# CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO

### **DECISION SCHEDULE**



Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2010

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room C Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor V Tumilty, Cabinet Member responsible for Culture, Leisure and Tourism will consider the following items.

#### 1. KEY DECISIONS

1.1 Allotment Development Strategy 2010-2015 – *Director of Child and Adult Services* 

#### 2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

2.1 Hartlepool Cultural Strategy 2009-2014 – Director of Child and Adult Services

#### 3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 3.1 Review and Rationalisation of Tourism Signage *Director of Child and Adult Services*
- 3.2 Vacant Shops Project Director of Child and Adult Services

### **CULTURE LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder 4 May 2010



**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ALLOTMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2010 - 2015

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks approval for the adoption by the Council of the Allotment Development Strategy 2010-2015.

#### 2. SUMMARY

The Allotment Strategy has been developed over the last eighteen months and seeks to give clear guidance for the future management, administration and development of the allotment service. Considerable consultation has taken place with Members, Allotment Associations and allotment tenants including a very valuable scrutiny process.

#### 3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for the Allotment Service.

#### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key Decision – Test ii

#### 5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

This is an executive decision by the Portfolio Holder for Culture Leisure and Tourism.

#### 6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To consider and approval of the final version of the Allotment Development Strategy 2010-2015.

**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ALLOTMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2010 - 2015

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval for the adoption by the Council of the Allotment Development Strategy 2010-2015 attached as **Appendix 1**.

#### 2. THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 Following an extensive consultation process which began in June 2009, and culminated in a review by the Authorities Scrutiny Forum in February 2010, the final version of Hartlepool Borough Council's Allotment Development Strategy is presented for approval and adoption by the Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio.
- 2.2 A copy of the final version of the Allotment Development Strategy 2010
   2015 has been circulated with this report.
- 2.3 No consultation process can hope to contact 100% of the people but we can strive to achieve a representative sample of knowledge, experience and wisdom to inform the decision making process. To this end the Parks and Countryside Section have undertaken:
  - June 2009 Internal professional consultation.
  - July 2009 Members consultation and seminars.
  - The member and associated internal consultation highlighted the soundness of the proposed strategy and included the observation "If we can achieve half of what is outlined in the strategy we will dramatically change allotments in Hartlepool for the better".
  - Autumn 2009 Allotment Associations, general community and public consultation.
  - Comprehensive feedback was received from a series of Hartlepool Allotment Associations who had canvassed the opinions of their members. Comments such as "overall impression is of a most valuable document for which an enomous amount of work has been done and a very wide range of sources consulted" seem to reflect that the draft document had substantial merit and was a positive step forward.

- The Allotments team also sent a letter to every registered tenant, over 1000 people, notifying them personally that the draft document was available online, in all the local libraries and on loan from their Allotment Associations
- The online draft version was accessed over 550 times. This built upon the wide press coverage the launch of the document received and an article in the 'Hartbeat' magazine distributed free to homes in Hartlepool.
- Staff also attended meetings with a variety of allotment holders and discussed the draft strategy.
- Scrutiny Forum meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and a final review by HBC Scrutiny Forum on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010.

#### 3. CONCLUSION

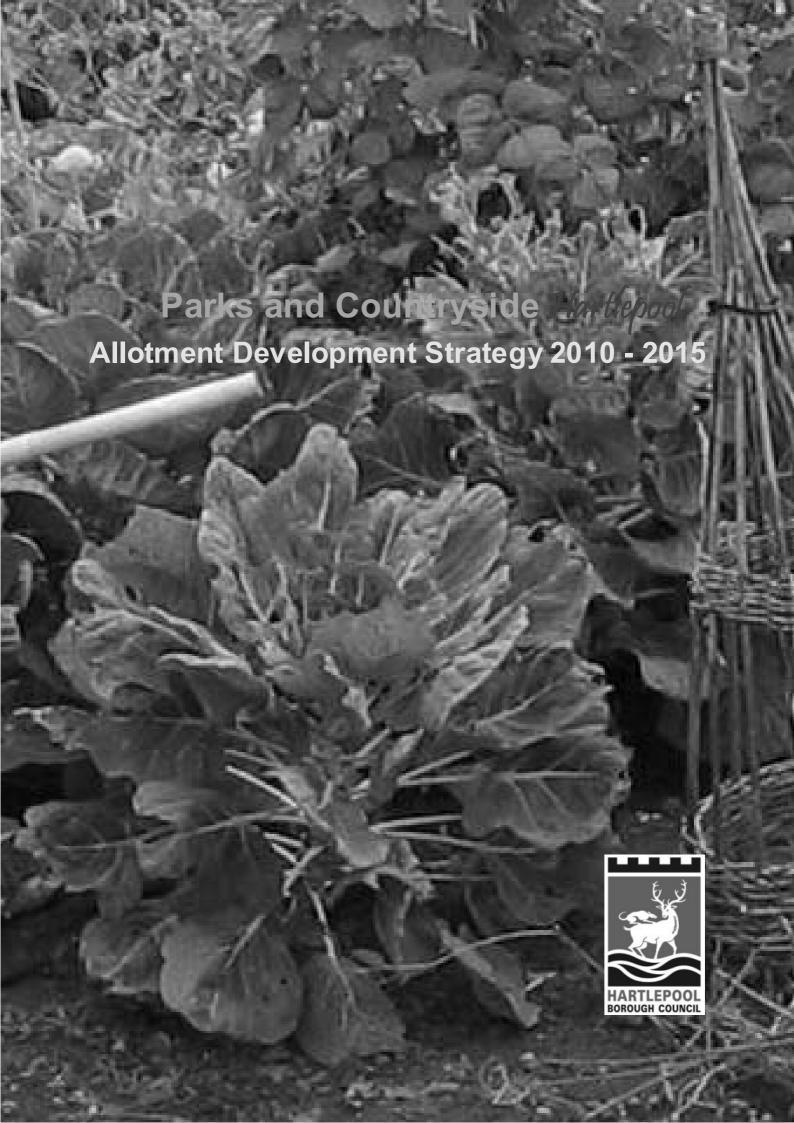
3.1 The strategy covers a very high profile and sensitive service area, the consultation process has therefore been particularly thorough and the final strategy document is now a comprehensive and detailed strategy which will serve the Authority and Service Users well. It is recommended that the strategy is approved.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To consider and approval of the final version of the Allotment Development Strategy 2010-2015.

CONTACT OFFICER: John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community

Services







### Parks and Countryside Hartlepool

Responsible for the care, development and promotion of:

- Public Rights of Way and Access Network,
  - Formal parks and Country Park areas,
- Countryside and Nature Conservation areas,
- Coast and associated Beach Safety provision,
- Town wide Horticulture and Stranton Nursery,
  - Cemeteries and the Crematoria,
    - Allotments,
  - Children's fixed play equipment,
- Football pitches, Games spaces and Bowling Greens
  - Within the borough of Hartlepool.



Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Caring for, developing and promoting Green Space in Hartlepool.



# Parks and Countryside *Hartlepool*Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015

April 2010

(As amended following Scrutiny Forum and recommended for adoption at Portfolio)



'Stop thinking in terms of limitations and start thinking in terms of possibilities'

#### **Forward**

Welcome to the proposed Allotments Development Strategy 2010 – 2015. In this document we consider the challenges currently facing the allotments service. Over a long period of time there has been a general deterioration in the condition of allotment sites in Hartlepool as a consequence of the volatile nature of funding and resource availability. Consequently the services limited staff base, without the general support of strong partnerships with allotment associations, has struggled to police inappropriate activity on some allotments and on occasion misuse by service users and neighbouring communities.

Historically a large amount of senior manager, director level and even Elected Member time has been drawn into addressing or inputting into low level issues resulting from a minority of allotment plots and holders. This misdirection of resources has contributed to the inability of the service to adopt a more proactive and constructive stance where we develop greater partnership working and jointly seek more outside investment. A service stance that would really meet the needs of the majority of plot holders; and those truly representative, democratic, inclusive, welcoming and forward thinking allotment associations; who jointly want to quietly get on with the business of allotment gardening.

The Development Strategy offers a series of possibilities, or developmental avenues, from which a new vision for the protection, promotion and management of Hartlepool's allotment resource can be built and sustained. This document needs support from all levels including Elected Members, Officers, plot holders, neighbouring communities, partner departments and outside bodies. Only working together will it be possible to see the improvements and positive changes, this strategy offers, become reality.

Over the years I have been fortunate to meet a number of good people who shared a common passion for delivering public services, helping the communities' in which we work and live to value and care for the natural environment around them. These people have been willing to share with me their knowledge and experience and I am forever in their debt. Amongst the many things I have learnt the value of patience, the art of listening, and the importance of applying common sense stand out. These virtues will be needed by all parties if this development strategy is to have any success over the coming years.

I continue to be fortunate in inheriting a wealth of knowledge, experience and enthusiasm in the Parks and Countryside team. Together we have begun to challenge ingrained practices, and debated approaches to formulate the proposed strategy before you. I would like to thank the following people for their valuable insight, help and support given in the preparation of this document: John Mennear, Richard Harlanderson, Jim Wilson, Janette Davison, Chris Scaife, Pat Wormald, Steve Robbins and Deborah Jefferson.

Chris Wenlock
Parks and Countryside Manager
Hartlepool Borough Council (May 2009)



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#### Section 1 - Statement of intent

"Our vision is to work with allotment holders and surrounding communities to encourage through partnership working the growth of vibrant, supportive and inclusive allotment groups. Help identify through these partnerships the means and support necessary to take forward works to improve the quality, appearance and environmental value of allotments and promote greater community participation. Through these actions make a positive contribution to a greener and healthier future for the people of Hartlepool."

In implementing the Allotment Development Strategy the intension is to develop positive partnerships, co-operation and a service area in which people can expect:

- Secure sites with tidy and practical allotments; giving plot holders the opportunity for healthy relaxation, pleasure and social contact.
- Opportunities and encouragement to individuals and communities, including children and young people, wishing to be involved in the cultivation of allotments.
- A willingness to build friendly and co-operative relationships with plot holders, neighbourhood groups, voluntary organisations, children and young people, police and other community agencies to help improve and develop allotment sites through partnership.
- Encouragement to sites and associations to develop self management.
- To encounter, as a result of open and positive communication, a relationship whereby plot holders, allotment associations, members and officers share realistic expectations. Where we work in partnership to develop and support procedures that promote efficient and effective allotment administration.
- Effective and appropriate allocation of resources that become available to achieve prioritised, realistic and shared expectations for allotment sites.
- Fair open and equitable treatment and safe tenure.
- Opportunities for developing gardening skills.
- Fair charges and rents.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Section 2 – Introduction to the production of the Strategy

#### Introduction

Parks and Countryside Hartlepool is responsible for the care, development and promotion of the public rights of wav and access network, formal parks and country park areas, countryside and nature conservation areas, coast and associated beach safety provision, town wide horticulture and Stranton Nurserv. cemeteries and crematoria, allotments. children's fixed play equipment, football pitches, games spaces and bowling greens within the borough of Hartlepool.

In partnership with the communities it serves, members, partner organisations, other departments and officers, the unit wishes to build a clear vision through its development strategies for the continued improvement of its service areas. The service development strategies will help shape a Green Spaces & Natural Environment Strategy for Hartlepool.

This development strategy has been drafted for allotments held by the Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Section directly managed sites and those sites under self management by allotment associations, but not for the small area of privately owned allotments.

#### Allotment overview

An allotment is an area of land in, or on the edge of, a developed area which can be rented by local people for the growing of vegetables, flowers or fruit. Allotments provide opportunities for those who wish to grow their own produce and support health, sustainability and social inclusion: they also provide garden space for those with no gardens, such as flat dwellers (Capita Symonds, 2007).

Background to the creation of the Allotments Development Strategy Consider for a moment what do Hartlepool's allotments look like?

They can look like this:



Or you might be unlucky enough to see one like this:



### So why have an Allotments Development Strategy for Hartlepool? General observations:

 Allotments are a major feature of Hartlepool's urban environment - how they look and how they are used, like it or not, influences the perception of the town we live in.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



- The majority of Hartlepool's allotments are in public ownership (1012 plots) they are a community resource.
- · Allotment Tenants are service users just like visitors to the swimming baths, or local library and have a obligation to work with the Council to ensure the service is used responsibly.
- · Hartlepool Borough Council provides 1012 allotment plots across 16 sites. The sites range from large sites such as Stranton with 174 plots to small sites such as Greatham with 2 plots. In total, there are approximately 32 private allotment plots across the town.
- Allotment services in the Borough, like many nationally, have been subject to best value and efficiency targets over many years. As a consequence, many areas of allotment service delivery are regularly challenged to find innovative resourcing approaches to maintain and improve basic delivery requirements and infrastructure renewal.

#### Specific observations:

- Need clarity around what the 'Borough' wants from its allotment resource - a structure or vision is required to give direction to the service and importantly illustrate how plot holders and other partners can contribute.
- There is a wide gap between the 'aspirations' of plot holders and the wider community and the 'actual' resource capabilities of the Allotment Service e.g. enforcement, investment.
- Despite this there are some wonderful embryonic examples of good allotment tenancy and a growth in wider community participation in Hartlepool's allotment resource.

#### Desired outcomes

The strategy and the associated wide scale public and professional consultation that has gone into its production will it is hoped have the following outcomes:

- Understanding of the capabilities of all stakeholders: and set realistic but challenging aspirations for the future.
- Clarity about how plot holders and partners can contribute in bringing about real, positive and substantive change.
- Better relationships between allotment sites and the wider community.
- · Positive, respectful and inclusive use of allotment plots and a genuine feeling of custodianship for the future.

### Development of the Strategy

- The strategy is strongly influenced by the Local Government Association publication 'Growing in the Community'
- The document also draws on the experiences of other leading local authorities both locally and nationally.
- The strategy has been subject to wide scale public and professional consultation.



### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### Who has been consulted on the draft document?

No consultation process can hope to contact 100% of the people but we can strive to achieve a representative sample of knowledge, experience and wisdom to inform the decision making process. To this end we have undertaken:

- June 2009 Internal professional consultation.
- July 2009 Members consultation and seminars.
- The member and associated internal consultation highlighted the soundness of the proposed strategy and included the observation "If we can achieve half of what is outlined in the strategy we will dramatically change allotments in Hartlepool for the better".
- Autumn 2009 Allotment Associations, general community and public consultation.
- Comprehensive feedback was received from a series of Hartlepool Allotment Associations who have canvassed the opinions of their members. Comments such as "overall impression is of a most valuable document for which an enomous amount of work has been done and a very wide range of sources consulted" seem to reflect that the draft document had substantial merit and was a positive step forward.
- The Allotments team also sent a letter to every registered tenant, over 1000 people, notifying them personally that the draft document is available online, in all the local libraries and on loan from their Allotment Associations.

- The online draft version has been accessed over 550 times. This builds upon the wide press coverage the launch of the document received and an article in the 'Hartbeat' magazine distributed free to homes in Hartlepool.
- Staff also attended meetings with a variety of allotment holders and discussed the draft strategy.
- In February 2010 Strategy the subject of a review by HBC Scrutiny Forum.

## What were we consulting upon? Throughout the consultation we have

Throughout the consultation we have been asking these questions:

- Have we got it right? Does this development strategy contain an appropriate 'Vision' for Hartlepool's allotment resource?
- 2. Have we missed any Aims or Aspirations out?
- 3. Do we need to re-think any of the objectives?
- 4. Can you think of better solutions to the problems faced?
- 5. Can you see a way in which you might be able to help contribute to making the aspirations become a reality?

## Review process for feedback received as part of the consultation

Comments received as part of the public consultation have been considered, and incorporated where appropriate, as the final draft of the Allotments Development Strategy was drafted.

The finalised Allotment Development Strategy will be submitted for adoption by the Council in 2010.

Parks and Countryside Hartlepool

Caring for, developing and promoting *Green Space* in Hartlepool.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Section 3 – How to read and use the Strategy

### What is in the Strategy?

The strategy has a vision:

"Our vision is to work with allotment holders and surrounding communities to encourage through partnership working the growth of vibrant, supportive and inclusive allotment groups.

Help identify through these partnerships the means and support necessary to take forward works to improve the quality. appearance and environmental value of allotments and promote greater community participation.

Through these actions make a positive contribution to a greener and healthier future for the people of Hartlepool."

### The strategy tells you:

- What we know at the moment about Hartlepool's allotments.
- What resources are currently available and how they are used.
- About the service and resource challenges we have.

Most importantly the Strategy suggests what we can do together in partnership to help allotments be an asset to Hartlepool:

 And we call these suggestions the 'Proposals'.

#### The 'Proposals'

The Allotment Development Strategy contains seven broad "work areas" which are as follows:

- Promotion of allotment use and food growing
- Appropriate allotment provision
- Good administration
- Localised Allotment Management
- Allotment Crime Prevention
- Environmental sustainability
- Appropriate service resourcing

#### Aims - Aspirations

Each "work area" has a series of individual Aims or 'aspirations' undemeath it.

Three different levels of Objectives can exist for each aim. These Objectives state the work proposed, resources permitting, to achieve the stated Aim.

Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

Level Two objective

Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow

Level Three objective Would like to deliver but only if suitable opportunities and resources can be identified

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



- Level 1 objectives are considered to be the backbone of an effective allotment service offering and will be prioritised for delivery, resources permitting, each year.
- The level 2 and to a certain extent level 3 objectives will be reviewed for continued relevance and practicality of delivery in light of forecasted resource availability each year as the budgets are drawn up.
- Every 5 years level 2 and 3
   operations will be reviewed, some
   may be deleted, others added in light
   of the strategic operational and
   funding environment. These 5 yearly
   reviews will be subject to a public
   consultation process.

## Progress in achieving aims and objectives

How quickly progress can be made on individual Aims and Objectives contained in the document will be dependent upon the staff resources made available, and equally the help and support that is received from plot holders, allotment associations and other partnerships.

The strategy recognises the volatile nature of funding and resource availability. It should be remembered that the Allotments Development Strategy is a snap shot of a dynamic project planning and delivery process. The Aims and their respective Objectives do not have any 'valid till date'.

The Strategy recognises the importance of allotments as a leisure and recreational facility and for their benefits to communities, green spaces, health and well-being and wildlife, as well as in

producing low cost locally produced food in a sustainable way

Other potential opportunities and issues will present themselves during the initial 5 year review period of this strategy that have not been identified during its preparation but which are relevant to the Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Section's objectives for overall service delivery. When such opportunities or issues arise, officers and as appropriate members, will carefully judge each case on its merit, consider the opportunities offered in relation to the section's service objectives and the wider Council portfolio and policies and the effect it will have on implementing this Development Strategy.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### Section 4 - Review of the current allotment service and available resources

### Staff

Parks and Countryside Hartlepool have one Technical Officer whose primary responsibilities lie with Allotments and, when required, in supporting Play demands held by the section. This Technical Officer role is, as a direct consequence of the volume of issues arising from deteriorating infrastructure and inappropriate use of plots, principally reactive in nature.

The officer investigates issues that arise and where appropriate using the resources available co-ordinates a response using HBC Neighbourhood Services and outside contractors. These responses are often mend-and-make-do to tackle immediate issues or problems as the root cause is often symptomatic of the lack of external capital investment opportunities for allotments, a situation that has persisted over many decades.

Parks and Countryside Hartlepool also recognise the very high administrative workload associated with managing 1012 individual allotment plots over 16 diverse sites. One member of the administrative unit delivers an absolutely critical role for the section administering all of the allotment plots. This is a time consuming role and includes being the first point of contact for all enquiries, logging and filtering enquiries, and then passing them on if necessary to the technical officer for further action.

The administrative unit has also developed and refined the processes and systems needed to manage the vast amount of data required to effectively administer the allotment plots. The

section currently uses the specialist allotment management software package 'Clear advantage' to assist in this process.

## The human resource challenge: 'Acting-down' resource wastage

Historically a large amount of senior manager and director level time has been inappropriately redirected into addressing or inputting into low level issues with allotment plots and holders. This misdirection of resources is compromising the adoption of a more proactive stance in relation to the allotment service provision.

#### **Empowerment**

The one member of administrative staff who administers all the allotment plots plays a vital role in the day-to-day management of allotment issues. Unfortunately the level of empowement that could effectively exist with this highly competent and experienced Allotment Administrator is stifled and would be helped by the revision of some procedures.

Secondary to this is a need for plot holders, allotment associations, officers, council members and senior managers to address issues, or redirect them if necessary, to the appropriate level for resolution and thus reinforce and respect the procedures put in place to maintain and develop a cost effective service.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### Enforceable guidance

The challenging situation described previously is compounded by the need to develop clear, accessible, friendly and enforceable guidance documentation for plot holders. Making clear what activities are not acceptable; and the authority's objectives in relation to the plot.

#### The move to a proactive stance

Consideration of the points made above and implementation of the suggested actions should, if applied well and supported at all levels, begin to reinforce weak areas of the current limited allotment service delivery package. A case can be put forward though for the Authority to move from this position of simply policing the status-quo and continuing to watch infrastructure decline.

This case sees the Authority adopt a clear proactive service delivery stance. In order to achieve this though it is necessary to considers ways of building in capacity for an 'allotments development' element to the work of the allotment team. A series of options are presented in this strategy.

## Partnership challenge: Being a good neighbour

The Parks and Countryside section has received a great deal of support from allotment holders and through its work with groups interested in working allotment sites. Unfortunately many issues still arise through some allotment holders failing to abide by the rules of tenancy to which they have signed up to, or as a result of unneighbourly actions. This has led in many cases to disruption and disturbance to neighbouring allotment holders and neighbouring home owners.

Clearly if the small allotment team is regularly engaged in dealing with issues arising from an inability to follow the rules and guidance put in place to ensure a pleasant and relaxing environment for plot holders and neighbouring landowners; then they cannot make the necessary headway in working with allotment holders and associations in finding investment to improve sites for all involved.

#### Service partnerships

For many years allotment service delivery has been perceived as a poisoned chalice with many inherited and generational challenges and an expected resistance to any change. Many Authorities have demonstrated though that it is possible to revitalise this most challenging of service areas.

The potential exists to use allotments as the vehicle for community based improvements in physical and mental health, fitness, and social wellbeing. There are enomous opportunities to improve community cohesion, citizenship, and community ownership of Hartlepool's green spaces through allotments.

In order to capitalise on these opportunities we need to invest energy and quality time to be able to harvest the benefits that are potentially available. Service partnership agreements with the health sector, regional bodies, businesses, local agencies, and local people are a realistic goal for a proactive Parks and Countryside allotment service.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### The financial resource challenge: Overview

Parks and Countryside Hartlepool has a budget allocation of approximately £90K for allotments which covers the cost of the Allotments Technical Officer, water supply costs and reactive maintenance costs for all the plots each year. In 2008 a further £28K approximately of additional one-off Capital monies were found and subsequently expended on works for the allotments.

In the 2008-09 financial year direct expenditure by the Parks and Countryside Section on allotments equated to approximately £116 per allotment plot. The rent levied on plot holders in 2008-09, a charge which is based primarily on size of plot, ranged from £14.78p to £64.62p per year.

The Allotment Administrator role is currently financed through Support Services and is an indirect cost not factored into the calculations above. The time expended by other Parks & Countryside Section staff, senior managers, and Assistant Directors on allotment issues amounts to a considerable additional resource expenditure which is also unaccounted for in the figures above.

#### Capital budget challenge

The following illustrates the capital investment challenge that faces the allotments section. Installation of modem coated metal external allotment fencing to replace dilapidated close board wooden fencing can, when demolition and disposal costs are factored in, cost between £75 - 150 per meter. A similar situation exists with internal track networks that full under the Authorities care. The following table summarises the

approximate amount of external allotment fencing and internal track areas.

## Estimated total external fencing lengths and internal track areas networks falling under the responsibility of the Authority.

- Derived from Hartlepool Borough Council Allotments Condition Surveys, June 1999

Site Name	Est. external fencing m	Est. track m <sup>2</sup>
Briarfields	0	515
Brierton	100	1280
Burn Valley	3600	765
Catcote	1310	790
Chester Road	8581	6807
Greatham	551	571
Has well Avenue	3841	484
Nicholsons Field	661	3220
Olive Street	31	231
Station Lane	340	2500
Stranton	6181	6903
Thompson Grove	0	332
Thornhill	492	1644
Throston	4362	3459
Waverley Terrace	315	408
Woodcroft	45	1614
Total:	30,410	31,523

Using today's costs external fencing replacement on the council's allotment sites represents a medium-term capital programme in the range of £2.28 million - £4.56 million. Renewal of internal track and haulage ways could represent a medium-term capital programme in the range of £4.72 million – £6.30 million.

#### Revenue budget challenge

A multitude of challenges face the annual revenue budget, abandoned plots, water charges, backlog of repairs, security and health and safety issues etc.; a selection of these are discussed below.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



The total annual water bill paid by Parks and Countryside Hartlepool for the allotments was budgeted at £10,436 in 2008-09 an average of £10.31p per plot. At present there is no incentive for plot holders to manage use and conserve water.

Another annual resource consideration is abandoned plots and the barrier they present to better allotment use and long-term retention of new plot holders. One of the consequences of the lowering of the profile and resources of the allotment service over the decades has been the gradual incipient decline in standards of allotment use in some areas.

It has been common to encounter buried gas canisters, animal carcases, as bestos and other hazardous materials, glass from demolished green houses, caravans, fridges and freezers with CFC's present etc. The criminal element of society has also been found to have used hidden plots as 'chop-shops' for stolen vehicles and other goods. The resultant poisoning and contamination of allotment soil has left sites unusable without extensive topsoil removal and replacement. There have been circumstances where the clearance and disposal to registered facilities of fly tipping, hazardous waste, and polluted soil have cost the Section thousands of pounds per an incident.

#### The way forward

In recognition of all these challenges it is hoped that this Allotment Development Strategy:

- Raises awareness amongst all stakeholders of the issues surrounding allotments, their management and use.
- Encourages all parties to recognise the opportunities that could be developed with better understanding, support and commitment to the aims and objectives set out in the document.
- Leads to a renewed commitment by plot holders, allotment associations, council members and senior officers to support the allotment management, administration and enforcement procedures developed in partnership to minimise resource wastage.



### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### Section 5 - Proposals: The Aims and Objectives of the Strategy

Aim	Title
1	Promotion of allotment use and food growing

Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

#### 1.1 Ensure retention of new tenants

Work towards the long term retention of new tenants.

Tenants who leave after only a few months gain little benefit from their experience, as a previously neglected plot can often only really become productive in the second and subsequent years of cultivation. In addition, plots that have initially been cleared soon become overgrown again, the expense of clearing and rotovating the plot having been wasted, whilst the amount of administration work involved in constantly processing vacations and new applications creates excessive workloads for allotment staff.

Research by other authorities indicates reasons for new tenants leaving can include the following:

- A lack of knowledge of how to grow food.
- Crops destroyed by pests and diseases.
- Difficulty in clearing and cultivating an overgrown plot.
- Security/vandalism.
- Lack of time.

- Attitude of some other tenants may be off-putting to younger tenants (particularly on some more traditional "older male" dominated sites).
- Cost of seeds, materials etc. needed.
- Service did not meet expectations.
- People may feel that they are made to feel unwelcome on a site or a part of a site because they are from an ethnic minority, a woman, because of their sexual orientation or because they are from a different age group to the majority of tenants.
- A person may feel unwelcome because they use different gardening methods to the majority of tenants.
- Access problems.
- Lack of a shed on the plot.
- Groups of Disabled people or people with mental health problems may be made to feel unwelcome because of the perceived fear or prejudice of other tenants.

Experiences in other authorities have shown that there are many cases where take up has improved dramatically on a site, to be followed by a spate of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. leading back to a rapid decline in tenancies. Bad experiences, particularly when someone is new to gardening can make them demoralised and consider it is not worth the effort.

Sometimes factions can develop on sites because of disputes; this can generate a "bad atmosphere" on a site. A consequence is tenants giving up because they do not wish to be involved in "allotment politics".

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Although some of the above factors may be outside of the control of the council, the following are proposed ways, resources permitting, of improving the retention of tenants:

- 1.1.1 Phased introduction of clearing and rotovating overgrown vacant plots for new tenants.
- 1.1.2 Tendering of plots which are deemed to be unlettable due to their poor condition rather than offering individually to people on waiting list. Successful tenderers would be offered sites for extended rent free period in exchange for bringing 'problem' plots back into cultivation and ensuring they are secure.
- 1.1.3 Giving or directing new tenants to sources of allotment gardening support and advice. This could include encouraging allotment associations to produce a mail shot that can be sent out with the annual renewals and invoices to new and existing tenants of relevant allotment sites. Information included might be dates of future meetings, association contacts etc.
- **1.1.4** Working in partnership to ensure that all sites are secure see 3.3.2
- 1.1.5 Having Site Representatives on as many sites as possible to provide help and advice.
- **1.1.6** Working in partnership to ensure good access see 3.3.2
- 1.1.7 Making all tenants aware of their responsibilities towards others, including making it clear that those who harass others can face eviction.

- 1.1.8 Consider offering half or smaller plots on sites and publicise this fact.
- 1.1.9 Encourage the formation and development of allotments associations who can provide seeds, compost etc to members at discounted prices and provide advice and support see 3.4

Hartlepool enjoys a high level of occupancy across its sites and the Parks and Countryside section recognises the most valuable allotment resources are the tenants. The current rate of tenancy fluctuates around the 95% level. Mass inspection programmes since 2006 have resulted in better levels of cultivation across all sites and new tenants have replaced those tenants who were not utilising allotment sites for their primary purpose.

The healthy waiting list for most sites would suggest that a tenancy rate of 95% or above should be adopted as the norm for sites to ensure that high levels of cultivation are maintained and income into the service is maximised.

To date, there have been three mass inspection programmes undertaken. In October 2006, there were 269 plots that were classed as vacant or not being worked. A subsequent inspection in July 2007 found 187 plots either vacant or not being worked.

1.1.10 Work towards maintaining allotment tenancy rates at or above 95% through partnership working with allotment associations and use of the mass inspection programme.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

### 1.2 Encourage diversity of tenants

Work towards the engagement of a diverse portfolio of allotment tenants and in doing so bring the health benefits of allotment based activity to all sections of the community.

The traditional image of allotment tenants is one of elderly white working class males. It is intended that we will seek to find initiatives to promote allotments, and work with:

- **1.2.1** More women, couples and families.
- 1.2.2 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.
- 1.2.3 Find innovative ways of promoting and advertising Allotments, especially in areas of poor uptake.
- 1.2.4 To promote the health benefits of Allotment Gardening.
- 1.2.5 Support opportunities to work in partnership with schools, Health Authorities, Doctors Surgeries etc. to promote and encourage allotments to be used as an educational resource.
- 1.2.6 To offer plots free of charge to schools and introduce a Best School Plot competition.
- 1.2.7 To continue to work with community groups, especially in areas of poor uptake to encourage food growing in areas where it is widely acknowledged that issues such as

poor diet, lack of exercise and obesity are most acute.

1.2.8 To support and attend events organised locally on allotments to promote the image of allotment gardening.

Research carried out by other authorities has indicated impairments such as arthritis and mobility problems are often cited as reasons for older tenants vacating plots.

The Disability Discrimination Act requires a body to make reasonable adjustments to improve access to its facilities by Disabled people. This includes considering the needs of disabled users when considering footpath improvements or vehicle access, but it can also involve simpler adjustments such as a gate that is easier to open, or better information for partially sighted people. Clearance of neglected plots can also help people with disabilities to get started on plots. It is intended, therefore, to address these issues in the following ways:

- 1.2.9 Seek funding and partnership opportunities to improve participation by disabled people through the creation of accessible plots, ideally with the following facilities:
  - raised beds;
  - · wide paths;
  - water supply;
  - accessible shed;
  - vehicle access.
- 1.2.10 The above will be in addition to making sites more physically accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.

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### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Aim	Title
2	Appropriate allotment provision

#### Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

2.1 Ensure adequate provision of allotments.

Maintain an average level of allotment provision for the entire borough of Hartlepool of 26.1 plots per 1,000 households as per PPG17 recommendations

There are currently 16 Council allotment sites across the town they are described below:

#### North Area

Nicholson's Field Chester Road Olive Street Thornhill Throston Thompson Grove

In the North area, there are 454 plots (including private provision) making 35.2 plots per 1,000 households available (above the level recommended by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners target provision of 20 plots per 1,000 households).

#### **Central Area**

Briarfields Burn Valley Brierton/Rossmere Stranton Catcote In the Central area, there are 377 plots (including private provision) making 24.5 plots per 1,000 households available (above the level recommended by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners target provision of 20 plots per 1,000 households).

#### South Area

Station Lane Woodcroft Greatham Haswell Avenue

In the South area, there are 213 plots (including private provision) making 19.3 plots per 1,000 households available (below the level recommended by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners target provision of 20 plots per 1,000 households).

Whilst there is an apparent shortfall of allotment sites in the south area, the overall picture in Hartlepool shows an average of 26.1 plots per 1,000 households - above the level recommended by the NSALG – and also above the average allotment provision in England (currently 15 plots per 1,000 households).

**2.1.1** Monitor level of available plots per 1,000 households in Borough.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

## 2.2 Transfer under-utilised sites to alternative or temporary uses

Consider utilising vacant allotment land which is not defined as surplus for other revenue generating purposes permitted under the Allotments Acts, such as grazing or community uses, ensuring that it is held as a 'land bank' for potential future allotment use.

There may be opportunities to use underutilised areas of sites for alternative uses. In particular it may be appropriate for land to be taken out of allotment use that is not deemed suitable because of the following reasons:

- Flooding
- Poor soil
- Shade from trees
- Badger setts and other wildlife habitats

Alternative uses for such land could include:

- Wildlife/conservation areas
- Open space
- Rotation of playing fields
- Community plant and tree nurseries
- Grazing

Legal advice would need to be sought as to which of these uses will require Secretary of State consent and which will be deemed as temporary uses under the Allotments Acts, as it is intended that suitable vacant land will act as a potential land bank for future allotment growing.

When a site has 6 or more people on its waiting list for allotments, any allotment land in the area used for temporary uses would be transferred back to allotments if there is no alternative vacant land nearby (it is a requirement of the Allotments Acts 1908 that an allotment authority must consider providing allotments where there are 6 people or more requesting to rent allotments).

The issues to consider when considering a site for an alternative use include:

- Legal issues.
- Accessibility (especially general public access).
- Management responsibility.
- Funding.
- Reversibility of alternative uses (i.e. requirement for Secretary of State consent).
- Public desire for the alternative use versus need for allotments.

It is important to remember that some uses (e.g. open space or wildlife) may in theory be reversible, but in practice may not be so easy. Therefore Secretary of State consent should be sought to prevent future conflicts of interest from occurring.

■ 2.2.1 Consider opportunities that arise to positively utilise vacant plots for the benefit of the neighbouring communities whilst ensuring they are held as a 'land bank' for potential future allotment use. Triggers to indicate areas should return to allotment use include a drop below the England average level of allotment provision (currently 15 plots per 1,000 households) for the entire borough of Hartlepool.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Aim	Title
3	Good administration

Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

### 3.1 Allotment procedures manual

An allotment procedure manual will be developed through an amalgamation and review process of all existing procedural information and documentation to ensure that the current procedures are correctly documented.

The development of this manual will be conducted with HBC legal department to ensure compliance with any statutory requirements. Allotment holders will be advised of proposed procedural changes before annual tenancy renewal. In particular, it is intended to update the following procedures:

- 3.1.1 Reduction of the time between reminder letters being sent out before issuing Notice to Quits for:
  - Non-payment of rent, to ensure that non-payers are evicted more quickly.
  - Non-cultivation of plots, to ensure that plots are utilised by those genuinely interested in growing vegetables, flowers or fruit.
- 3.1.2 Consider the introduction of a "Three Strikes and You Are Out" rule for tenants who persistently receive Notice to Remedy letters. Any tenant receiving in total 3 Notice to Remedy letters on one plot within a 3-year period will automatically

be given a Notice to Quit their allotment (subject to inspection of the plot by an HBC Technical Officer) which will not be rescinded other than in exceptional circumstances.

- 3.1.3 Introduction of a separate agreement for persistent problem tenants to sign (e.g. agreeing not to have bonfires, harass others or bring rubbish onto a site). Failure to abide by the agreement would lead to an automatic Notice to Quit.
- **3.1.4** Ensure that there are procedures for complaints, disputes and mediation e.g. an Allotments Appeals Panel.
- 3.1.5 Agree a recognised eviction methodology with the council's legal department and Police, and consult with allotment associations.
- 3.1.6 The procedure manual should also include any specific guidance that relates to agreements and procedural processes agreed with Associations undertaking certain activities on sites under a Devolved Management agreement.

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### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

#### 3.2 New tenancy agreement

Develop new tenancy agreement and code of conduct for plot holders to update the rules and make the tenancy agreement more relevant and easier to read and understand.

Many of the following clauses are included as the issues covered have been a substantial cause for complaint and disturbance over many years:

#### General

Annually, to remain a plot holder, all existing and new tenants will be expected to sign and return to the Council's Allotments Team, one copy of the tenancy agreement (lilac paper); and adhere to the rules and conditions of tenancy in relation to their use of Council owned allotment land; and their interaction with other plot holders and the Council's Allotments Team. The Council, as Landlord, retains all rights and powers over the land.

The Council reserves the right to set appropriate annual rent levels and review and revise these rent levels as becomes necessary.

The Hartlepool Borough Council Allotment Tenancy Agreement applies to all tenants, be they existing or new. Where devolved management agreements exist, some of the Rules and Conditions of Tenancy, e.g. permitted activities may be further

refined or restricted by the particular allotment site management body.

- 3.2.1.2 Plot ID Numbers. All plots must display clearly on site, the identification number in a position that can be read easily by all interested parties in a prominent position at the front of the allotment plot on a board no larger than 30cm x 10cm (12inches x 4inches).
- 3.2.1.3 Primary User. The tenant will be expected to be the primary user of the plot and responsible for the activities of all registered partners and visitors to the plot.
- a.2.1.4 Sub-Letting. The tenant shall not enter into any agreement, verbal or written, to sub-let, assign or part with possession of the allotment plot or any part of it under any circumstances. The Council is the landlord of all of the allotment plots and, as such, it is the only body that can issue a legal tenancy agreement. If, for any reason, a tenant wishes to give up their plot, they must inform the Council's Allotment Team as soon as possible.

Please do not arrange for someone to take over your plot. It may be possible for the Allotment Team to consider existing registered partners, but we would need you to surrender the plot before the registered partner could to be offered the tenancy. This consideration can only occur if the partner is currently not a tenant elsewhere and only if the partnership has been registered with the Allotments Team for more than one year. Please contact us if you wish to register a partner and we will send

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



you the necessary paperwork to complete and return.

■ 3.2.1.5 Use of Plot and Insurance.

The tenant shall use the allotment plot only for the purpose of growing vegetables, fruit, flowers or lawn for the tenant and their immediate family's domestic use.

Where permission has been sought for them and subsequently granted by the Council's Allotment Team, limited numbers of certain specific animals may be allowed to be kept upon plot at specific allotment sites. The Council, as Landlord, reserves the right to amend or repeal permissions to keep animals on plots.

Tenants are reminded that the Council is not responsible for the security of any article taken onto the allotment site; or damage or injury resulting from activities undertaken by Tenants on, or in connection with, their use of the allotment plot. As the legal Tenant of a plot, Tenants are liable for their own personal property and related activities, as well as those of their guests. It is the Tenant's responsibility to insure against theft or damage and personal injury. Tenants are advised to seek professional advice about personal liability and property insurance cover. They may also wish to consider becoming a member of one of the national allotment organisations, where membership benefits may be available.

3.2.1.6 Unauthorised or Illegal Use of Plot. The tenant shall not use the allotment plot, or allow it to be used, for the purposes of any trade or business. The operation of a business from the plot is banned and the bringing onto a plot of produce for the purpose of selling on is not permitted.

The storage of goods or disposal/recycling of business waste on plots is not permitted. Should it become necessary to take enforcement action, Trading Standards, the Environmental Enforcement Unit and the Police will be notified as appropriate.

3.2.1.7 Cultivation Levels. The Government's guide for plot holders states that tenants must keep plots clean and maintained in a good state of cultivation. The plot should be mainly used for the growing of vegetables and fruit.

As a guide, the Allotment Team advises new tenants that ideally \(^2\) (two thirds) of the total plot area should be under cultivation.

Tenants with established plots should keep the allotment plot free from weeds, well manured and maintained in a proper state of cultivation. If, for any reason, the tenant is unable to maintain the garden for a prolonged period of time, for example, due to illness, the tenant or a relative should notify the Council's Allotment Team in writing.

As a minimum, tenants taking over neglected plots should cultivate in a way that does not interfere in a material way with the enjoyment of neighbouring tenants. Key elements include:-

(i) removal of weed seed-heads before the seed has set:

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- (ii) control of pernicious weeds, such as those that spread through the extensions of roots (e.g. couch grass and ground elder) or by generating new plants from growing tips in contact with the soil (e.g. brambles);
- (iii)removal of long grass or detritus that is likely to harbour slugs and snails (which may forage next door); and
- (iv) keeping paths free of hazards to allow free and unimpeded access and to ensure grass paths are trimmed.
- 3.2.1.8 Internal Paths. Where present, the tenant shall keep paths adjoining the allotment plot clean and in good repair. The tenant shall not obstruct, or allow to be obstructed, any path or road and soil must be kept clear of the edge to enable rainwater to drain away. A clear and unobstructed division path at least 45cm (18inches) wide should be at each side of the allotment plot.
- 3.2.1.9 Internal Tracks. In order to facilitate access by emergency and maintenance vehicles, tenants of allotment plots adjacent to main access tracks shall ensure that the track is kept free of obstructions and hazards at all times and shall ensure that the width of the track is retained at all times. Tenants must not reduce the track width by encroachment, or depositing soil, or any other material or debris on the track surface.
- 3.2.1.10 Vehicles on Allotment Sites. Vehicles brought onto allotment sites are the responsibility of their owners; the Council will not be

responsible for any damage, injury or theft associated with the use of such and owners of vehicles used in this manner should ensure they have adequate motor insurance, including third party cover for this type of use.

It is not permitted to use allotment plots for parking or garaging of vehicles.

Plot users are requested to park considerately and not block access ways to adjacent properties or routes that might be required by emergency vehicles.

Allotment tracks and pathways are generally not suitable for motor vehicle traffic. Access to many allotment tracks is barred to plot holders' vehicles with pedestrian access only allowed. The exception is emergency vehicles or vehicles required for site maintenance and the emergency services are provided with keys to open these gates if necessary.

Use of allotment tracks and pathways by vehicles will be reviewed, as necessary. Further areas may become 'Pedestrian Only' to help reduce issues of fly tipping and damage/deterioration of track/path surfaces from motor vehicle traffic on surfaces that were never designed or envisioned to be used for the purpose when the allotment site was laid out.

Should plot holders bring a motor vehicle onto an allotment site for any reason, they should limit their speed to 5mph and drive with due care and consideration, stopping to allow pedestrians and other users to pass safely, where necessary.

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- 3.2.1.11 Trees. The tenant shall not, without prior written consent of the Council's Allotment Team, cut, prune, remove or interfere with any timber or trees outside the boundaries of their plot.
- 3.2.1.12 Minerals. The tenant shall not or permit to take, sell or carry away any mineral, soil, stone, gravel, sand, slate, chalk, flints, clay or substrata or allow any other person to do so.
- 3.2.1.13 Damage. The tenant shall not cause damage, or allow damage to be caused, to any roads, paths, gates, fences etc. or any other Council property. The Council is entitled to require any tenant who has caused or is causing damage to repair such damage. If the tenant fails, refuses or neglects to repair such damage within 28 days of the Council requiring him/her to do so, the Council may undertake the work and charge the cost of such works to the tenant. Non payment of these rent arrears will result in termination of tenancy.
- 3.2.1.14 Fault and Repair Reporting. On sites which do not have devolved management arrangements, the first point of contact for reporting maintenance problems with security gates, locks, water pipes etc. is the Council's Allotment Team. Once issues are identified, most minor repairs will be undertaken as soon as reasonably practical by a Council assigned contractor. Substantial infrastructure repairs or replacement projects will be assigned, if feasible, for rectification within the limited annual resources available each vear or may have to become the focus for joint fundraising efforts by the Council

and partners, including Allotment Associations.

### **Allotment Security**

- 3.2.2.1 Allotment Security. The Council's Allotment Team work in close partnership with the police, Neighbourhood Forums and other agencies to help allotment tenants reduce their vulnerability to incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.2.2.2 Security Gates. In partnership, the Council has secured funding over recent years to install locked access gates to allotment sites across the Borough to which tenants are issued keys. These gates should be closed and secured immediately after passing through them, either when entering or exiting the site.
- 3.2.2.3 Reporting Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. Allotment tenants are encouraged to report any instances of crime or anti-social behaviour on allotments to the Police. Under reporting can affect the ability to task Police resources to any new issues. Please see inside back cover for Police/PCSO contact telephone numbers.

Tenants have a significant role to play in reducing the chance of becoming a target for crime, e.g. thinking carefully about what equipment/machinery is brought onto sites, how sites are used - locking security gates, development of sites to assist natural surveillance, early and accurate crime logging/reporting to the Police etc.

3.2.2.4 Keys. For many years now, the Allotment's Team has provided Police and PCSO's with keys to

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access allotment sites and the initiative is seeing regular patrols of sites being initiated where a concentration of incidents have been reported.

Locked security gates are a front line defence against criminal activity and plot holders are asked to keep keys safe and secure. The tenant is responsible for the activities of all registered partners and visitors to the plot.

- 3.2.2.5 Property Marking.
  - Hartlepool's allotments are not very different, in both layout and crime issues, from many Local Authority sites in the North East and the Police have done research looking at how other districts are addressing the perceived crime issues. Out of this process was highlighted the importance of using micro-dot marking of property on allotment sites - the modern equivalent of property marking pen. Just as important is the prominent signage on those sites by tenants, e.g. stickers on sheds, greenhouses, gates etc., to warn potential thieves of the preventative actions that have been taken by plot holders.
- 3.2.2.6 Personal Safety. Tenants and visitors to allotment sites are reminded to pay due regard to their own personal health and safety and others who may be around them.
- 3.2.2.7 Access. The tenant, registered partners or visitors shall not enter the allotment site except by the provided tracks, paths and associated gates. Tenants are not allowed to install additional entrances or gates without prior written permission of the

Council's Allotment Team. Tenants are also not allowed to modify or interfere with the padlocks, fences, gates or any other security provision made by the Council.

3.2.2.8 Hours of Use. The Council reserves the right to delegate authority to any appropriate policing or security body to challenge the activities of any person found on any allotment site at any hour of the day.

To help combat crime and anti-social behaviour, persons found on an allotment site or plot outside of those times normal for the maintenance of an allotment can expect to be challenged. As a general guide in the summer, this would be between the hours of 5am and 10pm daily. During the winter months, due to reduced daylight, these 'normal' hours might be considerably shortened.

This particular area of the rules and guidance acknowledges that some tenants may have animal welfare duties and these may extend beyond the 'normal hours'. In these particular circumstances, tenants can access their plots outside these hours, but they should expect occasionally to be asked to explain their presence to Police Officers, PCSO's and other authorised security personnel that should encounter them on site in the hours of darkness.

# Fire Safety- Storage and Handling of Fuel for Heating and Machinery

Fire and explosions are a real risk on plots and pose specific dangers to the emergency services tasked to deal with them. In order to reduce risk to the public

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and emergency services, the following restrictions will be operating:-

- 3.2.3.1 Restriction on Gas
  Cylinders. Only canisters containing
  LPG are to be used on plots for
  heating and lighting. No other type of
  gas cylinder is permitted. The
  maximum canister size is 15kg, of
  which only two canisters (be they full
  or empty or any stage between) are
  permitted on a plot at any one time.
  All tenants with pressurised gas
  cylinders on plots are required to:-
  - Register them with the Council (pink paper);
  - Ensure they are stored correctly and securely;
  - Ensure they, as plot holder, have relevant third party insurance to cover their presence on site.
- 3.2.3.2 Restriction on Inflammable Liquids. Maximum inclusive total of 20 litres (4.4 gallons) of inflammable liquid (paraffin, petrol, diesel, methylated spirits etc.) can be stored by tenants on plots. All inflammable liquids must be in containers specifically designed for their storage with appropriate, visible and readable safety warnings on the outside of the container. Containers to be kept in adequately secure and ventilated circumstances. Fuel in machinery or heaters is not included in this storage total, but should not exceed an additional inclusive total of 10 litres (2.2 gallons) for the plot.

## Being Considerate Neighbours

The Council, as Landlord, expects all its tenants to act in a considerate and responsible manner to all neighbours,

both plot holders and the neighbouring public. The following areas have persistently generated complaints and the following restrictions will be in force:-

#### 3.2.4.1 Restriction on Bonfires.

Bonfires only allowed during the last week in March and first and second week in November each year. As a general rule, all suitable materials to be composted or, in exceptional circumstances, after agreement with Council's Allotment Team, disposed of by green waste skip.

When burning rubbish on the allotment plot, the tenant must consider the effect of the smoke on other tenants and occupiers of neighbouring premises.

Tenants should not light any bonfires or cause any smoke nuisance as defined by the Environmental Protection Act 1990, section 80. The tenant may be subject to independent enforcement action under the terms of this Act if they disregard this condition. If the tenant is found guilty, they could in addition have their tenancy terminated.

The tenant must not burn the following materials on the allotment plot:-

- Rubber/Plastics/Foam/Paint;
- Any material originating outside of the allotment site/plot;
- Any material producing black smoke;
- Any other hazardous material that could cause environmental damage;
- The tenant must not use any flammable material, for example, petrol, to assist burning.

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Where requested by a Council Officer, the tenant must stop burning immediately.

3.2.4.2 Dogs - Rules Pertaining to Tenants, Registered Partners and Visitors Bringing Dogs on Allotments When They Visit Plots. It is a requirement to keep dogs on a lead or under close control, so they do not stray onto other plots or disrupt other site users.

Tenants must ensure the responsible removal and appropriate disposal of dog faeces.

Visiting dogs should not be a source of nuisance (barking/howling etc.) whilst on site.

- 3.2.4.3 Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour. The tenant shall not cause or permit to be caused any of the following:-
  - A gathering on the allotment plot or site to consume alcohol or facilitate drug use;
  - Use any building or shed on the allotment plot for residential or sleeping purposes;
  - Bring firearms or air rifles onto the allotments.

If a tenant is found to be connected with any of these above activities on an allotment plot, it will result in their tenancy being terminated.

Similarly, if substantive evidence is presented that a tenant or persons invited onto a site by the tenant have been involved in anti-social behaviour, the Council may refuse to provide them with an allotment plot. These activities might include:-

- Nuisance, annoyance or damage to the allotment plot or to the tenant or owner of any adjoining or neighbouring premises;
- The depositing of any refuse on or obstructing any path set out for the use of allotment plot holders;
- Trespass on other tenants' allotments.
- 3.2.4.4 Children. The tenant shall ensure that any children brought onto the allotment site are accompanied and supervised by the tenant or other responsible adult.
- 3.2.4.5 Harassment and
  Threatening Behaviour. Tenants
  who harass or threaten neighbours,
  officers or the public can be evicted.
  Tenants are reminded they are
  responsible for the activities of all
  registered partners and visitors to the
  plot.

All issues should be documented/recorded (date, time, description of persons/vehicles present, description of incident) by those affected and reported promptly to the Police.

### **Animals on Allotments**

Registration of ALL
Livestock/Animals on the Allotment
Plot. Tenants wishing to keep
animals on their allotment plot must
first submit to the Allotments
Administrator at Hartlepool Borough
Council, full details of the type and
number of animals they would like
permission to keep on the plot (yellow
paper).

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The Allotment Team will consider the request and may decline applications to keep certain animals or request a revision of numbers of animals kept on the plot, where it is felt inappropriate.

Only when tenants have fully satisfied the requirements and conditions deemed necessary by the Allotment Team, will they be provided with written permission to keep the agreed animals on the plot.

All registrations are required to be confirmed each year at the beginning of April; requests for amendments to written permissions that have previously been given will require submission of a written request to the Allotments Administrator at Hartlepool Borough Council for consideration by the Allotments Team.

Specifically, the Allotment Team requires all tenants to submit the following information:-

- Complete details of the numbers and type of animals the tenant is requesting permission to house on the allotment plot;
- If tenants cannot be clear or precise about the exact number of each type of animals, they are requested to indicate a maximum number of each type of animal proposed to be kept on the allotment plot.
- 3.2.5.2 Dogs on Allotments.

Tenants are advised that the overnight kennelling of dogs on allotments is to be gradually phased out. Initially, this is likely to take the form of no further tenants being given permission to keep dogs overnight on plots. Existing tenants with permission are likely not to see this permission renewed upon natural death, or permanent removal by the tenant, of any existing dogs which currently have permission. In all cases, the Council reserves the right to revise any existing permissions and the gradual phasing out of permissions should circumstances require it.

Dogs should not be a source of nuisance (barking/howling etc.). Minimum enforcement practice in cases of nuisance usually rescinds any existing permission to keep the problem dog on the allotment.

The use of allotments for the purpose of dog breeding is not acceptable and any reported cases will be referred to the Animal Welfare Team of the Environmental Health Unit.

It is a requirement to keep dogs on a lead or under close control so they do not stray onto other plots. No guard dogs are permitted on allotment plots.

Tenants must ensure the responsible removal and appropriate disposal of dog faeces.

- 3.2.5.3 Fully Restricted Sites. No animals (with the exception of registered bee hives) are to be kept on the following sites:-
  - Briarfields
  - Haswell Avenue
  - Olive Street
  - Thompson Grove
  - Waverly Terrace
  - Woodcroft

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All other sites will be kept under review to ensure the presence of livestock does not become a nuisance.

- 3.2.5.4 Types of Animals. On those allotment sites where certain animals are currently allowed, the following general restrictions apply:-
  - (a) Generally permitted animals:-
    - Chickens (although cockerels are restricted to certain sites)
    - Rabbits
    - Pigeons
    - Bees (only registered hives)

An animal registration form still needs to be submitted by the tenant for consideration by the Allotments Team and written permission needs to have subsequently been given.

- (b) Cockerels are banned from the following sites:-
  - Brierton
  - Chester Road
  - Greatham
  - Station Lane

All other sites will be kept under review to ensure the presence of cockerels does not become a nuisance to neighbouring properties.

- (c) All hoofed animals are banned, e.g. goats, pigs, sheep and horses/ponies.
- (d) Other small animals:- In general, no other small animals are permitted to be kept, housed or stabled on allotment sites.
  Tenants with a desire to keep any

other type of small animal on a plot should ask the Allotment Team about its suitability by submitting details on the animal registration form. Reasonable requests will be considered on a case by case basis and, if appropriate, specific temporary permission granted to the tenant.

In all cases of animals on allotments, it is the duty of the plot holder to ensure:-

- the animals are pre-registered with the Council (yellow form);
- that numbers of animals kept do not exceed those agreed by the Council;
- the animals are kept in good health and welfare conditions;
- that the animals do not cause a danger or nuisance to others.

## Promotion of Good Allotment Care

- 3.2.6.1 Contamination from Carpets. The use of carpets as a weed suppressant on sites is banned.
- 3.2.6.2 Contamination of Plots. It is not permitted to bring rubbish, hazardous materials or problematic disposal items onto plots for storage or burial. The following list is not exhaustive, but illustrates items that are not acceptable: asbestos, animal carcases, broken panes of glass, white goods: fridges, freezers, washing machines, dryers, cookers, TV's etc., mattresses, scrap metal, scrap plastic, carpets, household and commercial waste; items such as motor vehicles or parts there-of, waste oil containers and other liquids and

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canisters that are not expressly for use in growing vegetables, fruit or flowers. If in doubt, do not bring it onto site.

3.2.6.3 Recycling/Rubbish. The tenant shall keep the allotment plot and the surrounding area clear of litter, refuse, or other rubbish.

Tenants are encouraged to recycle and/or re-use material in an environmentally friendly manner, but only strictly for the purposes of direct horticultural care of their plot. Waste recycling centres are not permitted on allotment plots. Tenants are not allowed to bring onto the allotment plot general rubbish for the purposes of disposal. Any non-recyclable items generated by an allotment plot should be taken to the nearest appropriate local amenity site.

The tenant shall not deposit or permit to be deposited on the allotment plot, any refuse or decaying matter (except manure and compost in such quantities as may reasonably be required for the use in the cultivation of the allotment plot) or place any refuse or matter elsewhere on any adjoining allotment plot or site.

- 3.2.6.4 Composting. The tenant shall maintain compost heaps in a tidy condition and they must be in proportion to the size of plot, for example, for a 253 square metres (302 square yards) plot, the heap should not exceed 5 cubic metres (6.5 cubic yards) in size.
- 3.2.6.5 Water Supply. The tenant shall not waste or contaminate the water supply.

The tenant must not interfere with any water supply for the use of all tenants.

The Council may shut off the water supply when it deems necessary, including for the purposes of emptying the pipes owing to frost or any other cause.

■ 3.2.6.6 Chemicals/Pesticides.
Tenants should ensure that any chemicals and/or pesticides are applied in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and be approved products. Tenants should ensure that when spraying, it is not allowed to drift onto paths or other tenant's allotment plots.

## Improving the Visual Impact of Allotment Plots

- **3.2.7.1 External Fence.** No structures to be attached or supported by external fencing. Where this is currently the case, plot holders will be expected to make arrangements to rectify the situation when external fencing replacement or maintenance is undertaken.
- 3.2.7.2 Building Control in Relation to Structures on Allotment Plots.

The tenant shall not, without prior written consent of the Council's Allotment Team, erect on the allotment plot any dwelling house, chalet, tool house, shed, greenhouse, summer house, fences, compost bays, gates or any other building or structure whatsoever. This directive includes replacement or renewals of existing structures on plots.

If the Council's Allotment Team gives consent to any building or structure, it may be subject to additional

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



conditions, materials or position as imposed by the Council's Planning Department.

3.2.7.3 Responsibility for **Structures**. Structures (and their foundations) need to be capable of being removed from the plot before the tenancy is surrendered.

The Council will, if sufficient notice is given, endeavour at the request of a departing tenant when securing a new tenant to offer the prospective tenant responsibility for taking over any existing structures on a plot.

If a structure is not removed by the tenant surrendering the plot they may be subject to pay for costs incurred in safely removing the structure.

Any structures erected on an allotment plot by the tenant (or previous tenants in the case of structures passed on to new tenants) are the responsibility of the current tenant. They should be well maintained and in a safe and serviceable condition that does not pose a danger to themselves, other users or visitors of the allotment site, the public or neighbouring land owners.

3.2.7.4 The Process, Which MUST be Completed BEFORE Starting any Construction, for Requesting Permission to Erect a Structure on an Allotment Plot. Tenants wishing to erect any structure must first submit to the Allotments Team at Hartlepool Borough Council, full details of the proposed structure (blue paper).

The Allotment Team will consider the request and may decline applications

to erect structures which would not be suitable or request a revision of proposals, where it is felt inappropriate, as it does not follow the quidance provided.

Only when tenants have satisfied the requirements and conditions deemed necessary by the Allotment Team, will they be provided with written permission to erect a particular structure on the allotment plot. This written approval may stipulate the structures removal by the tenant at end of agreement.

The written approval could also, in some circumstances, require a refundable non-removal payment guarantee to be paid to the Council. for example, when a disproportionately large structure is proposed, that would make substantial areas of the plot difficult to bring back into cultivation.

Specifically, the Allotment Team requires all tenants to consider the following criteria that must be met for any proposed structure and submit relevant information in their application to the Council's Allotment Team.

#### Structure Criteria

All renewals and all proposed new structures on allotments need written permission from the Council's Allotment Team. Tenants proposing to renew existing structures or construct a new structure, must meet the following criteria, details of which should be provided on the 'Structures' form (blue paper):-

#### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### 3.2.7.5 Area of Plot Occupied by Structures

- Ideally, new tenants are advised a minimum of two thirds (⅔) of plot should be available for open land cultivation.
- Proportion of remaining third (1/3) would include compost, paths structures (greenhouses/sheds), storage, pigeon coups, animal runs etc
- There should be at least 1 metre spacing between any structure and an external allotment fence for maintenance. No structures should be affixed to an external allotment fence.
- No individual structure can exceed 30 square metres (36 square yards). Building with less than 2 metres (6½ feet) gaps between them would be considered as one structure.

#### 3.2.7.6 Height

- Ground based single storey structure.
- Maximum height to eaves 1.82 metres (6 feet).
- Maximum height at ridge from ground level 2.74 metres (9 feet).
- **3.2.7.7 Foundations for Proposed Structures.** As with other aspects of the proposed structure, a tenant may be required to remove (or pay for the removal of) foundations at the end of a tenancy. For this reason, concrete foundations should not be used; wood or paving slabs might be a more appropriate alternative.

#### 3.2.7.8 Materials

- Reclaimed or Recycled
  Materials. The Allotments Team
  will need detailed information
  about what will be used and how it
  will affect external appearance.
  For example, old doors used as
  external walls are likely to be
  unacceptable.
- New Materials. In the case of wood, for example, these are likely to be acceptable, but again some details about the external appearance of the finished structure will be required by the Allotment Team.
- Brick and Block Work. All structures need to be easily removable at end of tenancy and for this reason, brick and block work is not acceptable.
- 3.2.7.9 Roofing. The roof of a structure tends to have the largest visual impact outside of allotment site. As a consequence particular emphasis is put on achieving a visually sensitive roofing solution. For example, a felted wooden roof would be generally acceptable. Metal sheeting might be considered as long as painted, for example, green/black/dark colours.
- 3.2.7.10 Internal Fencing (This Section Only Applies Where New External Fencing has been Installed to the Perimeter of the Whole Allotment Site, e.g. Waverley Terrace). In order to promote natural surveillance, the following guidance will apply on these types of allotment site to plot holders considering new and replacement internal fencing:-

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



- Internal fencing, if utilised, to be no higher than 1.22 metres (4 feet) high from mean allotment ground level.
- Barbed or razor wire must NOT be used anywhere on or around the allotment plot.
- Examples of potentially acceptable materials:-
  - Wooden post, rail;
  - Wooden post, rail and pales;
  - Wooden post and four strands of galvanised 4mm (¼inch) diameter plain wire equally spaced up posts;
  - Wooden post and four strands of galvanised 4mm (¼inch) diameter plain wire equally spaced up posts with rabbit netting;
  - Post and woven hazel/willow hurdles.
- 3.2.7.11 Use of Structure. Any proposed structure for an allotment plot must have a clear horticultural purpose in relation to the cultivation, maintenance of the plot, or welfare of permitted animals (for which separate permission to keep animals on the plot must be obtained from the Council's Allotment Team).

The Council's Allotment Team will require details from the applicant about why the structure is required and what it will be used for, specifically:-

 Detailed of Proposed Use, What Materials Will Potentially be Stored Within Structure. For example, is the structure potentially for use to store:-

- Essential low risk garden tools/materials for use on the plot only - this should be generally acceptable;
- Potentially hazardous liquids and gas containers these materials have restricted levels and must be for use in cultivation of plot. The proposed structure will need to reflect the safe storage requirements of these substances. Separate registration of the substances with the Council's Allotment Team will be required for fire risk management purposes.
- Storage of Small Trailers. These can only be housed with written permission from the Council's Allotment Team and will, if permission granted, form part of third (1/3) non cultivated area.
- Heating of Structures. Fires are strictly restricted on plots, if the applicant has the intention of using solid fuel heating within structure, this would need to be identified in the application to the Council's Allotment Team with details of proposed fuel and stove/chimney structure.

It should be noted that Hartlepool is a smokeless zone and that only smokeless fuels would be permissible for use in stoves.

Restriction Prohibiting
 Connection to Mains Gas or
 Electricity Services. All
 structures on allotments have
 general restrictions prohibiting

#### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



connection to mains gas or electricity services.

#### **Enforcement**

■ 3.2.8.1 Power to Inspect Plots. The allotments are Council land and any officer of the Council is entitled, at any time, when directed by the Allotment Team to enter and inspect an allotment garden and ensure compliance with rules and conditions of tenancy. Tenants are advised that photographs of plots are a routine part of the inspection process and these pictures are retained by the Council's Allotment Team for future reference. In this, the Council complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Hindrance or harassment of a duly appointed officer in carrying out inspections of the plot could result in an immediate Notice to Quit the plot being issued.

- **3.2.8.2 Removal of Property.** Where a Notice to Quit has been issued by the Council and structures on the plot are allowed to remain, the tenant must ensure that any structures on the plot are emptied of all contents and any padlocks removed. Failure to do so may result in the Council removing and destroying any padlock and contents.
- CCTV. Tenants are advised that mobile CCTV cameras can and will be deployed by the Council and other authorised agencies, as necessary, to monitor and gather information about activities on allotment sites for enforcement purposes.

#### Tenancy

3.2.9.1 Termination by Tenant. The tenant may give up the allotment plot by giving 28 days' notice in writing to the Council's Allotment Team (or less if agreed). Where a deposit has been paid, it will be refunded upon receipt of a request, in writing, from the tenant to the Council's Allotment Team. Refund of the deposit is dependent upon satisfactory inspection of the plot demonstrating that the tenant has not breached the terms and conditions.

Where the tenant gives up the allotment plot in accordance with clause above, he/she must ensure that any shed on the allotment plot, for which permission to remain has been granted, is vacated and emptied of all contents and any padlock(s) removed. Where the shed is vacated before the expiry of 28 days' notice, the tenant must notify the Council's Allotment Team immediately. Should the tenant fail to vacate and empty the shed as directed, the Council shall remove and destroy any padlock(s) and any items left by the tenant.

3.2.9.2 Termination by the Council. Where there is a proven breach of tenancy agreement, the Council has the option to, but is not obliged to, issue a waming in the first instance to a tenant. It may be that the Council elects to forego a warning and immediately issue a Notice to Quit for certain breaches or repeated breaches of tenancy.

The Council may require the tenant to vacate the allotment site by:-

Re-entering the allotment site after providing a Notice to Quit with 28

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



days' notice in writing to the tenant if the tenant has not paid rent, has not maintained the garden in a proper state of cultivation or has breached any term or condition of the tenancy or has become bankrupt or entered into an arrangement or agreement with his/her creditors.

- Re-entering the allotment site after providing three months' notice in writing to the tenant if the land is required for building, mining or any other industrial purpose (or for roads or sewers necessary in connection with any of those purposes) or if the land is required by Council for the purpose (other than agriculture) for which the land was acquired by the Council or has been appropriated under any statutory provision; or
- Providing a notice in writing with twelve months or longer notice expiring on or before the 6 April or on or after 29 September in any year.
- Where the Council holds an allotment site under a lease, on determination of that lease arrangement, the tenancy of the allotment plot will be terminated. The Council is not obliged to issue a Notice to Quit.
- Where a Notice to Quit has been issued by the Council, the tenant must ensure that any shed on the allotment plot is vacated and emptied of all contents and any padlock(s) removed. The tenant must immediately notify the Council's Allotment Team when

the shed has been vacated and padlock(s) removed. If the tenant fails to vacate and empty the shed the Council shall remove and destroy any padlock(s) and contents.

- 3.2.9.3 Apportionment of Rent. In the event of the termination of the tenancy by the Council for whatever reason, the tenant shall be liable to pay rent up to the date of such termination or re-entry.
- 3.2.9.4 Written Correspondence. Any written correspondence, for example, letters, notices, forms etc., from the Council to the tenant, shall be sent by post to the tenant at his/her last known address or left in a conspicuous place on the allotment plot.

Any written correspondence from the tenant to the Council must be delivered or sent by post to the Council's Allotment Team at Hartlepool Borough Council.

- 3.2.9.5 Change of Address. The tenant must give written notice of any change of address within one month of such change. If the Council does not receive notification from the tenant and any correspondence to the tenant's address is returned undelivered, the Council may terminate the allotment tenancy.
- **3.2.9.6 Death of Tenant.** The tenancy of the Allotment shall terminate one month after the death of the tenant. The tenancy will not automatically transfer to a next-of-kin; a request for a transfer will have to be made, in writing, to the Council's Allotments Team.

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Tenants are advised that no human or animal ashes should be scattered on the allotment plot/site.

#### 3.2.9.7 Disputes Between Tenants. In the event of any dispute between tenants the decision of the authorised Council Officer shall be final.

#### 3.2.9.8 Contact Details:-

#### **Address**

Parks & Countryside Section,
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Department,
Church Street Offices,
1 Church Street,
Hartlepool.
TS24 7DS

#### **Email**

allotments@hartlepool.gov.uk

#### **Telephone Number**

01429 523406

#### Website

www.hartlepool.gov.uk/allotments



### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

3.3 Health and Safety

Review risk management procedures for allotments.

It is proposed to continue to improve Health and Safety, both for tenants, volunteers and staff by carrying out the following:

- 3.3.1 Risk assessments for allotment hazards and activities as necessary.
- 3.3.2 Work in partnership towards further investment on sites where it is most needed to improve security, paths, etc and removal of hazardous rubbish (and take action against those who dump it) see 3.3
- 3.3.3 Health and safety training and advice will be delivered when need is identified for individuals (including Site Representatives) who carry out maintenance work on allotments and who work with volunteers.

Level Two objectives
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

#### 3.4 Quality Assurance

Improve Allotment Infrastructure to achieve Quality Mark of 79% across all sites.

The PPG17 assessment of all sites in 2007 identified a number of sites that did not meet the proposed standard of 79%.

The sites identified in the 2007 assessment were:

- · Station Lane.
- Brierton.
- Greatham.
- Nicholson's Field,
- Waverley Terrace.
- Briarfields.
- 3.4.1 Priority should be given to these sites to improve the quality marks in order for them to meet the standard of 79%. Key areas for improvement include:

Improving Security of Sites: 3 Sites
Cultivation Level of Site 2 Sites
Number of neglected sites 2 Sites
Car Parking Provision 2 Sites

The standards will be assessed on a yearly basis as part of the mass inspection programme and reported to the Portfolio Holder and allotment associations

3.4.2 Other sites will be maintained at a level to keep them at or above 2007 standards.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



#### Level Three objective

Would like to deliver but only if suitable opportunities and resources can be identified

#### 3.5 Tenant Surveys

Undertake surveys of existing tenants, future tenants on waiting list, and exit surveys of tenant relinquishing their plots.

Tenant surveys are a valuable tool to find out where the allotment service is improving and where the service is still in need of improvement.

- **3.5.1** Develop a suitable, accessible survey form to gather feedback on the allotment service.
- 3.5.2 Instigate exit surveys of tenants relinquishing their plots. Expand to include existing tenants when resources allow, and then ultimately investigate the desires and expectations of future tenants on waiting list.

#### Level Three objective

Would like to deliver but only if suitable opportunities and resources can be identified

#### 3.6 Allotments Online

Make allotment documentation available online.

It is hoped to develop an online allotment resource for tenants with such things as: FAQ's, Good allotment guide, tenancy documentation.

- **3.6.1** Provide access to tenancy documentation online.
- **3.6.2** Develop in partnership with local allotment associations and input from national bodies a 'Good allotment guide' and provide access to it online.
- **3.6.3** Help facilitate in partnership with local allotment associations and national bodies an online Hartlepool Allotment Gardeners FAQ's forum.

As part of the wider Hartlepool Borough Council web site review and development of central corporate booking system consider the following developments.

■ **3.6.4** Development of an online allotment plot payments and administration process.

#### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Aim	Title
4	Allotment Crime Prevention

The Council's Allotment Team work in close partnership with the Police, Neighbourhood Managers and other agencies to help allotment tenants reduce their vulnerability to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.

The Police and the Council encourage allotment tenants to report any instances of crime or antisocial behaviour to the Police. Unfortunately both seem traditionally to be significantly under reported to the police by allotment tenants which can consequently affect the ability to task police resources.

Hartlepool's allotments are not very different, in both layout and crime issues, from many local authority sites in the north east and the police have researched how other districts are addressing the perceived crime issues. As a consequence many of the following objectives reflect the advice and guidance this research has provided.

The following section brings together as a summary elements of the Allotment Development Strategy, which are discussed in detail elsewhere in the document, but which have a bearing on allotment crime prevention.

Level One objective
Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

4.1 Rules and guidance on being a Hartlepool Allotment Tenant that assist in reducing the vulnerability of allotments to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.

The new tenancy agreement is the principle tool to help and encourage tenants to support the Police, Council and other agencies reduce the vulnerability of allotments to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.

The tenancy agreement is discussed in 3.2 with the following clauses specifically included to address allotment crime prevention:

#### General:

■ 3.2.1.6 Unauthorised or illegal use of plot. The tenant shall not use the allotment plot, or allow it to be used, for the purposes of any trade and business.

The operation of a business from the plot is banned and the bringing on to a plot of produce for the purpose of selling on is not permitted.

The storage of goods or disposal of business waste on plots is not permitted. Should it become necessary to take enforcement action Trading Standards, the Environmental Enforcement Unit and the Police will be notified as appropriate.

■ 3.2.1.10 Vehicles on allotment sites. Vehicles brought onto allotment sites are the responsibility of their owners; the Council will not be responsible for

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



any damage, injury or theft associated with the use of such, and owners of vehicles used in this manner should ensure they have adequate motor insurance including third party cover for this type of use.

It is not permitted to use allotment plots for parking or garaging of vehicles.

Plot users are requested to park considerately and not block access ways to adjacent properties or routes that might be required by emergency vehicles.

Allotment tracks and pathways are generally not suitable for motor vehicle traffic. Access too many allotment tracks is barred to plot holders vehicles with pedestrian access only allowed. The exception is emergency vehicles or vehicles required for site maintenance and the emergency services are provided with keys to open these gates if necessary.

Should plot holders bring a motor vehicle on to an allotment site for any reason they should limit their speed to 5mph and drive with due care and consideration stopping to allow pedestrians and other users to pass safely where necessary.

#### **Allotment Security:**

3.2.2.1 Allotment Security. The Council's Allotment Team work in close partnership with the police, Neighbourhood Forums and other agencies to help allotment tenants reduce their vulnerability to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.

- 3.2.2.2 Security Gates. In partnership, the Council has secured funding over recent years to install locked access gates to allotment sites across the borough to which tenants are issued keys. These gates should be closed and secured immediately after passing through them, either when entering or exiting the site.
- 3.2.2.3 Reporting crime and antisocial behaviour. Allotment tenants are encouraged to report any instances of crime or antisocial behaviour on allotments to the police. Under reporting can affect the ability to task police resources to any new issues.

Tenant's have a significant role to play in reducing the chance of becoming a target for crime e.g. thinking carefully about what equipment/ machinery is brought on to sites, how sites are used - locking security gates, development of sites to assist natural surveillance, early and accurate crime logging/reporting to the police etc..

■ 3.2.2.4 Keys. For many years now the Allotment's Team has provided Police and PCSO's with keys to access allotment sites and the initiative is seeing regular patrols of sites being initiated where a concentration of incidents have been reported.

Locked security gates are a front line defence against criminal activity and plot holders are asked to keep keys safe and secure. The Tenant is responsible for the activities of all registered partners and visitors to the plot.

#### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



- 3.2.2.5 Property marking.
  - Hartlepool's allotments are not very different, in both layout and crime issues, from many local authority sites in the north east and the police have done research looking at how other districts are addressing the perceived crime issues. Out of this process was highlighted the importance of using micro-dot marking of property on allotment sites - the modern equivalent of property marking pen. Just as important is the prominent signage on those sites by tenants e.g. stickers on sheds, greenhouses, gates etc., to warn potential thieves of the preventative actions that have been taken by plot holders.
- 3.2.2.6 Personal safety. Tenants and visitors to allotment sites are reminded to pay due regard to their own personal health and safety and others who may be around them.
- 3.2.2.7 Access. The tenant, registered partners or visitors shall not enter the allotment site except by the provided tracks, paths and associated gates. Tenants are not allowed to install additional entrances or gates without prior written permission of the Council's Allotment Team. Tenants are also not allowed to modify or interfere with the padlocks, fences, gates or any other security provision made by the Council.
- 3.2.2.8 Hours of Use. The Council reserves the right to delegate authority to any appropriate policing or security body to challenge the activities of any person found on any allotment site at any hour of the day.

To help combat crime and antisocial behaviour persons found on an allotment site or plot outside of those times nomal for the maintenance of an allotment can expect to be challenged. As a general guide in the summer this would be between the hours of 5.00am and 10.00pm daily. During the winter months due to reduced daylight these 'normal' hours might be considerably shortened.

This particular area of the rules and guidance acknowledges that some tenants may have animal welfare duties and these may extend beyond the 'normal hours'. In these particular circumstances tenants can access their plots outside these hours but they should expect occasionally to be asked to explain their presence to police officers, PCSO's and other authorised security personnel that should encounter them on site in the hours of darkness.

# Fire Safety- Storage and handling of fuel for heating and machinery:

Fire and explosions are a real risk on plots and pose specific dangers to the emergency services tasked to deal with them. In order to reduce risk to the public and emergency services the following restrictions will be operating:

3.2.3.1 Restriction on gas cylinders. Only canisters containing LPG are to be used on plots for heating and lighting. No other type of gas cylinder is permitted. The maximum canister size is 15kg of which only two canisters (be they full or empty or any stage between) are permitted on a plot at any

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



one time. All tenants with pressurised gas cylinders on plots are required to:

- Register them with the Council;
- Ensure they are stored correctly and securely;
- Ensure they as plot holder have relevant third party insurance to cover their presence on site.
- 3.2.3.2 Restriction on inflammable liquids. Maximum inclusive total of 20 litres of inflammable liquid (paraffin, petrol, diesel, methylated spirits etc.) can be stored by tenants on plots. All inflammable liquids must be in containers specifically designed for their storage with appropriate, visible and readable safety warnings on the outside of the container. Containers to be kept in adequately secure and ventilated circumstances. Fuel in machinery or heaters is not included in this storage total but should not exceed an additional inclusive total of 10 litres for the plot.

# Being Considerate Neighbours:

The Council as Landlord expects all its tenants to act in a considerate and responsible manner to all neighbours both plot holders and the neighbouring public. The following areas have persistently generated complaints and the following restrictions will be in force:

■ 3.2.4.1 Restriction on bonfires.

Bonfires only allowed during the last week in March; and first and second week in November each year. As a general rule all suitable materials to be composted or in exceptional

circumstances after agreement with Council's Allotment Team disposed of by green waste skip.

When burning rubbish on the allotment plot, the tenant must consider the effect of the smoke on other tenants and occupiers of neighbouring premises.

Tenants should not light any bonfires or cause any smoke nuisance as defined by the Environmental Protection Act 1990, section 80. The tenant may be subject to independent enforcement action under the terms of this Act if they disregard this condition. If the tenant is found guilty they could in addition have their tenancy terminated.

The tenant must not burn the following materials on the allotment plot:

- Rubber/Plastics/Foam/Paint;
- Any material originating outside of the allotment site/plot;
- Any material producing black smoke;
- Any other hazardous material that could cause environmental damage.
- The tenant must not use any flammable material, for example petrol, to assist burning.

Where requested by a Council Officer, the tenant must stop burning immediately.

3.2.4.2 Dogs – Rules pertaining to tenants, registered partners and visitors bringing dogs on allotments when they visit plots. It is a requirement to keep dogs on a lead or under close control so they do not

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



stray onto other plots or disrupt other site users.

Tenants must ensure the responsible removal and appropriate disposal of dog faeces.

Visiting dogs should not be a source of nuisance (barking/howling etc.) whilst on site.

- 3.2.4.3 Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour. The tenant shall not cause or permit to be caused any of the following:
  - A gathering on the allotment plot or site to consume alcohol or facilitate drug use.
  - Use any building or shed on the allotment plot for residential or sleeping purposes;
  - Bring firearms or air rifles onto the allotments:

If a tenant is found to be connected with any of these above activities on an allotment plot it will result in their tenancy being terminated.

Similarly if substantive evidence is presented that a tenant or persons invited on to a site by the tenant have been involved in anti-social behaviour the Council may refuse to provide them with an allotment plot. These activities might include:

- Nuisance, annoyance or damage to the allotment plot or to the tenant or owner of any adjoining or neighbouring premises.
- The depositing of any refuse on or obstructing any path set out for the use of allotment plot holders;

- Trespass on other tenants' allotments.
- 3.2.4.4 Children. The tenant shall ensure that any children brought on to the allotment site are accompanied and supervised by the tenant or other responsible adult.
- 3.2.4.5 Harassment and threatening behaviour. Tenants who harass or threaten neighbours, officers or the public can be evicted. Tenants are reminded they are responsible for the activities of all registered partners and visitors to the plot.

All issues should be documented/ recorded (date, time, description of persons/vehicles present, description of incident) by those affected and reported promptly to the police.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objectives
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

4.2 Development objectives that assist in reducing the vulnerability of allotments to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.

The strategy recognises that many of Hartlepool's allotment sites would benefit from physical changes to help reduce further their potential vulnerability to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour. This work will need to be done in partnership with Associations and outside agencies to access and attract appropriate resources and support.

The following objectives contained within the Allotment Development Strategy under the aims of 'Good Administration' (objective 3.6.2); and 'Environmental Sustainability' (objective 6.4.1) have the potential to contribute to crime prevention on allotments:

- 3.6.2 Work in partnership towards further investment on sites where it is most needed to improve security, paths, etc and removal of hazardous rubbish (and take action against those who dump it) see 3.3
- Allotments team will work in partnership with allotment associations to establish more sustainable approaches to allotment security through the planting of native hedgerow external boundaries to allotment sites. These planted hedgerows can be managed by trimming and hedgelaying to gradually provide a dense, secure natural barrier

for sites that will support a rich diversity of wildlife.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Aim	Title
5	Localised Allotment Management

The Allotment Development Strategy recognises the importance of community prioritisation, or neighbourhood based management. It is for this reason that for example Allotment Associations would be asked to contribute to the decision making process that identified priorities for investment on each particular site.

To support this concept many of the possible longer-term developmental avenues proposals put forward in the strategy look to support the devolution of day-to-day management to strong, inclusive, forward thinking Associations so that local needs can be better met.

Later in the strategy service resourcing is discussed and one way of facilitating the funding aspirations of sites proposes that Associations could chose at some point in the future to raise greater funds from allotment rents and reinvest it on their sites; at present approximately two thirds of their running costs come from Council budgets with the remainder being rent.

The following objectives look at how the relationships between Allotment Associations, the Council, and other agencies can be sustained. It is recognised that no one partner, including the Council, is able to undertake or resource all aspirations for allotments. It is hoped though that by working together with Associations and other agencies, and them taking a lead in some circumstances, the Council can continue to target its limited resources to support initiatives where it is most needed.

Level One objective
Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

5.1 In partnership with representative Allotment Associations work to improve the visual appearance and perception of sites.

Support should be given to associations who are attempting to improve sites through external funding. Policing of allotment activities should be undertaken wherever possible in partnership with allotment associations.

There are many advantages in having a single, representative (i.e. the large percentage of plot holders on a site are members), democratic and inclusive allotment association representing a site.

Associations are involved in sites on a day to day basis and have a desire to make their sites secure, functional and attractive places for people to come and enjoy their pastime. They are also well placed to attract funding into the site through grants or neighbourhood funding.

Many sites suffer from poor relationships with local residents, due to unsightly fencing, buildings or issues of anti social behaviour, such as barking dogs, noisy cockerels or fly tipping. Many of these issues can lead to complaints to the Council. This is particularly prevalent in the sites that are on railway approaches (Nicholson's Field and Station lane) where people travelling into Hartlepool are faced with unsightly allotments as they approach the town.

It is proposed to support this objective by:

#### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



- 5.1.1 Regular liaison between the Authority and Allotment Associations. Encouraging the sharing of knowledge about opportunities for funding or in-kind support to achieve improvements.
- 5.1.2 Development in partnership of prioritised site specific improvement wish-lists. Supporting allotment associations in the development of prioritised, realistic action plans for site improvement that can be used in targeting outside funding and resource opportunities. Suggested format is a photographic audit and map based site action plan. Targets for action would include:
  - investment in secure fencing,
  - removal and replacement where necessary of:
    - inappropriate internal fences,
    - buildings and storage structures.
- 5.1.3 Supporting associations in applications and improvements delivery. When available providing targeted assistance in application development and if successful assistance in project management and delivery on site of improvements. Taking account of, and where possible modifying, pre-planned annual work delivery demands to accommodate 'new' work load on officers.
- 5.1.4 Mass inspection programme.

  Undertake a yearly mass inspection programme of allotment sites and plots to assist in the identification of issues and provide opportunities for coordinated responses, in partnership with allotment associations, to uphold and maintain appropriate standards.

Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

5.2 Explore Devolved Management arrangements in sites with active and well established Associations.

Support and encourage a movement towards greater devolved management; and continue to support those Associations who already have devolved management arrangements in place. Recognising in doing so there is likely to be a gradual progression over time for allotment sites from a position of dependence on the council to one of semi-autonomy. This process will likely require a considerable investment in time by council officers to facilitate.

During 2007, four new allotment associations were formed in sites where no such associations existed. These were Chester Road, Haswell Avenue, Nicholson's Field and Brierton (known as Rossmere Allotment Association). Throston was created in 2008. There are, however, sites where no such association exist namely Station Lane, Waverley Terrace as well as the three smaller sites Greatham, Olive Street and Thompson Grove.

The experience of Woodcroft Allotments undertaking devolved management of the site has been very successful. Woodcroft Allotments is a thriving association led site, which is very well managed and popular. The success of this pilot project and the positive impact that this has had on allotment gardening in the town has led to an interest in pursuing this form of management across other sites.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



It is important that once an association is managing a site under devolved management arrangements, that support is given to the committee in their development of the site. The Council will continue to act as a landlord to tenants and collect rent, issue wamings and notices as well as maintaining a waiting list. However, consideration and support will be given to those associations who wish to further increase the level of independence from the Council and become independent allotment providers, managing waiting lists, collecting rents and issuing notices etc.

It is proposed to support this objective by:

- 5.2.1 Gatekeepers. Encouraging allotment sites to nominate a person, or series of persons, to act as 'Gatekeepers' for information. These gatekeepers would be the principle point of contact that the council would approach as a first point of contact to disseminate consultation information relating to the site. These gatekeepers could also informally feedback to the allotments section.
- 5.2.2 Allotment Forums. For those sites without an allotment association it is proposed to convene a 'special' allotment forum when circumstances require canvassing the views of plot holders or site representatives on proposed substantial capital expenditure and changes to a site.
- 5.2.3 Allotment Associations.

  Provide advice and support to those sites interested in the setting up an allotment association. Foster a supportive environment which gradually allows those associations

who are interested to adopt responsibility for a range of duties under licence from the authority, under financial arrangements that release a proportion of rental income for this purpose.

• 5.2.4 Semi-autonomy. If circumstances arise that are suitably robust support suitably experienced allotment associations in leasing sites from the authority. The association would have the flexibility to arrange tenancy agreements and reinvest revenue, which it would manage, on maintenance, repair and capital items.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

#### 5.3 Improve relationships

Continue to improve the relationship between the Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Allotments Team and Site Representatives and Associations.

Achieved by carrying out the following:

- 5.3.1 Attend the allotment association's annual General Meeting once a year.
- **5.3.2** Hold one Site Representatives Forum meeting per annum for all of those allotment sites without an association. This will be held at a different location each year.
- 5.3.3 Self-managing Allotment Association Site Representatives will continue to be encouraged to carry out maintenance on our behalf.
- **5.3.4** Tenants will be encouraged to become 'Gatekeepers' that can begin to represent site interests on sites where there are currently no formal Site Representatives.
- 5.3.5 A Site Representatives Code of Conduct will be developed that incorporates issues such as health and safety, their duties etc.
- 5.3.6 Any future Capital Investment Programme will include leasing allotment association sites, and will involve detailed consultation with the associations on the requirements of their sites see 3.3.2





Aim	Title
6	Environmental sustainability

#### Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

# 6.1 Encourage composting and recycling on allotments

Allotments need to make a positive contribution towards environmental sustainability targets for Hartlepool. Activities that contribute to air pollution and damage fragile soil structures need to be replaced by appropriate composting and recycling.

As discussed earlier it has been common to encounter buried gas canisters, animal carcases, as bestos and other hazardous materials, glass from demolished green houses, caravans, fridges and freezers with CFC's present etc. The criminal element of society has also been found to have used hidden plots as 'chop-shops' for stolen vehicles and other goods. The resultant contamination of allotment soil has left sites unusable without extensive topsoil removal and replacement.

Bonfires in light of the disproportionate levels of complaints they generate from site neighbours, and the environmental and local atmospheric pollution issues that surround them, should no longer be considered an acceptable practice on Hartlepool allotments. Although in the past bonfires were seen as a valuable control measure for diseased plant material it is now widely accepted that this type of activity is not necessary if appropriate temperatures are achieved during the composting process. A great

deal of research on plant disease control and composting has been carried out by the Henry Doubleday Research Association (which now operates under the title Garden Organic).

- 6.1.1 Plot Level Composting.

  Allotment holders to make provision on plots to compost green waste see 3.2.4. for restrictions on bonfires.
- 6.1.2 Site Level Composting. On larger sites allotment section work with allotment associations and HBC Neighbourhood Services to investigate to practically of setting up on vacant allotment plots or in dedicated bays larger site composting facilities.

It is envisaged that these facilities could be used to compost municipal green wastes in addition to allotment material. Management of the composting process would be undertaken by HBC contractor — shredding material on an industrial scale with hired machinery, rowing up and turning to aerate as appropriate using tractor with frontend loader. This process would enable plot holders to improve the soil quality of their plots by the use of leaves and organic matter provided from council parks and other areas.

• 6.1.3 Site Level Compost Deliveries utilising town-wide green waste resource. The Council's domestic green waste is collected and processed in to a soil improver locally by an outside contractor. In the past the Allotments Team has brought and supplied topsoil to some problem plots. The intension is to only use composted soil improver in the future with the added benefits this can potentially

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



provide to soil drainage and organic improvement of allotment soils. This soil improver resource is also available to Allotment Associations and individuals who may wish to purchase directly.

- 6.1.4 Encourage plot holders to bring onto site only those items that are of use in allotment gardening.

  Through good administration, support and advice discourage hoarding, and to invite plot holders to think about how they will dispose of items before they bring them onto the allotments.
- 6.1.5 Pride in Hartlepool –
  Allotments Amnesty. In support of the work described in 6.1.3 organise in conjunction with an appropriate recycling contractor the provision of strictly controlled and manned skips and collection facilities on allotment sites to remove non-compostable materials such as glass, metal, wood, plastics and gas canisters.

Care must be taken to ensure that skips do not become a repository for hazardous wastes such as as bestos, garden chemicals and gas canisters.

After an appropriate period this facility would be phased out and strict enforcement of allotment tenancy agreements would be applied.

■ 6.1.6 Fly tipping. Respond quickly to acts of fly-tipping to ensure they do not propagate. Work with plot holders and police authority to ensure a watchful eye is kept on sites and wherever possible work with responsible agencies to secure prosecutions of offenders.

- opportunities. The Allotment team in partnership with allotment associations will look for, and when financially possible support, other sustainable recycling opportunities e.g. the provision of old wooden allotment site fencing for the creation of compost bins, and containers suitable for water collection.
- 6.1.8 Support the improvement of the visual appearance and aesthetics of allotment structures on plots. Look for opportunities, in partnership with Allotment Associations, to work with agencies such as colleges, centres for adults with special needs, skills development programmes, probation services, etc to utilise recycled materials such as liberated external allotment fencing. Set up programmes with such partners that would see them manufacture new shed and cold frame designs for use on plots.



### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

6.2 Encourage social and environmental responsibility.

Allotments need to make a positive contribution towards improved social and environmental responsibility targets for Hartlepool.

Allotments are a valuable tool in reducing carbon emissions for Hartlepool. Allotment growing reduces food transport costs - food miles; and encourages sustainable transport use like cycling and walking.

- **6.2.1 Gardening for health.** Work in partnership to develop and support initiatives that encourage greater community engagement in allotment gardening and the environmental and health benefits that can result.
- 6.2.2 Gardening courses for allotment tenants. In partnership research funding opportunities to run gardening courses on allotments to assist new and existing gardeners.
- 6.2.3 Promote organic gardening methods. It is recognised that methods of gardening should be a matter of choice for individuals. The alloments team in partnership with sympathetic local Allotment Associations will look to grow awareness of organic gardening methods through visiting speakers and short courses on allotments when opportunities arise and resources are available.

Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow

6.3 Water conservation.

Allotments need to make a positive contribution to water conservation.

The annual water bill paid by Parks and Countryside Hartlepool for the allotments was budgeted at £10,436 in 2008-09 an average of £10.31p per plot. At present there is no incentive for plot holders to manage use and conserve water.

- **6.3.1 Water charging.** In vestigate the feasibility of installing a network of internal water meters on larger allotment sites to sub-divide usage. The idea being to charge localised groups of plot holders an equal percentage of total water bill for that particular area. This measure would ideally be part of greater localised site management possibly via a level of devolved management to allotment associations. Potential exists to foster a group awareness of water usage. conservation measures and reinforce the importance of rapid leak reporting.
- 6.3.2 Support water conservation opportunities. In partnership with allotment associations will look for, and when financially possible support, other water conservation opportunities e.g. the provision of guttering and containers suitable for water collection.
- 6.3.3 Encourage the adoption of cultivation techniques that maximise water conservation. Where feasible provide guidance and training – see 6.2.3

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

6.4 Identify and manage areas for wildlife and conservation.

Allotments need to make a positive contribution to Hartlepool's Green Spaces by providing valuable wildlife corridors to link isolated areas and provide wildlife refuges in their own right.

The patchwork of uses that exists on allotment sites ensures that working allotments are valuable wildlife habitats. Allotments are an important urban habitat for species such as slow worms, badgers, foxes, amphibians, snakes, lizards, bats and a wide variety of birds.

- Allotments team will work in partnership with allotment associations to establish more sustainable approaches to allotment security through the planting of native hedgerow external boundaries to allotment sites. These planted hedgerows can be managed by trimming and hedgelaying to gradually provide a dense, secure natural barrier for sites that will support a rich diversity of wildlife.
- 6.4.2 Gardening with nature. The allotments team will work in partnership with allotment associations, the Authorities ecologist and Countryside Wardens to support the integration wildlife friendly approaches in allotment gardening.

Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

6.5 Neighbourhood Renewal and Planning Gain.

Regeneration of existing or creation of new allotment sites is allowed for in neighbourhood renewal schemes and new developments.

With the move towards smaller garden plots in new housing developments allotment renewal, and in some cases new allotments, need to be considered as part of improved green space provision in development proposals for Hartlepool.

Parks and Countryside Hartlepool. The Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Section will continue to work with external organisations and other council departments working towards creating a greener and more sustainable Hartlepool. To ensure that allotments remain an integral part of this vision it is intended intend to work more closely with the council's Neighbourhood Renewal Team to ensure that the regeneration of existing or creation of new allotment sites is allowed for in neighbourhood renewal schemes and new developments.

# Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Three objective
Would like to deliver but only if suitable
opportunities and resources can be identified

6.6 Toilets.

A lack of toilet facilities is an issue on allotments, particularly when encouraging women, families and Disabled people to use allotments.

Toilet supplied by mains water and sewage connections are not considered to be a sustainable way of addressing this issue, and would exert a considerable pressure on revenue budgets. Compost toilets have been successfully utilised by some Authorities and pioneered at Briarfields Allotments during 2008-09.

■ 6.6.1 Research and investigate the feasibility of using composting toilets on allotment sites. Provide information and support to sites where there is an allotment association which is willing to maintain them.

#### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Aim	Title
7	Appropriate service resourcing

Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

7.1 Building proactive Allotment Team.

Create a dynamic, flexible and proactive core allotments team with a Service Development component.

The strategy offers the Authority and potential partners a core sustainable vision for the service provision. This vision is tempered by resourcing issues, some of which have the potential to be lessened through partnership.

The strategy firstly needs the allotment team to move to a **defensible service position** where the service can effectively police the status-quo, unfortunately if it stays at this position it will likely continue to see overall infrastructure dedine. This move to a defensible service position will require:

7.1.1 Allotment Administrator. The Parks and Countryside Section needs to secure through the Business Transformation Process the continued services of the highly experienced Allotment Administrator from the Admin Support Services Department.

The Allotment Development Strategy provides a case for the adoption of a proactive service delivery stance by the Authority. A more **proactive service** delivery stance would require extra human resource input for example:

■ 7.1.2 A second Allotment Technical Officer appointment. The Allotment Development Strategy Progression Table outlines the service improvements that would be possible with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Technical Officer.

In order for the allotments service to reach the higher aspirations of the Strategy it is necessary to considers ways of building in capacity for 'allotments service growth/development' within the team. The Parks and Countryside Section provides a model example of how this developmental element can be built into a staffing structure. Front line Technical Officers are supported by a single service area Development Officer who oversees service implementation and development through partnerships. Two example options are presented as a way forward:

- 7.1.3.1 Option 1: Allotments

  Development Officer appointment.

  For filling much the same role as the Parks Development Officer this post would aim to maintain and grow service quality through partnership and synergies with the work of other agencies; whilst overseeing and coordinating service implementation.
- 7.1.3.2 Option 2: Parks Development Officer role expansion with associated appointment of 2<sup>nd</sup> Parks and Games Spaces Technical Officer. This option would meet the aims of role expansion and also provide more appropriate front line service level staffing. It would mean the Parks Development Officer post holder was required to act-down less and could concentrate more on service development, partnership opportunities and sourcing of outside funding.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level One objective

Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package

7.2 Resourcing a proactive Allotment Team.

Resource the allotments team to achieve a Service Development component within the Allotment Team.

The Allotment Development Strategy recognises the financial challenge the Authority faces in delivering its services. The strategy has outlined current resource considerations. It emphasises how through proactive support of the allotment team and the policies and procedures it has, and will develop in the future, we can all work to ensure the finite resources, both human and financial, are better used to achieve 'best value'.

To achieve a defensible service provision where it is accepted that we are likely to continue to see overall infrastructure decline and the allotments team is for all intensive purposes policing the statusquo, the following would be required:

■ 7.2.1 Financial support for the embedding of a full-time Allotment Administrator within the Parks and Countryside section. The Section needs to secure through the Business Transformation Process the continued services of the highly experienced Allotment Administrator from the Admin Support Services Department.

The Allotment Development Strategy provides a case for the adoption of a proactive service delivery stance by the Authority. A more proactive service delivery stance would require extra human resource input **for example**:

■ 7.1.2 Financial support for the embedding of a second Allotment Technical Officer. The Allotment Development Strategy: Objective Delivery Table outlines the service improvements that would be possible.

In order for the allotments service to reach the higher aspirations of the Strategy it is necessary to considers ways of building in capacity for 'allotments service development' within the team. The Parks and Countryside Section provides a model example of how this developmental element can be built into a staffing structure. Front line Technical Officers are supported by a single service area Development Officer who oversees service implementation and development through partnerships. Two <a href="mailto:example">example</a> options are presented as a way forward:

- 7.2.3.1 Option 1: Financial support for Allotments Development Officer. This post would aim to maintain and grow service quality through partnership and synergies with the work of other agencies; whilst overseeing and co-ordinating service implementation.
- 7.2.3.2 Option 2: Financial support for Parks Development Officer role expansion with associated appointment of 2<sup>nd</sup> Parks and Games Spaces Technical Officer.

  This option would meet the aims of role expansion and also provide more appropriate front line service level staffing. It would mean the Parks Development Officer post holder was required to act-down less and could concentrate more on service development, partnership opportunities and sourcing of outside funding.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



It may well be that these higher aspirations of the Strategy could also be partially achieved through the use of staff resources in other areas. An example might be Neighbourhood Management Teams who might be in a position to use existing skills and technical knowledge bases to support/ teach Allotment Associations how to apply and develop support for site projects through successful fundraising and grant seeking strategies.

Obviously this assumes the staff resources are not already being used to capacity on other projects. It also should be pointed out that these relationships and use of existing resources from other areas of the Authority would by their very nature be of a temporary nature. The idea would be to enable a skills and knowledge transfer to take place 'upskilling' for example representatives from Associations. Hopefully they could then take a greater leading role in achieving aspirations for their sites by fundraising and making grant applications.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow

7.3 Revising plot charges to support sustainable growth.

Foster greater allotment community ownership and support for site improvement, de velopment and growth through appropriate contributions to future investment.

Allotment plots are a valuable community resource that deserves appropriate care and investment.

The scale of investment was illustrated earlier by the following stark figures: using today's costs external fencing replacement on the council's allotment sites represents a medium-term capital programme in the range of £2.28 million -£4.56 million. Renewal of internal track and haulage ways could represent a medium-term capital programme in the range of £4.72 million - £6.30 million.

Many of the aspirations contained in this development strategy, if adopted for implementation, would further challenge those who care for and use allotments to find outside investment. It is likely to become more important to find contributions and match funding to support bids for outside money and in doing so it will be necessary to demonstrate commitment and support from plot holders.

The following is only an example of one way in which it might be possible to focus investment on those sites where there is a real willingness to support better allotment provision from plot holders.

■ 7.3.1 Tiered rent charges. Tiered rent charge for sites at different stages of partnership working development (allotment association, devolved management) and subsequent renewal and investment in facilities.

Charges would comprise the current 'area of plot' charge, 'water charge' if water conservation measure described in 4.3.1 achieved for site, and a 'site investment' charge.

Site investment charge classifications:

• 'Dandelion Sites'. These are sites where plot holders chose not to form an over arching group to represent their interests and do not wish to actively contribute to site improvement.

Site Investment Charge: low (Held by Council Allotments Team as a small war chest to lever outside funding opportunities for site)

'Tulip Sites'. These are sites where plot holders as a group work towards forming a positive and constructive relationship with Allotment Team with the medium term of aim of facilitating site improvements through outside investment. The object would be to build a 'war chest' for match funding purposes.

Site Investment Charge: Medium (Held by Council's Allotments Team as a war chest to support growth of an Allotment Association and at the same time proactively lever outside funding opportunities for site).

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'Carnation Sites'. These are sites
 where plot holders have formed a
 strong, inclusive, vibrant and diverse
 Allotment Association. The
 Association has a history of working
 in a positive and constructive way
 with the Allotments Team to secure
 investment and improvements.

Site Investment Charge: **High** (Collected by Council's Allotments Team and *returned* to Allotment Association to act as a war chest to *proactively* lever, in partnership, outside funding opportunities for site).

Site investment charges would not be seen as an option for plot holders. In order to ensure the allotment resource is available for future generations a commitment by all users to care and maintenance of sites is a necessity not an option.

Individuals on the waiting list would be able to indicate their desire to garden on either Dandelion, Tulip or Camation sites. There would be a gradual encouragement for all sites to: work towards collective representation in some form, and develop a positive and constructive working relationship with the Allotments Team.

Level Two objective
Will consider next priority for delivery if
resources allow

7.4 Propagating service partnerships.

The key to allotment service development is partnership be it with plot holders, Allotment Associations', local communities, members, officers; or organisational partners including businesses, industry, and voluntary or health sectors.

Healthy partnerships have their foundations in good working relationships where a common need exists and all parties are willing to invest time, energy and resources into achieving a shared outcome.

The adoption of a proactive delivery stance within the Allotments Team will propagate opportunities to develop service partnerships.

7.4.1 Develop Service Partnerships. Promote Allotment Development Strategy to potential organisational partners including businesses, industry, and voluntary or health sectors.



# Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



#### Section 6 - Summary Table of proposed Aims and Objectives

	The Allotment Development Strategy contains five broad headings or Aims.  This table lists the individual <b>Aims</b> of the development strategy	Service Review key: The three different highlighted colours denote which proposed objectives would be attainable under the three different Allotment Service resourcing positions described in the Allotment Development Strategy – See 5.1 for further details.  Service		
	underneath which three levels of <b>Objectives</b> can exist. These Objectives state the work that the section has proposed to undertake, resources permitting, to achieve the stated Aim.	Defensible Position	Proactive Position	Growth Position
Aim	Title			
1	Promotion of allotment use and food growing			
	Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package			
	1.1 Ensure retention of new tenants			
	<b>1.1.1</b> Phased introduction of clearing and rotovating overgrown vacant plots for new tenants.			
	1.1.2 Tendering of plots which are deemed to be unlettable due to their poor condition rather than offering individually to people on waiting list. Successful tenderers would be offered sites for extended rent free period in exchange for bringing 'problem' plots back into cultivation and ensuring they are secure.			
	<b>1.1.3</b> Giving or directing new tenants to sources of allotment gardening support and advice.			
	1.1.4 Working in partnership to ensure that all sites are secure – see 3.3.2			
	<b>1.1.5</b> Having Site Representatives on as many sites as possible to provide help and advice.			
	1.1.6 Working in partnership to ensure good access – see 3.3.2			
	1.1.7 Making all tenants aware of their responsibilities towards others, including making it dear that those who harass others can face eviction.			
	<b>1.1.8</b> Consider offering half or smaller plots on sites and publicise this fact.			
	1.1.9 Encourage the formation and development of allotments associations who can provide seeds, compost etc to members at discounted prices and provide advice and support – see 3.4			
	<b>1.1.10</b> Work towards maintaining allotment tenancy rates at or above 95% through partnership working with allotment associations and use of the mass inspection programme.			





	Level Iwo objective		
	Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
	1.2 Encourage diversity of tenants		
	1.2.1 More women, couples and families.		
	1.2.2 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.		
	1.2.3 Find innovative ways of promoting and advertising Allotments, especially in areas of poor uptake.		
	<b>1.2.4</b> To promote the health benefits of Allotment Gardening.		
	1.2.5 Support opportunities to work in partnership with schools, Health Authorities, Doctors Surgeries etc. to promote and encourage allotments to be used as an educational resource.		
	<b>1.2.6</b> To offer plots free of charge to schools and introduce a Best School Plot competition.		
	1.2.7 To continue to work with community groups, especially in areas of poor uptake to encourage food growing in areas where it is widely acknowledged that issues such as poor diet, lack of exercise and obesity are most acute.		
	<b>1.2.8</b> To support and attend events organised locally on allotments to promote the image of allotment gardening.		
	1.2.9 Seek funding and partnership opportunities to improve participation by disabled people through the creation of accessible plots.		
	1.2.10 The above will be in addition to making sites more physically		
	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.		
Aim	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.		
Aim 2	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.  Title		
	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.		
	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.  Title  Appropriate allotment provision  Level One objective  Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package		
	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.  Title  Appropriate allotment provision  Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package  2.1 Ensure adequate provision of allotments.		
	accessible generally as suitable capital investment, and maintenance opportunities present themselves.  Title  Appropriate allotment provision  Level One objective  Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package		
	Title  Appropriate allotment provision  Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package  2.1 Ensure adequate provision of allotments.  2.1.1 Monitor level of available plots per 1,000 households in Borough.  Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
Aim 2	Title  Appropriate allotment provision  Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package  2.1 Ensure adequate provision of allotments.  2.1.1 Monitor level of available plots per 1,000 households in Borough.  Level Two objective		
	Title  Appropriate allotment provision  Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package  2.1 Ensure adequate provision of allotments.  2.1.1 Monitor level of available plots per 1,000 households in Borough.  Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		





Aim	Title
3	Good administration
	Level One objective
	Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package
٠	3.1 Allotment procedures manual
	3.1.1 Reduction of the time between reminder letters being sent out before issuing Notice to Quits
	<b>3.1.2</b> Consider introduction of a "Three Strikes and You Are Out" rule for tenants who persistently receive Notice to Remedy letters.
	<b>3.1.3</b> Introduction of a separate agreement for persistent problem tenants to sign (e.g. agreeing not to have bonfires, harass others or bring rubbish onto a site). Failure to abide by the agreement would lead to an automatic Notice to Quit.
	<b>3.1.4</b> Ensure that there is a procedure for complaints, disputes and mediation e.g. Allotments Appeals Panel.
	<b>3.1.5</b> Agree a recognised eviction methodology with the council's legal department and Police, and consult with allotment associations.
	3.1.6 The procedure manual should also include any specific guidance that relates to agreements and procedural processes agreed with Associations undertaking certain activities on sites under a Devolved Management agreement.
	Lavel One ship ship
	Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package
·	3.2 New tenancy agreement
	General: 3.2.1.1 Annual Tenancy Agreement. 3.2.1.2 Plot ID Numbers. 3.2.1.3 Primary user. 3.2.1.4 Sub-letting. 3.2.1.5 Use of plot. 3.2.1.6 Unauthorised or illegal use of plot. 3.2.1.7 Cultiv ation levels. 3.2.1.8 Internal paths. 3.2.1.9 Internal tracks. 3.2.1.10 Vehicles on allotment sites. 3.2.1.11 Trees. 3.2.1.12 Minerals. 3.2.1.13 Damage.
	Allotment Security: 3.2.2.1 Allotment Security. 3.2.2.2 Security Gates. 3.2.2.3 Reporting crime and antisocial behaviour. 3.2.2.4 Keys. 3.2.2.5 Property marking.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



3.2.2.6 Perso	nal safety.
3.2.2.7 Acces	ss.
3 2 2 8 Hours	ofllea

Fire Safety- Storage and handling of fuel for heating and machinery:

3.2.3.1 Restriction on gas cylinders.

3.2.3.2 Restriction on inflammable liquids.

#### **Being Considerate Neighbours:**

3.2.4.1 Restriction on bonfires.

3.2.4.2 Dogs – Rules pertaining to tenants, registered partners and visitors bringing dogs on allotments when they visit plots.

3.2.4.3 Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour.

3.2.4.4 Children.

3.2.4.5 Harassment and threatening behaviour.

#### **Animals on Allotments:**

3.2.5.1 Compulsory registration of all livestock/ animals on the allotment plot.

3.2.5.2 Dogs on allotments.

3.2.5.3 Fully Restricted Sites.

3.2.5.4 Types of Animals.

#### Promotion of good allotment care:

3.2.6.1 Contamination from carpets.

3.2.6.2 Contamination of plots.

3.2.6.3 Re-cycling/ Rubbish.

3.2.6.4 Composting.

3.2.6.5 Water Supply.

3.2.6.6 Chemicals/ Pesticides.

#### Improving the visual impact of allotment plots:

3.2.7.1 External fence.

3.2.7.2 Building Control in relation to structures on allotment plots.

3.2.7.3 Responsibility for structures.

3.2.7.4 The process, which must be completed BEFORE starting any construction, for requesting permission to erect a structure on an allotment plot.

#### Structure criteria:

3.2.7.5 Area of plot occupied by structures.

3.2.7.6 Height.

3.2.7.7 Foundations for proposed structures.

3.2.7.8 Materials.

3.2.7.9 Roofing.

3.2.7.10 Internal fencing where new external fencing has been installed to the allotment site.

3.2.7.11 Use of structure.

#### **Enforcement:**

3.2.8.1 Power to inspect plots.

3.2.8.2 Removal of property.





Tenancy: 3.2.9.1 Termination by Tenant. 3.2.9.2 Termination by the Council. 3.2.9.3 Apportionment of Rent. 3.2.9.4 Written Correspondence. 3.2.9.5 Change of Address. 3.2.9.6 Death of Tenant. 3.2.9.7 Disputes between tenants. 3.2.9.8 Address for Correspondence.
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Level Two objective		
Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
3.3 Health and Safety		 
<b>3.3.1</b> Risk assessments for allotment hazards and activities as necessary.		
3.3.2 Work in partnership towards further investment on sites where it is		
most needed to improve security, paths, etc and removal of hazardous rubbish (and take action against those who dump it) – see 3.3		
<b>3.3.3</b> Health and safety training and advice will be delivered when need is identified for individuals (including Site Representatives) who carry out maintenance work on allotments and who work with volunteers.		
Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow 3.4 Quality Assurance		
<b>3.4.1</b> Priority should be given to these sites to improve the quality marks in order for them to meet the standard of 79%. Key areas for		
improvement include: Improving Security of Sites - 3 Sites; Cultivation		
Level of Sites - 2 Sites; Number of neglected sites - 2 Sites; Car Parking		
Provision - 2 Sites. The standards will be assessed on a yearly basis as		
part of the mass inspection programme and reported to the Portfolio Holder and allotment associations		
3.4.2 Other sites will be maintained at a level to keep them at or above		
2007 standards.		
	,	
Level Three objective		
Would like to deliver but only if suitable opportunities and resources can be identified		
3.5 Tenant Surveys		
<b>3.5.1</b> Develop a suitable, accessible survey form to gather feedback on the allotment service.		
3.5.2 Instigate exit surveys of tenants relinquishing their plots. Expand		
to include existing tenants when resources allow, and then ultimately		
investigate the desires and expectations of future tenants on waiting list.		
Love Thurse shi sekine	1	
Level Three objective		
Would like to deliver but only if suitable opportunities and resources can be identified		
3.6 Allotments Online	1	
3.6.1 Provide access to tenancy documentation online.		
3.6.2 Develop in partnership with local allotment associations and input		
from national bodies a 'Good allotment guide' and provide access to it		
online.		
<b>3.6.3</b> Help facilitate in partnership with local allotment associations and national bodies an online Hartlepool Allotment Gardeners FAQ's forum.		
3.6.4 Development of an online allotment plot payments and		
administration process.		



### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015

Aim	Title		
4	Allotment Crime Prevention		
	Level One objective		
	Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package		
	4.1 Rules and guidance on being a Hartlepool Allotment Tenant that assist in reducing the vulnerability of allotments to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.		
	Level Two objective		
	Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
	4.2 Development objectives that assist in reducing the vulnerability of allotments to incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour.		



A	T*41.		
Aim	Title		
5	Localised Allotment Management	-	
•	Level One objective		
	Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package		
	5.1 In partnership with representative Allotment Associations work to improve the visual appearance and perception of sites.		
	5.1.1 Regular liaison between the Authority and Allotment Associations. Encouraging the sharing of knowledge about opportunities for funding or in-kind support to achieve improvements.		
	5.1.2 Development in partnership of prioritised site specific improvement wish-lists. Supporting allotment associations in the development of prioritised, realistic action plans for site improvement that can be used in targeting outside funding and resource opportunities. Suggested format is a photographic audit and map based site action plan. Targets for action would include: investment in secure fencing; and removal and replacement where necessary of: inappropriate internal fences, buildings and storage structures.		
	5.1.3 Supporting associations in applications and improvements delivery. When available providing targeted assistance in application development and if successful assistance in project management and delivery on site of improvements. Taking account of, and where possible modifying, pre-planned annual work delivery demands to accommodate 'new' work load on officers.		
	5.1.4 Mass inspection programme. Undertake a yearly mass inspection programme of allotment sites and plots to assist in the identification of issues and provide opportunities for co-ordinated responses, in partnership with allotment associations, to uphold and maintain appropriate standards.		





Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
5.2 Explore Devolved Management arrangements in sites with active and well established Associations.		
<b>5.2.1 Gatekeepers</b> . Encouraging allotment sites to nominate a person, or series of persons, to act as 'Gatekeepers' for information. These gatekeepers would be the principle point of contact that the council would approach as a first point of contact to disseminate consultation information relating to the site. These gatekeepers could also informally feedback to the allotments section. <b>5.2.2 Allotment Forums</b> . For those sites without an allotment		
association it is proposed to convene a 'special' allotment forum when circumstances require canvassing the views of plot holders or site representatives on proposed substantial capital expenditure and changes to a site.		
<b>5.2.3 Allotment Associations</b> . Provide advice and support to those sites interested in the setting up an allotment association. Foster a supportive environment which gradually allows those associations who are interested to adopt responsibility for a range of duties under licence from the authority, under financial arrangements that release a proportion of rental income for this purpose.		
<b>5.2.4 Semi-autonomy</b> . If circumstances arise that are suitably robust support suitably experienced allotment associations in leasing sites from the authority. The association would have the flexibility to arrange tenancy agreements and reinvest revenue, which it would manage, on maintenance, repair and capital items.		
Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow 5.3 Improve relationships		
<b>5.3.1</b> Attend the allotment association's annual General Meeting once a year.		
<b>5.3.2</b> Hold one Site Representatives Forum meeting per annum for all of those allotment sites without an association. This will be held at a different location each year.		
<b>5.3.3</b> Self-managing Allotment Association Site Representatives will continue to be encouraged to carry out maintenance on our behalf.		
<b>5.3.4</b> Tenants will be encouraged to become 'Gatekeepers' that can begin to represent site interests on sites where there are currently no formal Site Representatives.		
<b>5.3.5</b> A Site Representatives Code of Conduct will be developed that incorporates issues such as health and safety, their duties, harassment, anti-racism etc.		
<b>5.3.6</b> Any future Capital Investment Programme will include leasing allotment association sites, and will involve detailed consultation with the associations on the requirements of their sites – see 3.3.2		





Aim	Title		
6	Environmental sustainability		
	Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package		
	6.1 Encourage composting and recycling on allotments		
	<b>6.1.1 Plot Level Composting.</b> Allotment holders to make provision on plots to compost green waste - see 3.2.4. for restrictions on bonfires.		
	6.1.2 Site Level Composting. On larger sites allotment section work with allotment associations and HBC Neighbourhood Services to investigate to practically of setting up on vacant allotment plots or in dedicated bays larger site composting facilities. It is envisaged that these facilities would be used to compost municipal green wastes in addition to allotment material. Management of the composting process would be undertaken by HBC contractor – shredding material on an industrial scale with hired machinery, rowing up and turning to aerate as appropriate using tractor with frontend loader. This process would enable plot holders to improve the soil quality of their plots by the use of leaves and organic matter provided from council parks and other areas.		
	<b>6.1.3</b> Site Level Compost Deliveries utilising town-wide green waste resource. The Council's domestic green waste is collected and processed in to a soil improver locally by an outside contractor. In the past the Allotments Team has brought and supplied topsoil to some problem plots. The intension is to only use composted soil improver in the future with the added benefits this can potentially provide to soil drainage and organic improvement of allotment soils. This soil improver resource is also available to Allotment Associations and individuals who may wish to purchase directly.		
	<b>6.1.4</b> Encourage plot holders to bring onto site only those items that are of use in allotment gardening. Through good administration, support and advice discourage hoarding, and to invite plot holders to think about how they will dispose of items before they bring them onto the allotments—see 3.2.11. and 3.2.12		
	6.1.5 Pride in Hartlepool – Allotments Amnesty. In support of the work described in 4.1.3 organise in conjunction with an appropriate recycling contractor the provision of strictly controlled and manned skips and collection facilities on allotment sites to remove non-compostable materials such as glass, metal, wood, plastics and gas canisters. Care must be taken to ensure that skips do not become a repository for hazardous wastes such as asbestos, garden chemicals and gas canisters. After an appropriate period this facility would be phased out and strict enforcement of allotment tenancy agreements applied as proposed in 3.2.9.		
	<b>6.1.6 Fly tipping.</b> Respond quickly to acts of fly-tipping to ensure they do not propagate. Work with plot holders and police authority to ensure a watchful eye is kept on sites and wherever possible work with responsible agencies to secure prosecutions of offenders.		





6.1.7 Support recycling opportunities. The Allotment team in partnership with allotment associations will look for, and when financially possible support, other sustainable recycling opportunities e.g. the provision of old wooden allotment site fencing for the creation of compost bins, and containers suitable for water collection.		
<b>6.1.8</b> Support the improvement of the visual appearance and aesthetics of allotment structures on plots. Look for opportunities, in partnership with Allotment Associations, to work with agencies such as colleges, centres for adults with special needs, skills development programmes, probation services, etc to utilise recycled materials such as liberated external allotment fencing. Set up programmes with such partners that would see them manufacture new shed and cold frame designs discussed in 3.2.12 for use on plots.		



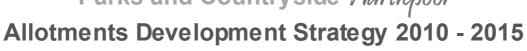


Level One objective		
Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package		
6.2 Encourage social and environmental responsibility.		
<b>6.2.1 Gardening for health.</b> Work in partnership to develop and support initiatives that encourage greater community engagement in allotment gardening and the environmental and health benefits that can result.		
6.2.2 Gardening courses for allotment tenants. In partnership research funding opportunities to run gardening courses on allotments to assist new and existing gardeners.		
6.2.3 Promote organic gardening methods. It is recognised that methods of gardening should be a matter of choice for individuals. The allotments team in partnership with sympathetic local Allotment Associations will look to grow awareness of organic gardening methods through visiting speakers and short courses on allotments when opportunities arise and resources are available.		
Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow 6.3 Water conservation.		
6.3.1 Water charging. Investigate the feasibility of installing a network of internal water meters on larger allotment sites to sub-divide usage. The idea being to charge localised groups of plot holders an equal percentage of total water bill for that particular area. Such a measure would encourage a group policing of water usage, water conservation measures and rapid leak reporting.		
<b>6.3.2 Support water conservation opportunities.</b> The Allotment team in partnership with allotment associations will look for, and when financially possible support, other water conservation opportunities e.g. the provision of guttering and containers suitable for water collection.		
<b>6.3.3</b> Encourage the adoption of cultivation techniques that maximise water conservation. Where feasible provide guidance and training – see 4.2.3		
Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow 6.4 Identify and manage areas for wildlife and conservation.		
6.4.1 Planting green boundaries. The Allotments team will work in partnership with allotment associations to establish more sustainable approaches to allotment security through the planting of native hedgerow external boundaries to allotment sites. These planted hedgerows can be managed by trimming and hedgelaying to gradually provide a dense, secure natural barrier for sites that will support a rich diversity of wildlife.		
<b>6.4.2 Gardening with nature.</b> The allotments team will work in partnership with allotment associations, the Authorities ecologist and Countryside Wardens to support the integration wildlife friendly approaches in allotment gardening.		





Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
6.5 Neighbourhood Renewal and Planning Gain.		
6.5.1 Green Spaces Hartlepool. The Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Section will continue to work with external organisations and other council departments working towards creating a greener and more sustainable Hartlepool. To ensure that allotments remain an integral part of this vision it is intended intend to work more closely with the council's Neighbourhood Renewal Team to ensure that the regeneration of existing or creation of new allotment sites is allowed for in neighbourhood renewal schemes.		
	1	
Lev el Three objectiv e		
Would like to deliver but only if suitable opportunities and resources can be identified		
6.6 Toilets.		
<b>6.6.1 Research and investigate the feasibility of using composting toilets on allotment sites.</b> Provide information and support to sites where there is an allotment association which is willing to maintain them.		





n	Title
	Appropriate service resourcing
	Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package
	7.1 Building proactive Allotment Team.
	7.1.1 Allotment Administrator. The Parks and Countryside Section needs to secure through the Business Transformation Process the continued services of the highly experienced Allotment Administrator from the Admin Support Services Department.
	<b>7.1.2 A second Allotment Technical Officer appointment.</b> The Allotment Development Strategy Progression Table outlines the service improvements that would be possible with a 2 <sup>nd</sup> Technical Officer.
	7.1.3.1 Option 1: Allotments Development Officer appointment. For filling much the same role as the Parks Development Officer this post would aim to maintain and grow service quality through partnership and synergies with the work of other agencies; whilst overseeing and coordinating service implementation.
	7.1.3.2 Option 2: Parks Development Officer role expansion with associated appointment of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Parks and Games Spaces Technical Officer. This option would meet the aims of role expansion and also provide more appropriate front line service level staffing. It would mean the Parks Development Officer post holder was required to act-down less and could concentrate more on service development, partnership opportunities and sourcing of outside funding.
	Level One objective Prioritise for delivery resources permitting as part of basic annual service package
	7.2 Resourcing a proactive Allotment Team.
	7.2.1 Financial support for the embedding of a full-time Allotment Administrator within the Parks and Countryside section. The Section needs to secure through the Business Transformation Process the continued services of the highly experienced Allotment Administrator from the Admin Support Services Department.
	7.1.2 Financial support for the embedding of a second Allotment Technical Officer. The Allotment Development Strategy: Objective Delivery Table outlines the service improvements possible.
	7.2.3.1 Option 1: Financial support for Allotments Development Officer. This post would aim to maintain and grow service quality through partnership and synergies with the work of other agencies; whilst overseeing and co-ordinating service implementation.
	7.2.3.2 Option 2: Financial support for Parks Development Officer role expansion with associated appointment of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Parks and Games Spaces Technical Officer. This option would meet the aims of role expansion and also provide more appropriate front line service level staffing. It would mean the Parks Development Officer post holder was required to act-down less and could concentrate more on service development, partnership opportunities and sourcing of outside funding.





Level Two objective		
Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow		
7.3 Revising plot charges to support sustainable growth.		
7.3.1 Tiered rent charges. Tiered rent charge for sites at different stages of partnership working development (allotment association, devolved management) and subsequent renewal and investment in facilities. Charges would comprise the current 'area of plot' charge, 'water charge' - if water conservation measure described in 4.3.1 achieved for site, and a 'site investment' charge. Site investment charge classifications: 'Dandelion Sites'. These are sites where plot holders chose not to form an over arching group to represent their interests and do not wish to actively contribute to site improvement. Site Investment Charge: low (Held by Council Allotments Team as a small war chest to lever outside funding opportunities for site). Tulip Sites'. These are sites where plot holders as a group work towards forming a positive and constructive relationship with Allotment Team with the medium term of aim of facilitating site improvements through outside investment. The object would be to build a 'war chest' for match funding purposes. Site Investment Charge: Medium (Held by Council's Allotments Team as a war chest to support growth of an Allotment Association and at the same time proactively lever outside funding opportunities for site). 'Camation Sites'. These are sites where plot holders have formed a strong, inclusive, vibrant and diverse Allotment Association. The Association has a history of working in a positive and constructive way with the Allotments Team to secure investment and improvements. Site Investment Charge: High (Collected by Council's Allotments Team and returned to Allotment Association to act as a war chest to proactively lever, in partnership, outside funding opportunities for site).		
Level Two objective Will consider next priority for delivery if resources allow 7.4 Propagating service partnerships.		
7.4.1 Develop Service Partnerships. Promote Allotment Development Strategy to potential organisational partners including businesses, industry, and voluntary or health sectors.		



### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Section 7 - Previous studies that have looked at Hartlepool's allotments

Previous studies into Hartlepool's allotments and service provision
The Best Value Review into Allotments undertaken in October 1999 made a number of recommendations, namely:-

- That devolved management be explored with allotment tenants and negotiated where there is demonstrable local interest. There are two sites currently undertaking self management -Woodcroft Allotment Association have successfully managed the site since 2003, while Briarfields are in the process of becoming a devolved management site.
- Allotment budgets are centrally located in Community Services
   Department with effect from 1st April 2000.
   This has been completed.
- Officers actively pursue grants and other sources that could increase the financial resources available for allotments.

  Investment in sites such as Waverley Terrace and Briarfields have been completed, resulting in significant site improvements.
- Members give consideration to allotments as a priority for future funding.
   Ongoing
- A concessionary scheme is not introduced as part of the review. Noted - No concessionary scheme has been introduced.

- Some larger plots are subdivided to increase number of plots available and broaden appeal to those people wishing smaller plot sizes. This would be linked with promotion. Burn Valley, Station Lane, Waverley Terrace and Briarfields all offer a smaller than average plot size.
- Procedural guidance is produced to cover pricing policy for rent rebate or reduction requests.
   Rent reductions and waivers are utilised by Officers, as necessary, where situations arise.
- No further expansion in allotment provision is undertaken, unless additional funds become available. This has been adhered to.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



### Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management review

The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management undertook a study of allotment provision in Hartlepool in May 2004. The suggested recommendations from this study short, medium and long term.

#### Short Term

- That the Briarfields site should be disposed of. The site at Briarfields has been reduced in size and is now a 12 plot site with increased security and is working towards devolved management.
- An allotments charter be devised for plot holders, including simple and unambiguous standards.
   Some work has been completed to simplify the rules and procedures, particularly in respect of the devolved management site at Woodcroft.
- Existing local performance indicators be revised to ensure continuous improvement of the service. The prime local PI seeks to minimise allotment vacancy levels.
   Performance indicators to be reviewed for suitability in light of aims.
- Site security should be improved, in particular by raising the awareness of plot holders and introducing "Allotments Watch" programmes in conjunction with surrounding residents.

  The Ringmenter 10000 programmes.

The Ringmaster 10000 programme part of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership offers updates on criminal activity taking place locally and crime prevention advice.

- A suitable information pack should be produced to promote allotment gardening.
   Information pack requirements to be considered as part of development strategy.
- Plots at Waverley Terrace be aggregated to the eastem end of the site and the remaining land should be landscaped and added to the adjoining recreation ground.
   Achieved – the land remains allotment land for allocation as resources permit
- A similar policy of plot aggregation should take place at Station Lane with redundant land used for recreational purposes or disposal. Improvements at Station Lane to improve drainage and access has resulted in all available plots becoming tenanted (as at 14th January 2008).

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



## Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management review – continued: *Medium Tem*

- Self Management of Allotment Sites be actively pursued using sites such as Woodcroft as a blueprint. Progress has been made in establishing Allotment Associations. Woodcroft continue to be self managed with Briarfields undergoing legal negotiations at present. Other Allotment Associations are developing strongly and are considering self management.
- Consideration should be given to increases in rents to carry out a range of physical improvements to allotment sites across the Borough.
   A 22% average increase of rents in 2007/2008 has resulted in investment across a number of sites to improve access and has completed a drainage scheme at Station Lane.
- Action is taken to identify alternative sources of funding to fund a phased programme of improvements in addition to work already in hand. A number of associations have accessed Awards for All and other community funds to improve sites.
- A phased programme of removal of unsafe and unsightly barriers within allotment sites be drafted, subject to resource availability at Brierton, Chester Road, Nicholsons Field, Haswell Avenue, Station Lane and Waverley.
   Where the opportunity has existed (Briarfields and Waverley) internal fences have been restricted under legislation in the rules of tenancy.

- Disadvantaged and minority groups should be targeted to increase their usage of allotments and reduce under occupancy
   The allotment site at Waverley
   Terrace has provision for groups to be part of a community allotment.
   This is currently occupied by
   Integrated Mental Health Services,
   Learning Disability Services, Mental Health Matters, MIND, DISC (Drug Services) and NACRO (Offenders)
- The welcoming aspects of sites should be improved by entrance improvements and in particular the provision of attractive and informative signs.
   Not yet completed.

#### Long Tem

 Consideration should be given to the provision of community buildings incorporating toilet facilities (subject to resources becoming available) at the larger sites such as Stranton, Throston, Thornhill, Chester Road and Nicholson's Field. Not yet programmed.

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



## PPG17 Audit and Assessment Open Space, Sport and Recreation report (2007):

The PPG17 Audit and Assessment Open Space, Sport and Recreation was a technical study developed through community consultation and an audit of selected types of open space carried out in 2007. The PPG17 Audit and Assessment Open Space, Sport and Recreation set out to suggest standards for open space so that an assessment of current and future provision could be made.

The objectives of the study were:

- To provide information about existing community needs and aspirations
- To analyse how these results vary according to the different demographic characteristics of different groups and communities within Hartlepool
- To research the standards of provision
- To develop a set of appropriate standards for Hartlepool.

Open space in Hartlepool largely follows that defined in Planning Policy Guidance note 17 and it's Companion Guide and includes:

- Urban parks and gardens
- Allotments
- Amenity green space
- Churchyards and cemeteries
- Play space for children and teenagers
- Common land
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Civic spaces
- Green corridors
- Indoor sports facilities
- Natural/semi-natural green spaces.

The audit of open spaces included each site being scored against a predetermined set of criteria relevant to that type of space, for quality and value assessments.

The community needs study comprised of a postal, self completion questionnaire sent to a random sample of local people, augmented by discussion groups with residents and extensive discussion with officers and other stakeholders. A separate self completion survey was also distributed to local sports clubs.

The analysis of the audit and the community consultation was undertaken at different geographic levels. The local authority area was split into North (5 wards), Central (7 wards) and South areas (5 wards).

### Findings and standards proposed by the PPG17 report:

#### Quantity standard:

Current provision equates to 26.1 plots per 1000 households, compared to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners target for provision of 20 allotment plots per 1000 households. There is an overall provision of 0.47 hectares per 1000 population, which is over double the level of 0.2 hectares per 1000 population recommended in the 1969 Thorpe report. There is an overall provision of 26.1 plots per 1000 households, compared to the England average of 15 plots per 1000 households.

The allotment standards proposed are:

- 0.47 hectares per 1000 population and
- 26.1 plots per 1000 households

### Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



The quantity standard generates a surplus of over 0.15 hectares of allotment space across Hartlepool, with a deficit in two of the three sub areas. The deficit in the two areas is offset by the surplus of 4.55 hectares in the South area.

Turning to the standard based on plot provision per household, there is affectively a balance of provision. There is a deficit of 147.3 plots in the North area, although again this offset by surpluses in the South (105.7 plots) and Central areas (41.1 plots).

#### **Accessibility Standard:**

These accessibility criteria are considered to be the reasonable distances that people would expect to travel to an allotment site. The catchment areas for allotments in Hartlepool are based on the following criteria:

- Over 100 plots 1200 metres radius
- 50 to 100 plots 900 metres radius
- 10 to 49 plots 600 metres radius
- 1 to 9 plots 300 metres radius

The concentration of allotments in the North, Central and South Areas means that many of the catchment areas overlap. In effect only the sites in Greatham have discreet catchment areas that do not overlap. When the catchments are amalgamated the areas without reasonable access to an Allotments & Community Gardens can be identified. These are the wards of St Hilda's in the North Area; Stranton, Foggy Furze and Elwick in the Central Area and Fens in the South Area. The rural area of Elwick is largely unserved.

#### Quality standard:

A quality assessment was undertaken for the allotment sites. The quality score that was arrived at is based on an assessment of each allotment site using a scale of 0 to 3, 0 being very poor and 3 being good. The criteria used in the assessment are listed below.

- Access to site
- Security of site
- Provision of haulage ways & paths
- Water provision on site
- Cultivation level of site
- Quality of land/soil
- No. of Neglected plots
- Communal store/shed/shop
- Adequacy of car parking
- Fencing, gates & boundary hedges
- Range of plot sizes
- Evidence of vandalism
- Provision of individual sheds
- Provision of notice boards

The scores derived from this process are shown in the table that subsequently follows.

In terms of quality, the median quality score for the allotment sites was 78% and the agreed benchmark site was at Chester Road. The quality standard proposed for allotments was therefore set at 78%



#### PPG17 Open Spaces Assessment (2007)

•	ces Assessment (2007) of the quality of Hartlepoo	ol Borough Council allotme	ent provision
Site Name	Association Status	Quality Score from PPG17	Number of Plots (Size of Site)
Briarfields	Yes – (2007) looking to devolved managed	77% - <b>Below</b> median score (Priority 5)	12 (0.41 ha)
Brierton	New ly Formed in 2007	67% - <b>Below</b> median score (Joint Priority 2)	57 (2.51 ha)
Burn Valley	Yes	92% - above average	75 (3.53 ha)
Catcote	New ly Formed in 2006	83% - above average	56 (1.66 ha)
Chester Road	Yes. Formed in 2007	79% - Above Average	146 (6.48 ha)
Greatham	None	73% - <b>Below</b> median score (Priority 4)	3 (0.13 ha)
Haswell Avenue	New ly Formed in 2007	90% - above average	30 (0.80 ha)
Nicholsons Field	New ly Formed in 2007	67% - <b>Below</b> median score (Joint Priority 2)	164 (4.65ha)
Olive Street	None	100% - Above average	1 (0.03 ha)
Station Lane	None	61% - <b>Below</b> median score (Priority 1)	77 (0.71 ha)
Stranton	Yes	81% - above average	175 (7.69 ha)
Thompson Grove	None	85% - above average score	5 (0.16 ha)
Thornhill	Yes. Existing association previously with Chester Rd and Throston sites.	85% - Above average	86 (3.73 ha)
Throston	Yes. Formed in 2008	91% - above average	82 (2.86 ha)
Waverley Terrace	No	72% - <b>below</b> average	42 (1.22 ha)
Woodcroft	Devolved Management since 2003	100% - above average	30 (0.94 ha)

#### Notes:

- Total Number of Plots: 1012
- The quality score is based on an assessment of each allotment site using a scale of 0 to 3, 0 being very poor and 3 being good. The areas assessed were: access to site, security of site, provision of haulage ways and paths, water provision, cultivation level, number of neglected plots, quality of land/soil, communal plots, adequacy of car parking, fencing, gates and boundaries, range of plot sizes and evidence of vandalism



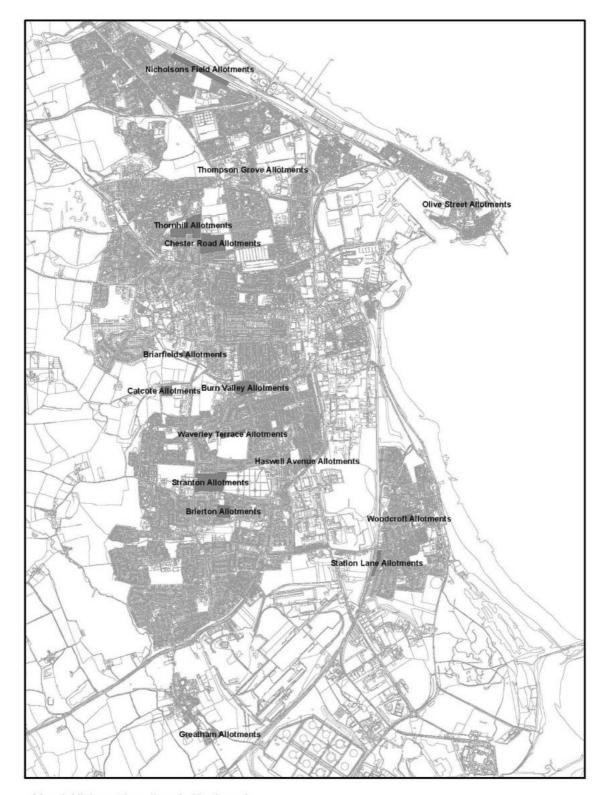


#### **Section 8 - Allotment Site Maps**

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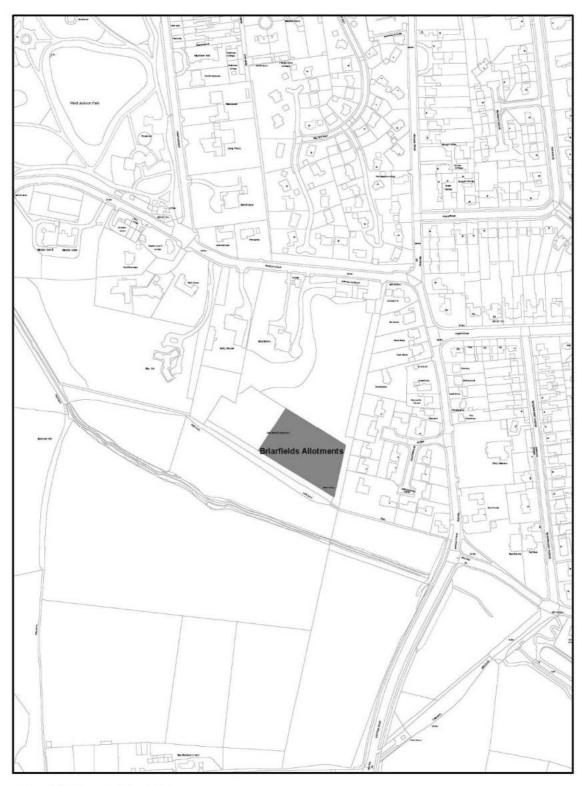
## HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



Map 1 Allotment Locations in Hartlepool





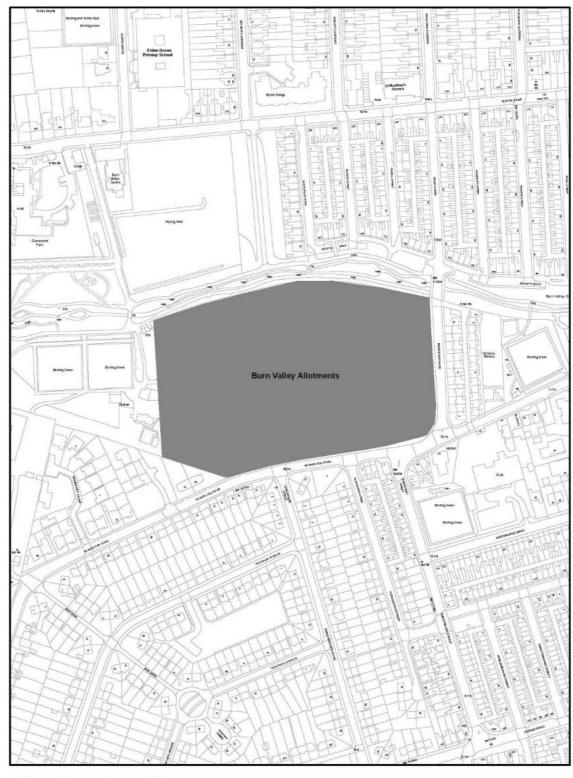
Map 2 Allotment - Briarfields





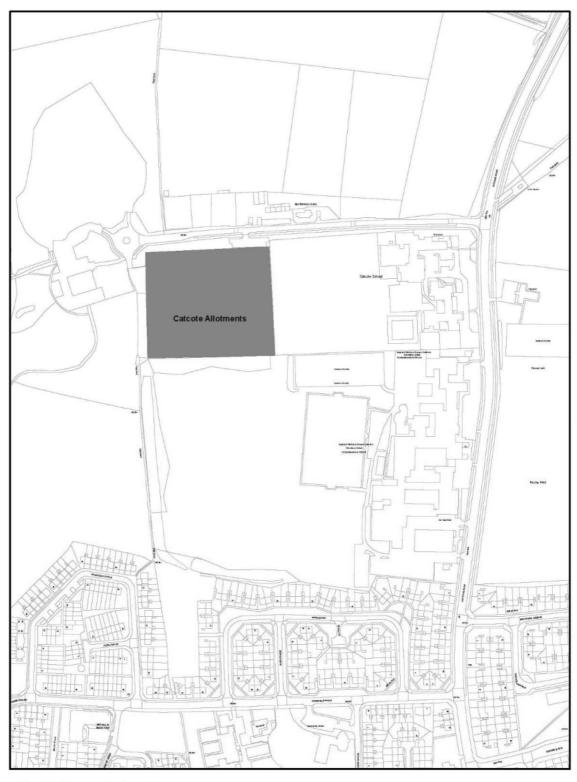
Map 3 Allotment - Brierton





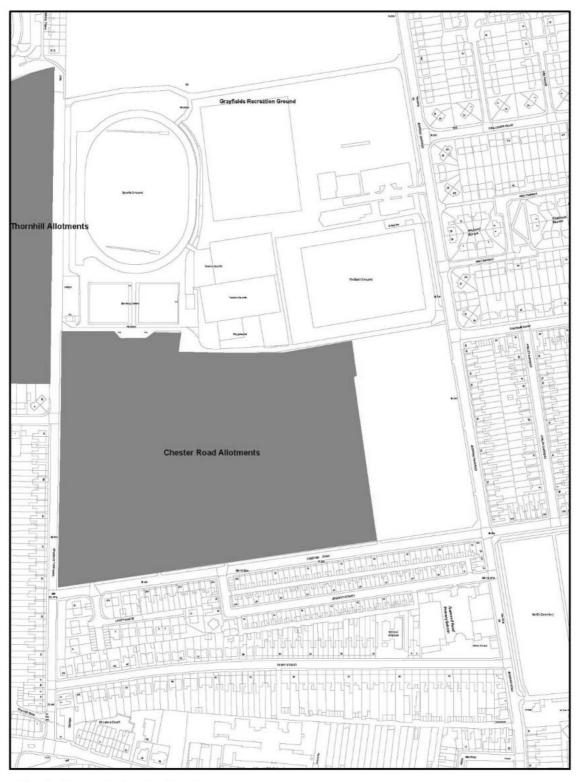
Map 4 Allotment - Burn Valley





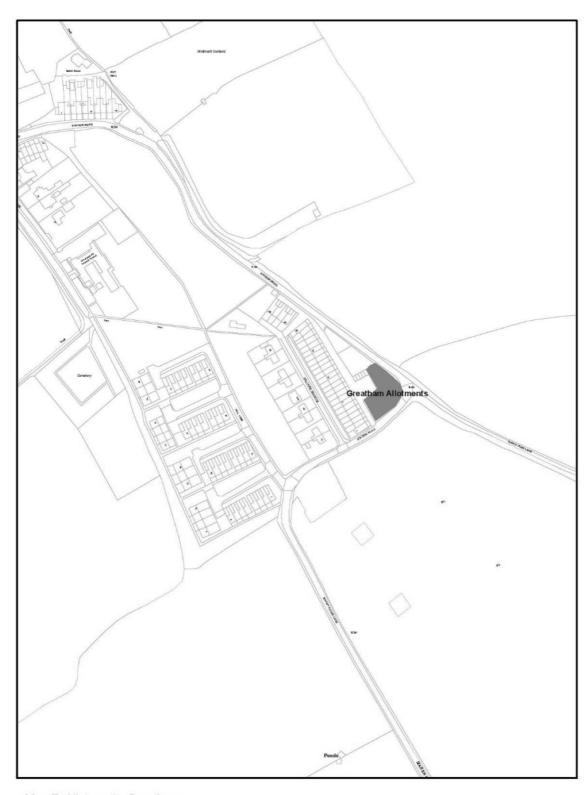
Map 5 Allotment - Catcote





Map 6 Allotment - Chester Road





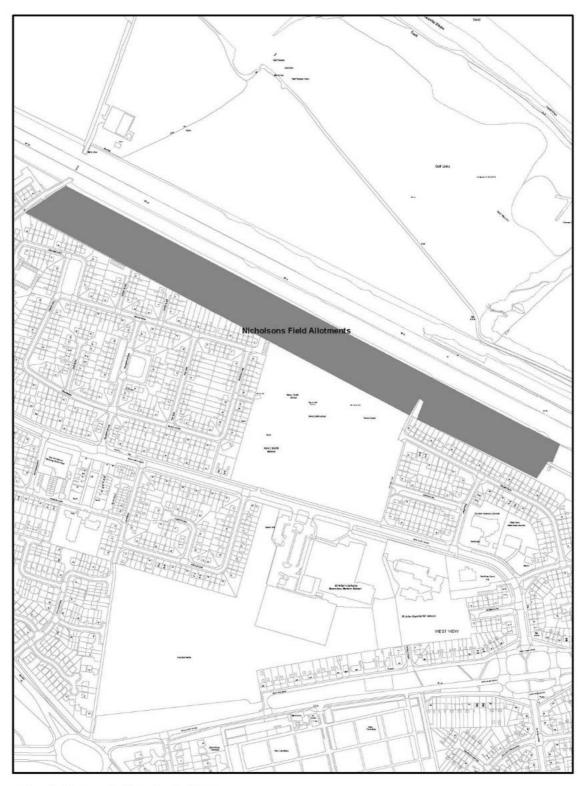
Map 7 Allotment - Greatham





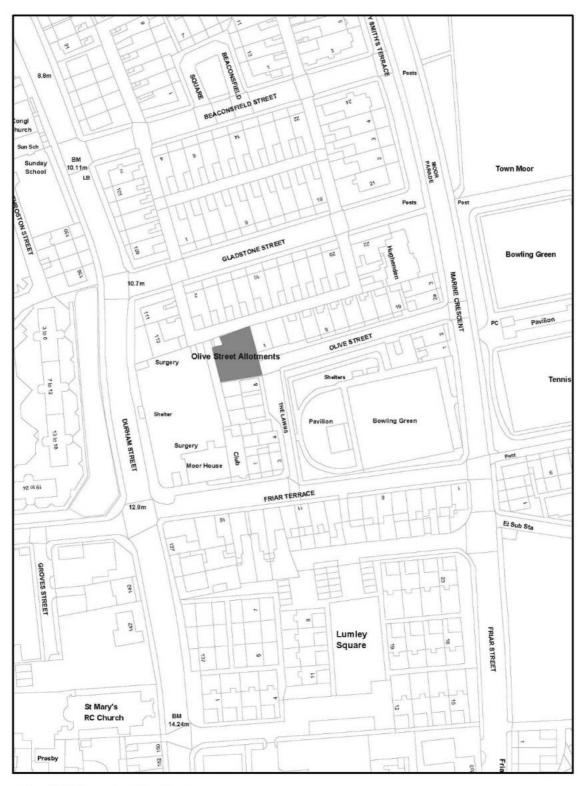
Map 8 Allotment - Haswell Avenue





Map 9 Allotment - Nicholson's Field





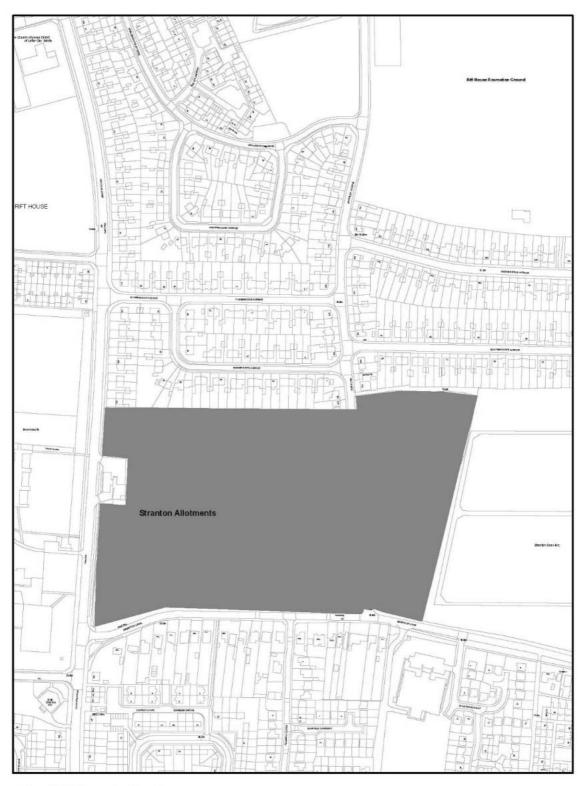
Map 10 Allotment - Olive Street





Map 11 Allotment - Station Lane





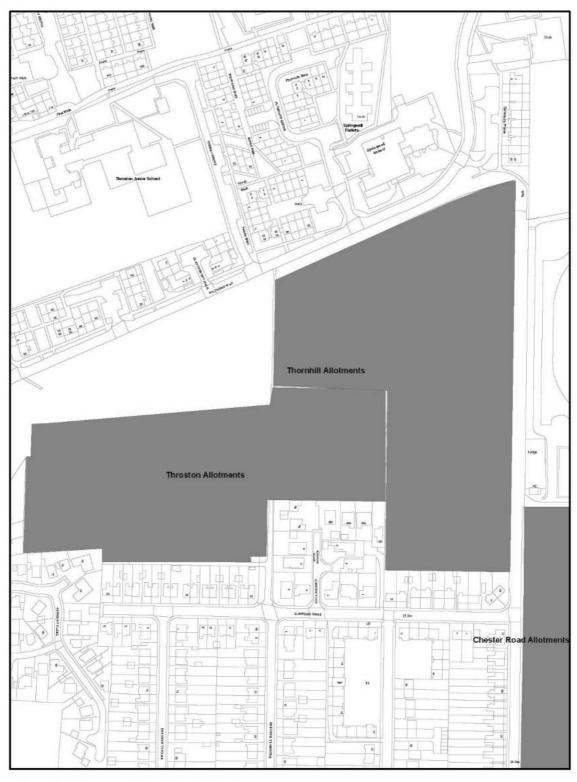
Map 12 Allotment - Stranton





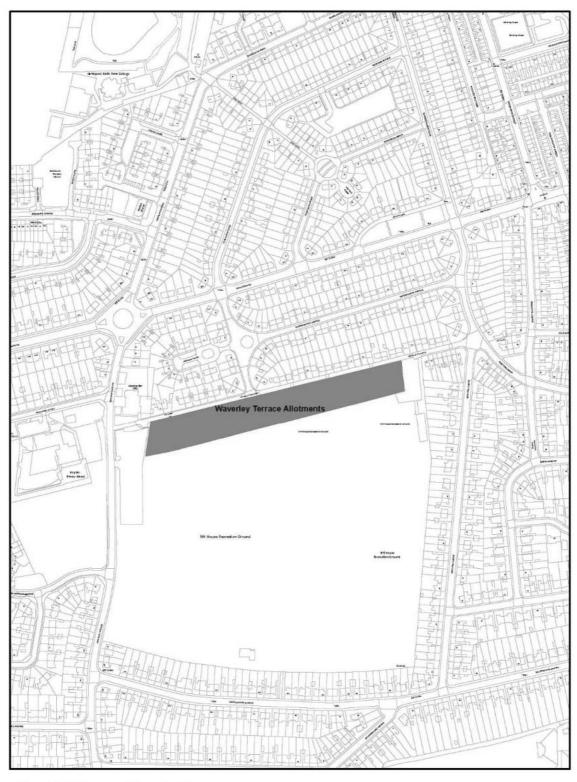
Map 13 Allotment - Thompson Grove





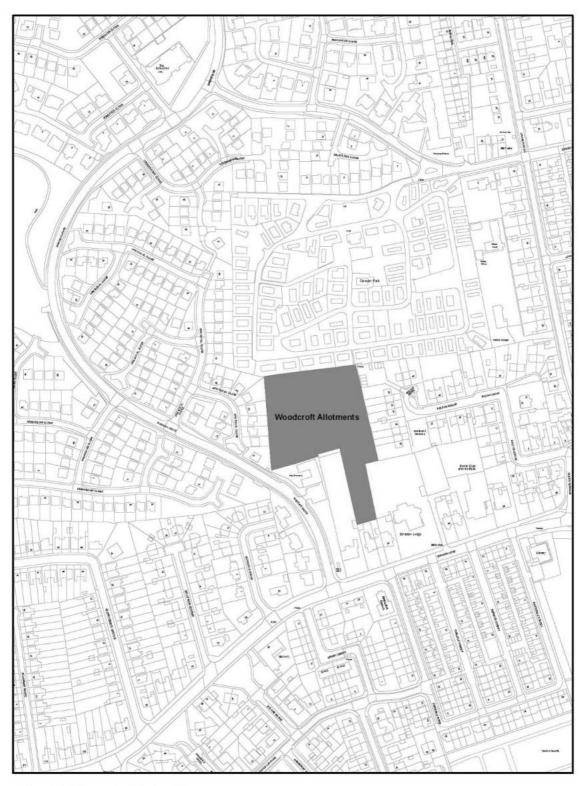
Map 14 Allotments - Thornhill and Throston





Map 15 Allotment - Waverley Terrace





Map 16 Allotment - Woodcroft



# Parks and Countryside Hartlepool Allotments Development Strategy 2010 - 2015



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## Parks and Countryside Hartlepool

Responsible for the care, development and promotion of:

- Public Rights of Way and Access Network,
  - Formal parks and Country Park areas,
- Countryside and Nature Conservation areas,
- Coast and associated Beach Safety provision,
- Town wide Horticulture and Stranton Nursery,
  - Cemeteries and the Crematoria.
    - Allotments,
  - Children's fixed play equipment,
- Football pitches, Games spaces and Bowling Greens
  - Within the borough of Hartlepool.



#### **CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder 4 May 2010



**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: HARTLEPOOL CULTURAL STRATEGY –

2009-2014

#### **SUMMARY**

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval and endorsement of the revised Cultural Strategy for the Borough, 2009 – 2014.

#### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The Strategy is a revision of the first strategy, produced in 2003.

The current version falls into three distinct sections.

- The first is a textual reflection, analysis and commentary on: the context for the strategy, and a description of the process used to create and test it.
- The second section sets out the strategy's visions, aims and objectives
- The third is the action plan

#### 3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Culture is a responsibility of the Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio

#### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key

#### 5. **DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Report and strategy to be presented to Culture Leisure and Tourism Portfolio – 4 May 2010.

#### 6. **DECISION REQUIRED**

That the Strategy be approved

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

HARTLEPOOL CULTURAL STRATEGY 2009-Subject:

2014

#### 1 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval and endorsement of the revised Cultural Strategy for 1.1 the Borough, 2009-2014 (Appendix A)

#### 2. **BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Town's first cultural strategy was produced and published in 2003 and is in need of review.
- 2.2 Although much of the original strategy remained relevant. developments and changes in the Town - and their implications required the production of a new strategy.
- 2.3 Taking the original as its starting point, the reviewed strategy has developed by way of consultation across the Council's cultural services and their partners. The principal means to achieving this was through discussion and reaction to the developing text by the Culture, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Partnership, the key partners and the Local Strategic Partnership.
- 2.4 The overall vision of the aim driving the strategy is "to create a cultural identify for Hartlepool which attracts people to Hartlepool and makes us proud to live and work here".
- 2.5 Detailed analysis then identifies a six strategic aims, together with an underpinning aim. The strategic aims are:
  - To create a strong cultural identity for Hartlepool within the region.
  - To celebrate Hartlepool and express that local identity.
  - To develop a sustainable cultural economy
  - Seek to support excellence in local cultural, artistic, live entertainment, sporting, and leisure provision / practice.
  - Increase participation, inclusion and opportunity for access and diversity.
  - Advocate the value of culture, and use it in meeting the expressed needs and aspirations of the community, to raise the bar for levels of cultural awareness, aspiration and participation.

2.6 The underpinning aim is to use provision of cultural opportunities and engagement with them as a means of contributing to the wider process of enhancing wellbeing for all.

#### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the strategy be approved

CONTACT OFFICER: John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community

Services

### FINAL DRAFT

# HARTLEPOOL CULTURAL STRATEGY 2009 to 2014



"[Culture is...] anything you do not have to do to live, but have to do to feel alive, it's what gives meaning to our lives"

François Matarasso

Making a difference to the quality of life for all, through cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities

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**May 2010 – Final** 

#### i. Introduction

Welcome to this new cultural strategy for Hartlepool.

The Town's first cultural strategy was written in 2003. It set out plans for culture in the Borough up to the end 2008.

Now, with many exciting changes for the Hartlepool already either underway, or on the horizon, this new plan gives details of the next phase of cultural development. A phase which not only will see the continuation of some of the earlier plans, but also new directions and opportunities such as The Tall Ships Races 2010, and the development of new facilities and opportunities for aquatic sports, libraries, heritage and performance arts.

And with culture and leisure forming an important part of '*Hartlepool's Ambition*' - the Hartlepool Partnership's community strategy and neighbourhood renewal strategy 2008 to 2020- now is a good time to be refreshing our plans for the immediate future so that culture and leisure go on playing a key part in making a difference to the quality of life for all.

#### 1. A Cultural Strategy for Hartlepool

We think Hartlepool is a special place. So our vision of the aim driving a Cultural Strategy for the Town has been developed to express this ...

."To create a cultural identity for Hartlepool which attracts people to Hartlepool and makes us proud to live and work here".

Our culture is developed from a number of aspects: our geography - the sea and the maritime influence; our heritage - a recorded settlement for over two thousand years; and our residents' resilience to change.

Our cultural background gives us a pride in the town. And the quality of activity that takes place here gives confidence and self-esteem. There is a strong link from our quality of life and cultural wellbeing, to employment opportunities and skills training. Culture has a significant role to play in creating a favourable environment for economic regeneration.

Culture impacts on everyone's daily life. Indeed culture has been at the centre of Hartlepool's dramatic improvement in appearance and development over the last ten years. It is important that this continues to create a sustainable economy and further enhance our growing reputation as a town with a distinct identity within the region 'the North East' and sub-region 'The Tees Valley'.

This strategy establishes a context to help Hartlepool residents achieve a better future and quality of life, and to do this by promoting and celebrating everything that culture has to offer.

We have some tremendous natural and developed assets, foremost being the Marina, a lively town centre, the historical Headland and the seaside resort of Seaton Carew, all surrounded by the attractive historic villages of Hart, Elwick, Dalton Piercy and Greatham. We will continue to develop these assets to ensure Hartlepool is recognised throughout the region as a vibrant and entertaining place to visit.

The strategy will help guide the detail and make more of our Christian and Anglo Saxon heritage which will bring increased visitors and a more attractive ambience to the medieval core of our town on the Headland.

The development of the St. Hilda's Church Visitor Centre in 2005 - and the Heugh Gun Battery in 2008 - have commenced the process. The Headland Sports Hall providing badly needed sporting facilities where none had previously existed became operational in 2006. Integrated into the existing Borough Buildings site, it provides a 'hub' of community facilities in the heart of the Headland all on one site, that has brought substantial health and recreation benefits to North Hartlepool. We hope to replicate this with our future ambition for the redevelopment of the Mill House site.

The Marina is a success, this has been maintained through the ongoing objective of securing the development of a 'national maritime visitor attraction', which provides an enhanced future for our most recognised visitor attractions HMS Trincomalee and the Hartlepool Maritime Experience enabling the town to extend its development as a major player among visitor destinations. A major hotel development is currently being planned to enable more overnight stays and conference business thus adding to our economic wellbeing.

The town's evening economy has improved beyond recognition. This needs further critical mass to ensure sustainability. The development of the Cultural Quarter within the Town Centre Strategy will give added focus to Hartlepool's increasing reputation for its night-life and eating out.

On the rural fringe, Summerhill Country Park is now a well established site with growing confidence in its role as an active recreational centre, being a hub for a wide range of outdoor sports. These include: archery; cross country running; cycling; BMX; climbing and high ropes. Our confidence in the quality of Summerhill, and the facilities it provides, was recognised in 2008 with a Green Flag award from the Civic Trust. Ward Jackson Park also achieved this award. At the same time the development of an RSPB Nature Reserve at Salthome has been completed. This is a development of National importance, and will help develop the mix of visitors welcomed to the town and creates a wealth of opportunity for resident involvement.

The people of Hartlepool can celebrate like no other! The Maritime Festival has grown in its regional impact and has generated a number of entertainment and community event spin offs (such as Dockfest 09 and the Big Mix) that will play a part in the cultural surround to The Tall Ships Races 2010.

The Tall Ships Races 2010 themselves will mark a major moment of achievement and progression for the Town and its Culture and Leisure offer. In August 2010 Hartlepool is the destination port for The Tall Ships Races, this will be the largest celebration ever to reach the shores of the Town. Between Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 10th an anticipated fleet of 100 ships will plot course to, and arrive in, Hartlepool as they finish the last leg of this prestigious international event. In itself a spectacle not to be missed, The Tall Ships Races 2010 in Hartlepool is likely to attract 1 million visitors and residents who are expected to contribute £16m¹ to the Town's culture and leisure economy. Furthermore there will be a programme of cultural activities and events leading up to and accompanying The Tall Ships Races 2010, that will see a vibrant range of spectacular happenings, lively sports activities and performances that will be make a new and different contribution to the Town's cultural environment.

Frankly, our ambition knows no bounds. Good communications within the Tees Valley, links with the Tees Valley Festival and Event Development Plan and Tees Valley Area Tourism Management Action Plan will help Hartlepool to secure development and become a major deliverer of the Tees Valley Vision.

MAY 2010 - Final Draft

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Source: "Looking forward to 2010 A framework document for The Tall Ships' Races Hartlepool Quays" page 6, referenced to NGI '05 evaluation.

The people of Hartlepool have a tremendous community spirit, the community and voluntary sector is noted for its vibrancy and organisation. There is much going on in the Borough that we can be proud of, the consultation process demonstrated this and helped to point out how much better and more appreciated this can be with greater efforts at co-ordination. This we will do.

The community will directly benefit from the Adult Education, Libraries and Museum services development which will give greater life long learning, outreach and social inclusion opportunities through the development of the People's Network, volunteering training and the Renaissance museums initiative. It is recognised it is important to improve access to learning and information.

Culture can, of course, be an end in itself. Artistic creativity and sporting endeavour allow self-expression and self-fulfilment, furthermore, an appreciation of local history, the natural environment and tradition can assist in a sense of place and identity.

The role of culture is important and the benefit of cultural activity should be seen as central to everything that we now do. Thus culture is firmly at the centre of the Hartlepool Partnership and the Local Area Agreement [LAA], and it is through these initiatives that we will progress.

#### 2. What is Culture?

The word 'Culture' will portray different images and activities to everyone, although in reality, it is whatever you choose to do in your spare time.

## "Anything you do not have to do to live but have to do to feel alive, its what gives meaning to our lives"

François Matarasso

Whatever you do, you do it because it interests you and you want to do it, because it makes you feel good, increases self-confidence, gives new skills, makes you feel better and fitter.

The benefit this can give to an individual can also benefit the community in which you live and the town as a whole.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport requested every Local Authority to produce a Local Cultural Strategy which should demonstrate how culture is important and central to our lives and how we can make it better and more relevant to the individual community and the social and economic well being of Hartlepool.

#### Culture can be .....

Entertainment	Visiting	the	cinema,	playing	bingo,	eating	out	in	а
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restaurant or visiting a local pub or town centre night-spot.

Arts/Literature Watching a performance, visiting the art gallery,

participating in a local art club class, visiting a library, attending evening classes, playing an instrument or curling

up in the chair with a good book!

Sport Participating or coaching in sports activity, visiting the

leisure centre, playing golf, netball, basketball, rugby, sailing out of the marina, watersports and angling,

attending keep-fit sessions.

Recreation Walking the promenade, walking in the countryside or the

park, attending events, attending a spectator sport,

shopping, tending the allotment or leisure gardening.

Heritage Visiting museums, historic buildings and archaeological

sites, re-enactment groups or historical societies, maritime

heritage and conservation areas.

Tourism Promoting the town's attractions, attracting visitors,

creating a critical mass of activity which helps sustain each partner, highlighting Hartlepool as an interesting and

exciting place to visit in a regional and national context.

#### 3. Introducing the Vision, Strategic Aims and Objectives

The development of the Vision, Strategic Aims and Objectives has taken account of where Hartlepool wants to be in the region and sub-region and the expressed cultural needs, demands and aspirations of the local community.

This is an over-arching document, which embraces and promotes a wide range of strategies and actions. Delivery of the resulting Action Plan is the first step towards realising the vision:

"To create a cultural identity for Hartlepool which attracts people to Hartlepool and makes us proud to live and work here".

Hartlepool's current rejuvenation has been dramatic, changing the face of the Town and attracting more and more regional attention. It is important that this continues, to create a sustainable economy and further enhance our growing reputation as a town with a distinct identity within the region.

#### The six Cultural Strategy Aims are:-

- To create a strong cultural identity for Hartlepool within the region.
- To celebrate Hartlepool and express that local identity.
- To develop a sustainable cultural economy
- Seek to support excellence in local cultural, artistic, live entertainment, sporting, and leisure provision / practice.
- Increase participation, inclusion and opportunity for access and diversity.
- Advocate the value of culture, and use it in meeting the expressed needs and aspirations of the community, to raise the bar for levels of cultural awareness, aspiration and participation.

#### 4. The Strategy in Context

This is the Cultural Strategy for Hartlepool; however it is closely allied to the Tees Valley Cultural Strategy to give an overview for the Tees Valley. Its aim is to ensure that, as a sub region, we are well placed to secure strategic funding for major projects which seek to benefit everyone living and working in the Tees Valley.

This all helps to deliver the broad objectives of the Regional Cultural Strategy which was published in July 2001. There is an integral link with the separate Tees Valley Tourism Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy

The Hartlepool Cultural Strategy will link the wider objectives of the Tees Valley with the expressed desire of the local community in Hartlepool.

#### 5. Hartlepool Today

Hartlepool is located in the southern part of the North East region, on the coast at the eastern end of the Tees Valley and has a significant port facility. The A19 passes through the western rural part of the Borough, which contains some distinct villages in attractive countryside. It is a compact Borough with a population of about 91,000. The town has seen a major transformation over the last 20 years, through regeneration programmes and private sector investment. The Borough contains major visitor facilities, including a modem Marina, a revitalised town centre with a wide range of retail facilities, the historic Hartlepool Headland, coastal and estuarine sites of international nature conservation importance, significant international business operations and major opportunities for investment, especially at the new Queens Meadow Business Park, the Marina, Hartlepool Headland, Wynyard and Seaton Carew.

Hartlepool people have a strong sense of identity, the Borough has a strong tradition of partnership working, community and voluntary sector activity and delivering change.

We are an important part of the region with strong connections to the adjoining areas of part of the new Durham Unitary Authority, and are an integral part of the Tees Valley Sub Region.

#### 6. Hartlepool's cultural assets include ......

Hartlepool has a long history of providing cultural activity. Prior to the industrial development of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Headland and Seaton Carew were noted spa and seaside resorts much favoured for summer residence by the gentry of Darlington and Stockton.

Early 1900's North Eastern Railway seaside posters extolling the virtues of visiting 'Happy Healthful Hartlepool' provide continuing evidence of the importance and attractiveness of the town's main physical attractions: its beaches and promenade walks.

#### Parks and Countryside

The countrys ide and maritime environment continue to be important, whether it's the dunes, denes and little tern colony near Crimdon to the north or the Site of Special Scientific Interest at Seaton and the North Gare. All are bounded by

#### Summerhill

Summerhill is a major Countryside development on Hartlepool's doorstep. Since 1997 the 100-acre Council owned site has been transformed for conservation and sports.

Classed as a Local Nature Reserve Summerhill is primarily a new woodland with associated wetlands and meadows. There are also several archaeological sites, notably the remains of the Iron Age / Romano British Catcote Village settlement. It is however the range of outdoor activities that make Summerhill unique. Most facilities' are open access and free to use at any time. Some highlights are the adventure play areas, the competition standard BMX course and the outdoor Boulder Park— the largest of its type in Europe.

Today Summerhill plays a major role as an attraction people can visit free of charge and a venue for meetings and events (including major sporting events such as National BMX competitions). The staff based at the Visitor Centre also run a wide range of activities and events for schools, community groups, businesses and the general public.

Summerhill represents an excellent resource to support artistic aspects of the C ultural Strateg y. The site has a number of art features — notably the Longscar Sound Base. The Visitor Centre is an excellent venue for events — support from the BIG Lottery has enabled free events for play to be hosted, offering almost something every day during the school Summer holidays. Future plans i nclude the 'Monsters, Myths and Legends' trail development, linked to the Cultural Olympiad 2012, which could result in a major new Cultural attraction for the Town, combining physical arts and the understanding of Local History whilst encouraging free and healthy exercise in the Countryside on people's doorstep.

beaches with water quality good enough to be awarded Blue flags. Former railway lines have been converted into linear walkways which also link up with the Sustrans national cycle routes. The inclusion of the rural fringe within the Tees Forest has brought major tree planting opportunities, Burn Valley Family Wood and the development of Summerhill, which introduces active participatory sport and recreation into a country setting, the high rope frame, climbing boulders and BMX track are not what one may expect to find in a rural setting.

The traditional public parks are receiving much overdue attention to reverse years of decline. Ward Jackson Park has been restored to its former glory with contemporary additions, following a £2 million restoration, and in 2008 received a Green Flag Award. Rossmere Park has been similarly improved. Both have active 'friends' who seek to incorporate high profile events into the annual calendar. The Burn Valley is high on the list for renovation and the Borough's network of footpaths and bridleways is now 95% signed and accessible. Burn Valley Gardens has benefited from significant investment in the lower part of the gardens form the Heritage

Lottery Fund. This included landscaping, lighting and play areas/features. The development of the upper Burn Valley Gardens is subject to a report commissioned by the Environment Agency. This will look to develop the

biodiversity value of the upper burn valley and will include the further development of Family Wood.

The town has over 1,000 allotment gardens which represents one of the highest provisions per 1000 population in the North East and reflects a keen allotment gardening culture within the town. Furthermore a self-managing, collective model of management for allotment sites in the Town has been introduced by the gardeners holding allotments as part of the Woodcroft Allotment Association. These aspects form the sound foundations for the Allotment Strategy. This has the aspiration of moving towards a setting where the HBC Parks and Countryside service work with allotment holders and surrounding communities to encourage – through partnership working – the growth of vibrant, supportive and inclusive allotment groups. It also seeks to encourage, support and take forward works to improve the quality, appearance and environmental value of allotments, whilst promoting greater community participation.

By the same token, recreation for Children is a crucial concern in the realm of Parks and Countryside. This is developing - thanks to major investment provided by the Department for Children, Families and Schools - in 22 Playbuilder sites in a variety of locations across the Town, and being shaped with input from the their users – the young people likely to play there.

#### Arts and Events

The Town's Strategic Arts Service exists to create an inclusive setting that provides: more opportunities; for more people (both Hartlepool residents and visitors to the Town); from more diverse backgrounds, to come into more contact with, participate, and engage with, more high quality, diverse, artistic experiences; in more places in Hartlepool, more often. To this end it provides opportunities for everyone to engage with creative activity through projects commissioned by the Arts Development Unit, whilst the venues provide an outlet for a broad range of live performance and entertainment.

The Town Hall Theatre is a 400 seat performing arts space, well used by the community, but also hosting a varied and accessible professional theatre programme including drama, ballet, contemporary dance, comedy and light entertainment.

The Community Studio (on Tower Street) provides a lively venue for local music, with a seven-day week programme for all tastes and a platform for new bands. It has a suite of recording studios and provides training and facilities for new groups and the unwaged. This means that The Studio has considerable potential to form a 'hub' for popular music activity and its development in the Town. This is complemented by Dyke House Secondary School Music Centre together with the proposed new facilities at St. Hilda's School, and an additional new studio development being progressed by Red Dreams.

The refurbished Borough Hall provides an unrivalled venue for major events being able to accommodate over 1200 patrons to concerts, snooker tournaments, televised boxing championships and community dances. It also hosts occasional television and radio programmes such as Question Time and Any Questions and 'Flog It!' (sic.). And such are its multiple potential uses, that every year it provides a setting for the much loved Hartlepool Horticultural Show – one of the Town's traditional events.

#### Maritime Festival

The Festival originated in 2000 as Hartlepod's Millennium celebration and was the largest participatory arts event organised in Hartlepod, involving 23 community groups and 28 schods in the creation of props, street decoration and costume for an 800 strong procession around the Marina. The Festival focused on the vibrant past, present and future of Hartlepool's maritime heitage.

Now established on a biennial basis, the 2002 Festival focussed on raising awareness of cultural diversity in the Borough, and a strong partnership developed with The Circle of Life, who delivered workshops and performances across a wide range of cultural activities.

In 2008, the Festival took part in the regional and national Big Dance initiative by presenting a Nautical Hompipe—danced to a specially commissioned piece of music by a massed group of over 500 dancers. Now in 2009—as part of the build up to The Tall Ships Races 2010, Dockfest 09—an additional major event in the Maritime Festival tradition—will present major stars from the worlds of popular music and comedy in a tented village next to the Hartlepool Maritime Experience site.

Other strategic events run to ensure that there is entertainment for all available on a free-of – charge basis. From the brass band concerts in the Town's Parks to the annual Firework display at Seaton Carew these events attract and are enjoyed by thousands of residents. And that is even before the popularity of the biennial maritime festival is allowed for.

The visual arts scene is served through a number of facilities and projects. Hartlepool Art Gallery, is a purpose designed conversion of Christ Church which now provides a splendid temporary exhibition venue, Tourist Information Centre and viewing tower. This is complemented by a new gallery at English Martyrs School which has Arts College status

and the continued vibrancy of product bursting forth from the Cleveland College of Art and Design in Church Square. Facilities for the creation of visual art by different parts of the community, with particular needs, are also available. Handprint Studio provide studios for the making of visual artworks (such as paintings, collages and sculpture) to Learning Disabled artists. From its premises on Park Road, The Artrium offers visual arts activities for people with mental health issues, whilst Café 177 makes available facilities for urban and digital visual arts to Young People. And casting the net wider shows what a vibrant visual arts culture the Town and its environs enjoys. For instance, the East Durham Artists Forum encourages community artists; practicing professionals have Studios in the Town and in its hinterland; whilst the idea of commissioning renowned sculptor Anish Kapoor to create a bridge sculpture as part of the proposed Victoria Dock development continues to be a source of excitement.

#### Sport and Recreation

Hartlepool is home to Hartlepool United Football Club based at Victoria Park which has seen considerable investment in recent years. Football as a sport is thriving at local level with 72 teams battling it out in local leagues. Rugby is well supported, West Hartlepool having achieved professional status in recent years, supported by many quality teams, including great rivals Hartlepool Rovers.

Hartlepool Cricket Club play in the highly regarded North Yorkshire and South Durham League and have hosted several first class Durham County Cricket Club games prior to the County side developing its own ground at Chester-le-Street. The town boasts three golf courses within its boundaries, two highly prized links courses at Seaton Carew and Hartlepool and a more recent development at Throston.

Other sports; tennis, indoor bowls, sailing athletics, boxing, basketball, hockey, archery, tennis, indoor bowls, are well represented with their own clubs. The town has an outdoor bowls consortium supported by the local authority, which manages 46 teams playing on 11 greens.

#### Community Activity Network

The purpose of the Community Activities Network [CAN] is to bring together & align key objectives across partners working in sport and physical activity in Hartlepcol. The network brings a coordinated approach in increasing opportunities for all in order to maximise participation.

Funding received both from Sport England, the Primary Care Trust and other sources, can be delivered to a central steering group, made up of community; voluntary and public sector members who may decide how best to allocate this. The approach is therefore led by the people of Hartlepcol (rather than a purely public authority sports development led approach). The overall aim of the network is to establish a clear vision for the development of sport and physical activity based on the identification of the needs of the community within Hartlepod. CAN's steering group brings together key members who may have either extensive knowledge in sport or physical activity, may work directly with an appropriate target group. For example, children's fund manager has access to hard to reach groups, disabilities manager, facilities manager and so forth. Working together to establish gaps in provision across the town the group aims to widen access, bring together partners and enhance communication, thereby reducing the chances of duplicating funding and increasing capacity.

The steering group has already drawn in funding from Sport England and the PCT, amounting to £148,000 to date, for a variety of physical activity interventions to the benefit of Hartlengol residents.

Engagement with recent initiatives has seen the creation of a Community Activity Network for Hartlepool (please see box on left). As well as this, recreational and Leisure sports are well catered for by private gymnasiums and fitness centres, and ten-pin bowling alley; together with snooker and pool clubs which are part of national chains. At the same time important facilities are provided through voluntary sector resources, such as the Belle Vue Youth and Community Centre or on educational sites such as Brierton Community Sports Centre.

The 'Quest' accredited Mill House Leisure Centre is the major public leisure facility for the town, currently providing a 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> metre swimming pool, a 57 metre flume and a

learner pool. These facilities are complemented by a main hall, catering for a full range of events as well as sporting activities, squash courts, a fitness suite and a floodlit outdoor area which contains a Skateboard and BMX Park.

The Headland Sports Hall is the latest facility to become 'Quest' quality assured and is home to Hartlepool Sportability Club. This and other facilities are also supplemented by the provision of Community Centres across the town providing a base for a wide range of leisure and recreational activities offered by a whole host of clubs.

The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy for the town was adopted in October 2007. A review of the future use of the Mill House site as a retained community sports hub within the centre of town seemed consistent with the emerging Central Area Investment Framework, is planned to determine the future development of the site.

Critical to this will be to design new facilities meeting the aspirations of other key partners on the site (Hartlepool United FC, Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club and Camerons Brewery), whilst utilising and integrating those sound elements of the buildings which will be retained.

The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy also examined the opportunities afforded for community use of school sites through the BSF initiative, resulting in the plans for colocation of facilities with Rossmere Primary School.

All of these facilities are well supported by the Sports Development Team — also now a 'Quest' quality assured service and only the second in the sub-region. They ensure that a wide range of innovative and engaging sport and physical activity initiatives are available at facilities throughout the town. There is a great emphasis on partnership work, especially with the Schools Sport Partnership and the Primary Care Trust, hence the Sports Development Team is involved in a wide range of schemes such as: youth sport and extended activities, GP Referrals, obesity reduction, smoking reduction, workplace health, drugs intervention to name but a few. They also work extensively

with the voluntary sector ensuring that Clubs can offer good standards in terms of coaching and national governing body accreditation.

Sports Development activity is further facilitated by the operation of an AALA licence for adventurous activity/outdoor pursuits and the Sport and Recreation Service were the first LA service to receive the EFDS (English Federation of Disability Sport) 'Count Me In' accreditation. This heralds the inclusive approach taken in the provision of facilities and activities.

The development of the Hartlepool Sporting Association (HAS) by the Hartlepool College of Further Education in association with six founder Member Clubs; Hartlepool Rovers Rugby Club, Hartlepool Cricket Club, St Francis Football Club, Hartlepool Heat Basketball and Hartlepool Table Tennis Club – seeks to promote education and health through sport and to help clubs grow in terms of quality of performance, coaching, facilities and equipment as well as the quality of players at all levels.

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games creates a great opportunity for Hartlepool to encourage more people to engage in sport and physical activity participation. A recent exciting development is the inclusion of the Marina facilities in the London 2012 Pre Games Training Guide for the Olympic and Paralympic sport of sailing. Working in partnership with colleagues in the region, it is very much hoped that we will be able to attract other countries to set up a training base for their athletes in the North-East leading up to London 2012.

#### Museums and Heritage

Evidence of the town's rich heritage is found throughout the Borough. The natural environment has shaped settlement patterns and economic development through fishing, a safe harbour, railways and docks. The whole story is comprehensively told within the award winning Museum of Hartlepool complete with its own Hartlepool-built paddlesteamer, PSS Wingfield Castle.

Since 2003 the Museums Service has been the lead partner in the Tees Valley for the North East Regional Museums HUB, representing the interests of all the museums across the Tees Valley under the MLA's Renaissance scheme. Hartlepool administers the Tees Valley Renaissance budgets and oversees sub-regional project delivery

The Battery was originally built in 1860 and was adapted several times in its history with the main re-building work taking place in 1900 and 1940. The site is unique in UK military history terms. being the only coastal Battery to fire a shot in anger during the entire First World War. The site was decommissioned in 1956 and into disrepair. In 2001 the Heugh Gun Battery Trust [HGBT] began a programme of work to render the site accessible to visitors. The aim of the HGBT is to ensure the long-term preservation and regeneration of the Heugh Battery and promote it as an interesting part of our heritage. In 2008 the Battery opened to the public, and also began its work as a local and sub-regional teaching resource. In 2009 the Trust began working towards Museum Accreditation, a status it expects to achieve by 2010.

across a range of areas including collections management, audience development, outreach and marketing. It also manages a Renaissance funded learning team with a remit to deliver an education programme focused on the Museum of Hartlepool and Hartlepool Art Gallery. Hartlepool is also the lead partner and host of Tees Archaeology. This organisation provides statutory planning advice and public engagement – having archaeological digs across the boroughs of Hartlepool, Stockton, Redcar and Cleveland and Middlesbrough.

Hartlepool's Headland is an historical gem, with Saxon and earlier finds, a medieval church in St. Hilda's and the remnants of the Medieval Town Wall. The Saxon church at Hart Village and early medieval churches at Elwick and Stranton underpin the Christian legacy in the area. The Victorian 'New Town' of West Hartlepool remains distinctly different in style and physical layout to the medieval intricacies of the Headland.

The town's visitor economy has turned full circle, with the new Marina being very much the focal point for regeneration. The Marina is the site of Hartlepool's visitor attractions, the Museum of Hartlepool, Hartlepool Maritime Experience and the world's second oldest warship afloat, HMS Trincomalee (1817). Trincomalee has undergone full restoration, and is now attracting increasing numbers of visitors as part of the Hartlepool Maritime Experience offer. The Marina is a focus for the town's watersports activity, the Diving Club, the Yacht Club and the focus for the new evening economy which boasts increasing numbers of restaurants, eateries and wine bars, all of which complement the well established and popular town centre pubs, wine bars and night clubs in Church Street and Victoria Road. A seven screen cinema and separate major bingo entertainment complex complete the leisure scene.

#### Libraries

The Public Library provides community based information, reading and learning services and promotes reading and writing as cultural and recreational activities. It provides public venues within the community that are open to all and offer scope for a wide variety of informal and formal events and meetings. All Libraries provide free computer access to the internet and a variety of software packages and information databases. The library provides a mobile library bus service and also a home delivered service.

In 2008/9 over 20,000 residents borrowed books, use of the public access ICT service averaged 6,500 hours each month, and the Reference and Information Service dealt with 23,000 enquiries (from local residents and also enquiries about Hartlepool from throughout the world). Over 600 people who are helped to live in their own home received the Home Library Service. The libraries act as learning resource centres and study spaces for people of all ages involved in formal and informal learning. In the Household User Survey of January 2008 the public library service scored the highest satisfaction rating of all Hartlepool Council's services. The library is a trusted and popular community based service, integrated and engaged with the public in many ways.

A major strand for future development is the refurbishment of the Central Library. Whilst the Central Library provides excellent services, the building is open to the public seven days per week and naturally suffers wear and tear. It is also necessary to adapt the internal lay-out of the building to deliver the service priorities for today and the foreseeable future within a setting that is pleasant and attractive. The study of family history attracts many people from outside of the town and from abroad. It is essential the local study facilities, based primarily in the Central Reference Library provide a positive image of Hartlepool. In accordance with the importance of learning for people of all ages the developments will enhance the library as an excellent study and learning centre, and a place to support parents and assist development children's literacy skills and learning. As a centre of culture, the Central Library will also host a diverse range of exhibitions and cultural and community activities.

To achieve this the library will establish costs of design, building and improvement works and identify possible sources of capital funding to carry these out. The library will also consult with the public in developing its plans and proposals. RFID self service technology was introduced within Central Library in early 2009 and consideration given to the scope for introducing a fully integrated RFID system across all library service points. This will offer increased functionality to the public and enable staff to spend more time assisting the public and provide a more 'value added' service. The Library will extend the breadth of information services available to the public through partnership arrangements with other organisations and information providers and will provide space and facilities within libraries for organisations to deliver their services. A successful model for this type of partnership already operates at Central Library with a child and disability information services.

#### 7. Links with other Strategies .......

The initial development of this strategy drew upon the guidance published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (January 2002) and incorporates the requirements of the Best Value Key Performance Indicator for the adoption of a Local Cultural Strategy by December 2002.

Following this the 'Local' Cultural Strategy was devised to fit into a hierarchy of Strategic Regional thinking. The DCMS sponsored advisory body 'Culture North East' was established in and co-ordinated the production of the Regional Cultural Strategy published in July 2001. This was later reviewed and republished as the Revised Regional Cultural Strategy in 2005. More recently the Hodge Review in 2008 recommended the simplification of the support system for culture in the English region's through the ending of funding support for the Regional Cultural Consortia (in our case Culture North East) to be replaced by closer strategic coordination between Arts Council England, Sport England, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, and English Heritage.

The role of the Association of North East Councils and the DCMS officers group – with representatives from the 12 North East Local Authorities - is now assuming greater cultural strategic significance.

#### Tees Valley Cultural Strategy

At sub-regional level, Hartlepool has strong linkages with its neighbouring authorities within the Tees Valley Partnership which will play a key role in delivering the sub regional economic development and regeneration agenda. The development of a Vision for the Tees Valley resulted in the production of a number of studies and strategies. There are three which are relevant in this context – the Tees Valley Economic Strategy, The Tees Valley Tourism Strategy and the Tees Valley Cultural Strategy.

The initial Tees Valley Cultural Strategy was developed in partnership with the Tees Valley Local Authorities — Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees. Hence major work is now progressing on achieving a refreshed version of this for the next five years.

The fundamental and long-term aim of the Tees Valley Cultural Strategy was to change the culture of the area and not just deliver a strategy for the development of cultural facilities and assets. This aim is likely to prevail at least until the completion of the next cultural strategy.

The three main objectives of the initial Strategy were: -

- Strengthen existing and important cultural assets of the Tees Valley
- Facilitate the provision of new cultural assets
- Undertake the above in a manner that promotes economic renaissance

The Strategy sought to tackle issues of self-esteem, aspirations, entrepreneurship and social inventiveness as well as addressing the important issues of place marketing, image improvements, employment creation and social inclusion.

#### **Local Context**

The Tees Valley Vision identified Hartlepool as pivotal to the success of the "Coastal Leisure and Tourism Belt" encouraging investment and development of the Tourism, Leisure and Wildlife potential. The existing Single Programme bidding round which includes the "Coastal Arc" in partnership with Redcar & Cleveland and the Maritime and Coastal Trail Theme of the Tees Valley Cultural Strategy builds on this pre-existing strength. The vision seeks to encourage further investment to help provide a self sustaining critical mass to Hartlepool's tourism and cultural economy. A particular aspect of this, led by the thinking of the LTP 'visit Tees Valley' is to develop a robust economy based on wealth creation through the provision of major public events.

The most recent development on this matter has seen the five Borough's of the Tees Valley co-operating with other partners (such as the sub-region's Universities and Tees Valley Unlimited), to devise a new cultural strategy for the sub-region. The first draft of this was published in January 2009 and contains eight aims of strategic importance which resonate with much of the Hartlepool Cultural Strategy. (Please see appendix one).

#### <u>Hartlepool Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership)</u>

Culture and leisure are specifically reflected within the Hartlepool Community Strategy and Vision providing a common framework and overall direction for the Hartlepool Partnership and the Borough Council.

The Community Strategy has seven priority aims which seek to improve all aspects of life in the Borough.

#### 1. Jobs and the Economy

Develop a more enterprising, vigorous and diverse local economy that will attract investment, be globally competitive and create more employment opportunities for local people.

#### 2. Lifelong Learning and Skills

All children, young people, individuals, groups and organisations are enabled to achieve their full potential through equal access to the highest education, lifelong learning and training opportunities.

#### 3. Health and Wellbeing

Work in partnership with the people of Hartlepool to promote and ensure the best possible health and wellbeing

#### 4. Community Safety

Make Hartlepool a safer place by reducing crime, and anti-social behaviour, and tackling drugs and alcohol misuse.

#### 5. Environment

Secure and enhance an attractive and sustainable environment that is clean, green, safe and valued by the community.

#### 6. Housing

Ensure that there is access to good quality and affordable housing in sustainable neighbourhoods and communities where people want to live.

## 7. Culture, Leisure & Community Learning Create a cultural identity for Hartlepool which attracts people to Hartlepool and makes us proud to live and work here.

#### 8. Strengthening Communities

Empower individuals, groups and communities, and increase the involvement of citizens in all decisions that affect their lives.

The Theme Partnership for **Culture**, **Leisure** and **Community Learning Partnership** is the co-ordinating body for overseeing the delivery of this Strategy within the Borough on behalf of the Hartlepool Partnership.

Opportunities for culture and leisure add greatly to the richness and diversity of neighbourhood life, so it is important that a wide range of accessible facilities and opportunities are on offer to promote greater involvement in leisure and cultural activities. They provide a creative outlet and can be a powerful tool in tackling economic and social inclusion. Access to, and availability of culture and leisure facilities is a significant attraction for tourists.

#### 8. Developing the Vision

In developing the initial Strategy [2001], a comprehensive analysis of all culturally related service plans, consultation questionnaires and Viewpoint 1000 panel returns was drawn upon to give a comprehensive picture of what the resident and visitor find attractive, enjoyable and satisfying about living in Hartlepool.

Key is sues emerged from this overview of cultural activities and these are documented below. In addition, this was complemented by a commissioned report, which focussed on community groups within the well-developed voluntary sector.

#### Analysis Results 2001 ~ Key Issues

#### Visual Arts/Performing Arts

The overview suggests relatively low proportions of residents visit galleries in general, despite this, the Art Gallery in Hartlepool has favourable attendance levels in comparison with similar venues elsewhere and is identified as a resource that would seem to have the potential for greater cultural and social inclusion opportunities. Uninteresting activities and a lack of information are the most commonly cited barriers to meeting expressed needs, and as an imbalance in cultural wellbeing emerges from the overview in respect of the visual arts, it is identified as a key strategic issue.

The overview also identified an imbalance in cultural wellbeing from the performing arts. Whilst only relatively low proportions of residents go to see a performance, the majority of these are to performing arts venues outside Hartlepool.

This suggests an opportunity to expand the audience for venues within Hartlepool. The most significant barriers are a perœived lack of facilities, uninteresting activity and a local lack of information. With low current "usage/participation", but a high level of 'interest' there remains excellent potential for development of theatre and performing venues in Hartlepool.

The perceived lack of adequate marketing for cultural venues and activities is identified as a key strategic issue.

#### Health

Poor health is a reason given by many respondents to explain why they are prevented from participating in cultural activities in which they have an interest. There may be a physical impairment which precludes undertaking the activity e.g. sport/exercise. In other cases a physical or mental condition may an effective barrier to attendance at an event.

However, not all problems will be severe disabilities and some claims by respondents of 'poor health' may be excuses (perhaps to themselves) for non-participation. Relatively low proportions say they suffered poor health in the context of some activities e.g. going to the cinema or performance arts. There is a wide range of personal health problems, and individual circumstances differ. For policy purposes suitable links with local health strategies may prove useful in treating this as a key strategic issue.

#### Expense

A reason for non-participation which occurs consistently across most category headings is the expense of gaining access to an activity or, less frequently, the expense of getting to an activity. Spending at a location e.g. eating out at a restaurant, is probably included and expense is of little importance only where access is free.

In Hartlepool a relatively high proportion of residents are dependent on benefits and a significant number of others survive on low incomes. Social inclusion may be particularly important to the participation of these groups in many cultural activities. The cost to individuals and families of participating in cultural activities is a key strategic issue.

#### Uninteresting Activities Locally

This was a barrier identified in the analysis for several activities in which respondents expressed an interest – sport/exercise; going out to a town centre pub/club or a local pub/club; art galleries; and performance arts. Where the activity generates significant number of trips out of Hartlepool it is probable that respondents have clear alternatives to local attractions in mind e.g. seeing a play. In other cases respondents may not have a clear idea of 'interesting activities'.

Some people may not be sufficiently aware of local activities to make an effective judgement but assume them to be uninteresting, perhaps from hearsay. The perception that several activities are uninteresting locally is a key strategic issue that requires addressing through the local cultural strategy.

#### **Information**

Information has been touched upon in considering other key issues but it is also identified in its own right. Lack of information was mentioned specifically and frequently as a reason for non-participation in several cultural activities — sports/exercise; art galleries; museums/heritage; live music; opera etc. and libraries.

Information has a key part to play in coherent cultural provision, especially where many public agencies and private, voluntary and community sectors are involved. If people do not know about an activity, a linked activity or where they are housed they cannot attend. Even if they know about it they may assume it is 'not for them'. In various dimensions, information may be crucial to removing several barriers and it is a key strategic issue.

The 2009 perspective – Relative Health, Wealth and Engagement

Although the 2001 consultation that led to the conclusions noted above took place for the original cultural strategy, new research carried out for Hartlepool Borough Council in 2009<sup>2</sup> provides indications of similar patterns.

That is, there is a strong association between the Town wards where there are low levels of personal health, low levels of household income and low levels of satisfaction with the Town's arts and museums. Hence the issues and the resulting drive to contribute to the enhancing of wellbeing for all will be carried forward as an underpinning aim of our Cultural Strategy.

Thus both the initial and new data were used as a basis for extensive consultation within the Culture, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Partnership as this strategy was developed.

#### Cross Cutting Issues

A local cultural strategy can be expected to demonstrate 'joined up' thinking across cultural activities. Relationships between activities emerge from the analysis, for example 'walking' links parks/recreation with participation in sport/exercise; museums/heritage is linked to conservation areas and Summerhill. The process of strategy development must act as a catalyst to identifying and forging other links.

#### Links to Other Strategies

A local cultural strategy requires links with regional and sub-regional cultural strategies and with the Hartlepool Community Strategy. Establishing links to other strategies (e.g. health) and making these links effective in delivering real benefits is also desirable. Identifying this as a key strategic issue can help to specify relevant processes through consultation.

To illustrate through an example, museums and heritage sites are vital to the success of the tourism sector in Hartlepool. Heritage attractions may need to be enhanced in future to maintain and increase visitor numbers and new attractions may need to be developed. Both residents and visitors would be beneficiaries.

Similarly, feeling safe from crime and vandalism is important to enjoying cultural activities. This was mentioned specifically in the context of parks/recreation and may be relevant to others e.g. public art.

#### Community and Voluntary Sector Consultation

The study has highlighted the important role the voluntary and community sector has in the development and delivery of cultural activities in Hartlepool. It has confirmed a general willingness for co-operation between the voluntary sector, the Council and other partner bodies to improve service.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> **Ips os MORI**, *'Hartlepool Household Survey Results 2008*, research commissioned by the Hartlepool Partnership, Hartlepool NDC and Hartlepool Borough Council (Published February 2009)

Key is sues have been identified, namely: -

- A need for a comprehensive directory on the community premises, facilities and resources available in Hartlepool. The outcome would be better use of existing facilities and increased co-operation between groups.
- The development of an effective network/forum to enable cultural sector groups the opportunity to share information through a series of regular thematic meetings, leading to better co-operation, increased planning and programming.
- Venue hire costs were identified as a perceived barrier to many, and a
  desire emerged for a standardised series of charges to facilities. Increased
  awareness of what is available at subsidised community rates would be
  helpful. The expansion of concessionary charges to charging cultural
  activities to the voluntary sector was desired.
- A desire to be consulted on the opportunities for alternative methods of use when improvements and re-developments are planned, including the adaptation of new spaces and non-traditional venues. A review of existing provision is required.
- A recognition that the quality of sports facilities is a problem, with a marked contrast between the flagship developments and older facilities. Support for action to redevelop the older sites.
- A recognition that many community facilities suffer as targets for vandalism, leading to security measures and repairs that have left unsightly and nonwelcoming facilities. In addition, a perception of safety in parks and car parking areas giving cause for concern in terms of current security measures. A desire to be involved in discussions regarding solutions and examples of good practice elsewhere.
- Closer links between cultural and health initiatives was seen as a key issue.
  Whist there was a willingness to participate, groups expressed that there
  was a lack of information about how they could do this. A desire for the
  voluntary sector to be represented at discussions for new initiatives which
  link culture and health activities.
- Community groups expressed great concern regarding their ability to continue to recruit new members and retain existing volunteers. The solutions included better induction, support and long term training programmes for volunteers, targeting of volunteers who can offer specialist skills e.g. marketing and fundraising. The possible role for Millennium Volunteers to act as a conduit to recruit younger people to cultural activities.

- General lack of confidence in securing positive responses from the media regarding voluntary activities. Action needs to be taken to support and train voluntary groups involved in cultural activities to access the local, regional and national media. Some specific concerns emerged regarding adequate representation within the local press. Training will assist in gaining positive coverage and there is a need for local press to be more proactive in covering cultural activities.
- A call from the voluntary sector, particularly heritage groups, to be involved
  in the process of commissioning site specific pieces of public art, viewed as
  necessary to improve local significance of the artwork to improve local
  "ownership".

The challenge for this Strategy is to ensure that all partners work together to address the identified issues.

The key issues identified within the consultation process have been incorporated within the resulting Action Plan and combine with the current strategic projects emerging from existing strategies and the Tees Valley Cultural Strategy to achieve a vision for Hartlepool.

In essence, everything that we seek to achieve will be delivered through the Culture, Leisure and Community Learning Partnership and will contribute to the aims of the Community Strategy which has been developed and approved by the Hartlepool Partnership

#### 9. The Vision, Strategic Aims and Objectives

The development of the vision, strategic aims and objectives takes account of where Hartlepool wants to be in the region and sub-region and the expressed cultural needs, demands and aspirations of the local community.

The strategic framework outlined below stems from these local aspirations and is expected to have a positive impact on Hartlepool and its residents. It is an overarching document for the many plans and strategies which will embrace the actions outlined and commit to ensure delivery. The resulting Action Plan a further step towards realising the vision: -

"To create a cultural identity for Hartlepool which attracts people to Hartlepool and makes us proud to live and work here".

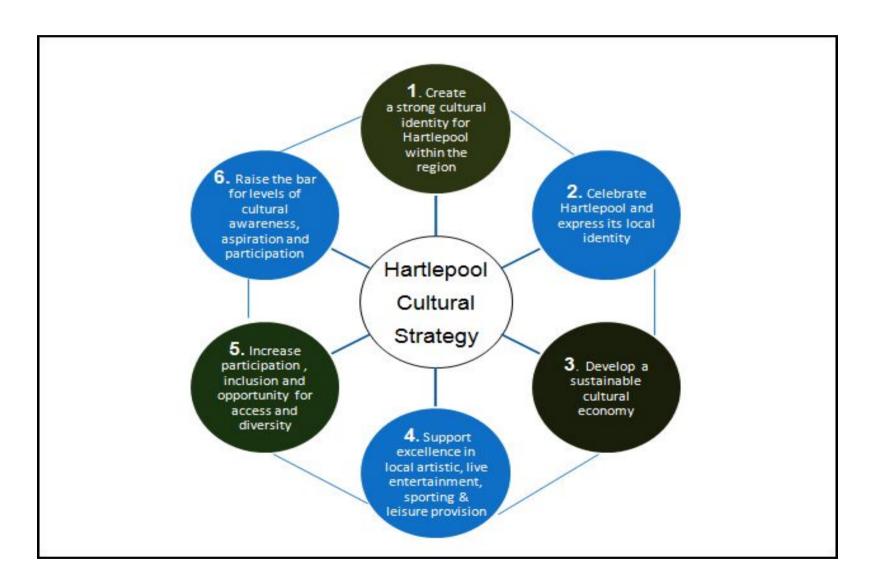
The Strategic Aims and Objectives will work towards achieving this Vision. Against each objective are a number of actions and timescales for delivery. The timescales being: -

Short term; within 18 months (December 2010) Medium term; within 3 years (March 2012) Long term; within 5 years (March 2015)

Hartlepool's current rejuvenation has been dramatic, changing the face of the town and attracting more and more regional attention. It is important that this continues, to create a sustainable economy and further enhance our growing reputation as a town with a distinct identity within the region.

In order to maximise our potential the following six main Aims and Objectives have been created. Please see diagram on next page, and the following details of how these aims breakdown into objectives.

#### Hartlepool Cultural Strategy – The six main aims and objectives



#### Aim 1

To create a strong cultural identity for Hartlepool within the region.

#### **Objectives**

- Develop and promote an effective image for Hartlepool.
- Preserve and develop Hartlepool's built and natural assets and use them to promote local culture and heritage.
- Improve the promotion of our existing facilities and activities.

#### Aim 2

To celebrate Hartlepool and express that local identity.

#### **Objectives**

- Ensure that cultural provision is a key factor in community development and capacity building initiatives.
- Increase opportunities for celebrating Hartlepool and its cultural heritage.

#### Aim 3

To develop a sustainable cultural economy.

#### **Objectives**

- Encourage the provision of key cultural facilities and identify opportunities to develop relevant visitor attractions.
- Develop existing cultural facilities to improve their impact at regional, subregional and community levels.
- Encourage the establishment and growth of cultural sector businesses and the development of the town's evening economy.

#### Aim 4

Seek to support excellence in local cultural, artistic, live entertainment, sporting, and leisure provision / practice.

#### **Objectives**

- Enable exposure to artistic, cultural and sporting experience of the highest possible standard and quality
- Create opportunities for artists, performers and sports people in the Borough to challenge themselves to the very best of their abilities.
- Create pathways and routes for cultural exchange so that excellence in local practice is matched and enhanced by the importing of national and world practitioners who can be role models for people in Hartlepool.
- Build links to excellent international projects created to use culture to address similar issues to those facing communities in Hartlepool.

#### Aim 5

Increase participation, inclusion, and opportunity for access and diversity.

#### **Objectives**

- Remove barriers and open doors to cultural opportunities for all.
- Celebrate diversity, promote equality of opportunity for all in cultural provision.
- Value and encourage the voluntary and community sector in the delivery of cultural pursuits.
- Ensure that residents have good access to information and cultural facilities, within their neighbourhood.
- Enhance access, participation and service within the libraries through the major refurbishment and remodelling of the Central Library, and the introduction of RFID self-service technology.
- Instigate and encourage cultural projects devised and run as creative celebrations of difference, thus prodaiming the Town's commitment to inclusivity and diversity.
- Examine the potential for creating a fully accessible performing resource for use as an Indusive and Diverse Arts Resource, through the means of pursuing elements of the arts development and inclusion plan.

#### Aim 6

Advocate the value of culture, and use it in meeting the expressed needs and aspirations of the community, to raise the bar for levels of cultural awareness, aspiration and participation.

#### **Objectives**

- Put in place the cultural capacity to enable schools to extend their use of culture as a vehicle to raise achievement and support engagement.
- Encourage people to discover new ways of learning and realise their full potential.
- Extend resident involvement with Sports Development initiatives.
- Ensure the Leisure, Culture and Community Learning Theme Partnership is led cohesively and championed comprehensively.
- Establish and harvest the benefits of a Community Arts and Inclusion Network.

### 10. Action plan

### 10. 1. Planned strategic initiatives by provision area

### Sport & Recreation

- Continue to improve upon the facility infrastructure available in the town through the delivery of the indoor sports strategies. A replacement for the existing Mill House facilities is of particular importance.
- London 2012 The marina is recognised as a potential training camp facility for the Olympics and Paralympics and we hope to realise our ambition to act as hosts to a visiting nation who wish to train for the sailing events
- Drive up sport and physical activity participation in the Borough by 1% year on year reducing inequalities and barriers – This is all associated as part of the London 2012 legacy action plan (NI 8)
- Ensure that we have in place a suitable programme of activities and initiatives to improve the general health and well being of the local community
- Continue to provide advice and funding support to the community and voluntary sector
- Continue to work in partnership with a variety of internal and external partners, including all local, sub-regional, regional and national agencies and organisations to deliver social change

### Museums & Heritage

- Deliver on current Renaissance programme and advocate for continued funding after 2011, with our partners in the Tees Valley and North East region.
- To operate and further develop the archaeology (via Tees Archaeology), learning, exhibitions, events and outreach programmes.
- To further develop the tourist industry in Hartlepool by maintaining, promoting and developing our tourist offer.
- To safeguard our collections, developing them as publically accessible in terms of both virtual and physical accessibility.
- To proactively participate and drive events of regional and national importance such as The Tall Ships Races 2010 and the Cultural Olympiad.
- To encourage and support volunteering at heritage sites, and engagement with young people.

### Parks & Open Spaces

- Rejuvenate and improve existing Parks facilities.
- Develop wider use of Park facilities
- Replace, improve, or rejuvenate existing recreation grounds and develop wider usage of these facilities by people of all ages.
- Increase the number and quality of Outdoor Play Areas in line with the Out Door Equipment Play facilities strategy, Playbuilder Event Allocation and the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) strategy, with 22 Playbuilder sites planned to be in place by March 2011

- Implement the 2010 Allotment Strategy for the Borough, hence maintaining and rejuvenating the current allotment stock providing for the widest user base whilst encouraging self-management
- Manage current rights of way and countryside access whilst improving the network and liaising with new developments on 106 agreements.

### Libraries

- Continue developing and improving a Library Service that is attractive, promotes participation in reading and literature and supports local writing and creativity.
- Provide quality information services and inspire and support the study of local and family history.
- Increase and enhance the breadth of information services offered to the public through partnership arrangements with other organisations and information providers.
- Refurbish and enhance the Central Library, providing an attractive and welcoming community space for study, informal learning and the provision of a diverse range of exhibitions and cultural and community activities.
- Introduce a fully integrated Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system across the Library to all branches.
- Increase and enhance the breadth of the information service offered to the public through partnership arrangements with other organisations and information providers

- Provide support to parents and carers and assist in the development of children's literacy skills and learning.
- Support and work with the Library Friends Local History Group to create new resources and exhibitions and encourage participation in recording and celebrating local history and culture.
- Examine the current library network and explore new ways of delivering services to improve levels of community engagement with the library service (as measured by the National Indicator NI9).
- Continue to work in partnership with Hartlepool Cultural Service providers and a
  wide range of other local, regional and national partners and with the Third Sector
  to increase participation in literary and cultural activities.
- Examine how the branch service network should be developed and explore and develop ways of delivering outreach services.
- Work within the framework of national and local priorities and the need to deliver services as efficiently as possible.
- Engage with the public and with communities to ensure services are embedded within locally expressed needs and priorities.
- Support and work with the Library Friends Group, and arrange regular meetings.
   The Library Friends group will be the principle library specific organisation for local public engagement in the planning, development and delivery of Public Library Services in Hartlepool.
- Continue to work in partnership with Hartlepool's Cultural Service providers and other local and Council services, with the voluntary and community sector and with regional and national partners and agencies.

### Strategic Arts & Events

- Enhance levels of public engagement and access (as measured with NI11) by providing appropriate artistic and access opportunities.
- Devise, manage and deliver major events for the Town such as the Hartlepool Dockfest 2009 and its run ons.
- Collate and manage a review of the Hartlepool Borough Council Cultural Strategy.
- Develop and deliver arts development strategies for the Borough for the various art forms and disciplines, starting with a 'dance development strategy', to be followed by a 'young people's inclusive drama initiative'

Create and support networks and frameworks for the mutual information and skills between workers focusing on special activity themes (such as youth arts, multicultural arts, dance, music etc).

- Actively promote, advise and support a broad range of high quality arts and cultural events.
- Facilitate cultural and arts learning, training and participation through a wide range of activities and events across all art forms which specifically aim to increase awareness and interest amongst communities which do not currently engage in cultural activities.
- Deliver and promote Hartlepool's Halls Service together with other venues and performance sites as feasible opportunities arise.
- Create and use a strategic programming framework for arts and events in the Borough whilst enhancing partnerships, connections and engagements with the voluntary sector.

- Research and compile a delivery plan for a visual arts mural for the Town Railway
   Station timed for unveiling of artwork by Spring 2010 in time for Tall Ships.
- Build on the legacy of the Tall Ships Races 2010 to bid for and develop future major events.
- Provide input to the developing Tees Valley cultural strategy.
- Review stage access at the Town Hall Theatre as the starting point for further enhancing the venues' indusivity.

### 10. Action Plan

### 10.2 LOCAL CULTURAL STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

# Strategic Aim 1 - To create a strong cultural identity for Hartlepool within the region.

**Objective 1a:** Develop and promote an effective image for Hartlepool.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Develop and maintain a Marketing Strategy in order to improve publicity and promotion and raise awareness of the cultural offer within Hartlepool, thus encouraging increased tourism and resident participation.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Passport Group. Hartlepool Mail. Radio Cleveland. Regional/Media Operators. Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit.	Short	Jo Cole	Raise awareness of the cultural offer. Increase participation.
2.	To support the Hartlepool Tourism Strategy to achieve co-ordination of further Tourism related activities and create regional impact.	Sector Stakeholders.	Short	Jo Cole	To identify forward strategies for key components of the Hartlepool Tourism offer.
3.	Secure and deliver The Tall Ships Races 2010 for the Town	Hartlepool Borough Council. Sector Stakeholders. Tees Valley Partnership One North East	Short / medium	John Mennear	Tall Ships Races 2010 secured to run in August 2010. Workstreams in place and functioning. Maximise impact by attracting residents and visitors to the event.
3.	Bid for future Tall Ships Races	Hartlepool Borough Council Sector stakeholders Tees Valley Partnership One North East	Medium	John Mennear	Building on the legacy of the Tall Ships Races 2010 this would emphasise the role of Hartlepool as a major maritime destination capable of delivering large scale

Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
				events for the region.
Enhance visitor orientation and awareness of attractions through an ongoing Network of 'brown' signs.	Hartlepool Borough Council	Medium	Jo Cole	Enhance visitor orientation and awareness of attractions through an ongoing Network of 'brown' signs.
5. To support the Tees Valley Cultural Marketing and Events Agency for the co-ordination and development of new programmes designed to raise awareness of the cultural offer and maximise the impact, branding and marketing resources.		Short	Julia Frater	Operate strategically in the Tees Valley on the timing and range of events.  Maximise the impact of branding and marketing.

# Strategic Aim 1 - To create a strong cultural identity for Hartlepool within the region.

**Objective 1b:** Preserve and develop Hartlepool's built and natural assets and use them to promote local culture and heritage.

Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
Continue to develop opportunities arising through the indoor sports and PPG17 Open Spaces study as well as BSF & Primary Capital Initiative.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Sport England. NHS Hartlepool NGBs of sport.	Medium	Pat Usher	Improved provision of sporting infrastructure within the Town.
Continue to seek opportunities for the enhancement and development of Summerhill as a major countryside and cultural attraction in the Tees Valley	Hartlepool Borough Council. Strategic Funding Partners.	Long	Tony Davison	Improved access to the countryside on peoples' doorsteps through the development of visitor attractions  Provision of an extensive activity and events programme with a wide ranging appeal
3. Develop a Summerhill Tea Shop	Hartlepool Borough Council			Make available flexibile and unique opportunities to see and take part in events. Enhance the facility and help attract general visitors.
4. Develop the Monster, Myths and Legends story trail at Summerhill.	Hartlepool Borough Council The Arts Council			Enhance the facility and enourage walking and interaction with the arts.
5 Continue to identify and declare appropriate areas as local nature reserves.	Hartlepool Borough Council. English Nature. BCTV.	Long	Chris Wenlock	Improve and increase access to the natural environment.
6 Develop, adopt and implement the Allotment Strategy.	Allotment Association Development Control Parks & Countryside Community Safety	Long	Chris Wenlock	Enhanced provision of and access to allotment facilities.

# Strategic Aim 1 - To create a strong cultural identity for Hartlepool within the region.

**Objective 1c:** Improve the promotion of our existing facilities and activities.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Develop 'Hartlepool Now' as an online, virtual place, to present information from a range sources the people of Hartlepool can go for good quality information about local services and to find out what is happening in their area.	Hartlepool Borough Council Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency NHS Hartlepool Voluntary and community sector	Long	Leigh Keeble	Range of information presented on line to be in an accessible form enabling the people of Hartlepool to access it with ease.  Site empowers Hartlepool people to use it as a source of good quality information on local services and as a means of finding out what is on.
2.	Review the effectiveness of current marketing and publicity avenues for the promotion of the town's cultural programme and develop Marketing Strategy.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Private Sector Operatives. Voluntary Sector/Trust Operators. Hartlepool Partnership. Hartlepool Mail. Regional Media Operators Tees Valley Museums.	Short	Claire Munroe	To improve the effectiveness of marketing and increase visitors and participants at the town's cultural attractions.  Improve perceptions of the quality of the local product.
3.	Explore the use of social media such as FaceBook and Twitter for communication and awareness raising.	Hartlepool Borough Council	Medium	Claire Munroe	Potentially attracting non-traditional audiences especially young people.
4.	Increase awareness of cultural engagement according to the NI11 definitions by running a related promotional campaign		Medium	David Worthington	Enhanced awareness among residents of NI11 engagement such that it supports an upward trajectory for this indicator.

# Strategic Aim 2 - To celebrate Hartlepool and express local identity.

**Objective 2a:** Ensure that cultural provision is a key factor in community development and capacity building initiatives.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Provide the grants support scheme to develop the independent cultural sector.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency.	Long	Pat Usher	Strengthen the Independent Cultural Sector. Broaden the town's cultural offer and stimulate social and economic well being.
2.	Investigate existing provision of outreach services within the community, identify areas of need and develop and deliver appropriate library, museum, art and sport programmes working with the community and voluntary sector.	Arts Council, NE. Sport England. Voluntary and community sector		David Worthington Graham Jarritt Pat Usher	Improved access. Capacity building. Life long learning opportunities.
3.	Encourage, and work with, communities to identify cultural projects that can be supported from external funding, that support community involvement and capacity building.	Hartlepool Borough Council. North Hartlepool Partnership. New Deal for Communities (West Central Hartlepool). Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The Ohanaeze Group Community Network Neighbourhood Action Plans Voluntary and community sector Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency	Short	John Mennear	Increase participation. Improve capacity building in cultural sector. Improve self-esteem and skills development.

4.	Secure a new Partnership Agreement	Hartlepool Borough Council.	Short	John Mennear	Improve linkages between the
	with the Arts Council (NE) to improve	Arts Council, North East.			arts function and delivery
	strategic positioning of the arts in the	Hartlepool Partnership (LSP)			partnerships.
	Local authority.	Community Safety Partnership.			Commitment to the arts
		Hartlepool Primary Care Trust.			contributing to the local
					authority's priorities.
					Ongoing with ACNE and Tees
					Valley Authorities.
					Approval to March 2011

# Strategic Aim 2 - To celebrate Hartlepool and express local identity.

**Objective 2b:** Increase opportunities for celebrating Hartlepool and its cultural heritage.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Devise and deliver arts development projects targeted at identified parts of the community with special provision / engagement needs (such as Young People, people with disabilities, cultural minorities, disadvantaged and hard to reach people).	Tees Valley Partnership (Single Programme).	Short	David Worthington	Enhance the local cultural offer. Develop skills and self-esteem.  Delivered successfully April, 2010, with comprehensive partnerships achieved.
2.	Continue to develop the regional impact of the biennial Hartlepool Maritime Festival (2004 onwards) and the Cultural Surround build up to Tall Ships Races 2010.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Tees Valley Partnership. Private Sector Sponsors. Voluntary and community sector	Short	David Worthington	Enhance the Maritime Heritage of the town. Increased visitor numbers.
3.	Ensure complementary provision of event planning throughout the Borough to increase participation and optimise on resources.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency Private Sector Sponsors. Community Organisations.	Short	David Worthington	More effective event planning that optimises local opportunity and links to Tourism opportunities.

**Objective 3a:** Encourage the provision of key cultural facilities and identify opportunities to develop relevant visitor attractions.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Support the HMS Trincomalee Trust in its bid to develop a sustainable future.	Trincomalee Trust. Private Sector. English Partnerships. Hartlepool Borough Coundl. Heritage Lottery Fund. National Maritime Museum. Tees Valley Partnership (Single Programme). Grant making Trusts and Foundations	Short/ Medium	John Mennear	Secure the future of HMS Trincomalee in Hartlepool. Contribute to the Maritime Heritage visitor offer as a local / regional / national attraction.
2.	Establish linkage to Green Tourism through support of the RSPB development of the Tees Valley International Nature Reserve at Port Clarence Marshes, Saltholme	INCA. Stockton Borough Council.	Medium	Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	A major visitor attraction to the south of Hartlepool with significant benefits to the visitor economy.
3.	Support the Tees Valley County Sport Partnership to achieve excellence in the 'niche' sporting activities through better facilities, events and delivery.	Local Authorities.	Long	Pat Usher	Achieve positive results in tourism, regeneration, health and education. Improve health of residents. Give confidence to participate in sport and associated events. Pursue excellence in 'niche' sports established in the Tees Valley.

**Objective 3b:** Develop existing cultural facilities to improve their impact at regional, sub-regional and community levels.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Advocacy to ensure Hartlepool Museum as an integral part of the North East Hub established by the "Renaissance", initiative to improve museum funding support and outcomes to the sector.	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Department for Culture, Media and Sport Tyne and Wear Museums. Bowes Museum. Beamish Museum. Tees Valley Museum Services.		David Worthington	Deliver agreed outcomes to the regional museums sector and its users.  Work in partnership with the North East Hub to deliver outcomes agreed with Resource. Increase users and satisfaction levels.
2.	Continue to implement the principles of the Hartlepool Play Facilities Strategy to rationalise and improve the quality of outdoor play facilities which meet community needs and current standards by deploying Playbuilder funding.	Tees Valley Partnership (Single Programme). Sure Start. Children's Fund.	Short	Chris Wenlock	

Objective 3b cont: Develop existing cultural facilities to improve their impact at regional, sub-regional and community levels.

Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
Review community access opportunities to the town's cultural sector community assets.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Voluntary and community sector Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency. Culture Leisure and Community Learning Theme Partnership. Schools Children's Trust		John Mennear	Improved support for the community/voluntary sector. Positive community support. Sustainable venues.

**Objective 3c:** Encourage the establishment and growth of cultural sector businesses and the development of the town's evening economy.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Contribute to and participate in review		Long	John Mennear/	Map potential exit strategy from
	of mechanisms for Cultural	<i>'</i>		David Worthington	ACENE RFO status post 2011
	Partnerships between the Tees Valley	Media and Sport group			Propose and agree new form
	Local Authorities.	Arts Council England North East			and function for cross Authority
		Sports England			officer groups such as Tees
		Tees Valley Culture Officers Sub			Valley Strategic Arts Officers
		Group (TVCOSG)			Group.
		Businesses.			
2.	Encourage improvements to the	Hartlepool Borough Council.	Medium	Jo Cole	Increase bed space provision.
	tourist infrastructure including the	English Partnership.			Improve visitor retention rates.
	development of hotels and conference	Tees Valley Partnership.			Enhance the requirement for the
	facilities.	HMS Trincomalee Trust.			evening economy.
		Hartlepool United F.C.			

### Strategic Aim 4 - Support excellence in local artistic, live entertainment, sporting & leisure provision.

**Objective 4a:** Enable exposure to artistic, cultural and sporting experiences of the highest possible standard and quality.

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Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1. Devise, develop and deliver plans	Tees Valley Partnership.	Long	Pat Usher	Develop a London 2012 sport &
relating to opportunities flowing from the London 2012 Olympics.	Arts Council England North East Sports England TVCOSG Businesses.		David Worthington	physical activity action plan. Create and implement plans relating to the Cultural Olympiad 2012, including assessing the viability of the Summerhill Monster Myths and Legends story trail.
Build on opportunities linked to Hartlepools potential selection as a Olympic Training Site		Long	Pat Usher	Develop and implement sports provision built around possible Olympics infrastructure. Links to 2012 Action Plan (as above)

# Strategic Aim 5 - Increase participation, opportunity for access and diversity.

**Objective 5a:** Remove barriers and open doors to cultural opportunities for all.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Increase targeting of arts and museums programming and outreach activity towards those communities who do not currently engage in cultural activities in accordance with community strategy priorities through Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.	Culture, Leisure and Community Learning Theme Partnership. Tees Archaeology. Community Voluntary / Sector	Short	David Worthington	Increase participation of residents satisfied with Museums and Art Gallery. Reduce the satisfaction gap between the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy residents and Hartlepool in general.
2.	Provide reassurance and reduce negative perceptions regarding crime and anti social behaviour in accordance with Community Safety Strategy and NAP action plans	Community Safety Partnership. Culture and Leisure Partnership.	Medium		Increase participation of residents in cultural activities. Improve perception of residents in respect of crime and antisocial behaviour to reflect a more positive reality.  Cultural aspirations included in NAP's (Neighbourhood Action Plans).
3.	Continue to develop relationship with Integrated Transport Unit to promote access to venues by public transport		Medium	David Worthington	Support environmental developments  Improve access to venues

# Strategic Aim 5 - Increase participation, opportunity for access and diversity.

**Objective 5b:** Celebrate diversity, promote equality of opportunity for all in cultural provision.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Implement the Corporate Diversity Action Plan	Hartlepool Borough Council.	Short	David Worthington	Use Equality Standard mark as starting point for introducing cultural aspects of Diversity Action Plan.
2.	Celebrate diversity within Hartlepools' communities.	Hartlepool Borough Council. HVDA. Community diversity groups	Medium	David Worthington Clare Irvine	Develop and implement plans for a Diversity Festival.
3.	Support the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act to maximise access to services and premises for disabled people, their carers / partners.	HVDA.	Short	John Mennear	Improve access to cultural activities and the ability to participate.

# Strategic Aim 5 - Increase participation, opportunity for access and diversity.

**Objective 5c:** Value and encourage the voluntary and community sector in the delivery of cultural pursuits.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	To work in co-operation and provide support to the voluntary and community sector to develop, deliver and sustain cultural pursuits as indentified in the Voluntary Sector Strategy	Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency	Short	Margaret Hunt	Increase recognition of the role of the voluntary and community sector.  Review implementation procedure.
2.	Build upon current initiatives, involving partnership working in order to maximise the benefits of cross-sectoral working.		Short	David Worthington	Improved cultural benefit.  Cost effective community partnerships.  Detailed review of existing initiatives and new direction required.
3.	Promote volunteering and continue to develop and run volunteering courses	Hartlepool Borough Council Voluntary and community sector Adult Education Tall Ships Races 2010	Short	David Worthington Maggie Heaps	Provides support at facilities and events  Contribute to individual skill development and improves leadership skills

# Strategic Aim 5 - Increase levels of participation and opportunity for access and diversity.

Objective 5d: Ensure that residents have good access to information and cultural facilities, within their Neighbourhood.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
	<ol> <li>Review existing methods and practices of marketing and promotion of information on cultural activities to residents and produce Marketing Plan.</li> </ol>	Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency	Short	Claire Munroe	Improve awareness of the Hartlepool culture offer. Improve audiences. Improve viability of community activity.
2	2. Establish the cultural agenda as part of Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) within Hartlepool.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Cultural and Leisure Partnership	Medium	John Mennear	Raises profile and hence awareness.
,	3. Implement the Sports and Recreation Strategy to develop sport participation as a key element of community development and capacity building.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Sport England. Culture and Leisure Partnership. Bowls Consortium. Teesside Sport.	Long	Pat Usher	Improved health capacity building in local areas. Increase participation.  Contribute to the Public Health Strategy  LPSA2 – GP Referral

### Strategic Aim 6 - Advocate the value of culture in meeting the expressed needs and aspirations of the community.

Objective 6a: Put in place the cultural capacity to enable schools to extend their use of culture as a vehicle to raise achievement and support engagement

Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
Raise awareness of the Cult Strategy to key partners inclu- head teachers, teachers Governors to raise the profile culture in School Improvement Plan	ding Head Teachers. and Teachers. of Governors.	Short	Caroline O'Neill	Improved co-ordination.  Implemented via School Governor Liaison meetings.
Increase opportunities for all tead to improve their use of cultural too aid engagement with pupils incluactivity delivered via Sport and sub-group to BSF.	s to Creative Partnerships. Jing NEMLAC.	Long	Pat Usher	Capacity building. Increase educational attainment.

# Strategic Aim 6 - Advocate the value of culture in meeting the expressed needs and aspirations of the community.

**Objective 6b:** Encourage people to discover new ways of learning and realising their full potential.

	Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
1.	Support the use of ICT to culture and learning by developing existing initiatives.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Arts Council, NE. NEMLAC. New Opportunities Fund. Hartlepool College of FE.	Short/ Medium	Graham Jarritt	
2.	Strengthen and broaden the scope of Libraries as a community resource by implementing the actions identified within the Annual Library Plan.		Short/ Medium	Graham Jarritt	Widen access to services. Contributes to social indusion. Increased use/skills in ICT.
3.	Encourage the specialist schools and colleges to maximise the cultural offer to meet local needs and maximise effective use of resources.	Hartlepool Borough Council. Voluntary and Community Sector. Specialist College Status Schools. Hartlepool United F.C.	Medium		Increase community access to Schools. Football in the community (HUFC).
4.	Promote recreational literature through reading groups	Hartlepool Borough Council. Voluntary and Community Sector.	Medium		Capacity Building. Increased participation.

# Strategic Aim 6 - Advocate the value of culture in meeting the expressed needs and aspirations of the community.

**Objective 6c:** Ensure the Leisure and Culture Theme Partnership is led cohesively and championed comprehensively.

Action	Potential Partners	Timescale	Lead Officer	Impact
<ol> <li>To ensure that culture is considered where appropriate in all strategies prepared by the Hartlepool Partnership.</li> </ol>	Hartlepool Borough Council. Hartlepool Partnership.	Short/ Medium	John Mennear	Improved quality of life for Hartlepool residents.

#### APPENDIX ONE

### TEES VALLEY UNLIMITED CULTURE STRATEGY (DRAFT)

### <u>Shared Strategic Priorities for Tees Valley</u> 2009 - 2014

Any Strategy for the development of culture and creativity across the Tees Valley Sub-Region will operate in the context of attractive existing and potential resources to which many people are strongly committed. These include: histories of maritime exploration and commerce, of ancient rural communities, and of industrial revolution; outstanding natural environments; increasing facilities for sport; and self-defining local communities with strong senses of identity bound up with specific places.

The Shared Strategic Priorities outlined, have been defined by the Tees Valley Unlimited Culture Sub Group, in collaboration with a range of agencies and individuals, notably the University of Teesside, Tees Valley Arts, Tees Valley Sport, Arts Council England North East, and Visit Tees Valley.

In developing this strategy the contributors have considered those things which can be best done together or at a sub-regional, Tees Valley wide level. This is not therefore an expression of the total of all our priorities for culture, but only those that are sub-regional in character. An initial consultation with a wider set of stakeholders, through thematic groups, generated a host of ideas and aspirations, many of which have not found there way into this Shared Priority list, either because they were not a priority for all Districts, or they were concerned with small scale or low level work, were inherently local in character, or were not as high a priority as other initiatives. The omission of these ideas does not imply that they are not relevant of worthwhile in their intended context.

The proposed strategic aims can be grouped into two types; the inward facing, and the outward facing. This might also be thought of in terms of the product, and the packaging. The following 8 aims are strategically important and should drive investment up to and beyond 2014.

### Inward facing aims;

- Increase investment in existing cultural infrastructure, and develop efficient mechanisms for identifying, supporting and connecting local cultural projects/programmes to the benefit the whole Sub-Region
- 2. Utilise culture to raise aspirations and enhanced health, social engagement, education, and workforce development among the communities of the Tees Valley, initially through public sector investment, but with the aim of establishing conditions in which private investment would flourish.
- 3. Promote the Tees Valley's diverse cultural wealth coherently to local markets.

4. Celebrating difference and the richness of the tees Valley, recognising that many cultural initiatives are developed in a specific place by a local community; but while local loyalties and investments can overlap within the Sub-Region, collaboration can enhance projects that will benefit the whole Sub-Region.

### Outward facing aims;

- 5. Develop the national and international 'image' of the Tees Valley both as a place with a very distinctive history and heritage, and as a sub-region with sites of major importance for wildlife and for access to the natural environment.
- 6. Promote the Tees Valley's diverse cultural wealth coherently to national and international markets.
- 7. Attract incoming commercial investment, not only in 'cultural industries' as such but also in other industries whose leaders would see commercial advantage in supporting the development of the creative community. Such an 'image' could enhance the tourism industry of the sub-region in a major way while also increasing pride and confidence among local communities and among exiled Teessiders, world-wide, who increasingly access digital links to their heritage.
- 8. Attract highly qualified and creative people to the sub-region, and retain them.

The Strategy also acknowledges that the public sector alone cannot create a lively and diverse cultural environment, and that ways need to be found to:

- create a Sub-Regional environment that will attract and retain cultural and creative entrepreneurs (including artists, retailers, restaurants and cafes, street performers, street artists, writers and performers, publishers and booksellers, print and broadcast journalism) who will thrive on the basis of our local creativity and histories;
- attract and retain major commercial sponsors and partners for major Sub-Regional cultural, environmental and sporting facilities;
- attract inward investment in other business sectors where advantage may be gained from a thriving cultural economy.

### **Shared Priority Objectives (or projects)**

This section sets out a number of areas of activity in which effort and investment might be prioritised, perhaps at different times. Much more work would need to be done to define the mechanisms and procedures for each of these.

- 1. **HERITAGE.** a review should be carried out, and proposals formulated, about how museums, archives, and archaeological activities across the Tees Valley can best be resourced, run, and marketed so as to:
  - enable them, separately or together, to maximise pride in and international awareness of the distinctive industrial and maritime heritage of the region;
  - maximise opportunities for publicity about and participation in major events;
  - encourage local and international public engagement with the Sub-Region's heritage, through exhibitions, activities, education, publications, outreach, improved physical access, and projects involving digitisation and internet communications;
  - attract and support entrepreneurial investment in making and selling merchandise related to local and Sub-Regional heritage.
  - improve efficiency and effectiveness in the care and accessibility of collections
- 2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT a task group should be established to determine ways in which the natural and physical environments across the Sub-Region can be recognised as possessing major cultural value, and can best be enhanced and marketed so as to:
  - maximise pride in and international awareness of the distinctive rural and ecological heritage of the region, and of its value for creative leisure and tourism;
  - engage local communities and individuals in the exploration and conservation of their places by means of specific local projects – including both land conservation projects and imaginative cultural projects enabling people to represent their places in creative work;
  - fully recognise and act on the importance of the natural environment in the enhancement of health, happiness and social identity among local communities;
  - increase environmental awareness, and encourage environmentally responsible behaviour, at all levels of society.

3. ARTS - the TV Unlimited Culture sub Group will consider and prioritise any major arts projects, able both to attract and involve local people and to engage national and international audiences, to maximise possible public and commercial investment and exploitation.

A mechanism will be developed for the periodic evaluation of proposals, from whatever source, in order to;

- identify existing local or capital projects capable of contributing in a major way to the development of the Sub-Region, and achieving a consensus across the Sub-Region about support for their investment and marketing;
- select among proposals for new projects those which can best contribute to the development of the Sub-Region, and identifying ways of attracting investment in them:
- identify commercial partners with whom cultural projects might be developed in collaboration with Sub-Regional groups or institutions.
- 4. EVENTS increase live activities and events, including those using digital media, and improve marketing, to develop a sense of place and of a lively community, and raise and improve the profile of the area.

This Strategy aims to create conditions in which local and community-based events and creative businesses will grow and prosper, while independent and commercial cultural interests will be attracted to the Tees Valley as a place and as a series of venues for events and performances. This will involve:

- Commission production of a culturally imaginative Tees Valley brand which both community and commercial promoters would be glad to incorporate in their marketing of events; and of activities to publicise events across the whole Sub-Region
- Improving the process for mapping plans of the five boroughs against each other; and for agreeing collaborations in scheduling, and in the development and marketing of distinctive venues for public and commercial events
- Developing the workforce by drawing upon an infrastructure of co-ordinated training programmes (delivered by such bodies as community groups and Tees Valley Arts, schools, the Colleges including the College of Art, the two Universities, and the regional print and broadcast media) to enable young people across the Sub-Region to develop entrepreneurial planning, performance and presentation skills, and to have the opportunity to develop careers in the cultural and performance industries.

- 5. SPORT work in partnership with Tees Valley Sport and others to attract and stage more high profile sports events and use them to improve the image of the Tees Valley and encourage participation in sport and active leisure.
  - enhance the development and use of facilities across the Sub-Region as venues for high profile events attracting investment and sponsorship;
  - exploit opportunities to promote success stories and other news events, including those created by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the Cultural Olympiad;
  - support the development of sport and physical activity among people resident in the Sub-Region.
- 6. WRITING promote writing and publication by local people, and reading and access to archives, to increase local pride and confidence, and create a national and international market for the history and culture of the Tees Valley.

A forum of representatives of the universities and colleges, libraries and archives, writers' groups, local publishers, and representatives of booksellers and major publishers, and New Writing North, should be formed to develop proposals to enhance:

- local, national and international access to historical and community archives across the Sub-Region, including the development of digital access;
- access to library stocks across the Sub-Region for all users;
- continuing development and support for writers' groups, and local history research groups, in terms of accommodation and mentoring;
- routes by which Sub-Regional writers can be mentored in seeking national and international publication in print and broadcast media.

# **CULTURE, LEISURE & TOURISM PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder 4th May 2010



**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

**Subject:** REVIEW AND RATIONALISATION OF

TOURISM SIGNAGE

### SUMMARY

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of the brown tourism signage review and to outline the proposal to review the pedestrian and interpretation signage within Hartlepool.

### 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report details the rationale and findings of the brown tourism signage review and the work currently being undertaken to examine the pedestrian and interpretation signage across Hartlepool.

### 3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Tourism falls within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.

### 4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key

### 5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

### 6. DECISION REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested to note the review and the plan to rationalise and update the brown tourism signage within Hartlepool.

**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

**Subject**: REVIEW AND RATIONALISATION OF

TOURISM SIGNAGE

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the results of the brown tourism signage review and to outline the proposal to review the pedestrian and interpretation signage within Hartlepool.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The review of brown tourism signage across Hartlepool was established as a result of actions arising from Scrutiny Forum investigations into the "Marketing of Hartlepool" and "Railway Approaches".
- 2.2 The Railway Scrutiny Forum recommended that the pedestrian and vehicle signage (including further development of brown signage) around Hartlepool station should be improved, especially in relation to the town centre, whilst the Marketing of Hartlepool investigation recommended that the signage into and around Hartlepool should be reviewed with particular reference to interpretation signage.
- 2.3 In addition to the scrutiny forum recommendations there have been numerous requests from businesses through the tourism networks and the Navigation Point Group for additional brown signage, particularly in relation to the Navigation Point restaurants. The Trincomalee Trust have also requested additional signs for HMS Trincomalee, recognising the contribution it makes to Hartlepool's tourism offer.
- 2.4 A review of signage complements the recommendations of the Hartlepool Central Area Investment Framework which recommended consideration of an enhanced and extended pedestrian signage scheme around the town centre and the need to incorporate new facilities such as the Hartlepool Transport Interchange.
- 2.5 An officer-working group was established to undertake the review into vehicle, pedestrian and interpretation signage. The review into brown signage is now complete, the findings of which will be placed onto a plan and tabled at the meeting. The pedestrian and interpretation signage is currently being examined.

### 3.0 REVIEW OF TOURISM SIGNAGE

- 3.1 The aim of the brown tourism signage review was to create a robust and coherent signage strategy for visitor attractions, the railway station and transport interchange.
- 3.2 As the existing brown signs across the borough have grown incrementally over the years and are partly out of date, the review focussed on determining the most appropriate approach to signage that recognises and complements Hartlepool's tourism offer.
- 3.3 The rationale used to update the brown tourism signage involves being succinct and summarising the Hartlepool tourism offer using a minimum number of words supplemented by appropriate symbols. This approach ensures that information is shown in a clear and concise way with a minimum number of signs so not to exacerbate clutter. Only the main attractions with a significant number of visitors will be signed. The strategy has been developed around the visitor journey with key themes being used with more details added as visitors travel nearer to the centre of town.
- 3.4 A draft plan detailing the findings of the review will be tabled at the meeting. Using the rationale stated above the brown signage will show broad summaries of the component parts of Hartlepool's tourism offer on the outskirts of the town, supplemented by more detailed signage further into town, detailing individual attractions. The signs on the outskirts of town will therefore display "Central Attractions", "Marina", "Historic Headland" and "Beaches", with appropriate symbols.
- 3.5 An audit of existing vehicular signage was compared with the plan and costs obtained for any additional signs or amendments that were required. During the review the need to rationalise signage and remove redundant signage was taken into account to comply with the Council's de-clutter policy. It is the intention to implement the recommendations of the strategy before The Tall Ships Races in August 2010. In order to improve the image of the signs high quality, reflective signs will be used.
- 3.6 The signage to the station and transport interchange has also been reviewed. Additional signs will be placed to guide people more effectively to the station and transport interchange. Some existing signs will be re-sited to more prominent positions. Existing signage will be reviewed and rationalised where possible.

### 4. REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE AND INTERPRETATION

- 4.1 The second phase of the review, which has recently commenced, involves examining pedestrian signage and signposting across the town, including tourist interpretation and information points together with locator "you are here" maps.
- 4.2 The feasibility of placing of Electronic Information Terminals at key tourism locations will be examined in order to signpost people between key facilities and improve visitor awareness of the tourism product within the town.
- 4.3 The feasibility of providing new and innovative forms of interpretation such as the Microsoft tag system, which provides information on mobile phones, will be examined.
- 4.4 The results of the review of pedestrian signage and interpretation will be the subject of a further report.

### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The funding to implement the recommendations of the brown tourism signage review will be allocated from the Local Transport Plan. The signage relating to the Railway Station and Transport Interchange will be funded from the Transport Interchange budget. The total cost of implementing the brown signage plan is estimated to be approximately £40k.
- 5.2 There is limited risk to the Council in terms of financial management. The maintenance of the signs will be undertaken from existing maintenance budgets.

#### 6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to note the review and the plan to rationalise and update the brown tourism signage within Hartlepool.

### 7. CONTACT OFFICER

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# **CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder 4 May, 2010



**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

**Subject:** VACANT SHOPS PROJECT

### **SUMMARY**

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Portfolio Holder on the Vacant Shops Project

### 2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report provides an update on the development of a multi-use shop at Unit 12, Level 1, Middleton Grange Shopping Centre for temporary occupancy as part of the Empty Shops / Arts / Tall Ships Initiative.

### 3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Cultural Services section falls within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.

### 4.0 TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key

### 5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Culture, Leisure & Tourism Portfolio of 4 May 2010.

### 6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested note the progress of the project identified within the report.

**Report of:** Director of Child and Adult Services

**Subject:** VACANT SHOPS PROJECT

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder on progress with the Vacant Shops Project.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Hartlepool is one of 57 local authorities to benefit from a £3 million fund made available by the Department for Communities and Local Government to address empty shops in town centres, which have increased in number due to the economic recession. The award for each area is £52,631. The funding is unringfenced revenue grant and can be used at the discretion of the Council.
- 2.2 The projects identified include an expansion of the indoor market initiative, a Multi-Use Drop-in Unit at Middleton Grange Shopping Centre and smaller scale initiatives aimed at improving the appearance of vacant shops.

### 3.0 MULTI-USE, DROP-IN, "SHIP IN A SHOP" INITIATIVE

- 3.1 The Multi-Use Drop-In project will comprise a number of elements that are designed to enhance the vibrancy of Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, bring a vacant shop unit back into use for 6 months and provide complementary activities in the lead up to the Tall Ships event in August 2010. The project has been designed to run from the 6<sup>th</sup> April 27<sup>th</sup> August 2010.
- 3.2 The shop will contain a variety of components including a "Ship in a Shop" interactive art feature which involves the construction of a glass and steel ship by a local artist in association with local groups, a community art gallery, and an information centre where voluntary and public sector organisations will be able to promote their services.
- 3.3 A professional artist will be appointed to develop and build a major piece of art work within the shop. The making of the "Ship in a Shop" will be carried out in full public view, with the artist engaging with the public through talks and workshops, so that the public will be involved

- in the design and creation of the art work. Preliminary workshops will be held, focusing on creative writing and glass design techniques.
- The shop unit will also incorporate an exhibition space where there will be a programme of community exhibitions to showcase work of community groups and schools. An information centre to inform the public of Tall Ships related events, activities, and information will also be established
- 3.5 Following discussions with Middleton Grange Shopping Centre the former Jonathan James unit, on level one, has been identified as the location for the project. Middleton Grange Shopping Centre have offered to waive costs for the duration of the project subject to the project paying utility costs. A licence agreement will be drawn up between Hartlepool Borough Council and Middleton Grange Shopping Centre for the use of the unit.
- 3.6 At the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2009 Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio meeting a contribution of £10,000 was agreed for the Multi-Use Drop-in project form the vacant shop unit fund. As a result of this allocation, significant levels of match funding have been secured towards the project from both the Arts Council and the Social Care Reform Grant Fund. £27,000 has been awarded from the Arts Council's Grants for the Arts fund and £31,314 has been secured from the Social Care Reform Grant fund, which will contribute towards staffing and marketing costs.

### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council as funding has been secured as described in 3.6.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to endorse the project.