

Transparency and Standards

Minutes, research reports and progress updates are published on a dedicated webpage.

All board members will uphold the Nolan Principles of public life, including selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. The declarations of interest for all board members have been completed in line with Rossendale Borough Council’s procedures.

Investment Approval Process

The board will deliver a targeted programme of investment designed to respond to local evidence, build on community priorities and accelerate visible change across Rossendale’s neighbourhoods.

The board’s decisions are underpinned by a strong evidence base and local insight from residents and partners identified through engagement. Together, these elements have shaped a long-term framework for investment that will guide delivery across the full lifespan of the programme.

Four thematic workstreams have been confirmed, each with an identified lead partner, defined scope of work and allocation of capacity funding:

1. **Healthy Communities;**
2. **Regeneration and Place;**
3. **Empowering Young People;**
4. **Jobs and Skills.**

The Council will continue to actively support each workstream, coordinating progress through regular meetings and performance reviews to ensure consistency, accountability and shared outcomes throughout the project’s duration.

Over 70 project proposals have already been submitted by partners across Rossendale, encompassing both revenue and capital initiatives. All submissions are required to meet agreed strategic criteria and align with the overarching Investment Themes.

Governance

Cluster-Based Delivery Model

The board has adopted a cluster-based approach to programme delivery. This model organises projects into coherent thematic clusters to ensure alignment, efficiency and measurable impact.

Rather than focusing solely on individual projects, clusters bring together related initiatives within shared geographic or thematic areas, enabling collaboration and a stronger focus on outcomes.

Under this structure:

- Regeneration and Place will focus on Waterfoot, Bacup Road Crawshawbooth;
- Healthy Communities and Jobs and Skills will target Leisure and Active Travel, Staghills and Edgeside estates;
- Empowering Young People will deliver programmes focused on youth skills, confidence and leadership focused on enabling the young.

Cluster Subgroups and Funding Allocations

Each cluster operates as a subgroup of the Pride in Place Board, acting as an advisory body to assess proposals, define priorities and ensure consistency with strategic objectives.

Each Subgroup is responsible for defining priorities and objectives that align with the overarching Pride in Place Strategy. In doing so, they identify

high-impact initiatives that act as flagships within their theme and review and recommend supporting projects that complement these. Subgroups assess all proposals against clear criteria, including strategic fit, deliverability, value for money and overall impact, ensuring that every investment contributes meaningfully to local priorities. They also play a vital role in supporting the development of business cases and funding proposals, providing local insight and expert guidance throughout the process.

Comprising local experts, practitioners and community representatives, the Subgroups bring specialist knowledge and practical insight to the development of business cases and funding proposals. They act as champions for their theme, helping to communicate progress, share successes and build wider community engagement around the programme's ambitions.

Programme Delivery

Each of the delivery themes will be led by a partner supported by a wider group of interested people who will be responsible for overseeing the development and delivery of projects. They will lead on the reporting of progress to the Board and the wider community.

Rossendale Borough Council shall deliver bankrolling facilities, risk assessments, reporting to Government and provide regular management

information to the Board and to the wider community forum.

The investments are agreed by the Board following an open call for projects that can deliver our objectives. The projects shall be judged against:

- Strategic fit
- Deliverability
- Impact
- Value for Money

This list of projects will form the first four-year investment plan.

The Accountable Body will ensure the projects meet the criteria agreed by the Board and the government's latest guidance. It will also monitor project performance, evaluate outcomes and provide regular update reports to the Board and to Government.

Section 9

Assurance



Assurance

Programme Delivery

The role of ensuring assurance to the programme sits with Rossendale Borough Council. The programme will be delivered under the Council's established Programme Board framework, ensuring strategic oversight, accountability and alignment with corporate priorities.

A dedicated Programme Manager will lead day-to-day delivery, through providing scheduling, coordination and performance tracking. The Programme Manager will report directly to the Programme Board, providing progress updates, risk assessments and recommendations for key decisions. They will coordinate activity, track progress against the approved delivery plan and provide transparent reporting to elected members and Pride in Place reporting body.

Lead partners will operate under formal agreements with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms. Delivery performance will be monitored through monthly dashboards, quarterly review meetings and milestone-based progress reporting, with corrective action taken promptly where delivery risks emerge.

Governance and stakeholder engagement will be reinforced through the Internal Pride in Place working group, held every six weeks, to coordinate delivery activity across council services and ensure alignment with wider place-based priorities. The Board will continue to meet approximately every twelve weeks, providing an external oversight forum where partners, community representatives and business leaders can review progress, discuss delivery challenges and advise on priorities.

Approach to Best Value and Managing Public Money

The Council will meet its statutory Best Value Duty by securing continuous improvement in the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of all programme activities. All procurement will comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Act 2023 and follow competitive, transparent processes, supported by options appraisal, benchmarking and analysis.

Stakeholder and community engagement will ensure that interventions address local priorities and deliver measurable social, economic and environmental benefits. Continuous improvement will be driven by performance reviews, lessons-learned processes and independent evaluation. Evidence of value for money will be documented at each stage, with decisions taken in line with the Best Value Standards statutory guidance.

Compliance will be assured through governance processes that safeguard regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility throughout the programme lifecycle. All projects selected for investment will either be drawn from pre-approved, "off-the-shelf" interventions endorsed by central government, or will be developed with proportionate business cases prepared in line with HM Treasury's Green Book. Financial controls will include budgetary oversight, segregation of duties and independent audit review. Value-for-money principles will be embedded into procurement, contract management and performance monitoring. All decisions will be fully documented to maintain a clear audit trail, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public funds.

Assurance

Contract and Grant Management

Contract and grant management processes will underpin all delivery arrangements, ensuring clarity, compliance and accountability. Each agreement will set out specific deliverables, financial and output requirements and reporting obligations. Grant funding will be issued under formal grant agreements and monitored against approved budgets. Contract management will include performance reviews, milestone review and regular financial monitoring to ensure delivery remains on track and represents value for money.

All contracts and grant agreements will include clear performance measures, financial controls and reporting requirements, with oversight provided by the Programme Manager. Value-for-money principles will be embedded into procurement, grant administration, contract management and performance monitoring. All decisions will be fully documented to maintain a clear audit trail, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public funds.

The Procurement Officer and Section 151 Officer will be invited to observe or advise at Neighbourhood Board meetings.

Risks and Dependencies

A comprehensive risk management framework will be maintained by the Programme Manager and reviewed regularly by both the Programme Board and the Neighbourhood Board. At the centre of this framework is a risk register, which will capture all strategic, operational and delivery risks. Each risk will have clearly defined ownership, mitigation measures and escalation routes to ensure accountability and effective management.

The programme risk will feature on the Council's risk management framework, established through the Risk Management Strategy.

High-impact risks will be subject to additional independent assurance, providing confidence that programme delivery remains achievable within the approved budgets and agreed timescales. Responsibility for risk management will sit at the appropriate level: lead partners will be accountable for managing risks associated with their individual projects, while the Programme Manager will oversee programme-wide risks and coordinate responses across the portfolio.

Appendices



Appendix 1 - Key Demographic and Economic Features

The following section outlines the key demographic and economic characteristics of Rawtenstall.

Understanding Local Prosperity (IMD)

To assess relative prosperity across the PiP area, analysis has been undertaken using the 2019 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The IMD provides a national ranking for each census area, combining multiple indicators of disadvantage, including income, employment, health, housing access, education and skills, physical environment and crime.

Around 16% (2,115) of children live in low-income households and life expectancy for both men and women are below the national average.

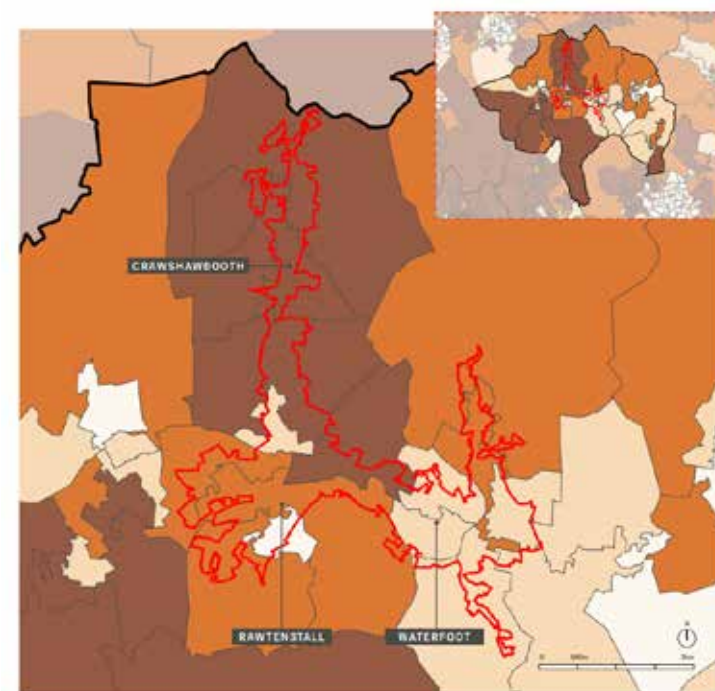
Within the PiP boundary, Waterfoot town centre and parts of central Rawtenstall, particularly areas southeast of Bury Road, exhibit the highest levels of deprivation. In terms of employment deprivation, Rossendale falls within the 20% most deprived areas nationally, alongside neighbouring authorities such as Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle and Preston.

Key Observations

There is a clear spatial link between deprivation and demographic patterns, with Waterfoot and Rawtenstall North and South among the most deprived neighbourhoods.

Strong contrasts exist between the more deprived town centres and the affluent rural and residential areas extending toward Crawshawbooth.

Improving access to employment, education and healthcare in the most deprived areas offers the greatest potential to enhance local prosperity and reduce inequality.



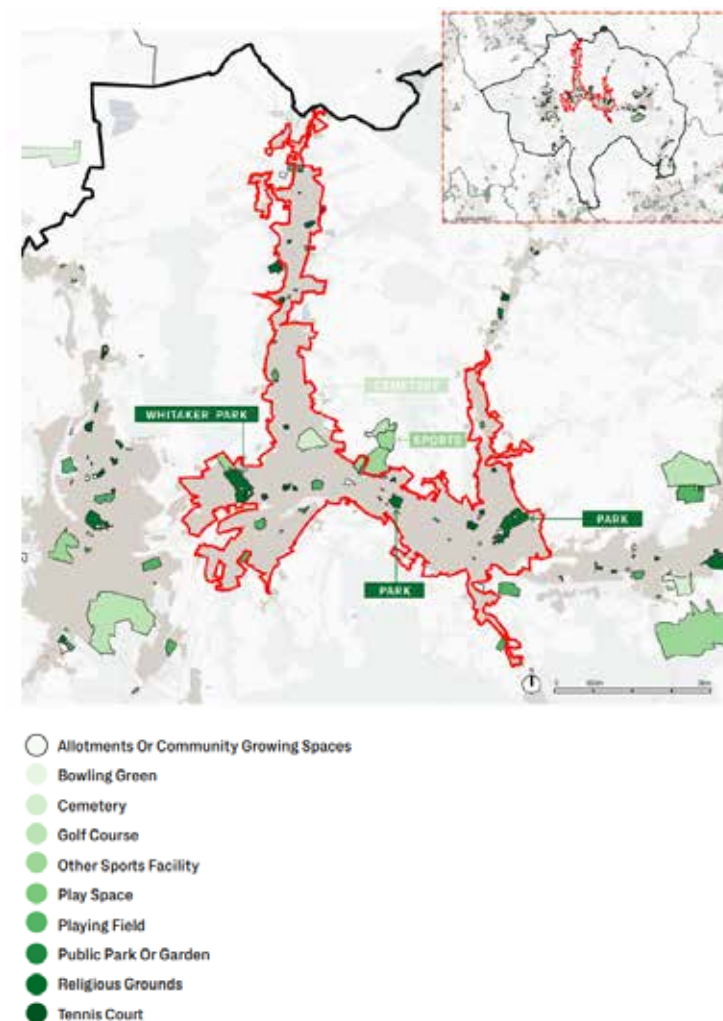
Public Greenspaces

The area benefits from a number of well-distributed public parks and green spaces. Three main parks are located within the PiP boundary, providing residents with accessible recreation and leisure opportunities. Whitaker Park, located to the east, serves as the primary public open space, offering a mix of landscaped areas, woodland and cultural attractions.

Other significant green assets include the sports fields associated with the Marl Pits Leisure Centre (Rossendale Sports Club), located immediately north of the PiP boundary. The cemetery, situated within the area, also represents an important element of the town's green infrastructure—its elevated position and mature landscape contribute to its scenic and tranquil character.

Key Observations

- A range of 'Play Spaces' and 'Playing Fields' are dispersed across the PiP boundary, providing local recreational opportunities.
- The three key parks are generally concentrated in the southern part of the area, with Whitaker Park being the most notable and multifunctional.
- Alongside these parks, the cemetery and sports fields form the largest areas of public open space within the area.
- Improving safe, direct pedestrian and cycling connections to these assets particularly from Crawshawbooth and northern neighbourhoods would significantly enhance accessibility and usage for local residents.



Appendix 1 - Key Demographic and Economic Features

Residential Density

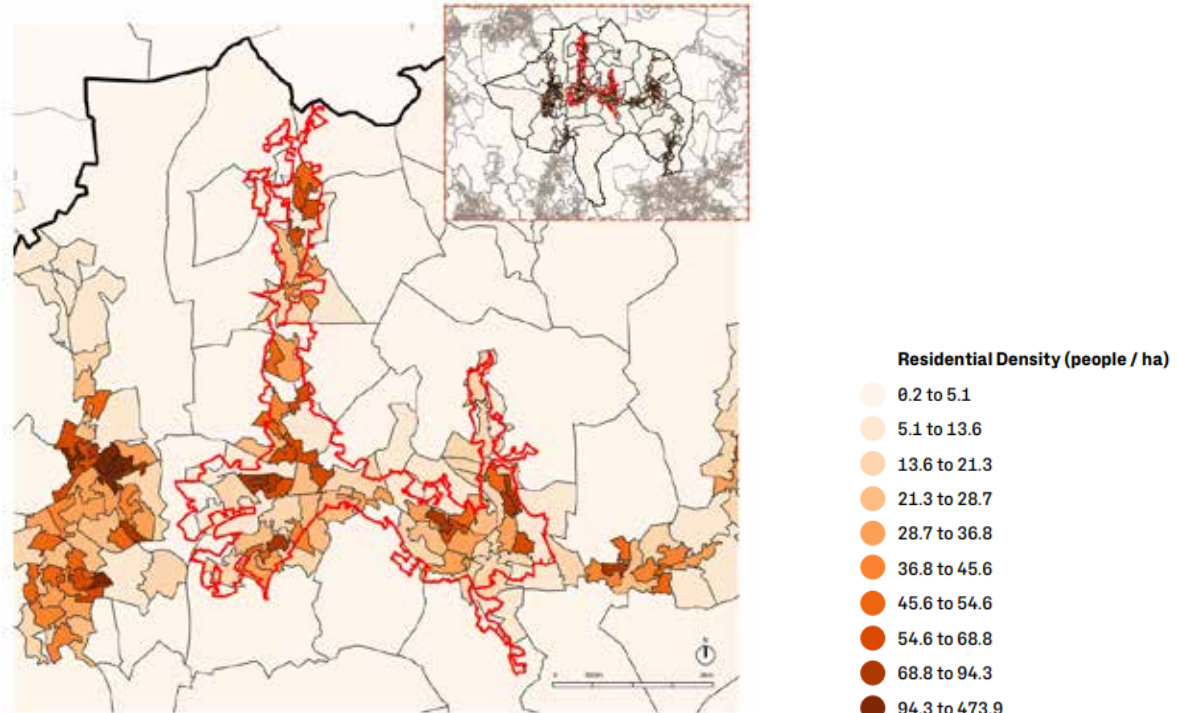
Across the borough, higher population densities are typically concentrated within town centres, with densities decreasing markedly in the surrounding rural and semi-rural areas.

Within the boundary, only a limited number of locations exceed 50 people per hectare, with most neighbourhoods averaging around 20–25 people per hectare.

Key Observations

- UN-Habitat recommends an average density of approximately 125 people per hectare to support the creation of sustainable and vibrant urban communities.
- There is scope to sensitively increase residential density within and around Rawtenstall town centre and other key nodes in the area.

Higher densities in town centre locations would help to increase footfall, strengthening local vitality, economic activity and perceptions of safety through greater activity and passive surveillance.



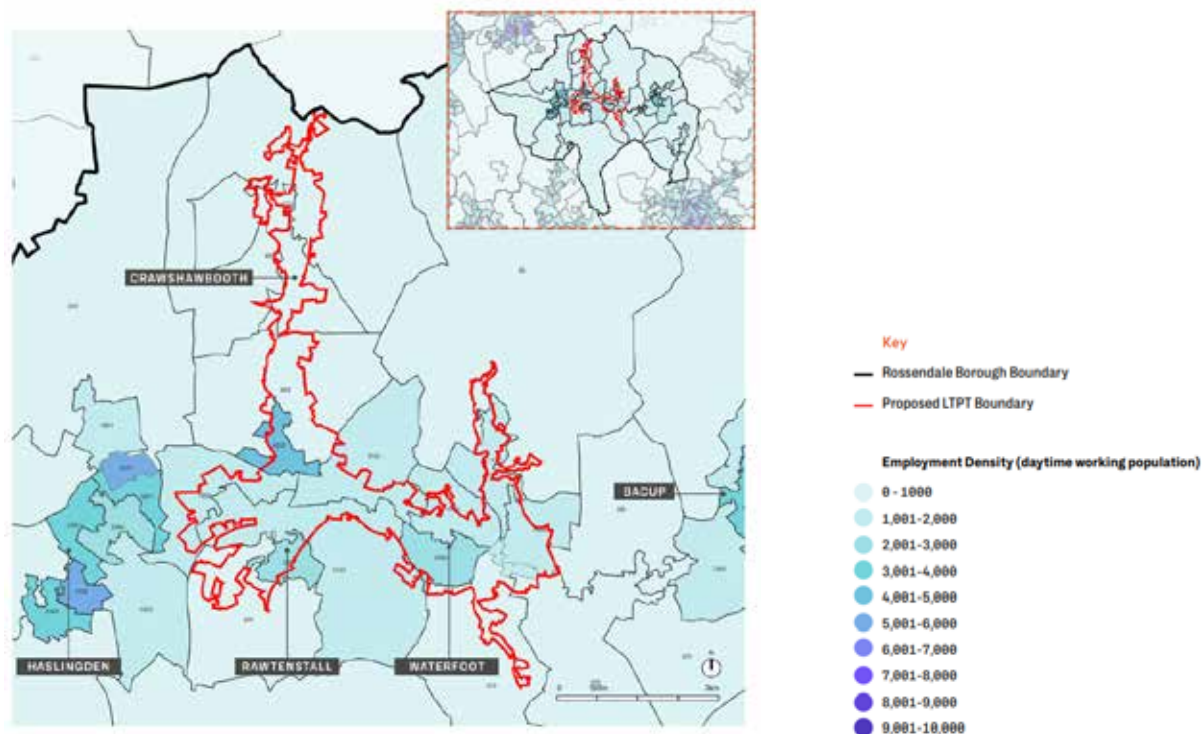
Employment Density

Employment densities across Rossendale Borough are relatively low, particularly when compared with neighbouring areas such as Rochdale and Blackburn. Within the PiP boundary, there are pockets of slightly higher employment concentration located around the main built-up areas, reflecting the town's limited but established commercial and service-based employment base.

In the wider borough context, Haslingden demonstrates the highest concentration of jobs, serving as a key employment hub for Rossendale residents.

Key Observations

- There is an opportunity to strengthen connections between residential areas with lower employment access and nearby job centres.
- Encouraging higher-density employment uses within suitable locations in the area particularly around existing town centres and accessible transport corridors that could enhance local job opportunities and support economic resilience.



Appendix 2 – MHCLG Resident Survey

In 2025, MHCLG carried out a digital consultation with 116 respondents on what is important for them in Rawtenstall. The key messages are:

High satisfaction and pride:

- 81% of residents are satisfied with their local area and 68% are proud to live in Rawtenstall — mainly due to its green spaces (73%) and local facilities (41%).

Positive trajectory:

- 46% feel the area has improved in the past year and 37% expect further improvement in the next two years.

Town centre and services:

- 42% are fairly satisfied with town centre services.
- The town scores above average for safety (+30%), but slightly below average for access to well-paid jobs (-2%).

Key issues and concerns:

- Residents most frequently cited anti-social behaviour (35%) and a limited range of shops and services (32%) as areas needing improvement.
- The most pressing specific problems are vehicle-related anti-social

behaviour (43%) and drug use or evidence of drugs (36%).

Community and young people:

- Rawtenstall is seen as an above-average place to raise children (+25%) and fewer residents believe young people easily fall into crime (-19%).

Engagement and local trust:

- Half of residents feel they cannot influence local decisions and 57% report not being consulted on local services. Almost half (48%) had not heard of the Plan for Neighbourhoods before the survey.

Resident investment priorities:

The top priorities for the £20 million investment are:

1. Town centre improvements
2. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
3. Enhanced youth services
4. More shops and amenities

At the start of each new investment cycle, the Neighbourhood Board, in consultation with the local community, will develop a refreshed Investment Plan. Each plan will outline current priorities, the interventions proposed, how they align with the overall 10-year vision and how funding will be allocated and managed for that period.

Discovery Phase (Winter 2024)	
• Set up of the Neighbourhood Board	
Strategic Planning Phase (Spring - Winter 2025)	
• Community Engagement	• Baseline Research
• Vision Setting	• Setting of Activity Clusters
• Case for Change	• Partnership Setting
Delivery Planning Phase (Winter - Spring 2025/26)	
• Securing Match Funding	• Feasibility Exercises
• Partnership Discussions	• Community Engagement
Investment Period 1 (2026–27 to 2029–30)	
• Programme Delivery	• Community Engagement
Investment Period 2 (2030–31 to 2032–33)	
• Programme Delivery	• Community Engagement
Investment Period 3 (2033–34 to 2035–36)	
• Programme Delivery	• Community Engagement

Appendix 3 - Population and Socio-Economic Evidence

In 2022, the median age in Rawtenstall was 42 years, the same as the wider Rossendale area and slightly above the England average of 40. Across local neighbourhoods, the median age varies, but overall, it has increased by about two years since 2011, compared with a one-year rise nationally, suggesting a gradually ageing population. Rawtenstall had a population of around 23,564 in 2022, an increase of 3.6% since 2011. This rate of growth was slower than in Rossendale (4.7%), the North West (6.6%) and England (7.7%).

The age profile of Rawtenstall is broadly similar to national trends, with 18.9% of residents aged under 16 and 19.6% aged 65 or over, compared with 18.5% and 18.6% across England respectively. Most people in Rawtenstall (93.1%) identify with a White ethnic group, while 4.6% identify as Asian or Asian British, 1.6% as Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, 0.2% as Black or Black British and 0.5% as other ethnic groups. Overall, Rawtenstall has experienced modest population growth, a slightly older age profile and a less diverse population than the regional and national averages.

Over 30% of neighbourhoods in Rawtenstall (measured at Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level) fall within the 20% most deprived areas in England for Employment and for Health Deprivation and Disability. The most significant challenges locally are in Employment and the Living Environment, where around 10.5% of Rawtenstall's neighbourhoods are ranked among the 10% most deprived nationally. This highlights that while parts of Rawtenstall perform well socioeconomically, there remain pockets of significant disadvantage, particularly related to job opportunities and local environmental quality.

Around 22.4% of children under 16 in Rawtenstall live in relative low-income households, which is 1.1 percentage points higher than the England average. This suggests that despite overall stability, a notable share of families experience financial hardship, reflecting uneven prosperity across the area and the persistence of local inequalities within the community.

Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall Area 2026 - 2036

