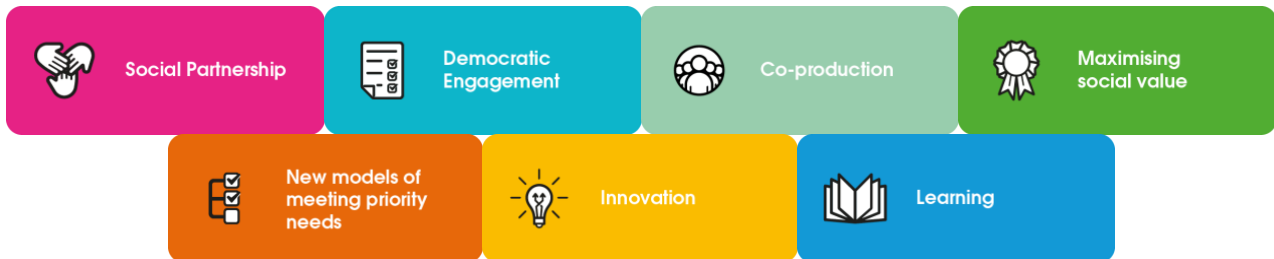




COMMUNITY



The National Network for Neighbourhood Improvement – 3ni working with Wigan Council

Using hyper-local data to strengthen community co-operation in Wigan

Across England's most deprived neighbourhoods, poorer life outcomes often occur where social infrastructure and social capital are weakest. However, data on these factors is frequently only available at borough or ward level, concealing significant differences between nearby communities and complicating efforts to target support effectively. For councils, understanding community conditions at a very local level is vital. 3ni collaborated with Wigan Council to provide this insight by mapping the key areas of social capital and community need at neighbourhood level across the borough.

Using its **Discovery** platform, 3ni analysed data at the level of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), small statistical regions with about 1,500 residents. This allowed it to help the council map and profile social capital levels across neighbourhoods, creating a clearer evidence base for targeted, place-based decision making. Social capital is essential for fostering the bridging and linking social ties that underpin community cooperation and resilience.

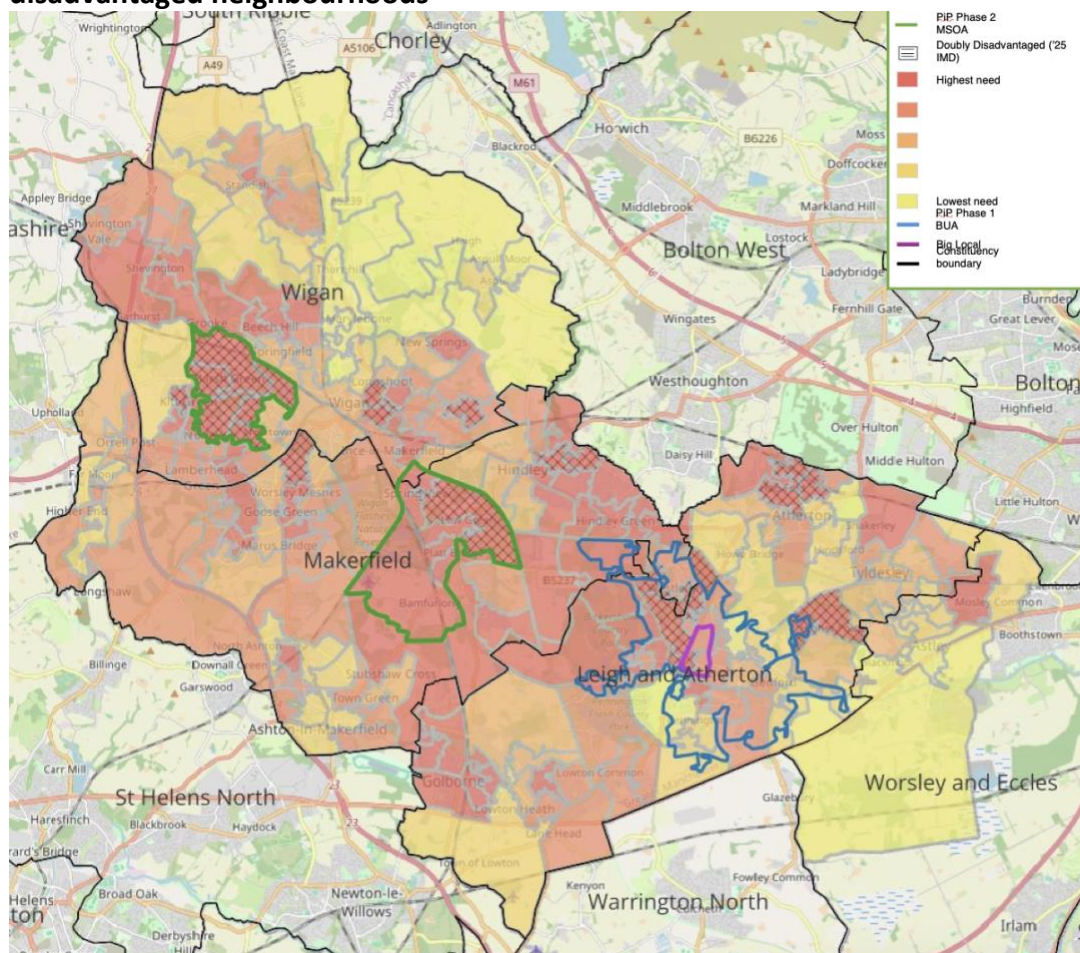
One key application was the integration of **Discovery** in supporting Wigan's Pride in Place programme. 3ni has produced tailored insight packs for Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board members to help them better understand the context of their neighbourhoods and to support discussions about community priorities. The analysis also informed decisions about the allocation of the Pride in Place Impact Fund. By highlighting those doubly disadvantaged neighbourhoods

where high levels of need coincide with weaker social infrastructure, but which were outwith the Pride in Place programme, the council was able to prioritise investment in areas where additional support could improve outcomes in an equitable way that responded to local needs.

The data also helped identify “social capital coldspots” across the borough, areas where local networks, community participation or infrastructure might be limited. This has enabled the council to consider where targeted support could help foster stronger connections between residents and encourage greater involvement in neighbourhood initiatives, as part of its Progress with Unity strategy to deepen and establish new relationships between the council and its communities.

This work shows how hyper-local data can support more collaborative approaches to local governance. By combining solid evidence with local knowledge and resident input, councils can allocate resources more efficiently while empowering communities to develop solutions that reflect their priorities. For Wigan, the approach aligns with its broader goal to enhance neighbourhood resilience and participation and to foster community leadership.

Community need heatmap of Wigan Borough, showing Pride in Place areas and doubly disadvantaged neighbourhoods



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