

## Accessing Services Meeting Notes

Date: Wednesday, 27th November 2024

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### Focus Going Forward

- Emphasise **free, affordable, and universal access** to services across Hartlepool.
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### Activity: Researching Free Christmas Activities

Commissioners were tasked with spending five minutes researching free Christmas activities in Hartlepool using laptops and smartphones.

#### Key Questions Asked:

1. What did you find out?
2. How easy was it to do?
3. Did the search provide what you wanted?
4. Does free really mean free?
5. Are sufficient free activities available?

#### Feedback from Commissioners:

- **Hard to Navigate:** Many found the process boring and difficult to navigate.
  - **Reminders of Financial Struggles:** The results highlighted things already known to be free, like beaches or parks, which aren't practical in winter.
  - **Lack of Centralised Information:**
    - No single place collects or maps events effectively.
    - Most participants relied on **word of mouth** for information.
  - **Digital Exclusion:** Pauline mentioned being aware of apps and websites but unable to use them due to difficulties being online.
  - **Positive Findings:**
    - Free wreath-making workshops.
    - Several free events in community hubs.
  - **Overall Outcome:** "There will be lots of free things out there, but we just can't see them."
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#### Potential Actions Discussed

1. **Improving Accessibility of Information:**
  - Install **notice boards** along the number 6 bus route or on the buses themselves, promoting activities at the central hub (Library).
  - Set up a **community notice board** in the Job Centre highlighting enrichment and leisure activities.
  - Convert a **shop window** into a public notice board.
2. **Better Promotion and Collaboration:**
  - Share flyers with Judith from the DWP to display on the Job Centre's community board.

- Encourage **ward councillors** to actively promote events in their wards.
- Collaborate with Grace from WeMakeSound, who is collating all creative spaces in Hartlepool.

### 3. Mapping Free Events:

- Use the **Family Hubs interactive map** as a model for an online map of free activities.
- Create a reliable “Map of Events” updated specifically for the three major holidays: Easter, Summer, and Christmas.

## Exercise: Exploring Paid Leisure Activities

Commissioners evaluated leisure activities in Hartlepool that incur costs, such as Vue Cinema, Jump 360, and Wacky Warehouse, to determine how these could be made more accessible.

### Selected Focus Areas:

- **Vue Cinema**
- **Wacky Warehouse**

Participants split into two groups to pitch ideas for collaboration with each company.

## Vue Cinema Group Discussion

### Current Schemes in Place:

- O2 Priority.
- Sky VIP (2x free tickets per month).
- Meerkat Movies promotion.
- Charity worker discount (up to 40% off).
- "Mighty Mornings" (£2.50 tickets on weekends and school holidays).
- Tiered seating prices (£7.99–£9.99).

### Ideas Generated:

- Host a “Hartlepool Cinema Day,” mirroring National Cinema Day (31st August).
- Create a **Vue Film Club** partnering with schools and colleges to screen educational or culturally/socially relevant films.

### Next Steps:

- Research Vue Cinema’s **social responsibility policies**.
- Contact Darren Williams, Hartlepool General Manager (identify contact details).

## Other Proposed Actions

### 1. Promoting Free Events:

- Expand promotion efforts across the town and within specific wards.
- Use **"What's On" shopfronts** and boards outside community hubs, particularly the central hub.

### 2. Maintaining Event Listings:

- Ensure those organising free events update information for a “Map of Events.”
- Focus on centralised listings during major holidays (Easter, Summer, Christmas).

**3. Online Maps and Resources:**

- Review the Hartlepool "What's On" page.
- Collaborate with Lorraine Hutchinson to integrate her **Family Hubs map** into a comprehensive online resource.