



Hello,

It feels as if the work is really motoring now - you can feel the change underway in Rochdale, Grimsby and in the conversations we are having with partners who are interested in this different way of working.

Over the last month, a group of leaders from Grimsby have shared the insights about what it takes to work in the benefit of future generations with the team at 10 Downing Street. We have had an offsite to bring together people who love Rochdale, building the relationships that make everything else possible. We have launched the first pilot of the citizen-led fund in Grimsby - which is now open and looking for decision makers.

All of these are connected by the same thing, change happens when people who love their home town come together to make things happen. That is what we are seeing, in towns across the country and it's a privilege to be part of it.

There's a lot in this newsletter. I hope it leaves you feeling as energised as we are.

Emily Bolton
CEO, Our Future

Learning we shared at Downing Street

We were recently invited to 10 Downing Street, with some of our partners from Grimsby. It was a great opportunity to share the work underway in Grimsby and what we have learned.

It was a real a milestone and recognition of the progress we've made together.

The group embodied partnership with people from the voluntary sector, business, social enterprise and the local authority. However, really this was about people who love their town. We could have filled the whole building with people who are part of this change. Maybe next time?

We were there to share what we have learnt to feed into the government's Pride in Place policy.

A refrain that ran through the meeting was that trust has to come first. This work cannot be rushed. It takes time, relationships and people showing up consistently with no agenda beyond the good of the town. Without it, nothing else works.

The learnings that were shared included:

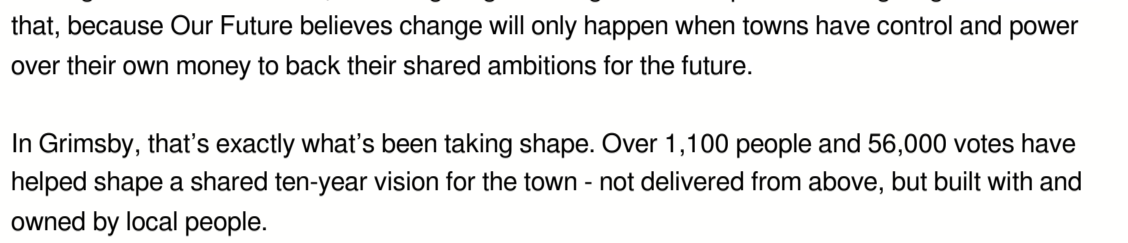
- The collective of people has to come before the money. People working together in the common good, building a shared vision and a sense of common purpose, has to be the foundation. Investment that arrives before that collaboration risks creating a hunger games scenario where people are competing for the money.

- Money must follow, not lead. The fund matters, but ambition, relationships and belief have to be there first. Grimsby is structuring its £20 million Pride in Place funding into a locally led fund that the town controls that can hopefully exist for the long term. That is a fundamentally different proposition from short term competitive funding. (Please keep reading for more info on the fund!)

- Local authorities enable this change by working differently. Stepping back, creating the space and backing citizens to lead.

This requires all of us to see something bigger than our own interests and grasp the opportunity to leave something we are proud of for future generations.

If you want to understand the model and what we are learning you can find out more by reading the Building a Brighter Future Together piece.



[Read: Building a Brighter Future Together](#)

Backing places to shape their own future

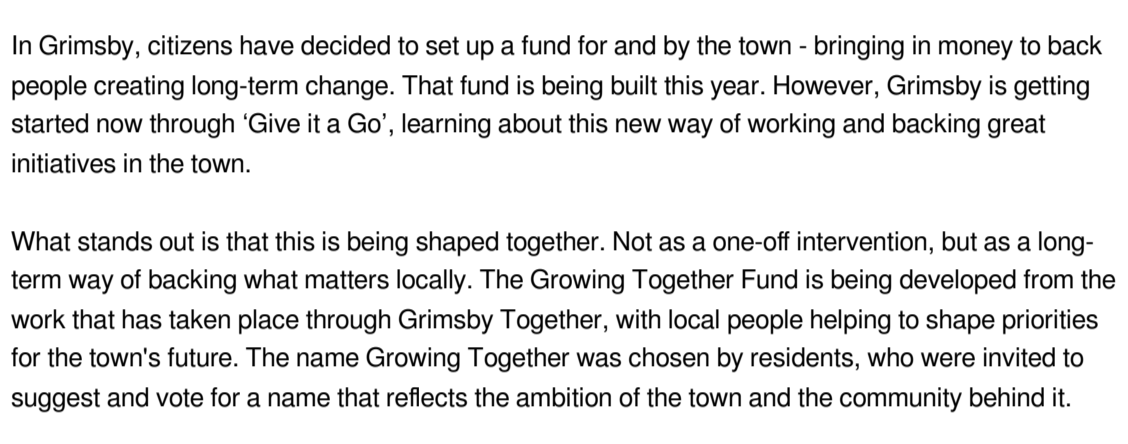
We're really proud to be featured as a case study in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's newly published report, 'Our Place to Give: a plan for growing place-based philanthropy'. It's encouraging to see national recognition of what becomes possible when people, places and partners work together in new ways.

As the report notes: *"Our Future is leading the way by doing things differently."*

It sets out the Government's ambition to create the conditions for communities to attract and direct funding into their own towns, removing long-standing barriers to place-based giving. We welcome that, because Our Future believes change will only happen when towns have control and power over their own money to back their shared ambitions for the future.

In Grimsby, that's exactly what's been taking shape. Over 1,100 people and 56,000 votes have helped shape a shared ten-year vision for the town - not delivered from above, but built with and owned by local people.

It's so encouraging to see this approach recognised at national level, not just for Grimsby, but as a model for every place that wants the backing to build its own future.



[Read: Our Place to Give](#)

The Grimsby Fund: Built by the town, for the town

The people who love a place need to be at the heart of making decisions about its future.

In Grimsby, citizens have decided to set up a fund for and by the town - bringing in money to back people creating long-term change. That fund is being built this year. However, Grimsby is getting started now through 'Give it a Go', learning about this new way of working and backing great initiatives in the town.

What stands out is that this is being shaped together. Not as a one-off intervention, but as a long-term way of backing what matters locally. The Growing Together Fund is being developed from the work that has taken place through Grimsby Together, with local people helping to shape priorities for the town's future. The name Growing Together was chosen by residents, who were invited to suggest and vote for a name that reflects the ambition of the town and the community behind it.

'Give it a Go' is the start of a shared learning phase. It will help test how community decision-making can work fairly and transparently, while backing practical local action now. 'Give it a Go' offers grants of up to £10,000 to people who live or work in Grimsby for ideas ready to test, start or spark something new in the town, but it goes further than funding.

We're inviting local residents not just to bring forward ideas, there is a call to become Decision Makers - helping to review shortlisted ideas and recommend which projects receive funding.

If you are in Grimsby, you can apply to become a **Decision Maker** and help decide which local ideas are backed, or **apply for funding** if you have an idea that could make a difference in the town via the dedicated Growing Together website. **Applications for both routes are open until Friday 5th June 2026.**

Our Future is proud to support and enable this work. Helping bring people together, sharing learning from other places and supporting local residents as they shape priorities and next steps. **We'll share more as this work continues to develop, in the meantime for more information please visit the Growing Together website.**



[Visit Growing Together Website](#)

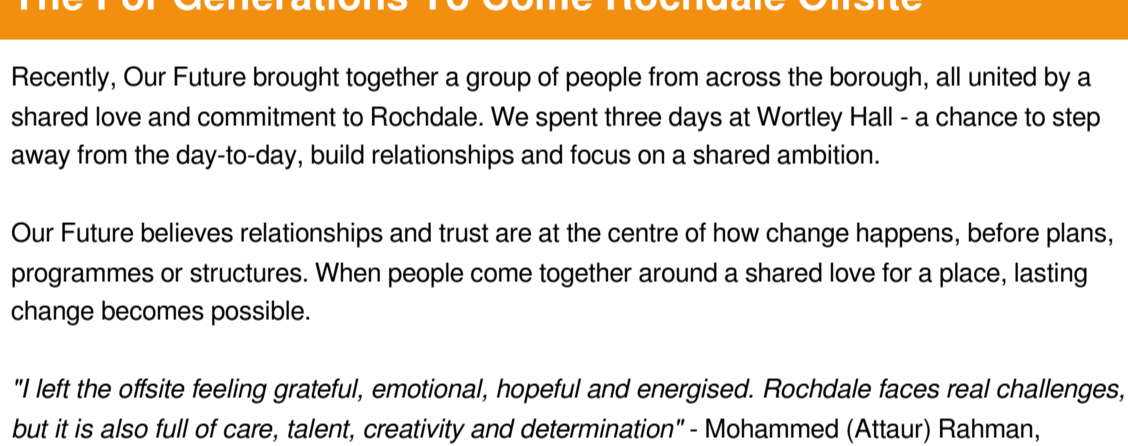
A Proud Moment for Rochdale

Huge congratulations to our partners at Rochdale A.F.C. on their promotion.

A brilliant achievement for the club, the fans and the town. The team has shown the true spirit of Rochdale - resilience, pride and people pulling together.

The Club and Rochdale AFC Community Trust continue to keep the community at the heart of everything they do. That connection between the club and the town is what makes this achievement even more special. Bringing people together, lifting pride across the whole borough and showing the country what the town is all about.

We're looking forward to seeing the positive impact this success continues to have across the borough in the months ahead.



Rochdale Home Wins Network

Home Wins is a network that connects individuals that have a shared love for the borough, but no longer live there.

It's a way to stay connected and contribute to what comes next. That might mean sharing ideas, making introductions, opening doors, or supporting local work - a way of backing Rochdale, wherever life has taken you. **For more information about Rochdale Home Wins, please click the button below.**

[Join Rochdale Home Wins](#)

The For Generations To Come Rochdale Offsite

Recently, Our Future brought together a group of people from across the borough, all united by a shared love and commitment to Rochdale. We spent three days at Wortley Hall - a chance to step away from the day-to-day, build relationships and focus on a shared ambition.

Our Future believes relationships and trust are at the centre of how change happens, before plans, programmes or structures. When people come together around a shared love for a place, lasting change becomes possible.

"I left the offsite feeling grateful, emotional, hopeful and energised. Rochdale faces real challenges, but it is also full of care, talent, creativity and determination" - Mohammed (Attaur) Rahman, Founder Chief Executive Director, Rochdale Science Initiative.

This wasn't about creating a closed group. It was the start of growing a movement that will bring more voices into a conversation across Rochdale.

The three days were shaped by some brilliant sessions. David and Katherine from The Relationships Project led an inspiring exploration of how we nurture the relationships needed to create lasting change.

Jose from Jose Davies Marketing brought storytelling expertise to help us recognise the importance of sharing real experiences from local people, as they are best placed to tell them.

We were also joined by Matt and Cathryn, Social Investors from Key Fund, Mark from Manvers Lake, and Deborah from Grimm & Co.

There was so much joy across the three days, and people left feeling energised, connected and hopeful about what comes next.



Inspiring us this month - Jose's story in North East Lincolnshire

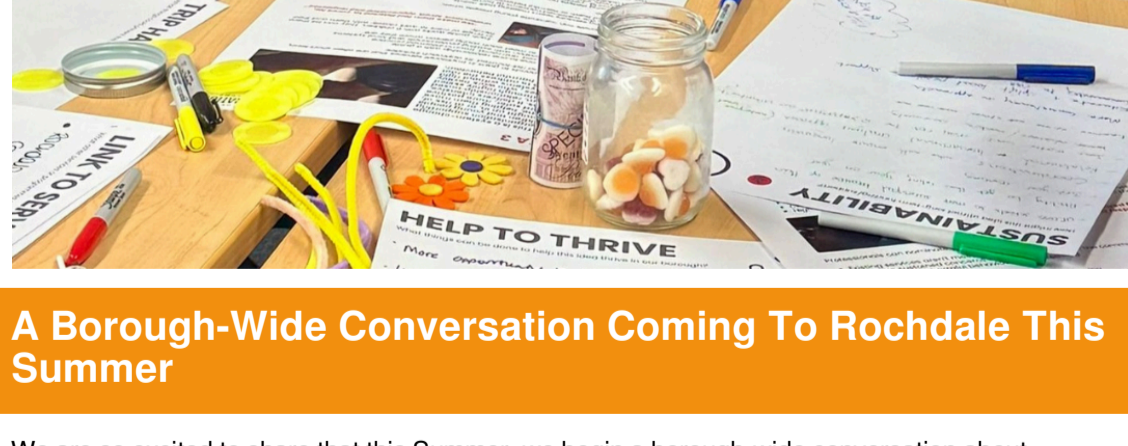
Jose has spent over 25 years working across recruitment, business support and council-funded programmes for business owners. Now, at 56, she says she is doing the most important work of her life.

Growing up on the Grange Estate in Grimsby, Jose's understanding of people and place was shaped early. Her parents ran a small shop on the Grange Estate. It was where people came to shop, but also to talk, catch up, and spend time. That sense of community has stayed with her ever since.

After years working across different roles and places, Jose returned to North East Lincolnshire and rebuilt her life and work there. Over time, she noticed that brilliant work was happening in communities, but the stories behind it were often missing.

Now, Jose works as a place-based storytelling partner across North East Lincolnshire, helping people and organisations find the words to describe what they do and why it matters.

At the heart of her work is a simple belief: the story of a place is shaped by the people who live it every day.



[Read Jose's Story](#)

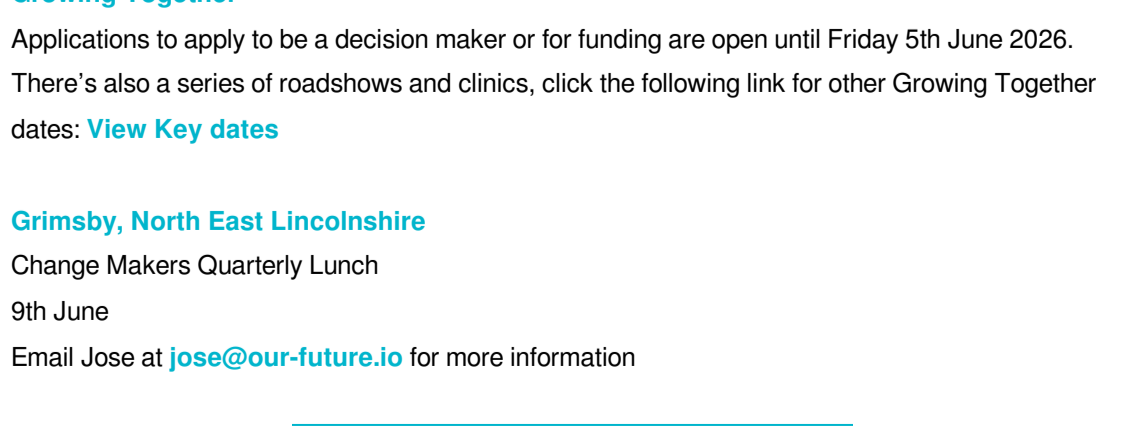
Let's Talk About Conversations in Rochdale

One of the ways we've been bringing people together is by hosting a series of conversations about the future of the borough. The very first session focused on Our Kids - the children and young people across Rochdale. Individuals came together, regardless of their professional roles, to share experiences, exchange ideas and explore how they could work collectively to create a brighter future.

Since then we have hosted follow-up conversations and added new themes based on what locals told us mattered to them such as Our Health, Our Spaces and Our Homes, Our Jobs and Our Story.

If you care about the borough, these conversations are a chance to talk with likeminded people about what's good and what could change.

To get involved, please get in touch with Ben. Dates of upcoming Let's Talk conversations are listed below.



A Borough-Wide Conversation Coming To Rochdale This Summer

We are so excited to share that this Summer, we begin a borough-wide conversation about imagining a better future together in Rochdale.

This isn't about starting something new, but builds on what's already there - the work, relationships and ideas already taking shape across the borough.

People will have a chance to come together to explore what Rochdale could become and what it will take to get there.

Rochdale has always been shaped by people who care about it, and that story continues to be written together.

We will share more information soon about how you can get involved. In the meantime, you can visit the website for updates.

[Visit For Generations To Come Website](#)

Dates For Your Diary

Rochdale

Let's Talk About...

- Our Homes - June
- Our Story - August
- Our Jobs - September

Email ben@our-future.io for more information

Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire

Home Wins in-person London meet-up - July

Email Crystal at crystal@our-future.io for more information

Growing Together

Applications to apply to be a decision maker or for funding are open until Friday 5th June 2026.

There's also a series of roadshows and clinics, click the following link for other Growing Together dates: [View Key dates](#)

Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire

Change Makers Quarterly Lunch

9th June

Email Jose at jose@our-future.io for more information

None of this is possible without the people who choose to show up. In Grimsby, in Rochdale, and towns across the country. Thank you for being part of it. There's a lot more to come.

Onwards,
Emily.

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