



A Strategy for North Halifax 2024-2034



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Overview of North Halifax: Geography, Communities, and Key Areas

North Halifax comprises the combined areas of **Ovenden ward** and **Illingworth and Mixenden ward**.

Illingworth and Mixenden lies three miles from Halifax town centre, much of it situated on elevated ground, while Ovenden is just a mile north of the town centre and is predominantly residential.

The A629 road, which connects Halifax to Keighley, is the primary access route for the area.

The northern part of North Halifax includes moorland, scattered farms, Bradshaw village, a wind farm, and Ogden Reservoir, an important recreational area. Three of Calderdale's secondary schools are located here and there are industrial areas primarily along Shay Lane.

The southern part of the area encompasses the settlements of Illingworth, Mixenden, Holmfield, Ovenden, Furness, Lee Mount and Wheatley.

While some residents strongly identify with their specific neighbourhoods, many others use the term "North Halifax" to refer to the entire area, recognising its interconnected nature.





Welcome to the North Halifax Strategy 2024-2034

Councillor Sarah Courtney, Lead Member for Regeneration and Transport.

I am proud to share this strategy for North Halifax, shaped by our vision for Calderdale; a place where you can realise your potential whoever you are, whether your voice has been heard or unheard in the past.

This strategy sets out strategic goals and high-level actions that have been codeveloped with people living and working in North Halifax.

It draws on the insights of local organisations, private, public, voluntary and community and social enterprise sectors, who told us about their pride in North Halifax places and people. People who come together in times of need, who innovate and lead social action, and who aspire for a better North Halifax.

The strategy celebrates the community spirit that exists in North Halifax while acknowledging some longstanding challenges and that people's health, wealth, and wellbeing in North Halifax has been particularly negatively impacted by the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

Our commitment to reducing inequalities, creating thriving towns and communities, and addressing the climate emergency is at the forefront of this plan.

This is an exciting time to launch our strategy as we deliver economic regeneration in Calderdale through an unprecedented level of investment, creating a place where people want to invest, live, work, visit and study.

Together we are determined that North Halifax benefits from public realm improvements and actions that generate employment, social opportunities, and community wealth for all its residents.

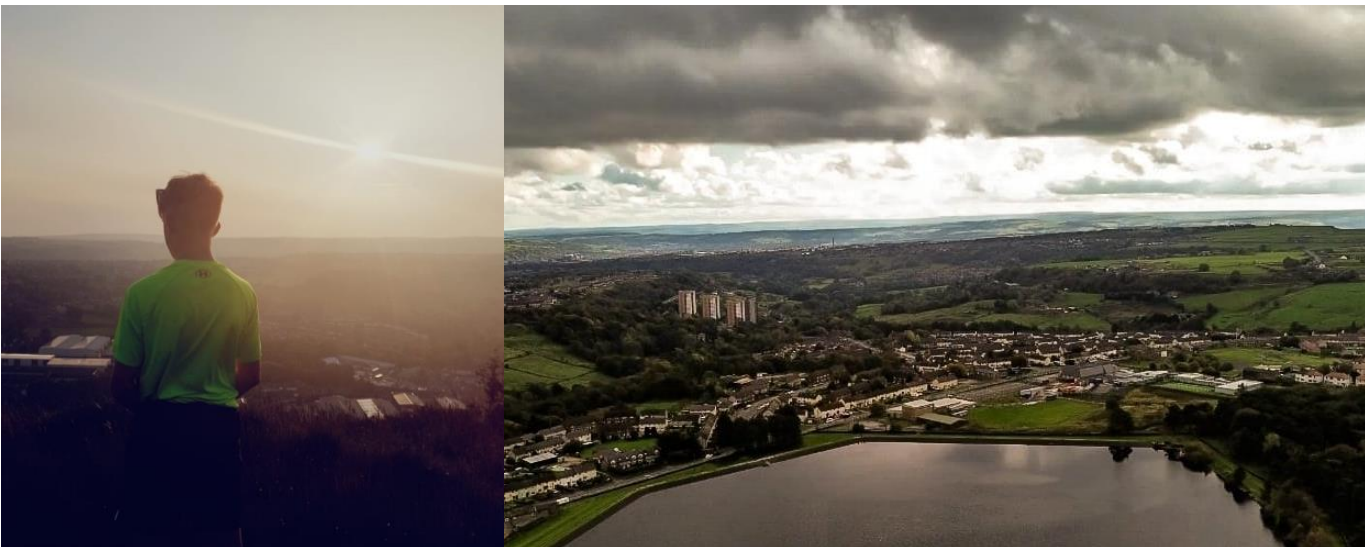
Vision: North Halifax Fit for the Future

Our vision is that by 2034 everyone in North Halifax thrives, in vibrant communities, where businesses can grow, residents live fulfilled lives and feel supported, and our environment is protected. This means:

- increased economic opportunities.
- reduced inequality and better health and wellbeing.
- financial and environmental sustainability.

Our strategy identifies **six goals** to achieve our vision:

1. A more accessible place for everyone.
2. A safe place to live, work and visit that people are proud of.
3. Services and activities that are targeted and inclusive.
4. A place to thrive and succeed.
5. A place where people care for each other.
6. Places and spaces designed to work for local people.



Credit: Snappy Valley Photography

Vision: A North Halifax Fit for the Future

Key themes					
Transport and Accessibility	Community Safety and Perception	Services and Activities	Employment and Skills	Health and Wellbeing	Built Environment
Goals					
1: A more accessible place for everyone.	2: A safe place to live, work and visit that people are proud of.	3: Services and activities that are targeted and inclusive.	4: A place to thrive and succeed.	5: A place where people care for each other.	6: Places and spaces designed to work for local people.
Walking, wheeling and cycling is a genuine alternative and effective mode of transport.	The perception of North Halifax has improved, both among local people and in the eyes of other Calderdale residents.	There are more activities and opportunities that strengthen resilient people and families.	Less unemployment and access to good employment opportunities for all.	People stay well in their own homes and take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.	There is access to affordable, high-quality housing in North Halifax.
Everyone can access shops and amenities and people do not need to travel outside of North Halifax for essentials.	Our excellent green spaces and heritage are celebrated locally and attracts people from across Calderdale.	Resources are targeted to strengthen local communities and people have influence over their future.	Young people have high aspirations and the skills and opportunities to realise their ambitions.	People have strong social networks and good emotional health and wellbeing.	There are good places and spaces for community services and activities.
Bus services are more reliable, frequent and convenient.	North Halifax has clean, safe and attractive streets and public spaces that people feel proud of.	Children are school ready, and all our children can access a good education close to home.	North Halifax is an enterprising place, creating employment opportunities within the community.	Health outcomes for people in North Halifax are in line with the rest of Calderdale.	There are more community owned buildings and assets.

Building on our strengths

Community Spirit

People are North Halifax's greatest asset. They are:

- Friendly and look out for each other
- Resilient to the daily challenges they face, remaining positive and optimistic.
- Have a strong North Halifax identity and are proud of their neighbourhoods.
- They are loyal – with people and organisations who have been there for a long time.
- During the covid pandemic local people and organisations rallied to help one another, setting up food banks and a range of other vital support networks that helped mitigate some of the impacts of the pandemic.

NORTH HALIFAX IS A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE FEEL A STRONG SENSE OF PRIDE AND IDENTITY

WITH A HISTORY OF INNOVATION AND COMMUNITY-LED CHANGE THAT HAS INFLUENCED HOW WE DO THINGS ACROSS CALDERDALE

AND COMMUNITIES COMING TOGETHER IN TIMES OF NEED



Good support services

There is a large choice of support services available, and organisations work together well.

The thriving local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector really understand the area.

There are excellent schools in North Halifax both in terms of the number of schools available and the quality of teaching.

Access to green spaces

Proximity to green spaces and the natural environment, such as parks, trails and woodlands is a key feature of North Halifax we want to protect and celebrate.

From well-known attractions like Ogden Water to hidden gems like this idyllic fishing pond in Mixenden (right).

The natural beauty of the landscape and the views shouldn't be overlooked or taken for granted.



Leadership and innovation

There is a strong voluntary and community sector in North Halifax with key community anchors who innovate and lead, driving change and often influencing how we do things in Calderdale.

They have played a specific and vital role in Calderdale, particularly in times of crisis.

This has been recognised by communities who have seen the benefits of hyperlocal services, and the Council's policy to support a flourishing and sustainable voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

North Halifax growth and investment

In 2022 North Halifax was identified as a particular priority for action by Calderdale Council's cabinet.

This focus saw North Halifax prioritised for £2.8m UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Alongside Active Calderdale funding this investment is delivering improvements to local parks, buildings and community services.

The built landscape is changing already with significant investment going into a range of physical assets across neighbourhoods. These include Ash Green School, Beechwood Library, new walk, cycle and traffic schemes, Mixenden Hub plus emerging plans for Mixenden Activity Centre and the Threeways Centre.

New Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision and housing fit for the future will meet local need and demand on land that is current underutilised.

Addressing some of our challenges

Accessibility and poor transport connection

Most services including basic shopping, work, and public services are a bus or car journey away.

Getting around within North Halifax can be difficult.

The topography of the area can be challenging for people with mobility issues. Around 1 in 5 people have a long-term health problem or disability which limits activities.

High dependence on public transport. Many residents do not have access to a car.

Lack of access to healthy affordable foods, a supermarket and other amenities.

Poor perception of North Halifax

Conversations about North Halifax are too often focused on its problems rather than celebrating what's strong.

People from outside often have preconceived perceptions of North Halifax but local people can also talk negatively about some of our neighbourhoods.

Lack of opportunities for young people

Not enough activities for young people to socialise and develop skills for the future, and the sense that this contributes to increased levels of antisocial and risky behaviours.

Too many children who have special educational needs have to travel away for the right education.

Children's poor emotional health and wellbeing, especially after the pandemic.

Poor health and people living with long term health problems

Higher rates of heart disease and more people living with respiratory illnesses than in other parts of Calderdale.

Low employment and skills levels

Higher than average levels of unemployment and economic inactivity. Almost a third of people in North Halifax have no qualifications and high levels of teenagers not in education, employment, or training.

Housing growth

High number of empty properties and those in need of refurbishment.

The scale of development identified for North Halifax in the Local Plan needs to ensure the infrastructure, both hard and soft, is put in place to support this growing community.

Lack of good quality facilities

The closure of some key facilities in North Halifax has reduced the amount of provision available for services and activities, and opportunities for social interactions for those most in need. A sense of disinvestment in facilities and the environment has led to vandalism.

LACK OF BUSES.
IF YOU MISS ONE
YOU HAVE TO
WAIT 30 MINS FOR
THE NEXT ONE

BETTER BUS
SERVICE, NOT
MANY RUNNING IN
THE AREA

WE NEED MORE
ACCESSIBLE
COMMUNITY
SPACES WITH THE
RIGHT PROVISIONS
FOR PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES.

AND MORE
ACTIVITIES
FOR YOUNG
CHILDREN!

THERE IS CLEAR
DISPARITY BETWEEN
NHX PARKS AND
OTHER WELL
MAINTAINED PARKS IN
CALDERDALE

THERE ARE LONG
STANDING ANTISOCIAL
BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGES
IN THE COMMUNITY AND AT
KEY SITES.

THESE ARE OFTEN
ATTRIBUTED TO A
LACK OF YOUTH
PROVISION



A photograph of two young children, a girl and a boy, painting a stone step. The girl, on the right, is wearing a pink shirt and purple boots, and is using a paint roller to apply white paint from a tray. The boy, on the left, is wearing a white shirt and blue boots, and is also painting. A yellow bucket is on the ground. The background is a stone wall.

Working Together to deliver the strategy

More community involvement in decision making,
particularly about how money is spent

The council and its partners will always work alongside
communities in North Halifax, as partners, to drive
positive change.

A commitment to caring about what happens in these
communities *'as if I lived there'*.

Working Together

Our North Halifax goals are interdependent and achieving them will require everyone working together: public services, businesses and communities to achieve a North Halifax fit for the future.



This strategy was created by people living and working in and for North Halifax.

With special thanks to the people of North Halifax, and the following organisations involved in creating the strategy.

The Accessible Calderdale
Disability Access Forum

Ash Green Community Primary
School

Calderdale Council

Calderdale Inclusive Economy
Board

Calderdale Employment and Skills
Partnership

C&K Careers

Disability Partnership Calderdale

Friends of Beechwood Park

Friends of Shrogg's Park

Halifax Boxing Club

Halifax Rugby Union Football Club

Healthy Minds

Illingworth Moor Methodist
Church

Illingworth Rugby

Holmfield Bowling Club

Holy Nativity Church, Mixenden

Magpies

Moorside School

New Local

Newground Together

Noah's Ark Centre

North Halifax Partnership

North Halifax Primary Care
Network

Ovenden Community Sports
Arena

Ovenden, and Illingworth and
Mixenden Ward Councillors

Place Capital

Phoenix Shed

Snappy Valley Photography

St George's Community Trust

Together Housing Group

The Addy, Mixenden

West Yorkshire Fire and rescue
Service

West Yorkshire Police

Yorkshire Water

Transport and Accessibility

GOAL 1: North Halifax will be more accessible for everyone.

WHAT WILL CHANGE

- Walking, wheeling and cycling is a genuine alternative and effective mode of transport.
- Everyone can access shops and amenities, and people do not need to travel outside of North Halifax for essentials.
- Bus services are more reliable, frequent and convenient.

HOW WILL WE DO IT

- Working with local people to identify improvements that can make streets safer for walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Creating new greenway connections linking key transport hubs, schools, and services.
- Launching a marketing campaign to highlight the health, environmental, and community benefits of active travel.
- Organising community events, such as bike rides or walking groups, to encourage community participation.
- Supporting aspirations for a new supermarket or community shop in Mixenden, along with an affordable delivery service for essential groceries.
- Working with transport authorities to improve local bus services and advocating for routes that connect residents to key destinations within North Halifax and beyond.
- Investigating the potential for a hyperlocal transport solution within North Halifax.

WHY IT IS A PRIORITY

Accessibility and poor transport connections have emerged as significant challenges for residents. Improving infrastructure is seen as a way to create a more inclusive community by helping to alleviate dependence on cars and improve the environment and quality of life for residents.

In North Halifax, most essential services such as grocery shopping, employment, and public services, are often located a bus or car journey away, posing a barrier for those without access to a vehicle.

IF YOU DRIVE LIFE IS EASIER BUT MANY RESIDENTS DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A CAR.

Limited access to affordable, healthy food options further burdens residents, increasing both shopping costs and inconvenience.

Public transport reliance is high, yet travelling within North Halifax can be cumbersome, often requiring trips via Halifax town centre. The area's challenging topography poses additional obstacles for individuals with mobility issues, exacerbating feelings of isolation.



EVIDENCE BASE

- **24.5%** of people in North Halifax and **39.3%** of older people have a long term health problem or disability which limits activities

HOW WE WILL ASSESS PROGRESS

- Number of people travelling actively
- Usual mode of travel to school

CASE STUDY Reviving Beechwood Park: A Community Project for Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Harmony

A six-week social action project aimed to inspire young people and create a safe, enjoyable environment in Beechwood Park, a popular spot for families and dog walkers.

However, the park faced vandalism issues, especially at Holmfield Bowling Club, which serves older members who rely on the facilities as a place to meet and be active. To address this, Newground Together, the Bowling Club, and North Halifax Partnership joined up funding from Active Calderdale and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to foster intergenerational respect.

Sixty-three children participated in educational sessions on the impact of antisocial behaviour, and families engaged in park maintenance activities like litter picking and gardening, and restoration work.

As they took ownership, the young people began to appreciate the bowling green, even showing an interest in playing themselves, and the club introduced faster-paced games that the young people loved.

By summer's end, the park improved significantly, with no further reports of antisocial behaviour, increased youth participation, and new bowling club members. Adults and young people began interacting positively in the park, and families

started attending the bowling club together.

There are plans for an asset transfer, with volunteers ready to maintain the green year-round. This project has established a foundation for ongoing collaboration between Holmfield Bowling Club and Newground, promoting respect and active community involvement among youth.

Newground Together is a charity dedicated to improving lives and creating opportunities within communities. They provide essential open access youth services, and support individuals of all ages to get into employment or back to work.

Their team runs youth clubs and outreach programmes in Mixenden and Ovenden ensuring young people in North Halifax have safe spaces to connect with friends and access early help and support from trusted, experienced workers.

This project underscores the importance of community-led services for young people. Newground is also spearheading the development of a Calderdale Youth Collective and a framework for delivering high-quality, sustainable youth services throughout Calderdale.



Community Safety and Perception

GOAL 2: A safe place to live, work and visit that people are proud of.

WHAT WILL CHANGE

- The perception of North Halifax has improved, both among local people and in the eyes of other Calderdale residents.
- Our excellent green spaces and heritage are celebrated locally and attracts people from across Calderdale.
- North Halifax has clean, safe and attractive streets and public spaces that people feel proud of.

HOW WILL WE DO IT

- Creating campaigns that showcase the beauty and vibrancy of North Halifax, targeting both local residents and visitors.
- Using social media and local events to promote positive stories and community achievements.
- Organising festivals and events that celebrate the culture, people and places of North Halifax.
- Ensuring that North Halifax parks, activities and businesses are featured in Calderdale wide cultural and heritage programmes.
- Increasing opportunities for residents to lead initiatives focused on maintaining and improving shared spaces, such as parks and public areas.
- Working with community organisations, Police, Fire, and Community Safety teams to address safety concerns and enhance residents' sense of security.
- Directing funding and investment towards enhancing and maintaining safe, welcoming public spaces, including planting flowers, adding seating, and creating art installations.

WHY IT IS A PRIORITY

Discussions about North Halifax frequently centre on its challenges rather than celebrating its strengths. This focus can shape negative perceptions among outsiders and even within the community itself.

Many stakeholders believe that the absence of youth clubs, sports activities, and social spaces for young people contributes to antisocial behaviour and risky choices. When facilities are neglected and allowed to deteriorate, it often leads to vandalism and further community issues.

Creating a safe place to live, work, and visit is a priority for local residents.

It fosters a sense of pride and belonging, encouraging positive engagement and investment in the community. By addressing these concerns, we can shift the narrative and highlight the potential of North Halifax as a vibrant, welcoming place for all.



EVIDENCE BASE

- **56%** of people in North Halifax think Calderdale is a great place to live
- Some areas of North Halifax are ranked within the 10% worst areas for crime in England

HOW WE WILL ASSESS PROGRESS

- Number of people from North Halifax who think Calderdale is a great place to live
- Perception of North Halifax by people
- Increased ranking in the Indices of Deprivation Crime Domain



NHP Staff and Community Directors

CASE STUDY Empowering Communities: The Vital Role of Community Anchors in Local Development

Community anchor organisations have proven vital to Calderdale, especially during periods of crisis.

North Halifax Partnership (NHP) has played a crucial community leadership role for over 25 years, empowering residents to shape their futures and drive positive change.

Established in 1998 for social and economic regeneration, NHP is dedicated to improving life in North Halifax by collaborating with local services, businesses, and organisations to tackle various challenges.

As an independent, community-led organisation, they have a strong track record of delivering holistic services in community development and family support that foster pride and engagement, promote social inclusion, and create opportunities.

NHP recently led the UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment in the area and their engagement campaign, Reimagining Communities, involved over 2,400 residents sharing their views on community priorities and development. Their Listening Library has gathered stories, ideas, and experiences from individuals, families, and communities in North Halifax, to shape the vision of the North Halifax strategy.

GOAL 3: Services and activities that are targeted and inclusive

WHAT WILL CHANGE

- There are more activities and opportunities that strengthen resilient people and families.
- Resources are targeted to strengthen local communities and people have influence over their future.
- Children are school ready, and all our children can access a good education close to home.

HOW WILL WE DO IT

- Reestablishing Mixenden Activity Centre as a community asset with a viable plan for ongoing management.
- Embedding Family Hubs across North Halifax and providing access to a range of services and resources for residents.
- Increasing training for early years staff
- Working with community providers to develop a framework for high-quality, sustainable youth services throughout Calderdale.
- Building on community-led approaches to investment and directing funding towards what really matters to local people.
- Training and mentoring young people to develop skills to participate in decision-making.
- Building a new SEND school in Ovenden and expanding provision at Ravenscliffe in Halifax.
- Promoting inclusive places in schools through alternative provision in mainstream schools and satellite specialist classes.

WHY IT IS A PRIORITY

North Halifax has long faced significant deprivation, worsened by recent crises. This underscores the urgent need for targeted and inclusive services to support community recovery and resilience.

Residents report a decline in services, particularly in special educational needs and youth programs. The closure of essential facilities has limited access to support and social networks for those in need.

If children aren't ready physically and emotionally for school, it can affect their learning and their play.

There is a pressing demand for specialised programmes to address the social and educational needs of young people, especially post-pandemic.

Stakeholders also stress the importance of involving the community, particularly young people, in decision-making processes. This involvement fosters ownership and ensures resources are directed toward services that truly meet local needs.

Prioritising targeted and inclusive services by ensuring that all residents have access to necessary support and opportunities is essential for strengthening the North Halifax community.

EVIDENCE BASE

- Almost $\frac{1}{4}$ of children in North Halifax live in poverty.
- Higher rates of school absence (**9.6%**) for pupils eligible for Disadvantaged pupil premium.
- Only **56%** of children are ready to start school.

HOW WE WILL ASSESS PROGRESS

- Number of children living in low income families
- School absence rates
- Number of children ready for school





CASE STUDY Empowering Community Connections: Holy Nativity Church's Vision for a Sustainable Future

Community-focused funding initiatives like the UK Shared Prosperity Fund have empowered projects to create strong, healthy places where people can get the help, they need in their own neighbourhood.

In North Halifax, people and community organisations have deep ties and a clear understanding of community challenges.

Holy Nativity Church in Mixenden has over 70 years of experience supporting local people, providing a welcoming space for social activities and access to financial, health, and family support. The church and its volunteers also host arts events, including live lounges and community cinema.

During the pandemic, Holy Nativity introduced a food pantry and holiday hunger interventions in partnership with Ash Green School and local businesses and community organisations.

Four years on from the covid pandemic, and thanks to UK Shared Prosperity Fund support, Holy Nativity is embarking on an ambitious three-year project which hopes to secure funding to enhance its building and activities, including a volunteer hub and a funded youth worker to bolster community engagement.

This will improve accessibility, create flexible spaces, and focus on sustainability, aiming for a low carbon footprint and efficient running costs.

GOAL 4: A place to thrive and succeed

LINKING SCHOOLS
MORE EFFECTIVELY TO
SKILLS PROGRAMMES
AND CONNECTIONS TO
EMPLOYMENT

WE ARE KEEN TO OFFER
MORE VOLUNTEERING
OPPORTUNITIES TO
YOUNG PEOPLE TO
DEVELOP HANDS ON
SKILLS

WHAT WILL CHANGE

- Less unemployment and access to good employment opportunities for all.
- Young people have high aspirations and the skills and opportunities to realise their ambitions.
- North Halifax is an enterprising place, creating employment opportunities within the community.

HOW WILL WE DO IT

- Creating an employment and skills taskforce of local delivery partners to implement the Employment and Skills Framework and Post-16 Learning, Employment, and Skills Strategy.
- Fostering partnerships between local businesses, schools, and community organisations to create pathways for internships, apprenticeships, and employment tailored to the needs of the community.
- Encouraging entrepreneurial initiatives by offering resources, mentorship, and access to funding for local startups and enterprises.
- Establishing programmes that inspire and empower young people to pursue their ambitions, including skills development workshops and mentorship programmes, with a focus on green skills and careers.
- Ensuring that social value is a key criterion in the planning and procurement of new developments including their potential to create jobs and opportunities that benefit people in North Halifax.

WHY IT IS A PRIORITY

When individuals have access to opportunities for education, employment, and personal development, they can improve their quality of life and contribute positively to the community.

Creating a thriving environment is a top priority for local people in North Halifax due to some significant challenges including higher-than-average unemployment and economic inactivity.

Nearly one-third of residents lack formal qualifications, limiting their job prospects.

While many children perform well academically, the pandemic has negatively impacted education, leaving some with unmet special educational and emotional needs. Additionally, communities see a concerning number of teenagers who are not in education, employment, or training—higher than the Calderdale average.

This lack of local opportunities for skill development and work experience hinders young people's aspirations and future success. Addressing these issues is crucial for fostering a community where everyone can thrive and succeed.

EVIDENCE BASE

- **890** people seeking employment.
- **31%** of residents have no qualifications.

HOW WE WILL ASSESS PROGRESS

- Pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
- Number of people saying that Calderdale is a great place for young people to flourish and achieve their ambitions.
- Number of people that think that Calderdale is a place that enables businesses to thrive and succeed.



CASE STUDY **Strengthening Community Care: Noah's Ark Centre's Integrated Wellbeing Service**

The Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS) developed by Noah's Ark Centre contributes to the North Halifax goal to be a **"Place Where People Care for Each Other"** by addressing the mental health and wellbeing needs of vulnerable young people in the community.

The IWS provides early intervention and holistic support to those facing significant challenges, including trauma, poverty, and adverse childhood experiences. By offering therapy, activity groups, money advice, and other tailored services, the IWS helps build resilience and improve the emotional health of young people who may otherwise fall through the cracks of traditional support systems.

The service is inclusive of diverse groups, such as those who are not in education, employment or training, have special educational needs, care leavers, or identify as LGBTQ+, ensuring that every young person has access to the care they need.

Through developing partnerships with local Family Hubs at Kevin Pearce and Innovations Children's Centres and other community organisations, the IWS takes a collaborative approach to mental health support, demonstrating the power of community engagement and collective care.

Noah's Ark aims to involve more community partners to broaden the holistic services available and ensure the IWS becomes a long-term part of the mental health and wellbeing support offered to young people and adults in North Halifax and beyond.

By empowering people to take control of their mental health and wellbeing, the IWS supports the vision of a North Halifax where individuals are not only cared for but also equipped to care for themselves and others, creating a supportive, resilient community where people look out for one another and work together to overcome challenges.



WE LOVE COMING TO
COMMUNITY EVENTS
THAT BRING
EVERYONE OUT!

GOAL 5: A place where people care for each other

WHAT WILL CHANGE

- People stay well in their own homes and take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- People have strong social networks and good emotional health and wellbeing.
- Health outcomes for people in North Halifax are in line with the rest of Calderdale.

HOW WILL WE DO IT

- Collaborating to develop innovative approaches that empower individuals using health services, focusing on the prevention of conditions that affect the heart.
- Implementing the community-led ‘We’re All Active Calderdale’ programme to promote physical activity that is easy, accessible, and appealing.
- Sustaining the funding of Staying Well Hubs and community organisations delivering vital health and wellbeing services.
- Working with local mental health services and charities to empower residents and establish peer support networks and increase volunteering.
- Using community events to share health information and strengthen connections.
- Enhancing access to health through collaboration with local pharmacies.
- Advocating for increased funding in accessible mental health services to better support community needs.
- Launching initiatives to reduce smoking and increase cancer screening
- Addressing barriers to accessing health information online.

WHY IT IS A PRIORITY

North Halifax faces significant health challenges, with a higher prevalence of chronic illnesses compared to other areas. The impact of the covid pandemic has been particularly severe here, exacerbating existing disparities in health, wealth, and well-being.

Conditions like heart disease and respiratory issues, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma, are more common among residents. Additionally, lifestyle factors contribute to these health concerns: one in four adults smoke, and there is a notable percentage of people with a body mass index of 30 or higher.

The community also shows low participation in cancer screenings and a concerning lack of physical activity, with 30% of adults not meeting the recommended minimum of 30 minutes of exercise per week, compared to 24% across Calderdale as a whole.

Addressing these health disparities is crucial for fostering a supportive environment where all residents can thrive. A focus on community well-being is essential to ensure that everyone has access to the care and resources they need to lead healthier lives.

EVIDENCE BASE

- **7.1%** of residents reporting bad or very bad health
- **69.28%** of people breastfeeding at delivery reduces to **39.45%** at 6-8 weeks
- Life expectancy in Ovenden is almost **4 years less** than the Calderdale average.

HOW WE WILL ASSESS PROGRESS

- Number of ‘We’re All Active Calderdale’ initiatives and improvements
- Percentage smoking at delivery
- Standardised mortality rates for chronic respiratory conditions.



CASE STUDY A Community Revitalised: Breathing New Life into Cherished Community Spaces

In Mixenden, residents said their parks felt neglected and had fallen into disrepair. Broken glass, litter, and outdated play equipment made the spaces unsafe, forcing families to seek recreation elsewhere.

To address this, various funding sources were combined to rebuild pride and strengthen the community while supporting the council's climate action commitments. The goal was not just renovation, but the creation of a safe, engaging, and sustainable environment for families to gather and thrive.

Community involvement was key, with focus groups including residents, children, and teenagers ensuring the designs met their needs. Together, they envisioned modern, accessible play equipment, shelter and shaded areas, and safer paths.

The results are remarkable. Sunny Bank Park and Mixenden Urban Park now feature vibrant play areas, three newly surfaced courts, a multi-use games area (MUGA), basketball pitch, and cycle tracks, along with nature and history trails enriching the community's connection to the environment.

At the grand opening, hundreds of families gathered to explore the revitalized parks. This transformation not only beautified the area but also ignited a renewed sense of ownership among residents. As one resident said, "When we're looked after, like we deserve to be looked after, we look after ourselves!" This sentiment resonates throughout the North Halifax Strategy, reinforcing the importance of community engagement in maintaining their shared spaces.



Built Environment

GOAL 6: Places and spaces designed to work for local people.

WHAT WILL CHANGE

- Better access to affordable, high-quality housing in North Halifax.
- There are good places and spaces for community services and activities.
- There are more community owned buildings and assets

HOW WILL WE DO IT

- Addressing housing needs by investing in affordable housing options, encouraging mixed-income developments, and revitalising vacant or underutilised properties.
- Taking a place shaping approach to transforming housing and public places in North Halifax by focusing on holistic development that enhances the quality of life for residents.
- Engaging local residents in the planning and decision-making processes to ensure that developments reflect their needs and aspirations.
- Working with absent landlords/those who neglect the quality of their stock and incentivising them to refurbish poor quality stock.
- Creating a purpose-built Mixenden Hub for healthcare services, retail, library and community garden.
- Empowering the community to take ownership of key assets and manage resources according to their specific needs and priorities.
- Working with local people on the planned development of a new SEND school at the old Threeways Centre site.

WHY IT IS A PRIORITY

The Local Plan has identified sites for over 1,600 new homes in North Halifax across 23 locations. Such significant development requires infrastructure to support the growing community. Revitalising empty and neglected properties is essential to improving the overall community environment.

Thoughtful design can improve accessibility for all residents, including those with disabilities, families, and the elderly. When spaces reflect the values and culture of local people, it fosters a sense of pride and belonging, encouraging active participation in local life.

Well-designed areas can enhance safety and comfort, making residents feel secure and encouraging them to use these spaces more often. Integrating renewable energy solutions into these developments, in alignment with Calderdale's Climate Action Plan, helps reduce environmental impact while promoting energy efficiency.

Designing with the community in mind often leads to more sustainable practices, ensuring that spaces remain relevant and well-maintained over time.

By prioritising these approaches, North Halifax communities can create vibrant, functional, and inclusive environments that enhance quality of life for all residents.

EVIDENCE BASE

- 38% of households rent from a social landlord or privately.
- 18% of households living in fuel poverty. 185 homes without central heating.

HOW WE WILL ASSESS PROGRESS

- Increase in the number of community owned/managed assets
- Number of VCSE organisations involved in partnerships with the council
- Percentage of Calderdale spend in areas of deprivation
- Calderdale spend in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.



APPENDIX: North Halifax at a glance

Population

North Halifax represents a significant population within Calderdale (25,534 people or approximately 12% of Calderdale).
Ovenden ward has the 2nd most dense population with 38 people per hectare compared with 6 in Calderdale. Average age in Ovenden is 37.27. Population growth of just 1% over last decade, with a fall in the number of working age people. This is projected to continue with a 3% fall in working-age people over next 10 years

Ethnicity

	Illingworth and Mixenden	Ovenden
Asian/Asian British	89	278
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	60	107
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	224	303
White	12,159	11,977
Other ethnic group	33	70

Qualifications

	Illingworth and Mixenden	Ovenden
% of residents with no qualifications	23.40	26.28

Occupation

North Halifax wards have the highest level of skilled trades in Calderdale.
Occupation sectors in order are ‘Skilled trades’, ‘Elementary occupations’, ‘Process plant and machine operatives’, Administrative and secretarial, ‘Caring, leisure and other’.

Housing tenure

	Illingworth and Mixenden	Ovenden
Number of all households	5,398	5,426
Households rented from private landlord or letting agency	786	981
Households rented from council or other social landlords	693	956
	461	544

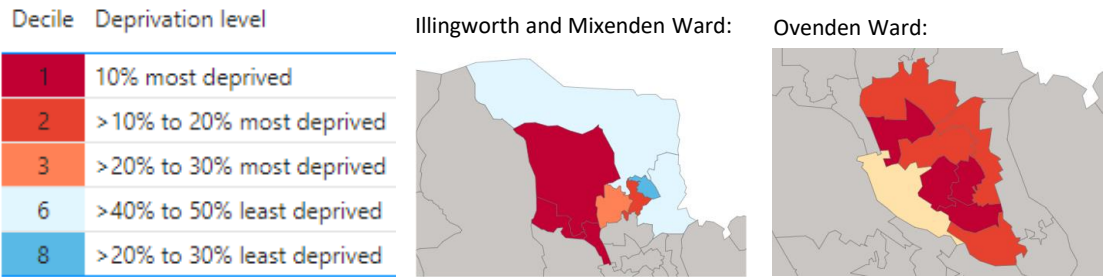
Deprivation and Poverty

English Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD)

The area has experienced long-lasting, severe deprivation and the wards area among Calderdale’s most deprived communities in the 2019 IMD before the covid pandemic.

Seven lower super output areas (LSOA) are within 10% most deprived in England, with almost all LSOAs worsening since 2015. IMD 2019 ranks Ovenden ward as within the 4% most deprived nationally.

Deprivation levels in Illingworth and Mixenden vary with 4 of the most deprived LSOAs in Calderdale in Mixenden and 2 of the least deprived in Illingworth.



	Illingworth and Mixenden	Ovenden
Children in poverty (%)	22.3	25.8
Older people in poverty (%)	14.7	22.7
People living in fuel poverty (%)	15.5	20
Number of households claiming Universal Credit	1,763	2,282
People claiming Universal Credit	2,142	2,728
Housing Benefit claimants	500	611
Households claiming Council tax reduction	1,222	1,564
Council tax debt (£)	313,192	451,355
Claimants seeking employment	365	525
Children eligible for free school meals (%)	37.1	46.1
Absence rate for pupils	7.1	9.7
People entitled to disability benefits	1,923	1,893
People eligible for carers allowance	435	478
Pension credit claimants	284	327

APPENDIX North Halifax at a glance

Calderdale Cares Neighbourhood Profile. Wards in North Neighbourhood: The wards do not map exactly to neighbourhood boundaries, however the following wards have part of their population living within North; Illingworth and Mixenden 86%, Ovenden 80%, Town 44%, Warley 42% and Northowram & Shelf 34%.

Starting Well

Around 460 babies are born each year in North.

Around 1 in 7 mothers are still smoking at the time of delivery - significantly more than the Calderdale average.

Babies born with a low birth weight is significantly higher than for Calderdale.

Breastfeeding is significantly lower following delivery and by the time mother and baby are discharged from hospital. These rates are significantly lower than the Calderdale average.

Developing Well

Just under 19% of reception age children have excess weight and by year 6 this has increased to around 37% which is significantly higher than the Calderdale average.

The proportion claiming disability living allowance who are aged under 16 is the highest of the neighbourhoods at 7.3% and is significantly higher than Calderdale.

The referral rate to children's social care in North is the highest of the neighbourhoods at 84.9 per 1000 children and this is significantly higher than the Calderdale average. 9.8 per 1000 children are on a child protection plan which is also significantly higher.

Living and working well

Significantly higher than the Calderdale average:

- 1 in 4 people smoke.
- Higher prevalence of those aged 18 and over with a body mass index of 30 or above (12.4%)
- Around 1 in 5 have a long-term health problem or disability which limits activities.
- Referrals to adult's social care each year
- Deaths from cardiovascular disease and ischemic heart disease
- Respiratory conditions are an issue for North with more people living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and Asthma.
- 0.9% of the population in North have a learning disability.
- Just over 4% have chronic kidney disease

Significantly lower than the Calderdale average:

- Both males and females in North are expected to live over three years less than the Calderdale average.
- Screening for cervical cancer, breast cancer and bowel cancer are all significantly lower/worse than the Calderdale average.

Ageing well

Significantly more people aged 65+ claiming pension credit. Just over 1 in 6 claims in North, compared to 1 in 9 in Calderdale overall.

The health of older people in North Halifax appears to be worse than the Calderdale average with significantly higher percentages claiming Personal Independence Payment (60+) (12.3%) and Attendance Allowance (65+) (13.6%).

Mortality from heart disease, respiratory conditions and cardiovascular disease in those aged 65 plus are all significantly higher than Calderdale average.