



**COMMUNITY FUND**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FUND**

Application No 05

Organisation: Blackpool South MP

Contact: Chris Webb

Project Brief:

**Project Name: Highfield's New Community Garden**

**Constituency:** Blackpool South

**Funding Requested:** £3,000

**Total Project Cost:** £25,750

**Project Duration:** Ongoing Community Initiative

**Start Date:** 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

**Location:** Highfield Park, Blackpool

**Issues Identified:**

There has been a clear rise in anti-social behaviour in Highfield Park over the past year, including graffiti, deliberate fire-setting requiring fire service attendance, loitering, and repeated damage to park facilities. These issues have discouraged local families from using the park and have been directly observed by volunteers, Hub users and residents. Although formal crime data is not held, neighbourhood policing teams confirm ASB as an ongoing concern. Given the size and location of the new 234m<sup>2</sup> community garden, preventative, youth-focused interventions are essential to help reduce further incidents.

**Project Aim:**

The project aims to address persistent anti-social behaviour (ASB) and low community engagement within Highfield Park and the surrounding residential area by transforming an under-used space into a safe, inclusive, and well-maintained community garden. Through positive, structured engagement—particularly with young people—the project seeks to build local ownership, responsibility, and pride, helping to reduce vandalism, disruptive behaviour, and community tensions while strengthening cohesion across generations.

**Key Interventions:**

The project will deliver a combination of physical improvements and community-led activity, including:

- Creation of a **fully accessible community garden and allotment space**, open to the public from early Spring 2026
- **Targeted youth gardening sessions**, providing structured and supervised activity for teenagers aged 13–18 who may otherwise lack access to positive provision
- Practical **skills development** in planting, food growing, basic landscaping, tool use, and site maintenance
- **Positive role-modelling and informal mentoring**, with adult volunteers working alongside young people

- **Community events and engagement activities**, including planting days, harvest celebrations, and shared intergenerational projects
- Installation of **crime-prevention measures** (secure storage, CCTV, robust tools) to protect the site and deter vandalism and misuse

These interventions will provide meaningful activity, establish clear guardianship of the space, and reduce opportunities for ASB in and around the park.

#### **Referral Pathways:**

Young people are identified through strong relationships with local schools, who already engage pupils in positive outdoor activities that build confidence, structured responsibility and community ownership. Once the garden opens, a second nearby high school will be brought into the project to widen access. The approach is firmly rooted in **early intervention**, helping young people see the park and garden as “their space,” reducing ASB by encouraging pride and positive peer influence rather than enforcement.

Referrals come via school pastoral and wellbeing teams, informal signposting from youth workers and community volunteers, and open-access sessions once the garden is established. All referrals are **supportive and preventative**, aimed at engaging young people before behaviour escalates into enforcement or criminalisation.

#### **Partners and Roles**

The Highfield Community Garden will be delivered through strong partnerships that combine early intervention, rehabilitation, community safety, and positive engagement for young people.

- **Probation Service:** Involves individuals on community-based rehabilitation in practical gardening tasks, offering positive role modelling and promoting responsibility and constructive routines.
- **Local High Schools:** Identify and refer pupils who would benefit from structured outdoor activity, supporting early intervention and encouraging young people to value and take ownership of community spaces.
- **Local Policing Team / PCSO:** Provide informal community safety guidance, make referrals, offer visible reassurance, and support preventative approaches to antisocial behaviour, helping build trust with young people.
- **Community Volunteers:** Contribute to daily gardening activities, supervision, mentoring, and intergenerational engagement, ensuring the project remains community-led and inclusive.
- **The Hub (Lead Organisation):** Oversees project coordination, safeguarding, youth engagement, volunteer management, and long-term site maintenance.
- **Friends of Highfield Park:** Provide gardening expertise and support intergenerational community involvement.
- **Local Schools & Youth Organisations:** Promote the project and facilitate participation from young people.
- **Local Authority (Parks/Community Development):** Provide land access, environmental guidance, and support long-term sustainability.

#### **Expected Outcomes:**

- **Reduction in anti-social behaviour** and vandalism within Highfield Park and surrounding streets

- **Increased positive engagement of young people**, particularly teenagers, in constructive and supervised activities
- **Improved community cohesion**, with increased interaction between different age groups
- **Greater pride, ownership, and stewardship** of Highfield Park among local residents
- Establishment of a **safe, attractive, and well-maintained community asset** that provides long-term benefit to the area

**Evaluation & Success Measures:**

Success will be assessed through a proportionate and practical monitoring approach, including:

- Monitoring of **ASB reports**, alongside feedback from local police and community wardens
- Attendance and participation records for youth sessions, volunteer involvement, and community events
- Surveys and informal feedback from young people, volunteers, families, and local residents
- Visual assessment of the space, including levels of maintenance and absence of vandalism or damage
- Ongoing partner reviews to assess engagement, behaviour change, and wider community impact

**PCC Funding Request (£3,000):**

- **Secure, lockable storage shed:** £1,450
  - Weather-proof, reinforced storage to safeguard equipment and reduce theft and vandalism
- **Solar-powered security cameras:** £900
  - Deterrence and monitoring to protect the site and promote respectful use
- **Gardening tools and safety equipment:** £650
  - Youth-appropriate tools, protective equipment, and safe storage to enable inclusive participation

**Overall Project Funding:**

The total project cost of **£25,750** has already been secured through funding from the **National Lottery Community Fund** and **Pay Back Time Trust**, which supported the transformation of the site, including raised beds, fencing, surfacing, seating, and growing areas. The **£3,000 PCC contribution** will complete the final essential elements required to open the site safely and sustainably, safeguarding the wider investment and reducing the risk of ongoing ASB.

Priority Supported:

**Tackle Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour  
Rebuild Public Trust and Confidence**

Partner Consultation

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire

The project is a positive community initiative. Applicant confirmed involvement with NPT and other partners.

ASB, Prevention and Problem-Solving Command

The concept is strong, the applicant has clarified referral pathways and evaluation methods.