



Hartlepool Sport Toolkit - Run Your Club

Keeping your group simple, sustainable and rooted in place — week after week in Hartlepool

Starting a club is exciting.

Running one — consistently, calmly, without burning out — is the real craft.

Most clubs don't fail because of money or facilities.

They fade because:

- one person does everything
- admin piles up
- energy drops
- nobody shares ownership

This guide helps you **stay small, steady, and sustainable.**

Think:

👉 “boring but reliable beats brilliant but chaotic.”

1. Nail the Weekly Rhythm

Clubs survive on rhythm.

Same time.

Same place.

Same faces.

A simple session formula

Before (15 mins)

- unlock
- set up kit
- greet families

During

- warm up
- main activity
- small win or game
- cool down



After (10 mins)

- quick tidy
- chat with parents
- note anything important

Consistency builds trust more than fancy sessions ever will.

2. Share the Load Early

If everything runs through one person, the club has an expiry date.

Minimum roles

You don't need titles — just responsibilities.

- Lead coach – runs session
- Helper – supports kids
- Admin – register, messages, money
- Safeguarding lead – welfare point of contact

One person can hold two roles.

But never all of them.

Rule of thumb

👉 If you can't miss a week without chaos, you haven't shared enough yet.

3. Keep Admin Lightweight

Avoid over-engineering.

You only really need:

- register
- emergency contacts
- WhatsApp or text group
- simple income/expense list
- basic risk assessment

That's it.



Not:

- complex software
- long reports
- 20 policies no one reads

Clubs are relationships, not paperwork.

4. Money: Boring = Healthy

Financial stress kills clubs faster than anything.

Keep it predictable

Monthly:

- hall hire
- insurance
- small kit replacement

Simple model

Subs → cover costs → tiny surplus → reinvest locally

Aim for:

- 2–3 months costs saved as buffer

Tips

- collect monthly where possible
- avoid chasing debts
- hardship quietly handled
- buy second-hand kit
- share equipment with partners

Stability beats chasing big grants.

Funding should **support**, not **resuscitate**, your club.



5. Safeguarding & Safety (simple but serious)

You don't need complexity — just clarity.

Basics

- named safeguarding lead
- DBS where required
- first aid kit
- emergency contacts
- clear sign-in/out
- know who parents are

Culture matters most

- greet every child
- notice changes
- listen
- escalate early

Most issues are solved through trust, not policy documents.

6. Communicate Like a Neighbour

Formal comms feel distant.

Neighbourly comms build belonging.

Works well in Hartlepool

- WhatsApp
- word of mouth
- school gate chats
- simple posters
- photos & thank yous

Do more of:

- “great effort tonight”
- celebration posts
- quick reminders



- informal conversations

Do less of:

- long emails
- jargon
- corporate tone

If it sounds like a council memo, rewrite it.

7. Build Belonging (retention secret)

People don't stay for drills.

They stay for how it feels.

Easy wins

- learn names
- birthdays
- end-of-term awards
- hot drinks for parents
- group photo days
- youth leaders helping younger kids
- socials or fun days

Belonging = attendance.

Attendance = sustainability.

8. Track What Matters (light touch)

You don't need complex monitoring.

Just know:

- how many attend
- who's new
- who's stopped
- why



5-minute monthly reflection

Ask:

- What's working?
- What's hard?
- Who needs help?
- What should we stop?

Small course corrections prevent big problems.

9. Look After Yourself (seriously)

Volunteer burnout is the #1 club killer.

Protect your energy

- share tasks
- take holidays
- say no
- avoid over-expanding
- remember: good enough is enough

If the club only works when you're exhausted, it's not sustainable.

A calm club beats a heroic one.

10. The Hartlepool Sport Way

Running a club here isn't just delivery — it's place-making.

Think beyond sport

Your club also:

- creates safe spaces
- builds friendships
- reduces isolation
- supports families
- grows local pride



Practical principles

- buy local
- partner local
- train local young leaders
- celebrate visible wins
- be open & welcoming

If someone can walk in without feeling judged, you're succeeding.

Monthly Club Health Check

People

- helpers in place
- no one overloaded
- kids happy

Sessions

- consistent attendance
- venue secure
- kit OK

Money

- costs covered
- small buffer

Culture

- welcoming
- fun
- parents engaged

If all four are green → you're thriving.

One-line philosophy

- Run it simply.**
- Share the load.**
- Keep costs low.**
- Build belonging.**
- Protect your energy.**