OCTAVIA Abri



Community Investment Plan 2026-2027

Bristol

Building a healthier, safer and more connected neighbourhood together

Introduction

Bristol is one of our identified community investment zones within the South West

This plan sets out our long-term commitment to working alongside residents, partners and community organisations to support a healthier, safer and more connected neighbourhood.

We believe homes and communities are places to belong, grow and thrive. Through the Octavia Foundation, we are committed to a place-based approach to community investment that builds on the strengths, relationships and potential that already exist within local communities.

This plan has been shaped through a combination of local data, housing insight, community research and ongoing conversations with residents and partners.

It reflects both the opportunities and challenges within Bristol, while recognising the important role residents play in shaping the future of their neighbourhood.

This is a living plan that will continue to evolve alongside residents as local priorities, feedback and opportunities develop over time.

Our aim is not simply to deliver projects, but to support long-term community resilience, stronger local connections and improved life chances for residents.

ABOUT BRISTOL

Bristol is one of the South West's largest and most vibrant cities, known for its creative culture, multicultural communities, and thriving food and music scenes. The city actively celebrates its rich heritage and distinct neighbourhoods through regular grassroots festivals. It is also experiencing rapid economic growth, with major industries spanning digital technology, aerospace, and the creative sectors.

As of 2026, Bristol's local authority population has surpassed half a million. It boasts a relatively young median age of 33 and is highly diverse, with over 90 languages spoken.

Alongside this development, significant challenges arise, particularly around wealth inequality and housing affordability. As of 2026, Bristol has 41 areas falling within the most deprived 10% nationally. Bristol also faces high levels of homelessness, perpetuated by the city's soaring costs and inequality levels.

These contrasts make Bristol a deeply dynamic place where growth borders hardship. The numerous community networks and local organisations across the city look to bridge neighbourhood divides. These groups highlight Bristol's history of activism, grassroots organising, and community cohesion. Empowering social change sits at the heart of the city, reflecting its reputation as the UK's capital of civil rights.

Our research also highlights wider socioeconomic challenges within the area, with the wards of Hartcliffe & Withywood ranking highly within the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Alongside this data, housing management insight, tenant satisfaction measures and community engagement activity have helped us build a fuller understanding of local priorities and experiences.

Importantly, this plan takes an asset-based approach. While we recognise the challenges facing the community, we also recognise the strengths already present in Bristol, including resident knowledge, community relationships, local organisations and shared spaces that can support positive long-term change.

WHAT YOU TOLD US

Listening to residents has been central to shaping this plan.

Through surveys, conversations, community events and regular engagement, residents shared what matters most to them and where they would like to see investment and support focused over the coming years.

You told us that the biggest priorities for the area are:

- Rising living costs and financial pressures
- A rise in loneliness and a lack of community cohesion
- Concerns around community safety and antisocial behaviour
- Limited opportunities and activities for young people
- The need for increased support by fostering partnerships with local organisations
- The need for a stronger resident voice and influence

Bristol has recently been designated a Community Investment Zone by Abri, marking the start of our journey to proactively tackle the local challenges our residents face.

Resident feedback provides Abri with a clear framework of priorities to meaningfully improve our customers' lives. This document details how we intend to deliver on these priorities across Bristol.



Our approach

Our approach to community investment in Bristol is long-term, place-based and community-rooted.

This means:

- Working alongside residents to shape priorities
- Building on existing strengths and community assets
- Focusing on prevention and early support
- Developing strong local partnerships
- Creating opportunities for residents to lead and participate
- Investing in sustainable change rather than short-term interventions

We want to feel like a large organisation with a genuinely local presence — visible, accessible and connected to the communities we serve.

This plan will continue to evolve over time as local needs and priorities change. We are committed to ongoing engagement with residents to ensure our investment remains shaped by the people who live here.

OUR VISION FOR BRISTOL

Our vision is to support the development of safe, welcoming, and connected communities across Bristol. We aim to ensure residents are well-informed, able to access the support they need, and provided with opportunities that help them to thrive.

We are committed to working alongside residents and partners to create places where people feel a genuine sense of belonging, identity, and pride in their neighbourhoods.

Our priorities for Bristol

Priority 1.
Supporting our Customers and Communities with the Impact of the Cost-of-Living

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Success would mean:

- More accessible support services for our residents
- A more financially resilient community
- Local confidence in money management, budgeting and tenancy sustainment

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Together, we will work to:

- Partner with local organisations that provide personal support services
- Signposting and helping residents access additional services where needed
- Partner with local organisations to provide activities that are free of charge

WHY THIS MATTERS

We recognise that rising living costs continue to place significant pressure on many households. National and global economic challenges have contributed to increased costs for essentials such as food, energy, and transport. These pressures can be particularly difficult in Bristol, one of the UK's most expensive cities to live in.

Through our conversations and engagement with residents, we know that financial well-being remains a key concern. This is highlighted by the fact that 50.6% of Abri Bristol residents are in arrears. Many residents have told us they would benefit from support with employment and accessing benefits. As a result, helping residents manage the cost of living and improve their financial resilience remains a priority for us.

Priority 2.
Supporting Customers with Opportunities to Connect with Others and Create a Better Sense of Social Cohesion

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Success would mean:

- More residents feeling connected to their community
- Reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation
- Increased participation in community activities
- Stronger relationships between neighbours

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Together, we will work to:

- Create more opportunities for people to meet and connect
- Support inclusive community activities and events
- Improve support opportunities for isolated residents
- Encourage volunteering and resident participation

WHY THIS MATTERS

As Bristol is a relatively new Community Investment Zone for Abri, there have historically been fewer opportunities for residents to come together through community activities and events. Many of our homes in Bristol are also part of newer developments, meaning that neighbourhoods and resident networks are still developing.

We recognise that strong communities do not happen automatically. Opportunities for residents to meet, build relationships, and support one another are important for creating places where people feel they belong.

This is particularly relevant in our city centre properties, where the nature of the area can make it more difficult for residents to connect with one another. Bristol, in fact, was the only SW local authority with below average sentiment of belonging 54% compared to the regional average of 61%.

With fewer established community spaces and hubs nearby, there is an important role for Abri in bringing residents together, fostering a sense of belonging, and supporting the development of connected communities.



Priority 3.
Working to Tackle ASB Within our Communities

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Success would mean:

- More residents feel safe where they live
- Improved confidence in reporting concerns
- A cleaner neighbourhood with reduced fly-tipping.
- Increased pride in the neighbourhood

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Together, we will work to:

- Improve communication and behaviour around waste disposal
- Improve communication around local safety issues
- Support community activities that build trust and neighbourhood pride
- Encourage greater confidence in reporting concerns

WHY THIS MATTERS

Residents have told us that safety and antisocial behaviour are significant concerns across several of our Bristol communities. In Bristol, we have 12 ASB cases per 1000 homes. Through our engagement work, you have highlighted the importance of feeling safe where you live and having confidence that concerns raised will be addressed effectively.

Through our door-knocking, community walkabouts, and events, you have also told us that you would like clearer communication about antisocial behaviour affecting your community. Additionally, you would like a more visible and responsive Abri presence when concerns are reported.

One issue that has been consistently raised is the inappropriate disposal of waste, including fly-tipping and misuse of communal bin areas. As this can negatively affect the appearance, cleanliness, and safety of neighbourhoods, tackling waste-related antisocial behaviour will be a particular area of focus within our wider efforts to create cleaner, safer, and more welcoming communities.

Priority 4.
Engage and support young people and families

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Success would mean:

- More young people participating in positive local activities
- Families feeling better connected to support and opportunities
- More young people feeling confident, included and listened to

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Together, we will work to:

- Increase activities and opportunities for young people
- Support children and families to access local services
- Involve young people in shaping local activities and projects

WHY THIS MATTERS

Support for young people and families with children has consistently been identified by residents as a key priority through our engagement work. This was the most frequently discussed topic during conversations with residents at Castle Park View and Speedwell Baths.

We recognise the important role that positive activities and opportunities can play in helping young people build confidence, develop new skills, and form connections within their community. Where youth activities and services already exist, we will look for ways to improve awareness of and access to these opportunities.

However, linking residents with local youth services is becoming increasingly difficult due to budget cuts. Funding for Bristol youth services dropped from £1.42m annually in 2023/24 to £1.23m the following year, and then to £825,000 from 2025/26. In areas with fewer activities available, we will work with local partners to explore how new opportunities can be introduced to the community.

We also understand that parents and carers can face a range of challenges that affect their ability to access opportunities for their children. For this reason, our approach will not focus solely on young people, but on supporting the wider family.



Priority 5.
Strengthening Local Partnerships to Better Support Abri Customers

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Success would mean:

- Making support from local organisations accessible to Abri residents
- Supporting local organisations to better serve their communities
- Involving Abri residents in shaping local activities and projects

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Together, we will work to:

- Build strong relationships with local community hubs and centres.
- Signpost local activities and support that align with residents' needs and wants.
- Relay resident needs and wants to local organisations

WHY THIS MATTERS

Bristol is home to a wide range of organisations, charities, and community groups that provide valuable support on issues such as employment, financial wellbeing, and health. Ensuring that residents can access the right support at the right time is an important priority for us.

In some areas, such as Lockleaze, strong relationships already exist between Abri, local organisations, and community hubs. These partnerships help us connect residents with opportunities and services that can make a positive difference to their lives. However, we recognise that these connections are not yet as well-established across all our Bristol communities.

We will continue to build and strengthen partnerships with local organisations to create a broader network of support for residents. By working collaboratively with specialist providers and community groups, we can help ensure that residents have access to expertise and services that extend beyond those provided directly by Abri.

Priority 6.
The need for a stronger resident voice and influence

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Success would mean:

- Stronger relationships between neighbours
- Residents feel listened to and able to influence change
- Increased confidence and participation across the community

WHAT WE WILL FOCUS ON

Together, we will work to:

- Create regular opportunities for resident feedback and involvement
- Encourage community-led ideas and projects
- Strengthen resident influence over local priorities and activity

WHY THIS MATTERS

Resident feedback and involvement are central to how we design and deliver our work. Our priorities and projects are shaped by the people they are intended to support, and we recognise that residents are best placed to tell us what works in their communities.

Through our engagement activity, we know that opportunities to share views and contribute ideas are valued. Residents have told us they appreciate having a chance to speak with us directly.

We are committed to strengthening these opportunities further by increasing how often we engage with residents, particularly through face-to-face conversations. This will help ensure that your voices continue to play a meaningful role in shaping services and community investment across Bristol.

WORKING TOGETHER

This plan represents the beginning of a long-term commitment to Bristol and the people who live here.

We know that lasting change happens when residents, community organisations, public services and local partners work together around shared priorities and ambitions.

By continuing to listen, invest and build on the strengths already within the community, we believe Bristol can continue to grow as a healthier, safer and more connected place where people feel proud to live.

We will continue to review progress with residents and adapt our approach as local priorities and needs evolve over time.

HOW WE WILL STAY ACCOUNTABLE

We are committed to keeping residents updated on the progress of this plan and listening to feedback as the work develops. We will regularly review whether the actions in this plan are making a meaningful difference for the community and use resident feedback and local insight to shape future priorities and activity.

We will continue working with residents to shape how this plan develops and how progress is shared with the community over time.

A shorter resident-friendly summary version of this plan will also be developed alongside residents following the launch of the full Community Investment Plan.

If you would like to find out more, get involved in local activities or help shape future community investment in Bristol, please contact Jack Middleton at jack.middleton@abri.co.uk, or on 07785 016005.

For regular updates on the progress of each priority in Bristol, check out our website.