

One Planet Living

Annual Review 2017



Introduction

Middlesbrough has used the One Planet Living framework during 2016 - 2017 to deliver sustainable environmental, economic and social improvements across Middlesbrough.

The One Planet Living approach created by international charity Bioregional, provides us with a clear and practical framework to examine the town's sustainability challenges and deliver appropriate solutions; ultimately improving the quality of life for local residents.

The 10 principles framework enables individuals, communities and organisations to live greener, healthier and more sustainable lifestyles. Calculations show that if everyone lived like the average Middlesbrough resident does we would need three planets to sustain our lifestyles.

Middlesbrough's One Planet Living action plan aims to reduce this trend, enabling residents to live within their fair share of the Earth's resources.

Some of the many success realised from the ambitions of the One Planet Middlesbrough Action Plan, delivered by Middlesbrough Council and Middlesbrough Environment City, are celebrated here. These are some of the key activities which have supported Middlesbrough's One Planet ambitions and brought about positive and sustainable social, environmental and economic benefits to the residents of Middlesbrough.

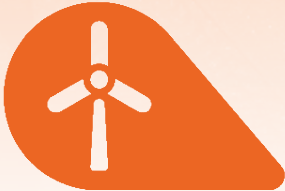


Councillor Tracy Harvey - Executive Member for Environment and Commercial Services



Councillor Julia Rostron - Executive Member for Adult Health, Social Care and Public Health, and chair of Middlesbrough Environment City





Zero carbon

Photovoltaic Panels

Photovoltaic Solar Panels were installed at the Neptune and Rainbow Leisure Centres, adding to the renewable energy portfolio of the Council and acting as a test bed for future PV Arrays and/or renewable energy power sources.

Neptune Centre's PV Panels, from March 2015 to March 2016, generated 7,713 kWh, which equates to powering two average sized homes in Middlesbrough for a year. The FIT (Feed-In-Tariff) payments generated = £3,446.60 for the year

Rainbow Leisure Centre's PV Panels, from March 2015 to March 2016, generated 8,349 kWh, which also equates to powering two average sized homes in Middlesbrough for a year. The FIT (Feed-In-Tariff) payments generated = £3,725.55 for the year

Since their installation in 2011 the two sets of PV Panels have generated a combined, 16,062 kWh of electricity and a combined total of £7,172.15 in income for the 2015-16 financial year.



A rooftop PV system is a photovoltaic system that has its electricity-generating solar panels mounted on the rooftop of a residential or commercial building or structure.

In a grid connected rooftop photovoltaic power station, the generated electricity can sometimes be sold to the servicing electric utility for use elsewhere in the grid. This arrangement provides payback for the investment of the installer.





Zero carbon

Warm and Healthy Homes Project

Middlesbrough Environment City has spent the last year giving Middlesbrough residents an energy efficiency makeover. The Warm and Healthy Homes project is funded by British Gas Energy Trust and is aimed at people who are vulnerable to the cold weather, particularly:

- older people (over 65)
- people with illnesses made worse by the cold weather e.g. cardio-vascular disease, lung diseases and asthma
- people living with sensory loss or dementia
- people with disabilities and mobility issues
- people from BME communities, asylum seekers and refugees

The aim of the project, which has run since December 2015, is to give householders, whose health is vulnerable to the cold, a wide range of energy efficiency advice and small measures designed to help them save money and make their homes more energy efficient.



Up to February 2017 the project has engaged with almost 1000 residents who have received small energy saving measures, including energy efficient LED light bulbs, reflective radiator panels, cold alarms and timer switches. We were also able to help 61 households with emergency boiler repairs/replacements.

The project, which ends in March 2017, has enabled us to establish a home visit service to help the most vulnerable residents and has so far visited over 70 residents at home.

We have also established regular drop in sessions in all Middlesbrough's community hubs to provide energy



efficiency and energy switching advice and making onward referrals for help with insulation or boiler grants.





Zero waste

Recycling Reward Scheme

Middlesbrough Council launched a Recycling Reward Scheme to encourage residents to continue recycling and to also ensure that they only put the correct items in the recycling bin. By increasing the amount of household waste recycled it will also reduce the amount of waste sent for final disposal and ultimately lead to zero waste going to disposal. Since the start of the scheme there have been over 40 winners equating to a total of £2000 of vouchers being given away to residents to spend locally in Middlesbrough. The scheme has also led to an increase in participation and more importantly a reduction in the amount of contamination in the recycling bins.



Yes

Place these items loose (unbagged) in your blue lid bin or clear sack



cartons



food tins & drink cans



plastic food containers & bottles



mixed glass bottles & jars



newspapers & magazines



paper & cardboard



No

Use your black refuse bin or communal bin for these items



plastic film, wrapping, carrier bags, black sacks, sweet wrappers or crisp packets



food waste



takeaway pizza boxes



takeaway food containers



textiles



nappies



Place your recycling out for collection at the front of your property for collection on the day stated on your calendar by 7am.

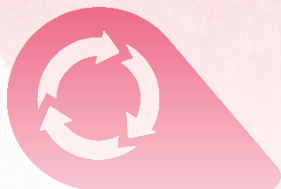
Go for recycling gold!



Middlesbrough Council is giving local residents the chance to win prizes by recycling responsibly.

Simply follow our recycling golden rules to enter our weekly competition - you could WIN a town centre shopping voucher worth £50!





Zero waste

has noticed a renewed focus by the media on recycling, re-using and reducing waste as well as an increased focus on short product lifespans. In order to capitalise on this focus and minimise waste, OPM decided to launch an exciting new project.

Fix-it Club is a project to help people learn new skills and get their gadgets and other IT and electronic gizmos fixed. The free events are a chance for people to bring in faulty or broken items for assessment by an experienced 'fixer' who will try to diagnose the problem and attempt a repair. Our view is that rather than dismissing a faulty item, leaving it to collect dust or consigning it to landfill, it is far better to inject new life into the item and bring it back to its former glory.

By watching and helping with the repair, the public can gain new skills and knowledge on how to potentially fix things in the future.



Fix-it Club's initial focus is on fixing problems with electronic and IT devices such as laptops and mobile phones, but lamps, toasters and kettles can also be brought back to life with a bit of know-how.

Not all issues or problems can be fixed on the spot and the 'fixers' have a limited amount of spare parts but if a repair isn't possible then advice will be given on the next steps to take.

The project aims to involve volunteers with new and varied skills and targeted promotion is

underway to get the word out far and wide in order to achieve this. Not only will this help to increase the range of items that can be fixed at the events but it will also allow for further skills to be shared amongst those attending and help to upskill our communities.

Work is ongoing to plan further Fix-it-Club events throughout 2017 and raise the profile of the project. We think our approach to tackling waste by enabling people to learn new skills, repair their possessions and save money as a result, will be a big success!





Sustainable transport

Access Funding

Middlesbrough Council, in partnership with Tees Valley Combined Authority, successfully bid for funding for Access Funding worth over £3.3m for project delivery from 2017 to 2020.

The Access Funding was made available by the Department for Transport for Local Authorities to bid for to enhance the sustainable transport offer to the local area. Working in partnership, the programme of works will actively promote increased levels of physical activity through walking and cycling by;

- Increasing the number or children travelling sustainably to school - improving the health and fitness of the children and reducing congestion related to the school run
- Improving access and information relating to accessing post-16 education, training and employment
- Improving actual and perceived safety on sustainable transport networks
- Working closely with public health bodies to promote healthy transport choices; and
- Working closely with businesses to enable accessible and healthy transport choices



Over the period, Middlesbrough will receive the benefits of the programme, including:

- Personalised Travel Planning
- Independent Travel Training support to remove transport as a barrier to everyday opportunities
- Town Rider Bus Service continuation of the bus link between Middlesbrough Bus Station, Rail Station, College, employment sites and new Middlehaven retail and leisure facilities
- Wheels To Work - Reduced cost of travel through loans of bicycles, electric bicycles or basic scooters. Including the provision of training and safety equipment
- Connect Tees Valley portal - Supporting the website as a central point for all sustainable transport information
- Engaging schools via the Tees Valley Education Marketing programme
- Tees Valley Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme - a student led road safety initiative targeting pupils in year 3
- Tees Valley Pedestrian and Cycling Training Scheme - a school based pedestrian and cycling safety training, including Bikeability Plus
- The continuation of the existing function of Middlesbrough Cycle Centre at Middlesbrough Bus Station. Including training and development.
- Active travel challenges - Delivery of a number of challenges designed to encourage residents of the Tees Valley to access work, training and education by active modes.
- Development of web interface in year





Sustainable transport

Middlesbrough Bike Library

Funded by Welcome to Yorkshire and Yorkshire Bank, the Bike Library, based at Middlesbrough Cycle Centre, provides a fleet of free to hire recycled bikes suitable for all. The bikes are available to hire for a wide range of uses from commuting to family days out. The hire term is not restricted.

The bikes are provided by Yorkshire Bank and recycled to a useable state by qualified cycle mechanics. The bikes are also available to hire from the Middlesbrough Environment City offices located on Sandy Flatts lane in Acklam. This second location increases access to the service and provides a great link between the town centre and the south side of Middlesbrough. It is also a prime location for access to National Cycle Route 65.

Since the Bike Library started at the Centre in December 2017, 11 people have joined as members with an average hire duration of 9 days per hire.

The Bike Library will complement a range of other cycling projects being undertaken in Middlesbrough through the partnership between Middlesbrough Council and Middlesbrough Environment City. The Cycle Centre continues to provide free, safe and secure cycle parking for shoppers and commuters, as well as a shower, lockers and cycling



information. It is also now home to the Shopmobility service in Middlesbrough.

With funding through the Department for Transport Access Fund, the Bike Academy in the West Lodge at Albert Park continues to provide a range of cycle maintenance courses, bike swaps and Dr Bike events. Activities, such as cycle maintenance courses and Dr Bike repair sessions are also held at businesses, community venues and community events across the town.

MEC also delivers Bikeability safe cycling training to Year 5 and 6



pupils across Middlesbrough, with over 800 trained in the last year. All of these activities are aimed at increasing the number of journeys made by cycle in Middlesbrough, through improve confidence and skills of riders and ensuring that they are able to maintain their cycle in good working order.





Sustainable materials

Greenham Ltd Janitorial Products

Procurement continue to contract with Greenham Ltd for the supply of Janitorial Products Greenham supply a range of Biodegradable, Renewable and Recycled Products via the current contract. The company has developed initiatives to help reduce the environmental impact by implementing agreed principles, proactively challenging existing distribution methods, collaborating with the Council and sharing best practice, while setting standards and measuring operating improvements in order to reduce the environmental impact.

Greenham invite the Council to trial products of the differing natures on a try before you buy / suitability process and help the Council in making informed choices towards a specific environmental solution. This may be through the provision of a product manufactured from recycled or biodegradable materials or through controlled dosing systems to minimise waste.



Working with Wood

‘Working with Wood’ is a one-day workshop fully funded by Middlesbrough Community Learning Partnership designed to provide learners with the basic knowledge and skills to build things like bird boxes, bird tables and planters from reclaimed wood.

The aim of the course was to teach learners all they needed to know to make attractive practical objects for the home using wood that could found lying around, such as discarded pallets or wood reclaimed from a previous use (one learner made a garden bench from an old bed!).

Fifteen older gentlemen from the Sporting Chance project completed the course, and not only did they learn how they could prepare and use

reclaimed wood, but it also provided many other beneficial aspects such: as a practical activity that helped keep them fit; confidence in using skills they once had but hadn’t used in many years; an environment with tools to rekindle a past time they had lost make things; and a social ‘men in sheds’ activity.

Using reclaimed materials is a low cost means of creating something unique and practical for the home and reduces the demand for new materials helping conserve the world’s natural resources and helping to reduce the carbon footprint of a household. The ‘Working with Wood’ course is one of a suite of practical sustainability courses, aiming to upskill residents, encourage them to use sustainable alternatives and share their learning with the communities in which they live and work.





Local and sustainable food

Middlesbrough Food Action Plan

The Food Action Plan aims to make Middlesbrough a place where local people can eat good quality, healthy food that is easy to buy, offers value for money and is produced locally wherever possible.

Since launching the Action Plan, Middlesbrough Food Partnership has delivered:

- 3 Local Food Weekends – the latest in March 2017 showcased 19 local food outlets
- Supported 8 community locations to provide free meals during the school holidays – around 5000 meals were provided in 2016
- Delivered Slow Cooker Workshops to over 200 families
- Created extra growing spaces and community gardens allowing communities to learn to grow their own fruit and vegetables, e.g. community gardens at MIMA and Albert Park

A key ambition is that the whole community should be given the opportunity to get involved with the creation of a food culture which gives everyone access to good food which is healthy, locally produced and value for money.

Under the brand 'Growing Middlesbrough' a Food Charter has been developed aimed at all businesses, charities and organisations based in the borough. There is also a People's Food Pledge which is aimed at anyone living, working or visiting the town.

Businesses and organisations are invited to sign up to the Business Food Charter on the Growing Middlesbrough website and make a commitment to supporting and achieving a range of ambitions as set out in the Food Action Plan. The Growing Middlesbrough website has information and advice linked to all the ambitions to help organisations achieve their commitments. Upon signing the Charter the business receives a certificate confirming they are part of the Growing Middlesbrough food network. Since its launch in the summer of 2016, seven organisations have signed the Food Charter.

The People's Food Pledge invites everyone living, working or visiting Middlesbrough to get involved with the Food Action Plan's vision of creating a town where local people can eat good quality, healthy food that is easy to buy, offers good value for money and is produced locally wherever possible. By signing the Food Pledge and agreeing to make small changes to their eating and shopping habits people can link into a range of online support including advice, links to healthy cooking workshops and horticultural courses and information about enjoying a more healthy diet, reducing food waste, composting kitchen waste, buying



Fairtrade food, buying local food and growing their own at home.

The Pledge is available online at the Growing Middlesbrough web page and once signed up people become part of the Growing Middlesbrough food network and receive newsletters and information about local food events and skills workshops.





Local and sustainable food

Hearty Appetites Project

Funded by Subway and delivered by Middlesbrough Environment City, the Hearty Appetites Project is aimed at promoting heart health to families, particularly those with children under 11 years. 57 adults and 85 children took part in the nine month project which was delivered in a school, Community Hubs and Community Centres throughout Middlesbrough.

The participating parents and carers took part in practical 'Healthy Cooking on a Budget' sessions including a Slow Cooker Workshop. On completion of the cooking course, each family was provided with a slow cooker and a bag of groceries to enable them to prepare affordable nutritious meals for the whole family.

In addition, fun activity sessions were provided for the families, with some of the highlights including a picnic and rounders session, a family zumba class, treasure hunts and walks in the park. During one particular slow cooker session, sausage and bean casserole was made by the parents, whilst the 'little cowboys' line danced and had a morning of fitness activities.



One of the participants stated that the slow cooker has been a great help in improving the food choices of her child. She will now eat meat as the cooker makes the meat so tender!

The project was well received, with the following statements being made by some of the families regarding changes they intend to make to their diets.

'Cut fizzy pop out!'

'All my family now like granola yoghurt'

'Stop adding salt when cooking food'

'Enjoyed the course. Start making healthy food from now on'





Sustainable water

Stewart Park Reed Bed

Middlesbrough Council has been working closely with the Environment Agency on a number of schemes over the years to improve the water quality in Middlesbrough's watercourses. The schemes have included opening up a culvert across Prissick to create a watercourse, naturalising Marton West Beck at James Cook Gardens and the removal of several weirs. The final scheme was to create a reed bed in Stewart Park.

The creation of the reed bed will provide water-quality treatment through entrapment of silt and other water-borne material in the reeds. The scheme opened up 35m of a surface water culvert to create a 4m wide reed bed. The reed bed system that has been created is an on-line feature, with water inflowing at the southern end from the culvert and then flowing through the reed bed into another culvert at the northern end which



extends under access paths and then outfalls into the top lake. This will contribute to an improvement in the quality of water further downstream within the Park.

These schemes will lead to the enhancement of the water quality in Middlesbrough's Watercourses therefore improving our ecology.

Water Saving at the Middlesbrough Environment City Office

Middlesbrough Environment City moved to its new office at the former Nature's World site in Acklam in April 2016. In line with the organisation's environmental ethos, two of the priorities were to minimise the negative environmental impact on the local environment and provide examples of the measures that householders and businesses can undertake to live more sustainably.

The roof on the office had already been planted with plants to create a "green roof" and reduce the rate

of water run-off from the building. One of the first jobs undertaken on site was to install two recycled water containers on the outflow to collect the water for use on site.

During the summer Middlesbrough Environment City's apprenticeship team, funded through the Big Lottery 'Our Bright Green Future' programme, used the water on a regular basis, particularly on the vegetable growing containers next to the office. The veg containers provide staff with fresh lunchtime produce during the summer, contributing to MEC's Better Health at Work Award. The vegetables are also used in MEC's community healthy cooking programmes. Through the activity, the apprentices also learnt more about the importance of water conservation as part of their training.

In the winter, when less water is needed, the excess is drained off into the adjacent orchard area, where it can be absorbed into the soil and drain away slowly, rather than adding to the flow of the rainwater drainage system.





Land use and wildlife

Maelor's Wood

Maelor's Wood, formerly known as Stainton Wood, was the vision of the late Councillor, Maelor Williams. As a governor with Tees Forest he arranged for the wood to be planted in the late 1990's, with the help of local volunteers and school children. Over time this green corridor for wildlife has been linked by footpaths to Stainton Quarry and Kell Gate Green to form a circular walk around the village.

Upon Maelor's passing the Parish council, friends and local residents thought it would be appropriate to rename the wood in his honour. With the agreement of MBC, this was done in 2016.

The wood itself is now 18 years old and contains a mixture of native species from crab apple, hawthorn and dog rose to hazel birch and oak with several spruce and other firs thrown in for good measure, giving wide biodiversity. It has been developed significantly by The Friends of Stainton & Thornton Green Spaces. With the help of Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, a management plan was formulated which would entail the thinning of the wood by one third over a five year period. The group are now two years into this plan and are supported by Askham Bryan College, the Community Pay Back team and the One Planet Pioneers, making the wood an enjoyable place to visit.



During 2016 the Group were successful in obtaining a £10,000.00 'Bags of Help' grant from Tesco that has helped develop the area further with the installation of signs and information boards. Four new wooden chainsaw sculptures have also been created by Steve Iredale and new seating has been introduced along with a circular nature rubbings trail consisting of 10 posts with a metal plaque on each. Each one is different and represents a different aspect of the nature to be encountered on the walk through the wood. A free leaflet accompanies the trail, so all that is required is a crayon or pencil, some decent weather to spend an hour or so exploring the nature right here on the doorstep.





Land use and wildlife

One Planet Pioneers Project

The One Planet Pioneers Project kick started in May 2016 with the aim to physically improve the life chances of 14-21 year olds living in Middlesbrough, through apprenticeships, volunteering and placement opportunities. Working with Tees Valley Wildlife Trust and Actes the project has successfully been able to engage young people in environmental activities such as horticulture, conservation and other environmental activities with the added opportunity for politically minded people to join the Youth Panel.

With scope to create better community cohesion, the project has been working closely with 'Friends of' groups. This has helped both old and young understand the importance of working together and why we do the work. As we are almost coming to the end of the project's first year we have set a good foundation to build on, creating strong working partnerships with local secondary schools, Teesside University, Askham Bryan College, Middlesbrough Council, youth and alternative education organisations such as Choosing Pathways, Hemlington Linx, Princes Trust and the former Know Your Money project.



One Planet Pioneers has engaged:

- 167 young people into volunteering opportunities with a total of 1568 total hours
- 10 young people in long term apprenticeships

Nine young people have progressed through the project:

- 7 gone on to 6th Form college
- 1 on to University
- 3 into apprenticeships

A total of 15 community gardens, nature reserves and school gardens have been physically improved through the project. The One Planet Pioneers team are looking forward to an exciting and very busy 2017-2018.





Culture and community

My Town Hall

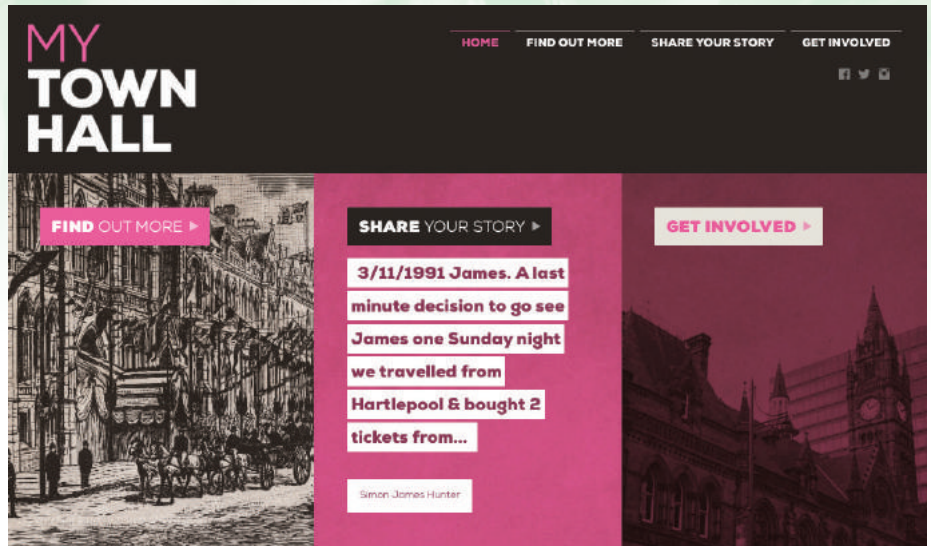
Middlesbrough Town Hall, one of the town's iconic buildings, is undergoing a major refurbishment. Funded by the Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the project aims to ensure that:

- The Town Hall's hidden treasures are revealed
- Spaces we already know and love are improved
- People take part in learning about the heritage of the Town Hall
- The Town Hall helps to tell the story of Middlesbrough and Teesside
- The Town Hall is a vibrant and sustainable cultural and heritage venue
- People know more about the history of Teesside and are proud of their local area

During the closure period, there are plenty of opportunities for people to get involved with the project and celebrate the history and heritage of this wonderful Grade II* listed building.

We have been engaging people with information boards, quizzes and games at a number of events over the year, including the Middlesbrough Mela, Town Meal, Cleveland Show and Discover Middlesbrough.

www.mytownhall.co.uk



There is a new website (www.mytownhall.co.uk) where people can find out more about the project, or submit stories and memories of their times in the Town Hall - some of the stories submitted so far have been very interesting, ranging from relatives living in the Town Hall in the early days of the building, to people attending some of the many fantastic gigs held in the venue over the years.

There is also now a community of volunteers working on the project. Some are researching the history and heritage of the venue in Teesside Archives, with others documenting the building work as it happens through photography and video. Some of the materials produced by our volunteers will be used to help people learn about the building when it reopens in 2018.





Culture and community

English as a Second Language - Energy in the Home Programme

The English as a Second Language Energy in the Home Programme has provided simple energy efficiency advice to residents of Middlesbrough with a first language other than English, whilst also developing their English skills and addressing issues of social isolation. Originally designed by Greening Wingrove with support from National Energy Action, it has been adapted by Middlesbrough Environment City specifically for use amongst migrant, asylum seeker, refugee and BME communities in Middlesbrough.

Through the project, MEC provided simple energy efficiency advice to residents in a culturally appropriate way, developing their understanding of the ways in which fuel bills can be reduced and homes can be kept warmer. Participants also improved their English language skills by taking part and had opportunities for social interaction with a wide range of people. This helped to tackle social isolation amongst groups where loneliness can be a significant issue. By enabling our learners to take control of their own energy usage through simple



actions and behaviour changes they gained confidence to deal with their energy bills and energy suppliers effectively in the future.

Providing simple home energy efficiency measures such as LED bulbs to participating learners also helped to demonstrate the impact that energy saving in the home can have.

Run three times in 2016, the course was a great success, with a total of 23 learners completing the full three sessions. The primary partner for this project was Investing in People and Culture, a voluntary sector organisation supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. They supported the project extensively with promotion and also referred many people who could benefit from our help onto our courses.





Equity and local economy

Orange Pip Market

A brand new artisan street food market was launched in May 2016 bringing influences from around the world to the heart of Middlesbrough each month until December of each year.

Orange Pip Market - centred in the town's bustling Baker Street was launched with around 25 independent food vendors attending as well as arts, culture and entertainment.

Vendors from the best of the region's farmer's markets, continental markets and street food festivals, provided a memorable visitor experience alongside music from up-and-coming artists, pop-up arts workshops and street theatre.

Influences on the development of the new arrival include Maltby Street, Broadway and Borough Markets in London as well as overseas attractions such as Brooklyn Flea in New York, Marché Raspail in Paris and Berlin's Street Food Thursdays.

The market name was taken from a Sherlock Holmes short story, The Tale of the Five Orange Pips by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle - it fits with the age of the turn of the century buildings on the street and along with bars, Sherlock's and The Twisted Lip.



Baker Street and Bedford Street are really leading the way in bringing a new energy and vibrancy to the town centre and Orange Pip Market is a fantastic addition to the mix further animating the town centre and offering something for everyone.

Middlesbrough's Orange Pip Market has led to a town centre "business boom" worth an estimated £1m to the local economy, plus local business owners have reported that Orange Pip has led to a 120%

increase in sales when compared like-for-like against non-market Saturdays.

The market's first outing on Baker Street in May attracted 3,000 people and by July that number had risen to 8,000, resulting in an expansion onto Bedford Street in August. The market has relaunched in March 2017 and may offer some additional summer specials to further improve the visitor experience and attract further people into the town centre.



Equity and local economy

Holiday Inn Express

The transformation of a dilapidated office block into a thriving Holiday Inn Express hotel has kick-started the latest phase of town centre regeneration in Middlesbrough.

Vacant for almost 20 years, the former Cook and Endeavour House offices occupied a prime town centre location with strong redevelopment potential but struggled to secure financial backing due to the recession.

In just over a year, one flank of Centre Square – one of the region's biggest public open spaces – has been transformed as part of a hugely successful redevelopment that was only made possible by Middlesbrough Council intervening to take on the role of 'bank' for the first time. A £5.8 million loan was provided by the Council in April 2014 to property developer Ashall Projects for the £12.4 million construction of the hotel.

Just nine months after the Holiday Inn Express opened, plans were announced for a £2.2 million extension to increase capacity from 138 to 159 rooms to meet demand. The resulting Holiday Inn Express has breathed new life into the Albert Road wing of the Cleveland Centre shopping complex, creating 40 new jobs.

The collaboration between Middlesbrough Council and Ashall Projects Ltd has resulted in further plans being drawn up for the redevelopment of land on the east edge of Centre Square to address the town's shortage of premium office accommodation. The development has acted as a catalyst for the town centre economy, with upmarket restaurant chains and retailers jumping at the opportunity to move into nearby vacant premises.



Mark Ashall, Managing Director of Ashall Projects Ltd, said:

“When it became apparent that securing the required funding could make or break the project, Middlesbrough Council had the vision and ambition that was crucial to its success.

“By providing a loan and supporting the project from the outset, the Council has shown that it is truly forward-thinking and willing to work closely with partners to bring development and jobs to the town.

“They have provided invaluable assistance at every stage of the process, and also made possible the extension to the hotel which will further benefit the town centre.

“Our experience of working with the Council throughout this period has been very positive and, as a result, we are already looking to participate in other development projects in the town.”





Health and happiness

Sporting Chance

Sporting Chance was a 3 year project targeting isolated older men to improve their health and wellbeing. The project was managed in partnership between Volunteering Matters and Middlesbrough Council and had a huge impact throughout Middlesbrough. The Sporting Chance project aimed to reduce isolation, improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, and increase the skills of participants. The aim was to use a combination of physical activities and social activities such as regular reminiscence sessions but also outings, to combat isolation and health issues.

Male life expectancy is, as in many areas, lower than that of women in Middlesbrough, by 1 or 2 years. There is also an 8 year difference between male life expectancy in the suburbs, such as Nunthorpe, and the centre of Middlesbrough, such as Pallister – 82 versus 74.

The project team worked hard to make sure that the sessions were as welcoming as possible and therefore often taking place away from 'health care' or 'sports/ fitness' locations, utilising community hubs and held at different times of the day.

The attendance levels were excellent and grew year on year. In Year 3 there were a total of 8660



image: Ageing Better Middlesbrough

attendees at all the various keep fit, walking and gym sessions. - With an average monthly attendance of 787 since October 2015.

During that time case studies and questionnaires were carried out with Reducing social isolation measured with two main statements - making new friends (99%) and feeling part of something (97%). Both achieve almost universal agreement and more than four fifths stated they can move more easily and indicate they eat a healthier diet. A further 2/3 have lost weight. Nearly half drink less and 14% smoke less.

The project has now come to an end but continues in some venues with some residual funding. A community group has also been set up called the TOFY club (the over 50's youth club) which is run by volunteers from the project and offers physical activity opportunities to all over the age of 50.





Health and happiness

Fit to Ride and Walking for Health

Fit to Ride is a programme of volunteer led rides that take place in and around Middlesbrough, funded by a Public Health Physical Activity Grant.

Volunteer 'Cycle Champions' are recruited to the programme and take part in a three day training course where they learn useful skills such as cycle maintenance, road safety, route planning and risk assessing.

They are then assisted to lead a few rides before becoming a 'Cycle Champion' and developing a programme of rides for members of the public to attend that are promoted by Middlesbrough Environment City.

To date fourteen Cycle Champions have been trained each delivering an average of one ride a month.

Walking for Health is a programme of volunteer led walks that also take place in and around the borough. The walks last no longer than 90 minutes and are accessible to everyone.



The programme began in Middlesbrough in 2002 and is supported by the Ramblers Association and Macmillan Cancer Support. Funded by Public Health the programme has been developed and managed over the last year by Middlesbrough Environment City.

Volunteer walk leaders are recruited to the programme and take part in a training course whereby they learn essential skills such as route planning, risk assessing and the health and wellbeing benefits of social walking.

They are then able to assist walk leaders with the current programme of walks or identify and set up a new walk.

During 2015-2016, 369 walkers were registered and took part in 162 walks.

