

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2021-2025

Work towards revitalising the Town Centre					
Objective	Actions	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success Criteria (SC)	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Comments and % Progress
Progress HSHAZ	Work with NCC on the Heritage Action Zone to revitalise the primary shopping area based on heritage led regeneration.	Mostly CE (Councillors Cessford, Fairless-Aitken, Grennan and Kennedy)	Obtain SC from HSHAZ.	March 2024	Buildings have been renovated and plans are being made to renovate the street scape. 50%.
Celebrate Hexham's heritage	Consider heritage signage throughout Hexham	Mostly P&I	Better signage, etc.	December 2022	Funding provided for two plaques. NCC Planning advising on Lawful Development Certificate/ Advertisement Consent. 50%.
Work towards making the Market Place more attractive to shoppers and successful for traders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investigate new market management strategies. 2. Investigate making the Market Place traffic free for market days and events. 3. Find ways of having more stalls. 4. Investigate the possibility of more events in the Market Place. 	Mostly CE	More visitors. Recognised as the best market in Northumberland. Positive feedback at Council market stall.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. December 2022 2. Ongoing 3. Spring 2023 4. Ongoing depending on results of 2 above 	Encouraged Tuesday Market change of management with Hexham Business Group. In discussions with NCC re reduced charges for road closure. 10%.
Try to encourage more self-support among Hexham businesses	Encourage businesses to form mutually beneficial forums for discussion and cooperation.	F&GP/CE	Business increases for local businesses.	2025	Small business group is functioning well. 50%.

Rent space	HTC to consider renting a shop/office for a year, providing it free to startup businesses on a short term basis. HTC uses it as an office.	F&GP/CE	Continuous occupancy of a currently empty shop. HTC more accessible.	2025	0%.
Tuesday market stall	HTC considers providing a market stall to startup businesses on a monthly basis. email clerk@htc to apply.	F&GP/CE	Continuous use of an extra market stall.	Spring 2023. This should be advertised from early 2023	Stalls are available rent free for 6 months to new traders. 10%.
Clean the town	Work with Wombles. Includes parks for litter picking etc.	P&I	Constituents comment that town is cleaner/smarter.	Ongoing	SFA's Wombles initiative for litter picks. 100%.

Progress the sustainability action plan

Objective	Actions	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Protect and enhance the biodiversity in Hexham	Work with HS4N to implement its tree management plan for parks and the town.	P&I	Hexham has a viable tree management plan.	Spring 2023	HS4N continues to create the plan in conjunction with NCC. 75%.
	Work with HS4N to review the cemetery biodiversity plan.	P&I (Clerk, Councillor Ord)	New cemetery biodiversity plan is created.	Spring 2023	Land has been allocated for bee friendly perennials. 80%.
	Work with HS4N, Hexham in Bloom, NCC, residents' associations and other stakeholders to make insect friendly flowerbeds.	P&I (Councilors Baty, O'Farrell and Ord)	More beds with more biodiverse-friendly planting.	Ongoing. Awaiting Northumbria in Bloom judgement	2022 planting sourced from peat and pesticide-free growers, and perennial and pollinator-friendly planting ordered to be introduced in to some beds and planters. 100%.
	Council stops using glyphosate.	P&I (Councillor Ord,	No glyphosate is used by	Completed 2021	Completed. A natural

		Operations Manager)	HTC in Hexham.		weedkiller is being trialled. 100%.
Reduce carbon use by the town council	Investigate solar panel installation at the cemetery.	P&I (Councillor Ord, Clerk)	Full cost analysis and permissions in place.	2023	Solar panel estimates received. 50%.
	Investigate air source heat pump installation at the cemetery.	P&I (Councillor Ord, Clerk)	Full cost analysis and permissions in place.	Completed	Air source heat pumps estimates received. 100%.
Measure the carbon footprints of the town council and Hexham as a whole	Work with NCC to produce and analyse the data - Started	P&I (Clerk, Councillor Ord)	Carbon footprint of HTC as an organisation is measured. Whole town carbon footprint is measured.	Data collected on Town Council by NCC was insufficient. Carbon survey of whole town to be undertaken by Town Council through 2023	Ongoing – presentation made at March 2022 Full Council. NCC failed to carry out footprint survey. Calculator is available – www.impact-tool.org.uk 100%.
Manage allotment waiting list	Research the possibility of more sites. Encourage involvement in gardening partnering scheme (Grow Hexham).	P&I (Councillor Grennan)	Grow Hexham gains crowdfunding support from North of Tyne Mayor. Allotment waiting list is reduced.	1. More sites at Wydon Park investigated. 2022 2. Grow Hexham 2022	1. Still waiting for NCC/ groundwork plans 2. Target reached. Project Coordinator appointed March 2022. 100%.
Encourage close cooperation with Allotment Association	Create allotment guidance booklet. Councillor joins allotment association.	P&I (Councillors Hartland and Ord)	Regular communication between QBAA and HTC.	Completed	Booklet completed, distributed and on website. Councillor Ord joined QBAA. 100%.
Work with NCC re its climate policy implementation	Encourage existing and create new climate action groups in Hexham. HTC to act as liaison between groups and NCC.	P&I/CE	NCC's climate policy is implemented so far as Hexham is concerned.	On going work throughout the term of the Council	Working party formed, taken on Climate Champions initiative. 100%.

Support Tourism

Objective	Actions	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success Criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Arrange events in the Market and Town	Prepare to celebrate 800 years anniversary of the Market in 2022. Commemorate the Hexham Massacre (9 March 1761).	CE	Successful events.	Main event to be held 24 September 2022	Projects and Funding Officer post created. 100%.
	Queen's Jubilee	CE	Jubilee is celebrated Proclamation made	Completed (various events held)	100%.
	Closer working with HCP	CE		Ongoing through term of council	Grant aid agreed. 100%.
	Audition Bellman	CE (Councillor Ball)	Bellman vacancy is filled.	Completed	Auditions held April 2022. Bellman and Deputy appointed. 100%.
	Arrange Remembrance event in remembrance of those lost/injured at war.	CE (Sub-Committee, Clerk, Councillor Williscroft-Ferris)	Event takes place.	Each November	Event attended by approx. 2000 in 2021. 100%.
	More Bandstand events	CE (Councillor Grennan)	Bandstand events are increased.	Throughout term of Council	Held on 11 Sundays in 2022. 100%.
	Co-ordinating and communicating the Hexham events (e.g. calendar on website?)	CE	An easy to access calendar of events is well used.		100%.
	Appoint Projects Officer	Projects and Funding Officer	Project plan created.		Projects and Funding Officer started February 2022 (permanent post). 100%.
Work towards developing a more ambitious Christmas /	Contact Artichoke, Partnership and Abbey re Hexham Lumiere or more extensive lights event.	CE (Clerk)	Full costings provided and feasibility understood.	2023/04	Estimate received for improving the Abbey lights. Working with HCP. 100%.

Winter Lights event					
Work towards Dark Sky Town Status		P&I (Councillor Fairless-Aitken)	Town Dark Sky status achieved.	Long term plan throughout term of the council	Related presentation made at December 2021 Full Council. Guidance agreed by P&I Committee. 10%.
Improve toilet provision in the town	Continue discussions with NCC regarding demolition of existing toilet block behind Queen's Hall and installation of new toilets.	P&I/F&GP (Councillors Hartland and Kennedy)	Fewer complaints about toilet provision from the public.	2023 (NCC Leader visit in 2022)	In spring 2022 NCC announced upgrade and reopening block behind Queen's Hall. 50%.
Increase footfall in old shopping areas	Research a summer land train for 2022 which would link Bunker Site parking, Wentworth, Station and Market Place.	P&I (Councillor Ord)	Full cost analysis and feasibility study provided.	2023	Summer land train would cost £50,000 to buy – hire costs being researched. Hire costs and bureaucracy involved makes this almost impossible. Shuttle bus is a more practical alternative. 25%.
Tourism Strategy	Review and revise the existing policy if necessary	CE	Strategy is reviewed	Ongoing	Events held. 100%.
	Modernise and add information boards across the town.	CE	More information clearly provided in an accessible way.	2022/03	Community noticeboard ordered July 2022. 50%.

Gain quality status for the Council
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Objective	Actions	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Community Involvement	Encourage and facilitate more community involvement in the work of the Council.	CE	Community speaking at meetings.	2022	Each Full Council has at least one community speaker. 100%.
	Continue Market Stall consultation with the public.	CE (All Councillors)	Engagement. Understanding priorities of the public.	Throughout term of the Council	Ongoing. 100%.
	Set up a young persons' forum.	CE (Councillors Grennan, Fairless-Aitken and Williscroft-Ferris)	Forum meets regularly.	2023	Invite school rep to attend Full council meeting. 10%.
	Review and improve the links with Hexham Community Partnership.	CE	Closer collaboration.	Throughout the life of the Council	100%.
Training	All Councillors to attend at least one training session.	All Councillors	Each Councillor gives brief feedback on course attended.	Continuous	10 Councillors attended at least one training session in 2021/22. 90%.

Retain Green Flag Award for Cemetery

Objective	Actions	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Maintain the Cemetery infrastructure	Repaint the gates, doors etc in the cemetery where required.	P&I (Clerk)	Infrastructure is sound, clean and well maintained.	Ongoing	Repainting completed in summer 2021, except the gates. 100%.
Review Cemetery biodiversity management plan	Review existing and consider additions/changes suggested by HS4N	P&I (Clerk)	More insect friendly perennials are planted	Completed	Green Flag Award given for 2022/23 Area of land has been selected. 100%.
Increase community use	Creating a nature trail with Hexham in Bloom.	CE/P&I (Councillor O'Farrell)	Nature trail is created and publicised.	2023	50%.

Work towards more affordable housing

Objective	Action	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Work with Partners	Consider derelict sites in the town with Karbon Homes, Bernicia and Castle and Coast	CE/NP	Relationships built with housing providers	Ongoing through term of council	Meetings have been held. 100%.
	Work with Hexham Community Led Housing.	NP	Relationship built with HCLH	Ongoing through term of council	Regular meetings have been set up via working party. 100%.
Use the Neighbourhood Plan	Encourage empty commercial buildings or spaces above shops to be repurposed as affordable homes.	NP (Councillors Baty and Domingue)	Spaces above shops are repurposed. More town centre housing is created	Ongoing through term of Council	A number of properties have gained planning permission. 100%.
Bring Police Houses into use.	Work with relevant agencies to upgrade empty police houses.	NP (Councillor Kennedy)	Houses are used as affordable homes.	Ongoing through term of council	Questions asked of PCC May 2022. 50%.
Old Bus Station	Setup a Community Led Partnership as a vehicle for building affordable housing on site.	NP (Councillors Baty and Domingue)	Community Led Partnership is set up.	2024	0%.

Former HMS site	Modify the Hexham Neighbourhood Plan to include the former Hexham Middle School site.	NP (Councillors Fairless-Aitken, O'Farrell and Ord)	In HNP.	Meetings to be held throughout 2023 for application Sept 2024	10%.
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Ensure Cemetery does not run at a loss

Objective	Action	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Make the Cemetery financially independent of the precept	Ascertain the cost of each burial and charge appropriately.	P&I/F&GP (Clerk)	HTC precept no longer subsidises costs of burials.	Review each financial year	Council agreed to raise 2022/23 fees by 15%. 80%.

Improve the Skatepark/sports facilities

Objective	Action	Committee and Lead Person(s)	Success criteria	Priority/Aimed for Completion date	Progress
Improve facilities	Work with Hexham Youth Initiative to improve the skatepark surface, etc.	P&I/F&GP (Clerk)	Feedback from users	Refurbishment to take place September/October 2022	S106 funding application successful. Application to Suez Communities Trust for funding also successful. 100%.

