

OUR BRADFORD DISTRICT LOCAL NEEDS ANALYSIS (Supporting Social Value Delivery)



Purpose and Context

This document is designed to support partners (including businesses, suppliers and social enterprises) operating across the district to understand where and how they can best deliver meaningful impact through their social value commitments. It outlines the key social, economic and environmental challenges facing Bradford District, with a particular focus on communities experiencing the highest levels of deprivation.

The document takes a social value approach, meaning it looks beyond economic outcomes alone. It explains the district's social value priorities and expectations and highlights how partner activity can positively contribute to improved health and wellbeing, reduced inequality, increased opportunity, and stronger, more resilient communities.

Bradford is a young, diverse district with significant strengths, including strong community networks and an active voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. However, patterns of deprivation remain deeply entrenched in some areas, leading to persistent inequalities in employment, health, education, and environmental quality.

➤ Social Value Expectations for Suppliers

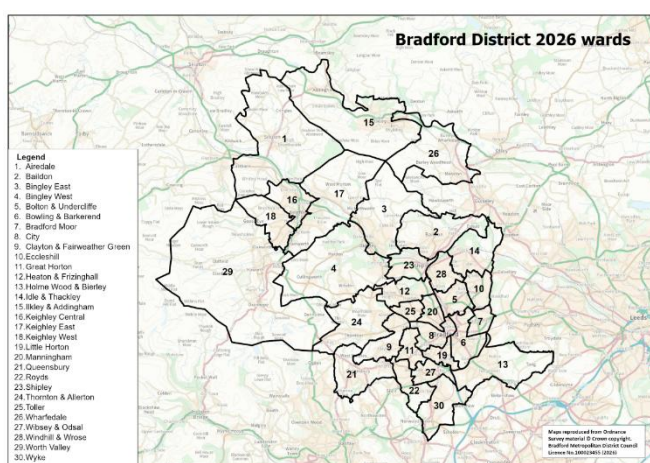
To ensure maximum impact on our place and communities is achieved, suppliers' social value proposals should:

- Aim to be targeted at deprived areas and priority groups.
- Achieve meaningful and measurable change.
- Align with local strategies and priorities (which can be achieved through working with our highlighted local delivery partners).
- Demonstrate sustainability and long-term benefit.

Social value proposals that show a strong understanding of local needs and partnership working will secure higher marks when tenders are evaluated.

➤ Geographic Concentration of Deprivation

Deprivation in Bradford is not evenly distributed. It is concentrated in specific neighbourhoods, particularly inner-city wards and some outer housing estates. These areas experience multiple overlapping disadvantages, including low aspirations, low incomes, poor health outcomes, limited job prospects, and environmental stressors.



Key implications from a social value perspective:

- Support needs to be based in communities.
- Investment must prioritise neighbourhoods with cumulative disadvantage.
- Local suppliers and businesses can play a stronger role in redistributing opportunity.

Bradford District is ranked the 11th most deprived local authority in England out of 296, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025 ¹. Over 50% of Bradford residents (approximately 294,000 people) live in neighbourhoods within the most deprived 20% nationally, highlighting the scale and concentration of disadvantage ².

[Local Deprivation Explorer 2025](#): Link to UK government tool showing deprivation levels across England using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025.

Implication for suppliers: Social Value work should focus on the areas that need it most, especially communities facing several challenges. Local support should be targeted at priority neighbourhoods and communities. This can be achieved through working with our local delivery partners.

1. Employment and Economic Inactivity

➤ [Identified Need](#)

Employment deprivation is a significant challenge in Bradford's most deprived areas:

- Bradford's unemployment rate is approximately 7.1%, compared with 3.8% nationally, indicating a higher than average reliance on out-of-work benefits and economic inactivity ^{3,4}.
- Under IMD employment and income domains, Bradford is ranked among the most severely affected local authority districts in England, reflecting entrenched labour market exclusion ⁵.

Economic inactivity is closely linked to:

- Poor physical and mental health.
- Reduced household income and financial insecurity.
- Increased pressure on public services.

➤ [Implications for Suppliers](#)

Suppliers are expected to show how they will:

- Create local employment opportunities accessible to residents in deprived areas.
- Support those who are economically inactive or furthest from the labour market, especially our most vulnerable people.
- Adopt fair pay, secure employment, and progression routes.
- Work in partnership with local employment and skills providers.

Priority should be given to residents facing multiple barriers to work.

¹ MHCLG (2025) English Indices of Multiple Deprivation. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

² West Yorkshire Combined Authority (2025) *Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 Briefing*. Leeds: WYCA.

³ Bradford Council (2024) Bradford Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Bradford: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

⁴ Office for National Statistics (2022) Census 2021: Bradford District Profile. London: ONS.

⁵ MHCLG (2025) English Indices of Multiple Deprivation. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

2. Youth Unemployment (including Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET))

➤ Identified Need

Bradford has a young population profile, with a median age of 36.8 years, significantly lower than the England average ⁶. While recent improvements have been made for 16–18-year-olds, challenges remain for young adults in deprived neighbourhoods:

- Youth disengagement is more concentrated in deprived areas, increasing the risk of long-term unemployment, social exclusion and mental health issues ⁷.
- Although Bradford's 16–18 NEET rate stands at approximately 4.4%, this masks higher levels of vulnerability among 18–24-year-olds, particularly in communities experiencing multiple deprivation ^{8,9}.

Table 1 – NEET and Not Known performance over time

	Bradford 2022/23	Bradford 2023/24	Bradford 2024/25	Bradford 2025/26*	National 2025/26*
NEET and Not Known rate	6.8% ▲	4.4% ▼	4.1% ▼	4.0% ▼	5.8% ▲

Source: [DfE NEET Scorecard](#) / *2025/26 data NCCIS database
[Text colour denotes comparison with national; arrow and colour denote year on year change]

➤ Implications for Suppliers

Suppliers are encouraged to:

- Provide apprenticeships, traineeships, paid work placements or entry-level roles.
- Support mentoring, employability skills, and confidence-building activity.
- Target opportunities towards young people living in deprived areas.

Social value delivery for young people should focus on early intervention and sustained progression rather than short-term activity.

3. Local Economy and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

➤ Identified Need

Compared to many other areas of the UK, Bradford's local economy is strongly shaped by its vibrant entrepreneurial spirit, with SMEs playing a critical role in driving innovation, job creation, and economic resilience. However, despite this strength, SMEs often face barriers to accessing procurement opportunities and securing long-term contracts ¹⁰.

⁵ Office for National Statistics (2022) Census 2021: Bradford District Profile. London: ONS.
⁷ Department for Education (2025) NEET Statistics: Annual Brief. London: DfE.
⁸ SkillsHouse Bradford (2024) *Lowest Rate of Young People NEET in a Decade*. Bradford: SkillsHouse.
⁹ Bradford Producing Hub (2024) Bradford Data Review: Socio Economic Deprivation. Available at: <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk> (Accessed: April 2026).
¹⁰ Bradford Council (2024) *Bradford Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*. Bradford: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

➤ Implications for Suppliers

Suppliers are expected to demonstrate how they will:

- Use Bradford-based SMEs as part of their supply chain.
- Support local subcontracting and business growth.
- Retain economic value within deprived neighbourhoods.

Local procurement and SME engagement are key mechanisms for delivering inclusive growth.

4. Community Support and the VCSE Sector

➤ Identified Need

Voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations provide essential support for our communities, including:

- Reducing social isolation.
- Supporting vulnerable and marginalised groups.
- Delivering trusted, culturally appropriate services.

However, many VCSE organisations face funding instability and capacity challenges, limiting long-term sustainability ¹¹.

➤ Implications for Suppliers

Suppliers should outline how they will:

- Work with and invest in local VCSE organisations.
- Support community-led solutions.
- Build long-term partnerships rather than one-off interventions.

Supporting community resilience is a core social value priority.

5. Environmental and Transport Inequalities

➤ Identified Need

Environmental deprivation disproportionately affects Bradford's most deprived communities:

- Bradford experiences illegal levels of air pollution, particularly in inner-city and deprived wards, largely due to road transport emissions ¹¹. Maps showing the locations of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) can be viewed on the council's website here: [Air Quality Management Areas | Bradford Council](#)

¹¹ Bradford Council (2024) *Bradford Joint Strategic Needs Assessment*. Bradford: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

- It is estimated that around 500 people die each year in Bradford from respiratory disease, with approximately one-third of asthma cases linked to air pollution ¹².
- Poorer communities are more likely to experience environmental risk factors, including pollution, noise and limited access to green space ¹³.

➤ Implications for Suppliers

Suppliers are expected to demonstrate how they will:

- Reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact.
- Promote green transport and sustainable travel.
- Deliver environmental improvements that also support public health and equality, and biodiversity.

Environmental social value should clearly link carbon reduction with health benefits.

¹² Bradford Council (2025) *Air Quality Annual Status Report 2025*. Bradford: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.

¹³ Born in Bradford (2025) *Air Quality: Pollution and Health Evidence Briefing*. Bradford: Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.