

HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report To: Scrutiny Committee
29 June 2017

Subject: ANNUAL REVIEW 2016/17 – HAMBLETON HIGHLIGHTS

All Wards

1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a review of Hambleton District Council's performance and achievements during the 2016/17 year.
- 1.2 Attached at Annex A is the Annual Review 2016/17 – Hambleton Highlights – which focuses on the successful progress that has been made against the Council's key priorities and shows the authority continues to strive to deliver its aims for the community.
- 1.3 The Annual Review provides information across the four priority areas throughout the year, an indication for the year ahead and finishes with a snapshot of performance statistics. The four priority areas are:
- Driving Economic Vitality
 - Enhancing Health and Wellbeing
 - Caring for the Environment
 - Providing a Special Place to Live

2.0 LINK TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

- 2.1 This report demonstrates the monitoring of performance against the Council Plan key priorities for the year 2016/17 and provides an overview of Hambleton District Council performance to deliver local outcomes.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 3.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny note the Annual Review report for 2016/17 performance to deliver services to the community.

LOUISE BRANFORD-WHITE
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE (S151 OFFICER)

Background papers:

Hambleton District Council (HDC) Plan 2015-19	HDC Economic Strategy 2014-24
HDC press / media releases / website	HDC Quarterly Scrutiny Performance Reports
HDC Business Roundup 2016/17	HDC Council Talk 2016/17
Equality & Human Rights Commission	Gov.uk
HDC Insight 2016/17	Local Government Association (LGA)
HDC Parish Updates 2016/17	North Yorkshire Economic Monitor
Rural Services Network	

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Hambleton Highlights



Annual Review 2016 - 17



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Welcome to Hambleton



Hambleton District Council exists to serve the needs of those living, working in or visiting this very special area.

The motto on the council's Coat of Arms is 'United in Progress'

which accurately captures our vision of working **for** the community by working **with** the community. We firmly believe that only by listening to our residents and working together can we deliver the type and quality of services needed, helping communities to help themselves with the resources we have available.

In this way, we believe we are better able to turn the unique challenges we face into employment opportunities, tourism opportunities, leisure opportunities and economic opportunities - that will ensure this beautiful district continues to prosper.

A stylized black ink signature of Councillor Mark Robson.

Councillor Mark Robson
Leader of Hambleton District Council



Each year we publish Hambleton Highlights as a snapshot of the Council's key achievements and developing projects through the year.

Whilst our Council Plan looks forward to the aims and priorities for the community, Hambleton Highlights takes a look back at how we did and what we got up to in the past year.

A major talking point in 2016/17 is the exciting new re-development of the former prison in Northallerton, one of the most important economic investment projects the Council has ever undertaken. Then there's the new green waste programme as we continue to drive up recycling rates for a more efficient and environmentally friendly waste collection service.

And who can forget the incredible Tour de Yorkshire that came back to our district for a second year, bringing world class sport and a host of legacy events to our doorstep.

Please take this opportunity to look back at some of the work the council has been involved in on your behalf, to both deliver essential services and to help our communities flourish.

A stylized black ink signature of Dr Justin Ives.

Dr Justin Ives
Chief Executive Officer

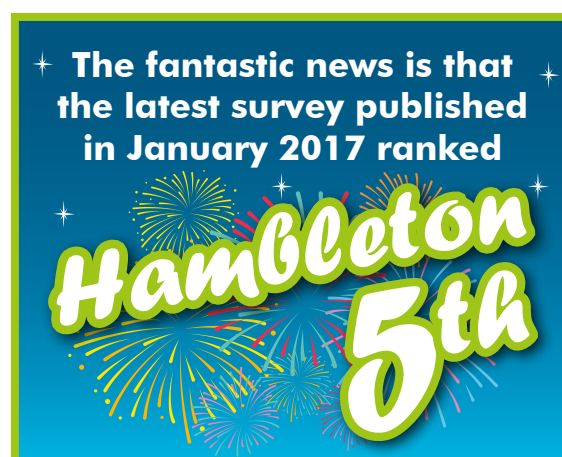
Where we live

Hambleton is a region of contrast, from affluent market towns to remote villages, a picturesque rural area framed to the east by the North Yorkshire Moors and the Howardian Hills, stretching from the urban conurbations of the Tees Valley in the north to the outskirts of York in the south. Extensive open and undeveloped spaces provide large tracts of tranquil countryside, home to an agricultural heritage of arable farming and livestock grazing.



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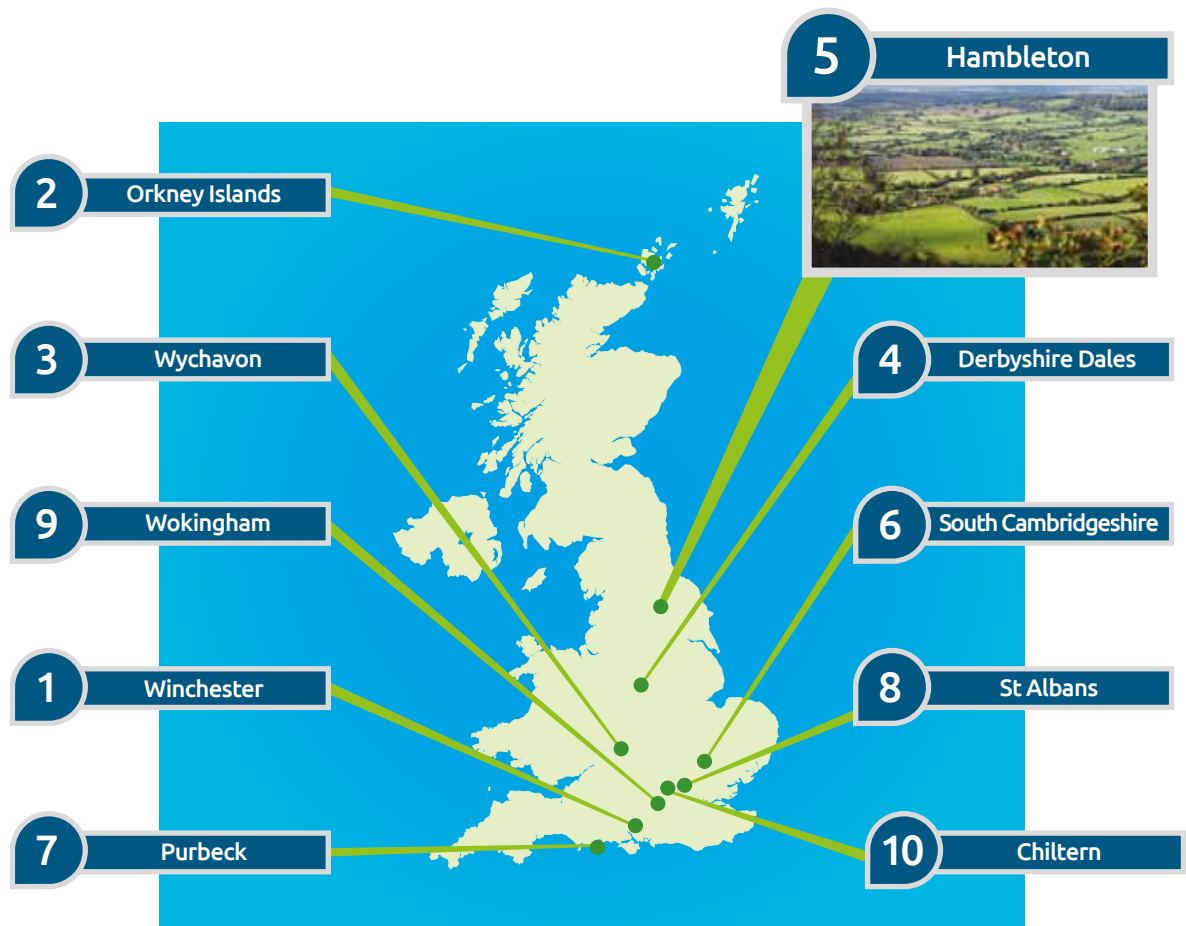
Last year we reported that Hambleton ranked 18th in the annual Halifax Quality of Life survey of local authority districts where living standards are highest.



The survey tracks living standards across a wide range of indicators such as life expectancy, earnings, housing, environment, education, broadband access, crime rates, average sunshine hours and rainfall, health, personal well-being and - for the first time this year - the number of pubs and leisure centres.

Winchester in Hampshire leads the table with only the Orkney Islands, Wychavon in the West Midlands and the Derbyshire Dales between us. Hambleton scored highly in the personal well-being survey as well and, at 87.7%, has one of the highest employment rates.

Once again this proves - as if we needed reminding - that we live and work in one of the country's loveliest places.




Who we are

We have a diverse population enjoying a good quality of life in Hambleton which is reflected in the demographic profile with a high percentage of older people who are active, healthy and relatively wealthy retirees, many of whom are mortgage free. Hambleton is an area of low unemployment and demand for housing is high. The district is also attractive to families wanting to live in the countryside but work in the main market towns or further afield in York, West Yorkshire and the Tees Valley, all of which are within an easy commute by road or rail.

There is net internal migration to predominantly rural areas like Hambleton as residents move between local authorities to live in the countryside. This applies across all age bands except for 17 to 20 year olds when students often move away from home to college and universities that are mostly in urban areas.

Rural challenges

Living in the countryside, however beautiful, does present some unique issues as residents tackle characteristics of rural life such as erratic public transport, lack of local GP surgeries, shortage of affordable housing, post office and bank branch closures, fuel poverty and social isolation. Such issues can be more intensified because of Hambleton's large geographical area and dispersed settlement pattern with over 130 villages in the district, many of which have fewer than 500 residents. Just over half the Hambleton population live outside the five market towns making our population density one of the lowest in the country.



**life
expectancy
at birth
above the
national
average**

Our population is also ageing with life expectancy at birth above the national average at more than 80 years of age for both men and women. According to the Office of National Statistics, the number of people reaching the age of 100 has increased by 71%, with those aged over 90 almost trebling, in the past 30 years. Whilst this trend is great news, it does present a number of challenges for authorities responsible for providing essential services.

Connectivity

Access to adequate broadband - or the lack of it - is of crucial importance for commerce and communities across the country; this is especially true for rural communities where connectivity has a direct impact on business and social isolation.

The National Infrastructure Commission report into telecommunication technology, published in December 2016, concluded that mobile connectivity has become a necessity. The report acknowledged that Britain is in the digital slow lane lying 54th in the world for 4G with too many digital deserts and partial not-spots even within our city centres.

This is especially crucial for remote and rural communities where Ofcom found that one in four homes still cannot get decent broadband often because they are a long way from the exchange or local street cabinet.

North Yorkshire County Council set up the Superfast North Yorkshire (SFNY) programme with £34.5m joint funding from the Government's Broadband Delivery UK and European Regional Development Fund, which aims to see up to 90% of premises in the county achieve broadband speeds of 25Mbps by mid-2017. Council officers attend working group meetings and provide links to the community. The third phase of the programme hopes to lift this to 95% by 2019.

To help ease connectivity in our market towns we have already introduced free Wi-Fi to market places in Thirsk, Easingwold and Northallerton and are close to doing so in Stokesley.

What we do

Hambleton district has a business base covering 31 different employment sectors with 3,650 enterprises, a strong micro business economy and a highly skilled labour force. We have major employers in the manufacturing and distribution sectors with strengths in agriculture, professional services, retail and manufacturing, although the majority of businesses in Hambleton are small micro businesses.

Key employers such as Quorn, Armstrong Richardson, Express Aerospace, Preston's of Potto, and Sterling employ over 1,200 people in and around Stokesley. Thirsk and Dalton firms include Severfield, Wagg Foods, National Tube Stockholders, and the North Yorkshire Police at Newby Wiske employ over 1,250 who will soon be relocating to Northallerton. In Bedale and Leeming Bar, Vale of Mowbray, Fiori and Caw Ingredients employ over 750 people which increases with seasonal employment. The area around Easingwold includes International Textiles and Plastics, G H Smiths and Hawkhill, but most employers here are micro businesses with fewer employees. In the main market

town Northallerton, larger organisations such as North Yorkshire County Council, the Friarage Hospital, Allerton Steel and of course the district council, between us employ over 21,500 people.



A growing feature of rural life is the tendency for home working, people who spend at least half their working time based at their home address; this now accounts for 22% of all workers living in rural areas, almost double the proportion of home workers in urban areas, and is increasing. Home workers tend to be in higher skilled roles earning on average a higher wage, many of whom are self-employed. This is most prevalent in the agricultural and construction industries and amongst the older age groups.

Financial Sustainability

The range of services provided by the Council is extremely diverse supporting the community in many areas of everyday life:



**Building
Control**



**Business
Engagement**



Car Parking



CCTV



**Community
Safety**



**Community
Sports and Art
development**



Council Tax



**Design and
Maintenance**



**Development
Management**



Elections



**Emergency
Planning**



**Environmental
Health**



Food Hygiene



**Housing
Benefit**



**Housing
Options**



Licensing



Leisure Centres



Land charges



Mapping



**Planning
Policy**



Recycling



Safeguarding



**Street naming
and numbering**



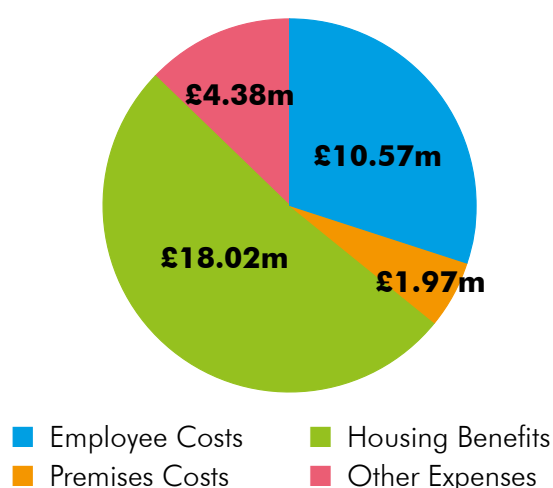
**Waste
Collection**



**Workspace
management**

The key to the council's success in recent years in the current challenging economic environment is our willingness to adapt and change within a shifting economic climate. From recession through austerity and into a Brexit future we remain focused on the fundamentals of careful financial management in the pursuit of continuous improvement in service delivery.

Total Expenditure £34.94m

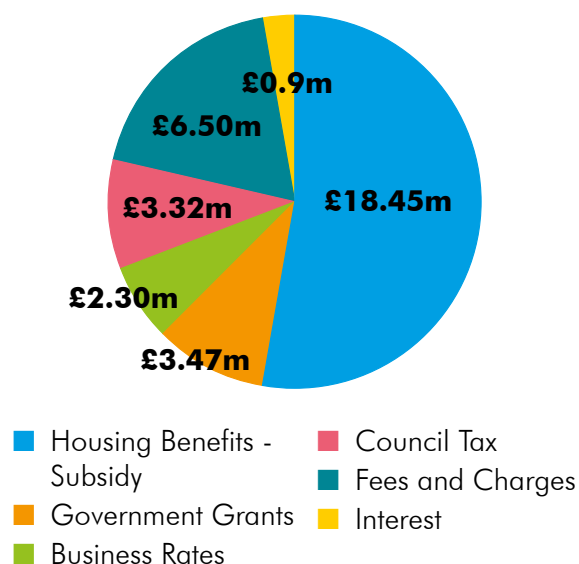


Flexibility has seen us survive and thrive through some difficult years, and will continue to do so. Since 2010 there has been a 53% reduction in grant funding amounting to £2.6m. However, the council's robust financial strategy has enabled a planned and moderated reaction to these cuts and in direct response has saved over £3m from our net revenue budget without any significant impact on front line services.

Future cost pressures are likely to include diminishing recycling revenues, salaries, pension liabilities and fuel costs.

The council will also lose its Revenue Support Grant (RSG) over the next four years, another £1.6m. The New Homes Bonus (NHB) is expected to be significantly reduced and cease altogether in 2020/21, a further reduction of £1.8m.

Total Income £34.94m



However, the council receives extra Rural Funding for 2016/17 of £0.5m and £0.2m for 2017/18.

To maintain its financial position the council has achieved savings in management and staffing costs, enabled sustainable increases in fees and charges and introduced green waste charges to generate revenue. Altogether these efficiency savings are expected to generate income of £1.4m over the two years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Despite, as yet, the unclear effect of Brexit on public sector funding and a potential slowdown of the economy, the council's financial strategy is robust and sustainable with reserves targeted to remain at £10m at the end of the ten year period.

Uncertain times mean the council must - and will - continue to be prudent, innovative and flexible.

Driving Economic Vitality

Mixed predictions for growth post-Brexit could dent investment confidence and stifle development in the district - IF we let it. But as the nation explores different ways to do business, Hambleton is well placed to deal with the years ahead and already making plans to ensure we grasp every opportunity.

The council's Economic Strategy announced in 2014 outlines initiatives to sustain long term growth by both supporting existing businesses and attracting new business to the region. This approach will also generate the need for more housing and leisure facilities.

The five key themes of the strategy are: business support, inward investment, driving growth, vibrant market towns and supporting activity. The strategy is designed to evolve the five market towns Bedale, Easingwold, Northallerton, Stokesley and Thirsk working closely with community partners, developing ideas to ensure continued prosperity.

Economic Development

Northallerton Prison

Northallerton Prison was home to tens of thousands of inmates during its 230 year history. As the first custom-built jail in England, it is significant in the history of penal reform and the likely reason Northallerton became a county town.

The prison was closed by the Ministry of Justice in 2013, paving the way for the council to purchase the 3.4 acre site in the centre of the town as the lynchpin of the authority's ambitious Central Northallerton re-development scheme.

This brave move was taken to ensure Northallerton continues to develop in a co-ordinated and well planned way that suits its location, meets the needs of a growing, diverse population and ensures long term prosperity for the district's principal market town.



Following a tendering exercise which saw a range of bidders discuss potential schemes, the authority is entering into partnership with the Wykeland Group of Hull to form a 'Joint Venture Company' to transform the former prison over the next three years. Demolition of all but the five listed buildings began in October 2016 and will be completed during 2017, ready for redevelopment to begin in 2018.

Before demolition began, filming took place in the prison cells for an episode of the popular ITV detective series 'Vera', which was transmitted in March.

A planning application and public consultation on the proposed uses for the site is expected soon, to include a mix of shops, managed workspace, apartments, restaurants, a cinema and a quadrangle for public events.

Two of the five listed buildings, the former female wings, will include space for community use, a possible heritage centre, workspace for start-up businesses and a 'digital hub', which would involve further partnership work with local universities. The southern end of the site has been earmarked for retail with a food store and two smaller retail units, as well as a 125 space car park.

An archaeological investigation will take place before any new building work begins with details of that work, including opportunities for public involvement, to be announced in the near future.

With the prison site redevelopment and the move of North Yorkshire Police to neighbouring Alverton Court, it is important that we create inviting and easily accessible connections to the town centre. A detailed scheme is being drawn up for changes to Zetland Street and two alleyways, New Row and Central Arcade. All three will become major pedestrian routes from the town centre to the redeveloped prison site.

The council hopes existing shop owners will also look at their building frontages and see how they can be involved in any improvements.

Northallerton BID

Northallerton has a lot to offer, and it is creating a Business Improvement District (BID) to promote the area.

Out-of-town retail parks and the internet are taking their toll on high streets across the country, with customers increasingly discerning about how they use their leisure time.

Northallerton could turn the tide and improve what it has on offer to make everyone's visit a high quality experience and a place where residents and visitors alike want to spend more time... whether it's to shop, eat, drink or holiday.



Northallerton has the ingredients that many towns aspire to with high quality independent shops alongside a good selection of national high street names, traditional architecture and high quality buildings. What the town lacks is the resources to 'sell' the elements that make up this outstanding offer to a wider range of customers. Northallerton Retail and Business Forum (NRBF) has been investigating ways to tackle this and believes a BID offers the best potential solution. A BID is a business-led organisation, funded through a levy on all businesses within a defined area. BIDs have common themes such as improved marketing, better environment, security and co-ordinated events programme.

Many towns and cities are adopting this model to help improve their fortunes and NRBF asked the council to put the idea to the Northallerton businesses that would be affected by the levy. The ballot returned a 71% majority voted in favour of creating a Northallerton BID.

A steering group of business and council representatives aims to develop a plan that achieves the outcomes everyone wants - a vibrant, thriving high street thronging with people enjoying our town and all it offers.

Dalton BID

An example of a BID already in action is at this key industrial estate, strategically located on the A1/A19/A168 corridor where plans to alleviate highway flooding will save an estimated £2m in traffic diversion costs alone. It will also help to open up another 50 hectares of development land with the potential for as many as 1,000 new jobs.

The proposal includes a new bridge, re-prioritisation of the Dalton / Eldmire Lane junction and raised highway and flood embankments offering a 1 in 100 year flood protection. Construction work is estimated to cost £3.2m and the objective of the BID is to raise £1.2m of private sector funding in an equitable and transparent manner. To achieve this, the council has signed an agreement with the BID company for contributions calculated on a business rate levy of between 4%-6% of rateable value, capped at a maximum £275,000 and this will generate around £250,000 per year collectable for 5 years.

The detailed design was finalised in October 2016 with a tender process running to February 2017. Construction will commence in the second quarter of 2017 and should be complete early in 2018.



North Northallerton Bridge and Road

Work on a major new development in north Northallerton - including a link road and bridge between Darlington and Stokesley roads - is underway. Construction teams from are on-site preparing the land for work to begin on the initial 300 homes and the road.

It means the plan to create around 1000 new homes, a school, retail space, sport and recreational areas and sites for businesses - and the new road - will finally come to fruition. The scheme has been in development for several years and brings together a consortium of developers and funders - including a £6m grant from the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to help deliver the scheme.

The road will add capacity to the local network to minimise the development's impact, providing an alternative route through the town avoiding the Low Gates level crossing.

The council is delighted work is starting, which is expected to deliver big economic and community benefits for Northallerton. Through working with our partners we kick-start new economic growth by helping the area's businesses to start up and thrive. Growing businesses need a workforce with housing in which to live and this investment was part of our Local Growth Fund from central government to help unlock housing growth here in Northallerton. Strategically, this scheme is vital to help deliver the authority's objective to double the number of homes across York, North Yorkshire and East Riding.

Business Support

Workspace

The council now manages two business centres Evolution in Northallerton, Springboard in Stokesley:

Evolution Business Centre is the council's managed office facility in Northallerton which supports the start-up and growth of businesses. Evolution's facilities as a conference centre have also proved extremely successful with meeting room hire and refreshment sales growing year on year.

The popular 'Lunch and Learn' sessions continued at Evolution through the year with expert speakers offering practical advice on topics such as wellbeing in the workplace, how to turn a great idea into a business, marketing on a shoestring, exporting and PR.

Springboard Business Centre on Stokesley Business Park also continued its popular programme of monthly Breakfast Briefings. This year topics have included time management, top tips for t'internet, staff motivation and wellbeing at work.



Business Surgery

Discussions with local businesses identified a need for more bespoke guidance, leading to the introduction of free business 'surgeries' where an officer is available to offer advice and support on a one to one basis.

Surgeries have been held in each market town providing advice to businesses in that area on a wealth of topics. Whether its ten minutes or half an hour, sessions can be booked to suit the client, ideal whether you're just starting a business or needing help developing a company.

Clients have found the surgeries a really useful way to get valuable support just around the corner that addresses their particular concerns.

Networking

An innovative boost for businesses across Hambleton was given the green light when Cabinet approved a new £40,000 grant scheme - the Business Network Support fund.

The council has links with a number of networks across the district and this financial injection aims to help these groups continue to develop their membership, effectiveness and long term sustainability - that could be by developing a website and social media links or general marketing and promotion.

With 4,000 businesses in Hambleton these networks, often led by just one or two local businesses on a voluntary basis, are vital to offer mutual support and collaboration and act as information hubs.

Business Forum

The importance of business and government working together was highlighted at a major business conference in Hambleton.

Now in its fourth year, the 2016 Hambleton Strategic Business Forum was hosted by the council's Business and Economy team and sponsored by the North East Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Enterprise Partnership and Teesside University.

The event held in Easingwold attracted more than 100 people from 60 businesses in the district. Delegates heard from keynote speakers with thought provoking accounts of when business has been supported by government - as well as the highs, the lows and challenges that politicians and companies face.



Business Awards

The council's Business Awards scheme celebrates the range and diversity of businesses in the Hambleton area, and the exceptional individual contributions they make.

Now in its third year, the 2016 awards recognised achievements in nine categories. Thirteen inspirational entrepreneurs from across the district received their awards at a Civic Centre ceremony hosted by the council and also sponsored by the Federation of Small Businesses, Dales of Thirsk, Proper Tasty of Northallerton and STAR Radio.

Nominations for the 2017 awards opened on 1 March and as the event continues to grow the next ceremony will be held at the Forum in Northallerton.



Federation of Small Businesses Collaboration

A collaboration with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) reducing the cost of a year's FSB membership has celebrated its first anniversary. The innovative scheme, the first of its kind in the UK, helps small local businesses access advice and support as and when they need it. With a £50 subsidy per applicant from the council, the three year funding package enables FSB to waive the usual joining fee for around 60 applicants per year. This is a great partnership and another example of how we provide practical support for small businesses, the backbone of Hambleton's economy.

To date 93 businesses have taken up the offer since the scheme was introduced.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Hambleton parishes are taking advantage of an investment stream which raises funds through new developments to create the infrastructure needed to support them.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that local planning authorities can raise on new developments in their area. The money is used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhoods have identified such as new road schemes, park improvements, leisure facilities or a new primary school. The amount payable is calculated as a rate per square metre when planning permission is granted, and paid when building begins. The levy is charged on developments such as large retail outlets, supermarkets and some private housing.

A proportion of the money raised is passed on to local parish councils.

Hambleton was one of the first district councils in the country to introduce the CIL levy and since April 2015 has shared over £62,000 with local parishes for smaller projects important to those communities.

Vibrant Market Towns

Boosting Industrial Estates

A drive to improve Hambleton's industrial estates will stimulate investment through a series of initiatives reviewing opportunities for growth and understanding the skill, infrastructure, land and buildings needed to support it. Research from a review of industrial estates conducted by the council informed an action plan encompassing business rates support, recruitment, skills, training and transport, productivity and innovation, broadband, roads, parking, utilities and land and premise availability.

Whilst the council has worked hard to grow the existing business base, a more targeted approach will strengthen key sectors to enable us to play to our strengths and increase the competitiveness of local businesses.

One focus is developing clusters such as the food base at Leeming Bar and advance manufacturing centre at Stokesley, to help bring in external funding, develop links with local universities and increase the ability of businesses to recruit skilled staff.

The council operates industrial estates and units in Thirsk, Stokesley, Bedale, Leeming Bar and Northallerton but there are also key employment areas at Dalton and Easingwold and in smaller communities across the district.

Keeping Hambleton Vibrant

The unique character of our five market towns makes them exceptional places to shop, live and work. Reinforcing its commitment to the Vibrant Market Town ethos, a Preferred Options document went through six weeks of public consultation in late 2016 encouraging residents to help shape the future of employment land allocations across the district over the next 20 years.

Ensuring vibrancy is something the council can take a lead role in. We don't want to see empty shops in our high streets, we want to see towns thriving, more people visiting and help communities take the initiative to organise events like those that take place around the Tour de Yorkshire.

Action plans to drive forward the economic prosperity of Hambleton's market towns are being developed with input from the individual communities, and will be further boosted by the creation of a new 'market town' arm within the council's business team.

One of the key themes of the council's Economic Development Strategy is developing vibrant market towns where each of these communities has a central business area providing services for a wide rural catchment area, effectively making them local capitals for large rural hinterlands. The links between cultural, social and community initiatives and the economy is vital for the sustainability of these towns as local groups and activities create greater footfall which supports the economy. It is equally important to develop and drive the evening as well as the daytime economy - how we use our market towns for leisure purposes as well as to live, work and shop is a key consideration in what makes them vibrant. Drinks and a bite to eat after work, evening classes, theatre, comedy, live music and cinema are all key elements plus, ideally, the ability to do some shopping in your favourite local businesses on the way home. Combining all these elements will create an attractive vibe in our towns throughout the day.



This is <YOUR MARKET TOWN>

Businesses are invited to subscribe to a new series of digital bulletins being sent electronically to companies in the market towns Thirsk, Bedale, Stokesley, Northallerton and Easingwold. Bulletins are published fortnightly on Thursdays and each edition contains short, punchy articles with a call to action and a link to further information.

The first 'this is THIRSK' edition featured the Hambleton Business Conference, the new online shopping app - ShopAppy and an introduction to the bulletin.



Energy Efficiency - Public Lighting

Hambleton owns 3,700 public lights, located in its car parks, facilities and on the streets. During 2013/14 we implemented a scheme of 'part nighting' where 2,200 selected public lights were adapted to automatically switch off between midnight and 5am. This initiative reduced energy consumption by 400,000kwh per year, some 28% of energy for lighting.

In 2016/17 a capital allowance of £87,000 was allocated to invest in the introduction of more efficient LED lighting across the district, to begin replacing the older public lighting lanterns which consume more energy. This initiative has realised a further energy saving of 130,000kwh per year, which is 13% of energy for lighting.

The installation of LED lighting will continue into 2017/18 with a further investment of £43,000. On completion of this second phase energy used by public lighting will be around half of the April 2013 levels.

Enhancing Health and Wellbeing

The value of sport to communities extends beyond sport for sport's sake - it has a social and cultural impact that can play a role in bringing communities together. Regular involvement in sport can benefit individuals and communities, contributing to a culture of tolerance and respect, creating cohesive and inclusive communities that value diversity with local pride and a sense of place, reducing youth offending, anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drug misuse

The Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our residents with a broad range of initiatives and activities at our leisure centres and a dynamic platform of programmes in the community.

Leisure Centres

Open seven days a week, our Zest leisure centres at Bedale, Northallerton, Stokesley and Thirsk provide a range of sporting activities for people of all ages, needs and abilities - be that swimming, badminton, football and much more. Each has a Zest Fitness gym whose team of qualified instructors can guide new exercisers as well as regular users. They also have floodlit pitches close by and offer great value memberships or pay per visit.

More and more Hambleton residents are choosing to get active and accessing the centres through a membership than ever before. Zest Freedom is the full premium membership which includes unlimited access to the gym, swimming, sauna and fitness classes and more. A total of 2,018 new Zest Freedom memberships were taken up in the 12 months to March 2017, resulting in a year end membership base of 2,822 - the highest it has ever been.

Hambleton Rated 'Excellent'

Hambleton Leisure Centre has been rated 'excellent' by the national quality award scheme for leisure centres - Quest - one of only 10% nationwide.

Quest is commissioned by Sport England to assess the quality of leisure centres across the UK through a rigorous inspection programme that covers all aspects of their operations. The centre excelled in: community outcomes, team and skill development, health and safety management, sales and retention, lifeguarding and financial management and performance.

Both staff and customers are consulted during the assessment process and a mystery visit is carried out to measure the consistency of service standards.



Centre Refit and Extension

A refit of Hambleton Leisure Centre moved a step closer in January with the announcement of development partner Alliance Leisure Services Ltd. The £2.5m project will include:

- Newly built gym with 70 stations - about twice the current size
- Dance studio
- Activity studio
- New pool changing refurbishment
- New gym changing
- Toning suite
- Improved sports hall changing



The majority of the cost will be borne by the council, with £213,000 lottery funding from Sport England specifically targeted at improving swim change facilities. Planning approval was granted on 30 March 2017 meaning construction work can begin within weeks.

Thirsk and Sowerby Upgrade



Thirsk and Sowerby Leisure Centre celebrated the official opening of new and improved facilities in July 2016 with £200,000 of council funded improvements to the pool hall and changing village.

On the pool side, this included replacing pool surround tiles, ceiling cladding, refreshed seating, improved poolside lighting and new storage for pool equipment. The changing rooms benefitted from improved lighting, drainage and floor and shower walls.

#Perfect 10

All four leisure centres ran a variety of schemes throughout the year to encourage people to get and stay active.

The new #Perfect 10 scheme launched in September 2016 rewards customers who have remained full Zest Freedom members for a consecutive ten months and attended at least ten days each month, with entry to this exclusive club! 157 members have qualified so far across the four centres.

Bedale Hoist

A new pool hoist with ceiling tracking and height adjustable bed have been installed at Bedale leisure centre giving better pool access. The improvements followed a disability audit which identified that people with more complex needs struggled to access the pool using the existing fixed chair hoist system.

Funded jointly with the historic Bedale charity 'Rector and Four and Twenty' the equipment will help people with a wider range of disabilities, those rehabilitating from injury and mature adults who prefer assistance into the pool.



Swimming is recognised as one of the best forms of therapy as movement of the body through water gives a sense of freedom and can be an effective physiotherapy session.

Swim Gala

Hambleton's four swimming clubs battled it out in their second swimming gala.

Held at Bedale Leisure Centre, over 100 junior swimmers aged from 6-12 years competed in individual and team events - in front crawl, backstroke, breaststroke and for the older swimmers - butterfly. The event finished off with a 12 strong cannon race composed of six boys and six girls one from each age group bringing out the atmosphere of the gala from both the teams and spectators with their cheering.

Thirsk White Horse Swim Team was the overall winning team on the day.

The Hambleton Swimming League is a collaborative effort between the clubs in Bedale, Northallerton, Stokesley and Thirsk and Hambleton District Council.

Smiley Faces Rank Services



Customers are helping improve our leisure centre services as they adopt the council's GovMetric system to measure customer satisfaction ratings.



Every time a customer visits one of the centres or uses the website they are encouraged to give feedback through the system. A series of smiley faces rank the service and if customers are dissatisfied comments can be added. Visitors can use a touch screen panel before leaving to give their views and each website page has a snippet with smiley face buttons to press.

Community Leisure

The council is also engaged in improving community health and wellbeing with inclusive local activities, facilities, events and interventions. We develop and promote an extensive range of leisure and wellbeing initiatives many aimed at the general public, but some programmes are tailored to groups with particular needs, or who live in a certain neighbourhood.

Hambleton Community Awards



Over 200 people gathered at the Northallerton Forum in March 2016 to celebrate Hambleton's annual 'Community Awards'. Now in their fourth year the awards pick out exceptional contributions to the district by residents young and old.

Service to Young People, Service to Older People, Service to Disability, Community Group of the Year, Community Event of the Year, Community Building of the Year, Young Volunteer of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Parish Council of the Year and Champion of the Year were all celebrated.

The evening highlighted the warmth and care of a dedicated group of people who work tirelessly for no pay to see through projects or organise services for their communities.

Parkrun 1st Birthday

Over 100 people - and three dogs - celebrated Northallerton Parkrun's first birthday in August 2016. Well-earned refreshment was provided by Herriot Hospice Homecare and each runner was awarded a unique commemorative pin badge. The run averages 80 runners each week.

To enable the Parkrun to grow and become such a success relies on a small army of over 50 volunteers. They are the lifeblood of the event and provide support in many different roles.

The Parkrun is also an integral part of the Hambleton Running Hub programme that supports Run Leader training courses, Community Running Groups and new running ventures.

The Parkrun takes place each Saturday on the fields around Northallerton Leisure Centre, starting at 9am with a pre-run briefing just beforehand. So if you would like to be involved but not run, please come along as we are always on the lookout for more helpers.



Couch to 5K

A new free running class took off in Easingwold in October 2016 aimed at new runners wanting to run further - whilst having fun!

Supported by the council, North Yorkshire Sport and Yorkshire Cancer Research, the new Couch to 5K group is a running and fitness plan developed to help absolute beginners get more active. The programme features different activities each week and can be adapted to suit all abilities, under the guidance of an experienced qualified Running Leader.

Pramfit

The first council led 'Pramfit' sessions place took place in October 2016 in Stokesley Park.

This outdoor exercise class for postnatal mums offers a variety of exercises to help to regain fitness, strength and shape and is led by a qualified coach. The fun and friendly sessions include elements aimed at regaining and promoting strength and flexibility in addition to walking in and around the park.

More classes are planned and there's no need to worry about childcare... prams and babies are a must!!



Inclusive Sport

The Inclusive Sport programme, designed to increase the number of disabled people regularly playing sport, is part of Sport England's wider commitment to increasing regular sport participation by disabled people. The council wholeheartedly supports the programme and has already invested in a variety of initiatives to bring activity to as many of our residents as possible.



■ Ability Day

A special event to focus on inclusive sport took place in February 2017 when Hambleton Leisure Centre ran a taster day for everyone regardless of age, ability or experience.

Participants enjoyed having a go at boccia, football, new age kurling, dodgeball and - by popular demand - dance!

Introduced for the first time, Rebound Therapy also proved extremely popular using trampolines to provide movement, therapeutic exercise and recreation across a spectrum of special needs.

■ Primetime

This initiative uses sport to reduce isolation in rural areas where populations are sparse and people can feel cut off.

Sessions are for any age or ability but particularly welcome those looking for social interaction. Primetime is operated by the council and North Yorkshire Sport with four schemes up and running in Stillington, Topcliffe, Husthwaite and Stokesley. In October, 43 participants took part in a special event to celebrate the launch two years ago.

Primetime is about having fun, forming friendships, getting people out of their homes and meeting up with other people, young and old having fun together.



■ Future Stars

Sports stars of the future once again received a boost from the council as 25 young people enjoyed access to free training to help them reach their sporting goals. The 10 - 17 year olds showed their talents in sports such as athletics, cricket, rugby, football, swimming, hockey, biathlon, cycling, triathlon, cross country and fell running, with some competing in multi-disciplines - 15 at regional level.

The young athletes each received a £280 'Zestcard' giving them free use of selected facilities at the council's four leisure centres as well as the Galtres Centre in Easingwold.

To improve as an athlete takes immense dedication, and often great expense and the council is delighted to offer this practical help and support.



■ Hambleton Boccia club

Boccia is a sport that tests muscle control and accuracy as players propel balls to land close to a target ball. Two sides compete as individuals, pairs or a team of three over a set number of ends.

Getting started is simple, but the tactics of the sport offer both tension and excitement! A ball can be rolled, thrown or kicked. If a player is unable to throw or kick the ball, they can use a ramp. If players are unable to release the ball with their hands, they can use assistive devices - head/hand pointer.

In October 2016 the club competed in its first major competition in Sheffield. Three members took part in the Heathcoat Cup, a new competition for all impairment groups. Mark Gracey made it all the way to the final coming away with a silver medal and will now represent Hambleton in the National finals in London in April 2017.

The club runs sessions every Saturday at Hambleton Leisure Centre suitable for all ages and abilities, with parents, supporters and carers all very welcome!

Cycling Roadshow

Around 80 Stokesley schoolchildren enjoyed a cycling themed roadshow in May 2016. Organised by the council at Stokesley High School, the event was attended by pupils from Stokesley, Roseberry and Mount Grace Primary Schools.

The children enjoyed a day of activities that included cycling over ramps and negotiating obstacles, a cycle racing presentation and even making fruit smoothies using pedal power!

The roadshow was a Tour de Yorkshire legacy event as we continue to encourage more people to cycle through the district council's Get Hambleton Cycling scheme.



Northallerton Multi-sports club

This club meets every Tuesday at Hambleton Leisure Centre and is for anyone with a physical or learning disability over the age of 11.

Activities include kwik cricket, dodge ball, boccia, new age curling and multi-sport challenge. Sessions are suitable for all ages and abilities and parents, supporters and carers all welcome.

Hambleton Club Night

This free workshop run in partnership with North Yorkshire Sport helps Hambleton sports clubs share experiences, challenges and good practice while keeping up to date with available support and initiatives. Club Night is particularly relevant for those who have responsibility for running or improving their club.

Sports Awards

Hambleton's sporting heroes were again recognised at a Civic Centre function in November organised by the council with support from North Yorkshire Sport.

Awards in 11 categories acknowledged commitment in a range of sports including football, rugby, shot putt, rowing cricket and hockey, alongside outstanding individual contributions to clubs and organisations across the district.

Special guest for the evening was Bedale cricketing hero Paul Grayson who made his first class debut for Yorkshire at Scarborough in 1990. After six seasons with Yorkshire, he joined Essex achieving a county cap in his first season, reaching four Lords finals and gathering two England caps along the way. Retiring in 2005 Paul became assistant coach, then Head Coach, at Essex before taking his current role as Head of Cricket at Durham University last year.

The ceremony once again brought together people of all ages and abilities from school children to ex-players, coaches and even a Paralympian gold medallist!



Tour de Yorkshire returns to Hambleton!



On the first weekend in May 2016, Hambleton again contributed to a sporting spectacular that saw over two million people ignore miserable weather to watch the second Tour de Yorkshire! It's fair to say that businesses and communities did the district proud in the weeks prior as painted bikes and bunting appeared and a team of over 300 knitters yarnbombed Thirsk!

Communities on the route were supported by the council with advice, guidance and in some cases grants to ensure spectators had a great time. The last day of the race saw the cyclists race through ten Hambleton wards including a sprint through Thirsk, passing through a funfair in Northallerton - a first for the race - and the first King of the Mountains up Sutton Bank.

The Council and North York Moors National Park Authority won the Welcome to Yorkshire land art competition with a jointly commissioned piece installed at the Yorkshire Gliding Club, Sutton Bank. The whopping 70m by 40m white painting re-creates the animals from the council's coat of arms. The piece came into view as helicopters broadcasting live coverage of the race tracked the cyclists' ascent of the Côte de Sutton Bank. A worldwide audience of six million saw a horse atop a penny farthing with a ram perched on its shoulders and a boar sitting aloft holding a telescope looking out at what 'All Creatures Great and Small' author and vet Alf Wight, known by his pen name James Herriot, declared was "the finest view in England".

The council also presented plaques to each of the main communities which welcomed this year's event - Great Ayton, Stokesley, Hutton Rudby, Northallerton, Thirsk, Sutton under Whitestonecliffe and Sutton Bank.

The Tour is now the second most watched cycling event in the world, surpassed only by the Tour de France itself. The legacy of the event will remain with the district for years to come; last year the race brought £50 million to the county so the economic benefits are undeniable. It is also anticipated that activity levels will increase as more people get cycling.

The route for the 2017 tour has been announced, once again travelling through Hambleton's West Tanfield on the second day Saturday 29 April. Looking further ahead, 2018 will also see a Tour de Yorkshire as well as the announcement of the route for the nine day cycling World Road Championships; we hope Hambleton will feature in both events.



Mental Health

At the prestigious Charity Commission lecture in January 2017, the Prime Minister, Theresa May, set out her government's vision for transforming mental health support, recognising there is not enough help to hand for those suffering what was described as 'the burning injustice of mental illness'.

Mental health issues affect millions of people of all ages and backgrounds. An estimated one in four people have a common mental disorder at any time. The economic and social cost of mental illness is £105 billion, or roughly the same as currently spent on the entire NHS. Whilst great strides have been made for those suffering a mental health crisis, the Prime Minister urged a transformation in the way we deal with mental health problems across society and at every stage of life.

The government is introducing a package of measures with a major review of children and adolescent services, efforts to improve mental wellbeing in the workplace, expanding support in local communities and additional funding for online therapies.

Hambleton is proud to be involved in developing solutions to tackle mental health issues, having already begun working with our residents and communities to break down barriers, improve awareness and create opportunities for improving the wellbeing of those in our community suffering mental health difficulties. We have taken advice from experts in such fields as autism and dementia on sensory impact considerations, and are looking to make more adjustments in leisure centres that focus on mental health accessibility.

Run and Talk



Since 2013 'Time to Talk' day takes place annually on the first Thursday in February as a chance for everyone to take a breath and open up discussion on the topic of mental health - conversations that can improve awareness and help change lives.

To support this year's campaign, Northallerton's Neon Nights running club held a number of friendly runs during February 2017.

The aim of #runandtalk is to get people talking about mental health, share experiences and remove the stigma. It encourages people experiencing mental health problems to be physically active through running either by helping them get started or encouraging them to return to or keep running.

We know that physical activity is good for both body and mind but overcoming negative body image or lack of self-esteem as well as practical obstacles can make it difficult for mental health sufferers to get started. Community running groups like Neon Nights give everyone the opportunity to come along and run, jog or walk.

Dementia Friendly

Latest figures reveal that dementia has overtaken heart disease as the leading cause of death in England and Wales. Last year, more than 61,000 people died of dementia, 11.6% of all recorded deaths, largely due to an ageing population. People are living longer and deaths from some other causes such as heart disease have gone down. Doctors are also better at diagnosing dementia and the condition is now given more weight on death certificates.



Twelve months ago the council signed up to the Dementia Action Alliance to become a dementia friendly council and developed an action plan which has delivered dementia awareness sessions to over 200 members of staff, signed seven council buildings to become a Safe Place for people who need extra support, and signed up to Swim England's dementia friendly swimming project.

Another initiative invited leisure centre customers to compete in the 'Swim for Dementia Challenge', challenging swimmers to swim the English Channel - 33,600 metres or 1,344 lengths!

Dementia Week in May 2016 saw the council again show its commitment by holding a 'Sporting Memories' session. Held at Blue Bell House, Northallerton people living with dementia used archived sports images, reports and memorabilia to stimulate conversations and memories, such as reminiscing about a place they used to play football, sporting events they attended or watching an iconic sporting moment on the television.

Dementia Action Alliance encourages and supports communities and organisations across England to take practical actions to enable people to live well with dementia and reduce the risk of costly crisis intervention.

Grants and Funding

Another vital part of our role is to promote and support cohesive community activities which we do by initiating and funding a broad range of activities, programmes and events.

This year core grants totalling £48,700 were awarded to several voluntary organisations towards their ongoing running costs including:

- Bedale, Easingwold, Thirsk, Northallerton and Stokesley Community Car Schemes
- Hambleton Strollers
- Rural Transport and Access Partnership
- Wheels 2 Work
- Yorkshire Local Councils Association

But this is just one of an extensive range of support initiatives we offer to our local communities.

Making a Difference - Again!

Village and church halls across Hambleton are among 29 groups to receive cash awards from the District Council's £125,000 'Making a Difference' fund. The scheme, which is open to local community groups and voluntary organisations, offers grants of between £2,500 and £25,000 for projects that 'make a difference' to Hambleton communities.

Grants were approved to groups ranging from £12,650 for kitchen refurbishments at Dalton Village Hall to £2,500 for the renovation of steps at West Tanfield, and the Angel Community Festival in Osmotherley. One grant of £4,500 went towards landscaping around the perimeter of the Sowerby Sports Village project.



Cash for the scheme comes from an ongoing cost saving exercise that sees us put money back into community projects which help improve life in our neighbourhoods and most important of all - make a difference to people's lives. Whatever the scheme, it must show community spirit and improve the environment. Each scheme must meet one of the council's key priorities and each must show that there is community involvement and represents value for money.

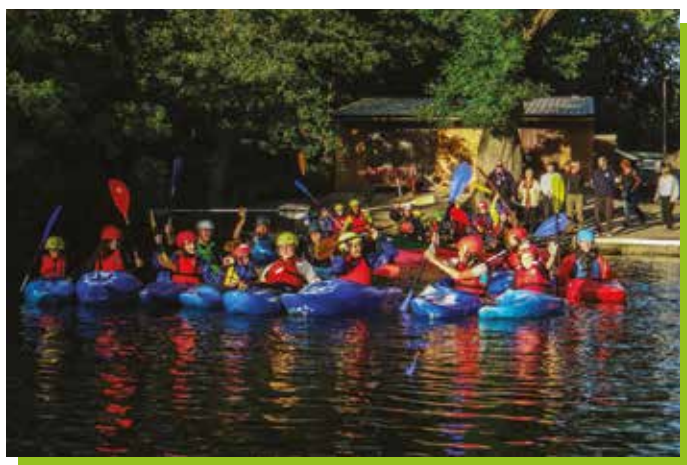


Small Grant Scheme

Nineteen community groups from across Hambleton benefitted from the council's 'Small Grant Scheme' which offers grants of between £500 and £5000 to projects that help support the four council priorities:

- driving economic vitality
- enhancing health and wellbeing
- caring for the environment
- creating a special place to live.

Now in its second year the £50,000 grant scheme continues to prove popular with voluntary and community groups from across the district. Thirty six applications were received and a total of £49,018.88 has been awarded to a wide range of community projects including the Hutton Rugby Biodiversity Group, Hambleton Paddlers Canoe Club and the Stokesley River Leven Group.



Culture and Art

The council employs a Development Officer - Arts and Recreation, who provides advice and support to arts based organisations and projects across the district, as well as supporting community groups who manage play areas.

In the last 12 months the council has delivered a 'Celebration of Dance' event to showcase dance opportunities and increase participation in dance related activities. Funding has been secured from the Arts Council to install a piece of public art in Bedale and support has been provided to a community group in Bedale to create an arts trail. Ey Up Stand UP, a programme of performance poetry, was developed with shows being held in Thirsk and Northallerton. Finally, the first Fair Play was held to bring together groups that manage play areas to share information and experiences.

The Civic Centre also hosts regular exhibitions from local artists which can be viewed during opening hours.

Local artists are invited to contact the council for more information on exhibiting their work.

Caring for the Environment

The council's services to the Hambleton community encompass all aspects of our environment - household waste collection, recycling, street cleansing, environmental health and licensing services.

Everything from dog fouling, noise pollution, pest control, food safety and hygiene, managing air quality, collecting discarded syringes, dealing with abandoned vehicles, removing roadkill and providing litter pick equipment - not to mention collecting the rubbish!!

Waste Services

Hambleton is a Waste Collection Authority operating from our main depot in Northallerton and a smaller depot in Stokesley. The household waste we collect is delivered to disposal sites run by the County Council, with recycling processed by a contractor and garden waste taken directly to a facility for turning into compost.

The Council's recycling contract ended in January 2016 which gave the opportunity for a major review of how we handle household waste and recycling in Hambleton. The resulting Waste Management Strategy 2016-25 explains how waste will be collected by the authority over the next ten years.

Recycling rates (continue to) soar!

Residual waste tonnages decreased year on year between 2006 and 2012, but are now fairly static. Recycling and composting tonnages have risen sharply since the introduction of our new recycling service in 2016.

Recycling, Composting and Re-use rates 2006-2016

Year	%	Year	%
2006 - 07	44.27	2011 - 12	46.25
2007 - 08	43.92	2012 - 13	45.24
2008 - 09	46.30	2013 - 14	46.85
2009 - 10	45.64	2014 - 15	47.70
2010 - 11	44.27	2015 - 16	54.10
		2016 - 17	53%

60% more
recycling collected
at the kerbside
under the
new scheme

Recycling - the UNusual suspects!

Since we introduced our new recycling scheme 12 months ago we have collected 60% more recycling at the kerbside - an extra 1194 tonnes!! And we used the national Recycle Week in September 2016 to ask households to take a fresh look at their recycling habits to see if there were any opportunities to recycle even more items. There are lots of things that can be recycled but aren't always being put in the boxes and bins.

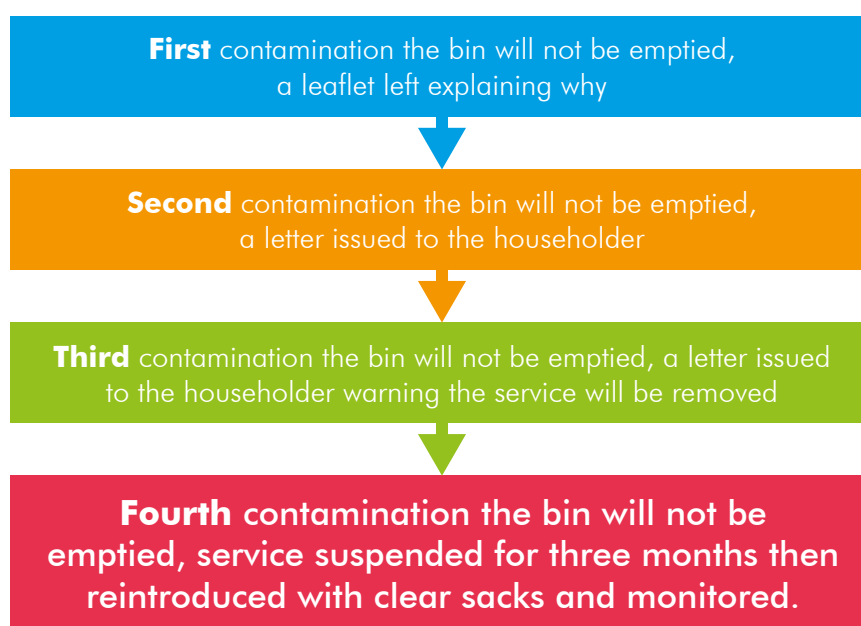
Residents are familiar with recycling plastics bottles, pots, tubs and trays, clean food and drink cans, jam jars, cardboard boxes and newspapers, but don't forget aerosol cans, foil trays, beauty cream jars, perfume bottles and toilet roll tubes!.

If everyone in the UK recycled one toothpaste box, it would save enough energy to run a fridge in over 2,000 homes for a year!

Four strikes and you're out!

Whilst the vast majority of households have embraced the council's recycling schemes some continue to ignore all the advice on how and what to recycle and still put the wrong items in their recycling bin. This contaminates the whole load, losing the authority valuable income. The recycling contract allows for a 10% contamination rate but this has been running at up to 16% on some weeks, when the contractor charges extra to sort and dispose of the contamination costing the council up to £47,000 per year. These unwanted 'extras' include glass in the blue lidded bins, plastic bags, pizza boxes, plastic toys, rubble, clothing and dirty nappies in the recycling bin.

The council have been forced to take action with a four strikes crackdown meaning that:



If contamination persists the service will be permanently withdrawn

The council expects this approach - regrettable but necessary - will reduce the amount of inappropriate materials being deposited and eliminate the extra cost this entails.

Facebook and Twitter

A new Facebook page has been set up to provide residents with weekly updates about waste and recycling in the district, including what can and can't be recycled as part of the kerbside collection service, particularly relevant to deal with large quantities of contamination - just search @hambletonrecycling and waste.



It will also provide residents with information on garden waste charges, compost bin sales and give updates on waste and street scene services, such as changes to collection days. This is a great way to ask questions about recycling and we will always try to respond by the next working day.

Information can also be found on www.hambleton.gov.uk or follow us on Twitter @recycleHDC

Become First Class... ..recycle your glass

The council looked at a variety of different recycling modelling options before deciding on the new service. A twin stream system where glass is separated from co-mingled materials showed better recycling figures at reduced cost; it also eliminates some of the health and safety issues faced by collection crews and the public alike with the manual handling the old kerbside sorting system involved.

New glass products can contain up to **90%** recycled material

Glass is perfect for recycling as it can be brought back as new bottles and jars over and over again, without its clarity deteriorating. New glass products can contain up to 90% recycled material.

Residents are encouraged to take a look around the home and see what extra glass bottles and jars they can recycle. Whilst window panes, light bulbs and glass ovenware such as Pyrex cannot be recycled and should be disposed of carefully in the black bin, many other glass items are perfectly suitable.

Along with the obvious wine, beer bottles and jam jars many others are often forgotten - pasta sauce and coffee jars, baby food jars, medicine bottles, make up and beauty bottles, glass deodorants roller balls, perfume bottles and glass dessert ramekins!



What happens to recycling materials?

The recycling material collected is taken to Yorwaste recycling sites at Tancred, near Scorton or Harewood Whin near York and then bulked up before it is taken to Ward Recycling Ltd and Palm Recycling in Teesside.

From there other products go to specific recycling centres across the country:

Newspapers and magazines	Norfolk	Cartons	Kent
Cardboard and mixed papers	Kent	Glass	Sheffield
Aluminium cans	Warrington	Waste	Hartlepool
Steel cans	Smethwick	Mixed glass, cans, plastic bottles	Barnsley
Mixed plastic	Manchester	Mixed fibres	Cheshire

Green Waste

The council introduced a free garden waste collection service 12 years ago as part of a national drive to boost recycling rates. Since then, increased pressure on local authority budgets to sustain core services has led to a trend across the country to charge for discretionary services, such as green waste collections.

If a council chooses to offer a green waste collection service it can charge residents to cover the costs of running it. In line with the majority of other local authorities, Hambleton believes that in the current financial climate it is appropriate for residents who want this service to pay for it. Cabinet agreed that an opt-in subscription service of £35 per annum should be levied from 1 April 2017. The charge is for a single licence per bin.

The scheme will bring substantial efficiency savings helping to meet the council's £1.4 million saving target, and bringing it line with most of its counterparts as five of the seven authorities in North Yorkshire already charge. Charges are on an annual voluntary subscription basis - only bins from households that pay the annual fee will be emptied.

Information on the new scheme was issued to every household early in 2017 and residents were able to sign up from February 2017 to receive a plastic credit-card size licence printed with the household address details which attaches securely to the green bin. Only bins with tags will be collected and there are NO exemptions or concessions. Householders currently receiving assisted collections will automatically continue to receive this support - providing there is a valid licence.

For people with small gardens there is the opportunity to cut the cost by sharing bins. Residents with larger properties can request more bins at £35 per bin. Those with no room for a bin can choose to receive sacks instead at the same cost. Householders can choose to opt out of the service.

Email addresses of all residents who sign up to the scheme will be collected and used to issue renewal reminders for the second year. For year three, renewal will be automatic unless the householder opts out of the scheme.



Where does garden waste go?

Waste goes to three composting sites - two Yorwaste sites at Tancred and Harewood Winn - material is shredded and composted to a high quality PAS 100 standard then sold as a soil conditioner. Some garden waste material collected in the north of the district is composted on a farm within the district and put back on the land as a fertilizer.

Hambleton residents were reminded that they can help themselves to free nationally accredited compost at two special events. Yorwaste, in partnership with the authority held the compost giveaways in April, May and June 2016 at Yorwaste's Tancred Waste Transfer Station, near Scorton.

We have the technology!

Residents will be interested to learn that supplying the new garden waste licences to the correct households required a huge behind the scenes technology project.

The Garden Waste Bin project is the largest ever in-house development project in the history of the council's Information Communication Technology (ICT) department.

As there is no suitable off the shelf product in the market, two business analysts worked for several months designing a dedicated system for Hambleton, while two other analysts delivered the service - all this during the busiest period when ICT supports the annual billing process for council tax and business rates as well as focusing on the Public Sector Network (PSN) submission requirement. A true team effort!

So far ICT have invested around 800 hours of development time to deliver the Garden Waste Bin solution involving:

- online webform to order bins
- integration between the online application form and online payment system so the public can order and pay in one go
- a bespoke database to securely store all subscription data
- automated newly ordered bin list to generate licenses
- administration tools for the waste management team to handle enquiries and exceptions

Many more development hours are still needed before the project is complete.

The response received is overwhelmingly positive. Of the 17,000 applications so far, 54% of subscriptions have been 'self-serve' by residents using the online tools; of these 70% have also provided their email address making it much easier to renew their licence next year.

In an ageing population area this has far exceeded expectations, which will have a profound impact on the council's digital strategy for the future. Residents are clearly comfortable engaging with us online at their own convenience, which means we can expand the online experience in other areas.

Environmental Health

This part of our work focuses on minimising the ill effects of the environment. We involve our customers in order to understand their needs, incorporating their views on a vast range of issues from animal welfare, licensing, private water supplies, traveller caravans, taxi and late night alcohol licensing, to pest control, food hygiene and safety inspections, local air quality control, and cosmetic piercing hygiene. We are also called in to advise and support event management around the district.

Planning an event?

If you are organising any public events in the Hambleton area we would like to know about it and offer advice.

The Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is made up of core members of the council, the Police, Highways Authority, the Fire and Rescue Service and Ambulance Service. SAG's role is to promote and encourage high standards of public safety and wellbeing at events in Hambleton.

If you are organising a large event, we recommend you submit an Event Notification Form at least six months before the occasion, three months for smaller events. Where a road closure is required residents must notify North Yorkshire County Council at least three months in advance.

If necessary the council will arrange joint meetings to discuss proposals with promoters to clear up any issues well before the event is staged.

Food Safety

When eating out, check the venue has a Food Standards Agency (FSA) hygiene rating.

We carry out regular checks on all food premises to ensure the public are protected and that high standards are maintained. Inspections take place without prior warning and higher risk premises are visited most frequently.

During an inspection officers want to be satisfied that adequate controls are in place to prevent any problems, ensure staff are adequately trained and the condition and cleanliness of the premises meets required standards. Scores are awarded for food hygiene compliance, structural compliance and confidence in management. Premises are not rated against the quality of the food they produce.

An example of the council's firm stance on food hygiene came in February 2016 when emergency action saw a Hambleton restaurant closed for three days as the result of an untreated rat infestation.



Environmental Health officers carried out an unannounced inspection after receiving a customer complaint. They found evidence of an active rat infestation; the premises were dirty with food debris on the floor and grease on equipment. Fresh rat droppings were found on the wooden boards used to serve burgers, under the cooking range, in the dry store and in the cellar. Satisfied that an imminent risk to health existed, officers served a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notice closing the premises with immediate effect. An application for a Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Order was made to Northallerton Magistrates Court.



The business was ordered to pay the Council's costs in full. Following a revisit in July 2016, officers found the premises 'generally satisfactory' and awarded an FSA rating score of three.

Protecting Tenants

The private rented sector has seen rapid growth and is now the second largest tenure after home ownership with 19% or some 4.3 million households in England. Increased demands on the sector have opened it up to exploitation by rogue landlords. There is a duty of care on landlords, above that of owner occupiers, to ensure a rental property provides a safe and healthy environment for tenants. Many properties which have been historically converted do not meet building regulations and require additional fire safety measures, or even redesign.

In the last 12 months the authority has served legal orders prohibiting the use of three flats in the district due to poor housing standards. A Prohibition Order means the property cannot be occupied because the conditions are so dangerous there is a serious health and safety risk for anyone living there.

In one flat, the bedroom and living room had sleeping facilities for eight people in confined conditions. In another, the tenant was living and sleeping in a useable space of just 4.05sq metres. Both flats, above commercial premises, were poorly insulated with no fixed heating so tenants were using their own portable heaters and failures in fire safety and poor escape provision from the buildings were also identified.

It is very unusual for the council to serve Prohibition Orders as we will first try to work with the landlord to bring the property up to a safe standard. However, the conditions found within these properties meant it was simply unsafe for the tenants to stay there. Both flats have since undergone refurbishment work.

In a third case, the initial tenant's complaint concerned damp but an inspection found that the only fire escape from the bedroom was through the living room and then the kitchen. There was also only one battery smoke alarm fitted in the living room and all the windows to the flat were difficult to open providing no alternative exit from the first floor.

A room where the only means of escape is through another room is a significant risk as fires can start unnoticed and trap the escape route before residents become aware. Most fire deaths are not caused by burns but by smoke inhalation which often incapacitates so quickly that victims are overcome before they can reach an accessible exit, especially during the night.



Cooking accidents are responsible for over half of home fires and in this case the tenant would also have to pass through the living room and a narrow kitchen, directly in front of the cooker, to reach the exit. This meant in the event of a fire there was a very high risk to the tenant of serious injury, or even death.

The tenant was found alternative accommodation by the letting agent and the landlord is looking at ways to revise the layout of the property that would permit it to be re-occupied.

With a lack of affordable housing and increased rent levels there is concern that more landlords will try and let poor quality property and we urge tenants living in poor conditions to contact us for advice.

Air Pollution - healthy air, healthy bodies

The vast majority of the Hambleton district enjoys very good air quality but there are a few 'hotspots' where it could be improved.

Environmental Health officers monitor and report air quality for different pollutants, to help combat climate change, reduce pollution and improve health. Some pollutants can exacerbate conditions such as asthma and other respiratory illnesses and some have been linked to heart disease, strokes and lung cancer.

The two main sources of air pollution are road traffic and industry. In locations that have standing traffic throughout the day, when combined with narrow streets, emissions can increase in concentration.

We monitor such locations on a monthly basis and send samples for laboratory analysis. Results are collated over a year and used to generate an annual average. We also measure air quality using a monitoring station in Northallerton, which runs continuously 24/7. The results are downloaded electronically for analysis. Both monitoring methods are crucial for measuring the levels of pollution in the air we all breathe and the results are reported annually to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

This is where you come in!

Residents can help reduce emissions and improve air quality by using alternative methods of transport such as public transport, walking or cycling, particularly for short journeys, which has the added benefit of improving personal fitness! If you do need to drive then consider car sharing, choose low emission vehicles and fuels and avoid hard acceleration and braking.



Flies - what a nuisance

This year Environmental Health has received a number of complaints from residents affected by high numbers of flies believed to be coming from near-by farms, which follows a general increase in this type of complaint nationally.

It is not clear why this is happening but could be, in part, due to the relatively mild winters over recent years. Complaints have been associated with various sites, poultry houses and livestock farms being the most common but also sewage treatment works, animal housing, manure/silage storage areas and landfill sites.

When investigating fly nuisance complaints officers visit the complainants and may leave sticky papers which allow numbers of flies to be estimated and the species identified. The biggest difficulty is pinpointing the source of the flies and species identification is important. There are a thousand different native flies some particularly associated with certain operations and whilst knowing the species does not identify the source, it allows us to narrow down the possibilities.

This year the sticky papers showed flies principally associated with cattle sheds. Local farms have been visited and best practice measures discussed on limiting breeding sites, monitoring to identify problems early, control measures to minimise outbreaks and good record keeping.

Where possible we also try to ensure through the planning process that potential new sources are properly controlled or, if this is not possible, recommend the development does not go ahead.

Bag it and Bin it

The in-house dog warden service was set up two years ago to carry out patrols in areas where fouling is an issue, to act as a deterrent and issue on the spot fines where necessary - as well as deal with stray dogs. Since then the number of stray dog calls has risen from 93 to 310 and fouling incidents from 60 to 171. Fouling is a particular concern for local people, in a recent survey 52% of residents reported incidents near their homes.

Clearly one person undertaking all the work relating to stray dogs and dog fouling across a district the size of Hambleton was untenable. So Hambleton's dog warden service - and the purge on dog fouling - has been expanded as the council has combined it with the pest control team, meaning all the officers can now deal with both services. This offers a much better dog warden service as whilst we can still undertake all our pest control duties, when officers are out and about they can also deal with dog issues.

Now the team are multi-functional and will be a very visible presence in their newly liveried vehicles. Officers will be out and about checking known dog fouling hotspots and keeping their eyes open for problems. The new fleet of refuse trucks also carry the banner 'Bag it and Bin it' as a reminder to residents to stop turning their backs on their pets' fouling.



It is hoped the new service will also have the capacity to work more closely with schools and parishes to proactively promote and address dog fouling problems.



The authority also continued its programme of events for dog owners, offering free health checks and microchipping, nail clipping and training advice. It will soon become illegal to transfer a dog to a new owner if the dog hasn't been microchipped which should be done after the age of eight weeks. Dogs Trust donate the microchips saving owners up to £30 per dog, and also check existing chips and update the owner details.

Flooding update

Our services often work together such as during severe weather conditions. Since storms caused extensive flooding across the north of England in December 2015, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have worked tirelessly to administer grants and collate data and statistics from the seven district and borough councils across North Yorkshire, as well as Cumbria, Lancashire and Northumberland.



The various flood recovery schemes are now being reviewed and as one of the affected areas Hambleton has contributed some valuable information:

- 21 households and 3 businesses affected
- £10,500 Emergency Recovery payments paid to affected households within 3 weeks of flooding
- £10,150 Council Tax relief and £13,000 Business Rate relief awarded
- £20,000 Flood Resilience grants awarded by DCLG via North Yorkshire County Council

It has been a long road to recovery and back to normality for some of our residents, one of whom was displaced from her home until the following August.

Parishes across Hambleton that experienced flooding received some extra support in the form of a lightweight alternative to sandbags - Floodsax. Convenient and easy to use the council distributed over 2,000 Floodsax to parishes at risk and struggling to store the traditional sandbags, which are bulk, very heavy and can deteriorate over time. Naturally sandbags will also still be made available to residents at risk of flooding.

A Special Place to Live

Providing a special place to live is a keystone of the authority's aims for the community and one of the council's main priorities. This means providing an adequate amount and appropriate mix of housing, including affordable homes, preventing homelessness and providing financial support to enable residents to live in the district independently.

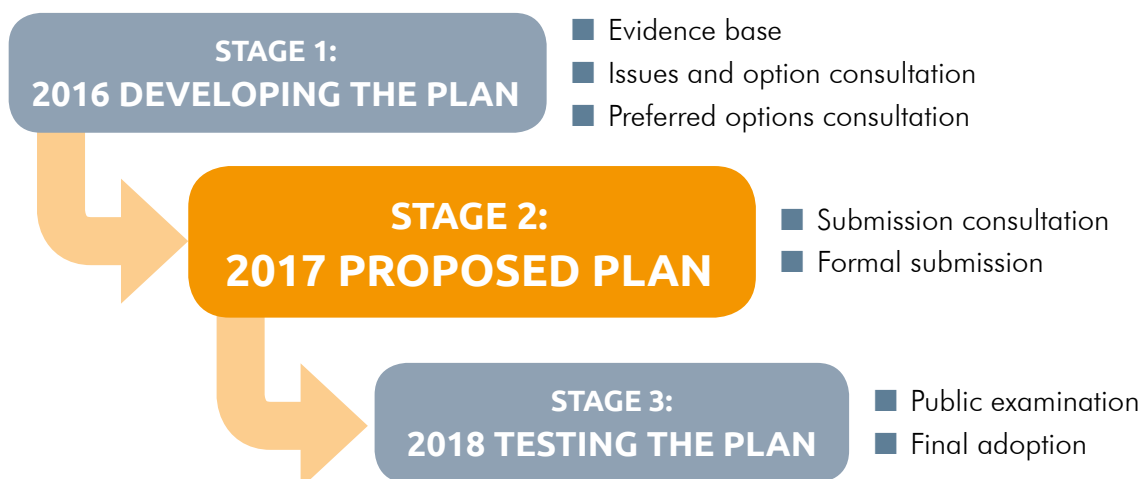
Housing

New Local Plan

A new Local Plan setting out how much and where land should be allocated for new homes and jobs in Hambleton is on the way. The plan will define the vision and objectives for the district, allocate sites for housing, employment, retail, leisure and other forms of development for the district up to 2035. As well as determining where new development will go, the plan will incorporate policies which seek to protect and preserve open space, green infrastructure, historic heritage and environmental assets.



The Local Plan is a statutory document with three key stages. We are currently in the second stage:



Having completed a public consultation in 2016 with a range of events and public drop-in sessions, we received over 3,000 responses and the emerging evidence base is being used to inform the preparation of the draft plan. Through the consultation a further 83 alternative sites were submitted for consideration. Feedback highlighted that objectives should be specific to Hambleton, have a rural and people focus, include health and well-being and address landscape, character and distinctiveness.

The new plan will allocate sites for 3,200 new homes over the period to 2035, in addition to existing commitments, with an additional 41.69ha allocated as employment land. Sites for new homes are being allocated in the market towns: 1,000 in Northallerton, 400 in Thirsk, 300 in Bedale, 300 in Easingwold and 200 in Stokesley. A further 1,000 new dwellings are being planned in the service and secondary villages.

The council will be consulting on the draft plan in the autumn of 2017 aiming to have the new Local Plan adopted by December 2018.

Sustainable Affordable Housing

At Hambleton we believe that market forces alone will not provide the homes we need at prices local people can afford and, whilst households are generally getting smaller, the private housing market is still delivering a high proportion of larger family homes with only a handful of bungalows built in the district in recent years.

The council is working to encourage a change in housing type and size, and to increase tenure choice, enabling all our residents to have access to a decent home which they can afford and which suits their needs.



The council also supports sustainable development recommending that developers work with planners from the outset to incorporate various aspects of sustainable development through the planning system, dealing with sustainable design, construction and waste management. The authority helps by providing detailed guidance and supporting information for the public, developers, planners, architects and other agents in submitting and considering planning applications.

Rural Housing

The lack of decent affordable housing in rural areas is often a hidden problem, yet it limits the opportunities that people have to work and live in these communities which in turn negatively impacts on the diversity and vibrancy of rural towns and villages.

The need for additional rural affordable homes in Hambleton is well-established as high house prices, the scarcity of sites, the viability of rural developments, as well as competition from second and holiday home owners, all threaten our ability to deliver more rural affordable housing. Providing more good quality, affordable rural housing is both a huge challenge and a high priority for communities and local authorities.

Rural Action Yorkshire and the North and East Yorkshire Rural Housing Enabler Network (RHE Network) are helping Hambleton communities by taking forward community-led housing solutions.



Whilst the shortage of affordable housing is a major issue, communities are often resistant to commercial developers sweeping into their village putting up luxury houses that do not meet residents' needs. Many rural communities would be much more receptive to new developments if the resulting homes were the of right size and type for local people. We need more genuinely affordable homes, both for growing young families and, for those later in life to downsize to. A good mix of affordable housing supports a diverse and mixed-aged community, which in turn helps keep local shops, post offices, pubs and schools open and rural areas vibrant. In villages where local services are under threat, a community-led housing scheme can kick start other initiatives to keep essential services going, some of them through community ownership.



Community-led housing puts local people in the driving seat to decide where homes are built, what they look like and who occupies them. These developments are not for profit and can take a variety of forms including self-help housing, co-housing, co-operatives, community land trusts and community self-build. Most are small developments of less than ten properties and no two are ever the same.

The RHE Network has secured funding from the Nationwide Foundation, North Star Housing and the UK Co-housing network for a new project to explore the potential for community-led housing to be part of the solution to the shortage of affordable, good quality housing in this area. The new project will consider what community-led housing might look like and assess the appetite of rural communities to lead the delivery of affordable housing, supported by the RHE Network. Five pilot communities will work on bringing community-led housing to fruition in North Yorkshire and East Riding.

Royal approval

Paddocks End at Hutton Rudby is a great example of rural housing in action; the site was chosen after consultation with local people including the parish council and thanks to this input Broadacres were able to design homes in keeping with the traditional look of the village, whilst having all the modern features of high insulation and large south facing windows.



One such development, Paddocks End at Hutton Rudby, was opened in January by HRH, The Princess Royal. This scheme was developed by Broadacres in partnership with the North Yorkshire and East Riding Rural Housing Network of which Hambleton District Council is a member, and forms part of the Rural Enabler programme. All 16 homes were allocated to people with a strong local connection to the village, allowing local people to stay local.

Princess Anne was given a tour of the development and met some of the people involved in getting the homes built, speaking to a few of the new residents who have had their lives transformed by being able to stay in the village.

Addressing wins Gold Award

It is true that everything happens somewhere, so high quality address data is fundamental to everything we do. Addresses are invaluable to our economy and public services, they ensure that emergency services get to our door as quickly as possible, they confirm our identity and help us to access products and services.



For the second year running the council won a Gold Performance Award for excellence in the management of its corporate address database during 2015-16. The award was presented at the GeoPlace annual conference and Exemplar Awards in May 2016 which celebrate excellence in service delivery, enabled through local government address and street information.

The award is given to authorities that have reached and maintained accurate management of both its domestic and commercial address data and excellence in supply of updates to the national hub which manages address data from authorities across England and Wales. More and more organisations depend upon accurate street naming, numbering and address management, without which residents encounter difficulties receiving mail, goods and services and even applying for credit.

The council has continued to maintain its database at Gold Standard throughout the rest of the year - especially valuable for the new green waste licensing scheme!

Housing Options Service

The Council offers a free and confidential service that can help with housing and housing related problems. Together we can look at your situation and decide on the best way to help tackle problems to enjoy trouble-free housing.

Beginning with a simple interview our team bring their experience and a network of contacts to offer help in the following ways:



- prevent you from becoming homeless
- assistance claiming benefits and entitlements
- help finding accommodation that's safe, good quality and right for you
- work with the landlord to sort out problems such as rent arrears
- referral to supported housing schemes
- help finding other agencies and organisations that can assist
- assistance finding secure private rented accommodation
- useful advice on debt, legal issues, employment and health matters

Gold Standard

Hambleton District Council has become the first authority in the area to achieve the Gold Standard award for its free and confidential Housing Options service that helps with housing issues preventing homelessness and helping people claim benefit entitlements and working with landlords.

To obtain Gold Standard involves passing ten evidence based challenges demonstrating a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness, working in partnership with voluntary sector and other local partners, offering a Housing Options Prevention Service that includes providing written advice, a No Second Night Out model or effective alternative, housing pathways with each key partner and client group, a suitable private rented sector offer with advice and support to both client and landlord, preventing mortgage repossessions, a homelessness strategy which sets out a proactive approach to prevention, not placing any 16 or 17 year olds in bed and breakfast accommodation, nor any families unless in an emergency and for no longer than six weeks.

The team has taken over a year working through these challenges developing policies and procedures for each element. This achievement is a testament to the authority's commitment to supporting local people and to delivering services with a clear focus on early intervention and homelessness prevention.

Homelessness is one of the biggest challenges facing councils today and this award demonstrates the authority's commitment to doing all we can to target support and early intervention for those most in need. The team are rightly proud of their achievement and their customer-centred approach to service delivery.

Private Rented Sector

The council's Housing Options team can also assist and support people seeking private rented accommodation.

The team build working relationships with private landlords and agents throughout the district, both directly and by engaging in the authority's Landlords Forums offering advice and support to existing landlords and encouraging new landlords considering investing in rental properties the district. Housing Options officers also issue a range of information leaflets and booklets to assist both the landlord and tenants to ensure sustainability for the future.

The team also works closely with Environmental Health to help improve the standard of private rented housing within the district; we offer financial assistance towards a bond scheme or rent in advance to assist those homeless or threatened with homelessness in which case the properties are inspected by a member of Environmental Health.



Social Housing

Hambleton District Council transferred its housing stock to Broadacres Housing Association many years ago and together with seven of the eight local authorities in North Yorkshire is part of the North Yorkshire Homechoice Partnership.

North Yorkshire Home Choice is a choice based lettings scheme which advertises council and housing association properties for rent, as well as shared ownership properties for sale. Available properties are advertised weekly and eligible residents can register to express an interest - or bid - on up to three properties they would like to be considered for.

Local authorities must give reasonable preference when allocating housing, to the following groups:

- people who are homeless
- people occupying unsanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing
- people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds
- people who need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that would cause hardship to themselves or to others

North Yorkshire Home Choice will also give additional preference to Armed Forces who have urgent housing needs and approved foster carers who need a larger home to accommodate a child.

There is great demand for all types of housing within Hambleton and a large number of households awaiting affordable and social housing; as demand outweighs supply for those not in urgent need this option may not be realistic.

Houses of Multiple Occupation

House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a term used to describe occupation that involves sharing part of the accommodation - a property occupied by three or more people forming two or more households. It applies to both bedsit style housing and shared housing, where a group of unrelated people share amenities such as a bathroom or kitchen.

Legislation places duties on landlords of all HMOs to provide additional fire safety provisions and to maintain common parts, fixtures, fittings and appliances. Properties must also be free from hazards in accordance with the Housing, Health and Safety rating system (HHSRS).

Because of their size, some types of HMO are classed as having increased safety risks and must be licensed by the local authority; this applies to properties :

- at least three storeys high
- with at least five tenants forming more than one household
- where tenants share facilities such as a toilet, bathroom or kitchen

Licensable HMOs must also comply with the council's amenity standards which places minimum restrictions on room sizes and numbers of amenity provisions.

To become licensed, landlords must apply to the council which assesses whether the property is suitable for the number of people the landlord proposes to rent it to, amenities and fire precautions are adequate and whether a licence needs to include any conditions requiring any changes.

Hambleton District Council is working with Lifeline to provide a much needed HMO in Northallerton. We are waiting for the property to be decorated and furnished and are looking at applications for the new residents.

Landlords' Forum

We encourage landlords wanting to know what standards to meet to contact the council for free confidential and impartial advice.

For just this reason since 2015 we have run quarterly Landlords Forums at Evolution Business Centre for private landlords, agents and any other organisations with an interest in private sector housing.

Representatives from the authority's housing options and environmental health teams, along with the Fire Service, are available to offer advice and discuss issues they are facing such as the change in the economic climate and, more recently, the impact of changes to the benefit system. We arrange for guest speakers to attend and discuss the issues affecting landlords.

We follow up every forum with a newsletter with updates and information to assist existing and potential landlords.

Extra Care Housing Scheme

Orchid House, the new Extra Care facility built in partnership with the council, was completed on 17 October 2016. Part of the Herriot Gardens development at Sowerby Gateway, the scheme has a range of bungalows and apartments available for rent, shared ownership and outright sale within a supportive community that is staffed 24 hours a day, every day of the week.

Staff are on site to help residents maintain their independence providing a range of interesting and useful social, health and wellbeing activities such as craft events, a book club, quizzes, and a visiting chiropodist or optician. Residents can decide how much they wish to be part of the social life of the scheme, in a way that suits them.



Residents will be part of the Orchid House community as well as the wider communities of Sowerby and Thirsk. Family, friends and people from the local neighbourhood are free to come and go as they please and so the main communal areas are open during the day for anyone wishing to visit. There is a café/bistro, garden room and residents' lounge in the main apartment building where residents can get together with friends.

Each bungalow has its own private garden, while all homes benefit from a landscaped communal garden with space to relax.

Applications are considered and assessed through an allocation panel and must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- have a local connection
- be either over 55 years of age with a housing and/or care and support need or below 55 with an assessed care need which can be appropriately met within the scheme
- have a positive desire to retain or regain your independence

Further information and application forms are available from the Housing Options Team.

Homelessness Prevention

The causes of homelessness and its effects are complex and intertwined, and inevitably there are no simple solutions. It is not just about buildings and beds - it is about many social problems that may go wrong in people's lives, such as health, income, family breakdown.

The authority is managing the number of people facing homelessness through focused prevention measures which have led to the number of temporary accommodation units required falling from 19 to 11 over the last two years.

We work with partners to ensure we share good practice with other North Yorkshire local authorities across all areas of homeless work including supporting and dealing appropriately with victims of domestic violence, ex-offenders, gypsy and travellers and people with addiction issues. Developing Initiatives Supporting Communities (DISC) won the new Homeless Prevention Service contract commencing 1st October 2016, replacing Foundation.

Through this work with guidance, debt advice, the choice based lettings scheme and support for the no second night out campaign the authority is seeing the number of homeless applications drop.



Safer Hambleton

The Safer Hambleton Community Safety Hub is made up of statutory partners including the council, police, fire service, probation, health and other voluntary and community organisations. The partnership is able to respond flexibly to the changing community safety landscape, tackling issues as they arise with local problem solving and shared projects.

When crime and anti-social behaviour issues are highlighted or trends identified, multi-agency problem solving interventions can be quickly put in place to help our neighbourhoods stay safe for all those who live, work or visit our area.



CCTV

As an important part of the authority's crime prevention work, the council invests in a network of closed circuit television cameras (CCTV).

In a £100,000 programme most of the cameras in Bedale, Northallerton, Stokesley and Thirsk have been upgraded to high definition digital devices giving improved image quality and potential facial identification with greeter zoom capacity. A wireless transmission system has also been installed to reduce running costs and future proof the service.

Working alongside this, the Shopwatch radio link scheme allows subscribing businesses to contact CCTV operators and staff from other shops when a crime is in progress, alerting police whilst CCTV evidence is recorded. Northallerton's upgraded Shopwatch system is already paying dividends with the police able to make a number of arrests since its re-launch earlier in the year.



Prevent


The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on local authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". The UK's counter terrorism strategy is known as 'Contest' with four key elements: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Of this, the Home Office 'Prevent' strategy is about 'preventing people being drawn into terrorism' and has three specific objectives:

- respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism
- prevent people from being drawn into terrorism
- work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation

Terrorism is usually understood to mean acts or the threat of extreme violence. Extremism is generally understood to mean vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values.

Prevent is intended to deal with all kinds of threats to the UK, from Al Qa'ida associated groups to extreme right wing organisations. The Safer Hambleton Community Safety Hub manages a live Counter Terrorism Local Profile which helps to assess the ongoing risk from terrorism or domestic extremism.

The council's Safer Hambleton team rolled out training to raise awareness and give staff an understanding of what causes people to be vulnerable to radicalisation or influenced by extremism, and what to do if they have any concerns about an individual. This work emphasises the need to protect ourselves, our residents and visitors from all forms of extremist influences which can also include animal rights extremists, right wing political organisations and anti-nuclear groups.



All council staff are required to wear an ID badge and ensure that visitors to council offices sign in and out at reception and also wear a visitor badge during their stay.

Everyone has a role to play and is encouraged to contact the team with any concerns, after all - it might be nothing but... it could save lives.

Benefit Fraud

The Council's stance is simple: no matter what the circumstances - we will not tolerate fraud.

The Council is required by law to protect the public funds it administers and may share information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering these funds, in order to prevent and detect fraud. We also strongly encourage members of the community to report fraudulent benefit claimants, which can be done anonymously.

Hambleton's on-going campaign to stamp out benefit fraud saw a single Mum found guilty of four offences. The woman pleaded guilty to failing to inform the authority that she had received a £40,406 inheritance - whilst continuing to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction; she also pleaded guilty to providing false information in relation to the claims.

The defendant received a 12 month Community Order to carry out 100 hours of unpaid work, ordered to pay £250 towards the council's costs, £60 victim surcharge, and to repay £3,646.26 housing benefit and £440.88 council tax reduction.

In a separate case, a former midwife was found guilty of 13 offences. The woman pleaded guilty to falsely declaring the number of non-dependent children living with her, which enabled her to qualify for a five bedroomed property under Local Housing Allowance legislation. She also produced false tenancy agreements and rent books to show she was being charged a rent of £975 per month increasing to £1,200 per month when in fact the true rent was, and always had been, £600 per month.

The defendant received a 15 months prison sentence suspended for two years with a supervision order for two years and 100 hours unpaid work.

In addition to these court cases the council also issued two Administration Penalties in relation to Council Tax Reduction. An Administration Penalty can be offered following an investigation, when incorrect information is given or a change in circumstance is reported late and affects the Council Tax Reduction being claimed. The Penalty is 50% of the excess Council Tax Reduction and has to be paid in addition to the repayment of the excess.

The authority encourages residents to contact them if they become aware someone may be giving incorrect information and receiving benefits fraudulently.

Working for the Community

Striving for excellence in the way we deliver services to our community remains at the heart of everything we do.

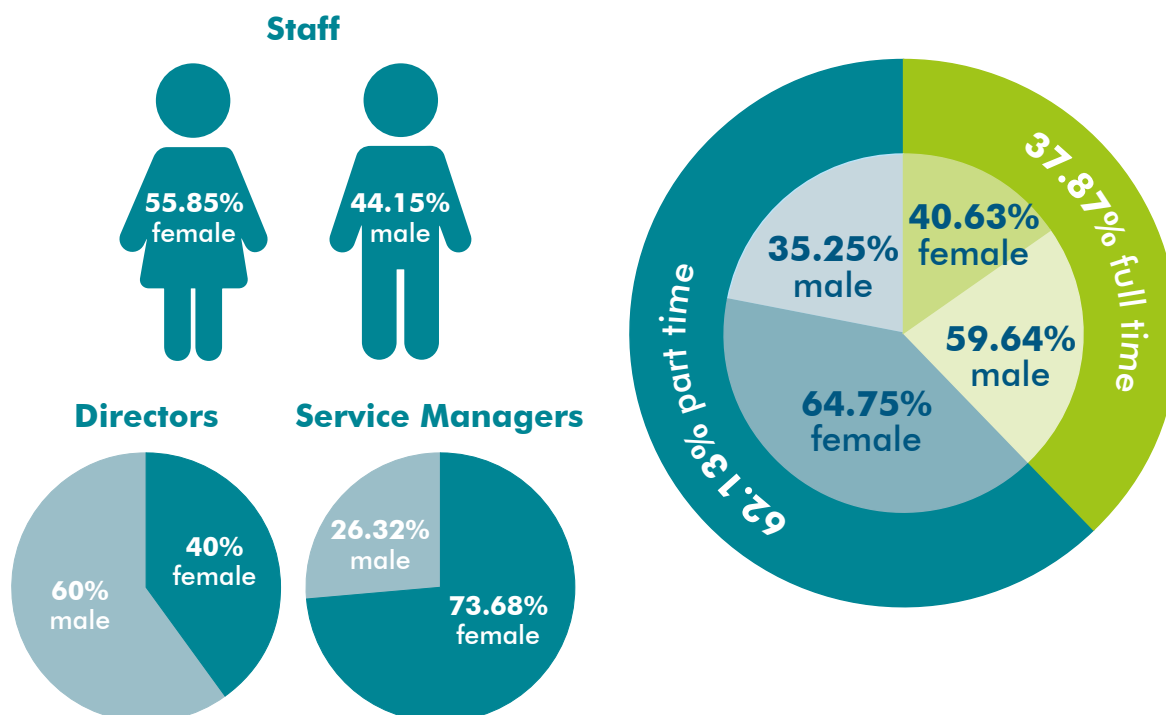
Our staff

Staff are crucial to the success of the authority, delivering professional services in line with the Council Plan across the whole of our community. To underpin service delivery the council have developed its employee infrastructure to ensure that staff are supported and empowered to make a difference.

We have introduced a Human Resources Strategy that outlines the council's commitment to staff through a measured approach to employee resourcing, helping managers recruit from local areas. We are committed to ensuring we have good employee relations through working with UNISON and by developing fair employment policies for all staff. We value employee development offering a range of learning opportunities for all staff, to make sure we maintain a competent workforce. We have also trained all our managers in performance coaching to help them get the best out of their teams.

The council also recognises that organisational development is essential to ensure quality service provision and have been working hard to promote and embed our values, as well as reviewing our approach to staff engagement and involvement.

At the end of March 2017 the council employed **573** people:



Disability Confident

The council believes that only by recruiting and retaining the best people can we deliver the best quality services to the Hambleton community. To ensure we encourage applications from the widest possible talent pool, we are proud to have signed up to the Government's Disability Confident scheme.

The council held the Two Ticks Disability Symbol status for years, Job Centre Plus has now developed this into a Disability Confident scheme and because of our previous work we have migrated across as being at Level 2. The council has introduced an Equality and Diversity Working Group to help develop and sustain our commitment to equality and diversity in relation to both staff and service users

This scheme aims to help organisations successfully employ and retain disabled people and those with health conditions, for their skills and talent. The Disability Confident scheme is voluntary and its symbol is used to identify employers who actively encourage job applications from disabled people.

We believe that by increasing understanding of disability and removing employment barriers in this way, the council can help to ensure the whole Hambleton community has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

Fundraising

The council was proud to donate three of its new blue lidded recycling bins to Tesco Northallerton as in-store collection bins for three local charities. The store had received numerous requests from customers to help local not-for-profit groups and chose three to support for the coming year:

- Hambleton Community Action
- Children's Inpatient Unit, Friarage Hospital
- Jerry Green Dog Rescue

Regular readers of Hambleton Highlights will also know that, as well as working for the community in their usual jobs, many of our staff are involved in charity fundraising through the year.

The last Friday of every month at the Civic Centre is 'Wear Jeans to Work' day when the staff bake and sell cakes, and pay a gold coin to dress casually. All money raised is donated to a variety of charities nominated by staff.



We raised a marvellous £4,265 this year in support of:

Parkinson's Disease	£320
Chopsticks	£260
The Brain Tumour Charity	£236
Prostate Cancer	£193
Mission Morogoro	£170
Kendal Organ Donor Town	£154
MacMillan Coffee Morning	£1056
Bedale Riding for the Disabled	£220
Children in Need	£443
Save the Children	£236
Myaware	£300
Candlelighters	£285
Dales School, Morton on Swale	£330
Air Ambulance	£62

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Hambleton FoodShare

Hambleton FoodShare is a registered charity that the council is proud to support. Almost entirely run by volunteers, the organisation relies on fundraising and donations to provide a three day emergency food parcel for people in temporary financial crisis. Clients can self-refer in the first instance but must be supported by a referral agency for subsequent relief.

Various events and promotions are run during the year to raise much needed funds, and local people are asked to donate tinned or packet food, other household essentials and toiletries. Donations can be left at several collection points, including the council offices in Northallerton.

Throughout the summer holidays FoodShare also piloted a scheme to ensure that families who would normally rely on free school meals during term time could also have access to the foodbank.

The public were invited to FoodShare's AGM in September to find out more about the project, meet the volunteers and possibly get involved. The food store opens every Monday at the Zion United Reform Church in Northallerton and the partnership has expanded into Bedale where facilities at St Gregory's Church make it possible for the satellite scheme to operate in the town.

Whilst it is a modern tragedy that food banks must exist at all, it is also a tribute to the generosity of so many in our local communities that through gifts of food and other essentials we continue to meet the needs of our neighbours.



Customer Services

We are committed to providing high quality services to our communities, but letting our residents know about the great work the council is doing is equally important. The council issued 263 press releases during 2016/17 and although we cannot force publishers to include articles it is a great effort towards letting our residents know what is going on.

Residents will be familiar with the GovMetric customer satisfaction system the council uses to capture their feedback. Some 20,370 customers left us ratings throughout 2016/17 via the three different channels: face to face, telephone and website. These statistics are graded in a league table of 75 GovMetric users in unitary authorities, county, district and metropolitan councils. This year the customer services team is proud to have achieved 'Top Ten' status many times - every month for our face to face customers, all but two months for our website ratings and in seven months for our telephone service.

Self-serve options for customers have also improved through the year. A CRM - or Customer Relationship Management system - means residents can now register online and create their own self-serve account to report issues and track progress online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This is proving hugely popular as it gives our customers the freedom to engage with us at their own convenience, at a time that suits them.

Customer contact is at an all-time high. We recorded the largest ever demand of telephone calls received in a single month - 17,407 calls during March 2017. This was due mainly to the annual council tax bill despatch and the implementation of garden waste subscriptions.

The resilience and the quality of service provided by the customer services team during such hectic times is what keeps us in the Top Ten GovMetric tables!

Herriot Centre

Buildings housing Thirsk's world famous veterinary surgery, The World of James Herriot, look set to be handed over to the community.

In what would have been author Alf Wight's centenary year, Cabinet members agreed in November 2016 to transfer 23 and 25 Kirkgate to the museum. The centre, a tribute to the vet and author Alf Wight / James Herriot, was opened by the authority in 1999. It invested £1.4 million in the project which included contributions from private and public sources, with artefacts being donated from across the UK.

In 2012 faced with declining visitor numbers the council agreed to put the centre on a commercial footing by transferring it to The World of James Herriot Ltd, since when those numbers have been reversed and the centre won Visit England's 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year' in 2015.

Transferring the buildings in the centenary year seems a good way of celebrating the success of the centre and of Alf Wight. It will give the centre better access to grants for further development. However, we will safeguard the items owned or donated to the council and part of the transfer conditions will see the asset returned to the council should changes that are not beneficial to the community proposed.



Olympic Square

The success of local athletes at the last two games - London 2012 and Rio 2016 - made us all proud and deserves to be recognised and remembered.

In December 2016, Northallerton Town Square was renamed 'Olympic Square' in honour of the district's Olympians and Paralympians, with plaques laid in the pavement to commemorate three extraordinary individuals. Plaques were unveiled to Laurence Whiteley, gold medallist para-rower in Rio, Nicola Wilson, silver medallist equestrian and Kat Copeland gold medallist rower in London.

The council hopes to add many more Olympic successes in the coming years!



Great British Spring Clean



Over the first weekend in March 2016 staff, Councillors and residents turned out to clean up the district !!

Half a million people volunteered nationally for the campaign, led by Keep Britain Tidy, alongside wildlife personality Steve Backshall and organisations such as the RSPCA, the Ramblers, Highways England, Marine Conservation Society, RSPB and a host of commercial organisations, in the biggest community-led clean-up the country has ever seen.

Community litter picks took place in Northallerton, Leeming Bar, Alne and Stokesley collecting 124 sacks of rubbish, with further events planned in Tholthorpe, East Cowton and Stillington.

The campaign inspired people to volunteer a few hours to get out and pick up some of the litter that blights our surroundings, doing their bit to make Hambleton a cleaner place to live.

The Hambleton Year Ahead 2017/18

Northallerton Sports Village

The refurbished Hambleton Leisure Centre could become the cornerstone of an exciting new sports village if further development proposals are agreed. Created with input from sports clubs in Romanby, Brompton and Northallerton the proposals will go for wider public consultation while a funding and delivery plan is developed.

The village would incorporate existing leisure facilities, alongside new housing, roads and a school already planned for the town, in a single multi-use venue providing various sports pitches, cycling, walking and jogging trails, an allotment area and parking provision.

Sowerby Sports Village

The final piece of the jigsaw for a £4m sports village on the edge of Thirsk slotted into place, as the last piece of land for the development was transferred to the council in December. This will enable the council to begin applying for funding to deliver this ambitious project.

Planning permission had already been granted for the site in Sowerby which will include facilities for junior football, rugby, hockey, cycling and a BMX skills park. There will be a circular recreational track for running walking and cycling, plus allotments a youth facility and sports pavilion.

The council is taking the lead in implementing the scheme which brings together the secondary school, local sports clubs, youth organisations and Sowerby Parish Council. And the facilities will complement those already at the secondary school and skatepark to provide much needed sport and recreation amenities for the area.

Grants for Hambleton Libraries



Hambleton District Council is to award grants totalling £25,000 to the district's five community-run libraries!

Leader of the Council, Councillor Mark Robson, announced in April 2017 that each community library in Thirsk, Stokesley, Bedale, Great Ayton and Easingwold, will be awarded £5,000 from the authority's 'Making a Difference' grant scheme.

Our 'Making a Difference' grants help community groups every year - and this year £25,000 of the £125,000 pot will help the community libraries first, as valuable assets to our district and for the local community.



Brexit

Since Britain voted to leave the European Union in June 2016, organisations such as the Local Government Association and Rural Services Network have been working closely with Government on our exit plan.

Whilst politicians, commentators and experts in all areas are uncertain what Brexit will eventually mean for us, they are agreed on some things. Now that Article 50 has been signed and officially triggered and we have begun the process of leaving the EU, this offers the opportunity to take a fresh look at how best to encourage future economic growth, particularly the opportunities and interconnections for growth in rural areas such as Hambleton.

Researchers say that rural areas in England alone contribute at least £237 billion each year to the UK coffers and whilst Brexit will naturally mean the end of some EU funding arrangements, it is also likely to offer opportunities for new and different ways to secure economic support for development in the future.

Corporate Peer Challenge

It has been over ten years since Hambleton District Council was subject to any form of performance scrutiny by an external body, other than the statutory annual financial audit by our external auditor, and we feel that this is something that is long overdue.

The Chief Executive Officer, Dr Justin Ives, has therefore arranged a Corporate Peer Challenge with the Local Government Association which is scheduled to take place between 28 and 30 June 2017.

Performance in Numbers

For those who love numbers, a snapshot of some figures to highlight our achievements

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Our Service to Our Customers	2016-17
193,678	260,000	230,775	309,500	Visits to our website hambleton.gov.uk	353,630
762,726	1,006,220	871,426	1,087,382	Web pages viewed	1,098,435
145,900	157,127	157,899	154,193	Enquiries to our Customer Services Team	185,342
51,503	53,994	55,028	49,824	Total Civic Centre visitors	51,774
80,975	89,373	87,077	86,246	Total contact centre calls	92,932
32	31	39	68 ^{^ ^}	Projects in Hambleton receiving grant funding	63 ^{^ ^}
76,638	71,274 [*]	79,435	77,821	Council tax bills issued	77,698
2,897 [#]	17,441 [^]	33,921 ^A	34,544	New and existing benefit claims processed	TBC
2m	2.8m	3.05m	3.6m ⁺	Waste and recycling bins collected (over 60,000 every week)	3.65m ⁺
9,893	12,001	10,333	9,899	Tonnes of compostable green waste collected	10,083
1060	1,203 [~]	1,131	1,119	Planning permission applications considered	1,190
1,133	1,616	1,136	903	Licences issued for taxis, alcohol, events and entertainment, gambling, and street collections	971
290	512	461	478	Families we helped prevent becoming homeless	287
57	60	117	111	New affordable homes provided for local residents	181
718	756	915	488	Food hygiene interventions	482 ["]
25	24	12	1	Contaminated land assessments	318 ^{..}
235	226	205	247	Noise complaints investigated	244

^{^ ^} includes Making a Difference grants, Small Grants scheme and core grants

^{*} figure appears reduced by 5k because March 2014 Council Tax bills were issued in April 2014 to avoid confusion with Annual Statements

[#] new claims only

[^] includes change of circumstances and other existing claim processes

^A includes Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction figures

⁺ includes all bins and boxes

[~] includes applications subsequently withdrawn

["] the number of premises that have been subject to an intervention, an intervention being an inspection, revisit, monitoring visit, etc.

^{..} includes planning applications and proactive settlements





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This information is available in alternative formats and languages