



**FOCUS ON
FARNWORTH**

10 Year Vision

Pride in Place Initiative

backed by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



Funded by
UK Government

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Executive Summary

The government's Pride in Place Programme will see up to £5 billion given to nearly 250 areas across the UK, Farnworth being one of these. Farnworth will therefore receive £19.537m of funding and support over the next 10 years to make long-term improvements that residents want.

The Pride in Place Programme gives power to local people and partnerships, bringing together residents, the local MP, the council, businesses and community organisations to decide how to shape the local area.

Each of the nearly 250 areas receiving this money has been asked to form a 'Neighbourhood Board' - The Farnworth Board is called 'Focus on Farnworth Board'.

The Focus on Farnworth board is designed to put local people at the centre of defining Farnworth's future, bringing together residents, local businesses, grassroots campaigners, workplace representatives, faith leaders, and community organisations.

Involving the community, the board has generated a vision for the future and set out a pathway to deliver that over the course of the 10-year programme (and beyond) which is articulated in this document.

Executive Summary

Context & Case for Change

Farnworth has proud industrial roots but faces deep challenges today:

Population: 29,800, younger and more diverse than average.

Economy: Employment 64% (vs 75% nationally); 1 in 5 adults have no qualifications.

Health: Healthy life expectancy 56–59 years; child poverty over 40%.

Community voice: Residents want safer streets, better youth provision, upgraded parks and hubs, and a stronger town centre.

The case for change is clear: Farnworth needs investment that restores pride, creates opportunities, and tackles disadvantage.

Vision for 2035

Farnworth is safe, vibrant and inclusive, with thriving places, strong communities and residents in control.

Priorities

In accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Pride in Place Strategy themes:

1. Thriving Places – Continue to invest in Farnworth town centre, and invest in Rock Hall, Harper Green playing fields and parks.

2. Stronger Communities – enhance youth facilities, focus on community hubs and support VCSE groups.

3. Taking Back Control – empowering a community-led Farnworth Board driving decisions and delivery.

This 10 year Vision for Farnworth and 4 Year Investment Plan focuses on complementing existing regeneration programmes (Market Precinct, Streets for All, Bolton Institute of Medical Sciences) and aligns with Greater Manchester's transport, health and skills strategies.

Executive Summary

Delivery & Outcomes

The Focus on Farnworth Board is chaired by a local VCSE leader and includes councillors, MP, youth and businesses representation and Bolton CVS.

Accountable Body is Bolton Council, providing financial assurance and compliance with Best Value and Managing Public Money.

Community engagement will be facilitated using a community run website, newsletters, youth panels, working groups, and an annual community assembly.

The Farnworth Fund will be established for small VCSE projects and the Focus on Farnworth Board will plan and have decision making powers for larger projects as detailed in the 4 Year Investment Plan.

1. Local Context

1. Local context

A Place with History

Farnworth grew as an industrial town during the 18th and 19th centuries, known for coal mining, paper mills and textiles. Rock Hall in Moses Gate Country Park, built in 1807 by industrialist John Crompton, is a reminder of that heritage. The town developed around strong working-class communities, proud traditions, and a culture of self-help and social action, from chapels and clubs to unions and co-operatives.

Who We Are Today

Population: 29,782 (2022)*

Age: Median age 35 (England 40). 23.5% under 16 (England 18.5%), 14.1% over 65 (England 18.6%)*

Ethnicity: 75.4% White, 18.7% Asian/Asian British, 2.1% Black, 1.9% Mixed*

This makes Farnworth a **younger and more diverse town** than England as a whole.

Our Identity

The data shows lower social trust: 20% of residents disagree that others can be trusted, compared to –3% nationally*.

At the same time, Farnworth has a strong tradition of resilience and community organising, with active voluntary, community and faith groups continuing to shape local life.

Our Economy

Farnworth is connected – many travel to Bolton, Salford and Manchester for work, and broadband access is excellent: 96% of households have gigabit broadband*

- Employment rate: 64% (England 75%)
- Unemployment: 7.1% (England 4.4%)
- Inactivity: 42.6% (England 20.9%)
- No qualifications: 20.6% (England 6.6%)
- GVA/job: £44k (England £62k)

* Farnworth Dataset 2025, provided by Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG), using Office of National Statistics Data, using Built Up Areas (2024) as geographical level

1. Local context

Health and Housing

Healthy life expectancy: 56.8 years for men, 59.5 for women (both lower than national averages of 61.5 for men and 61.9 for women)*

Children in low-income families: 42.6% (England 18%)*

Housing affordability: Price-to-income ratio 6.2 (England 7.7)*

Non-decent homes: 16.5% (England 14.4%)*

Community, Culture and Green Spaces

Cultural engagement is mixed: fewer residents attend theatre, arts and heritage compared with England, but **library use is significantly higher**. Farnworth's green and blue spaces, especially **Moses Gate Country Park**, are central to local identity and wellbeing.

Our Story So Far

Farnworth has faced **decades of industrial decline, deprivation and disinvestment**. Over 80% of local neighbourhoods are in the top 20% most deprived nationally.*

But renewal is underway. Through the **Focus on Farnworth Board**—made up of community, voluntary, private and public sector leaders—local people are shaping the future.

* Farnworth Dataset 2025, provided by Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG), using Office of National Statistics Data, using Built Up Areas (2024) as geographical level

2. Spatial targeting

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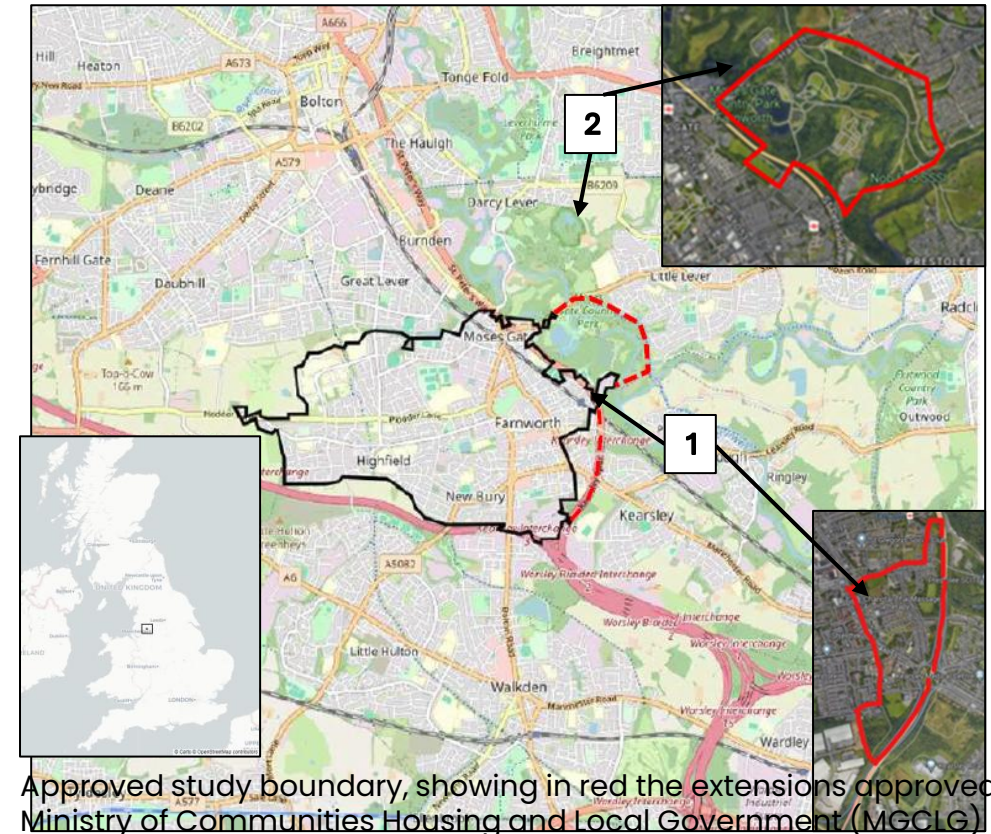
The boundary for the Pride in Place was originally prescribed by Government based around the Built-Up Area defined by ONS however, The Board requested two extensions are granted for the area, illustrated by the red lines.

Firstly (marked 1 on map), that the eastern boundary of the area is defined by the A666 dual carriageway rather than the boundary set by the Boundary Commission to define Farnworth ward.

The currently defined boundary runs along the middle of Upper Market Street (Farnworth's high street) so the proposed alteration will mean businesses on both sides of the road can participate in the plan.

The proposed extension takes in part of Kearsley ward and ward members from Kearsley are invited to participate in the Town Board.

Secondly, the area of Moses Gate Country Park has been included to encourage access to green and blue space and to support the interpretation of the area's former industrial heritage.



Approved study boundary, showing in red the extensions approved by Ministry of Communities Housing and Local Government (MCHLG)

2. Spatial targeting

The A666 forms a distinct tangible barrier between Farnworth and the rest of Kearsley with natural flows for residents being towards Market Street, Farnworth for local shops, facilities, bus and train connections.

Residents and businesses in the proposed extension will be included in engagement activities.

Secondly (marked 2 on map), that the Moses Gate Country Park north of the A666 to the Farnworth North ward boundary is included. Within the Park sits Rock Hall which is the beneficiary of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, and a canal network that has recently been partially upgraded using S106 monies.

Including the park and canal within the Pride in Place boundary will enable projects to come forward that improve the connection between the town and the park, encourage outdoor activity and supports the use of the refurbished hall.

As well as the boundary extensions, the fund will focus on ensuring the investments already made in Farnworth Town Centre are completed and working effectively to deliver the 10 year vision.

New Bury is also recognised as a neighbourhood in need of investment and this operates as a different centre of community activity to Farnworth town centre.

Playspaces, greenspaces and sports provision throughout the boundary area are also neglected and run-down in places and would benefit from some community-based investment and improvements in accessibility.

Connecting places and people is also key, and investment to support placing upgraded walking and cycling routes in the most appropriate locations will be a focus for the Board. Likewise, influencing bus connectivity decisions will also be a responsibility of the Board.

3. Vision for the future

3. Vision for 2035

“Farnworth as a place, is vibrant, accessible and safe with a focus on inclusivity and strong communities, enabled through sustainable partnerships which enable all to thrive.

We have built on the existing strong community foundations to create a welcoming, trusting and aspirational place where people choose to live, study, work and invest.

The new Farnworth has been moulded by its residents, community groups, businesses and wider stakeholders.

It is a place where people feel are safe, prosperous and happy.”

Shaped by Farnworth’s Board Members and Stakeholders

3. Vision for 2035

Vision Statement

Farnworth will be a vibrant, accessible, and safe place where inclusivity and strong communities are at the heart of everything we do. Our town thrives on sustainable partnerships that empower all individuals to flourish, ensuring that every resident, student, worker, and investor feels valued and supported.

We will continue to build upon Farnworth's existing strong community foundations, creating a welcoming environment rooted in trust, aspiration, and opportunity. This is a place where people actively choose to live, learn, work, and invest because they see a future shaped by collaboration, innovation, and shared purpose.

The new Farnworth is not imposed from outside but moulded by its residents, community groups, businesses, and wider stakeholders. Together, we have created a town that reflects the voices, needs, and ambitions of its people. It is a living example of what can be achieved when communities unite to shape their own destiny.

Our vision is for Farnworth to be a place where safety, prosperity, and happiness are not aspirations but everyday realities. We strive to foster a culture of belonging, where diversity is celebrated, opportunities are accessible to all, and every individual feels empowered to contribute. By nurturing sustainable growth, encouraging investment, and supporting education and enterprise, Farnworth will continue to evolve as a beacon of resilience and inclusivity.

Ultimately, Farnworth is more than a place—it is a thriving community, a trusted home, and a destination of choice where people feel proud to belong.

3. Vision for 2035

The Board will focus investments on creating the conditions for:

A place where residents have access to opportunities to improve their outlook;

A place where residents feel part of a network and have people they can turn to when in need;

A place where the community are empowered to set the direction of travel, make changes and see them make a difference.

9 projects have been proposed by the community based on the benefits that they have the potential to bring to the local community. There is the capacity to fund numerous smaller projects, and a handful of larger projects which have the potential combined to have a significant impact.

The projects also seek to leverage in other sources of funding to Farnworth. Areas of focus include Farnworth Town Centre including Market Street, New Bury, Harper Green Playing Fields and Moses Gate Country Park.

The Project Officer resource employed by the Council to help drive the programme will ensure stakeholders are coordinated and investment is maximised.

3. Vision for 2035

What success looks like at the end of the programme?

The 9 Projects that will deliver the Vision for 2035 are:

1. **Farnworth Fund**– Grant supports for voluntary, community and social enterprise groups in Farnworth
2. **CCTV, Lighting and Wayfinding**–Improve street lighting and CCTV coverage and wayfinding improvements
3. **Play areas in parks**– A programme to renovate/re-equip play areas across Farnworth with local community heavily involved in design
4. **Community Hubs upgrade**– Investment in the buildings that form community focus in Farnworth
5. **Harper Green Playing fields**– Creating a community-led sports-based facility
6. **Rock Hall**– The redeveloped hall will be a significant resource for the local community and will include a café, multi-use community spaces and interpretive displays.
7. **Bus connectivity**– Working with TfGM to encourage services linking Farnworth town centre and the residential areas and to improve evening and night services between Farnworth, Bolton and Manchester
8. **Walking, wheeling and cycling**– This project focuses improving the local routes linking the town centre, train station and Moses Gate Country Park and Rock Hall
9. **Community engagement**– Delivering a programme of continuous and meaningful engagement with Farnworth residents, community groups, schools, businesses, and underrepresented voices

4. Strategic Case for Change

4. Strategic Case for Change

Evidence of Need

- **Education and Opportunity**: data illustrates that only 64% of working age residents are in employment (England 75%)*, with unemployment at 7.1% (England 4.4%) and inactivity at 42.6% (England 20.9%)*.
- Skills gap data suggests that 20.6% of adults have no qualifications (England 6.6%)*. Young people are leaving school with lower attainment and fewer local opportunities for progression.
- Low productivity data suggests that Local GVA/job is £44k*, far below the England average (£62k).
- Deprivation data suggests over 80% of Farnworth's neighbourhoods are in the top 20% most deprived nationally* on at least one Index of Multiple Deprivation domain.
- Child poverty data indicates 42.6% of young people live in relative low-income households, more than twice the England figure of 18%*.

- **Health and wellbeing**: data shows healthy life expectancy is 56.8 years (men) and 59.5 (women), far below England averages (63.1 / 63.9)*.
- Community polling (MHCLG, 2024) shows that trust in others is 20 percentage points lower than the national average, and safety—particularly in parks, high streets and transport—is a consistent concern.

Local Voices & Case Studies

The consultation undertaken with the local community, as highlighted in the PLACED Initial Evaluation Report identifies:

- **Safety and security**: Residents have spoken in consultations about feeling unsafe in parts of the town centre at night.
- **Transport**: Residents feel there is a missing circular route for public transport, poor connection to the stations, and poor connectivity for walking and cycling into Moses Gate Country Park.

* Farnworth Dataset 2025, provided by Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG), using Office of National Statistics Data, using Built Up Areas (2024) as geographical level

4. Strategic Case for Change

- **Health and Wellbeing:** Voluntary Community & Social Enterprise (VSCE) groups describe growing demand for support around food, debt and mental health but lack capacity or funding to scale.
- **Cohesion:** There is an overwhelming concern that young people have “little to do and nowhere to go,” contributing to antisocial behaviour.
- **Regeneration:** Calls for upgraded or new community hubs (The Well, New Bury Learning Centre, Harper Green sports site) and expansion of health provision.
- Parks and green spaces (Moses Gate, Farnworth Central) need investment in play, sport, safety and accessibility.
- Desire for a better retail mix, quality shops, and improved public realm and job opportunities, and more creative/cultural outlets.
- **Safety & Security:** CCTV, lighting, policing, traffic safety, and tackling drug dealing are community priorities to create a safe, welcoming environment.

Alignment with Objectives

Thriving Places

Investment in town centre regeneration, green and heritage assets (Rock Hall, Harper Green Playing Fields), and modern community hubs addresses both adult and youth priorities.

Safer, cleaner, more welcoming streets respond directly to resident and youth calls for change.

Stronger Communities

Engagement showed Farnworth’s people are proud, resilient and committed to volunteering. Expanding facilities like The Well and New Bury Learning Centre will give this energy a base to grow.

Youth-specific investment (safe spaces, sports, arts) will help build belonging and tackle ASB.

4. Strategic Case for Change

Taking Back Control

The Focus on Farnworth Board includes VCSE, youth, and business voices.

Residents and young people have shaped the vision: more youth provision needed, safer places, affordable family activities, and a revitalised town centre are requested.

Intended Use of Powers

Neighbourhood prioritisation: Community priorities shape local decision-making, with the Board directing spend across regeneration, safety, youth, and health.

Local levers: Community safety, and devolved transport powers (with GMCA/TfGM) will be used to secure investment in connectivity, safety, and town centre renewal.

Youth involvement: A proposed Youth Working Group will co-design facilities and services, ensuring young people remain part of decisions.

Long term Outcomes

A thriving and safe community where residents, businesses and visitors choose to live, learn, work and visit.

Opportunities for Community groups to develop and grow.

Enhancing Farnworth as a destination.

Increased visitor numbers to Farnworth's play areas and greater community satisfaction.

Well maintained, well used and coordinated portfolio of community buildings with services being provided in locations that best meet the needs of the local community.

Well maintained and well used community multi-sport asset with diverse services being provided to meet the needs of the local community.

Improve bus connectivity within the local area. More people accessing greenspace, employment and leisure activities, and a modal shift from the car for journeys.

4. Strategic Case for Change

From the PLACED Initial Evaluation Report (Community Engagement)

"There's nothing for young people to do – so they hang around and get into trouble."

"We need a proper community hub where people of all ages can come together."

"I don't feel safe walking through the town centre in the evening."

"Too many takeaways and vape shops – we want quality shops back on the high street."

"Our parks should be places where families can go and feel safe."

"Harper Green and the sports pitches could be brilliant again with the right investment."

From the Schools Consultation (Young People's Voices)

"We need more places to go where we feel safe."

"There should be better lighting so we don't feel scared walking home."

"We want more sports facilities – football, basketball, places to exercise."

"Too many vape shops – it's not good for young people."

"It's hard for families to afford things – we need more free or cheap activities."

"We need places to help with careers, jobs, and our futures."

"We want more fun things to do – art, music, sports – not just sitting around."

5. Alignment with other programmes and investments

5. Programme Alignment

The Focus on Farnworth Vision and 4 year investment plan is designed to **complement, not duplicate, existing investment**. It targets neighbourhood-level change that builds on wider regeneration, leverages regional and national strategies, and ensures local communities feel the benefits.

Transport, Regeneration, High Street and Heritage

Farnworth Streets for All programme included £2.8m spend for public spaces in Market Street between Frederick Street and King Street, providing safer and more accessible space, to be complete by March 2026. This is funded using £1.8m of Future High Streets Funding and £990k of funding from Bolton Council and Transport for Greater Manchester.

Feasibility studies are underway to develop the next Streets for All scheme in Farnworth to further improve connectivity with routes from the Hospital to the Town Centre, and Buckley Lane to the Town Centre being explored.

There is expected to be future funding through Greater Manchester's Combined Authority Integrated Settlement. The funding for FY25/26 totals £630 million.

The outcomes framework for this funding is designed to align with GMs local priorities identified in the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS), which is available online.

Seize the opportunities of the Greater Growth Fund for the benefit of Farnworth residents and businesses.

Aligned to the GMS, Greater Manchester is continually developing a 10-year Delivery Plan, which will set out how the GMS vision will be delivered.

The outcomes which the funding will be aligned to include:

1. Improving business productivity to support local growth (Local Growth and Place)
2. Delivering the infrastructure needed to support place-based growth (Local Growth and Place)
3. Improved public transport in the GMCA area (Local Transport)

5. Programme Alignment

4. Healthier and greener transport in the GMCA area (Local Transport)
5. Maintaining, enhancing and delivering transport infrastructure in the GMCA Area (Local Transport)
6. Increased supply of the infrastructure and quality housing needed by communities (Housing and Regeneration)
7. Reduction in direct carbon emissions from public sector buildings (Buildings Retrofit)
8. Reduction in direct carbon emissions from domestic buildings, with reduced fuel poverty gaps for treated households in, or at risk of, fuel poverty (Buildings Retrofit)
9. More residents with the skills and learning they need for life, further learning and good life (Adult Skills)
10. Disabled residents, residents with long-term health conditions, and other agreed disadvantaged groups with complex barriers are supported to sustain good work through delivery of supported employment (Employment Support).
11. More residents moving towards, into and progressing within, good work (Cross-cutting)

5. Programme Alignment

Education and Opportunity

The University of Greater Manchester has delivered a 81,000 sq ft Institute of Medical Science. The £40m scheme came from the government's 2021 Levelling Up Fund (LUF) award. The £20m from LUF was matched by the university. The facility sits on three acres that was once a car park for the Royal Bolton Hospital. The institute will teach more than 3,000 pupils a year in physiotherapy, nursing, midwifery, and more.

Education, Work and Skills Leads within local authorities strategically are currently working with Greater Manchester City Region Combined Authority to develop local insight to engage, inspire and develop good pathways to work which allows our residents to upskill, sustain and develop in work.

The WorkWell Service is part of the wider Greater Manchester initiative, focusing on preventative actions to help people stay working fit, reducing sickness at work and health related unemployment.

The service is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and delivered from Bolton Councils Employment Hub lead by a Work and Health coach helping local residents cope better with their health conditions to secure meaningful work and stay in active employment for longer.

Funding post 2027 for Education Work and Skills is still being scoped at Greater Manchester level with central government as part of the Integrated Settlement arrangements. Bolton Council will continue to work with Greater Manchester to develop one local front door access point within the Mayoral ambition of Live Well Centres to offer fully integrated services based on resident need.

A key Greater Manchester document that will have a direct influence over education and employment funding is the Get GM Working Plan. Which is due to be determined for approval in December 2025.

5. Programme Alignment

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Health and Work programmes tackle low skills and high inactivity in Farnworth through community-based hubs, training and volunteering.

The Vision and investment plan will support GMCA's ambition to reduce health inequalities by focusing on deprived neighbourhoods.

Health and Wellbeing

Health inequalities (low life expectancy, child poverty, poor mental health) are being tackled through the Bolton Locality Plan for Health and Care (2020), and emerging Focus on Farnworth programmes will act as enablers of prevention and wellbeing.

At the Greater Manchester level, the Pride in Place themes of *Thriving Places*, *Stronger Communities*, and *Taking Back Control* align with GM priorities in the Greater Manchester Strategy (2021–2031) of inclusive growth, good jobs, skills and thriving neighbourhoods.

Transport

Walking, Wheeling & Cycling projects will feed into the Bee Network, expanding safe active travel connections between the town centre, rail stations and green assets.

Bus connectivity work with TfGM links to Greater Manchester's franchising and bus service improvement plan.



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6. Match funding and leveraged investment

6. Match funding

The Board recognises that the Pride in Place Funding provides a lever to attract further investment and have a multiplier effect.

Council officers and officers from other organisations eg Bolton CVS and Bolton at Home have expertise in securing external additional funding. These organisations have committed to sharing their expertise to support the Farnworth Pride in Place initiative. It is also recognised that securing funding can be resource intensive and judgements will be made to ensure bidding activity is cost effective.

This will include seeking public grants where available and eligible, private funding and donations. Examples include:

- **Health & Wellbeing:** Harper Green Playing Fields upgrade leveraging Sports England Funding
- **Regeneration, High Street & Heritage:** Rock Hall revival in Moses Gate Country Park leveraging Arts Council funding.

Local businesses will be encouraged to support the plan through initiatives that nurture training and employment.

The 4 year budget makes an allocation for:

- Funding to support external business case development and identify other sources of funding e.g. CRSTS2 for active travel schemes or Sports England funding for Harper Green Playing Fields
- Match funding to secure Heritage Fund monies for Rock Hall

In addition, the Farnworth Fund will encourage projects with co-funding.

7. Community & stakeholder engagement

7. Community & stakeholder engagement

The local community is at the heart of the plan. The Board is made up of representatives of a broad range of local groups with strong input and support from the local MP and local elected members. The Council's role in developing the plan has been through facilitation and support so the identification of issues, their prioritisation and their solutions are driven by community input.

The Board composition is as follows:

- An independent Chair
- Member of Parliament- Local MP
- Police Crime Commissioner (or senior representative).
- Two Local Councillors, noting that total numbers of elected representatives should be limited to promote community leadership.

Other membership will be rotated during the lifeline of the 10 Year Vision and will include representatives of:

- Community groups
- Faith groups
- Local charities
- Neighbourhood forums
- Youth groups
- Voluntary and social enterprise sector
- Local businesses
- Cultural, arts, heritage organisations
- Sporting organisations
- Anchor institutions

The Board will include no less than three representatives from the private sector as Members to the Board.

7. Community & stakeholder engagement

Board's Ways of Working and Distinction from Local Authority

The Board operates under clear **Terms of Reference** (October 2025) with responsibilities for strategy, oversight and engagement.

Bolton Council acts as the accountable body (legal/financial responsibility) but does not chair or dominate the Board, ensuring decisions are **community-led**.

Meetings are **open to the public**, with agendas and minutes published on the Focus on Farnworth website and promoted through social media.

Conflicts of interest are transparently managed and recorded.

Securing Buy-in from Businesses, Civil Society and Communities

Business engagement: Town centre businesses, developers, and local employers will be engaged and kept updated via a newsletter and involvement encouraged in shaping specific projects (e.g. safety schemes, wayfinding, hubs). They will be encouraged to bring in match-funding.

VCSE & faith sector: Through the **Farnworth Fund**, local groups will receive small grants, development support and partnership opportunities – strengthening the sector and creating long-term capacity.

Communities & residents: Outreach includes targeted events in community centres, schools, parks, mosques and churches, ensuring broad representation.

Young people: Schools engagement (Bright Leaders consultation model) will continue with **youth panels and workshops**, feeding into Board decisions and project design.

7. Community & stakeholder engagement

How Interventions Will Be Delivered

- **Co-design approach:** Each major project (community hubs, Harper Green, play areas, Rock Hall, safety schemes) will include **local consultation workshops** at design stage. Rock Hall and the Library service have already begun public consultation. Accessibility will be a key consideration.
- **Local volunteers-** maximising the opportunity to create community bonds around a shared purpose
- **Community commissioning:** VCSE groups can bid to lead delivery of local services and activities, embedding community ownership.
- **Continuous feedback loops:** Residents will be able to give feedback on interventions via online surveys, social media, school projects, and at community events.

Engagement & Consultation Over 10 Years

A **Communications Strategy (2025)** has been defined which identifies the following ways to communicate with the local community:

- **Dedicated website & social media** – central hub for updates, project progress, and consultations managed by Farnworth Baptist Church
- **Regular newsletters & posters** – distributed via schools, community hubs, health centres, shops and places of worship managed by Farnworth Baptist Church
- **Thematic working groups** – e.g. Youth, Safety, Health & Wellbeing, Parks & Heritage – bringing stakeholders and residents into project design managed through the Community Engagement workstream.
- **Annual Community Assembly** – open event each year to showcase progress, share financial updates, gather feedback and reset priorities organised by Farnworth Baptist Church.

7. Community & stakeholder engagement

- **Targeted engagement** – specific to each intervention (e.g. park redesign with families, heritage events at Rock Hall, sports engagement for Harper Green).
- **Evaluation feedback** – results of monitoring shared annually, with changes to delivery made openly in response to community input.



Long-Term Commitment

Over the 10 years, the Board's approach will:

- Maintain **transparent governance** (community-led chairing, open meetings, published decisions).
- Build **community capacity** (through grants, skills development, volunteering and youth leadership).
- Ensure **accountability to local people**, not just funders, through consistent two-way communication and opportunities for co-design.
- Leave a legacy of **stronger local organisations, safer spaces, thriving facilities and empowered residents** who have shaped the town's regeneration

7. Community Engagement

Engagement events were undertaken at a number of engagement events with the findings recorded in the Initial Engagement Report, produced by Community Interest Company PLACED, which shaped the Regeneration plan

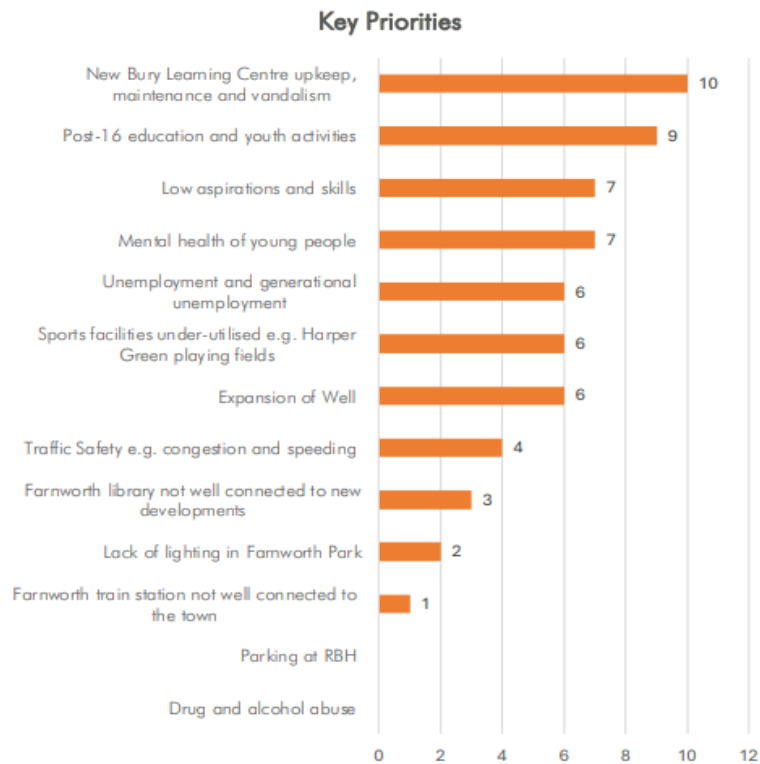


Figure 2: Responses to the question 'what are the key priorities for Farnworth?'

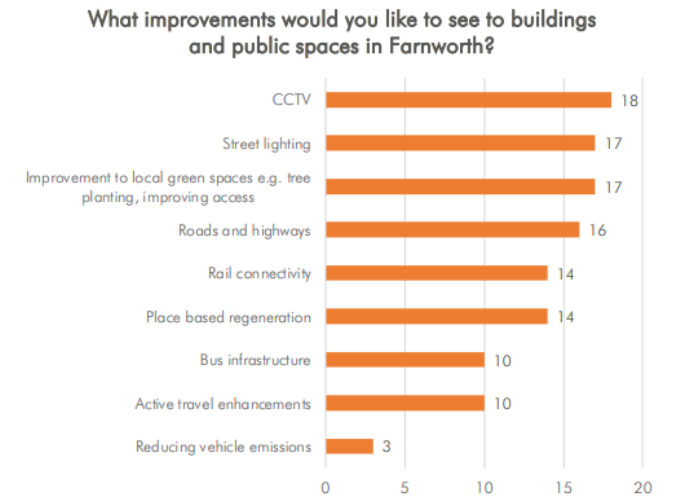


Figure 9: Responses to the question 'what improvements would you like to see to buildings and public spaces in Farnworth?'



8. Governance

8. Governance

The Board will be responsible for the strategic direction of the Plan and the effective implementation of the portfolio of projects within it. The Board will be decision makers for the projects. Where projects relate to Council owned assets, the decisions will be considered by both the Councils existing processes and the Focus on Farnworth Board.

The projects contain long-term outcomes and these are the responsibility of the board and other partner agencies. Measures of success will be both quantitative and qualitative.

The Board will work within agreed Terms of Reference. These include a specific obligation to work within Nolan Principles and the principles of managing public money. Each member makes a declaration of interest and recuses themselves from discussions giving rise to a potential conflict.

Each meeting is held in accordance with the Bolton Council Code of Conduct (Part 5 of the Constitution).

The Board has two elected members from political groups, which represent constituents in Farnworth. It has Council officers as observers to support the programme, project and assurance delivery. These officers come from Regeneration, Public Health and Finance teams in the Council.

The Council has recruited a dedicated full time project manager to oversee the delivery of Council led projects, monitor the programme and budgets reports to the S151 Officer and MHCLG and facilitate further Council approvals.

Farnworth Baptist Church will provide secretariat services to the Farnworth Neighbourhood Board as follows:

Board administration

- Hiring of rooms and refreshments for Board related meetings and events
- Secretarial services eg minute taking, agenda preparation, report/presentation preparation for Board meetings

Board development and training

- Planning development for Board members

8. Governance

Communications

- Website design and management
- Print design and production
- Social media design and management

Consultation

- Development and delivery of consultation strategy covering the first four-year investment plan
- Development of consultation skills within the local community

There will be regular liaison with the Council's dedicated project manager and the lead contact for the Farnworth Pride in Place Secretariat.

Identifying Investments

Stakeholders and the public were invited to submit ideas for consideration within the 4 Year Investment Plan.

The ideas were collated and matched against priorities identified through the engagement and consultation process. The EOIs have informed the process for making project investment decisions moving forward. To maintain flexibility in funding decisions, the following process has been designed:

Route 1- Project proposals from the VCSE sector have tended to be for smaller revenue grants (less than £100k) and some for smaller capital grants. Moving forward, these applications will be channelled through the Farnworth Fund which will be managed by Bolton CVS and will have an independent evaluation process, informed by the plan priorities, using evaluation criteria signed off by the Board. This process is similar and complementary in nature to the existing Bolton Fund, also administered by Bolton CVS. This process will administer support to the VCSE sector in ensuring they are set up appropriately to receive the funds and report on disbursement of the funding e.g. transparent accounting.

Bolton CVS will report to the Board on the Farnworth Fund.

8. Governance

Route 2– Other ideas for larger grants or for larger projects proposed, have been discussed with Board on 11th June 2024 and 13th June 2025. In addition to the Farnworth Fund, there have been seven suitable projects identified which match the priorities identified through engagement, two of which don't require revenue or capital funding from this funding pot as they will seek to draw down external funding. These have been identified in the 4 Year Investment Plan

Three of the projects need revenue funding to develop the ideas further. A review will be undertaken by the Board at the end of year 1 to check the budgets for years 2 & 3 are still realistic.

New projects through Route 2 may emerge over the lifetime of the Plan and these will be proposed at the Board's annual review of the Plan and Budget.

These projects will each have their own:

- Project Manager; and

- Project Boards and/or Steering Groups to drive progress and manage risks, to include presence from Finance and Legal.

The Regeneration Project Manager will be responsible for reporting progress on these projects to the Focus on Farnworth Board.

This governance framework ensures:

Community leadership and accountability through the Focus on Farnworth Board.

Legal, financial and compliance assurance through Bolton Council as accountable body.

Transparency and integrity via Nolan Principles, open meetings, published decisions, and annual community reporting.

Value for money and deliverability through proportionate appraisal, business case scrutiny, and robust procurement routes.

9. Assurance

9. Assurance

The revenue and capital funding will be awarded to Bolton Council, acting as accountable body on behalf of the Focus on Farnworth Board.

The Board has been properly constituted to assure good governance and respect for the purpose and objectives of the fund. The Council's Chief Finance Officer is required to provide assurance updates around the proper administration of the funding, including conflict of interest, subsidy control, procurement, counter fraud and risk.

It is understood the MHCLG Monitoring & Evaluation team will carry out independent checks on projects. The Board will undertake a review of the Plan and the projects within it on an annual basis.

Independent Scrutiny and Transparency

Programme performance and financial reporting will be subject to the Council's audit and scrutiny functions.

Annual performance and financial reports will be made public, ensuring accountability to residents and government.