

Neighbourhood Fund Round 1

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Neighbourhood Fund?

We know that a lot of violent crime happens in very specific local areas. To make a difference, many believe that it is essential to work with the people and organisations who live and work there as they know their communities best. The Neighbourhood Fund will test different models and approaches to community engagement to better understand how, where and why it supports improved outcomes for children at risk of becoming involved in violence. Through the Fund we will better understand the problems these communities are facing, then to co-design, test and evaluate solutions that respond to their local needs and context. We will evaluate the impact of engaging local communities in this way.

Where will you fund projects?

We selected five Local Authority areas to pilot the Neighbourhood Fund in 2021:

- Birmingham
- Bradford
- Cardiff
- Manchester
- Norfolk

Why have you selected these five areas?

We identified a shortlist of Local Authority areas with high levels of youth crime from analysis of available Youth Justice Board data and using a combination of rates and absolute numbers of Youth Violent Offences.

We didn't conduct our analysis to create a complete list of the areas we consider to have the highest level of youth crime. Instead, the purpose was to make sure we test our Neighbourhood Fund in lots of different areas, to see if local approaches work across a range of different contexts.

That's why the five areas we selected are based on this analysis and our commitment to test and learn across a variety of different geographies and demographics.

Will you ever run an open grant round?

We will be running two more Neighbourhood Fund grant rounds – funding 15 hyper-local programmes in total. We will review our approach in 2022 to inform the second round of the Neighbourhood Fund. We're open to different options for selecting hyper-local delivery areas.

Why is there such a long period of research before areas get funding for programmes?

We know that a lot of violent crime happens in very specific local areas. To make a difference, many believe that it is essential to work with the people and organisations who live and work there as they know their communities best. The Neighbourhood Fund will test different models and approaches to community engagement to better understand how, where and why it supports improved outcomes for children at risk of becoming involved in violence.

We know however, that to be effective, the process of engagement, understanding and co-production takes time. This is further exacerbated by lack of trust in some communities who may have seen a number of initiatives come and go. We need to ensure that the engagement process is fully inclusive for all parts of the community and takes account of changing contexts.

Our assumption is that comprehensive community engagement and buy-in will give the implementation of Local Action Plans, the best chance of success.

How much are you going to invest in each area in total?

We will invest approximately £1 million per hyper-local area to implement their co-designed Local Action Plan for up to 5 years.

Will partnerships always run through Violence Reduction Units? What if my area doesn't have one?

Round 1 areas were not selected through Violence Reduction Units. Of the five areas chosen, four are within a VRU area and one isn't. We anticipate that being within a VRU area will not be a criteria for future rounds. We will work closely with strategic partnerships at all Neighbourhood Fund sites, including VRUs where in place.

How will the evaluations work?

We will commission an independent Learning Partner that will work across the Neighbourhood Fund areas and Community Research & Co-Design Partners to evaluate our co-designed local solutions. The Learning Partner will use a mixed-methods approach and make use of a range of local and national data to learn lessons and, ultimately, assess impact.

Alongside testing whether the solutions we have funded have made a difference to the issues which local communities identify as the most pressing, we are also seeking to understand the most successful elements and approaches to building local partnerships focussed on tackling serious violence.

The research questions will be refined in collaboration with the appointed Learning Partner and Community Research & Co-Design Partners. However, we are currently anticipating that the evaluation will ask, in no particular order or priority:

- Which community engagement and partnership models (if any) contribute to improved outcomes, how, for whom, and in what context?
- Which hyper local activities, interventions and approaches can contribute to reducing young peoples' involvement in violence, and how?
- What different local conditions and contexts influence the optimal approaches to achieving the desired change and how?
- What are the optimal methods and measures for learning about place-based approaches to reducing local levels of young people involved in violence?

We will use our learning to help strengthen other neighbourhood approaches to preventing young people becoming involved in violence. It is anticipated that the evaluation will need to be theory-based, iterative, sensitive and responsive to the complexity involved in place-based approaches, whilst also aiming to draw transferable lessons.

We are developing our overarching theory of change for the Neighbourhood Fund. It is expected that each Neighbourhood Fund area will also develop its own theory of change based on its specific needs and context. It will be important to consider



how these local theories of change relate to the overarching theory of change for the Fund.

If we want to apply for more than one site, do we use the same response form or separate response forms for each site?

We are open to either option – either using one response form with site specific responses for each question as appropriate; or using separate response forms for each site you are applying for