



Hartlepool Sport Toolkit – Marketing & Comms

Helping the right people hear about your club — simply, locally and consistently — in Hartlepool

“Marketing” can sound corporate.

Logos.

Strategies.

Campaigns.

Analytics.

Community clubs don’t need any of that.

Because here’s the truth:

The best marketing for a local club is trust and word of mouth.

If families feel welcome and kids enjoy sessions, your club will grow naturally.

Marketing is just:

👉 *making it easy for people to know you exist and feel confident turning up.*

This guide keeps things practical, human and low effort.

1. Start With This Mindset

You are not selling a product.

You’re offering:

- a safe space
- friendly faces
- affordable activity
- belonging

So your comms should feel:

- warm
- simple
- neighbourly

Not:

- ✗ corporate
- ✗ jargon-heavy
- ✗ over-designed
- ✗ pushy



If it sounds like a council leaflet, rewrite it.

If it sounds like a friendly invite, you're on track.

2. Be Easy to Understand (clarity beats creativity)

Most people decide in 10 seconds whether to come.

So answer these immediately:

Always make clear:

- What is it?
- Who's it for?
- When?
- Where?
- How much?
- How do I join?

If any of these are missing, people won't chase you.

Confused people don't attend.

Simple people do.

3. Word of Mouth First (always)

Especially in Hartlepool.

Parents trust:

- other parents
- teachers
- neighbours
- coaches they know

Far more than ads.

So focus on:

- friendly conversations
- school gate chats
- parents sharing posts



- kids bringing friends
- local partners recommending you

Practical habit

Every week, ask:

“Who could you bring next time?”

One invite beats 100 posters.

4. Your Core Comms Kit (that’s all you need)

You don’t need a full brand strategy.

Just:

Essentials

- ☐ WhatsApp group or text list
- ☐ Simple Facebook page or group
- ☐ Basic poster/flyer
- ☐ Contact number/email
- ☐ A few good photos

That’s enough for 95% of clubs.

Anything more is optional.

Don’t overbuild.

5. WhatsApp = Your Superpower

For local clubs, nothing beats it.

Use it for:

- reminders
- cancellations
- quick updates
- celebrating wins
- photos
- thank yous



Tips

- keep messages short
- avoid spam
- clear subject lines
- group not individual chats
- positive tone

People read WhatsApp.
They ignore emails.

6. Social Media (keep it light and real)

You're not trying to go viral.

You're trying to look:

- active
- friendly
- consistent

Post simple things

- session photos
- "'session on tonight!"
- thank you volunteers
- celebration posts
- certificates
- upcoming events
- sponsor shout-outs

That's it.

Don't worry about

- ✗ graphics
- ✗ algorithms
- ✗ daily posting
- ✗ professional photography

Real beats polished.



Messy authenticity > perfect marketing.

7. Posters & Flyers Still Work

Especially locally.

Think:

- schools
- shops
- cafés
- community centres
- libraries
- partner venues

Keep design simple

Big text:

WHAT / WHEN / WHERE / COST

Small text:

contact info

That's all.

If people need to squint or read paragraphs, it won't work.

8. Photos Tell the Story

You don't need reports to show impact.

A smiling group photo says everything.

Capture:

- activity in action
- teamwork
- mixed ages
- celebrations
- volunteers helping
- parents chatting



This builds:

- trust
- credibility
- belonging
- future funding opportunities

Just remember:

- get consent
 - follow safeguarding rules
-

9. Talk Like a Human

Tone matters more than design.

Instead of:

✗ “Participants will engage in structured physical activity provision”

Say:

✓ “Fun weekly sessions for local kids”

Instead of:

✗ “Stakeholder engagement event”

Say:

✓ “Come along and have a go”

Plain English always wins.

Write how you speak.

10. Celebrate Small Wins Publicly

This is powerful.

People want to join things that feel alive.

Share:

- first session success
- new volunteers
- someone’s progress



- birthday shout-outs
- thank yous
- community partnerships
- “we’re full tonight!”

Momentum attracts momentum.

Quiet clubs look like struggling clubs.

Visible clubs look trusted.

11. Work Through Partners

Often faster than public marketing.

Connect with:

- schools
- youth groups
- community centres
- faith groups
- local businesses
- health or support services

If they trust you, they’ll refer families directly.

That’s warmer than any advert.

Relationships are the best distribution channel.

12. Keep It Consistent

Consistency beats intensity.

Better:

- one post a week forever

Than:

- 10 posts this week, nothing for 3 months

Better:

- same time reminders weekly



Than:

- random updates

Predictability builds trust.

Trust builds attendance.

13. Avoid the Common Traps

Don't:

- ✗ spend money on ads too early
- ✗ redesign logos constantly
- ✗ overpromise numbers
- ✗ create complicated booking systems
- ✗ compare yourself to big organisations
- ✗ wait for “perfect” materials

Clubs grow through relationships, not marketing campaigns.

14. Your 30-Minute Weekly Comms Routine

That's all you need.

Each week

- 5 mins – take photos
- 5 mins – send WhatsApp reminder
- 10 mins – post 1–2 social updates
- 5 mins – chat to parents
- 5 mins – invite someone new

Done.

No stress.

Comms Health Check

- ☐ People know when sessions are
- ☐ Parents in a group chat
- ☐ New people hear about you regularly
- ☐ Social page looks active
- ☐ Tone feels friendly
- ☐ No one confused about details



If yes → your comms are working.

One-line philosophy

Be clear.

Be friendly.

Be visible.

Be consistent.

Let word of mouth do the heavy lifting.