

Appendix A – Dewsbury 10 Year Regeneration Plan

Our Future Dewsbury – 10 Year Vision

Foreword

Photo – Sophie Johnson, Chair of Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board

Together, we can make a difference to the people of Dewsbury.

As Chair of the Neighbourhood Board, I am proud to present our Regeneration Plan, a bold and ambitious vision for Dewsbury's future. Over the next decade, we will build on our town's strengths in partnership with our communities, and shape a Dewsbury that is confident, connected and inclusive. This Plan is not just about new buildings or infrastructure. It is about creating a town that people are proud to call home: a place for enterprise and opportunity, a place that values heritage while embracing innovation, and a place where communities thrive together.

Our vision looks ahead with optimism. By working in partnership with local people, businesses and regional partners, we will create a Dewsbury that is vibrant, attractive and welcoming for everyone.

Together, we have the opportunity to make a lasting difference and to secure a future for Dewsbury that generations to come will be proud of.

Photo – Cllr Graham Turner, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration

This Regeneration Plan comes at a moment of real momentum for Dewsbury. After years of groundwork, we are beginning to see major projects move from plans into delivery - the revival of the Arcade, the renewal of Dewsbury Market, new homes at Station Apartments and the creation of a new town park. Work has begun on a modernised bus station, backed by West Yorkshire Combined Authority, demonstrating regional confidence in our town's future.

Our vision for Dewsbury is clear - we want to build good quality, affordable homes, create a thriving town centre, and help to open up more employment opportunities. These investments are the first steps in realising the long-term vision set out by Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board. They show that change is not just promised, it is happening. The coming years will bring more opportunities, stronger connections, and a re-energised town centre that attracts people to live, work, learn, and visit.

Dewsbury's moment has arrived. This Plan ensures we capitalise on it, unlocking new growth and delivering the vibrant, successful town our communities deserve.

Image of Dewsbury with a quote over the top

"Dewsbury is an ambitious place at the start of a spectacular transformation. Through #OurFutureDewsbury we are working hard to regenerate parts of our town and help deliver more jobs, more homes and a more varied offer for everyone to enjoy."

Cllr Carole Pattison, Leader of Kirklees Council

1. Local context

Dewsbury is a historic market town in West Yorkshire, home to around 64,000 people. Situated within Kirklees, the town has a rich industrial heritage rooted in textiles, which has shaped its identity, architecture, and character. It is a diverse and multicultural community, with over a third of residents under 25, bringing a wealth of culture, energy, and creativity that continues to define the town's spirit and ambition. Dewsbury sits at the heart of North Kirklees, well connected to Leeds, Huddersfield and Wakefield, and plays an important role in the wider West Yorkshire economy.

However, Dewsbury also faces significant and deep-rooted challenges. More than half of its neighbourhoods (LSOAs) rank among the 20% most deprived nationally. Child poverty is a particular concern, with over half of under-16s living in low-income households, compared to a fifth nationally. Educational attainment lags behind the England average, with too many adults having low or no qualifications, limiting access to better-paid work and restricting social mobility. Local jobs tend to pay less than elsewhere, unemployment is higher, and economic inactivity is widespread all of which affects residents' confidence and wellbeing. These challenges underline the importance of sustained local investment and partnership working to create fairer opportunities for all residents.

Safety is a major issue. In 2023, the recorded crime rate was 158.2 per 1000 population, compared to 92.8 nationally and residents consistently report feeling less safe than people in other towns. Tackling antisocial behaviour and restoring confidence in public spaces remain urgent priorities.

The town centre illustrates both challenges and opportunity. Dewsbury boasts an exceptional collection of historic buildings and civic spaces, yet too many shops stand vacant, footfall has declined, and the high street offer does not fully meet community needs. There is significant potential to bring new life into the centre, repurposing vacant spaces, attracting investment, and creating a town centre that reflects the diversity and ambition of its people. Recent projects such as the Arcade restoration and Town Park design have begun to build confidence and attract new interest.

Housing and health present further concerns. Homes are relatively affordable but often of poor quality, 23% of local homes fail to meet decent standards, compared to 21% regionally and 15% nationally. Health outcomes are below the national average: life expectancy is shorter, long-term illness more common, and demand on GP services above average. Residents spend more years living in poor health, highlighting the need for healthier neighbourhoods with improved access to green spaces, safe walking routes, and preventative services.

Despite these challenges, Dewsbury's strengths are clear. It has a resilient and committed population, a rich cultural mix, and unique heritage assets. Recent community initiatives and investment are beginning to shift momentum, and there is a strong appetite locally for change. With targeted support in skills, jobs, housing, health, safety, and town centre regeneration, Dewsbury has the opportunity to overcome entrenched disadvantage and unlock the potential of its young and diverse population, building a safer, fairer, and more vibrant future.

This forms the foundation for a long-term plan to re-establish Dewsbury as a thriving and inclusive town at the heart of West Yorkshire

2. Spatial targeting

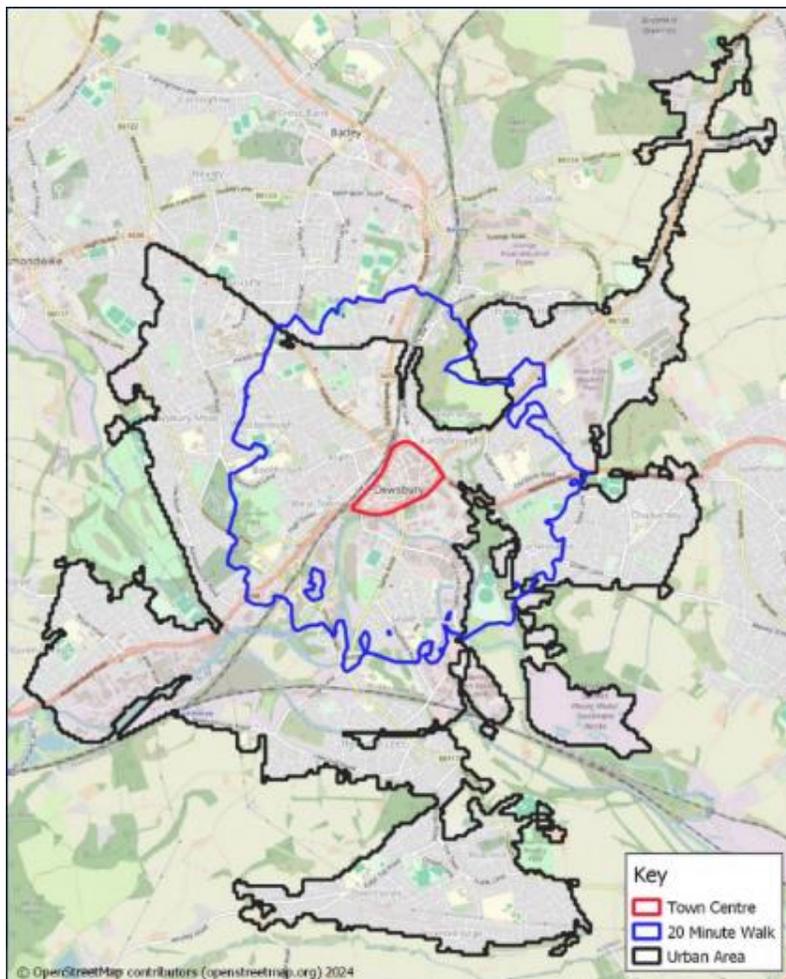
The focus of intervention for the Regeneration Plan is Dewsbury Town Centre. This area represents the functional heart of the local economy, housing the highest concentration of shops, services, community facilities, and transport connections. While wider neighbourhoods face disadvantage, the town centre is where the challenges of economic decline, market failure, and civic disengagement are most visible and where targeted investment can generate transformational change. The area includes key destinations such as Dewsbury Market, the Arcade, Town Park, and the rail and bus stations.

Focussing on the town centre provides the opportunity to achieve the strategic aims of the funding received, responds to the views of the people of Dewsbury, and builds on exiting projects within the town centre. Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board will continue to work with partners, and ensure the wider areas of Dewsbury are connected, contribute to, and benefit from the regeneration of Dewsbury.

Plan of Dewsbury Town Centre

The Place boundary is the Office for National Statistics Built-Up Area (BUA) for Dewsbury is as below.

Figure



Engagement through **#OurFutureDewsbury** involved surveys, workshops, and targeted outreach to residents, businesses, and community groups. Over 70% of participants described the town centre as “tired” or “neglected,” highlighting safety, cleanliness, and accessibility as top priorities.

Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board has carefully reviewed this feedback alongside socio-economic data, including vacancy rates, footfall trends, and underutilised assets. Through structured prioritisation exercises, the Board concluded that interventions in the town centre would deliver the greatest visibility, reach the largest number of residents, and act as a catalyst for wider regeneration. For example, analysis of mobility and retail data confirms that over 80% of trips to Dewsbury’s urban area begin or end within the ring road, reinforcing the town centre’s strategic importance.

This decision reflects a community-led and evidence-based approach: the proposed interventions directly respond to the issues identified by residents while supporting broader strategic objectives of the Government’s funding programme. While the town centre is the initial focus, complementary programmes in surrounding neighbourhoods will extend benefits across Dewsbury, ensuring that the wider community experiences positive impact.

Target Areas and Rationale

Dewsbury town centre faces acute challenges:

- **Vacancy and underused assets:** approximately 21% of commercial premises are vacant, with many historic buildings underutilised.
- **Declining footfall and retail offer:** the centre no longer meets the needs of a diverse, youthful population.
- **Safety and perception:** residents frequently report feeling unsafe, particularly in public spaces, undermining confidence and civic pride.

At the same time, the town centre holds Dewsbury’s greatest assets: historic architecture, underused public spaces, and strong transport links. Revitalising the centre can create visible improvements that ripple into surrounding neighbourhoods, attract investment, and restore civic pride. This investment will consolidate fragmented activity into a coherent place strategy that connects people, enterprise, and heritage.

Strategic Objectives

Focusing interventions in the town centre aligns with the Pride of Place - Long Term Plan for Towns framework:

- **Thriving Places:** Revitalisation through business support, public realm improvements, and reuse of heritage buildings will restore the town centre’s vibrancy and economic activity.
- **Stronger Communities:** A safer, cleaner, and more inclusive centre provides spaces for residents from all backgrounds to connect through markets, cultural events, and everyday activity.
- **Taking Back Control:** Local decision-making via the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board, grants programme, and collaborative enforcement ensures the community shapes investment and place management.

By focusing on the town centre, Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board will deliver strategic, community-based interventions with the potential to transform perceptions and

outcomes. Over the next decade, the centre will become a thriving hub for residents, businesses, and visitors, a foundation for wider regeneration, economic vitality, and civic pride across Dewsbury.

Concentrating resources here allows investment to achieve visible, high impact results, building confidence for private sector involvement and future co-investment. Improvements to safety, accessibility, and the local environment will benefit residents across the wider Dewsbury area by strengthening connections to jobs, culture, and essential services. Complementary housing, health, and skills programmes elsewhere in Dewsbury will further extend these benefits.

3. Vision for the future (≤250 words)

Vision for Dewsbury Town Centre

Dewsbury town centre will be a safe, vibrant and welcoming place where communities of all ages and backgrounds can live, work and connect. Guided by the priorities identified through #OurFutureDewsbury, the town centre will reflect the diversity, energy and creativity of its residents.

Building on work already done, historic buildings and underused spaces, like the Arcade, will be revitalised into affordable homes, community hubs, and spaces for businesses and start-ups, bringing life back to the heart of the town. Streets, parks, and public spaces will feel safer, cleaner, and more inviting, encouraging people to spend time, socialise, and enjoy the centre day and night.

Residents will have more reasons to visit and stay in Dewsbury town centre. Local businesses, market stalls and independent traders will be supported to thrive, while new enterprises see Dewsbury as a place of opportunity, innovation and growth. Building on the success of events like the Food and Drink Festival, a rich programme of events will celebrate the town's diversity and culture, providing something for everyone, every day.

By 2036, success will be seen in increased footfall day & night, seeing business setting up and staying open longer and thriving community activity. Residents will continue to shape the town's future, ensuring that everyone has a voice in the town centre's evolution. Over the next decade, Dewsbury town centre will become a place of pride, energy and possibility, where heritage and modern life can come together, and where people choose to live, visit and invest.

4. Strategic case for change

Context and Need for Change

Dewsbury is a proud market town with a rich industrial and cultural heritage, positioned at the heart of North Kirklees. For generations it has served as the commercial and civic centre for surrounding communities, a place of exchange, identity and shared belonging. Yet over recent decades, Dewsbury has experienced sustained economic and social decline, reflected most visibly in its town centre.

The following case for change outlines the underlying evidence of need, the priorities identified by local people, and the rationale for focusing interventions in the town centre as the catalyst for long-term renewal under the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme.

Evidence of Need

Dewsbury faces a complex set of interrelated challenges shaped by long-term structural changes in the economy, patterns of retail decline, and persistent deprivation in surrounding neighbourhoods. The town includes several communities ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019), with areas such as Dewsbury Moor and Moorside sitting within the most disadvantaged nationally. Income and employment deprivation are particularly acute with around one in three households experience some form of income poverty, and unemployment rates are almost twice the Kirklees average.

Social challenges mirror economic ones. Central Dewsbury's crime rate (135.4 per 1000 residents) remain significantly higher than both the district and national averages and the LSOA covering parts of Dewsbury Moor was ranked 6th worst in England for recorded crime, while measures of social trust are notably low, with net social trust at -19% compared to -8% for Kirklees and -3% nationally.

Health outcomes show similar inequalities with life expectancy in parts of Dewsbury being around three years below England's average, with higher rates of respiratory illness and obesity than wider Kirklees. These indicators underscore the need to build stronger communities through better health, opportunity and public confidence.

Economic and Market Conditions

The town's economy has struggled to adapt to changing patterns of retail and service use following the rise of online shopping. Vacancy rates in the town centre are approximately 21%, considerably higher than the national average of 13%, and a significant number of heritage and upper-floor spaces remain underused. Footfall data and business engagement suggest a 25% decline in visitors since 2017, with many local traders reporting reduced turnover and a perception of limited daytime and evening activity. Dewsbury's footfall index (151.5) compared to England's average of 100 for similar towns, highlights continued volatility in visitor patterns.

The local property market has been unable to respond effectively. Low rental values, high renovation costs and the complexity of bringing historic assets back into use have deterred private investment. Without public intervention, this market failure will persist, further undermining confidence and accelerating physical decline.

Public investment here represents value for money by unlocking stalled assets and attracting sustainable private co-investment.

Community Priorities

Community engagement through the Long-Term Plan and **#OurFutureDewsbury** revealed strong consensus about priorities.

- 72% of residents described the town as “run-down”, “neglected” or “tired”.
 - 68% reported feeling unsafe after dark.
 - 54% rated cleanliness as poor or very poor.
- When asked about improvements, residents prioritised:
- Cleaner streets (77%),
 - Tackling anti-social behaviour (74%), and
 - Support for local businesses (69%).

Businesses cited vandalism, fly-tipping, and low footfall as major barriers. Yet despite concerns, engagement revealed strong civic pride and a determination to see change. Local people want a town that feels safe, clean and confident again, reflecting Dewsbury’s identity and community spirit.

These findings directly inform the Board’s investment priorities and underpin the strategic case for town centre renewal.

Rationale for Town Centre Focus

While deprivation is evident across the wider Dewsbury area, focusing investment in the town centre is both deliberate and evidence-based. The centre remains the economic and social heart of Dewsbury, accommodating around 40% of all local businesses and serving as the key interchange for rail, bus and walking routes across North Kirklees.

It is also where decline is most visible with empty shops, heritage buildings at risk, and streets that no longer feel safe or welcoming. Targeting this area provides the greatest potential for transformational change. A revitalised town centre will attract visitors, restore business confidence and create a visible symbol of progress that benefits communities across Dewsbury.

The commercial vacancy rate in Dewsbury’s town centre is approximately 21.1% compared to England’s average of 10.4% and Footfall data (April 2022-2023) shows Dewsbury at an index of 151.5 where 100 denotes England’s average for similarly sized built-up areas. Public investment here will help correct long-term market failure by de-risking private investment, supporting heritage reuse and improving the quality of public spaces. Concentrating resources in this way ensures value for money and delivers early, visible results, helping to rebuild trust and civic pride further building on the positive impact the Dewsbury Town Investment Plan has had.

Alignment with Programme Objectives

Focusing on the town centre directly supports the three national objectives of the Plan for Neighbourhoods:

- **Thriving Places:** Investment in business support, heritage re-use, and public realm improvements will revitalise Dewsbury’s economic core, creating a more vibrant, attractive and prosperous town centre that draws residents and visitors back.

- **Stronger Communities:** A safer, cleaner, and more inclusive centre will encourage participation in civic life, local events, and community-led initiatives, helping to rebuild pride and shared ownership of place.
- **Taking Back Control:** Through the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board, residents, businesses and community organisations will shape local decisions on funding, enforcement and place management, ensuring that regeneration reflects local priorities and values.

Use of Powers and Long-term Approach

Over the next decade, the long-term plan in Dewsbury will combine strategic investment, local partnership, and community stewardship to deliver visible, lasting change. It will draw on available powers to:

1. Acquire and bring key vacant or derelict buildings back into productive use.
2. Coordinate enforcement, cleansing and maintenance activity to improve the local environment.
3. Deliver targeted business and community grants to support local enterprise and visible improvements.
4. Adopt local design and investment frameworks to guide development.
5. Explore the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) to sustain momentum and long-term stewardship.

Priority Themes and Interventions

1. Safety & Security

Creating a town centre that feels safe, clean and welcoming through a visible, coordinated task force model.

Key issues:

- 42% of residents identify crime and anti-social behaviour as their top deterrent to visiting the centre. The recorded crime rate (135.4 per 1,000 residents) is nearly 1.5 times the Kirklees average.
- Businesses cite vandalism, theft and fly-tipping as persistent issues.

Intervention focus: A multi-agency presence to tackle ASB, environmental crime and hotspot policing, alongside improved lighting, CCTV and cleansing operations.

Expected outcomes: Reduced crime and ASB, visibly cleaner public spaces, and increased public confidence in the safety of the town centre.

2. High Street, Heritage & Regeneration

Driving economic renewal and place identity through business growth, cultural vibrancy and heritage-led investment.

Key issues:

- Commercial vacancy rates are double the national average (21.1% vs 10.4%).
- Over 60% of heritage buildings in the central core are classed as 'at risk' or in poor condition.

- Footfall has fallen by over 50% since its 1990s peak.

Intervention focus: Bringing underused heritage buildings back into active use, supporting small and independent businesses, delivering workspace and housing above shops, and improving the look and feel of key public spaces.

Expected outcomes: Reduced vacancy rates, increased business density, a stronger local economy and renewed town identity with longer dwell times and higher visitor spend.

3. Transport & Connectivity

Ensuring Dewsbury is accessible, connected and future-ready.

Key issues: Congestion, limited safe walking and cycling routes, and car-dominated spaces reduce accessibility and visitor appeal.

Intervention focus: Enhanced pedestrian and cycling routes, better lighting, signage and crossings, and improved links between key destinations such as the rail station, the market and retail areas.

Expected outcomes: Improved accessibility, a safer, more walkable town centre, and a more sustainable transport network that supports footfall and local business.

Long-term Outcomes

Over the next decade, this programme will deliver:

- A thriving and sustainable town centre with significantly reduced vacancy and increased footfall.
- Improved perceptions of safety and cleanliness, with measurable reductions in crime and ASB.
- A stronger, more connected community, actively engaged in local decision-making.
- Renewed pride and confidence, with Dewsbury re-established as a destination for business, culture and community life.

By focusing on the town centre as the heart of the community, the long-term plan investment will deliver visible improvements, renewed confidence and a foundation for inclusive growth. This is a long-term plan to restore Dewsbury's role as a vibrant, welcoming and distinctive town which once again reflects the pride, potential and spirit of the Dewsbury people.

Dewsbury's challenges are significant but not insurmountable. The evidence clearly demonstrates economic need, social disadvantage and market failure but also strong local ambition for change.

5. Alignment with other programmes and investments

Local Context

Dewsbury sits in a prominent location within West Yorkshire, to the north of the Kirklees district. The town is part of West Yorkshire Combined Authority's (WYCA) southern corridor of opportunities as part of its Local Growth Plan.

The town is also a WYCA Spatial Priority Area and included in the Strategic Place Partnership for West Yorkshire, where Homes England, WYCA, and local councils are working together to unlock housing growth and regeneration.

Strategic transport investment is on-going and in development in and around Dewsbury, including the Tran-Pennine Route Upgrade, bus station regeneration, and feasibility work exploring the opportunities for the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Scheme.

The Kirklees Council Plan sets out shared outcomes which closely align with what the regeneration plan for Dewsbury aims to achieve. These outcomes are:

- [Shaped by People](#) - We make our places what they are.
- [Best Start](#) - Children have the best start in life.
- [Well](#) - People in Kirklees are as well as possible for as long as possible.
- [Independent](#) - People in Kirklees live independently and have control over their lives.
- [Aspire and Achieve](#) - People in Kirklees have aspiration to achieve their ambitions through education, training, employment, and lifelong learning.
- [Sustainable Economy](#) - Kirklees has sustainable economic growth and provides good employment for and with communities and businesses.
- [Safe and Cohesive](#) - People in Kirklees live in cohesive communities, feel safe, and are protected from harm.
- [Clean and Green](#) - People in Kirklees experience a high quality, clean, sustainable, and green environment.

The partnership strategies supporting the Council Plan also provide a framework for how Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board, Kirklees Council and other partners can work together to achieve the vision of the regeneration plan.

The partnership strategies are:

- Environment Strategy
- Inclusive Economy Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Inclusive Communities Framework

Kirklees teams that are working to deliver priorities such as the Dewsbury Blueprint and Local Plan will continue to work with the Board to achieve its aims through developing strategies, delivering projects, and securing inward investment.

Integration with Existing and Planned Investments

The Dewsbury Regeneration Plan is closely integrated with ongoing local, regional and national investment. It complements and amplifies existing programmes by connecting large-scale infrastructure projects with community-level improvements that are visible, immediate and lasting.

Towns Fund (£25m): The Dewsbury TIP identified nine major projects aimed at transforming the town centre through new public spaces, cultural facilities, and business growth. This Plan will complement those schemes through the updated intervention themes and outcomes that will be delivered.

These themes build on the Dewsbury Blueprint, a 10-year masterplan focused on making Dewsbury more attractive, active and accessible through heritage-led regeneration, new housing and public realm improvements.

Historic England: Kirklees Council and Historic England have a well-established partnership that has already delivered significant success through the Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). Dewsbury's Conservation Area remains on the National Heritage at Risk Register, and further collaboration through the Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) and Repair Grants for Listed Buildings will help restore vulnerable assets. The focus will not only be on physical restoration but on ensuring that these historic buildings are reanimated with community, cultural and creative uses, bringing them back to life as active parts of the town.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA): From 2026, WYCA's Single Settlement Programme will deliver regional growth funding aligned with the West Yorkshire Local Growth Plan. The Dewsbury Regeneration Plan sits firmly within this framework, particularly around inclusive economic growth, skills, housing and connectivity. Dewsbury is also benefitting from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), including the Cleckheaton Sustainable Travel Corridor (A638), Dewsbury Bus Station transformation and town centre walking and cycling improvements. The Plan will ensure these transport schemes lead directly to higher footfall, better accessibility and increased business activity in the town centre.

West Yorkshire Mass Transit and the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU): will further enhance regional and national connectivity. The Dewsbury Regeneration Plan will help ensure the town is ready to capitalise on these opportunities, with a cleaner, safer and more attractive environment for visitors, workers and investors.

Together, these programmes represent a powerful, interconnected network of investment. The Dewsbury Regeneration Plan provides the local framework that binds them together — ensuring that national and regional funding translates into tangible, visible improvements for local people.

Consistency with Masterplans

The revised regeneration plan for Dewsbury aligns strongly with the objectives of the Dewsbury Blueprint, and Town Investment Plan, building on existing work and taking the regeneration of Dewsbury to the next level.

The Dewsbury Blueprint sets out a long-term vision for transformation across ten themes from housing and transport to heritage, business, creativity and the environment. With over £60 million already secured, the Blueprint has created strong foundations for renewal. The Dewsbury Regeneration Plan builds directly on this momentum, focusing on local delivery and community participation to make these ambitions real at street level.

In practical terms, the Regeneration Plan will deliver the neighbourhood improvements that bring the Blueprint to life, focusing on:

- Cleaner, safer streets that feel cared for and well used;
- A stronger independent retail and business base;
- Cultural and community activities that activate public spaces and celebrate Dewsbury's diversity.

The Dewsbury Town Investment Plan (TIP), developed jointly by Kirklees Council and the then Dewsbury Town Deal Board, secured £24.8 million from the UK Government's Towns Fund, with additional match funding from Kirklees Council and partners, creating a total investment of over £60 million. Many of the TIP projects have been delivered, or are on-going, with those successes being built on by the interventions of the new regeneration plan.

Figure: Dewsbury Blueprint Plan / TIP Plan

6. Match funding and leveraged investment

The Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board recognises that transforming the town centre cannot rely on public funding alone. Our ambition is to create the conditions for sustained private, public, and philanthropic investment building confidence through delivery and showcasing Dewsbury's unique assets. By demonstrating visible success, we will attract new partners and secure the town's position as a place where investment drives community benefit.

Existing Commitments and Partnerships

Investment in Dewsbury is already gaining momentum. Recent successes, such as the revival of The Arcade supported by over £4m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, demonstrate how clear vision and delivery attract co-investment. Heritage-led regeneration is further strengthened through a strong and active partnership with Historic England, most notably through the Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone. Opportunities exist to extend this collaboration through partnership schemes in conservation areas (PSiCA) and repair grants, ensuring continued investment in Dewsbury's historic core.

In 2026, The Arcade Group will take on the lease for The Arcade, creating the UK's first community-owned shopping centre. This pioneering model reflects Dewsbury's distinctive community spirit, combining enterprise and creativity to sustain local business and cultural activity while signalling long-term investor confidence in the town centre.

Alongside this, local businesses and Kirklees College have committed ongoing revenue support for the future Dewsbury Town Park water feature, setting a precedent for shared responsibility in operating community assets.

Local partners are also stepping forward to share responsibility for the town's future. Kirklees College and local businesses have committed ongoing revenue support for the forthcoming Dewsbury Town Park water feature, setting a valuable precedent for community co-management of public assets.

The Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board benefits from strong relationships with key anchor institutions, each playing a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable local economy:

- Kirklees College aligning its mission of "*Creating Opportunities, Changing Lives*" with the *Plan for Neighbourhoods* priorities, and supporting skills and employment pathways for young people.

- Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust developing town-centre-based health and wellbeing services, embedding preventative care in accessible community settings.
- West Yorkshire Police and Fire Services working alongside Kirklees Council and the Neighbourhood Board to embed community safety, resilience, and building standards into regeneration projects.

Regionally, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) remains a strategic partner. Its forthcoming Single Settlement programme (from April 2026) will closely align with Dewsbury's priorities for inclusive growth, connectivity, housing, and heritage-led regeneration.

Cultural and creative partnerships also play a crucial role. Collaborations with the Arts Council, Taking the Lead Creative Culture, and Hatch are opening new opportunities for philanthropic and creative sector investment, building on the success of past cultural initiatives and strengthening Dewsbury's creative economy.

Strategic Approach to Future Investment

Looking ahead, the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board will continue to work in close partnership with Kirklees Council to build investor confidence and attract new capital into the town. Dewsbury has already been promoted at UKREiiF, the UK's leading real estate and infrastructure investment forum, alongside Homes England, Network Rail, WYCA, and major developers. The town will again feature prominently in 2026, offering a national platform to showcase progress and secure further institutional and private sector investment.

Our strategy is both collaborative and place-based, ensuring that future investment directly supports local people and businesses. Key actions include:

- Developing a compelling investment prospectus tailored to different investor audiences.
- Aligning Council resources and capital programmes to unlock private and institutional co-investment.
- Engaging proactively with philanthropic foundations, social investors, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes.
- Embedding community wealth-building principles to ensure local people benefit from growth through jobs, supply chains, and ownership models.

Through these partnerships and targeted actions, the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board will maximise opportunities for public, private, and philanthropic match funding, ensuring regeneration in Dewsbury is ambitious, inclusive, and financially sustainable for the long term.

7. Community and stakeholder engagement

Overview

Since 2019, the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board (DNB) has been at the heart of the town's long-term renewal, bringing together local voices, public services, and business leaders around a shared ambition to restore pride and purpose. Early engagement through *Our Town Dewsbury (2020)* and the *Town Investment Plan* helped establish strong local foundations.

Building on this, the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme funded "*Our Future Dewsbury*" (2024) a major engagement opportunity which received over 800 responses and reached far and wide, including underrepresented groups through multilingual and face-to-face outreach in schools, mosques, markets and community centres.

The Board made a deliberate effort to engage harder-to-reach groups, recognising that a representative process would lead to more inclusive priorities. This included:

- a youth-voice programme across schools, colleges and universities;
- targeted outreach with South Asian communities through multilingual officers;
- direct conversations with local businesses following low initial response rates.

These additional steps strengthened both the breadth and quality of feedback and now shape how the Board will sustain inclusive engagement throughout delivery.

Neighbourhood Board Membership and Leadership

The DNB brings together a diverse group of local volunteers, including:

- Local business leaders
- Community representatives
- Councillors
- The local Member of Parliament
- Representatives from the police, education institutions, and health services
- Charities and civil society organisations

The Board is chaired independently, ensuring impartiality and community representation. DNB members uphold the Seven Nolan Principles of public life including integrity, transparency, and accountability and work collectively to deliver outcomes that reflect local priorities.

Over the 10-year period, the Board will review its membership annually to ensure representation reflects Dewsbury's changing demographics. Young leaders and under-represented groups will be actively recruited to strengthen inclusivity and bring new perspectives. Board members are expected to actively participate in shaping and delivering the Regeneration Plan, leveraging their expertise and networks to support interventions and community engagement. Subcommittees and advisory groups may be formed to address specific areas, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness to emerging needs.

Ways of Working & Distinction from the Local Authority

The Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board operates independently from Kirklees Council, while recognising the Council's role as the accountable body for funding. This separation is deliberate:

- The Board sets the vision and priorities, informed by community engagement and local evidence.
- The Council provides delivery support and technical expertise, ensuring projects are viable, sustainable and compliant.
- The Board acts as a critical friend, challenging and advising the Council to ensure delivery reflects local priorities.

This partnership model has already been tested successfully. Since 2020, the Board has co-developed and overseen delivery of the Town Investment Plan alongside Kirklees Council, while retaining independence. This successful track record underpins confidence in the governance approach ensuring that the regeneration of Dewsbury is guided by local priorities and shaped by those who live and work in the town, rather than being solely driven by local government.

Securing Buy-in

DNB's approach is clear: regeneration must not be done *to* Dewsbury, but *with* and *by* its people. The Board's strategy therefore places community and stakeholder engagement at the centre of delivery, ensuring that actions are rooted in local needs, shaped through collaboration, and sustained for the long term.

Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board has established strong partnerships and will build on them through:

- **Business engagement:** A Business Network, launched in 2025 with The Arcade Group, has already convened local entrepreneurs and driven town-centre activity. Following initial low levels of engagement in the "*Our Future Dewsbury*" (2024) engagement programme, over 600 local businesses were directly contacted, with further engagement supported through a well-attended drop-in session at Dewsbury Town Hall. Two outreach teams then visited business premises to listen to issues and ideas directly, shaping priorities for supporting town centre traders. This will now be built on with the Board exploring similar models and new approaches to strengthen business participation and secure local investment.
- **Community engagement:** Outreach in 2024 included mosques, schools, market stalls, and cultural festivals, supported by multilingual staff to ensure inclusivity. Multilingual engagement officers ensured inclusion of Dewsbury's South Asian communities, conducting face-to-face conversations in Urdu, Punjabi and Gujarati, which proved particularly effective in breaking down barriers and improving participation. These methods will be continued and expanded on over the period.
- **Youth participation:** Engagement with Kirklees College and the University of Huddersfield has highlighted the importance of involving young people. Engagement with young people extended to over 100 participants across schools and colleges, including Thornhill Academy, Kirklees College and the local university, ensuring their priorities around safety, opportunity, and civic pride were embedded in the plan. The Board will build on this by creating

clear routes for young people to influence decisions, through representation on subgroups, forums and targeted outreach.

The Board will track participation levels, diversity of representation, partnerships formed, and additional investment leveraged and adjust their engagement methods accordingly.

Future Engagement Approach

Community engagement will remain continuous, iterative, and transparent. The Our future Dewsbury programme (2024) revealed strong community priorities: bringing empty buildings back in use with 45% of respondents prioritising, improving safety and security with 36% of respondents prioritising, and enhancing town-centre attractiveness with 27% of respondents prioritising. This evidence has directly shaped the first phase of interventions included in the 4 year plan.

The Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board is committed to ongoing dialogue with Dewsbury's communities and that it's not a one-off exercise but a continuous and evolving process.

The Board has commissioned physical communication hub in an engagement container at the Market, where members of the public can find out and talk about various projects in Dewsbury. This hub will be designed to continue reaching the same diverse audiences involved in the initial engagement particularly young people, ethnic minority communities and local traders to ensure continuity of conversation and long-term trust. DNB are working closely with community partners The Arcade Group who are leading and delivering a range of events where Board and Council colleagues can talk to communities. The Board have commissioned a range of digital ways to keep in touch about progress of the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme, where online engagement is also forming part of the feedback into the regeneration plan.

Quarterly Board meetings are open to the public and this is shared in advance on DNB platforms to get people physically in the meetings. These meetings provide a forum for residents to ask questions, share concerns, and contribute ideas.

Regular updates are provided through the Board's website and social media channels, ensuring that the public remains informed about progress and upcoming opportunities for involvement. Pop-up consultations are planned at key milestones in the delivery of the Regeneration Plan, allowing the Board to gather feedback and adjust its approach as needed. A full engagement report is scheduled for publication in late 2025, which will summarise the feedback received and outline how it has influenced the development of the Plan. Engagement methods will be iterative and regular review of data will be carried out.

Delivering Interventions

Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board have a clear roadmap: the first few years will focus on building community confidence through early wins and widening engagement with underrepresented groups, followed in the long term by embedding legacy and supporting local groups to sustain regeneration beyond funding.

The Board's delivery model builds directly on lessons learned to date. In 2024–25, interventions were shortlisted through Board-led working groups using community engagement data. For example, priorities such as vacant building reuse and safety improvements emerged consistently across consultations. The co-design process used in 2024–25 will be maintained throughout delivery. This approach has already shown the

benefits of embedding diverse voices at the start of project development, from local businesses influencing town-centre safety measures, to young people shaping the vision for public spaces. Embedding co-design ensures interventions are grounded in lived experience and community ownership.

Delivery Framework:

- Phased Delivery - Quick wins to build momentum which clearly respond to community engagement feedback, medium-term projects co-designed with stakeholders, and long-term interventions aligned with strategic vision.
- Co-Design + Technical Assurance - Communities shape interventions; Council officers provide feasibility, compliance, and sustainability checks.
- Partnership Model - Delivery in collaboration with businesses, charities, and local groups, with commissioning prioritised locally to create jobs and skills.
- Monitoring & Adaptation - Annual reviews, with interventions adjusted based on feedback and outcomes.
- Resilience & Sustainability - Building local capacity so projects can be owned and managed by the community beyond the 10-year funding period.

Transparency and Accountability

The DNB is committed to maintaining openness and accountability throughout the life of the programme.

- Open & transparent governance and published minutes of meetings including public accountability with dedicated question time at Board meetings.
- Conflict of interest protocols and FOI compliance.
- Clear KPI's which are reviewed and reported on frequently.
- Annual public reporting on progress and outcomes, aligned to the MHCLG Plan for Neighbourhoods framework.

Future Plans and sustainability

The Board's early achievements show how regeneration efforts can spark wider investment and participation. Over the next 10 years, these efforts will be scaled and embedded to ensure sustainability.

- Sustained community involvement: Supporting residents, volunteers, and young people to stay actively engaged through training, mentoring, and opportunities to take on roles in shaping, delivering, and sustaining projects. Building on lessons from the 'Our Future Dewsbury' engagement, the Board will develop a rolling programme of participation activity, ensuring continuity with harder-to-reach groups, including young residents, South Asian communities, and independent businesses so their voices continue to shape delivery decisions throughout the decade
- Partnership embedding: Strengthening networks across business, civil society, and public services to ensure collaboration continues beyond the life of the programme.
- Investment leverage: Using the £20m as a catalyst for attracting further private, voluntary, and public sector investment to secure long-term impact.

Ultimately, the vision is for Dewsbury to be a thriving, inclusive, and resilient town - shaped and led by its people and sustained beyond the life of the programme. The

Board has already seen how local energy and collaboration can deliver change, and over the next decade, it will build on this foundation to deliver lasting transformation.

8. Governance

A clear and proven governance structure is in place to oversee the Regeneration Plan for Dewsbury. This structure ensures accountability, transparency, value for money, and community leadership, drawing on the existing arrangements developed for the Town Investment Plan and refreshed through the *Dewsbury Town Board Terms of Reference (2025)*.

The DNB is the principal decision-making body for both the Town Investment Plan and the Plan for Neighbourhoods investment programme. It provides leadership, sets strategic priorities, and ensures that regeneration is community-led and evidence-based.

The Board's role includes:

- Setting and reviewing priorities for investment.
- Overseeing delivery performance and risk management.
- Providing assurance to Kirklees Council (as accountable body).
- Ensuring decisions reflect local needs and engagement feedback.

Board Membership includes:

Community Representatives:

- Christine Fox – Connect Housing
- Helen Rose – Kirklees College
- Palvinder Singh – Kirklees College
- Anum Rehman – Local resident and Youth Voice representative
- Chief Superintendent Jim Griffiths – West Yorkshire Police
- Fara Butt – Local business owner
- Martin Walsh – Local business owner
- Paul Burnett – Local business owner
- Jackie Ramsey – Local community member
- Andi Eccles – Local resident and community member
- Peter Mason – Dewsbury business owner

Political Representatives:

- Iqbal Mohammed MP – Member of Parliament for Dewsbury & Batley
- Councillor Graham Turner – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Finance
- Councillor Nosheen Dad – Dewsbury South

Membership will be reviewed regularly to ensure diversity; appropriate representation is present and alignment with community priorities.

Accountable Body and Delivery Structure

Kirklees Council acts as the Accountable Body for the Plan for Neighbourhoods funding. It is responsible for:

- Managing grant funds in line with Managing Public Money and Council financial regulations.
- Providing delivery, technical, legal and procurement support.
- Reporting performance, finance and risk to MHCLG.

Thematic Working Groups

Thematic Working Groups are convened and chaired by members of the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Their primary function is to oversee the delivery of key activities, facilitate prioritisation, support decision-making, and ensure effective reporting mechanisms are in place.

These groups work in partnership with the Board, stakeholders, and Council officers to ensure that project outputs and outcomes are achieved, and that grant funding is utilised efficiently and strategically.

Where thematic groups do not currently exist, they may be established to address emerging priorities, ensuring leadership by Board members and alignment with community needs. Examples include Safety & Security and Place groups, which can draw on both technical expertise and lived experience to inform and shape project delivery.

Transparency and Standards

All activity will be governed by the Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life including selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership and by the standards set out in Managing Public Money (regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility).

The DNB operates with full transparency, with:

- Published agendas, minutes and decisions on both the DNB and Kirklees Council websites.
- Quarterly public meetings advertised through local and digital channels, with opportunities for questions.
- Regular communications through social media and newsletters updating the community on decisions and progress.
- Annual reporting against key performance indicators, including financial compliance, community engagement reach, and delivery milestones.

The Board also undertakes governance training and self-assessments to review effectiveness and identify areas for governance improvement.

Approving Investments

All projects within the Dewsbury Regeneration Plan will be managed in line with HM Treasury's Green Book, Managing Public Money, and Kirklees Council's corporate project management framework. This ensures every investment is developed and delivered in a way that is regular, proper, feasible and represents value for money.

Project development will follow a proportionate, multi-stage approach covering:

- Scoping and business case development, aligning proposals with community priorities and the objectives of the Regeneration Plan.

- Appraisal and approval, ensuring independent scrutiny, risk assessment, and compliance with governance requirements.
- Delivery and monitoring, managed largely by the Town Centre Regeneration Team, with regular reporting to the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board, Blueprint Board and Cabinet.
- Evaluation and learning, using baseline data and success measures to track progress, capture lessons and inform future investment decisions.

The Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board will provide local leadership and community assurance, ensuring transparency, inclusivity and alignment with local priorities.

Kirklees Council, as the accountable body, will maintain oversight of financial management, procurement and risk through its established corporate controls. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at Kirklees Council ensures that the financial affairs of legal entities and other arrangements for which the Council has responsibility are managed in a secure and effective manner in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and related policies and procedures unless otherwise agreed by the CFO.

All financial transactions of the council are maintained on the Council's Financial Management System (FMS) unless otherwise agreed by the CFO. Transactions are recorded accurately, promptly and fully, and as soon as reasonably practicable. All financial reporting will comply with appropriate accounting standards.

This governance framework builds on tested local arrangements, ensuring:

- Community-led decision-making through the DNB.
- Strong financial and legal assurance through Kirklees Council as the accountable body.
- Clear lines of accountability and communication across all partners.
- Full transparency through open reporting and public access.

Together, these arrangements will ensure that the £20 million investment delivers lasting value, trust, and tangible change for Dewsbury's people and places.

Governance Structure Organogram to be included

9. Assurance

Assurance and Standards

Kirklees Council, as the accountable body for the Dewsbury Neighbourhood Programme, will ensure the programme is delivered in line with Best Value standards and the principles of Managing Public Money (regularity, propriety, value for money, and feasibility).

Assurance Approach

Clear Governance:

The Dewsbury Neighbourhood Board provides strategic leadership and decision-making, with financial accountability held by Kirklees Council. Escalations and additional oversight are supported through the Council's internal boards.

Robust Financial Management:

All programme funds will be managed through Kirklees Council's established financial systems and monitoring.

Fraud Risk Management:

Fraud risk will be assessed as part of procurement processes using governments Grants Functional Standards on Fraud Risk Assessment ensuring standards are being met appropriately to each project.

Subsidy Control:

Kirklees Council will ensure that all funding decisions comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 by undertaking proportionate legal and financial assessments, maintaining transparent records, and securing appropriate approvals to demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements

Best Value Duty:

The Council will apply its statutory duty to secure continuous improvement, ensuring the programme delivers economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Investments will be judged not only on financial return but also on their wider community benefit.

Procurement and Competition:

All contracts and delivery partners will be procured in line with Kirklees Council's procurement procedure using procurement frameworks, ensuring fair competition, transparency, and the best outcomes for the public.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Audit:

Programme delivery will be monitored against agreed milestones and outcomes, with regular reporting to the Neighbourhood Board and Kirklees Council. Internal audit and, where appropriate, external audit. Projects can subject to additional assurance through Scrutiny Management Committee.

Risk Management:

Risks to delivery will be actively identified, monitored, and managed through robust programme management, reporting and decision making.

Transparency and Accountability:

Key decisions, updates, and progress reports will be shared publicly to maintain confidence and demonstrate accountability.

Capacity and Capability:

Kirklees Council has the capacity and expertise to manage large-scale funding programmes, supported by specialist finance, procurement, legal, and programme management teams to ensure effective delivery.

Appendix – Latest version of Terms of reference

DNB board members? Could pull together a list of images / bios we already have on record for the website and collate as a PDF?

Consultation reports from Counter Context

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/pdf/Annual-Governance-Statement-2024-25.pdf>