

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



18 July 2013

at 9.30 a.m.

in Committee Room B,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

MEMBERS: REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Cranney, Dawkins, Fisher, Morris and Payne.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
3. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2013
(previously circulated)**

4. **KEY DECISIONS**

No items.

5. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

- 5.1 Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund - *Assistant Director, Community Services*



6. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 6.1 Department for Work and Pensions 'Flexible Support Fund' - *Assistant Director (Regeneration)*
- 6.2 Quarterly Housing Report Jan-March 2012/13 - *Assistant Director (Regeneration)*

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – 29 August, 2013 at 9.30am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.



REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 July 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Community Services

Subject: ESMÉE FAIRBAIRN COLLECTIONS FUND

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To recommend the acceptance of an external grant offer from the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund for the “999: What’s Your Emergency” museums project.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund is a National grant stream which funds research into public Museum collections, especially where such work helps to widen public access and engagement. It is administered by the Museums Association.
- 3.2 Culture and Information Services was invited to make an application for the final round of the Fund in April 2013. After discussion with potential partners, a collaboration between The Museum of Hartlepool (lead, HBC), The Dorman Museum (Middlesbrough BC) and Head of Steam (Darlington BC) was developed. This collaboration was informed by research into public need carried out in 2012 across the partners, and is supported by ACE (Arts Council England).
- 3.3 Our initial project proposal was successfully shortlisted, and we were invited to make a full application in May 2013. Only 15 projects were shortlisted from the 76 applications that were initially received by the Fund.
- 3.4 7 projects were chosen for funding on 17th June 2013, including £62,000 for two years of delivery of our project, called “999: What’s Your Emergency”.

- 3.5 In brief, “999: *What’s Your Emergency*” is a collections research and public access project to create knowledge of and widen public involvement in museum social history collections directly relating to The Emergency Services and individual heroes who have helped our communities over the last 250 years.
- 3.6 The focus will be primarily on objects relating to the Emergency Services, for our purposes defined as the Police, Fire and Ambulance services, the Medical Professions (including Doctors, Nurses, Midwives, Pharmacists and health professionals), and Lifesaving Organisations (including Lifeboats and Maritime rescue).
- 3.7 These collections are diverse but focus on objects that directly tell the stories of individual heroes of both genders, the famous and the undiscovered, whose personal actions helped others at a moment of crisis, served their communities, and/or became sources of inspiration
- 3.8 Each Museum has already identified certain topic areas for exploration. For example, Hartlepool expects results relating to Maritime subjects (including Lifesaving and Shipwreck) and early Victorian Printed Ephemera (including 1840s crime and disorder), Middlesbrough those relating to Iron and Steel, Medical and Health, and Exploration, while Darlington will contribute items and stories relating to Railway Policing (as the place with the first railway police in the world), Firefighting and the Homefront.
- 3.9 Activity will be delivered over two years by a single Collections Access Officer (Band 7) working peripatetically, directly employed by Hartlepool Borough Council on behalf of all the partners.
- 3.10 Activity will commence with a collections review and research programme across all three museums. This would then form the basis for volunteers to be involved in discovering relevant stories relating to the themes, for digitising collections, for a strong social networking and on-line presence (including a public website) which will make the results publically accessible, a touring exhibition around venues, a number of publications, and a one-day public conference/celebration at the end of the project.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

- 4.1 *Improving the knowledge about our collections through research, the enhancing of object records, and publication.* This will be delivered by the core activity outlined above.
- 4.2 *Improve physical and intellectual access to our collections, including digitisation and making them available online.* This will be delivered by a focus on making the results of the research openly available through a website, by a programme of social media contact and interaction, by publication and through a public event.

- 4.3 *To identify and work with community groups who would not normally visit their local museum - in particular young people.* The theme of focusing on the Emergency Services, and on objects that tell specific stories of personal heroism was specifically chosen by the partners to be unusual, inspiring and exciting in order to allow supporting programmes to be attractive to non-visiting audiences. We expect young people to be involved in the project particularly through volunteer opportunities and through supporting programmes (delivered by core learning staff) for the touring exhibition.
- 4.4 *Finding new ways that people can use museum collections to discover more about their family history.* While not every participant or visitor is going to have personal connections to a specific story of heroism found within our collections, the simple idea at the heart of this project that “every object tells a story” supports opportunities to enhance impact by marketing and delivering family history activities in cooperation with our Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning colleagues.
- 4.5 *Improve the opportunities for the involvement of volunteers with collections.* The project supports this shared objective by raising capacity to increase the number of volunteers directly engaged with collections.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The original submission has been accepted for funding and therefore there cannot be any alteration to the core proposal on offer and as submitted for consideration within the recommendations.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This project does not pose a financial risk. All activities have been carefully selected as being achievable based on the past experience of the partners involved.
- 6.2 There is no requirement for match funding.
- 6.3 The project would be undeliverable and indeed would be unlikely to take place without this external funding.

7. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Activity will be delivered by a single Collections Access Officer (Band 7), employed by Hartlepool Borough Council on behalf of all the partners.
- 7.2 As a temporary increase to the establishment from external grant funding is necessary, this post will require approval from Finance & Policy Committee to be accommodated in the Culture and Information Services staff structure.

8. SECTION 17

- 8.1 This project will assist in delivering our duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act by raising awareness and understanding of the historical role and contribution of the Emergency Services to local communities.
- 8.2 It is expected that early identification of the stakeholders in these service areas, and then taking all opportunities to widen engagement and collaboration with these modern Emergency Services will be a major sustained outcome of the project.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That Committee approves the acceptance of the grant offer.
- 9.2 That Committee approves the recruitment of a Collections Access Officer to deliver the project and an appropriate report is submitted to Finance & Policy Committee.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The acceptance of the grant allows the delivery of an exciting public project that would not be achievable without external funding.
- 10.2 The project directly helps us to achieve the strategic aims of the Museum in widening knowledge, understanding, participation and access to collections.
- 10.3 It continues and enhances our reputation for leading on collaborative working with other Local Authorities in the Tees Valley.
- 10.4 The securing of an Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund grant in the face of considerable completion shows the strength of the project.
- 10.5 Delivery of the project will attract considerable positive interest around the creative and imaginative use of museum collections. This further enhances the reputation of the Authority.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

John Mennear
Assistant Director, Community Services
Child & Adult Services
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY
Email john.mennear@hartlepool.gov.uk
Tel: (01429) 523417

Mark Simmons
Museums Manager
Culture and Information Services
Sir William Gray House
Clarence Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8BT

Email: mark.simmons@hartlepool.gov.uk
Tel: (01429) 284025

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 July 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS
'FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FUND'

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information only.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Regeneration Services Committee of the successful delivery of the Tees Valley Flexible Support Fund (FSF).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In April 2012, through an open and competitive tendering process; Hartlepool Borough Council as Lead Accountable Body secured £500,000 from Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) to enable the delivery of the Tees Valley FSF project. Within this grant application the five local authorities agreed to offer match funding of £250,000.
- 3.2 The FSF was officially launched in May 2012 and was in partnership between Hartlepool Borough Council's Economic Regeneration Team and the other four Local Authorities across Tees Valley. The project was delivered between May 2012 and May 2013.
- 3.3 The aim of the FSF project was to:
- Support 400 pre-work programme people from the Job Seekers Allowance/Employment Support Allowance claimant register into employment, of which 320 would be 18-24 year old.
 - Engage and consult with 500 Small Medium Employers (SMEs) in growth sectors to assist them to employ pre-work programme customers.

- Deliver HR employment legislation workshops and self employment workshops across the Tees Valley.

4. PERFORMANCE AND GRANT USAGE

- 4.1 The primary purpose of this grant was to assist individual's who were pre work programme clients to access employment. Each local authority was to achieve a fifth of the outcomes (a minimum of 80 jobs) and Hartlepool also agreed to support Middlesbrough Borough Council with the contractual management of the FSF project.
- 4.2 Due to the timescales and economic climate, this was a challenging project, however, the project over-achieved on its original contracted targets as shown below:

Outcomes and targets achieved were as follows:

- 805 referrals against a target of 650
- 451 claimants (pre work programme) into employment against a target of 400 – 80 for each LA
- 869 SMEs engaged with against a target of 500
- 10 HR employment workshops delivered
- 10 self employment workshops delivered

Split per Local Authority:

Outcome	Hartlepool	Darlington	Middlesbrough	Stockton	Redcar
Referrals	202	105	155	178	165
Into Employment	89	61	90	123	88
SME's Engaged	168	172	158	173	198

- 4.3 The overall value for money on this project was excellent and continues to provide further evidence of Hartlepool's ability to manage and deliver large scale employment programmes. It also shows that the five local authorities continue to work effectively together to support long term unemployed young people to secure sustained employment.
- 4.4 It is worth noting that of the 89 Hartlepool residents that entered into employment, 65% still remained in employment beyond 13 weeks. This level of sustainability was achieved through the in-work mentoring support provided by the FSF Contract Officer who worked closely with both the employer and the employee to maintain an individual's work placement.
- 4.5 Of the 89 Hartlepool residents into employment 56 of these were 18-24 year old.

5. IMPACT ON CHILD / FAMILY POVERTY

- 5.1 This project positively contributed to tackling the longer term causes and consequences of child and family poverty by preventing young people from becoming long term NEET by providing individuals with access to provision that enabled them to reach their aspirational goals and become economically active.

6. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This project positively contributed to Section 17 by improving education and employment routeways for young people. It included providing early interventions to intensive support programmes for individuals who may have been identified as high risk of offending.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 This project was aimed at supporting young people, regardless of their background, to achieve their career aspirational goals, particularly amongst vulnerable groups such as the seven priority groups shown below:

- Looked after children and care leavers;
- Young offenders (including those leaving the secure estate);
- Teenage parents;
- Young carers;
- Young people with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SLDD);
- Young people with mental health issues; and;
- Young people with drug and alcohol misuse issues.

8. CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER COUNCIL PROGRAMMES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 8.1 This project directly benefited other Council employment initiatives, such as the Hartlepool Youth Investment Project and Think Families, Think Communities. Also, the project positively contributed to the following indicators:

- Improving the Overall Employment Rate:
- Improving the Overall Youth Employment Rate
- Reducing the Youth Unemployment Rate:
- Reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

9. PREVIOUS CABINET REPORTS

- [Department for Work & Pensions – New Funding Opportunities – 15th August 2011](#)
- [Flexible Support Fund – 2nd April 2012](#)
- [Flexible Support Fund – 21st May 2012](#)

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report.

11. CONTACT OFFICER

Damien Wilson
Assistant Director (Regeneration)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523400
E-mail: damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk

REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 July 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration)

Subject: QUARTERLY HOUSING REPORT JAN-MARCH
2012/13

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

The report is for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Regeneration Services Committee about progress across key areas of the Housing Service relating to empty homes, enforcement activity, financial assistance (grants & loans), selective licensing, Disabled Facilities Grants, housing allocations and housing advice & homelessness prevention during the fourth quarter of 2012/13.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report provides an update on progress and benchmarking across key areas of the Housing Service during Quarter 4, 2012/13 and updates the last report presented to the Regeneration & Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder on 8 March 2013.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 No options submitted for consideration other than the recommendation(s).

5. EMPTY HOMES UPDATE

- 5.1 As part of the Council's Empty Home Strategy a number of incentive schemes are underway alongside positive action and enforcement proceedings to return long term empty properties back into use. This report provides a brief overview of current progress in enforcement action and incentive schemes.

- 5.2 A key action within the Empty Homes action plan was to bring 10% of empty properties back into use and to identify properties suitable for enforcement action. In order to demonstrate this ongoing work a table of the top 20 empty properties has been developed and this will monitor progress and assist in implementing the most appropriate form of enforcement action. Intensive work is conducted with the property owners and properties are brought back into use they are removed from the list and additional properties added to create a rolling list. Where a solution cannot be sought enforcement action is progressed. All enforcement action is to be approved by Committee prior to commencement. An overview of the enforcement activity is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Empty Homes Enforcement Activity

Enforcement Activity	Number of Properties	Number of cases resolved	Comments
Enforced Sale	2	0	Enforced Sale for unpaid Council tax – pending a decision.
Compulsory Purchase Proceedings	2	1	CPO served and advertised. One of two owners now engaging with incentive scheme.
S215 Action	34	14	These cases resolved through negotiation. Outstanding cases progressing through the informal route.
Direct Action through S215	3	2	One owner agreed sale with Council and one direct action has commenced.
Positive Action (Top 20) – rolling top 20 enforcement list of longest empty and	16	Ongoing list properties become enforcement cases (above) where negotiations fail. 8 properties have been brought back into use through negotiation to date.	Negotiation with owners has commenced on these 16 properties and some owners part of lease scheme.

- 5.3 A total 54 properties were brought back into use within quarter 3. The cumulative figure for 2012/13 is now 135 properties brought back into use. This exceeds the annual target of 75. This figure records any intervention by the Council which has resulted in a property being brought back into use. The figures for quarter 4 were not available at the time of writing this report and will be tabled at the meeting but the Council had already greatly exceeded the annual target in quarter 3 of 2012/13 due to the level of engagement with owners and the incentive/enforcement schemes currently underway.

- 5.4 In addition to enforcement activity, the Council is taking forward a number of incentive schemes to encourage empty homes to be brought back into use.

Separate update reports will be provided on these incentive schemes as they progress but Table 2 below provides a overview of the current position.

Table 2 - Empty Homes Incentive Scheme Overview

Incentive Scheme	Number of Properties	Number completed and reoccupied	Comments
Empty Property Purchasing Scheme	55	14	Of the 55 included in scheme 7 are in agreed sale awaiting final legal completion.
Every Home Matters (lease scheme in partnership with Housing Hartlepool)	43	19	Work is currently underway on 14 properties.
Baden Street Improvement Scheme	19	6	19 of 22 property owners engaged.

6. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

- 6.1 The enforcement update encompasses a number of key areas, including housing conditions, housing related statutory nuisance and problematic empty properties.
- 6.2 Table 3 sets out the service requests that have been received by the enforcement team during the course of the year. Previous year's figures are shown in brackets for comparison purposes.

Table 3 – Enforcement Team Service Requests

Request Type	Number and % of Total Number by Quarter 2012/13							
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
Disrepair	(65) 52	19%	(56) 43	20%	(61) 75	42%	(60) 132	58%
Empty & Insecure Property	(30) 53	20%	(58) 45	21%	(48) 24	13%	(40) 19	8%
Empty property report	(0) 0	0%	(0) 0	0%	(2) 0	0%	(0) 0	0%
Empty property Nuisance	(31) 44	16%	(23) 11	5%	(16) 8	4%	(4) 10	4%
Unauthorised Encampment	(4) 1	0.5%	(5) 2	1%	(0) 0	0%	(0) 2	1%
Nuisance from Adjacent Property	(13) 6	2%	(3) 36	17%	(7) 27	15%	(60) 21	9%
Nuisance from Occupied Property	(86) 92	34%	(83) 66	30%	(42) 34	19%	(20) 35	15%
Filthy & Verminous	(3) 0	0%	(0) 0	0%	(5) 4	2%	(0) 1	<1%
Defective Drainage	(23) 14	5%	(16) 10	5%	(6) 4	2%	(5) 3	1%
HMO Advice	(3) 3	1%	(4) 3	1%	(1) 3	2%	(1) 1	<1%
Immigration Visit	(5) 2	1%	(2) 0	0%	(4) 0	0%	(7) 2	1%
Total Number of Requests	(263) 267		(250) 216		(192) 179		(197) 226	

- 6.3 The majority of service requests fall into three main areas:
- Disrepair
 - Empty Properties
 - Nuisance
- 6.4 Overall the number of service requests received by the team has increased by 26% compared to the previous quarter and by 15% compared to the same quarter in 2011/12. This increase is more than attributed to the increase in disrepair complaints.
- 6.5 The number of disrepair cases has increased significantly in the last quarter compared to the previous quarter and has more than doubled compared to the same quarter in the previous year. Whilst an increase is not unexpected as the number of complaints about damp and cold housing tends to rise in the winter months, the scale of the increase was unanticipated. This rise in complaints reported is likely to be attributed to the increased awareness of private tenants and external agencies as a result of promotion activities carried out and attendance at community events, as well as improved confidence resulting from proactive work carried out in targeted areas.
- 6.6 In this quarter, three Housing Act 2004 Improvement Notices were served and one Environmental Protection Act 1990 Notice was served in relation to premises which were prejudicial to health. During this quarter, works were arranged at the property where the owner had failed to comply with the Environmental Protection Act notice.
- 6.7 Complaints regarding insecure empty properties have reduced each quarter through the year from 53 to 19 (a reduction of 65%). It is likely that the reason for this is the proactive work undertaken in relation to the empty homes strategy, area surveys and section 215s has had a major impact. Four notices were served to require the securing of empty dwellings and 2 notices were served requiring the abatement of nuisance associated with empty properties e.g. to remove rubbish from within the property boundaries.
- 6.8 The overall number of service requests relating to nuisances (both occupied and empty) has remained steady.
- 6.9 In addition to the reactive work carried out, the team undertakes proactive work in relation to identifying problematic empty and nuisance properties through area based targeting in a number of areas, including the Carr/Hopps Street Regeneration area, Oxford Road and Cornwall Street areas. Officers continue to undertake proactive inspections of the Selectively Licensed properties and properties to be advertised through the Choice Based Lettings scheme.
- 6.10 From 2007, when mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was introduced, to 31 March 2012 there were 15 premises licensed as HMOs in Hartlepool. These licences remain in force for 5 years, unless there are circumstances that require a variation or revocation. 5 licences became due for renewal during this year. All properties have now been inspected and licences are being prepared.

7. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

7.1 Three forms of financial assistance were available during 2012/13, aimed at improving homes in the private sector. These were -

- Regional Loans
- HomePlus Grants
- Warm Homes Healthy Hartlepool Grants

7.2 Regional Loans

7.2.1 The regional loans scheme replaced the Hartlepool grants/loans scheme in 2010 and whilst administration of the loans takes place sub-regionally, Housing Services are still responsible for providing a frontline service to identify those in need, make referrals and supervise works that are carried out. Loans can be one (or a combination of) of three types depending on ability to make repayments and financial circumstances –

- Repayment
- Interest free
- Equity

7.2.2 During 2012/13, 10 loans were completed, with an average value of £6,565. Of those, 2 were on a repayment basis, 4 were interest free and 4 were equity based.

7.2.3 All loans enabled the properties to reach the Decent Homes Standard. The works included replacement roofs, electrical re-wiring and damp proofing.

7.3 HomePlus Grants

7.3.1 This grant funding is targeted towards owner-occupiers who are over the age of 60 and in receipt of an income related benefit and under 60's who are also in receipt of a disability related benefit.

7.3.2 All grants resulted in the removal of category 1 hazards and high scoring hazards relating to electrical problems. The purpose of which is to protect health, enable persons to remain in their own homes and reduce the risk of falls in the home and immediate exposure to danger. Works included replacement boilers, electrical re-wiring and repairs to windows or doors. The funding per applicant is limited to £4000 over a three year period.

7.3.3 During 2012/13, 34 owners received assistance in the form of a HomePlus grant to an average value of £2,318.

7.4 Warm Homes Healthy Hartlepool

7.4.1 Warm Homes Funding became available in December 2012 and a scheme was established to provide grant based assistance to owner occupiers and private landlords/tenants. Demand for the scheme was very high, therefore priority was given to households where at least one person was aged over 60.

7.4.2 The main aim of these grants was to improve the energy efficiency of homes and protect the health of the occupiers through exposure to cold and/or damp homes, however as a result of some of the works that have been carried out, other hazards have also been removed, under the following headings:

- Excess Cold
- Damp & Mould Growth
- Entry by Intruders
- Domestic Hygiene, Pests & Refuse
- Food Safety
- Personal Hygiene, Sanitation & Drainage
- Structural Collapse & Falling Elements

7.4.3 51 grants were completed during the last quarter of the year, of which 43 were households where one or more occupier was over the age of 60. The average value of each grant was £2,236.72.

7.4.4 Around two thirds of applicants had improvements made to their heating systems ranging from a simple boiler service to a full central heating installation. Other works carried out included draught proofing of doors and windows, replacement of doors and windows and roofing repairs.

8. SELECTIVE LICENSING UPDATE

8.1 Table 4 summaries the Selective Licensing activities undertaken since the scheme commenced.

Table 4 - Selective Licensing Activity

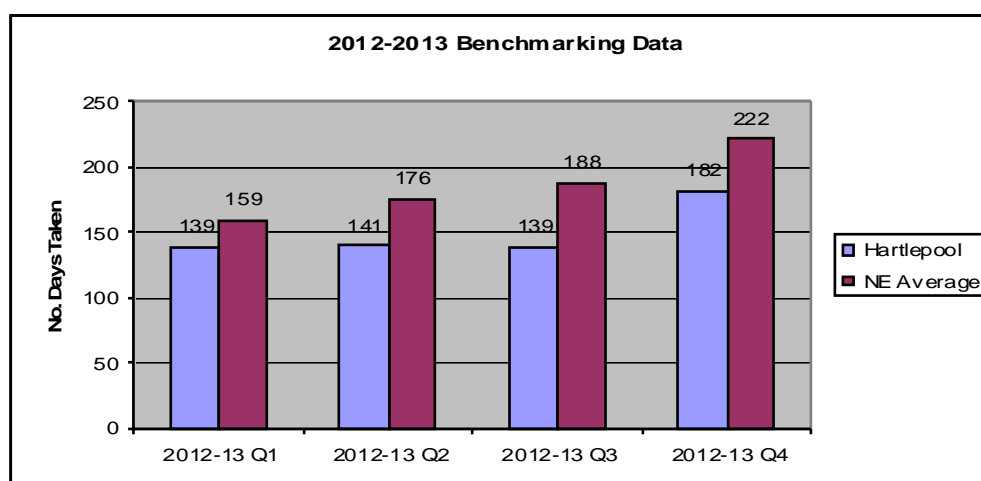
Licensed Properties	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Total number of properties licensed	46	482	52	152
Licences revoked	0	0	6	53
Gas/Electrical Safety				
Reminder Letters sent for Gas or Electrical safety Certificates		395	673	660
Notice Served for non supply of satisfactory Gas or Electrical Safety Certificate		139	422	331
Final Warning of court proceedings	0	0	0	119
Certificates Supplied following Reminder or Notice sent		257	492	649
Housing Standards Inspections				
Inspection of Licensed Property completed	0	86	220	100
Schedule of Works Sent with recommendation for action for Licensed property	0	10	140	38

- 8.2 152 properties were licensed during 2012/13 bringing the total number issued since the beginning of the designation to 732, with a total of 59 licenses being revoked leaving 673 licenses in place at the end of the year. The revocations have all been by mutual agreement for various reasons including;
- Change of ownership
 - Change of management agent
 - Property no longer licensable
- 8.3 We are currently dealing with 14 cases of non-compliance with the requirement to be licensed and are in the process of preparing notifications to commence legal proceedings for these; however we are confident that these can all be resolved satisfactorily. Examples of these cases include:
- Application submitted but not complete
 - Required supporting documentation not supplied
 - Licence fee not paid

9. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS (DFG) BENCHMARKING DATA

- 9.1 The Council has been benchmarking its DFG service against other Local Authorities in the North East as part of the North East Adaptations Group since April 2011.
- 9.2 The benchmarking is undertaken by monitoring the overall time taken from first contact (the date a person first approaches social services with a need for help and assistance) to certified date (date that the works are confirmed as completed).
- 9.3 During 2011/12 the Council's overall time taken averaged at 154 days. During 2012/13 this overall time taken has reduced to 150 days with 144 DFGs being completed during the year. From the limited benchmarking data that is available it would appear that the Council is performing well when monitored against the other North East Local Authorities (figure 1). The number of Authorities benchmarking varies from 6 to 9 in any quarter.

Figure 1 - Time Taken to Complete DFG Works



9.4 At the end of Quarter 4 there were 76 applicants on the waiting list for a DFG at an estimated cost of £443,225. The DFG budget for 2013-2014 received from central government is £437,717.

- 9.5 During Quarter 3 (2012-2013) the Council was notified about an extra £107,000 funding received from Central Government. In addition £167,000 funding was received in early January 2013 from the Primary Care Trust. This additional budget was used to reduce the current waiting list and £168,000 remained at the end of Quarter 4 to be carried over. However, £45,000 of this is already committed with work ordered during Quarter 4 2012-2013. The extra funding received during 2012-2013 contributed towards the improved performance of the service.

10. ALLOCATIONS SUMMARY

- 10.1 Choice Based Lettings (CBL) activity and performance is monitored on a quarterly basis and compared with our sub regional partners by the Sub Regional CBL Steering Group.
- 10.2 The number of applicants who are 'live' on the system and able to bid has stayed steady over the year (shown in table 5). During the year the number of Housing Hartlepool applicants on the waiting list wanting a transfer (from one Housing Hartlepool property to another) has increased from 25% to 30% as a result of the number of current Housing Hartlepool tenants who under-occupy their property and need to move so that they are not affected by the under occupation charge from April 2013.

Table 5 – Total number of 'live' applicants (able to bid)

	Hartlepool	Sub Regional Total
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	2340	16615
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	2399	16461
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	2311	15273
Quarter 4 (2012-13)	2332	16087

- 10.3 To ensure that applicants in the greatest need are given preference for an allocation of accommodation, levels of housing need are categorised into five bands. The numbers of applicants within each band demonstrates that over the year the number of applicants that fall within Band 4 – No or low level housing need – has reduced from approximately 75% of the whole waiting list to 67%. This means that there are an increased percentage of applicants whose level of housing need has put them into a 'priority' band (Table 6).

Table 6 – Total number of 'live' applicants (able to bid) within each Band

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total
Quarter 4 (2011-12)	145	425	60	1550	2180
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	190	512	54	1585	2340

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Total
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	200	497	56	1646	2399
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	173	507	46	1585	2311
Quarter 4 (2012-13)	189	521	51	1571	2332

- 10.4 Within Hartlepool, the number of decant applicants has decreased from 47 in Quarter 2 to 13 at the end of the year. For the purposes of the CBL policy, a decant applicant is defined as one who is losing their home through a recognised regeneration scheme and they are awarded the greatest priority.
- 10.5 Some applicants within the three Priority Bands (1, 2 and 3) may also have cumulative needs (more than one housing need). This figure has increased significantly since 2011-12. However, applicants with cumulative need due to a housing need in addition to under occupation have slightly decreased during the year from 77 to 66 within Band 2 and from 37 to 24 within Band 1 since the first quarter.
- 10.6 Table 7 demonstrates that the majority of lettings continue to go to those on the waiting list rather than to Housing Hartlepool transfer applicants. However, the higher number of lets to transfers reflects the increased number of transfer applicants on the whole waiting list. One of the reasons for this increase is as a result of the number of current Housing Hartlepool tenants who under-occupy their property and need to move so that they are not affected by the under occupation charge from April 2013.

Table 7 – Lettings Information for Hartlepool

	Total no. lets	Direct Lets	Transfers
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	151	0	22 (15%)
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	137	5	27 (20%)
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	146	3	29 (20%)
Quarter 4 (2012-13)	151	0	34 (23%)

- 10.7 Within the sub region the number of lets within each Band as shown in table 8, shows that more than one-third of lettings have gone to applicants within Band 4 and this is an increase on previous quarters.

Table 8 – Percentage lets to each Band (within Hartlepool)

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Decants	Total no. lets
Quarter 1 (2012-13)	34%	26%	6%	34%		151
Quarter 2 (2012-13)	35%	30%	3%	31%		137
Quarter 3 (2012-13)	30%	25%	9%	36%		146
Quarter 4 (2012-13)	29%	26%	8%	37%		151

- 10.8 The Sub Regional CBL Policy allows for cross boundary mobility as shown in table 9.

Table 9 – Cross Boundary Mobility

	Area applicant moved from :	Area applicant rehoused to:	Number
Quarter 1	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Stockton	Hartlepool	2
Quarter 2	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Redcar	Hartlepool	1
	Stockton	Hartlepool	3
Quarter 3	Hartlepool	Stockton	2
	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	1
	Redcar	Hartlepool	1
	Stockton	Hartlepool	4
Quarter 4	Hartlepool	Stockton	5
	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	3
	Redcar	Hartlepool	2
	Stockton	Hartlepool	3

- 10.9 The percentage of properties let on 1st offer is also monitored across the sub region. During the year this percentage has decreased from 73% to 57%. This will be monitored through regular liaison meetings that take place with Housing Hartlepool.
- 10.10 The CBL Policy has undergone a review following a range of measures contained in the Localism Act 2011 and the subsequent Code of Guidance issued by Department of Communities and Local Government in June 2012. Cabinet considered the review and a new policy is in place across the sub region from April 2013. This new policy has some local variations for Hartlepool, namely not awarding additional preference to those in paid employment and retaining three reasonable offers of accommodation for applicants.
- 10.11 In addition a Tenancy Policy for Hartlepool has been adopted which applies to Council owned stock, including the new build properties and also the properties acquired through the Empty Property Purchasing Scheme. A requirement of the Localism Act 2011 is for social landlords to publish clear policies outlining their approach to tenancy management and set out the types of tenancy that will be granted. Our policy has been developed to explain the types of tenancies that the Council will grant, our approach to Affordable Rent tenancies and discretionary succession rights. It has also been developed to align with the Tees Valley Tenancy Strategy published in November 2012.

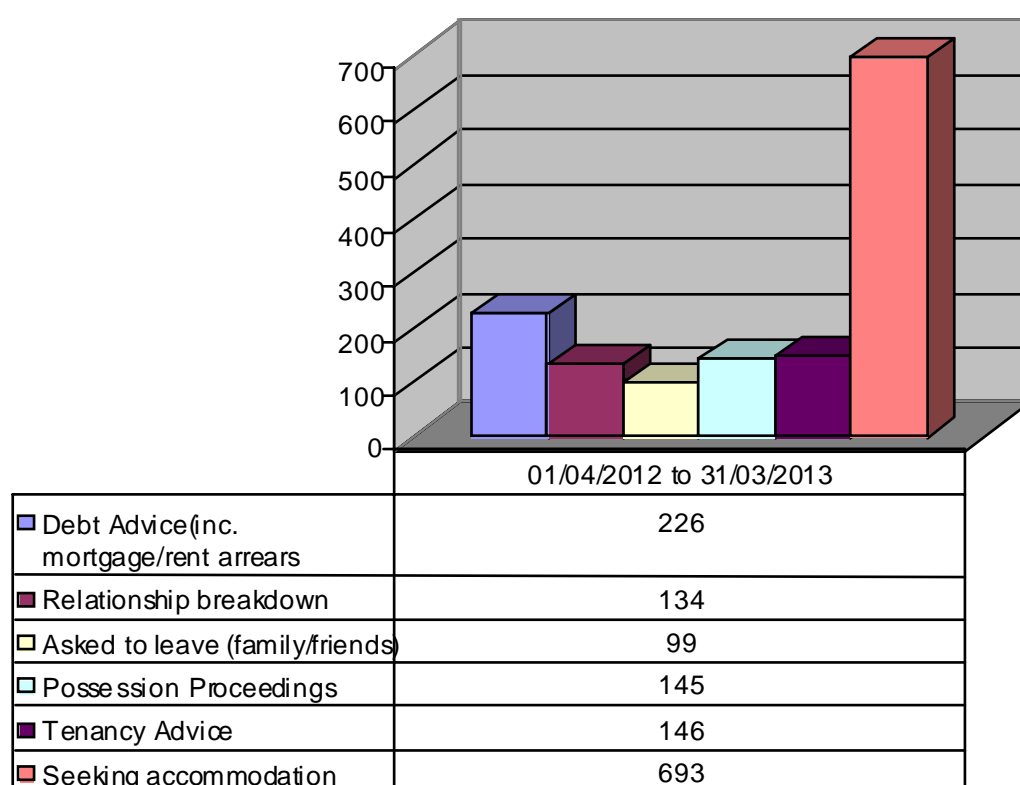
11. HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION ACTIVITY

- 11.1 The Housing Advice and Homelessness service, based at the Housing Options Centre, carries out the Council's statutory duties in relation to homelessness and all aspects of housing advice. From 1 April 2012 to 31

March 2013, **5,069** customers have accessed the service by visiting the Housing Options Centre.

- 11.2 During this year active casework has been carried out for **1,443** clients needing detailed advice and assistance to resolve their housing problem, this includes **387** households who with our assistance were prevented from becoming homelessness. We were unable to prevent homelessness for **9** households and in accepting our statutory duty arranged suitable alternative accommodation for these households.
- 11.3 Table 10 provides a breakdown of the enquiry types clients presented with during the year.

Table 10 - Housing Advice Casework 2012/13



12. HOUSING REPORTS ON FORWARD PLAN

- 12.1 **RN 20/12 Selective Licensing.** This is a key decision to consider the findings of the evidence gathered from the consultation as prescribed by guidance together with a timetable of possible implementation of additional Selective Licensing areas in Hartlepool. The current designation of Selective Licensing was implemented in May 2009 covering 6 areas of the town and in September 2011 Cabinet agreed to delay their decision to extend the scheme into a further 9 areas for 12 months until a thorough evaluation of the evidence available from the existing scheme has been undertaken. This

report will inform members of the outcome and evidence gathered from the consultation into introducing additional Selective Licensing areas in Hartlepool which currently have selective licensing of private landlords operating in designated areas.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 Impact Assessments have been carried out on all housing services strategies that are relevant to this report.

14. SECTION 17 OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998 CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires local authorities to consider crime and disorder reduction in the exercise of all their duties, activities and decision-making. This means that all policies, strategies and service delivery need to consider the likely impact on crime and disorder. This legal responsibility affects all employees of the Council as well as those agencies that are contracted by, or that legally contract to work in partnership with the Council in the provision of services.
- 14.2 Hartlepool Borough Council recognises that Community Safety affects all our lives, people, communities and organisations. People need to feel safe and this means developing stronger, confident and more cohesive communities. Community Safety includes reducing crime and disorder and tackling anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, promoting fire safety, road safety and public protection. The key areas of Housing Services have been developed with the reduction of crime and anti social behaviour in mind.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 Committee members to note the contents of the report and the progress made across key areas of the Housing Service for information purposes.
- 15.2 To decide which, if any, other key areas need to be included in future reports, for information purposes.

16. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 To ensure that committee members are informed about key activities across the housing service.

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 There are no background papers to the report.

17. CONTACT OFFICER

Damien Wilson
Assistant Director (Regeneration)
Level 3
Civic Centre
Hartlepool TS24 8AY

Tel: (01429) 523400
E-mail: damien.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Nigel Johnson
Housing Services Manager
Bryan Hanson House
Hartlepool
TS24 7BT

Tel: (01429) 284339
E-mail: nigel.johnson@hartlepool.gov.uk