

Pride in Place: Three-Pager for Church Leaders

The Pride in Place Programme is the government's new plan to see transformative change in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country, by building stronger, more cohesive communities, investing in high-quality local amenities, infrastructure and services, and empowering local people to pioneer these changes.

284¹ locations, typically with populations of ~10,000, have been selected to qualify for the £5.8bn Pride in Place Programme, entitling them to £20m funding each of the next 10 years. Selected locations will establish a **Neighbourhood Board**², which will decide how to spend the received funding in line with the objectives of the strategy³, whether that be developing a community garden, addressing local cohesion issues, regenerating the town square, or rolling out a new programme to tackle homelessness.

How can faith communities engage with Pride in Place?

Engaging with Pride in Place offers churches a significant opportunity to be at the heart of long-term community engagement and local transformation. The way that faith communities engage will vary in every context. Some churches or faith-based organisations may seek funding themselves, while others may provide their local expertise on a Neighbourhood Board, or alternatively input collective insights and local knowledge as part of an existing group or organisation e.g. Churches Together in [Location]. Pride in Place is an opportunity for faith communities to get to know influential stakeholders in their area, serve their local community, and be at the forefront of key decision-making.

Pride in Place policy papers have a few specific references to faith communities:

- It is noted that Neighbourhood Board membership should reflect a diversity of religious groups/affiliations.
- The wider policy also directly mentions continued work and consultation with faith groups, including recognition of their role in creating strong communities.

¹ 75 locations were announced in March 2025. As of September 2025 the fund has been expanded to another 169 locations, with another 40 locations added in March 2026.

² Neighbourhood boards are led by independent Chairs and include residents, local business owners, local MPs, civil society organisations, local authority representatives and VCFSE organisations. For the 40 places announced in March, a new community cohesion filter (using the Community Life Survey) was added to ensure that funding is directed to local authorities where community cohesion is weakest.

³ The broad objectives are: building stronger communities, creating thriving places and empowering people to take back control.

What are the next steps for churches?

284 areas have been selected for the Pride in Place Programme, announced in three phases. Start by checking whether your community has been selected to qualify:

- In March 2025, [75 places](#) were selected for Phase 1 of the Pride in Place programme.
 - These areas have now established Neighbourhood Boards and have submitted their Pride in Place Plans to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for review and endorsement. Faith-based organisations in these locations should look out for opportunities locally to get involved in delivering these Pride in Place Plans, which may include opportunities to apply for funding.

- In September 2025, [169 places](#) were selected for Phase 2 of the Pride in Place programme.
 - These areas are in various stages of establishing their Neighbourhood Boards. Proposed membership will be submitted to the government between the end of February and 17 July 2026. The Chair, together with the local MP and the local authority, will determine the final Board membership. Boards must have a minimum of 8 members, with at least 50% made up of local residents, however some of the largest boards established in Phase 1 have 30 members.
 - If you are based in one of these areas, this is an ideal time to consider seeking a place on your local Neighbourhood Board and influencing key decisions about how the funding will be used in your community. There are several ways of expressing your interest in joining. One way is to contact your local authority; many of them currently have live Expressions of Interest for potential Board Members. Often, they have a designated officer leading on Pride in Place. Some Neighbourhood Boards have dedicated webpages that you can find online with contact details. You could also write to your local MP and/or ward councillor to signal your interest. In any correspondence, clearly outline:
 - Your role within the local faith or religious community
 - Any existing social action, community engagement, or missional activity your church or faith group is already delivering locally
 - Why you are motivated to serve on the Neighbourhood Board and how you could contribute constructively to its work
 - Your local knowledge, community connections, and experience - these will all strengthen your application.

- An alternative to being on a Neighbourhood Board is to contribute to any local consultations or opinion gathering that happens, so Board members have a better idea of where the money would be best spent. Faith-based organisations often have local insights that others don't, and these are worth sharing.
 - Importantly, there will be chances for faith-based organisations to apply for funding opportunities that Boards decide on, and deliver local services. This could be in partnership with other organisations, or done independently.
 - Finally, there is an opportunity to be a part of the Network for Neighbourhoods, a national network offering support to and peer-to-peer learning for those involved in the Pride in Place Programme. This is due to start in Autumn 2026⁴.
- In March 2026, the government announced another 40 places in the Pride in Place scheme, expanding Phase 2. In due course, there will be similar routes to engage with these places as those listed above, but given their more recent announcement, they are still in the early stages of development.

The Pride in Place Impact Fund

If you're not located in one of the 284 selected locations, there is still an opportunity for you to engage through the separate but related Pride in Place Impact Fund. An additional 95 locations have been selected to receive £1.5 million to invest in:

- Community Spaces (through refurbishment or pursuit of community ownership for underused buildings)
- Enhancing the physical environment of public space
- Revitalising the high street and town centre

Funding needs to be committed to projects by the end of March 2027. The Impact Fund guidance also directly references 'disused churches' as one example of key community spaces that they want to reinvest in. It also specifically notes that: *"Religious organisations can receive Pride in Place Impact Fund funding to deliver community projects that are aligned with the fund's objectives, e.g. refurbishing a building owned by a religious organisation to provide community activities."*

Locations selected for the Pride in Place Impact Fund can be found [here](#). Applications for the Pride in Place Impact Fund are being hosted on local authority websites. If there doesn't seem to be any existing web content on your council's website, we recommend you get in contact with your local councillor to express interest in the Impact Fund's progress.

⁴ More information on the Network for Neighbourhoods [can be found via this link](#). Also, a [LinkedIn page](#) for the Network is now live.