

Pumpkins in the Park Report

Friday 27th October 2023



01 Background



We (Hartlepool Sport and The PFC Trust) wanted to create an event that would serve as a platform for clubs, groups and organisations within Hartlepool to meet people and recruit new members by showcasing what they do and promoting their community and why it is great to be a part of it.



As Halloween was approaching, it was decided that we would do this by inviting clubs, groups and organisations to participate in a pumpkin carving competition with the pumpkins acting as markers on a trail for the public to complete and vote for their favourite design.

Furthermore, we decided to hold our first Pumpkins in the Park event on Friday 27th October, from 5pm – 7pm at the Headland Town Moor Playground at a time that would typically see a rise in anti-social behaviour, particularly during the school holidays in an area of Hartlepool with one of the highest levels of anti-social behaviour (39.7) according to [local.communityinsight.org/Police UK](http://local.communityinsight.org/Police%20UK), second only to Victoria Ward (51.9). However, the lack of large green spaces in Victoria Ward would have made holding an event on this scale difficult, which is why the Headland and Harbour Ward was chosen.

It is our belief that activity and sport can have transformative effects that not only improve one's physical and mental health but can also reduce anti-social behaviour. They do this, by giving families and young people something to do and somewhere to go while instilling a sense of belonging and purpose in that individual. That is why linking up with local clubs, groups and organisations was a pivotal part of the event and ultimately the exit strategy, with the hope that through their engagement and recruitment of new members, more people would have something to do and somewhere to go for the long term.



Engagement & Impact 02

Pre Event

To promote Pumpkins in the Park, we took to social media and used the Hartlepool Sport Facebook page to publicise the event. In social media posts, we included a link to the Hartlepool Sport website (<https://www.hartlepoolsport.co.uk>) to allow participants to sign up to receive the trail map and sheet by registering their email address, stating the number of players in their party and having the option to opt out of being on the Hartlepool Sport mailing list.



The screenshot shows a registration form titled "Pumpkins in the Park". Below the title, it says "Please answer the questions below to download your free Pumpkins in the Park map and trail sheet." The form includes an "Email*" field, a checkbox for "I would like to hear about Hartlepool Sport's latest events, news and updates.", and a "Number of players" field. A "Send" button is located to the right of the "Number of players" field.

We also created QR Code flyers, leaflets and posters that were distributed in and around the Headland and Harbour Ward so that participants without social media could open the camera app on their mobile device and point it at the QR Code, which then automatically directed them to the sign-up questions on the Hartlepool Sport website.



Form Name	Number of Items
Contact Us	0 items
Move Mania Data Capture	26 items
Pumpkins In the Park	221 items
Registration	2 items
Send us a message and we'll get back to you shortly.	69 items

A total of 221 participants signed up to receive the Pumpkins in the Park map and trail sheet. However, this does not translate to a ratio of 1:1 as the highest number of players in a single party recorded was 10 and the lowest number of players in a single party recorded was 1. Therefore, we used an average of 1:3 (one email address, equates to 3 players - roughly one parent and two children as the national average of children per household is 1.9 according to the Office of National Statistics) to estimate that 663 players signed up pre-event to participate.

Post Event

On the evening of the event, we issued a total of 134 paper copies of the map and trail sheet. Therefore, by applying the principle of 1:3 as above, we can estimate that somewhere between 402-663 players took part on the night roughly equating to 150 families.



Diane Stephens manager of The Heugh Battery Museum– the UK's only First World War battlefield site, who had agreed to extend their opening hours until 7pm to serve hot drinks and hot dogs to the public, confirmed that at any one point there were 100+ people in the Poppy Tearooms and was grateful that we had included them in the event.



Unfortunately, the weather was torrential but rather than postpone or cancel the event, we took the decision to go ahead for a couple of reasons. Firstly, due to the perishable nature of pumpkins as we didn't want the clubs, groups and organisations' hard work going to waste if their pumpkins went bad because the event had to be rescheduled. Secondly, we believe that anti-social behaviour does not stop when it rains. In fact, individuals prone to anti-social behaviour are likely to be out in all weathers because they have nothing else to do and no other options therefore the event would give them something free and fun to do.



However, it does beg the question of just how many more people we would have attracted had the weather been fine!

03 Feedback

10

All comments

- William Mcmillan**
Fantastic thanks 😊👍😊
Just now Love Reply Message 1
- Gail Farrington**
Hi putting the weather aside what a great night and a great turn out ... thank you 😊
47 m Like Reply Message 1
- Carole Cass Archibald**
Was lovely 🍂
Well done to you all 🍂🍂
1 h Like Reply Message 2
- Sam Black-hawks**
It was fantastic!
3 h Like Reply Message 1
- Becca Singleton**
Stephen Smailes can we do this
6 h Like Reply Message 1

The feedback we received from the attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Even the rain wasn't enough to dampen spirits with some families and young people commenting that the rain added to the experience -

“Loved it don't know what the kids loved more hunting the pictures and looking at all the different pumpkins or splashing in puddles! Even if our map turned into mush we still enjoyed it” - Carrie

“Kids described as best night ever!” - Gareth

“Thanking you all for a fantastic event, well done pure Community integration for all the family” - Jason

A video round up of the event can be found on the Hartlepool Sport Facebook page.



Victoria Jane
Well done guys it was amazing & such a fantastic effort by all involved! Great community spirit even in the rain! X

47 m Love Reply 1

Melissa Jayne
Lovely night despite the rain 🍂

10 h Love Reply 3

Mel Foreman
Thank you for a great time we loved it ❤️



11 h Love Reply 3



Natalie Sian Frankland is at **Hartlepool Headland**.

2 h

Despite the weather this evening it was fantastic to see so many families brave the heavy rain and winds and come along to the Pumpkins in the Park event on the Headland 🍂🍂

It rained relentlessly for the two hours, however it was such a pleasure seeing so many excited children out with their families and speaking to them all ❤️

Well done to all of us who took part despite the weather and were a trail marker ❤️

A big thank you my kids for the Pumpkins 🍂❤️

[Hartlepool Sport The PFC Trust](#)



Sam Black-hawks
Everyone was still smiling and chatty despite getting soaked. It was lovely to see so many people getting involved

10 h Love Reply 3

Margaret Bazeley
It was a lovely time pity about the rain but everyone looked like they were enjoying it

10 h Love Reply 2



Exit Strategy and Future

04

In my opinion, the biggest success of the event was in the form of a message, which a coach from the Huskies Basketball Club kindly shared with us, sent to them by a friend of theirs outside their basketball circle that read (please see image)-

This is exactly what we hoped would happen. The event would act as a platform for clubs to recruit new members in the form of families and young people, giving them something to do and somewhere to go on regular basis, long after the event has ended.

Mate..whoever you had over the headland today were great!
Woman was so lovely and the bloke was mint with the kids!

They didn't wanna leave and now wanna start basketball so in a world where people are off the mark to complain..credit where its due they were honestly an absolute credit to huskies. They stood out in that ridiculous weather and still had all the time in the world for the boys. Its made their night so I have no doubt you'll be seeing them again. Pass on my thanks to them please! X

Another success of the event was that of the pumpkin carving competition winners as voted for by members of the public on the night. The Huskies Basketball Club were the winners with their Space Jam themed pumpkin, followed closely by Play Out Hartlepool with their fantastic fairy house and Sensory Spot C.I.C. took third place with their Plants vs. Zombies tribute. All winners will use their grant winnings to invest in their provision therefore putting money back into the community and impacting even more people.



Furthermore, the majority of clubs, groups and organisations that were involved have enthusiastically expressed an interest in taking part next year as has Diane from Heugh Battery Museum to make Pumpkins in the Park 2024 bigger and better than ever and a new annual tradition for Hartlepool!

Therefore, all of the decorations that were purchased will be stored and added to for next year as we were able to salvage some from the rain.

05 Special Mentions

LilyAnne's Wellbeing 4h · 🌐

We had a fantastic but wet night at the Pumpkins In The Park.

Despite the wet weather over 150 people turned out to take part.

It's only a bit of rain, we've been out in similar situations delivering support to those who really need it.

Huge thanks to the [Hartlepool Sport & The PFC Trust](#) for inviting us along.



Hartlepool Ambulance Charity 15h · 🌐

What a fantastic event to be part of! There were some really great pumpkins created, well done to everyone involved.

Its great to see so many families out supporting the community regardless of the weather.

Hartlepool Sport and The PFC Trust would like to thank all of the clubs, groups and organisations that took part in Pumpkins in the Park. We could not have done it without all their effort and hard work.

We would like to thank:

- Sensory Spot C.I.C
- Sustrans
- Hartlepower
- B.B.O.B. Rugby Club
- RepeaT for Kids
- Victoria Ward Engagement Team
- Geek Retreat Hartlepool
- Wellness Walks With A New Perspective
- Play Out Hartlepool
- Pools Youth U8 Blues
- Manilla Cycling
- Huskies Basketball Club
- Lilyanne's Wellbeing Café
- Hartlepool Wadokai
- Hartlepool Ambulance Charity

We would also like to thank Steve Turner Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland for choosing to support our project by including us in the Autumn Activity Fund.

