

hartlepoolpartnership



Communication Strategy 2006-2011

Endorsed by Hartlepool Partnership - 7th April 2006

Introduction:

This is the Hartlepool Partnership Communication Strategy. It sets out where we as a Partnership want to be in five years time in terms of communicating with the residents of Hartlepool, our wider partners and others. We not only want to share our work and achievements but also promote the role that residents have to play in the Hartlepool Partnership. It is the responsibility of the Hartlepool Partnership to steer progress and fulfil our vision of Hartlepool through the Community Strategy. We cannot do this alone. We need to work with all our partners including the people of Hartlepool.

This Strategy will not work on its own. In order to achieve our communication aims the Strategy will be backed up with a yearly Communication Strategy Action Plan that will be regularly monitored and evaluated by a Communications Sub Group.

Progress will be reported at the end of each year to the Hartlepool Partnership Board and fed back to each of the groups that make up the Hartlepool Partnership.

If you would like further information on the Hartlepool Partnership or would like to receive this information in a format more suited to your needs then please contact the Hartlepool Partnership Support Team on 01429 284147 or email us at hartlepoolpartnership@hartlepool.gov.uk

You can also check out the Hartlepool Partnership's website:

www.hartlepoolpartnership.co.uk

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About the Hartlepool Partnership

The Hartlepool Partnership is the town's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and brings together all of the town's partnerships delivering local services. It has agreed a "grand plan" which is called the Hartlepool Community Strategy. Through the Community Strategy process the Partnership looks at what local services and developments are needed, the best way of providing them and involving people further in the way services are delivered. Annex A of this Strategy sets out how residents can feed into the Hartlepool Partnership structure and how we as a Partnership aim to feed back to them.

The Vision of the Hartlepool Partnership is that:

Hartlepool will be a prosperous, caring, confident and outward looking community, in an attractive environment, realising its potential.

To achieve this we need to continue the regeneration of Hartlepool: We will therefore promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the town, taking into account the needs of future generations.

The Hartlepool Partnership Support Team

A dedicated team supports the work of the Hartlepool Partnership. They help to raise the profile of the Partnership, encourage people to become involved in its work, link the many areas of activity and support the Partnership Board. The team also has responsibility for managing the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the Local Area Agreement as well as undertaking annual assessments of the performance of the Partnership and reporting this to the Government.

Why we need a Communication Strategy

In order to achieve the vision of the Hartlepool Partnership we must use good communication to:

- increase public awareness of the Hartlepool Partnership
- promote the vision and values of the Partnership and highlight its priorities and activities
- inform people about how to get involved and how to feed their views into the partnership
- facilitate greater involvement of those hardest to reach in our communities in the work of the Partnership
- provide feedback on how their views are taken into account and to show accountability for the Partnership's decisions
- highlight the importance of inclusion and outline the work of the Partnership in tackling disadvantage
- engage our communities into the delivery of the Partnership and theme partnership's objectives
- establish links with other organisations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- better promote our activities and successes
- bring the need for communicating our activities higher up the agenda of the Partnership and its partners
- co-ordinate and join up the messages of our partners

This Communication Strategy will establish actions for improving the way in which we communicate with the people of Hartlepool, our partners and others and will outline how we aim to measure and evaluate our progress.

Please note that this Communication Strategy replaces the Consultation & Publicity Strategy agreed by the Hartlepool Partnership in 2001 and builds upon existing principles set out in the Protocol between the Hartlepool Partnership and the Hartlepool Community Network.

Who are we communicating with?

Defining target audiences is fundamental to the Hartlepool Partnership Communications Strategy. We need to be aware of who we are trying to communicate with in order to tailor our communications so that they reach our audience in the best format for them to receive and understand the information being shared. Our target audiences must include all of the borough's residents, partners and partnerships.

Target Audiences (Internal):

- Hartlepool Partnership board members and themed partnership members
- All teams and agencies involved with Hartlepool Partnership including the Partnership Support Team, Hartlepool Community Network and others
- All partner organisations including those represented on the Hartlepool Partnership Board (see Annexe B)

Target Audiences (External):

- People who live and work in Hartlepool
- Organisations working in and for the benefit of Hartlepool
- Visitors
- Employers and potential investors
- The media
- Regional and national organisations
- Other Local Strategic Partnerships
- Central and Regional Government
- Anyone who wants to know about the work and best practice of the Hartlepool Partnership

Our guiding principles for communication

The Hartlepool Partnership believes that a strategic approach to communication is important in order to present a strong and consistent message. Through the Community Strategy all members of the Partnership have committed themselves to a number of principles, which the Partnership strives to apply. Those principles of Accountability, Community Involvement, Co-ordination, Equality & Social Inclusion, Integrity, Maximise Opportunities, Maximise Resources, Partnership, Quality Services & Continuous Improvement and Sustainability are outlined in detail in Annexe C of this strategy. With specific reference to communications the following guiding principles have been developed and adopted by the Hartlepool Partnership:

Accessible	Making information available in all formats where practical and reasonable
Appropriate/relevant	Giving the right information, to the right place, in the right way, at the right time
Clear	Using plain language that is jargon-free and expressed simply
Consistency	Convey trust by delivering a strong and agreed message
Effective	Making use of easy and reliable systems e.g. Website. Avoiding duplication and adding value through working in partnership. All materials used for communication internally and externally must reflect the Partnership's style and brand identity and be instantly recognisable as being from Hartlepool Partnership
High quality	Ensuring all communications are of the best quality
Honest	Building and maintaining trust through honesty, consistency and integrity.
Informative	Facilitating a strong two-way flow of information
Open	Encouraging openness, transparency and participation
Receptive	Listening to all partners and communities

Our current position

In the preparation of this strategy a Communications Audit was undertaken with the Hartlepool Partnership and its partnership groups in order to identify what forms of communication are currently used to share the work of the Partnership.

The Hartlepool Partnership currently communicates in the following ways:

- Statutory Plans including the Community Strategy, Performance Management Framework and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.
- Non-Statutory Plans including Neighbourhood Action Plans.
- The Hartlepool Partnership website.
- Others including meetings, agendas, reports, minutes, presentations, letters, emails, fliers, brochures, press releases and information packs.

All other Hartlepool Partnership Groups (including Theme Partnerships) currently communicate in the following ways:

- Statutory Plans including the Crime, Disorder & Drugs Strategy, the Local Delivery Plan (PCT) and the Children & Young Peoples Plan.
- Non-Statutory Plans including Public Health Strategy, Older Persons Strategy, Economic Forum Action Plan & Protocol, Climate Change Strategy.
- Websites including the Community Network and Safer Hartlepool Partnership.
- Newsletters and supplements including the Safer Hartlepool Partnership supplement in the Hartlepool Mail, the Community Network Bulletin, the Community Network Newsletter and Hartbeat.
- Others including meetings, agendas, reports, minutes, presentations, letters, emails, fliers, press releases, information packs and jargon busters.



We looked at the current ways we communicate and the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified:

Strengths:

- Good networks & linkages
- Clear paperwork e.g. reports, strategies.
- Hartlepool Partnership website
- Dedicated Partnership Support Team to lead communication
- Broad representation on Partnership Board
- Partnership meetings
- Wide support for Hartlepool Partnership
- Variety of documents and papers available on the website
- Clearly defined 'brand'

Opportunities:

- Partners' publications and communications teams
- Interactive media
- Website potential
- Large partnership / many partners
- Key teams delivering partnership work
- Presentations to partner and other organisations

Weaknesses:

- Lack of consistent message
- Limited media contact
- Limited links with partners publicity / newsletters
- Limited use of 'brand'
- Not high enough profile
- Poor awareness of how to contact and get involved

Threats:

- Size and complexity of partnership
- Raised expectations about the communications we can deliver
- Ability to meet new demand for information
- Inconsistent messages
- Technical language
- Perception of being 'top-down'
- Change to website technology

Our five-year commitment to communication

Over the next five years the Hartlepool Partnership will:

- Promote the vision and values of the Partnership including tackling disadvantage in the Borough
- Increase public awareness and understanding of the Hartlepool Partnership and how to become involved
- Communicate openly and honestly with local people and stakeholders taking into account the diverse needs of the population
- Promote the work of the Partnership and highlight our successes
- Strengthen the brand identity for the Hartlepool Partnership to both internal and external audiences

Responsibility for communication

Everyone who makes up the Hartlepool Partnership has a responsibility for implementing the 5-year commitments to communication although the role they are expected to play will vary depending on where within the Partnership structure they sit.

The Hartlepool Partnership Board will:

- agree and adopt a vision for Hartlepool
- spread messages and actively promote the Hartlepool Partnership to their own organisations / constituents / partnership groups
- apply the principles of the Hartlepool Partnership
- ensure involvement and consultation is open to all
- own and promote the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- agree the principles of communication
- listen and provide feedback on how views are taken into account
- provide communications appropriate to the diverse needs of our community
- share our achievements

All other Hartlepool Partnership Groups (including Theme Partnerships) will:

- link the vision to delivery
- promote the aims of the Partnership
- actively promote the Hartlepool Partnership to their own organisations / constituents / partnership groups
- ensure involvement and consultation is open to all
- facilitate Community & Voluntary Sector involvement through Community Network representatives
- make appropriate use of the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- apply the principles of communication
- create, develop and spread messages
- listen and provide feedback on how views are taken into account
- provide communications appropriate to the diverse needs of our community
- share our achievements

The Hartlepool Partnership Support Team will:

- promote the aims of the Partnership
- be the centre of the Partnership network and the focus for developing communication messages
- facilitate the flow of information to and from all parts of the Hartlepool Partnership and externally
- produce promotional literature and press releases on the work of the Hartlepool Partnership
- ensure the correct use of the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- apply the principles of communication
- be the centre of the Partnership network and the focus for messages
- provide communications appropriate to the diverse needs of our community
- keep things simple, clear and appropriate to the target audience
- share our achievements

The Lead Officers for All Hartlepool Partnership Groups (including Theme Partnerships) will:

- understand and promote the vision and values of the Partnership
- develop and spread messages for the Hartlepool Partnership
- make appropriate use of the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- apply the principles of communication
- provide communications appropriate to the diverse needs of our community
- share our achievements

Communication Teams in Partner Organisations will:

- be aware of the vision and values of the Partnership
- spread the Hartlepool Partnership messages
- make appropriate use of the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- help to facilitate the flow of information to and from all parts of the Hartlepool Partnership and externally
- provide communications appropriate to the diverse needs of our community
- share our achievements

Delivery Partners of the Hartlepool Partnership (including organisations funded through the Partnership) will:

- understand and promote their role in delivering the vision of the Partnership
- actively promote the Hartlepool Partnership to their own organisations / constituents / partnership groups
- spread the Hartlepool Partnership messages
- make appropriate use of the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- inform the Hartlepool Partnership Support Team of their activities and achievements
- provide communications appropriate to the diverse needs of our community

The Public will:

- be aware of the vision and values of the Partnership
- feed in ideas
- advise of difficulties or issues
- be aware of the Hartlepool Partnership 'brand'
- inform the Hartlepool Partnership Support Team of their specific communication needs where appropriate
- be aware of and share the achievements of the Hartlepool Partnership

All partners will:

- maintain a two-way flow of communication to ensure that everyone is kept well informed
- advise of the copy dates for their publications
- advise of opportunities for joint-working
- advise of their communication and consultation activity
- provide publicity and display material
- manage or facilitate public relations or media campaigns
- provide skills and expertise in specialist areas where possible
- monitor and evaluate communication activity

Implementing the Communication Strategy and evaluating our communication activity

This Communication Strategy has given an overview of where the Hartlepool Partnership is in terms of communications and set out where we want to be in five years time. In order to implement this strategy and establish how we will get to where we want to be an annual Action Plan will be developed. The Action Plan will set out the activities needed to fulfil our five-year commitments and improve the way in which we communicate with the people of Hartlepool, our partners and others.

A Communications Sub Group consisting of representatives from each of the Theme Partnerships and a representative of the Hartlepool Partnership Support Team will monitor progress on this Communication Strategy. Progress will then be reported yearly to

the Hartlepool Partnership alongside an updated Action Plan for the following year. The Action Plan will also be evaluated for its impact on improving the communications of the Partnership. The impact of individual actions will be considered by the Communications Sub Group in order to evaluate their success.

One key area of work that this Communication Strategy has identified is the development of consistent messages for the Partnership. In order to ensure that all partners are using the same terms to describe what the Partnership is, what it does and what it is trying to achieve a Key Messages Script will be prepared annually. This Script will be made available to all partners for use in their communications as well as by the Partnership itself.

The review and update of this Strategy in 5 years time will include a revised evaluation of the communications of the Partnership.



Channels of communication

The information that the Hartlepool Partnership wants to share can be delivered to the target audience through a variety of communication channels. Some are informal and easy to access whilst others are more formalised and require a structured approach to ensure that the information is conveyed correctly. The channels of communication open to the Partnership include:

Correspondence	Letters
	Email
	Mailing Lists
	Fax
Audio Information	Telephone
	Word of Mouth
Media	Newspapers (local, regional & national)
	Freesheets
	Magazines (Hartbeat)
	Radio (local, national & community)
	TV (regional & national)
	Specialist Publications

Printed Information	Fliers
	Posters
	Brochures
	Leaflets / Booklets
	Information Stands
	Partnership Strategies – Community Strategy, Neighbourhood Action Plans etc.
	Partner Newsletters – Community Network, Housing Hartlepool, Resident Association

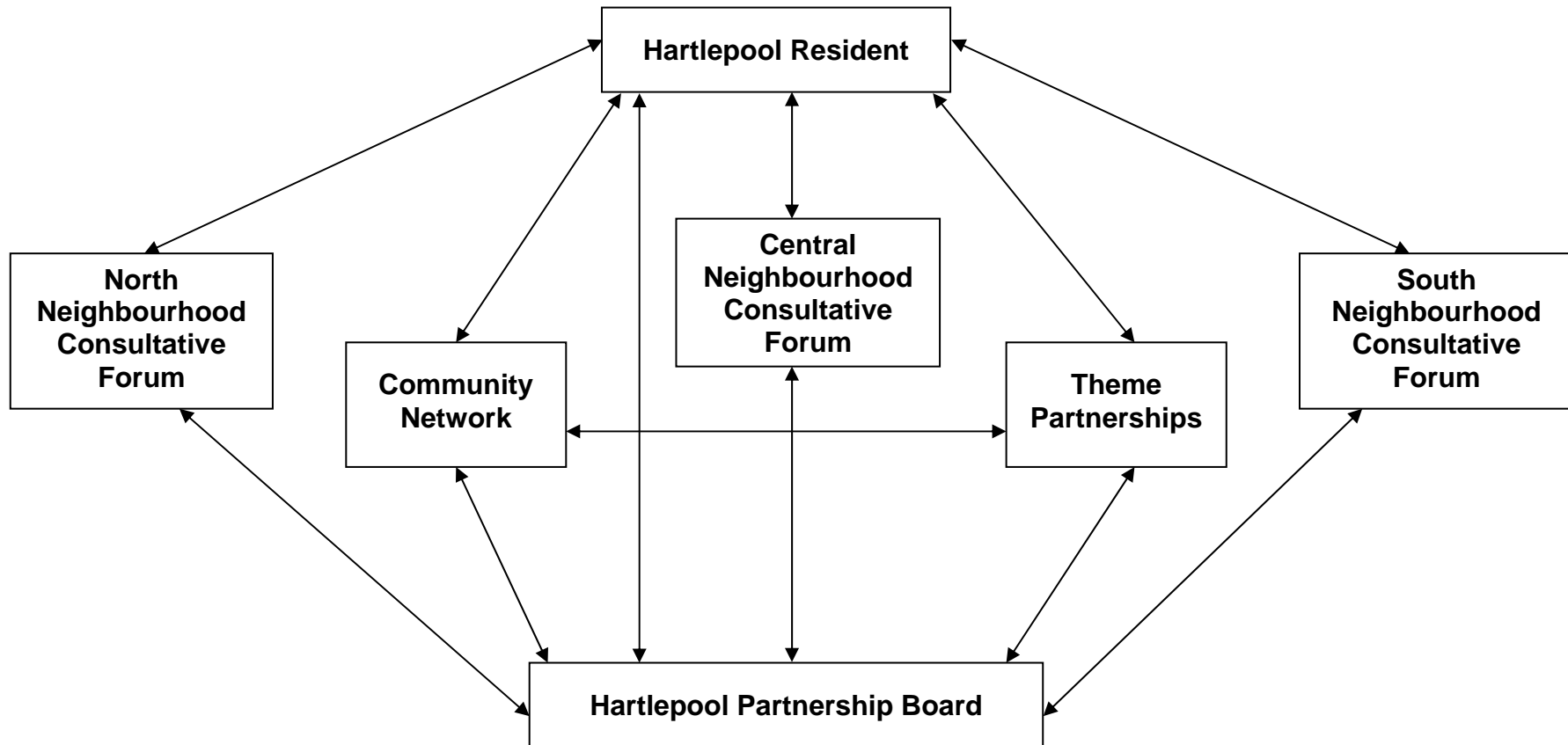


Interactive Media	Email Alerts
	Website
Meetings	Agenda
	Minutes
	Reports & Supporting Documents
Images	Logos
	Photographs
	Charts
	Illustrations
	Video / CD / DVD
Events	Meetings (open to observers)
	Annual Event
	Workshops
	Displays / Presentations
	Conferences

Feedback	Questionnaires
	Evaluation
	Listening
	Neighbourhood consultative Forum Representatives
	Community Network Representatives
	Partner Organisation Representatives
	Theme Partnership Representatives



Annexe A – Hartlepool Partnership Communication Flow Diagram



The diagram above outlines the principle flows of communication between residents of Hartlepool and the Hartlepool Partnership.

Annexe B – Hartlepool Partnership Board

The following organisations are represented on the Hartlepool Partnership Board:

- Business Link Tees Valley
- Cleveland Fire Authority
- Cleveland Police
- Cleveland Police Authority
- Government Office North East
- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Hartlepool College of Further Education
- Hartlepool Community Network
- Hartlepool New Deal for Communities
- Hartlepool Primary Care Trust
- Hartlepool Trade Union Council
- Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency
- Housing Hartlepool
- Jobcentre Plus
- North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust
- One North East
- Tees Valley Learning and Skills Council

Annexe C - Principles of the Hartlepool Partnership:

All members of the Hartlepool Partnership Board are committed to the following principles, which we will strive to apply.

- **Accountability** – ensuring decision making processes are fair and transparent and can be accounted for, and take place at an appropriate level.
- **Community Involvement** – involving the community at all stages of decisions and the carrying out of those decisions and ensuring as far as practicable that local needs are met at a local level.
- **Co-ordination** – organising services so that they support each other and are effective, efficient and economic.
- **Equality & Social Inclusion** – recognising the needs of everyone, encouraging tolerance, respecting the dignity and worth of the individual and minorities and valuing and protecting local diversity and distinctiveness. Reducing inequality by increasing opportunities, support, and accessibility to services especially in disadvantaged communities so that all people and groups are included in the mainstream economy and society. People must be able to live without fear of prejudice, harassment or discrimination because of their personal beliefs, race, gender, age, disability or sexuality.
- **Integrity** – acting with honesty, selflessness and objectivity comprising both straightforward dealing and completeness within individual organisations and in working in partnership with others.

- **Maximise Opportunities** – creating as many favourable chances as possible for the benefit of the community, groups and individuals.
- **Maximise Resources** – seeking to obtain and make the most of people, money, property, data and information and communication technology. Resources will be used efficiently, recycled and waste minimised.
- **Partnership** – working together, building trust and sharing responsibility, resources and information, in a spirit of cooperation and partnership across all sectors. Seeking to influence sub-regional, regional and national bodies in the interests of Hartlepool.
- **Quality Services & Continuous Improvement** – seeking good quality services and improving these, year on year to better reflect the needs and aspirations of the community, through “Best Value” and similar processes.
- **Sustainability** – securing the prudent use of resources and the protection and enhancement of the environment and its biodiversity, to ensure a better quality of life for everyone now and for future generations. This means a commitment to ensuring that the environment is put at the heart of all policies, plans, and actions that affect the Borough and that it is taken into account in their appraisal and approval. It implies social progress and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. It also requires that practical actions are taken towards sustainable development.