

# **Update on the Pride in Place Mission**

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## Update on the Pride in Place Mission

Pride features as one of the Levelling Up White Paper’s four overarching objectives – “restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging” – as well as one of the twelve ‘missions’ – **“By 2030, pride in place, such as peoples’ satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.”**

The Mission was described as exploratory at the time of publication, meaning more work needed to be done to understand the detail behind it. In practical terms, this meant defining the Mission, developing a framework for measuring its progress and identifying what really drives Pride in Place to inform government policy. The conclusions from this work are set out below.

## Definition of Pride in Place

*“Pride in Place is an emotion people feel towards the physical community that they identify with and feel a sense of attachment, belonging and deep-rooted contentedness towards. It is underpinned by their sense of safety and security, their participation and connections within the community, their engagement with local culture, heritage and sport and their satisfaction with local high streets, green and blue spaces and physical infrastructure.”*

## Why have we set a Pride in Place Mission?

Many indicators of economic performance tell a consistent story, that of large spatial disparities within the UK. But these measures don’t cover people’s quality of life and their feelings about their area. The Pride in Place Mission seeks to explore this by understanding the extent to which people feel a sense of attachment, belonging, and deep-rooted contentedness towards their local area, why this varies across the UK, and what can be done to restore people’s pride in their place.

Research indicates that feelings of attachment or connection to the places we live in are felt by people across the country<sup>1</sup>, which shows that Pride in Place is a universal phenomenon that affects every person and every community. It is connected to a range of factors including community engagement, local heritage, cultural opportunities, access and quality of local amenities – including green and blue spaces – as well as the state and appearance of housing and the local high street. These aspects of local life straddle several “capitals” outlined in the White Paper, highlighting the significance of Pride in Place within the Levelling Up Framework.

Many communities have suffered from a loss or erosion of their identity and a decrease in people’s satisfaction in their local areas. This lack of “community feel” is often attributed to a rise in antisocial behaviour as well as a neglect of public spaces, such as local parks and high streets. For example, 35% of people last year reported witnessing or experiencing anti-social behaviour<sup>2</sup>, whilst in 2021, higher crime and anti-social behaviour was the most common reason people thought their area was a worse place to live versus 10 years ago<sup>3</sup>. Many communities are stuck in a vicious cycle where higher levels of anti-social behaviour are accompanied by a withdrawal from community participation and engagement. This can contribute – alongside other socioeconomic factors – to an increase in property vacancies and a decline in physical infrastructure, such as local high streets, which are a particularly

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<sup>1</sup> Shaw, C, Garling, O, Kenny, M., [Townscapes: Pride in Place](#). Bennett Institute for Public Policy. 2022

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics. [Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\) estimates of personal and household crime, anti-social behaviour, and public perceptions, by police force area, year ending September 2022](#).

<sup>3</sup> Public First. [Levelling Up Poll](#). 2021

visible barometer of local pride<sup>4</sup>. The Pride in Place Mission was set to identify areas experiencing these types of negative spirals and therefore most in need of targeted, place-based interventions.

The Mission also attempts to identify and promote the aspects of local life that enhance people's quality of life and local pride. For example, well-designed, accessible and community-focused public spaces help to foster greater social engagement, which can support enhanced mental wellbeing and a reduction in stress. Similarly, access to sport, culture and green spaces supports Pride in Place, whilst the state of community assets like local football clubs or town halls has a significant bearing on the pride people feel in their local area<sup>5</sup>. Feelings of local belonging are also closely tied to the heritage of a place, especially its industrial heritage. For example, 29% of people in the North East named 'industrial heritage' as one of the top 3 things that helps foster pride in their local area<sup>6</sup>. The Mission seeks to harness the unique set of historical and social characteristics that underpin people's relationship with their local area to enhance local pride.

Overall, the Mission sets out to provide a framework to identify and improve the aspects of local life that matter most to people in order to "restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost."

### **Defining the Mission & identifying metrics**

Since the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper, we have held two rounds of consultation with external organisations to develop a tangible definition of Pride in Place and to identify policies that enhance people's pride in their local area.

Through our engagement to define the Mission, stakeholders emphasised that Pride in Place is an emotion that people feel, stemming from a sense of belonging and deep-rooted contentedness with an area. They stressed the importance of security, social cohesion and well-designed local places, all of which have been incorporated into our definition. Discussions also highlighted the importance of sports, activities, group rituals, events, connectivity and planning as key drivers of Pride in Place, on the basis that they support the social cohesiveness of local areas.

Finally, when it came to measuring local pride, stakeholders identified that devising a standardised suite of metrics is difficult, particularly at the hyper-local level with so many factors at play. That being the case, they felt that the range of proposed metrics was sensible and would provide a good indication of progress across each of the four key areas outlined below:

1. Safety and Security (Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour)
2. High Streets & Regeneration
3. Community Engagement, Participation and Connections
4. Culture, Heritage and Sport

When positive drivers are in action across the four key pillars outlined above, they act in a positively reinforcing manner, generating a virtuous cycle that eventually leads to a longer-term improvement in the social and physical fabric of an area. This will help to enhance peoples' pride in place in support of the Mission.

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<sup>4</sup> Craig J, Westerling J, Plumb N, Mandava S. [Community Powered High Streets: How community businesses will build town centres fit for the future](#). Power to Change. 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Dorrell, E., Crowhurst M. and Waterhouse, T. [Heritage and Civic Pride: Public First Report for Historic England](#). Report. Public First. 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Dorrell, E., Crowhurst M. and Waterhouse, T. [Heritage and Civic Pride: Public First Report for Historic England](#). Report. Public First. 2022.

## What have we done so far

Since 2019, the UK Government has supported places to revitalise town centres, retain community assets and grow their economies through programmes like the £4.8bn Levelling Up Fund (LUF), the £900m Getting Building Fund, the £400m Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF), the £150m Community Ownership Fund (COF), the £3.2bn Towns Fund, and the £1.1bn Long-Term Plan for Towns.

The government launched the £160m Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan in March 2023 as part of a new approach to tackle anti-social behaviour. Recognising the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on local communities, the Action Plan will help provide more police and other uniformed presence in hotspot areas, immediate justice for perpetrators, and extra youth service hours.

Recognising the importance of empowering local communities and supporting a bottom-up approach to levelling up nationally, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) enables local communities to enhance Pride in Place. The fund was originally launched in April 2022 and continues to empower local leaders to focus on what works best for their communities, allowing them to unleash their unique potential. Similarly, the Community Ownership Fund has awarded £36.9m to 150 projects across the UK to help communities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland take ownership of assets at risk of closure. The fund helps to ensure that important parts of the social fabric of places, such as pubs, sports clubs, theatres and post office buildings, can continue to play a central role in towns and villages across the UK.

In the Levelling Up White Paper<sup>7</sup>, government noted that access to arts, culture and sporting opportunities is unevenly distributed across the UK. The government has been pursuing various programmes to address this and since February 2022 has been working with Arts Council England (ACE) to improve access to the arts. Funding allocations from 2023 to 2026 mean that areas outside London will receive 22% more investment compared to 2018/19. The government is also investing significantly in widening access to sports and physical activity, including over £400 million between 2021 and 2025 into grassroots sport facilities such as swimming pools, football pitches and public tennis courts.

There are many other programmes – in addition to those highlighted above – that support Pride in Place, whilst the outcome of the Mission is also dependent on the successful delivery of other levelling up missions, such as Health, Education and Transport. The programmes mentioned above are designed to provide an indication of the work the government is doing to drive forward Pride in Place.

## Delivering future progress against the Mission

We now have an established framework for measuring the Pride in Place Mission and a better understanding of the main ways to progress it. This has been developed alongside action the government is already taking to deliver programmes that enhance people's sense of safety and security, boost our high streets, encourage greater community engagement and participation and increase access to culture, heritage and sport.

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<sup>7</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. [Levelling Up the United Kingdom, 2022.](#)

## Annex A – List of headline metrics

Following our engagement with a range of stakeholders we have developed four headline metrics for monitoring progress against the mission:

- Percentage of people who perceive ASB is a problem in their local area
- Percentage of people that agree/disagree that their local area is attractive
- Social Fabric Index (Adapted Relationship thread)
- Percentage of the local population engaged with cultural, heritage and sport activities

## Annex B – Theory of Change

We have also developed a Theory of Change to set out our thinking on how existing and planned interventions will contribute to increasing Pride in Place.

<b>IMPACT:</b> By 2030, Pride in Place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.				
<b>LONG TERM OUTCOMES:</b> 1) Increased pride in living in the local area. 2) Increased satisfaction with the local area. 3) Increased social capital (improved social fabric)				
	<b>Pillar 1: Safety &amp; Security</b> Capitals: Social	<b>Pillar 2: High Streets &amp; Regeneration</b> Capitals: Social, Physical	<b>Pillar 3: Community Engagement</b> Capitals: Social, Institutional	<b>Pillar 4: Culture, Heritage and Sport</b> Capitals: Social
<b>INTERIM OUTCOMES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved perceptions of ASB levels</li> <li>Reduction in recorded ASB incidents</li> <li>Fewer people experiencing or witnessing ASB</li> <li>More ASB incidents resolved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved perceptions of local area attractiveness</li> <li>Increased use of/ satisfaction with local amenities</li> <li>Increased satisfaction with the natural environment</li> <li>Increased high street footfall and decreased commercial vacancies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased engagement in the local area, including in civic action, volunteering and local decision making</li> <li>Increased sense of neighbourhood trust, belonging and community spirit</li> <li>Improved relationships between people from different backgrounds</li> <li>Reduced loneliness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased engagement in regular cultural and heritage activities</li> <li>Increased engagement in sporting activity, including attending sport events</li> <li>More opportunities to participate and greater representation in culture, heritage and sport locally</li> <li>Decrease in heritage at risk</li> </ul>
<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More police presence at ASB hotspots</li> <li>More youth activities in local areas</li> <li>Repairing of damage inflicted on victims and communities</li> <li>Removal of litter</li> <li>Fewer unreported incidences of ASB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New/improved community facilities including spaces for community activities</li> <li>Regenerated local areas including revitalised high streets</li> <li>Affordable homes (housing LU mission)</li> <li>Maintained/improved local parks, green &amp; blue spaces, air quality, sound/ noise environment &amp; cleanliness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frameworks for local level engagement, covenants, governance and delivery</li> <li>Survival/improvement and accessibility of community assets including accessible spaces for community activities</li> <li>New volunteering opportunities and community activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard culture/heritage assets and local sports teams</li> <li>Upgrade/deliver high quality cultural and sport venues</li> <li>Culture and heritage-led regeneration</li> <li>Recognising cultural heritage</li> <li>Frameworks for local engagement and delivery</li> </ul>
<b>INPUTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of additional police officers</li> <li>Interventions targeted at young people, such as youth activities and safe spaces.</li> <li>More powers to housing associations and landlords</li> <li>Crack down on illegal drugs and neighbourhood crime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High streets, green space and amenities interventions</li> <li>Housing interventions including through the housing mission</li> <li>Natural environment interventions</li> <li>Waste management interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community action and engagement interventions</li> <li>Communities and integration strategies</li> <li>Community funding including Community Ownership Fund, Know Your Neighbourhood Fund, Community Wealth Fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosting of cultural/sporting events</li> <li>Interventions to improve/maintain/preserve cultural, heritage and sports assets/facilities</li> <li>Interventions to preserve intangible culture and heritage</li> <li>Investment in grassroots sports and local cultural events</li> </ul>