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**PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME
WASHINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD
BOARD 10-YEAR VISION - APRIL 2026
TO MARCH 2036**

26 November 2025

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Introduction

The Washington Neighbourhood Board ('the Board') is delighted to present the 10-year Vision ('the Vision') for Washington's Pride in Place Programme ('the Programme').

The Vision and associated Washington Investment Plan ('the Plan') presents a compelling case for the target area through detailed socio-economic analysis, independent research to identify gaps in provision, and extensive engagement with stakeholders and beneficiary groups to agree local priorities for action. Crucially, Board members have been actively involved in developing the strategy, drawing on their wide-ranging knowledge and experience of the local area.

While Washington is performing well in some areas - growing businesses, attracting new retail/leisure investment and transforming key employment sites through regeneration - many residents have not been able to benefit fully from these opportunities, and a number of communities are deprived or feel disconnected.

This is why the Board fully embrace the programme - to strengthen pride in place, improve the life chances, employment prospects, health and general wellbeing of communities and individuals across Washington, particularly those who are still marginalised from the opportunities available.

The programme provides an important opportunity to target investment intelligently, where it is most needed, in order to support key local assets and communities, for example, youth and community spaces and greenspaces, as well as to support enhancing the appearance of the town centre and villages and improve transport infrastructure to make people more active and feel safe. These investment areas contribute will contribute to the delivery of the objectives of the programme and are key to improving the quality of life in key areas across Washington.

With the £20 million of support spread over the next 10 years, the Board has been established to ensure local people are integral to defining the future of their community and shaping how the funding is best utilised. The Board believes the Vision and Plan can make a big difference to the people of Washington.

One of the key underlying principles, and a key challenge that all projects will need to address, will be to improve connections between the Washington neighbourhoods and beyond so that all residents can benefit from existing and new opportunities within Washington and beyond. In addition, the Board recognises the need to focus some

work with individual target groups, including young people, to improve their connections with, and access to, key local assets, community and creative activities, training and employment opportunities.

The Board believes it is critical that Washington maximises the opportunity that the programme investment presents, by leveraging additional funds wherever possible, adding value to (and not duplicating) existing projects and programmes, and supporting project activities that are informed by local consultation, robust data and community-led decision-making.

The time, energy and commitment that local partners have already invested in the programme provides ample evidence of its significance and the added value that can be achieved, building on previous successes, creating new forms of partnership working, and improving community leadership and capacity-building.

The Board recognises that it must target investment carefully and strategically and that the programme cannot be the answer to all local challenges. However, the Board is excited and enthusiastic about the potential of the programme to address specific local priorities with different solutions and activities, while also initiating new models of delivery and working with partners to unlock additional funding opportunities.

The Board is confident that the Vision, priorities and approach to early interventions proposed will achieve positive lasting change and ensure that more residents in the target areas can benefit from the programme's investment.

Section 1: Local context

Washington is located within the local authority area of Sunderland in North East England. The three maps below show Washington's location in the UK (Figure 1), North East region (Figure 2) and Sunderland local authority area (Figure 3).

Figure 1



Figure 2

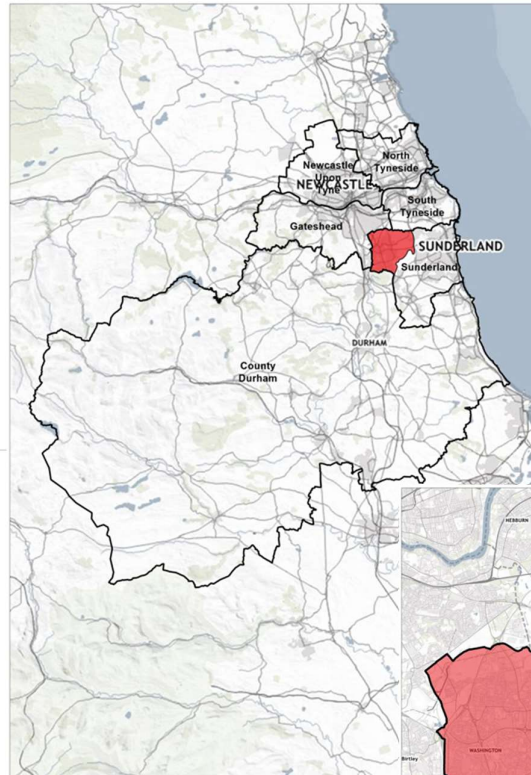
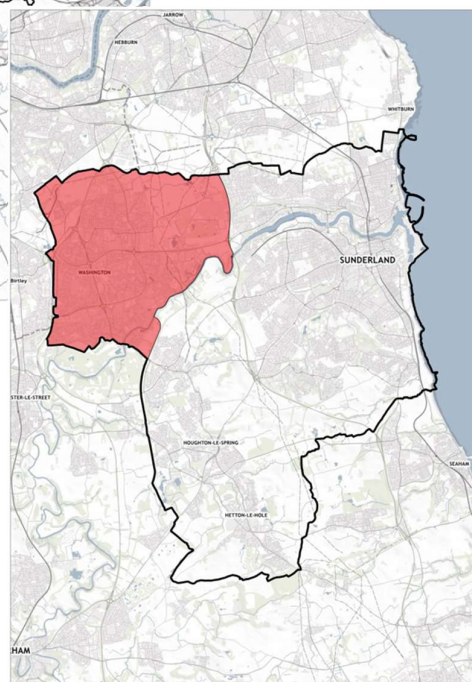


Figure 3



History of Washington

Washington has a rich history dating back to its early references in the 11th century as the “estate of the Wass family.” There had been mining in the Washington area from at least the 1600s, initially focused upon the riverside area around Harraton, Fatfield, Biddick and Chartershaugh in what is now the southern part of the town of Washington. There were at least 27 pits within the area now covered by the present-day town, and a number of industrial or mining villages developed in the neighbourhood such as Washington Staithes.

New town status was designated for the Washington area in 1964. It was intended to provide new housing for existing communities in the area as well as for overspill populations in neighbouring Tyneside and Wearside. Built in largely open space between Gateshead and Sunderland, one of its primary aims was to create new jobs with the decline of mining and other traditional industries.

Much of the development of the new town began in the 1970s on land that had formed part of the estate of Lambton Park purchased from the Lambton family. By 1981 there were sixteen districts or villages with a further two – Lambton and Ayton – developed later. The eighteen districts / villages are either named from existing local features or, as in the case of Albany, Columbia, Concord and Sulgrave, are named after American or Washington family themes.

The town covers what had previously been open countryside dominated by scattered pit villages, pit rows and collieries such as Glebe, Harraton, Usworth, Washington, and Fatfield. Eight of the districts in the town are built up around existing villages, of which the most historic is Washington village itself.

Economy

The expansion of Washington as a new town coincided with the decline of mining in the early 1970s, a reflection of the broader trend of deindustrialisation across the UK. Washington 'F' Pit was among the first in the area to close in 1968, with each colliery following suit until the last, Usworth Colliery, shut down in 1974. In an attempt to compensate for the closure of local pits and associated employment, investment began into new factories at both the Stephenson and Parsons Industrial Estates, and many more families moved to the area.

Led by the Washington Development Corporation (the Corporation), new employment sites, transport, housing, leisure and community infrastructure was established including the opening of the Galleries shopping centre in 1973. Much of the infrastructure – roads, housing and social facilities – was designed for future transfer to local councils. In 1974 Washington became part of the Borough of Sunderland.

Larger factories and offices were sold to private companies during the 1970s and 1980s and the Corporation eventually closed in 1988, following the success of attracting Nissan Motor Manufacturing UK (NMUK), to a greenfield site between Washington and the A19, in 1984. The high relative unemployment at the time, following the demise of the traditional industries, meant that Nissan had a large, eager and experienced manufacturing workforce to draw upon.

Since the plant opened in 1986, NMUK has stimulated growth of an important cluster of automotive and advanced manufacturing supply-chain companies in the North East, built on the Just in Time philosophy. With continued investment from Nissan and the supply chain over the decades, and continuous skills development, the sector has established itself as world-leading and remains a key employer.

Building on this, establishment of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park adjacent to Nissan began in 2018, which followed on from developments at both the Turbine and Hillthorn Business Parks. Currently, Washington's main sectors include automotive, battery and advanced manufacturing and distribution and logistics. With a strong manufacturing presence and a large number of employment sites, Washington's employment base is relatively diverse reflected in a high job density rate of 1.12 (compared to 0.67 Sunderland, 0.66 North East and 0.77 England).

While accessibility by road is a key strength of Washington's location, access to public transport has been an ongoing challenge since the town's railway station closed in the 1960s. After decades of exploring options to re-open the former Leamside line to Washington, in June 2025, the government announced new funding to the North East Combined Authority (NECA) to extend the Tyne and Wear Metro to Washington. The planned extension, running along the Leamside line, will create new stations at Follingsby, Washington North and Washington South, connecting with South Hylton and Pelaw. NECA has confirmed that £900 million of the Transport for City Regions (TCR) funding settlement (2027-28 to 2031-32) would be used to build the Metro extension to Washington (once the design and planning processes are complete), with the remaining funds sourced from private investment. As the project has a current target opening date of 2033, the Board does not at this stage intend to allocate

resources under Transport specifically for funding to ‘improve rail connectivity and access’ during the first 4-year investment period (2026/27-2029/30).

Washington has four main central shopping areas which are also key sources of employment for the area, they include: The Galleries, Galleries Retail Park, Peel Retail Park and Concord Shopping Centre.

Washington population

With an estimated population of 54,327 (ONS Census 2021 & ONS MYE 2024, published July 2025). Washington is the second largest settlement in the Sunderland local authority area. Between 2011 and 2022, Washington’s population decreased by 0.8%. For context, the population increased by 0.7% in Sunderland, increased by 3.3% in the North East, and increased by 7.7% in England (ONS Census, 2021).

In 2022, 17.7% of people in Washington were under 16 years old, 59.6% of people were aged between 16 and 64 and 22.7% were aged 65 and over (ONS 2022).

Across the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that make up Washington (either wholly or in part) in 2021, 97.0% of people identified with a White ethnic group, 1.4% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, 0.4% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, 0.9% with Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, and 0.3% with other ethnic groups (ONS Census, 2021).

Cultural and community assets

Culture is highlighted in the Sunderland City Plan as a major contributor to the vibrancy, health and dynamism of the local area, with an increase in creative businesses and cultural participation both included as ambitions between now and 2035.

Historically, Sunderland has struggled to leverage the appropriate levels of investment needed to enable its cultural sector to thrive. This has been due to insufficient infrastructure, low numbers of practising artists based in the city, and low levels of confidence within local organisations.

Over the past 7-8 years, the position has improved, with organisations including Sunderland City Council (‘the Council’) and Sunderland Culture successful in securing an increase in external investment into Sunderland’s cultural organisations and key

venues. Nevertheless, this growth has taken place from a very low base and Sunderland still has an under-developed cultural infrastructure and sees lower levels of cultural investment compared to other cities of its size. This trend is reflected in the local data profile issued by MHCLG (July 2025), which shows Sunderland has significantly lower levels of cultural participation (including engagement in arts, visits to museums/galleries, visits to heritage sites and libraries) than both the North East and England averages.

Despite this apparent shortfall in cultural participation, Washington has a range of cultural, heritage and natural assets which make it unique, offering residents and visitors diverse cultural experiences. **Arts Centre Washington** is Washington's main cultural hub housed on a 100-year-old farm and comprising a 120-capacity theatre, gallery spaces, a recording studio, creative spaces and function facilities. It offers a year-round programme of community classes and activities, exhibitions, performance, film and workshops to residents of all ages. **Cultural Spring** are also actively engaging with residents across Washington as part of their work more widely across Sunderland and South Tyneside. The Board will work closely with cultural partners including Cultural Spring to re-energise engagement with culture across Washington.

Washington Old Hall is a place of great significance as it was once the home to the ancestors of George Washington, the first president of the United States of America (USA). To celebrate the historic link between Washington Sunderland and Washington DC, USA, a Friendship Agreement was signed in June 2006. Under the Agreement, a range of initiatives have been taken forward over the years including economic development, cultural and educational programmes.

The town is also home to the **Washington Wetland Centre**, created in the 1970s and now run by Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, the **North East Land, Sea and Aircraft Museum**, which houses a collection in excess of 30 different transport vehicles and the **Washington 'F' Pit Museum**, which tells the story of the area's mining heritage. The 'F' Pit Museum is one of Washington's most important heritage assets, a well-known landmark and highly valued by the community. It is scheduled for a significant phase of redevelopment in 2026/27 funded by the Council to improve the visitor experience and undertake vital restoration and replacement works. **Bowes Railway Museum** sits on the former Springwell Colliery site, spanning the boundaries of Sunderland and Gateshead, and is open weekly as a visitor centre interpreting the rich railway and mining history of the North East.

Washington's heritage and history is documented and celebrated on an ongoing basis by the **Washington Heritage Partnership** which organises quarterly networking events

and coordinates a programme of activities involving community groups, schools and local cultural partners. In 2024, the partnership celebrated 60 years of Washington as a New Town delivering a broad programme of events and activities within communities.

Alongside the cultural offer in Washington, the area has a diverse range of **green and open spaces**. Washington had 456 individual greenspaces identified in the Council's latest Greenspace Audit (2020), totalling 1,034.18 hectares, which represents 26.66% of all greenspaces in Sunderland. Washington has 27 parks, including 13 parks containing play areas.

Active Sunderland works alongside key partners to enable everyone to be as active as they can be. Focusing on creating active environments, improving facilities, supporting education and workforces, empowering communities, and helping individuals who need extra support.

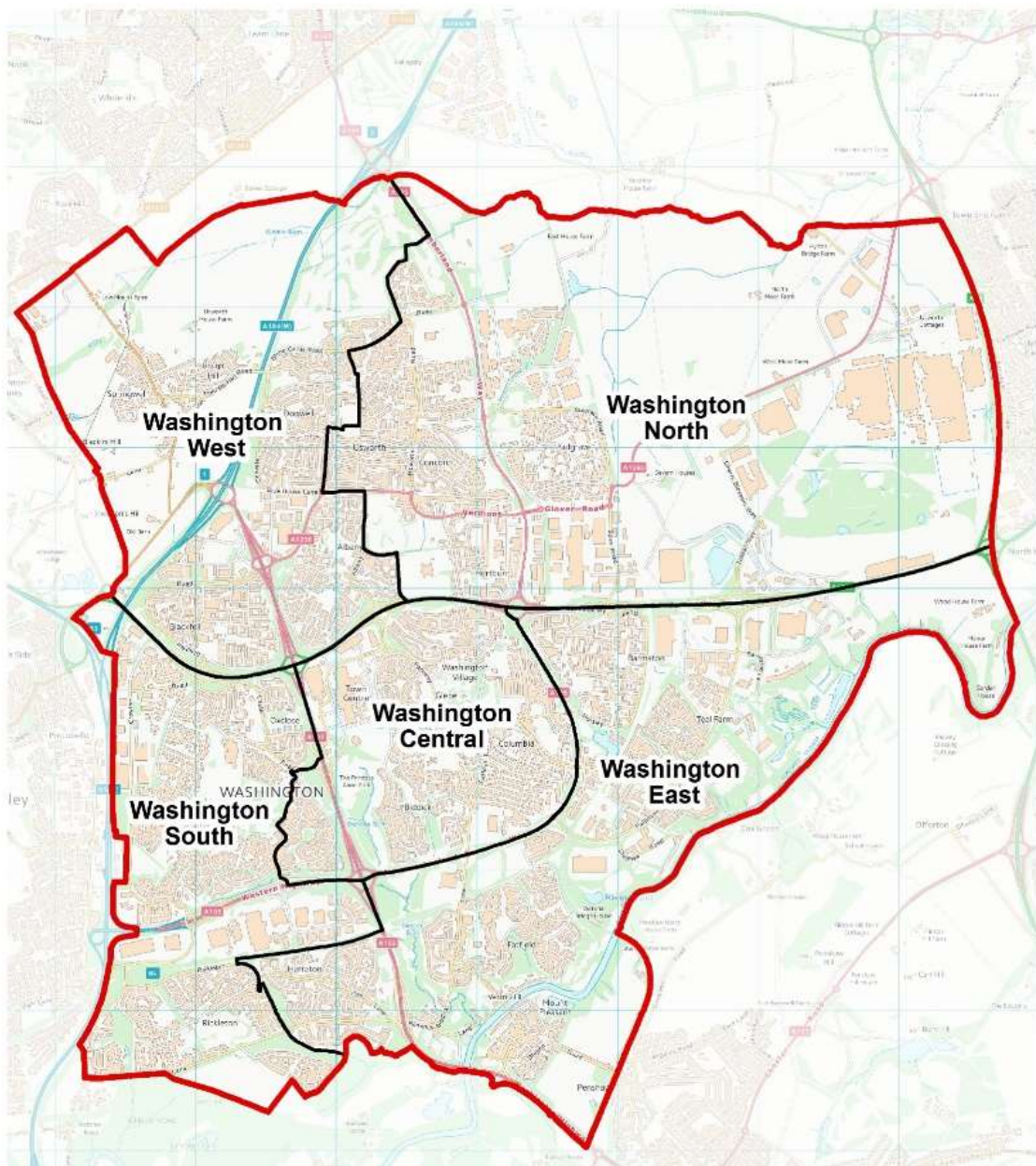
The health and social care sector in Washington offer prevention, treatment and care for all ages through a comprehensive community-based offer in general practice, community pharmacies, the Rainbow family hub, mental health and wellbeing hub and outreach clinics located in Washington.

Washington has a vibrant community and voluntary sector led by a community sector network and offering a wide range of local support and activities as well as volunteering opportunities.

Section 2: Spatial targeting

The map in Figure 4 below has been agreed with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Board. The red line surrounding the five Washington wards will be the geographical boundary for Washington where funding and interventions will be implemented.

Figure 4 - Map of geographical boundary for Washington.

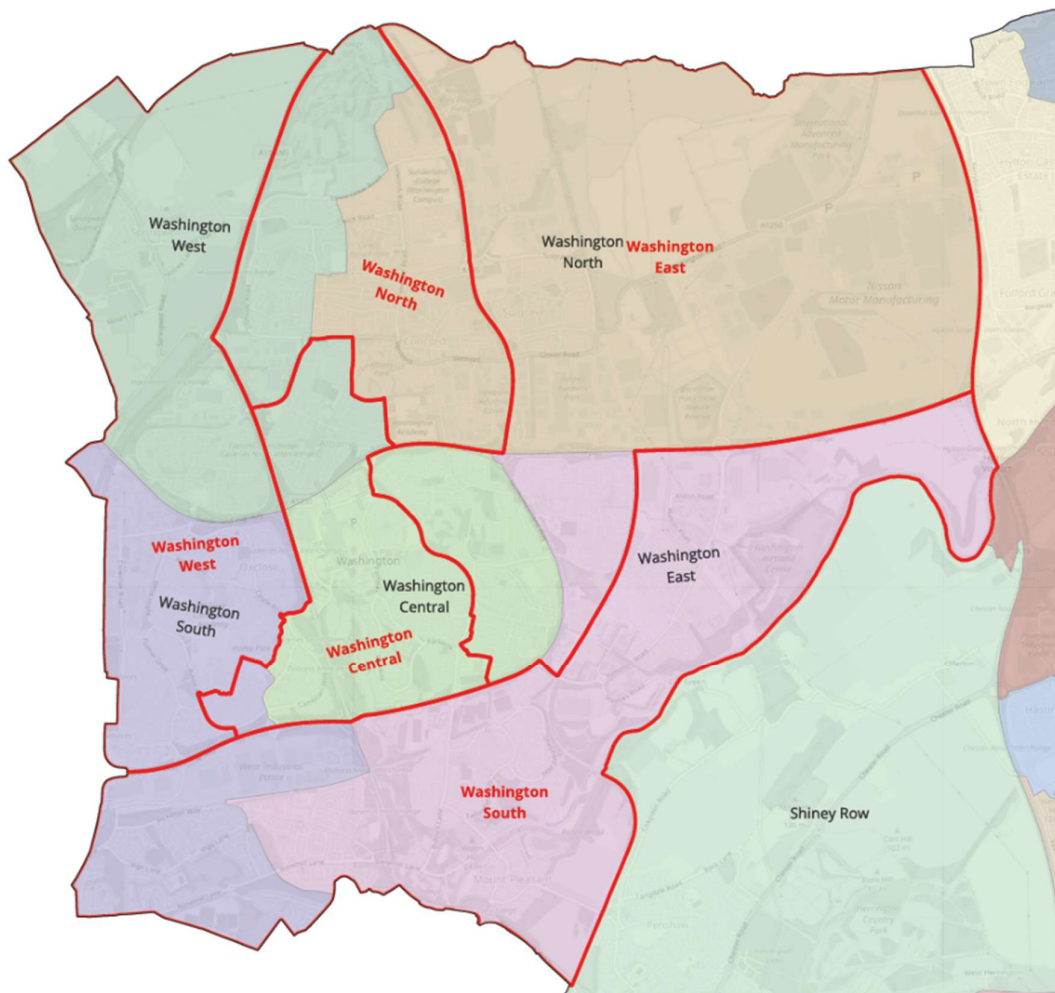


The geographical boundary is the red line around the perimeter of the five wards of Washington, including residential areas and communities that are considered as Washington. This boundary also includes the key employment areas around Nissan Motor Manufacturing UK and the adjacent International Advanced Manufacturing Park, with some of this employment area designated as part of the North East Investment Zone.

Sunderland has recently been the subject of a Local Government Boundary Review, and a new warding pattern will be implemented at the full-council local elections in May 2026.

Figure 5 below shows the new warding pattern for Washington where the new wards have been overlaid on the current wards. The new ward boundaries and names are shown in red. The agreed geographical outer boundary for investment will remain the same as in Figure 4 above.

Figure 5 - new warding pattern for Washington from May 2026.



The Board has taken into consideration that the political ward boundaries within Washington may change over the next 10 years, but the outer boundary will remain fundamentally unchanged.

To inform which geographical areas in Washington will be the focus of funding investment and interventions, multiple sources of data and information have been reviewed and considered to inform the Vision and Plan. These include the following:

- Census (2021)
- Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019 and 2025)
- Public Health and NHS
- Demographic, social and economic
- MHCLG Data Pack for Washington build up area (July 2025)
- Local authority held data (as of 2025)
- Board members' insights included:
 - Together for Children
 - North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
 - Education Partnership North East (Sunderland College)
 - University of Sunderland
 - Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner
 - Northumbria Police
 - Gentoo – social housing provider
 - Sunderland All Together Consortium (Youth Service organisations)
 - Washington Voluntary Sector
 - Washington Area Committee (elected members).

The above sources of information and intelligence, along with additional identified and updated sources, will continuously be reviewed and analysed throughout the 10-year programme to ensure the geographical areas which are receiving investment are those with the greatest need and that impact can be measured.

For the Board to be able to identify where the greatest need is in Washington, Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) (produced by the Office for National Statistics for the reporting of small area statistics), will be the geographical areas used to determine the focus for where the greatest need is using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) rankings.

The IMD is an overall relative measure of deprivation created by combining seven data sources, consisting of:

- Income Deprivation
- Employment Deprivation
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment Deprivation.

In addition, two supplementary indices include: the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index and the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index. IMD data was updated on 30 October 2025 and continues to inform the Plan and spatial targeting.

Washington LSOAs

There are 39 LSOAs in Washington as shown in the map in Figure 6 below. The darker the map shading, the more deprived the area based on IMD 2025 data.

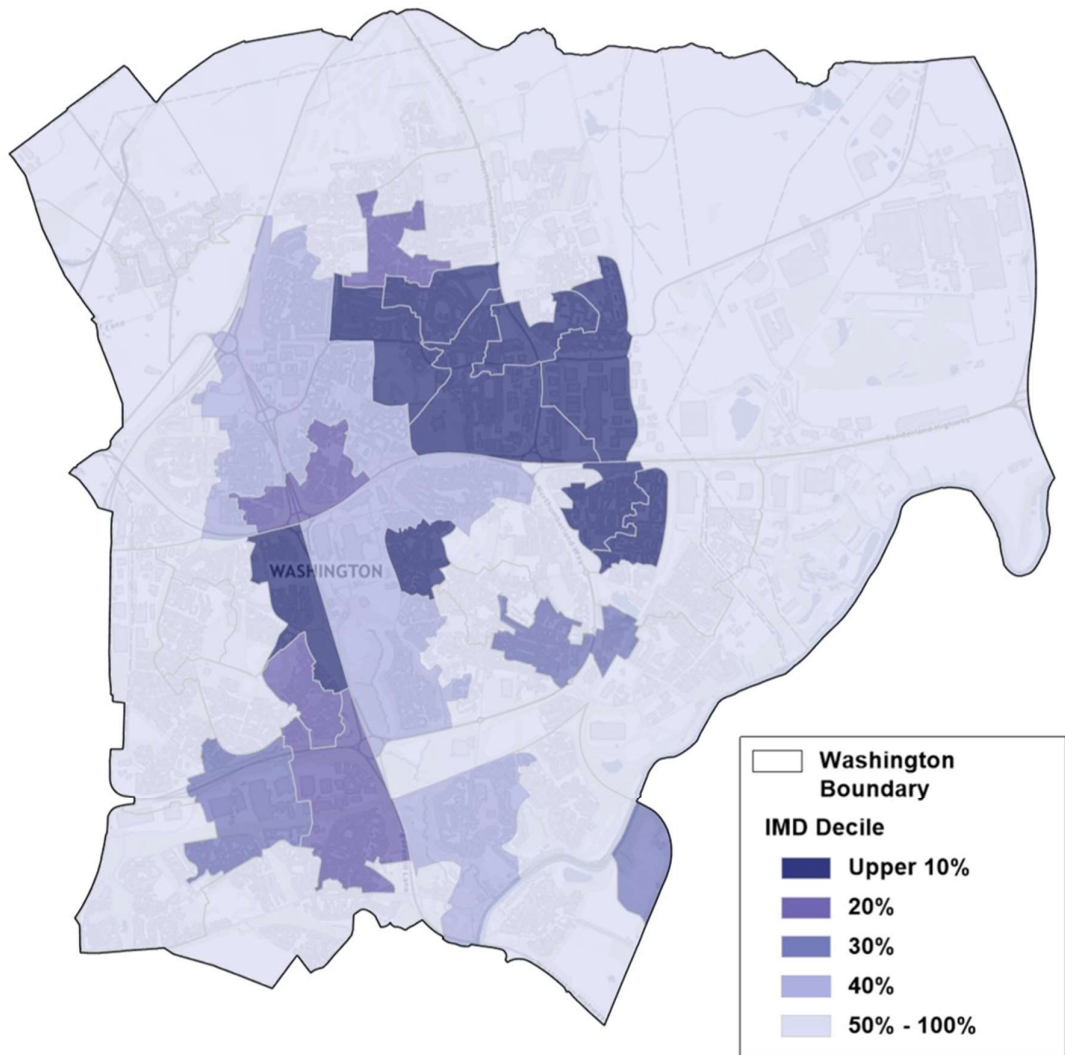
IMD 2025 data shows 9 of 39 (23%) LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived areas in the country and that 13 (33%) LSOAs in Washington are in the 20% most deprived areas, with 34% of the Washington population living in the 20% most deprived areas. This represents a significantly higher level of deprivation than the national average.

Comparing IMD 2019 to IMD 2025 for Washington, data in 2025 shows the most deprived LSOAs have maintained or worsened in relative deprivation and the least deprived LSOAs have improved in relative deprivation since 2019, showing an increase in the disparity between areas of greatest and least deprivation.

The Board is aware the LSOA boundaries do not fit neatly into the villages, place names and geographical areas that resonate with people in Washington, so the Board will therefore use the LSOA boundary information to identify the communities most in need by also using local data and community engagement findings.

The darker shaded LSOA areas in Figure 6 below are those with the highest levels of deprivation. It will be the communities within these areas with the greatest need where interventions will be primarily targeted, however the benefits of the Programme's investment within Washington are expected to be accessible, to a certain extent, by all.

Figure 6 - Washington LSOAs IMD 2025



Section 3: Vision for the future

Washington is a place of proud heritage and strong community spirit, ready to shape a bold future. The Board's vision is to create a town where every person, regardless of background, can access opportunity, feel safe, and live a fulfilling life. The Board imagines a Washington where vibrant villages and a revitalised town centre offer spaces to connect, grow, and celebrate. A place where nature is never far, and transport links open doors to education, employment, and culture.

In ten years, Washington will be known for its inclusive growth, resilience, and innovation. Children growing up here will have access to everything they need to succeed. Families will thrive in safe, welcoming neighbourhoods. Young people will feel seen, supported, and empowered. Older residents will remain connected and valued.

This vision is shaped by thousands of voices across Washington through community-led engagement. It reflects what matters most: safety, vibrancy, mobility, and wellbeing.

Together, the Board will activate change, deliver impact, and build a future where talent is nurtured, and opportunity is shared. Washington will be a place where people don't just live, they flourish.

The vision for Washington is for partners to work together with communities to create the social and economic conditions that support in **building thriving places, strengthening communities and empowering people.**

Despite the local challenges that exist across Washington, there is a lot of positive work being done to create opportunities for all, including for those people who feel left behind. Each village in Washington has a strong community feel, which cannot be overlooked.

The vision is for Washington to be a place with a proud heritage and strong community spirit, combined with a modern, welcoming atmosphere - a place where people can live, work, socialise, learn, visit and thrive. Looking ahead 10 years, the vision for

Washington is that it will be a place where opportunities are available, known and feel accessible, a Washington where people can:

- Enjoy vibrant places by enhancing the appearance of the town centre and villages.
- Feel safe by reducing crime & antisocial behaviour (ASB) by improving social infrastructure.
- Get around with access to improved transport & infrastructure.
- Thrive in a safe space designed for young people and families.
- Live healthier lives in sustainable places that support health and build resilient communities.
- Spend time in nature and access greenspaces.

This vision has been developed through engagement and close collaboration with thousands of people in all areas of Washington. It is informed by extensive research, data analysis, and direct engagement with people, which included:

- Sharing feedback on the online Commonplace platform
- Young people's surveys
- School classroom activities
- Qualitative focus groups
- Voluntary and Community Sector led engagement
- Community safety hub findings
- Government digital engagement.

Through this process, a clear picture has been built as to what people in Washington want to see, from feeling safe in a place with an improved appearance, to being able to move around Washington, learn new skills, access cultural opportunities and events and spend time in nature.

This engagement highlighted both immediate needs and future challenges, allowing us to set clear priorities for the next ten years. Importantly, the engagement with people in Washington is an ongoing and mutual relationship. The Board will continue to listen, adapt, and respond to changing circumstances, ensuring investment priorities remain relevant and practical for Washington.

Key themes raised from engaging with people in Washington:



The Washington Board is now well established and will work to address key local priorities, making the most of the £20 million Programme funding over the next ten years. The Board will work with local partners, residents and businesses to enhance Washington's connectivity, community spirit, and quality of life, aiming to make the town centre and villages more appealing, digitally connected and ensuring people from all generations have recognisable and accessible links to the opportunities that are available.

The Board's commitments to the people in Washington are to:

- **Identify** – opportunities for collaboration and partnership working.
- **Engage** – building trust and promoting connections and participation.
- **Define** – making plans relevant and meaningful.
- **Activate** – turning plans into community-led activities and opportunities.
- **Deliver** – sustainable improvements and lasting change.

The Board recognises that talent is equal, and opportunity is not. At times people can end up in a vicious cycle of struggling to get work or engage with school and further education, the Board wants people to have a better quality of life by using this funding to break the cycle, to enable families to be more resilient for the future and equip them with the tools and opportunities they need.

It is crucial that the Board enables the people of Washington to be able to access opportunities within Washington, as well as in Sunderland and the wider region. The vision for the future is that a child growing up in Washington has access to it all.

The Washington Neighbourhood Board's guiding principles

The Board is committed to making effective and efficient decisions, activating and maximising opportunities, to ensure the Programme funding makes a tangible difference for Washington residents, as well as bringing forward other funding and partnership investment opportunities. The Board has established and agreed a set of guiding principles that it will follow, alongside the wider Programme governance and assurance frameworks which will include key performance indicators to ensure the Board is able demonstrate it is shifting the dial of change through delivery of the Plan.

The guiding principles include:

1. Working in partnership and maximising resources

Harness the strengths of communities and work with the Council, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, health and prevention services, housing, education, and businesses to create a place where people are supported to thrive at every stage of life. Make sure there is no duplication of efforts and connect into wider interventions and opportunities bringing added value that is felt by people in Washington.

2. Targeted and sustainable action

Ensure investment is targeted in the areas of greatest need. All investments must be able to demonstrate their future sustainability plans, meaning longer-term access to support and services for people, leading to a better quality of life, rather than short-term support that temporarily alleviates challenges.

3. Evidence-led and impact-driven

Actions will be informed by robust data, which will be consistently monitored to measure change and impact, alongside local insights and learning from proven practice. Monitor progress to ensure lasting change for people and communities is visible and sustainable.

The Pride in Place Programme overseen by the government has set objectives over the next ten years for Washington and they are to:

- **Build thriving places**
- **Strengthen communities**
- **Empower people.**

The Board will work hard over the coming years to achieve these objectives, and this success will be demonstrated through monitoring progress using the programme's aims to:

- Raise living standards
- Reduce social exclusion
- Spread opportunities for young people
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Build stronger and more cohesive communities
- Reduce crime and ASB.

Key measurable performance indicators will be developed and all investments made by the Board must be able to demonstrate how they are shifting the dial for these programme aims.

Complementing wider Sunderland strategies

The **City Plan** is the Sunderland Partnership's overarching strategic plan up to 2035. It provides the blueprint for all partners and communities to work together to pursue and achieve the shared vision, ambitions and underpinning commitments for Sunderland.

The City Plan ambitions comprise:

- Everyone's talent is nurtured - our children and young people are achieving the best outcomes, everyone is connected to opportunities, and whatever your aspiration, you can achieve it in Sunderland.
- Inward investment, job creation and high performing businesses and employers create opportunities for all residents of the city, with Sunderland making a significant contribution to the UK's economic growth.
- People live healthier, longer lives - health and wellbeing outcomes are significantly improved and life is better because we live in Sunderland, rather than any other place.

- Sunderland is a place recognised for its natural assets; the city has an accessible, strong and growing offer for residents and visitors - it's easy to find something that captures the imagination in Sunderland.
- Our people and communities thrive and feel proud, and are stronger together; everyone is playing their part.
- Sunderland will play its role in tackling the global challenge of climate change, working together across the city to be carbon neutral by 2040.

In working to deliver on these ambitions, the City Plan is focussed on a bold and ambitious vision to create a connected, international city with opportunities for all.

To achieve this, the **City Plan has three themes:**

- Sunderland will be a **Dynamic Smart City** with more businesses, housing and cultural opportunities creating a stronger city centre. Children and young people will have equitable opportunities and the best life chances with poverty and its impacts significantly reduced. More city residents will have great skills and qualifications sought by employers, and there will be increased employment in more jobs that are fulfilling and better compensated. It will have great digital technology supporting a low carbon city, with great transport links with low carbon and active travel opportunities for everyone.
- It will be a **Healthy Smart City** where more people live healthier, longer lives as health inequality gaps are reduced. It will be a clean and attractive city where people feel safe in their communities and all neighbourhoods. There will be more and better housing and great support and social care that enables those who need it to live the life they want to lead.
- It will be a **Vibrant Smart City** with more resilient residents and cohesive, inclusive communities in the face of ongoing challenges including the cost-of-living crisis. More people will visit Sunderland with more residents shaping and participating in cultural or sporting events. There will be a strong sense of pride amongst residents and communities will feel engaged in shaping Sunderland's future and the opportunities being created. More residents will be active and participating in their communities.

The city's people and communities are at the heart of the City Plan, which continues to be delivered at pace with significant investment and developments underway, and more to come. The Programme will support the delivery of the wider City Plan.

The **Healthy City Plan 2020-2035** is the Health and Wellbeing Boards statutory Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The 2035 vision for health and wellbeing in Sunderland is: *Everyone in Sunderland will have healthy, happy lives, with no one left behind.*

The Healthy City Plan builds on the latest insight and analysis of health needs for Sunderland. The Healthy City Plan describes the "building blocks of health" as the essential conditions that shape our ability to live healthy lives, recognising our health is shaped by the world around us - whether we have a good start in life, a safe and warm home, decent work, have enough money, and feel safe and connected to our community.

The Healthy City Plan sets out the case for change around the three key priorities of creating healthy places, healthy communities and healthy people and aims to strengthen these building blocks through coordinated action and reducing the inequalities that exist within them, to improve overall population health and reduce unfair differences in health.

Section 4: Strategic case for change

This section will demonstrate how the underlying evidence and engagement with communities feed into the strategic case for change, it will then go on to use this underpinning evidence to show how they link into the programme's interventions, subsequently achieving the aims and objectives of the programme.

Deprivation and inequalities

An analysis of Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025 data shows that Sunderland has become more deprived and is now the 31st most deprived local authority area in the country, and within the top 10% of deprived local authority areas. The city is also the most deprived in the North East Combined Authority area.

Based on the domains of deprivation within the IMD, the local authority's greatest challenges are employment (ranked 10th nationally) and health (ranked 6th nationally). Other domains of income, education and crime all rank Sunderland in the top 15-20% (they are still a challenge for the city). The only domain where the IMD data indicates Sunderland has a relative strength is within the barrier to housing domain (ranked 270 out of 296 local authority areas).

Within the boundary of Washington, 13 lower super outputs areas (LSOAs) are in the top 20% (most deprived) areas in the country, with nine of these being in the top 10%. These figures represent an overall increase (in relative deprivation) from the 2019 IMD, where 10 LSOAs were in the top 20% most deprived.

The IMD also identifies the increasing gap between the least deprived areas of Washington and those most deprived. There are two LSOAs in Washington in the 20% least deprived areas nationally. This represents an increase (improvement) from the 2019 IMD where there was only one LSOA in the top 20% least deprived.

According to research commissioned by the Local Trust in 2019, Sunderland possessed 8 of the 225 'left behind' areas in England, including Washington North (OSCI/Local Trust, 2020). The research assessed levels of social infrastructure in all the wards in England, focusing on three area characteristics to create a Community Needs Index:

- Places to meet: Absence of community, civic, educational and cultural assets in or in close proximity to the area.
- An active and engaged community: Community and civic participation.
- Connectedness: Isolation, connectivity to key services, digital infrastructure and the strength of the local jobs market.

The Index mapped community need at a hyper-local level overlaying the Community Needs Index with the IMD (2019 data) to find those communities that suffer from the highest levels of combined social, cultural and economic deprivation. The analysis concluded that those wards that ranked in the top 10% most deprived on both indices are perhaps the most ‘left behind’ neighbourhoods in England (Local Trust/OSCI, 2020).

Drawing on Sunderland’s Joint Strategic Need Assessment research (2025), the main factors associated with poverty and exclusion include:

- Parental qualifications and skills
- Worklessness, income from benefits, underemployment and low paid work
- Poor health
- Lone parent families
- Minority ethnic backgrounds
- Caring responsibilities
- Affordable, good quality housing
- Domestic violence
- Best start in life
- Young people’s education and skills
- Cost of living – childcare, food poverty and quality, fuel poverty, family debt.

These factors are compounded by other significant issues that mark out some areas as requiring specific locally tailored support, including:

- Relatively high unemployment particularly among certain target groups such as women, young people, disabled people, ex-offenders, black and minority ethnic groups, single parents and older workers.
- Low adult skills and qualifications.
- High numbers of low paid jobs.
- Poor health and wellbeing, particularly poor mental health.
- Extremely high numbers of lone parents claiming out of work benefits.
- A significant attainment gap, particularly at Key Stage 4, between pupils living in poverty and those who do not.
- Relatively low levels of enterprise activity.

All these factors contribute to some areas having higher IMD rankings as well as lower levels of employment and business growth.

MHCLG Local Data Profile Pack (July 2025)

The table below draws on the evidence in the data pack and summarises some of the strengths and weaknesses from within this for the Washington area, relative to other areas of Sunderland or nationally.

It should be noted that the data pack for Washington was based on the built-up areas of Washington and was missing parts of Washington within scope of the geographical boundary as stated in Section 2 and that it only includes data available prior to the release of the IMD 2025 data.

Intervention	Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Safety, Security and Cohesion	Lower than Sunderland in all crime types except Vehicle crime (7.7) compared to Sunderland (6.9).	Crime and ASB rates remain above national averages: Crime rate (82.9) is above England average (76.7) ASB rate (21.5) is above England average (14.8) Social trust is -7%, is worse than England average (-3%).
2. Regeneration, high streets and heritage	High footfall index (128.3) compared to national average (100) Lower commercial vacancy rate (8.3%) than England (10.4%).	Fewer leisure and cultural outlets per 1,000 people (1.8 vs. 2.5 nationally) Lower cultural participation rates than regional and national averages.
3. Education, Work, Productivity and Skills	Higher GVA per job (£59,409) than Sunderland (£55,519) and North East (£51,395)	Lower proportion of residents with Level 3+ qualifications (46.9%) compared to Sunderland (48.1%), the North East (53.8%) and England (56.6%) Higher proportion with no qualifications (13.6%) compared to England

	<p>High job density (1.12) compared to Sunderland (0.67), the North East (0.66), and England (0.77)</p> <p>Higher Employment rate (69.4%) compared to Sunderland (66.6%).</p>	(12.4%), however, better than Sunderland (15.2%).
4. Transport and Connectivity	<p>Strong commuter links with Sunderland, Gateshead and Newcastle.</p> <p>Top 3 residence -work connections between Built Up Areas (2011):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reside in Washington and work in Washington = 12,978 • Reside in Sunderland and work in Washington = 6,252 • Reside in Washington and work in Sunderland = 4,731. 	<p>Average minimum travel time to the nearest hospital is higher than Sunderland. (Public Transport/walking = 7 minutes more. Cycling is 6 minutes more. Car is 2 minutes more)</p> <p>Lower gigabit capability and broadband coverage (81%) than Sunderland (89%) and England (83%).</p>
5. Housing	<p>More affordable housing (affordability ratio 4.2) than England (7.7)</p> <p>Fewer non-decent homes (12.4%) than England (15.1%).</p>	Data only available at Sunderland level; local variation within Washington not captured.
6. Health and Wellbeing	<p>High GP satisfaction (71%) compared to England average (67%),</p>	<p>Life expectancy for men (76.5 years) and women (80.9 years) in Sunderland is lower than England average (79.1 and 83.1 years)</p> <p>Healthy life expectancy for men (55 years) and women (55.6 years) in Sunderland is lower than England average (61.5 and 61.9 years)</p> <p>Lower rate of GP appointments in Washington (457/1000), than North East (509) and England (472).</p>

Community safety

In general, the local data profile for Washington (MHCLG, July 2025) shows lower levels of recorded crime rates per 1,000 population (2022 data) compared to Sunderland as a whole, but higher than the England average. ASB incidents are much closer to the Sunderland average, but significantly higher than the England average, suggesting that ASB in Washington is a more regularly recurring or significant issue. In terms of crime by type, vehicle crime is the only type where Washington's figure is greater than the Sunderland average. On most crime types (except for bicycle theft, robbery, theft from a person), the Sunderland average exceeds the England average.

The Board will be in regular contact with key partners who are working hard to ensure the safety and security of communities in Washington. These partners include the new Washington ASB Locality Hub, Northumbria Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Council enforcement and environmental services and local organisations. The insight, experience and knowledge of these partners as well as the wider Washington community will ensure that the most recent and robust data is used to inform the Plan and interventions.

Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing of people living in Washington is shaped by the places they live in, their education, job, income, housing and surroundings as well as their opportunities to live a healthy life and access help and support when needed. When these building blocks are missing, living a healthy life becomes significantly more difficult increasing the risk of illness and long-term conditions.

With a third of the population in Washington living in the 20% most deprived areas in the country, for many, the building blocks are weak. This often leads to unfair differences in health with a higher level of poor health, chronic illness and high demand on health and care services.

There are some significant health and wellbeing challenges in Washington and Sunderland:

- **Overweight and obesity** among both adults and children is high, with those living in more deprived areas more often affected. 71.8% of adults and 42% of children in year 6 in Sunderland are overweight or obese. Less than one quarter of adults in Sunderland take part in sport and active recreation for 30 minutes 3 times a week.

- **Alcohol misuse** affects too many people in Sunderland. Alcohol related hospital admissions and alcohol related mortality are high, especially from more deprived areas. Sunderland has the third highest alcohol related hospital admission rate in the country (843/100,00). Alcohol misuse is linked to liver disease, cardiovascular disease and cancer.
- **Smoking** has decreased significantly, but inequalities remain with higher smoking rates in some population groups. The smoking prevalence in Washington is highest in Washington North area.
- **Mental illness** such as **depression** is more prevalent in Washington (2.3% compared to 1.5% in England) and highest in deprived areas. This is also reflected in higher rates of antidepressant prescriptions.
- Many households include someone with a long-term health problem or disability. The most common reasons for **social prescribing referrals** include social isolation, poor mental health, financial concerns, and weight management.
- **Chronic illness** is common, with particularly high rates of **diabetes** and **respiratory disease** in Washington. Prevalence rates are higher in deprived areas and diabetes is associated with the highest number of expected hospital admissions.
- **Cancer and hypertension** are also very common with a higher prevalence than the England average. Prevalence rates are lower in deprived areas, potentially due to underdiagnosis or late diagnosis.
- **Cancer screening uptake** in Washington is similar to the national average, but uptake is lowest in more deprived areas.
- **Frailty** is a concern for 18.4% of the population over 65 years living in Washington, affecting over 1000 residents. People living with frailty are at higher risk of falls and other health conditions such as malnutrition and infections requiring tailored health and social care support.

Recognising the persistent health inequalities throughout the life course and supporting people to stay healthy and preventing chronic illness is a key priority for the city. People need strong building blocks of health such as good start in life, a safe and warm home, good job, transport, sufficient income and access to healthy food as well as supportive communities and networks to thrive and stay healthy. When people are unwell, they need equitable access to health and social care with targeted support for those with the highest needs.

Overweight or obesity is linked to poor access to healthy food and accessible opportunities for physical activity. There are many opportunities to become physically active for example through active transport to and at schools and workplaces as well as

participating in activities in community parks. People also need access to affordable and healthy food to live well and maintain a healthy weight.

The high rate of alcohol misuse has a significant impact on communities. Alcohol misuse and addiction is linked to a high demand on health services, antisocial behaviour, domestic abuse and violent crime as well as economic inactivity and unemployment. Reducing alcohol harm requires the collaborative efforts of communities and services to change attitudes and perceptions, reduce the availability of alcohol and offer targeted services and support to patients.

Similar to Sunderland and other areas in the North East, there is a high burden of disease from chronic illness in Washington, which disproportionately affects people from more deprived areas. The impact of chronic illness on physical and mental health and the ability of people to be active and participate is well understood and contributes to unemployment and economic inactivity.

Poor mental health is one of the main reasons for sick leave and inability to stay in employment. Sunderland leads on a number of programmes and activities¹ to improve workplace health and engage and support individuals who are socially isolated or marginalised from the labour market. These initiatives will support workplaces and people living in Washington.

The Plan will support the health and wellbeing of local communities through safe and healthy places with healthy homes, transport and access to greenspace and strengthen communities to be resilient, connected, financially safe, and economically active. The Plan will support people to live healthier lives and have better access to local support and services when required.

The Plan supports the Health and Wellbeing Board in its aim to reduce health inequalities and will support the new neighbourhood health approach by the NHS which aims to shift healthcare to prevention and services into communities.

Core20PLUS5 is a national NHS approach to inform action to reduce healthcare inequalities at both national and system level. The approach defines a target population – the ‘Core20PLUS’ – and identifies ‘5’ focus clinical areas requiring accelerated improvement.

Core 20PLUS5 approach to reduce healthcare inequalities with a focus on the 20% most deprived population in addition to locally identified groups with higher level of

¹ Examples of projects include the Wise Group’s Relational Mentoring project, Connect to Work, Economic Inactivity Trailblazer, Health and Growth Accelerator, Sunderland Links for Life programme and Community Digital Health Hubs.

need (inclusion health groups) and focus on 5 priority areas: maternity, severe mental illness, chronic respiratory disease, early cancer diagnosis and hypertension case finding. There are also five priority areas for health in children and young people. The data will be used to support interventions in Washington.

Education and Opportunity

Young people in Washington need all organisations to work together to support them. Good schools are essential, but they cannot do it alone.

The Programme and the Vision offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring together schools and civic institutions to work together to support young people. Built on a simple but powerful idea: that no single organisation, no matter how committed, can meet the full range of needs that young people face on its own.

Across Washington, the Vision seeks to bring together all schools with the city's key civic and national anchors – its local employers, public services and charities – in a transformative new partnership, united behind one common goal: **to improve outcomes and expand opportunities for children and young people in Washington.**

The Vision creates a new structure for deep, sustained, cross-sector collaboration: a practical way to bring together the insight, energy and resources across the community. It is a bold attempt to break through institutional silos and pioneer a new kind of civic leadership that amplifies community voice into a stronger platform for change.

Together, the Vision is to improve the lives of young people in schools in Washington – not only through building better mechanisms for support, but through richer opportunities, stronger relationships and a renewed sense of what is possible when a community truly works as one.

The challenge the Washington Neighbourhood Board will take on

Across Washington, too many children are growing up in communities where opportunity has quietly ebbed away. In places like Washington, a proud Sunderland area with deep roots and a strong sense of identity, the support systems that once surrounded young people have steadily reduced. Post 16 opportunities can sometimes be limited by travel costs to attend apprenticeship providers, colleges and sixth forms which sit outside of the boundary of Washington, in other parts of Sunderland and other towns and cities.

Guided by the voices of people in Washington, the headteachers, families, community organisations, employers, charities and public services who know Washington best, the Board will endeavour to tackle the issues experienced by young people:

- Stubborn levels of child poverty, with many families facing food insecurity, poor housing and economic strain.
- Consistently low school attendance, undermining learning and putting long-term outcomes at risk.
- Limited access to sport, culture, art and the outdoors – the kinds of experiences that build confidence, curiosity and ambition.
- A fragile bridge to the future, with too many young people leaving school without the support, networks or opportunities they need to thrive in work or training.

These challenges do not define Washington, but they do shape the landscape young people are navigating every day. The Board will seek to tackle them not as isolated issues, but as a connected system, building powerful partnerships between schools, services, employers, social and private landlords and communities to create the conditions for change.

Community infrastructure and state of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector

Through ongoing research and engagement work it is apparent that there is a shortage of capacity-building and training support across the VCSE sector in Washington. The consequence of this is that those more deprived communities, where VCSE sector presence is underdeveloped or lacks capacity, are less able to attract external funding for new projects and services. Meanwhile, those areas in the region and across the UK with a stronger infrastructure and more dedicated support are more likely to succeed in attracting new investment.

This trend is supported by surveys undertaken by the Northern Rock Foundation and more recently by Voluntary Organisations' Network North East (VONNE) as well as Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance. The Washington VCS organisations specifically have led various elements of the resident engagement to inform the Washington Vision and Plan, and the VCS are represented on the Board. The consultation highlighted the need for ongoing infrastructure support to strengthen and grow the sector. Powerful messages were received around key areas of need, support and advice. These are highlighted as follows:

- Work to secure longer term funding to improve productivity and outcomes.
- Support to sustain and grow the sector.
- Support to strengthen Management and Governance arrangements.
- Huge need to support the recruitment and sustainability of staff and volunteers.
- Support organisational reviews and improved business planning.
- Support the completion of successful funding applications.
- Wider collaboration across the VCS and the wider partners.
- Needs led service developments.
- Focus on outcomes not just service delivery based on identified needs.
- Develop communication and engagement, including digital platforms to raise the profile of the sector.

Alongside these are several important local hubs providing a wide range of services to support families, young people and adults of all ages. During the last 2 years, a network of 7 Digital Health Hubs has been established across Washington in the following venues:

- **Building Blocks Day Centre**, Concord
- **Columbia Community Association**, Columbia
- **Lambton Community Hub**, hosted by Crafting Connections, Lambton
- **Mickey's Place**, based at St Michaels and All Angels Church, Sulgrave
- **Shiney Advice and Resource Centre**, based in Barmston
- **Springwell Village Community Venue**, Springwell
- **St Georges Church: The Table Cafe**, Harraton.

The hubs are open to residents of all ages and offer friendly support to help people get online and build digital confidence. Many of the centres also provide wider support services and training opportunities to the community, including social prescribing activities through the Links for Life programme.

The Washington Millennium Centre hosts the Council's **community safety hub** for Concord and Sulgrave. This hub is helping to promote partnership working to tackle ASB and bringing together the Council, Northumbria Police, community groups and others all under one roof. The hub has its own community safety officers, community safety specialists and community engagement lead as well as dedicated police and wider partner support. The hub is also a venue where residents can report specific incidents and concerns relating to ASB in their neighbourhood.

The hub will work closely with the Board over the next ten years, to maximise outcomes to reduce crime and ASB and increase feelings of safety and security across Washington. The Washington Millennium centre also houses various VCS providers, holds classes and drop ins for residents as well hosting as a soft play centre, Millies Minis.

The Rainbow Family Hub in Concord, which is managed by Together for Children:

- Brings services together to improve access to services for families.
- Improves the connections between families, professionals, services and providers.
- Puts relationships at the heart of family support.

At the core of every Family Hub network is a great Start for Life for babies, from conception through to 2 years old. Support is also available to families of children aged up to 19, or to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged up to 25.

The Family Hub ambition is to ensure that local families can access the right support, at the right time, in the right place, with the right people.

The Board will continue to work closely with all hubs across the area.

Greenspace

In the Council's latest Greenspace Audit (2020) it was identified that Washington had 456 individual greenspaces, totalling 1,034.18 hectares, which represents 26.66% of all greenspace in Sunderland.

However, in some wards the percentage of Washington residents living within 300m of accessible natural greenspace of at least 2 hectares is only 43%, which was lower than Sunderland average of 49%. Therefore, whilst it is considered that there is a good overall provision of greenspace in Washington, it is not necessarily located near to where residents live, so increasing access to quality urban greenspace is important and supported through the resident engagement feedback.

Whilst the overall provision of greenspace within Washington is good, in some places, Washington lacks in quality accessible greenspaces, impacted in part through deprivation and increased population density.

The 2020 Sunderland Greenspace Audit notes that the quality of existing greenspaces should be improved in general, and especially in the more deprived parts of

Sunderland. ASB, fly tipping and littering are a problem in many of Washington's greenspaces, and quad/motorbikes are a destructive hazard. The Plan will highlight the impact of this behaviour and, working in conjunction with specialist teams, work towards innovative ways to combat this behaviour in greenspaces, bringing communities together.

There is a need for greenspace enhancement and restoration, creating an interconnected plan for the whole of Washington which will include improvements to existing community greenspaces, including play areas, historic parks, transport routes and blue spaces along the River Wear, bringing nature into neighbourhoods, connecting people, supporting social cohesion and creating a sense of pride in the local environment.

Digital Inclusion

Despite many initiatives and significant investment, 21 million adults can not complete essential digital tasks for work (Digital Nation UK 2025) in the UK. The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology published the Digital Inclusion Action Plan in February 2025. This sets out a coordinated, cross-government strategy to tackle digital exclusion, recognising it as a cross-cutting issue affecting housing, health, social care, education, employment, finance, equalities, and culture. The Action Plan has secured the backing of seven Secretaries of State and defines digital inclusion as '*ensuring everyone has the access, skills, support, and confidence to participate in and benefit from modern digital society, regardless of their circumstances*'. It identifies four national priorities:

1. Access to Data and Devices
2. Digital Skills
3. Accessible Digital Services
4. Digital Confidence and Motivation

To support delivery, a £9.5m Digital Inclusion Fund was launched for 2025/26.

On a regional level, the North East is the most digitally excluded region in the UK (Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital 2023). In September 2024, NECA launched the Minimum Digital Living Standards Task Group, a regional Digital Inclusion Taskforce unifying all seven local authorities and NECA. The aim is to introduce a minimum digital standard guarantee for all residents. With 360,450 people currently digitally excluded across the region, this collaborative approach embeds digital inclusion into broader strategies for economic growth, social mobility, and access to public services.

Based on Washington's digital inclusion data, vulnerable groups higher at risk of being digitally excluded are:

- Children and Young People, especially those living in digital poverty, who are frequently overlooked, despite facing serious barriers and health inequalities.
- Low incomes households or people without employment face financial constraints that limit access to devices, connectivity and learning opportunities.
- Older adults often face declining confidence and motivation, unsure of how digital tools fit into their lives.
- Small organisations (VCSE and SMEs) vital to local communities, often lack the resources or knowledge to fully embrace digital tools, impacting their sustainability and growth.

These overlapping challenges show that digital exclusion is not just a technical issue but also a social one, and it demands a compassionate, inclusive response.

The strategic case for change in Washington is underpinned by an extensive body of evidence. In this regard, the importance of hyper-local approaches cannot be underestimated. The Board will work towards ensuring sector bodies, employers, skills providers and support organisations are present in a sustained and committed way in these communities so that opportunity becomes real to the young people and the economically inactive who, with support, can take up fulfilling and fair work. It is the presence of fair work that offers a way to break the pervasive cycles of child poverty and economic inactivity.

The Board is committed to taking the opportunity this Programme presents to break the cycle and make improvements in Washington. This will be monitored through a range of key performance indicators (outputs and outcomes) which will be tailored to each intervention supported by the Programme. Alongside the Programme's direct KPIs, key baseline statistics will be updated annually to monitor Washington's overall progress over the course of the 10-year programme.

The baseline statistics will enable the Board to monitor longer-term trends and identify wider priorities and areas of focus. However, the Board will only be able to directly influence the programme specific KPIs (outputs and outcomes) that will result from the projects supported in Washington.

It should also be noted that the Board will have limited influence on the way in which data is collected, analysed and presented by partner organisations. However, it will endeavour to refresh how the data is collected and presented, should the way in which data collection and analysis change during the course of the programme.

Priorities for change

The priorities for change have been developed through engagement and close collaboration with thousands of people in all areas of Washington, with resident insight data previously shared with MHCLG. The priorities are informed by extensive research, data analysis, and direct engagement with people, which included:

- Sharing feedback on the online Commonplace platform
- Young people’s surveys
- Qualitative focus groups
- Voluntary and Community Sector led engagement
- Community safety hub findings
- Government digital engagement.

Through this process, a clear picture has been built as to what people in Washington want to see, from feeling safe in a place with an improved appearance, to being able to move around Washington and spend time in nature.

This engagement highlighted both immediate needs and future challenges, allowing the Board to set clear priorities for the next ten years. Importantly, the engagement with people in Washington is an ongoing and mutual relationship. The Board will continue to listen, adapt, and respond to changing circumstances, ensuring it remains relevant and practical for Washington.

Key findings from the Board’s engagement which is informing the first 4-year investment plan of the 10- year Vision:

Time in nature Greenspaces	Maintain existing parks to a high standard, add more facilities and explore potential for creating new parks.
Feeling safe Crime & antisocial behaviour	Improve street lighting, prune tree canopies, reduce speeding traffic and tackle issues such as e-bikes/off-road bikes, and other crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB).
Vibrant places Villages & town centre	Enhance the appearance of town centre and villages. Introduce outdoor seating and attract a better mix of shops, cafes and restaurants.
Getting around Transport & infrastructure	Review and improve cycle routes, maintain and extend footpaths/walking routes, upgrade road surfaces and signage and strengthen public transport links to key services.
Thriving lives Youth & Community	Create safe spaces for teenagers to socialise, expand after-school clubs, improve play and skate parks.
Improved appearance Streets & spaces	Reduce litter and fly-tipping, improve bin provision including opps to recycle, tackle dog fouling, remove graffiti and clean public spaces.

Youth engagement during the Plan development included school engagement as well as engagement via the VCSE community. The findings from the overall engagement are mirrored in the youth engagement findings.

Every school in Washington was invited to take part in the engagement. Secondary schools were provided with a link to a tailored young person's survey. Primary aged children were provided with school engagement 'toolkits' which asked them a couple of questions and/or a chance to draw their 'dream Washington', with the theme of the activities being called "My Washington Wish".

The key findings that young people would want to improve or change about Washington are:

- **Safer streets** - less anti-social behaviour & safer streets including things like more police presence, reducing crime and ASB, improving lighting.
- **A better-looking place** - with more greenery, improved appearance & nicer spaces.
- **Youth clubs and activities** - requests for safe places to hang out, more free football facilities, bike and pump tracks, skate parks and 'things to do'.
- **Greenspaces** - including better maintenance of trees, more seating, more green spaces and better facilities for children.

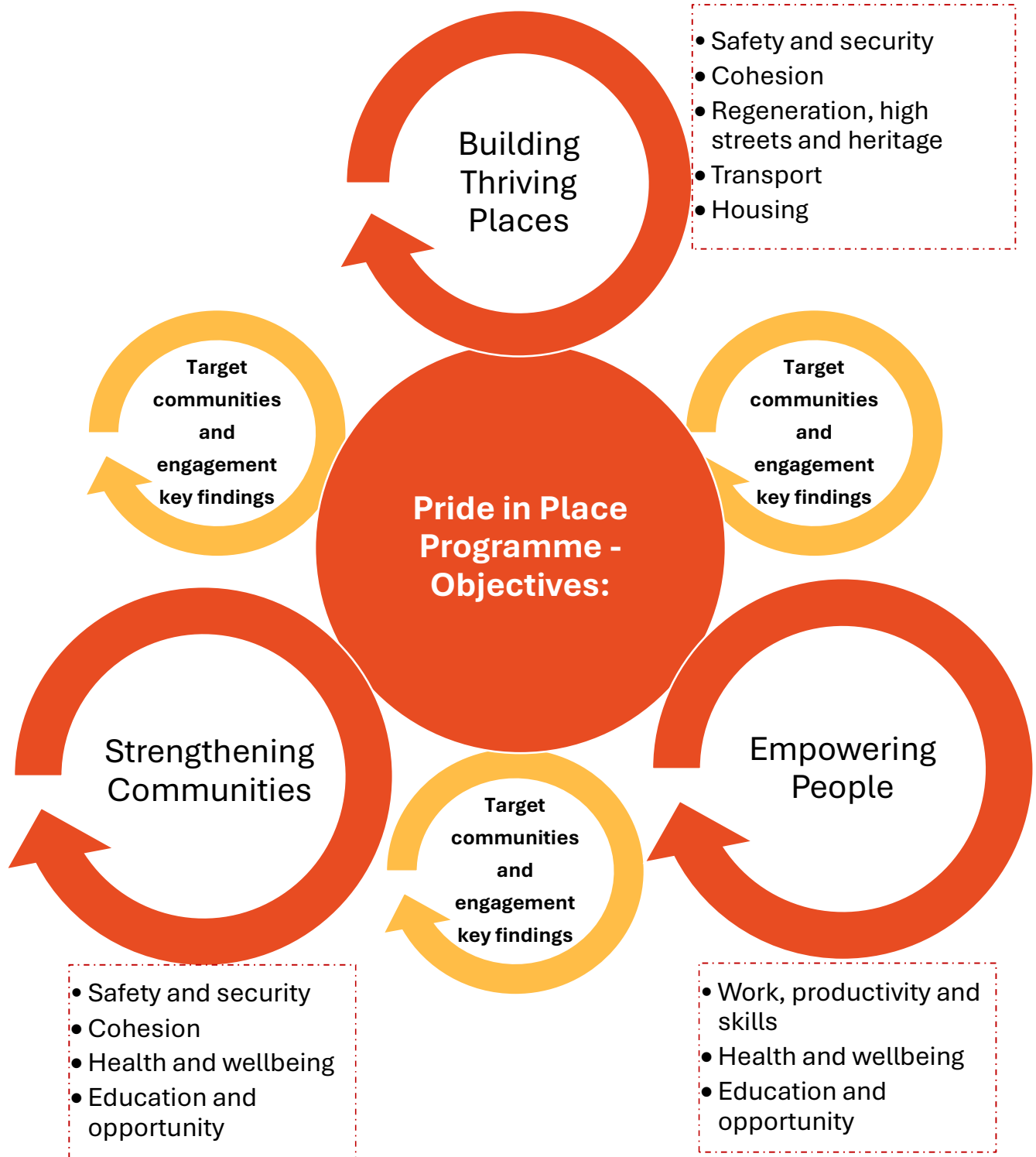
Alongside school engagement, Education Partnership North East invited their students living in Washington to take part in focus groups. College students discussed the type of activities for young people they would like to see. Safety was also a recurring theme, with students referring to vandalism and poor lighting as concerns.

VCSE led engagement included engagement with young people. Sunderland All Together Consortium led the engagement alongside Oxclose and District Young People's Project, Washington Youth Council and Community Opportunities, with additional support from street-based youth workers.

A blend of surveys and face-to-face discussions took place in the Town Centre & The Galleries, Ten Pin Bowling, Everyone Active, Albany Carnival, The Pitstop and within Oxclose, Concord and Sulgrave.

Again, mirroring the school engagement, safe places to go and support for youth work services were high on their wish list. In one survey of 212 young people, 69.8% state that they want safe places to go and 52.4% say support for youth work service is important to them. Free holiday and evening activities was reported at 42.9%. Mental health provision, specifically introducing more mental health services and appointments for young people was 57.5%.

The priorities that emerged from the engagement are aligned with the three objectives of the Programme as demonstrated in the diagram below, which also highlights how each of the objectives will be achieved by using the programme interventions available. Target communities and engagement key findings will be fed back into the programme to inform future decisions.



Intended use of powers to support delivery of interventions

The Programme provides the Board with a list of powers which can be used to deliver the objectives within the Vision and Investment Plan. With support from the Council, the use of the powers will be considered and appropriately utilised, informed by robust data and resident insight. The list of powers are associated with the programme's interventions as follows:

- Safety and security
- Cohesion
- Regeneration, high streets and heritage
- Work, productivity and skills
- Health and wellbeing
- Education and opportunity
- Transport
- Housing.

The long-term vision for Washington is for partners to work together with and within communities to create the social and economic conditions that support in **building a thriving place, strengthening communities and empowering people**. The Board is aware that, based on the funding levels and profile, some interventions can be implemented swiftly, whereas longer term interventions will take time to break the cycle, but in the long term will support a variety of important interventions which improve the lives of people in Washington.

Section 5: Alignment with other programmes and investments

The Programme for Washington aligns with and complements a wide range of existing and planned local, regional and national programmes, investments and funding initiatives. The Board will ensure through the delivery of the Plan that all potential sources of funding and investment are maximised and aligned to the programme interventions and outcomes.

The programme will support the delivery of the City Plan - Sunderland Partnership's overarching strategic plan for the period to 2035. The City Plan provides the blueprint for all partners and communities to work together to pursue and achieve the shared vision, ambitions and underpinning commitments for Sunderland to become a connected, international city with opportunities for all.

The tables below provide a wide range of existing and planned local, regional and national programmes, investments and funding initiatives the Programme for Washington can align with and complement. These tables will continually be kept up to date and is not an exhaustive list of the opportunities the Programme can align with and complement. It is the intention of the Board to survey the VCSE within Washington (and Sunderland) to get a clear picture of who is delivering projects currently, related to Pride in Place themes, enabling the Board to understand what is being delivered, how funded and to note any sustainability issues, ensuring the Board is able to add value over the coming years.

The tables have been divided by each Programme intervention theme detailing the lead organisation, sector, description and the end dates of the programme.

Safety, Security and Cohesion

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	Crime	Project Shield – initiative to tackle anti-social behaviour and serious violence in hotspot areas, including Concord. Working with	Funding to March 2026

		Northumbria Police, local authorities, and transport providers, Project Shield will see increased visible patrols, and proactive policing, to boost community confidence and drive down crime.	
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	Crime	<p>Safer Streets - Washington Galleries. Working in partnership with the Council, schools, health services, business, transport and community organisations to increase safety in town centres and high streets.</p> <p>Washington Galleries was identified as an area for this focussed activity which included community engagement, business engagement, additional patrols and other targeted interventions.</p>	Strategy to 2028
Tyne and Wear Fire Service	Fire and rescue	<p>Tyne and Wear Fire Strategy and Community Risk Management Plan from 2024 to 2027 sets out how they will continue to deliver a first-class fire and rescue service while driving innovation and improvement to meet future challenges.</p>	Strategy 2027
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	<p>Community safety hub for Concord and Sulgrave.</p>	Core LA funding
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	<p>Community safety plan - the partnership, which includes the Council, Northumbria Police, the Tyne and Wear Fire Rescue Service, health services and the probation service, must draw-up and publish a plan guiding actions and priorities.</p> <p>Four key priorities are outlined in the Sunderland Community Safety Plan to keep residents safe and enhance safety:</p>	Ongoing

		<p>Reducing serious violence Reducing domestic abuse Reducing anti-social behaviour, and Improving social cohesion.</p>	
The Little Onion Club	VCSE	<p>The Little Onion Club based in Usworth Park, is an inter-generational programme, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides regular structured, seasonal gardening activities for children, - offers facilitated gardening and well-being workshops for teenagers and adults, - organises market stalls and fun events for families, - runs gardening working bees and team building days for all ages, - welcomes seniors within the community to join in or watch activities. <p>Bringing the community together to build connections, and learn about sustainability, the environment, and social inclusion.</p>	Ongoing

Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
North East Community Forest (NECF) in partnership with Sunderland Council	Regional Local Authorities	<p>The NECF is a regional tree planting scheme designed to increase canopy cover and carbon capture in the North East region.</p> <p>Ultimately, the NECF will aim to almost double existing tree canopy cover across the area, to around 30% by 2050.</p>	2050

Gateshead Council (lead), Sunderland City Council, South Tyneside Council and Natural England	Local Authority	South of Tyne and Wear Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Working together to restore nature, combat climate change and benefit communities.	Ongoing
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority alongside City Partners	Sunderland Low Carbon Framework – working across partners to bring forward investment to support the decarbonisation of Sunderland as well as ensuring the City continues to adapt to the changing climate to support the most vulnerable communities.	2040 target for Carbon Neutral ambitions within Framework
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority and Durham Wildlife Trust	Connecting Through Nature – Nature, Towns and Cities project.	November 2028
Sunderland Music City	VCSE	The Sunderland Music Strategy (2025-2030) is a comprehensive plan that aims to propel the growth and prosperity of Sunderland’s music scene.	2030
Washington Area Committee	Local Authority	Supporting projects through Neighbourhood Funding and Community Chest .	Annual Funds
Arts Centre Washington	Local Authority	Arts Centre Washington is at the heart of cultural life in Washington and the wider city, delivering vibrant opportunities for participation across multiple art forms—from performances and exhibitions to community-led initiatives. Our strategic ambition is to become a leading incubator for creativity: supporting emerging artists, nurturing talent, and enabling the growth of local creative businesses driving innovation, economic growth, and community engagement.	2026-2030

Work, productivity and skills

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
UK Government / Skills England	Government	Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) – development of second round LSIPs is underway to inform local skills delivery and investment priorities.	Due to be approved and published by Summer 2026.
Department for Work and Pensions	Government	“Get Britain Working” White Paper outlines the Government’s strategy to support the ambition of a national 80% employment rate and help improve workplace health and keep people in work. Key components of the plan include those indicated below*.	March 2030
UK Government	Government	* Youth Guarantee includes a targeted backstop, where every eligible unemployed young person on Universal Credit for 18 months without earning or learning will be provided guaranteed paid work.	Timeframes tbc
Department for Work and Pensions	Government	* DWP - employment support programmes and sectoral work placements.	March 2030
NHS / North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board	NHS / ICB	Health and Growth Accelerator programme - tackling health-related inactivity via a more integrated approach involving prevention, empowerment and employer support.	Initially to March 2026
National Centre for Computing Education, supported by the Department for Education	Government	Accredited Computing Quality Mark - Offers schools access to high-quality resources and funding to work towards accreditation. Local schools in Washington are well-placed to benefit from this opportunity.	Ongoing
North East Combined Authority	Local authority / Further Education / VCSE	Adult Skills Fund including Free Courses for Jobs – training delivery is underway for 2025/26 providing adult learners with access to a wide of	September 2025-August 2026

		training providers, qualifications and short courses.	
North East Automotive Alliance	Local authority	Training for Growth Apprenticeship Pilot – Phase 2 (supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).	March 2026
Sunderland City Council	Local authority	Sunderland SkillStart Project (supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).	March 2026
Sunderland City Council	Local authority	Economic Inactivity Trailblazer (Phase 1) – further phase planned to extend delivery into 2026/27.	March 2026
Sunderland City Council	Local authority	* Connect to Work – Supported Employment Quality Framework (SEQF) / Local Supported Employment (LSE).	March 2030
Sunderland City Council	Local authority	Smart City Plan including Draft Digital Inclusion Strategy 2025 - 2035 – due to be launched Spring 2026.	2035
Sunderland City Council	Local authority	<p>Community Digital Health Hubs – network of hubs located across Sunderland providing broad range of community activities and learning opportunities.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier in Section 4, in the last 2 years, a network of 7 Digital Health Hubs has been established across Washington in the following venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Blocks Day Centre, Concord • Columbia Community Association, Columbia • Lambton Community Hub, hosted by Crafting Connections, Lambton • Mickey's Place, based at St Michaels and All Angels Church, Sulgrave • Shiney Advice and Resource Centre, based in Barmston • Springwell Village Community Venue, Springwell • St Georges Church: The Table Cafe, Harraton. 	Ongoing programme of activities

		<p>The hubs are open to residents of all ages and offer friendly support to help people get online and build digital confidence.</p> <p>Many of the centres also provide wider support services and training opportunities to the community, including social prescribing activities through the Links for Life programme.</p>	
Sunderland Workplace Health Alliance	Local authority	The Sunderland Workplace Health Alliance is a network of local businesses which aims to work collaboratively to improve health and wellbeing within Sunderland workplaces.	Ongoing programme of activities
University of Sunderland	Higher Education	Sunderland Skills and Inclusion Programme (supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund)	March 2026
North East Autism Society	VCSE	North East Autism Society delivering a range of programmes transforming the lives of autistic and neurodivergent people in the North East.	Ongoing
Wise Group	VCSE	Wise Group Relational Mentoring Project (supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).	March 2026
Triage Central Limited	Private	* Connect to Work – Individual Placement and Support (IPS).	March 2030

Health and Wellbeing

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
UK Government	Public	<p>UK Governments Child Poverty Strategy will outline national priorities across four key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing incomes • Reducing essential costs 	Ongoing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving financial resilience, and • Strengthening local support <p>The national child poverty strategy will support the work of local authorities and their partners to address poverty.</p>	
NHS	Health	<p>NHS 10-Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future proposing three shifts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From hospital to community 2. From analogue to digital <p>From sickness to prevention.</p>	2035
NHS	Health	<p>Neighbourhood Health Plans</p> <p>Improving health and wellbeing in local communities through partnerships between NHS, local government and VCSE. Sunderland has been selected for the implementation programme with an initial focus on frailty.</p>	2035
NHS	Health	<p>Core 20+5 approach to reduce healthcare inequalities with a focus on the 20% most deprived population in addition to locally identified groups with higher level of need (inclusion health groups) and focus on 5 priority areas: maternity, severe mental illness, chronic respiratory disease, early cancer diagnosis and hypertension case finding. There are also five priority areas for health in children and young people.</p>	Ongoing
NHS	Health	<p>Population Health Strategy supporting people stay healthy, happy and live independently for as long as possible through focus on workforce, giving children the best start in life, supporting patients to become active in their own care, creating a healthy environment, become a smoke free organisation and reducing harm from alcohol.</p>	Ongoing
North East Combined Authority	Mayoral authority	<p>NECA is committed to tackling child poverty, as set out in the published Child Poverty Reduction Unit (CPRU)</p>	Ongoing

		Action Plan. This plan highlights the importance of coordinated action across the region. It identifies child poverty as a shared priority.	
North East Ambulance Service	Health	NE Ambulance Trust Strategy 2021-2026 outlining approach to achieve the mission of providing safe, effective and responsive care for all.	2026
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	Sunderland Healthy City Plan 2020-2035 focuses on healthy places, healthy communities and healthy people.	2035
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	Sunderland Draft Child Poverty Strategy 2025 – 2028.	2028
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	Links for Life – wide-ranging programme of community-led, social prescribing projects and activities across Sunderland.	Ongoing programme of activities
Together for Children	Children’s Services	Healthy School Awards – working with schools in Washington	Ongoing

Education and Opportunity

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
UK Government	Public	Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper - The Government has published the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper, outlining its vision to reform the post-16 education system in England.	Ongoing
Social Enterprise Academy	Voluntary Sector working with Local Authority, Gentoos and Schools	Social Enterprise Academy supporting teachers, children and young people in schools in Washington - Oxclose Academy & Washington Academy, to set-up pupil-led social enterprises in their place of education to support students to develop skills for the future.	July 2026

Together for Children	Children's Services	<p>The Rainbow Family Hub in Concord:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings services together to improve access to services for families. • Improves the connections between families, professionals, services and providers. • Puts relationships at the heart of family support. <p>At the core of every Family Hub network is a great Start for Life for babies, from conception through to 2 years old. Support is also available to families of children aged up to 19, or to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged up to 25.</p> <p>The Family Hub ambition is to ensure that local families can access the right support, at the right time, in the right place, with the right people.</p>	Ongoing
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Transport

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
North East Combined Authority	Mayoral Authority	<p>North East Transport Plan 2021-2035 - outlines the Mayor's blueprint for a connected network that is simple, affordable, and built to last.</p>	2035
North East Combined Authority	Mayoral Authority	<p>NECA has confirmed an indicative allocation of £400m subject to NECA Cabinet approval from the Transport for City Regions (TCR) funding settlement (2027-28 to 2031-32) which would be used to build the Metro extension to Washington (once the design and planning processes are complete), with the remaining funds sourced from private investment. The</p>	2026/27-2031/32

		project has a current target opening date of 2033.	
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan developed for Washington	Plan ongoing

Housing

Lead Organisation	Sector	Description of Projects / Programmes / Investment Plans	Strategy / funding end date
Homes England	UK Government	The Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) will run from 2026-2036, with the aim of expanding the supply of social and affordable housing across England.	2026-2036
NECA	Mayoral Authority	Warm Homes Taskforce launched to address fuel poverty and improve housing quality across the North East through a region-wide retrofit strategy.	April 2027
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	Sunderland Accredited Landlord Scheme – working to ensure private landlords support communities to live happy and healthy lives.	Ongoing support for landlords
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	Warm Homes Local Grant – supporting financially vulnerable households to retrofit homes to reduce energy bills.	Funding ends March 2028
Sunderland City Council	Local Authority	The Welfare Rights Service delivers specialist welfare law advice in relation to welfare benefits and employment law. They challenge and represent decisions made by DWP and employers up to tribunal level. Caseworkers are placed in Family & Mental Health Hubs, and other accessible venues across Sunderland.	Ongoing
Gentoo	Housing association	Warm Homes - Social Housing Fund Wave 3 is funded by UK Government	September 2028

		(DESNZ) and will see energy efficiency measures installed in approximately 1,300 Gentoo homes across Sunderland through to September 2028.	
Gentoo	Housing association	Over the next 4 years Gentoo plan to deliver modernisation works to over 3,400 Gentoo homes in Washington. This investment will equate to a £17.8m investment. In addition, Gentoo will also be investing £3.5m in 22 new homes within Washington.	Ongoing
Shiney Advice and Resource Project (ShARP)	VCSE	Benefit advice - The Council's contracted advice provider for the Washington area. They offer free financial resilience checks, information, advice and guidance on welfare benefits, debt and housing matters.	Ongoing
Groundwork North East & Cumbria	VCSE	Energy Savvy Sunderland - provides free, impartial advice and support to help households, especially those in vulnerable situations, reduce their energy bills.	Funding ends 2027

Section 6: Match funding and leveraged investment

Across all priorities, interventions and activities the Board will endeavour to continuously review other funding opportunities – private, public and philanthropic - to maximise the impact of Programme funding in Washington.

During funding calls and through commissioning, delivery organisations / contractors will be encouraged to leverage additional funding to complement the programme investment. Projects will be required to demonstrate additionality, as well as sustainability and be complementary with other local, regional and national provision, and where feasible, additional leverage of other funds will be encouraged.

At this early stage, no direct funding commitment is aligned to individual aspects of the Plan. However, as outlined above in Section 5, there are a range of complementary projects, programmes and planned investments that activities supported through the programme will add value to and complement.

Strategic Funding opportunities

The Board has limited access to immediate match funding and other resources. As such, the projects that the Plan will support are likely to be developed and implemented in partnership with others. Given this position, the Board will adopt a proactive approach to identifying and maximising leverage from potential additional resources.

The Board will be supported by the Council, Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance and other strategic partners to identify future funds that will align to the programmes eligible activities. This will include continuing to assess, track and engage with a range of potential match funders including:

- National Lottery Community Fund and other lottery distributors
- Charitable trusts, foundations and philanthropic funding
- North East Combined Authority (NECA)
- UK Government departments
- Social investment programmes
- Resources targeting the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector

- Relevant health commissioners, including Public Health and the Integrated Care Board
- Employability, skills, education and social inclusion programmes
- Partner and stakeholder organisations
- Private sector contributions to local projects.

Initial mapping of potential funding sources has been undertaken and is summarised in the table below. It should be noted that many of these opportunities are open to VCSE organisations, who will be supported and encouraged to work together to access these opportunities to match with the programme’s grant funding, where appropriate. The table below shows a selection of funding opportunities that may be available to local projects.

Funding Body / Programme	Description / Programme priority
Arts Council England	Opportunities to access funding support for local arts and cultural projects, including grants and grassroots music initiatives.
Ballinger Charitable Trust	North East Trust supporting charities, CICs and community groups in North East England with a focus on young people and older people.
Community Foundation North East	The Foundation provides grants to support a wide range of causes across North East England, from nearly 300 different funds set up by the Foundation’s donors.
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	The Foundation focuses on investing in projects which aim to improve the natural world, secure a fairer future and strengthen the bonds in communities in the UK.
Garfield Weston Foundation	The Foundation supports a wide range of charities that make a positive difference, working in different sectors in the UK. These include welfare, youth, community, environment, education, health, arts, heritage and faith.
Greggs Foundation	The Foundation is a grant-giving organisation aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in the communities where Greggs operates. Funding will support schools, community projects and hardship.
National Lottery Community Fund	Opportunities for local partners to apply for match funding from the range of programmes available, in particular Reaching Communities and Awards for All.
National Lottery Heritage Fund	Opportunities for local partners to work together to apply for support for a wide range of heritage projects.
Police and Crime Commissioners Community Fund	Open to small grass roots organisations to bid for funding to build safer and stronger communities.

Rank Foundation	Rank is supporting Sunderland’s social sector over an initial 3-year period (2024-2027) boosting the impact of community anchor organisations, supporting leadership and social enterprise training, and providing access to micro, and repayable grants.
Sport England	The small grants programme provides opportunities for communities to get more people physically active, supporting new projects through National Lottery funding of between £300 and £15,000.
Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance	Information, advice and guidance on funding opportunities available to the VCSE sector, as well as support on volunteering, governance, training and capacity-building.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	The programme will seek to build on the lessons and achievements of key UKSPF projects that have been delivered in Washington up to March 2026.
Washington Area Committee	Annual neighbourhood fund to support community-led projects.

The issues and challenges outlined in Sections 3 and 4 highlight the need for a number of capacity-building actions that could be supported through the Programme, or through alternative delivery mechanisms.

The table below sets out the Programme’s approach to maximising other funding sources:

Activity	Actions required
Awareness and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved dissemination of funding information to Washington organisations. • More project development workshops and funding events based in the locality. • Agreed communications plan.
Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting partnership-working in common priority areas. • Incentivising collaboration between public, private and VCSE sectors. • Encouraging information sharing and signposting.
Co-production of projects and programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting good practice in co-design and co-production. • Workshops to improve community engagement methods, including research and consultation with priority target groups.
Joint business planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and meetings to identify opportunities for collaboration. • Developing joint projects to funders. • Developing and sharing good practice on approaches to embedding and measuring social value.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing approaches on project design, monitoring, business processes and alternative models.
<p>Training and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring support to promote personal and organisational development. • Developing a coordinated approach to recruiting, training and supporting volunteers. • Developing skills to access funding and other finance, such as business planning, and access to social investment, loan or equity funding. • Community-based workshops to improve capacity-building, knowledge and skills in areas such as marketing, leadership, governance, monitoring and evaluation, and managing volunteers.

Section 7: Community and stakeholder engagement

Since the launch of the Washington engagement activities on 8 August 2025, a comprehensive and inclusive approach has been taken to ensure broad representation across Washington. Thousands of residents have been engaged, significantly exceeding the statistically robust sample size required for meaningful insights.

Engagement activities included online via the Commonplace platform, face-to-face interviews, focus groups, youth engagement through schools and colleges, and outreach via 14 VCSE organisations. These efforts were promoted through a range of methods including leaflets, social media, local press, and community events.

The engagement was geographically widespread, covering all areas of Washington, and was designed to be inclusive, with particular attention to seldom-heard voices and young people.

Importance of community engagement

The Board has demonstrated a strong commitment to embedding community engagement throughout the planning and delivery of the Programme to date. This began with a facilitated workshop involving Board members or representatives to shape the engagement focus and questions.

Support for a mixed-methodology approach ensured accessibility and inclusivity, while investment in VCSE-led engagement helped reach underrepresented groups. The Board also endorsed ongoing youth engagement and used resident feedback to shape thematic priorities and inform long-term aspirations.

This commitment reflects the Board's understanding that sustained and meaningful engagement is essential for ensuring the Programme reflects community needs and aspirations, and that residents feel ownership of the changes being made.

Maintaining engagement

It will be essential to maintain engagement with residents throughout the 10-year programme. This should include:

Closing the feedback loop

To build and maintain trust with residents who have engaged with the Programme to date, it is essential to close the feedback loop with residents. This will enable the Board to demonstrate that the Vision and Plan has been developed taking into consideration the views of residents of Washington, including their priorities for improvement and their aspirations for the future.

Continued communication and engagement

Nearly a thousand Washington residents have signed up for further project updates via the online engagement platform (Commonplace), providing a solid foundation for continued communication and engagement with residents throughout the Programme.

Working with established networks

Key relationships have been developed through the initial phase of engagement activity. This includes the Washington GP Alliance, Washington Primary Care Network (PCN), Washington Headteachers Network and Washington VCSE Network. These groups have indicated a willingness to be kept informed and involved in the Programme. This will be key to ensuring the Board continues to reach Washington residents and communities where they are, via trusted voices.

Ongoing engagement opportunities

Throughout the 10-year programme, it will be vital to continue to hear from residents. Delivery activity will likely shape the form this takes, i.e. targeting in specific geographic areas where an intervention may be delivered, or further in-depth work with key demographic groups based upon the chosen interventions.

Youth engagement

During the programme, it will be vital to continue to reach young people to ensure their voices are heard as the Programme delivers and develops. There are established links with both the Headteachers' Network, individual schools within Washington, Sunderland College (which has an identified cohort of students from Washington) and youth groups via the VCSE.

Engagement review

Carrying out regular engagement audits will assess reach, impact and any changing or emerging priorities, ensuring the Programme remains responsive.

Ongoing Communications Plan

A communications plan will be adopted to ensure that programme information is widely and effectively disseminated to all potential applicants, beneficiaries and local stakeholders.

The publication of the first Call for Projects will provide an overview of the programme and more detailed guidance on the application / business case development process. Workshops / surgeries will also be held throughout the project development, delivery and monitoring stages of the Programme. The Programme will use established routes of engagement using public, private and VCSE partners. The Programme website will be regularly updated with appropriate information and guidance for applicants and approved projects.

The monitoring and evaluation plan which will form part of the Programme Assurance Framework will include measures to maximise evaluation findings, good news stories, project information and case studies.

Branding and publicity

All documentation used by the Programme will be branded with the appropriate UK Government logo and will include reference to Pride in Place. This will include, but is not limited to, the webpages, calls for projects, application forms, presentation materials, and guidance.

Local community and key stakeholders will be engaged with to agree a brand identify for the Programme. This will be developed in early 2026 once UK Government endorsement of the 10-year vision has been received.

Going forward all communications activity will be undertaken in line with the Programme branding and publicity guidance and, where required, with the support of the Council's Strategy and Corporate Affairs directorate. This will apply to both the Council as the accountable body and all approved projects and will form one of the methods through which the local community and key stakeholders will continue to be engaged in ongoing development of the Programme.

Section 8: Governance

The Board has been established to provide strategic oversight of the Programme, its 10-year vision and investment plans. Its membership comprises public, private and VCSE sector representatives including the local MP, local councillors, local businesses/business support providers, local and regional public health representatives, voluntary sector leads, education and skills providers, employment experts and providers, police and crime, and housing organisations.

At the point of developing and submitting the 10-year vision to MHCLG, the Board members are as follows:

- Ellen Thinnesen OBE, Chief Executive, Education Partnership North East – Chair of the Board
- Sharon Hodgson MP, MP for Washington and Gateshead South
- Councillor Beth Jones, Sunderland City Council
- Councillor Linda Williams, Sunderland City Council
- Rachel Snaith, Director of Commissioning and Policy, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria
- Scott Watson, Delivery Director for South Tyneside and Sunderland, NHS North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)
- Paul McEldon OBE, CEO, North East Business Innovation Centre (BIC)
- Simon Marshall, Director of Children’s Services and Chief Executive of Together for Children, Together for Children, Sunderland
- Marc Edwards, Executive Director of Property, Gentoo Group
- Professor Graham Thrower, Head of the Institute for Economic and Social Inclusion, University of Sunderland
- Kim Hunter, Business and Community Development Manager, Headway Wearside
- Ruth Walker, Community and Youth Worker, Sunderland Youth Consortium
- Austin McNamara, Interim CEO, Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance (SVSA).

A Washington Investment Panel (‘the Panel’) will be established by the Board to support them with project appraisal, selection and assurance processes, and to provide strategic advice and recommendations to the Board for their approval. The Panel will comprise officer representation from Board member organisations along with officer representation from the accountable body (the Council). Once established, the group is

expected to be chaired by the Vice Chair of the Board or other appropriate Board member.

It should be noted that Board members are volunteers, and no remuneration is received by the Board members or the Panel representatives.

The Secretariat for both the Board and the Panel will be provided by the Council. The Council will also fulfil the accountable body responsibilities for the Programme including project appraisal, contracting arrangements, coordination of programme management responsibilities, and project monitoring and evaluation. In this role, the Council will ensure the Programme is managed in line with the Nolan Principles and the standards expected for projects and proposals as outlined in Managing Public Money (regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility).

The Board, with support from the accountable body, will oversee the development of a Local Assurance Framework. The scheme of delegation will form part of the Framework. The Board will also develop terms of reference, process to nominate representatives for the Panel, and ensure declarations of interest are implemented and maintained for the Panel.

The table below summarises the proposed roles and responsibilities of the Board, the Panel and accountable body.

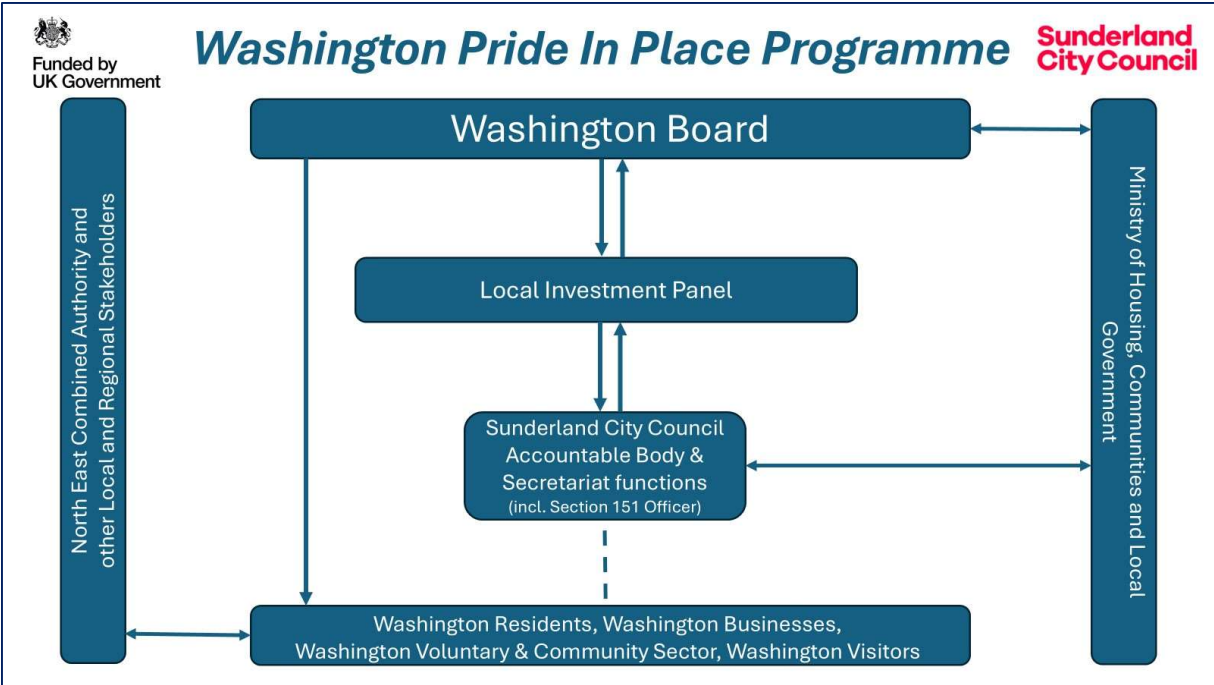
<p>Washington Neighbourhood Board ('the Board')</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the Terms of Reference and membership of the Board on an annual basis. • To approve or otherwise the Terms of Reference and membership of the Panel on an annual basis. • To approve or otherwise the recommendations of the Panel in respect of the approval of the programme grant funding to individual projects. • To receive programme performance reports, including reports on key performance indicators and budget performance. • To provide strategic advice on the direction of the programme to the Accountable Body and the Panel, including the scope and priorities for project calls and commissions. • To provide review and scrutiny of programme delivery. • Provide strategic input and oversight of the Programme communications, publicity and evaluation requirements. • To maximise opportunities to publicise and promote the Programme in Washington to key stakeholders and partner organisations in local, regional and national arenas.
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<p>Washington Investment Panel ('the Panel')</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive, consider and review project assessments and provide strategic advice on key aspects of the project Business Case/Full Application in line with the Assessment Framework for the relevant Call for Projects, Procurement or Commissioning exercise. • To reach consensus on the final project assessment, including scoring, comments and feedback to the applicant, where appropriate, and agree the recommendation to be made to the Board. • To make recommendations on project outcomes to the Board when appropriate, in line with the programme Scheme of Delegation. This includes where there is no Panel consensus. • To receive progress monitoring updates on individual projects including quarterly progress reports on key performance indicators. • To receive programme performance and external evaluation reports and advise the Board if action is required to meet financial targets, performance or delivery objectives. • To ensure that programme level risks and issues are monitored and reported to the Board as appropriate. • On the recommendation of the Accountable Body and/or the Board call in projects for review and scrutiny where projects may be under performing or are requesting a significant change in project scope, scale, delivery mechanism, key performance targets (outcomes/outputs) or costs/funding. • Support the Board in identifying and deciding on the admission of new members and/or the dismissal of members from the Panel. • When required by the Accountable Body and/or the Board, to consider and support with requests for information from MHCLG. • When required by the Board, support and advise on the content of future calls for projects, procurements and commissioning arrangements, and the criteria for the assessment and selection of projects. • When appropriate or as required by the Board, advise on stakeholder engagement or other matters as they arise during the Programme period.
<p>Accountable Body</p>	<p>Accountable Body (in consultation with the Board)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the operations of the Board and the Panel are supported and recorded through coordination of secretariat functions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure that the funding programme is managed at all times in accordance with the Assurance Framework.• To draft and issue Calls for Projects, Procurements and Commissioning documentation, including the criteria for the assessment and selection of projects, as advised by and on behalf of the Board• To make project funding recommendations to the Panel following full project assessment and due diligence.• Prioritise project funding applications according to assessment criteria for consideration by the Board and/or the Panel.• Where funding decisions on projects have been deferred or are unsuccessful, to advise the lead applicants on feedback, clarifications or next steps.• Following the approval of projects by the Board and/or the Panel, to draft and issue award letters and funding agreements to the successful applicants.• Receive progress monitoring information on individual projects and the Programme as a whole, including quarterly progress reports on key performance indicators.• Provide programme monitoring and performance reports and advise the Board and/or the Panel if action is required to meet financial targets, performance or delivery objectives.• Consider requests for information from MHCLG and agree responses as appropriate on behalf of the Board.• Support the effective communication of progress on the delivery of the Programme and ensure branding guidelines are adhered to.• Provide advice and guidance to the Board on management of the Programme.• Ensure that strategic programme and project management key risks and issues are reported to the Board and/or the Panel as appropriate.• Support and oversee plans for the evaluation of the Programme.• Encourage and promote best practice and sharing of lessons among Washington, Sunderland and wider NECA partners.• In liaison with the Board, review the membership of the Panel and its Terms of Reference at least annually, or more frequently when deemed necessary.
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	<p>Accountable Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accept the terms of the funding agreement with associated conditions from MHCLG. • To agree the terms of Local Funding Agreements or contracts with project delivery organisations whose projects are approved for support by the Board/Panel. • To execute all necessary legal agreements following approval by the Board. • To undertake clawback procedures or the suspension of grant payments to approved projects, in consultation with the Board and/or the Panel. • To submit programme reports and returns, and assurance statements to MHCLG. • To ensure the programme is managed in compliance of the Nolan Principles and the standards expected for projects and proposals as outlined in Managing Public Money.
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The organogram below presents the main governance structures for the Washington Pride in Place Programme.



Section 9: Assurance

The Council will undertake the day-to-day roles and responsibilities required to fulfil the Council's role as accountable body. This includes provision of secretariat functions, the publication of calls for projects, procurements or commissioning opportunities, and the coordination of project assessment, contracting, monitoring and evaluation responsibilities on behalf of and reporting to the Board.

The accountable body role will be delivered by Council officers from across a number of service areas. The Sustainable Regeneration Team and External Funding Team will take the lead coordination role for the Programme management and administration of the Programme, with the Sustainable Regeneration Team (with support from Law and Governance) leading on secretariat and coordination function and the External Funding Team leading on appraisal, monitoring and compliance functions. These teams will be supported by other teams within the following Directorates as appropriate:

- Finance Directorate - Audit, Risk and Assurance, Corporate Procurement, Financial Management.
- Smart Cities and Enabling Services Directorate – Law and Governance.
- Economy and Place Directorate - Business Investment, Economic and Sustainable Regeneration, Culture and Heritage.
- Strategy and Corporate Affairs Directorate – Communications, Area Coordination, Learning and Skills.

Clear lines of separation will be maintained between project development, assessment, approval and payment of grant.

The Council's Internal Audit service will provide advice on the establishment of robust programme and project monitoring processes, including the development of a Local Assurance Framework, and where applicable will undertake an independent audit of the arrangements in place to manage the Programme including review of roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, programme/project monitoring and compliance with assurance processes. Programme audits may be carried out at any point during the lifetime of the Programme and to support the Council's Section 151 Officer when providing assurance statements/returns to MHCLG.

In addition, the Programme shall fall under the remit of the relevant Council Scrutiny Committee reflecting the Council's role as accountable body and is expected to be subject to annual performance review under this mechanism.

The arrangements described above have been successfully implemented for previous external funding programmes where the Council has been the accountable body, including for Community Local Led Development, UK Community Renewal Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The Council will continually review its accountable body arrangements and make improvements if identified to provide assurance that the Programme for Washington is delivered in line with Best Value standards and guidance on managing public money. Accountable body, programme management arrangements and processes will be set out in the Local Assurance Framework document.

Find out more

Website link: <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/washington-pride-in-place>

Email contact: washingtonplan@sunderland.gov.uk