Hartlepool Community Mental Health Transformation Fund

Grant Application Guidance 2025/26

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1. Introduction and Purpose

The Hartlepool Community Mental Health Transformation Fund has been established to support innovative, community-led projects that improve mental health support for adults across Hartlepool. The fund is part of a broader programme of transformation aligned with the **Community Mental Health Framework** and local priorities co-produced during the **2025 Visioning Workshop**.

This funding opportunity invites **VCSE organisations, partnerships, and community groups** to propose services or projects that meet local need, close gaps in provision, and contribute to a more inclusive, person-centred and trauma-informed system.

Purpose:
To commission integrated, non-clinical, preventative, and accessible mental health support that complements statutory services and meaningfully involves people with lived experience.

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2. Strategic Objectives

All proposals must align with one or more of the following strategic objectives for 2025/26:

1. Integration

Aim: Develop integration between VCSE, Primary, Secondary and Social Care

2. Access

Aim: Improve access to timely, inclusive support.

3. Trauma-Informed Practice

Aim: Enhance awareness and navigation of services.

4. Lived Experience

Aim: Strengthen lived experience integration into decision-making.

5. Social Determinants

Aim: Address root causes of distress.

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3. Eligibility Criteria

Projects must:

- Be delivered in **Hartlepool**.

- Serve **adults (18+)** with or at risk of poor mental health.

- Be **VCSE-led**, or demonstrate genuine partnership with community organisations.

- Address one or more of the **priority populations** (see Section 4).

- Be aligned with the **values and principles** outlined below.

- Be **co-produced with people with lived experience**, including planning, delivery and evaluation.

- Offer services out of hours

- Avoid duplication of existing provision.

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4. Priority Populations

Applicants must design services for at least one of the following groups:

- People on long-term CPA with no clear progression plan

- People awaiting autism or ADHD assessment

- People frequently discharged or excluded from services

- People with complex needs across multiple systems (e.g. housing, addiction, justice)

- Young adults aged 18–25

- People facing systemic trauma or stigma (e.g. neurodivergent, LGBTQ+, minority ethnic)

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5. Values and Delivery Principles

All proposals must be underpinned by:

- **Trauma-informed** and relational approaches

- **Strength-based and empowering** delivery

- **Cultural competence and inclusivity**

- **Prevention and early intervention**

- **Person-centred and flexible** support

- A **"no wrong door"** model

- **Peer support** and lived experience involvement

- Collaborative work with other sectors, including **housing, benefits, employment, and social connection**

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6. Eligible Activities

Examples of deliverable initiatives include:

- Out-of-hours drop-ins or peer-led sessions

- Navigation and advocacy support

- Relational outreach to underserved groups

- Creative, physical, or social activities that promote mental wellbeing

- Embedded support in GP practices or community spaces

- Wraparound support for people on waiting lists or at risk of exclusion

- Peer support and lived experience leadership programmes

- Multi-agency pilots offering joined-up support

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7. Grant Outcomes

Applicants should demonstrate how their project will contribute to one or more of the following outcomes (as outlined by local and national priorities):

- Improved mental and physical wellbeing

- Increased independence and community integration

- Reduced emotional distress and reliance on emergency services

- Shorter wait times and fewer dropouts from services

- Reduced repeat referrals and duplication

- Increased social networks and meaningful activity

- Increased participation in the workforce or volunteering

- Development of self-confidence and interpersonal skills

- Empowerment and resilience in people with mental health needs

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8. Evaluation and Reporting Requirements

Applicants must outline how they will **track progress and evidence impact**. You will be asked to:

- Identify which outcomes you will contribute to

- Set **clear indicators** and explain your measurement approach

- Collect both **quantitative and qualitative** data (full information will be given upon grants being successful)

- Submit a **baseline, mid-point and end-of-project report**

- Participate in shared learning and reflective practice workshops

You will also be required to:

- Attend a grant induction session

- Contribute to quarterly partnership meetings with CMHT Coordinators

- Provide anonymised case studies or testimonials where appropriate

- Evidence how lived experience has informed your work

As part of Hartlepool's continued commitment to collaborative transformation, a new Mental Health Provider Forum will be established. This forum will operate as a thematic working group under the Hartlepool Opportunity Partnership (HOP) Local Infrastructure Organisation (LIO) and will bring together funded partners, VCSE organisations, statutory services, and individuals with lived experience. The forum will serve as a collaborative space to review and discuss outputs and outcomes, explore future visioning, and support a more holistic and integrated approach to mental health provision in the town.

Through regular meetings, the forum will act as a space to shape a wider model of delivery, champion a pluralistic approach that values different voices and experiences, and contribute to building a stronger, more connected community mental health ecosystem in Hartlepool. It will also have a broader remit to explore shared challenges and opportunities, influence strategic direction, and ensure community-rooted solutions remain at the heart of the transformation journey.

All successful grant recipients will be expected to engage meaningfully with the Mental Health Provider Forum. This includes attending bi-monthly meetings, contributing to shared learning and development, and feeding into wider strategy through the HOP governance structure—ensuring that investment is not only in projects, but in Hartlepool's long-term, collaborative transformation

Additional support for evaluation will be available on request.

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9. Application Process

Key Information:

- **Expression of interest to be completed**

- **Review of EOI by Coordinators**

- **If criteria met – invited to 1:1 online session**

- **Application form given**

- **Application Deadline:** [Insert Date]

- **Project Duration:** Up to 12 months

- **Stage 1 panel –** Steering group

- **Stage 2 panel –** risk assurance/ T&C's/ Due diligence

- **Grants given**

Application Form Will Ask:

- Organisational overview

- Project summary

- Target population

- Evidence of need

- Alignment with outcomes

- Approach to co-production

- Delivery methods

- Monitoring and evaluation

- Budget breakdown

- Any partnership arrangements

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10. Support and Contact

We want this fund to be accessible to grassroots organisations. If you would like help developing your application, contact us for support:

- **Contact Person:** [Insert Name]

- **Email:** [Insert Email]

- **Optional support sessions or drop-ins will be available**