

Accessing Services - meeting notes

What do we know about the problem?	What help or solutions are already out there?	What opportunities are there?	What are the next actions?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure is expensive: Families are choosing food and fuel over leisure, especially during the holidays. The extra cost of food and drinks at leisure activities makes it even harder to participate. • Limited access to services: Getting appointments with GPs and dentists is tough, and bus services aren't great, which makes accessing leisure activities harder. Youth clubs aren't available in every area, creating gaps. • Council under pressure: HBC is struggling financially and has had to raise the cost of some services. They've received £9,655,000 from Public Health England (PHE) for 2023/24, but we're not sure how it's being used yet. • Communication problems: Info on services changes so often, it's hard for people to keep up with what's available. This is especially true for groups like prison leavers who aren't getting the support they need. There seems to be a lack of collaboration between services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HAF Programme: The Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme helps some children, 15% of HAF can be nominated from school discretion. • HBC Hub: The HBC hub is extending its hours to be open on Saturdays, giving people more access to services. • Mental health support: There are mental health services in Hartlepool, but communication about them isn't great, and funding is limited. Programs like "Waiting Well" and social prescribers are helping people access health and well-being services like Fibro Connect and women's health groups. • Free activities: There are some free resources like Move Mania and events like Pumpkins in the Park, but more promotion is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable events: Ideas like £1 movie nights and community movie events could offer cheap and fun activities for families. Expanding things like free swim programs and the water park could make leisure activities more accessible. • Better collaboration and communication: A VCSE (Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise) collaboration charter could help services work better together and share info. We also need to do a better job using social media to promote services and events. • Unused buildings and spaces: There are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out resources: We need to figure out how public health money is being used, especially the funds HBC has, and identify where the gaps are. • Engage the community: Could we organise some kind of event to get out into the community and raise awareness of what's available. We also need a website to map out all the free events and make them more visible. • Boost collaboration and communication: Develop a VCSE collaboration charter to get services working together better. We also need to improve our social media presence to reach young people and promote activities. • Make spaces safe and accessible: Focus on

- **Safety for young people:** Many places aren't safe for kids to play in, and this limits their opportunities to get involved in leisure activities.

- **Social media:** We need to better use platforms like Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok to reach young people. Youth services used to be more widespread, with every school having its own youth club—now, that's not the case, and services are spread unevenly across the town.

empty buildings and unused spaces around town that could be turned into places for youth clubs, safe play areas, or other leisure activities.

- **Public health funding:** HBC has a big pot of money from PHE—there's an opportunity to figure out how it's being spent and make sure it's supporting the right services, especially around health, leisure, and youth activities.

making community spaces safer for kids to play. We could repurpose unused buildings and open spaces for leisure activities, youth clubs, and community events, with help from local businesses.