



**Evaluation report of the Blyth Safer Working Towns Campaign  
in the Yorkshire Humberside and North East Region of HSE**

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EVALUATION OF BLYTH SAFER WORKING TOWNS CAMPAIGN  
JUNE 2006

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# EVALUATION OF BLYTH SAFER WORKING TOWNS CAMPAIGN JUNE 2006

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this project was to evaluate a health and safety awareness raising campaign known as Safer Working Towns (SWT). This event took place in Blyth Valley Borough Council (BC) mainly during the first half of 2006 and culminated in a range of events in the area in June of that year. The aims and objectives of the event can be summarised as follows

- Work in partnership with community leaders and others to establish a programme for the Campaign.
- Encourage key organisations to get involved in promoting a healthier and safer culture in all workplaces by
  - i. Providing appropriate sources of information on the health and safety issues that are most relevant to the community.
  - ii. Assisting employers and employees to comply with their legal obligations relating to workplace safety, health and welfare.
  - iii. Promoting and sharing best practices in relation to occupational health and safety management.

To effectively evaluate the event a mixture of research methods were used. An analysis of event data was carried out along with an extensive series of qualitative interviews with stakeholders.

The key finding of the evaluation was that the event was a success. There were a range of positive and negative issues surrounding the event, these can be grouped under the following headings:

- Planning
- Media
- Stakeholders
- Wider Community
- Event
- Sustainability

Further details of these findings along with suggested ideas for the running of future events can be found in the conclusion to this report.

## Acknowledgements

Our evaluation of this event would not have been possible without the support of all participants in the process. We would like to thank all those involved with the organising and delivery of the Blyth event.

## **CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 HSC/E STRATEGY**

The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) has requested that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Local Authorities (LAs) establish, through a Strategic Programme, coordinated by Regional Partnership Managers, a programme of work that will develop and deliver the detailed arrangements for working together in an effective partnership.

In March 2004 the HSC published its "Strategy for Workplace Health and Safety in Great Britain to 2010 and beyond", which outlined its long-term vision for Health and Safety and the means by which this would be achieved. The concept safer working towns (SWTs) are part of this process and are designed to meet a number of the strategic targets including:

- Help benefit businesses by the use of joint interventions and effective use of shared resources;
- Use the application of a mix of interventions to improve health and safety;
- Improving health and safety in the community, whilst enhancing economic growth;
- Raise the public and political profile of health and safety so that it is recognised as a vital component of worker and public protection;
- Sustainable achievement of targets.

### **1.2 Safer Working Towns Concept**

The SWT campaign in Blyth Valley BC, Northumberland, was identified as a specific work stream in the Yorkshire and Humberside and North East Region of the HSE. The concept for the campaign arose from wide consultation in the region, co-ordinated and facilitated by the Yorkshire, Humberside and North East Partnership Group. Their main goal was to make sustainable improvements in safety and health arising from work activity. The concept is seen as an opportunity designed to stimulate innovative joint working between HSE and LA enforcement staff and the wider working community.

The SWTs Campaign is centred on holding a focussed series of events and interventions, in a dedicated location, during which targeted stakeholders join together to promote health and safety. The programme relies upon working in partnership with HSE/LAs', local businesses, employer organisations, key players in the community, local safety groups and potentially National Health Service (NHS)/Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

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It also provides the opportunity for the host LA to influence a group of people who may be of assistance in delivering aspects of the wider LA agenda, e.g. Securing Health Together, or it can be free standing or form the basis of LA/HSE involvement in already existing safe community initiatives.

### **1.3 The Blyth Valley Borough Council Campaign**

The campaign took place in May/June 2006.

The original overall concept of SWT type events was to be focussed mainly around a week long series of events, aimed at duty holders to promote, sustainable improvements in health and safety in a given LA area. In Blyth Valley BC this concept evolved to include a week of enforcement activity prior to the event week.

The final agreed aims and objectives of the SWT in Blyth Valley BC were as follows:

#### **Aims**

The principal aim of Safer Working Towns is to make sustainable improvements in Safety and Health, through partnership working between LAs, the HSE and other relevant partners and by focussing upon the FIT3<sup>1</sup> agenda.

The proposal is centred on holding a high profile Safer Working Town week, in a dedicated location. All partners will then work together, both leading up to and during that week, with the aim of publicising and promoting safety and health in the workplace and community by maximising the opportunities for employers and employees to access advice, help and information.

#### **Objectives**

1. Work with relevant partners to establish a programme for the Safer Working Towns Campaign.
2. Work with partners to reduce occupational accidents and ill health by promoting a healthier and safer culture in all workplaces by;
  - i. Providing appropriate sources of information on the health and safety issues that are most relevant to the community.
  - ii. Assisting employers and employees to comply with their legal obligations relating to workplace safety, health and welfare.

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<sup>1</sup> Health and Safety Commission (HSC) Strategic Delivery Programme centred round the concept 'Fit for Work, Fit for Life, Fit for Tomorrow'. For more information see HSE website

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- iii. Promoting and sharing best practices in relation to occupational health and safety management.
- iv. Carrying out focussed enforcement activity.

### Blyth Valley Specific Objectives

To broadcast to a population of approximately 86,000 in Blyth Valley via GNN and the Blyth Valley Communications Team. We will reach 10,000 via printed media, and a further 1000 by newsletter . Working through our partners to the programme we anticipate making a total 1500 face-to-face contacts with occupiers and their representatives.

Trial the use of flexible warrants for Blyth Valley BC enforcement officers and those of the HSE and the other six districts in Northumberland.

Engage a regional university for evaluation purposes on the first event this year at Blyth. Any lessons learn from this will be fed back to those LAs who subsequently take part in this initiative.

### **1.4 Working With Others**

It was envisaged that the Blyth VALLEY BC SWT event would take advantage of the benefits of working in partnership with other enforcing authorities by:

- Supporting & learning from each other.
- Dealing with what neither HSE nor LAs can effectively deal with on their own.
- Promoting consistent approaches between LAs and HSE.

Additional benefits were seen as providing access to suitable information on current best practices in occupational health and safety management. This was to be achieved by encouraging key organisations involved with the local working community to take ownership of the health, safety and welfare of their working population and promote a safer working culture in all workplaces.

This campaign was the first opportunity for enforcers to make use of the “Flexible Warranting” approach, encompassing both LA to LA and HSE to LA, to create a pragmatic response to issues found in the field. The comments and reflections of the teams involved could have a wider connotation as part of the potential national rollout of the flexible warrant scheme.

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**1.5 Evaluation**

The objectives of the evaluation were to seek to secure an understanding of:

- How successful was the event during the dedicated event
- How well did the LA and HSE and Stakeholders work together
- The benefits or otherwise of continuing the programme of work

Specifically the evaluation examined:

Planning phase  
Event phase  
Relationship building and  
Sustainability

The interim findings were presented to the Yorkshire Humberside North East Partnership Board with the production of a final written report.

## **CHAPTER TWO - METHOD**

### **2.1 Evaluation Methodology**

The evaluation of Blyth SWT placed two questions at the heart of the investigation:

1. The impact and perceptions of the initiative from the perspective of health and safety duty holders;
2. The impact and perceptions of the initiative from the perspective of enforcement authorities.

This was captured during the following phases of the project

- Planning and Relationship Building
- The Events
- Outcomes and outputs
- Sustainability

### **2.2 Approach to Evaluation**

The evaluation:

- Undertook a brief literature review of issues most relevant to events such as SWT – evaluation of health and safety interventions, partnership working and project planning
- Examined the process undertaken by participating LAs and the HSE to design and implement a programme of work known as “Safer Working Towns”
- Sought to determine whether the Aims and Objectives of the project set out in Sections 3 and 4 of Version 3 of the Programme Proposal have been met or will be able to be met in future.
- Considered the project in terms of the structure outlined at the Programme De-brief session carried out at the HSE Offices on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2006.
- Included an annexe which will specifically examine the use of Flexible Warrants by HSE and participating local authority inspectors in relation to the project.

The study focussed upon stakeholders involved in the initiative and was based upon three main categories:

- Health and safety duty holders i.e. local businesses who have taken part in the initiative;
- The enforcement authorities that have joined together in partnership to deliver the initiative.

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- Specific benefits to BLYTH VALLEY BC and other enforcement authorities in the region.

The intention was to obtain a broad spectrum of opinion from both sides of the health and safety world working in the area.

### **2.3 The Method**

The project utilised mainly qualitative methods such as semi structured interviews and analysis of data generated by the event itself, feed back from the participants at the events and interpretation of inspection data. There was a certain amount of simple quantitative techniques used such as pre-event questionnaires, see Appendix 1 and tallying interventions and event attendance and the like.

Analysis of interventions comprised an interpretation of a sample of information collated by the project team. This included information such as;

- How the premises inspections were organised, risk based, topic based etc.
- Impact on the ground i.e. the response of businesses who may have not received an inspection for some time
- Administrative process, consistent approach to inspections, report of visit, remedial action, action in emergency cases
- Target level of performance and that actually achieved and reasons for any variation
- Problems encountered by the inspector, level of briefing, guidance, working in a strange area etc.
- A pre-event questionnaire issued to all duty holders visited in connection with the event
- Feedback from those attending events

In addition, it was intended to hold targeted interviews with a sample of key stakeholders to analyse the intervention information to cover the three main issues under investigation. Unfortunately this proved impractical.

To obtain an appropriate spread in the context of this study, and to allow for an adequate number of responses, interviews were carried out to investigate the opinion and perceptions of individuals involved in the project who:

- Had a duty to comply with statutory health and safety duties;
- Enforce the legislation across the area

Where necessary, the study focussed upon the key individuals within each of the two categories in order to increase the validity and interest of the findings

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to the client. Data from the interviews was analysed using appropriate analytical techniques such as qualitative interview analysis. Unfortunately, despite numerous attempts, it proved impossible to gauge the opinions of duty holders due to difficulties getting in touch with prospective interviewees.

The client was provided with an appropriate written report summarising the findings of the evaluation.

The research methodology and process utilised is summarised in table 1 below

**Table 1**

|   |
|---|
|   |
| <b>Phase 1: Development</b>   |
| Undertake detailed analysis of the issues under investigation         |
| Develop the interview guides and questionnaires.                      |
| Final drafting and editing of the interview guides and questionnaires |
|   |
| <b>Phase 2: Interview management</b>                                  |
| Identify suitable interviewees  |
| Make contact and arrange suitable dates and times for interviews      |
| Conduct interviews  |
|   |
| <b>Phase 3: Analysing the results</b>                                 |
| Preliminary analysis of the data                                      |
| Interim presentation to Regional partnership team                     |
|   |
| <b>Phase 3: Write up</b>  |
| First draft of report   |
| Final draft editing and printing                                      |
|   |
|   |

## **CHAPTER THREE - LITERATURE REVIEW**

This evaluation project brought together a series of overlapping and complicated issues including the evaluation of health and safety programmes, partnership working and project management. Each of these issues is complex and arguably could merit an extensive literature review in their own right. This, however, would be beyond the scope of this project; therefore, each will be touched upon and contextualised to the Blyth Valley BC SWT project.

### **3.1 Health and Safety Programme Evaluation**

The evaluation of health and safety interventions on a micro level is well established, being an integral part of measuring health and safety performance and review in the seminal HSE publication HSG65 Successful Health and Safety Management (2000).

The evaluation of larger meta intervention initiatives such as Safer Working Towns is somewhat less well established. For example the HSE commissioned an independent review of the national impact of the European Health and Safety week in 2000 by NPD Associates. This large scale evaluation project examined the organisation, operation, impact and effectiveness of the event using a variety of methods. The report indicated very favourable results, however, these conclusions could be criticised from a variety of perspectives mainly relating to the limited scope of the participants and the potential for bias of the respondents. The approaches used and findings made cannot be readily compared to Blyth Valley SWT mainly due to the marked differences in scales of the events.

There have also been evaluations of much more focussed, discreet events such as assessments of the impact of health and safety awareness days aimed at raising awareness of occupational asthma risk in motor vehicle repair. This evaluation was conducted by the HSE Health and Safety Laboratory in 2005 and mainly focussed upon awareness raising experienced by individual event participants. Very favourable results were reported particularly in relation to the positive levels of awareness raised amongst participants, however, the bearing of this evaluation to the Safer Towns initiative could be called into question due to the very tight focus of the event in relation to risks and sector and also the relatively limited extent of the evaluation which only related to four one day events.

A series of studies have also been undertaken assessing the effectiveness of various enforcement activities and intervention techniques used by both LAs' and the HSE. In 1999 an evaluation of the use of mailshots and seminars by the HSE Field Operations Directorate (FOD) to contact health and safety duty holders regarding a wide range of health and safety topics was carried out by Rackel et al. The study focussed upon the degree of change within businesses following these interventions and concluded that seminars were most effective at stimulating change and that mailshots were also effective but to a lesser degree. A study was also undertaken to find the most effective methods of

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communicating with and influencing the behaviours of small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) (McKinney, 2002). This concluded that communicating with SME's was problematic and that the most effective way of achieving this was via focussed sector specific communication at key times in the development of a business via intermediaries. The conclusions for initiatives such as SWT are that the effectiveness of influencing duty holders is not clear and must be carefully considered.

The effectiveness of FOD intervention strategies and their evaluation was studied in 2004 (Mather). This study evaluated the impact of various interventions employed across the country by the various sub divisions of the FOD and also assessed the success of the evaluation of the efficacy of these efforts. It concluded that there was evidence of success in a variety of intervention areas but that there was a mixed response regarding the effectiveness of evaluations. It would be hoped that the production of this evaluation report would play some part in the effective evaluation of the success of an intervention in relation to the SWT model.

### **3.2 Partnership Working**

Partnership is broadly defined as

*'an agreement between two or more independent bodies to work collectively to achieve an objective'*

(Audit Commission, 2005)

Collaborative inter-agency working has been a significant feature of the ways in which public policy goals are to be reached for almost a decade now (Lowndes & Skelcher, 1998). This mode of delivering public services has now been applied in a wide variety of forms including collaborations between the public and private sectors in delivering such much publicised activities as the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Public Private Partnerships (PPP) (Akintoye et al, 2003), co-operative activities between the public and voluntary sectors mainly in health and welfare related activities (Markwell, 2003) and between a variety of the arms of government (ODPM, 2003). The SWT initiative delivered in Blyth was noteworthy as it aimed to bring together arguably all of these various participants to deliver on its aims.

This growth in partnership working has been followed by a concurrent development in interest in the phenomenon by both practitioners and academia. Organisation such as the Chartered Institute of Public Financial Accountants (CIPFA) (1997) and the Audit Commission (1998) have produced guidance to help public sector bodies to work in partnership effectively. Central government has also produced guidance to help local government in undertaking partnership activities (ODPM, 2003). Common themes emerge from all of this guidance. These include the importance of being clear as to the aims and objectives of partnerships, maintaining the commitment of those involved, project planning, key human resources, trust and openness between partners and reviewing and learning from the partnership experience. They

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also highlight that partnership working is challenging and that a range of potential benefits and risks are involved.

The benefits of partnership working are claimed to be many and varied. These include aligning services more closely with users needs, more effective use of resources, more imaginative ways of tackling issues, influencing others and building flexible and effective networks. The potential, if fully realised, of partnership working for an event such as Blyth SWT should be clear. A number of risks and problems inherent in partnership working are also discussed. These include hidden costs, breakdown in working relationships, loss of individual organisations identity, confused accountabilities, being handicapped by weaknesses in individual organisations and perhaps most dangerous in this context disagreement in cultures and ideology. The skills and capabilities of partnership personnel, the need for sometimes long term culture change, over dependence on key personnel, effective leadership, resource issues, measuring success and commitment of all partners are also emphasised as potential problems in partnership working.

The most recent guidance on partnership working by the Audit Commission (2005) stresses the importance of partnership working in delivering improvements in people's lives, however also sounds a very clear warning in relation to their proliferation. The risks and opportunities are highlighted as well as real problems in their governance. The value for money that partnerships deliver is also called into question as is the capacity for public organisations to be constructively critical of the need for and utility of such arrangements. In particular the way in which partnerships add value and are organised and led is called into question. An objective assessment of the risks and benefits of any partnership is called for and the importance of effective governance arrangements is highlighted. The report does, however, fully endorse effective partnership working.

The academic literature in this area is extensive and complex, mainly relating to the private sector concept of building competitive advantage through strategic alliances (Kanter, 1994). This idea has, however, been extensively developed and evolved to study partnership working in much wider and often non competitive situations. This development has arguably been best encapsulated in what has come to be known as collaborative advantage (Huxham, 1996). The development of this concept initially predominantly extolled the positive aspects of partnership working in a wide variety of contexts but has increasingly become critical and negative in its tone leading to the coining of the term 'collaborative inertia' (Huxham & Vangen, 2004). A range of key practical themes of relevance to partnership working have emerged from this literature. These are common aims, power, trust, membership structures and leadership (Huxham, 2003). Each will now briefly be considered in the context of Blyth Valley SWT.

The agreement of common aims may appear an obvious and straightforward theme, however, they can be a stumbling block in many partnerships as there are often multi-dimensional and sometimes competing aims and strategies from all organisations involved in the partnership. The potential for problems in

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relation to Blyth Valley SWT when the number and variety of stakeholders is taken into consideration is obvious. The theme of power is also potentially problematic in the Blyth Valley SWT context. For example the potentially complex power relationship between enforcers and stakeholder health and safety duty holders and also between the large national HSE and much smaller local enforcement agencies are obvious potential areas worthy of consideration as is the issue of exerting power to get things done in such a complex environment. Trust is recognised as the foundation of relationships. A project such as Blyth SWT will rely heavily on existing and newly developing working relationships. It is suggested that trust takes time to form and that reality at the start of many partnerships is suspicion. Given the potentially long standing and ingrained views of many stakeholders in such a project the potential for problems based upon trust or the lack of it is obvious.

Membership structures in partnerships are often recognised as being unclear complicated and ever changing. Given the large number of stakeholder organisations potentially and actually involved in Blyth Valley SWT there was a realistic risk of issues in this area. Given the propensity for partnership working acknowledged above there is also a very real risk of 'partnership fatigue' creeping into place amongst key stakeholders particularly if key individuals are regularly called upon for active input. This also brings into focus the issue of individual managers' general capabilities to operate effectively in what is recognised as a challenging environment. The fact that the Blyth Valley SWT is also expected to have long term impact also potentially exacerbates this factor. Finally leadership is identified as being fundamental to success in partnership working. This, however, is also recognised as being the potentially most challenging aspect when the involvement of multiple very different participating organisations is taken into consideration, such as in Blyth Valley SWT. The traditional role of a leader is problematic in such a context and the skills and attributes such a person might need are challenging and complex which has been recognised as often leading to frustrations in such individuals.

### **3.3 Project Management**

A project is defined as

*"...a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product or service."*

Project management has been defined as

*"...the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities in order to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations from a project."*

(Project Management Institute, 2000, p4&6)

It has developed as a key component of management theory over the last 20 years or so which brings together capabilities and skills from a variety of disciplines such as change management, human resource management, cost

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management, time management and information management into a coherent whole (Urli & Urli, 2000).

Given these definitions and the background of the discipline it is clear that Blyth Valley SWT was a project which required project management. Kerzner (2003) suggests that project management involves planning – defining work requirements, defining quality and quantity of the work and definition of resources required; and monitoring – tracking progress, comparing actual outcomes with expected outcomes, analysing impact and making adjustments. Lock (2003) proposes that any project must have a range of primary objectives which can be grouped under the headings specification, budget and time. He suggests that these have to be balanced effectively to deliver a successful project and that the people involved in delivering the project form the axis upon which project objectives must be centred.

The Project Management Institute (2000) advises that there are nine key considerations and processes involved in effective project management. These are integration and planning, scope planning and evolution, time management and activity scheduling, cost planning and control, quality assurance and control, human resource acquisition and team development, communications and administration, risk management and procurement and purchasing. All of these areas will potentially interact with each other at various stages of a project. They also highlight the importance of a range of general management skills for project managers. These include leading, communicating, negotiating, problem solving and influencing the organisation amongst others. The importance of the perceptions of stakeholders is also stressed in this publication and others (lock, 2003).

Most if not all of the general literature regarding project management is aimed at projects within individual organisations, the additional complexity inherent in managing projects involving multiple organisations and stakeholders must be taken into consideration in the context of Blyth Valley SWT.

Effective project management delivers a range of benefits such as identifying functional responsibilities so that all necessary actions are dealt with despite any changes in staff involved, reducing the need for continuous reporting, recognising the timing of key activities and achieving best fit for the project in question. It also allows for measurement of success against original objectives, early spotting of problems therefore allowing changes to be made in enough time, a better idea of capability for planning future activities and a knowledge of the limits of a project. There are, however, a range of complications which must be overcome before these can be achieved such as the complex nature of many projects, changing expectations, organisational and personnel changes, a range of project risks and unforeseen events impacting upon the project plan. Most if not all of these were potential problems for Blyth Valley SWT.

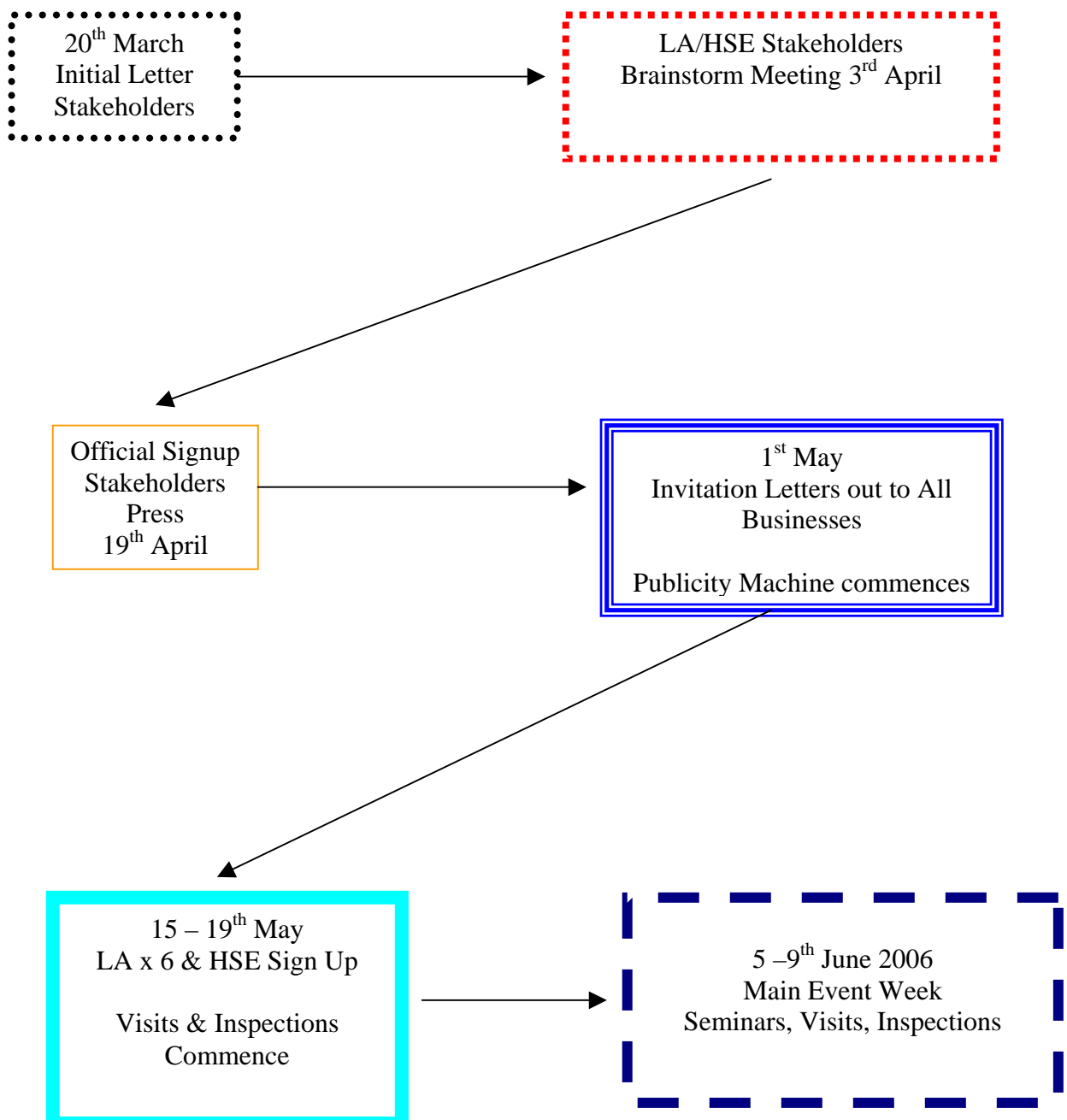
## CHAPTER FOUR – RESULTS

### 4.1 PRE-EVENT PHASE

#### 4.1.1 Planning

A Regional task group was established to prepare generic aims, objectives and a master plan framework which could be used as a guide for participating towns. This guide was prepared in such a way so as to include stakeholder engagement, visits to duty holders, awareness raising events and communication and publicity and maintaining long term improvements in health and safety. The Blyth Valley campaign amended this process as follows

Figure 1 Blyth Planning Process



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There was broad agreement amongst the organisers that more time was needed to adequately plan such an event. It was noted that Blyth Valley SWT was one of the first such events and therefore a decision was made to go ahead with it on what was suspected to be a tight schedule as a learning experience. The importance of effective project planning, a core team of committed organisation team members, availability of key organisers, meeting key project milestones and the maintenance of project momentum was all commonly acknowledged. The early involvement and participation of external stakeholders was also widely recognised, see section 4.1.3.

There were some tensions noted during the planning phase. This was attributed to a variety of possible issues. These included a feeling of a lack of clearly defined leadership for the event, the loss of key members of the organisation team due to absence at a key time and the perception that partners were not fully delivering on pledges of resources made during the planning process. There was also a perception of inflexibility on the part of the HSE who appeared to be promoting the inclusion of national priority health and safety issues despite local misgivings. The lack of experience in partnership working amongst organisers was also suggested as a possible reason for some of these tensions.

The key messages from the evaluation were:

- More time was needed to effectively plan the event
- Timing has to be carefully balanced with maintaining momentum
- Focus on issues of local interest as a first priority
- Commitment is crucial to success
- Project milestones and critical points must be met
- A core organising team with effective leadership is vital
- The loss of key team members can have a significant impact

### **4.1.2 Blyth Valley SWT Communication and Publicity Strategy**

The aims and objectives of the strategy were to promote the Blyth Valley SWT initiative as widely as possible. The approach recognised that there were a number of audiences to be addressed during the campaign including stakeholders, the business community, the working population, opinion formers and the community in general. The communications strategy was compiled and implemented by GNN and Blyth Valley BC Communications Officer.

Some messages to each of the above groups were the same – other messages may have been specific to one particular audience and press releases reflected this.

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The following key messages were proposed for each of the target audiences

1. General messages
  - A week long programme of events for all to take part
  - Promoting objectives of Fit 3 campaign – fit for life, fit for work, fit for tomorrow/ reducing occupational accidents and ill health – benefits of a healthier, fitter working population.
  
2. Stakeholders  
(Trade Unions, Local Authorities, Police, Fire, Ambulance.....)
  - This is a partnership initiative – we are working together to improve health and safety  
(Key stakeholders may also want to do their own publicity to support safer working Towns. GNN and Blyth Valley Communications Officer will liaise with stakeholder press office contacts).
  
3. Business Community and employees  
(Local companies, NECC, business support organisations, service sector – retail, hairdressing etc)
  - The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together.
  
4. Working population/ community in general  
(There are currently approximately 51,000 people of working age in Blyth)
  - The community was encouraged to take ownership of its own health, safety and welfare and being helped to build a safer culture across the board.
  - HSE, Blyth Valley BC and other partners are working to improve health and safety in the region.
  - Accepting that sensible health and safety is about managing risks not eliminating them.

The key regional media in Blyth Valley BC were identified as:

Evening Chronicle – Northumberland reporter and Industry reporter (Working lives feature)

The Journal – Northumberland reporter

Northumberland Herald and Post

Northumberland News Post Leader

BBC Radio Newcastle – Northumberland reporter

BBC Look North

ITV (North East)

Attracting local media interest was recognised as being at best problematical. The Strategy recommended that the all of the key media be targeted throughout the campaign publicity period, but that in addition, GNN and Blyth

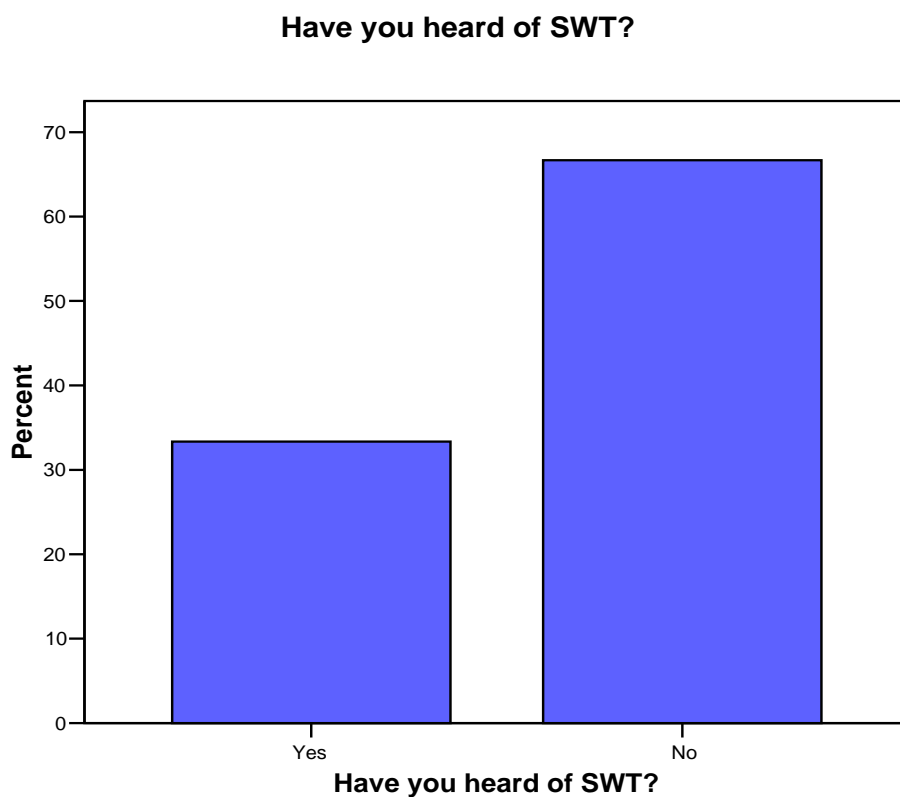
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Valley BC Communications Officer meet with the Northumberland News Post Leader to discuss the possibility of the paper carrying an article a week for at least six weeks in the run up to the campaign.

The media timeline and opportunities for Blyth Valley SWT are set out in appendix 2.

The media strategy was comprehensive, but generated little response. This is ably demonstrated by the pre-event questionnaire indicating that double the number of respondents had not heard about SWT prior to the visit to their premises, see figure 2 below

**Figure 2**



Of the media employed the vast majority of respondents indicated that they had heard about the event via the letter that was sent to all duty holders in the borough. Very few had heard about the event in any other way.

Our evaluation would suggest that:

- A great deal of effort for very little tangible benefit
- There is a need to focus on specific issues at local level
- “Big issues” need to be used as hooks
- “Wow “ factor is needed, timing as previously indicated and timescales are critical
- Targeting the media too early can lead to fatigue

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#### 4.1.3 Stakeholder Relationships

It was widely recognised that gaining the involvement of non HSE or LA stakeholders had not been as successful as it might have been. Credit must be given for the involvement of the stakeholders who took part in the event, as their assistance was invaluable, but the range and spread of organisations involved was disappointing. Creating and maintaining partnerships with stakeholders was recognised as a particularly challenging task. A lot of effort, with a fair degree of success, went into identifying and engaging with stakeholders at the start of planning for the event, however, this did not translate into involved stakeholders when it really mattered.

This lack of engagement has been ascribed to failure to effectively involve key stakeholders such as professional bodies and trade unions, lack of focus leading to stakeholders losing interest in the event and failure to affectively engage stakeholders in the planning process leading to their disenfranchisement. There was also a view that the event had to make do with the stakeholders that were freely available and that the event organisers must, to a certain extent, be cognisant with their motivations and needs. Much more could have been done to identify and engage stakeholders but the greatest factor in the failing to fully engage them was identified as insufficient time.

It has been suggested that much more effort needs to be directed at engaging and maintaining interest in the event. It is thought that this would lead to much greater involvement when really needed. Further ideas included actively involving stakeholders in the planning of events which would hopefully lead to much more inclusive involvement and 'ownership' of the event. It was also thought that this would aid in local targeting of events for most interest and specific benefit. A much more focussed approach to stakeholder contact was also suggested with the possibility of one to one relationships being fostered between members of the project team and individual stakeholders. Another idea was to target particular sectors, such as construction, rather than individual organisations. There must also be tangible mutual benefits in involvement with such events for stakeholders and organisers.

Unfortunately it has proved impossible to gauge the opinions of the involved stakeholders or the wider community on these issues.

Key findings:

- Not particularly successful in engaging stakeholders
- Engaging stakeholders challenging and requires a lot of focussed effort
- Stakeholders should be actively involved in planning the vent if possible
- Targeting local issues of interest or particular sectors may assist in engaging stakeholders

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### 4.1.4 Elected Members and Community

It was noted that the involvement of elected members in the event was minimal. There was also little or no involvement from the wider Blyth Valley BC community beyond the involvement of stakeholders discussed above. Local councillors had been regularly and extensively briefed about the event but apparently chose not to get actively involved. It was suggested that too much effort had been directed at this aspect of the event with very little result. The Mayor of Blyth Valley BC had been involved at the launch of the event. It was commented that some positive feedback about the event had filtered back to elected members, in particular regarding the usefulness of visits to duty holders prior to the main event week.

The difficulty in engaging elected members interest was recognised and attributed to their lack of awareness in local government involvement in health and safety and their lack appreciation of long term benefits in health and safety improvements. Several suggestions were made to address this problem as it was felt that the involvement of local politicians was important but perhaps not vital. These included appealing to their perceived need for positive publicity by arranging media opportunities, encouraging attendance at local events stressing the opportunity to engage with their local electorate and reporting back to them focussing upon the positive outcomes of the event. It was hoped that events such as SWT would raise future awareness in health and safety issues and that securing involvement of elected members would be more feasible in future.

Major findings of the evaluation include:

- Response from local politicians and the wider community in Blyth Valley BC was poor.
- Great efforts need to be made to engage local politicians and the wider community.
- Local elected member awareness of health and safety was raised in a positive fashion by informal means post event.
- Efforts to engage local politicians and the wider community should be focussed round perceived need for media exposure.

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**4.2 EVENT PHASE**

**4.2.1 Inspections and Visits**

In total there were 87 recorded inspections carried out during this 5 day portion of the event phase running from 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> May 2006. Higher numbers, of up to 120, were also quoted from several sources and this may in all likelihood have been nearer to the actual total, however, only 87 inspections were actually officially recorded.

The original intention was that all these visits/inspections would be carried out jointly by HSE and LA enforcement officers; however, it would appear that certainly some at least were carried out by officers from only one enforcement authority.

The result of these inspections was overwhelmingly informal and instructional with verbal advice and guidance being offered. The enforcement officers were, however, advised to deal appropriately with matters of evident concern uncovered during their visits. This led to a number of formal enforcement actions resulting from the visits. There were no immediate prosecutions resulting from the visits. 3 Prohibition notices were served on duty holders, 2 by LA enforcements officers and 1 by an HSE inspector. 5 improvement notices were served, unfortunately it was not known what the break down between HSE and LA enforcement officers was. The HSE inspectors also noted 2 premises which were identified for follow up action following the event. The outcomes are summarised in table 2 below

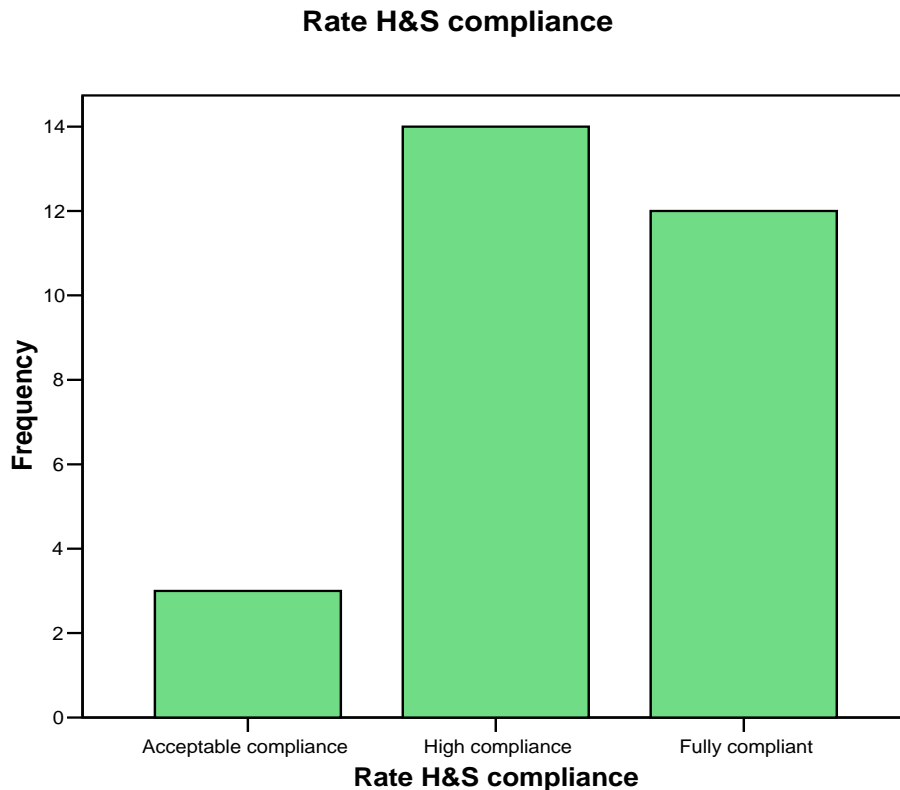
**Table 2**

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| No. VISITS              | 87        |
| No. PROHIBITION NOTICES | 3 (1 HSE) |
| No. IMPROVEMENT NOTICES | 5         |
| FOLLOW UP ACTION BY HSE | 2         |

All premises visited were asked to complete and submit a pre-event questionnaire regarding the event. Of the 87/120 visited a total of 30 submitted completed questionnaires. Interestingly the respondents overwhelmingly judged that their level of compliance with health and safety legislation was either high or fully compliant, see figure 3 overleaf.

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Figure 3

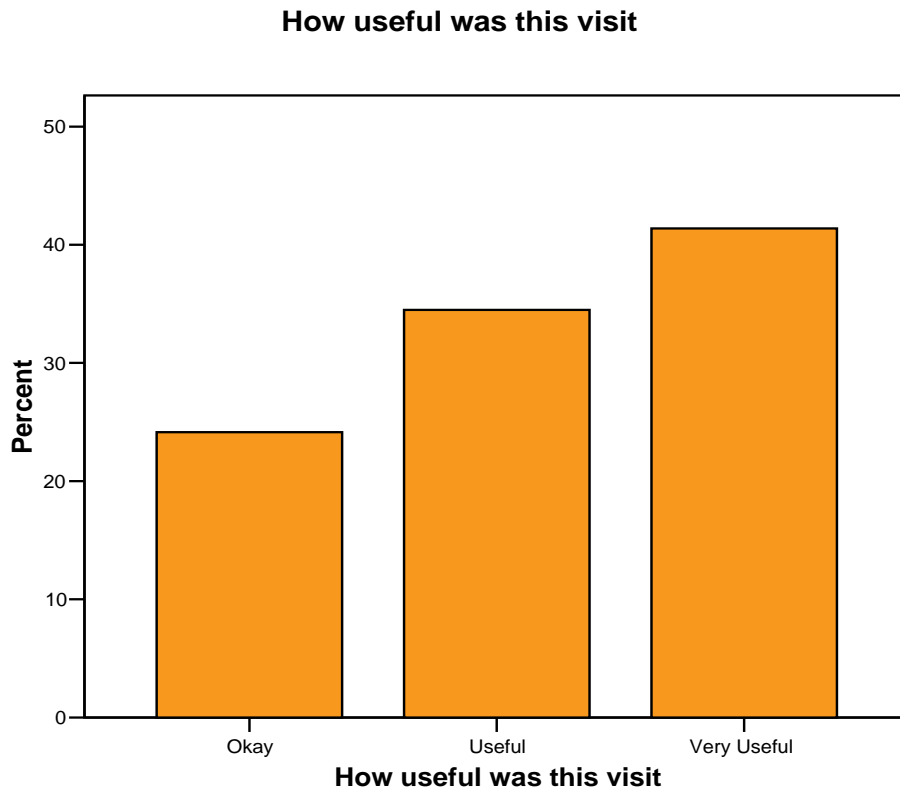


None of the respondents rated their compliance as below acceptable. The enforcement officers interviewed were less convinced of these high standards of health and safety.

Anecdotal evidence from the enforcement officers interviewed indicated that the inspections were a good way of raising awareness of the SWT event. Several even commented upon the 'ripple effect' of their visits upon other duty holders in the area leading to improvements being made in anticipation of a visit. For example one company reportedly spent several thousand pounds cleaning up their premises in anticipation of a visit and did not even receive one during the inspection week. This is a positive outcome considering the apparently debatable effectiveness of the media campaign in raising awareness of the event. In general respondents found the visits to be of use with over 70% of respondents rating the visit to be useful or very useful, see figure 4 over leaf.

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Figure 4



The enforcement officers interviewed, mainly LA, were overwhelmingly positive about the experience gained during this phase of SWT. In particular they thought that the focussing of resources from Blyth Valley BC, HSE and the other Northumberland LAs had achieved a great impact upon duty holders. They were also highly positive about the experience of working together particularly with HSE colleagues and other stakeholders such as Northumberland Fire and Rescue Services. They thought that this had been a valuable learning experience, that the event had dramatically improved communications and working relationships amongst enforcement stakeholders, helping to break down perceived barriers which had been present for some time. In particular the pooling of resources from several Northumberland LAs was noted as a particular success as this had delivered an unprecedented level of resource in a very focussed fashion both in terms of time and geographically. It was, however, noted by the other authorities that they were yet to experience the same levels of benefit. The value of networking and learning opportunities for staff from these other authorities through meeting HSE and other LA staff was generally acknowledged.

There were some negative comments regarding the organisation of the inspection week but this appeared to mainly have been down to confusion in communications. There were several comments about lack of preparedness leading to inspectors being assigned activities on the morning of the visits leading to confusion. There was also some confusion amongst HSE staff regarding the advisory/enforcement approach to be taken with some believing

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that the visits were to be advisory only. It was suggested that there was a lack of experience of HSE and LA staff working together and that this may have led to some of these problems. It was also put forward that resources could have been more effectively used by greater targeting of premises and sectors. It was also noted that there was a tendency for HSE enforcement officers to be more inclined to take formal action whereas the LA approach appeared to more advisory led.

It was suggested that it may have been a better idea to allocate enforcement officers a specified and discreet area and also to begin the process of planning the inspection activity early so that resources could be targeted most effectively. Communications between enforcement officers from different LAs and agencies was identified as being vital and could have been better arranged.

In summary this aspect of the event was almost universally viewed as being a resounding success. Key points of note include:

- A high intensity of interventions focussed upon one week and one discreet area.
- A mixture of outcomes, predominantly advisory but appropriate enforcement used where deemed necessary.
- Duty holders hold an apparently inflated perception of their compliance with health and safety legislation.
- Profile of health and safety rose within community during week.
- Very successful from the enforcement officers point of view in terms of building relationships and networks.
- A significant opportunity for enforcers to learn from each other.

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**4.2.2 Main Event Week**

This part of the event phase ran from 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> of June and comprised a series of health and safety focussed events running in various venues around Blyth Valley BC. The events were delivered by a mixture of various HSE personnel, Blyth Valley BC staff and a variety of non-enforcement stakeholders. The full Event Week Programme is included in appendix 3. The programme was drawn up in consultation with stakeholders. It was thought that having a 2-3 week delay between the inspections and the main event week was a good idea as this allowed time for the message delivered during the inspection phase to sink into duty holders.

A total of 220 people attended the events. This number would have incorporated duty holders who had attended more than one event, so in all likelihood the total number of duty holders involved would have been significantly lower than this total. Considering the duty holder population of Blyth Valley BC which is estimated at 1200, this level of overall attendance is perhaps disappointing representing only less than 18% all duty holders in the Borough. When the response from the pre-event questionnaire, where the majority of respondents indicated that they either did not intend to attend any of the SWT events or were unsure if they would attend, are taken into consideration it is perhaps not quite so surprising. Several of the event organisers however stressed that the success of the overall event should not be overly dependent only upon attendance at events. When the attendance is interpreted as a request for service by the duty holder this is a much more impressive outcome compared to levels of activity normally found in Blyth Valley BC. One source noted that this effectively represented almost six months normal requests for service from duty holders.

Feedback was received from 47 delegates, representing 21.3% of attendees. A breakdown the feedback is indicated on table 3 below. Feedback sheets were received from the following sessions:

**Table 3**

| Topic area              | Numbers providing feedback |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fire Risk Assessment    | 18                         |
| Manual Handling         | 15                         |
| Small business workshop | 5                          |
| Stress                  | 4                          |
| Care Homes              | 4                          |
| Dermatitis/Asthma       | 1                          |

All feedback responses were positive about the presentations, content of the presentations and the resources used and handouts supplied. Responses indicated that some knowledge had been gained from the session and delegates were aware after the sessions of the need to implement change in the work place, although most delegates would make use of the web to obtain further information.

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Some events such as the Fire Risk Assessments sessions run by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service were incredibly popular in terms of attendance, this may have been due to the imminent changes to the fire safety legislation which had been well publicised to businesses or the perceived exciting nature of such topics. Other popular events included basic health and safety skills for small businesses, such as risk assessment and manual handling, and violence at work training. It has been suggested that this was due to specific local interest relating to the characteristics of the local duty holder population and locally 'hot' topics.

Others events such as the 'meet the experts' sessions and the Occupational Health events proved to be less popular with some having either no or very few attendees. This apparent lack of interest was not necessarily reflected in the feedback from the sessions, the smaller groups being characterised by good interaction and debate. In some part this was due to the skills and experience of the presenters.

Other reasons for this lack of popularity are less clear. It has been suggested that there may have been a failure on the part of duty holders to appreciate that certain, perhaps less mainstream, issues applied to them. It may have been due to problems with targeting and encouraging the attendance of interested duty holders and others. It has also been suggested that some of these sessions were imposed upon the programme to directly meet with nationally agreed health and safety priorities such as the FIT3 strategy and that their local significance had not been fully considered.

There was also a feeling that too many events had been organised leading to a dilution in the focus and that this had led to some events not being promoted or supported as effectively as the might have been. It was also recognised that it was perhaps unrealistic to expect SME's to attend events given the tight financial margins and time pressures under which they operated. This was possibly borne out by the findings of the pre-event questionnaire which mainly prescribed lack of intention to attend to lack of time.

When interviewed, the presenters made the following observations:

- The presentation content was different from the delegate's expectations
- The range of knowledge of the delegates varied considerably, some regarded the session as a "refresher", others had little knowledge of health and safety, the FIT3 agenda and partnership working
- There was a need for clearer guidance over what was required to meet local needs
- Lack of preparation time was critical to meet the specific needs of the audience
- The size of the organisation sending delegates also had an influence on the attendance at particular sessions i.e. large organisations could free up staff time to allow attendance whereas smaller businesses couldn't

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Staff from both Blyth Valley BC and HSE commented upon unfulfilled promises and their time not being effectively planned and utilised. This led to confusion and a degree of disillusionment with the future possibilities of partnership working such as SWT.

It was felt that the local views on issues of interest, best embodied by the Blyth Valley BC LA staff, could have been given greater credence when events were being planned. It was also felt that national priorities such as FIT3 could be better communicated once the duty holders had been engaged either through visits or involvement in other SWT activities

In summary, the feedback from all those involved demonstrated that the event had been successful in raising awareness on Health and Safety issues with those who attended, but the following key messages emerged:

- Events must be targeted to stakeholders.
- The event agenda must not be driven by either the views of enforcement officers or nationally lead programmes based on national statistics.
- Topics of most value to the delegates were general - basic risk assessment, fire safety, manual handling.
- ***Local focus gets an audience, an imposed agenda is problematic.***

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## 4.3 POST EVENT

### 4.3.1 Sustainability

All of those involved who were spoken to were of the overall opinion that the event had been a success overall. This success was ascribed to a variety of factors which when compared to the overall aims and objectives for the event may not really bear up to intense scrutiny. It was generally accepted that the long term impact of the event may in many ways be intangible and impossible to effectively measure.

One of the key objectives of this campaign was to ensure that Health and safety is part of a continuous programme of measurable improvements. Our findings indicated that this aspect of the campaign is seen as being less tangible, and although Blyth Valley BC are hoping that a virtual resource will build on the contacts from the programme, a lack of continuing interest from some of the event stakeholders would draw us to the conclusion that further work in this area will be needed. There is a danger that once the momentum from the campaign has dissipated, normal work pressures will influence resource allocation leading to the impact of the event diminishing.

There is anecdotal evidence of sustainable benefits regarding the working relationships and networks which have been formed during SWT. Examples include the development of an integrated fire safety plan for an industrial estate which was the result of joint working between Blyth Valley BC and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Services, joint inspection activities between Blyth Valley BC and HSE staff beyond those undertaken during the SWT event and a more joined up response to major incidents involving Blyth Valley BC, HSE and the emergency services.

There was also a perception at the corporate level of Blyth Valley BC that due to SWT health and safety was now acknowledged as an issue of local interest. It was also noted that the local government Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) carried out by the Audit Commission would include key health and safety issues and that SWT would help Blyth Valley BC meet these requirements. It was also noted that there was a potential for Gershon savings, as required of public services by central government, which must be demonstrated through the CPA process. One example of this might be demonstrating an approximate 6 month level of requests for service from duty holders through one focussed week long event such as SWT.

A good foundation has also been laid for future partnership working in between Blyth Valley BC and the other Northumberland LAs involved in the event. The potential for future partnership working with the HSE on specific projects was also recognised.

Key findings of the evaluation in this area include:

- The overall event was generally hailed as a success.
- Tangible evidence of sustainability is difficult to identify.
- Original aims and objectives have perhaps not been fully met.

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- The most obvious benefit has been improvements in working relationships amongst enforcers.
- Events such as these are key to the development of partnership arrangements between HSE and LAs.

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#### 4.4 FLEXIBLE WARRANTS

Flexible warrants may be issued under the powers in s19 Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA). This allows one Enforcing Authority (EA) to appoint another EA's suitably qualified inspectors to act within its field of responsibility. In other words HSE and LA inspectors can be appointed to exercise their powers in each other's premises or spheres of activity. This type of approach has been successfully piloted elsewhere but what was unique about the Blyth SWT event was that staff from each of the participating Northumberland District Councils were authorised by Blyth Valley BC to act within their area.

This was seen not only as providing a practical tool for dealing with some allocation issues, but also Flexible Warrants could help to make better use of joint resources (by removing barriers to action), to increase the speed of response to issues of significant risk (because of LA inspectors' local presence) and generally to enhance partnership working (by recognising the equivalence of powers and skills between HSE and LA staff).

Although there were some administrative and operational difficulties, staff involved were generally supportive of the arrangements. The wider impact of the Blyth Valley event was considerable by:

- The reported wide spread use of Flexible Warrants by both LA and HSE staff since the event.
- Increasing the flexibility and responsiveness of health and safety regulators to situations across the range of premises visited during the week.
- Demonstrating the potential to remove some inefficiencies in administration.
- Improving the communication and cooperation between health and safety regulators with the recognition that many of the core skills were complementary.
- Breaking down misperceptions amongst enforcement officers from differing backgrounds.
- Facilitating the collective use of resources to increase the effectiveness of the regulatory system.
- Maximising local on the ground intelligence available to LA enforcement officers by distribution to other enforcement agencies.
- Although it is difficult to quantify value of the improvements in communication and cooperation between the HSE and LAs this appears to be one of the triumphs of the Blyth Valley Campaign with all those involved expressing the positive aspects flexible warrants have in developing a culture of partnership.

In particular, Senior managers in Northumberland expressed the view that the programme will underpin a move towards a more-explicit joint plan, as a vehicle to demonstrate better targeting of collective resources.

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A case study which was related during the evaluation perhaps best sums up the impact of Flexible Warrants during the Blyth Valley SWT event:

During SWT week a LA enforcement officer was picking up the mayor of Blyth Valley BC to transport them to a SWT event when they noticed that a heavy materials handling vehicle was involved in unloading materials in a dangerous fashion on the public highway. The LA member of staff showed initiative to intervene and to take action using the newly available powers available via Flexible Warrants. The area in question was taped off using hazard tape which the enforcement officer had in his vehicle thus preventing public access to the area in which the high risk activity was being undertaken. This demonstrated the use of Flexible Warrants in action at a very opportune time. The local politician was duly impressed by the prompt and effective action taken by the enforcement officer.

## **CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion the Blyth Valley Borough Council Safer Working Towns Initiative can be viewed as a success. The original aims and objectives were arguably not fully achieved and evidence of sustainable impact is debatable, however, the event provided an invaluable learning experience for all those involved and the various intangible achievements of the event are undeniable.

All participants in the event were overall positive about the event and its outcomes, and all wanted to either be involved in such events in the future or would repeat the experience should the opportunity arise. It must, however, be recognised that this position only related to this one event and a small group and a judgement will have to be made if this is representative of the region as a whole.

### **5.1 Summary of Main Findings.**

#### **Planning**

The planning schematic in section 4.1.1, does not effectively quantify the time and resources needed by the programme team to prepare for the Blyth Valley SWT initiative. The results from the evaluation stress the value of strong leadership to deliver all aspects of the plan. It is acknowledged that there were a number of difficulties and problems and that the overall time frame was short. Some of the difficulties can be summarised as follows:

- More time was needed to effectively plan the event
- Timing has to be carefully balanced with maintaining momentum
- Focus on issues of local interest as a first priority
- Commitment of all involved is crucial to success
- Project milestones and critical points must be met
- A core organising team with effective leadership is vital
- The loss of key team members can have a significant impact

#### **Media**

The impact of the media plan for the event was mixed. Some of the issues are summarised below:

- A great deal of effort for very little tangible benefit
- There is a need to focus on specific issues at local level
- “Big issues” need to be used as hooks
- “Wow “ factor is needed, timing as previously indicated and timescales are critical
- Targeting the media too early can lead to fatigue

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### **Stakeholders**

The range and level of stakeholder involvement was variable and can be summed up as:

- The event was not particularly successful in engaging stakeholders
- Engaging stakeholders is particularly challenging and requires a lot of focussed effort
- Stakeholders should be actively involved in planning the event if possible
- Targeting local issues of interest or particular sectors may assist in engaging stakeholders

### **Wider Involvement**

Engagement with the initiative beyond those closely involved was disappointing and can be epitomised as:

- Response from local politicians and the wider community in Blyth Valley BC was poor
- Great efforts need to be made to engage local politicians and the wider community
- Local elected member awareness of health and safety was raised in a positive fashion by informal means post event
- Efforts to engage local politicians and the wider community should be focussed round perceived need for media exposure

### **The Event**

The event activities produced some resounding successes and some acknowledged issues:

- There was a high intensity of interventions focussed upon one week and one discreet area producing an unprecedented impact upon duty holders
- A mixture of outcomes were achieved, predominantly advisory, but appropriate enforcement was used where deemed necessary
- Duty holders hold an apparently inflated perception of their compliance with health and safety legislation
- The profile of health and safety rose within community over the course of the event phase
- The event was very successful from the enforcement officers point of view in terms of building relationships and networks
- A significant opportunity for enforcers to learn from each other was apparent
- The event must be targeted to stakeholders.
- The event agenda must not be driven by either the views of enforcement officers or nationally led programmes based on national statistics

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- Topics of particular value to delegates were general - basic risk assessment, fire safety, manual handling
- Local focus gets an audience, an imposed agenda is problematic

### **Sustainability**

Blyth Valley BC have been setting up a network of stakeholders and contacts as an audience for new initiatives, probably linked to the local authority website. These ideas include a bigger community of emails and links, newsletters and using links to existing initiatives, for example, Healthy Business award Schemes and partnership enforcement activities.

Dedicated resources will be critical in promoting this work and measures of effectiveness will need to be introduced. Other notable summing up points:

- The overall event was generally hailed as a success
- Tangible evidence of sustainability is difficult to identify
- Original aims and objectives have perhaps not been fully met
- The most obvious benefit has been improvements in working relationships amongst enforcers
- Events such as these are key to the development of partnership arrangements between HSE and LAs

### **Costs and Resources**

The costs and resources associated with this campaign can be divided into the following areas.

Pre-launch work – Blyth Valley BC Team completed a lot of the work on developing the programme. Some further development is however needed to ensure the process operates in the most effective and efficient manner and to get over some of the problems and difficulties that occurred here. This development includes the production of a regional framework containing project management guidance, media/communications strategy and advice, ways to engage stakeholders, flexible warrant process and reporting arrangements. It should also include roll out support for future Safer Working Town type events.

Initial set up – This includes reaching a local agreement to proceed with SWT, including flexible warrants, agreeing the management arrangements, signing of warrants, training, communication routes etc.

Sustainability – Once SWTs are up and running, the programme team will need to support the process, answer queries, trouble shoot problems and maintain the momentum at local level.

Future day-to-day approaches - In the main it is not anticipated that field staff will do more work than they currently do, but it will allow them to work in a different way that potentially has a greater impact and makes better use of

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collective resources. It does however require good communication especially when dealing with reactive work on complaints and accidents.

### **5.2 Lessons for Future Events**

#### **Planning**

- Effective overall leadership of the event is crucial.
- More time is needed to properly plan and execute the event although care must be taken to ensure momentum is maintained.
- Identification of local issues must be built into the event at an early stage and stakeholders should be an integral part of this process.
- A strong, committed and consistent project team must be built and maintained.
- Effective communications between the project team, stakeholders and the wider community is essential for success.
- There should be a considered cost/benefit decision making process prior to the event.
- A Generic Toolkit for the running of such events should be developed as a matter of urgency.

#### **Media**

- Timing the involvement of media must be carefully considered.
- At an early stage try to identify local key issues of wider interest that can be exploited for maximum benefit.

#### **Stakeholders**

- Stakeholders must be able to see clear organisational benefits from being involved in such events.
- Attention needs to be given to engaging and maintaining interest in the wider stakeholder community. The effort required to achieve this should not be underestimated and should be given prominence throughout.

#### **Wider Involvement**

- It must be recognised that such events may not be a priority for the wider community.
- Effort should be made to engage the wider community but this should not detract from engaging stakeholders, getting the message over to duty holders, promoting planned events and making sustainable improvements to health and safety in workplaces.

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### **Event**

- The focussed impact of the inspection phase of the event should not be under estimated and its effect should be maximised.
- The event must be focussed on local stakeholders needs. National priorities should be taken into account and built in wherever possible but should be subsidiary to local issues of importance.
- The importance of basic health and safety topics should not be under estimated.
- The expertise of stakeholders should be an integral part of any event week.

### **Sustainability**

- Post event enforcement activity should continue to build upon the success achieved during the event.
- To consolidate and further develop the impact created by the event there will be a need to foster more partnership working initiatives with a range of stakeholders.
- The benefits to the enhancement of enforcement officers from working in partnership should be further developed.
- The formation and development of a local health and safety network arising from the event should be a key outcome. This network must be nurtured, maintained and its effectiveness monitored to ensure lasting benefit.
- Further consideration needs to be given to measuring the sustainable impact and cost/benefits of such events.

The Blyth Valley Safer Working Town event was one of the first examples of such region wide partnership working and as such should be considered a success. This evaluation has identified a range of issues which need to be considered if such events are to be rolled out elsewhere in the region and beyond. If all stakeholders engage fully with the programme Safer Working Town type events offer real potential to make a significant impact upon raising awareness of health and safety issues within any given area and as such can only positively contribute to improving standards safety in a wider context.

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**APPENDIX 1**





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**APPENDIX 2**

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**Media time line and opportunities**

| <b>Date</b>                            | <b>Activity</b>  | <b>Objective</b>   | <b>Message</b>  | <b>Audience</b>  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Week commencing 20 <sup>th</sup> March | Joint HSE and BVBC press release<br><br>Circulate to key media<br>Circulate to stakeholder press offices and recommend use in internal newsletters/web | Initial awareness raising exercise.<br>Invite other possible stakeholders to participate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a partnership initiative – we are working together to improve health and safety</li> </ul>   | Stakeholders   |
| Week commencing 4 <sup>th</sup> April  | GNN /BVBC meet with News Post Leader   |  |   |  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> April                  | Joint HSE /BVNC press release – constructive stakeholder meeting   | Awareness raising exercise   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The community is being encouraged to take ownership of its own health, safety and welfare and being helped to build a safer culture across the board</li> <li>HSE, Blyth Valley BC and other partners are working to improve health and safety in the region</li> <li>Sensible health and safety is a cornerstone of a civilised society</li> <li>Sensible health and safety is about managing risks not eliminating them</li> </ul> | Stakeholders<br>General public<br>Working population<br>Businesses |

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|   |  |                          |  |   |
|---|--|--------------------------|--|---|
| <p>19<sup>th</sup> April<br/>1.00pm</p> | <p>Press call - official sign up of stakeholders</p> <p>Press release<br/><b>RECOMMEND A CHANGE OF VENUE FOR THE PRESS CALL EG AT ONE OF THE STAKEHOLDER PREMISES –EG FERGUSONS TRANSPORT – HAVE TWO LORRIES – ONE LOADED CORRECTLY – ONE INCORRECTLY- “SPOT THE DIFFERENCE”</b></p> | <p>Awareness raising</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community is being encouraged to take ownership of its own health, safety and welfare and being helped to build a safer culture across the board</li> <li>• HSE, Blyth Valley BC and other partners are working to improve health and safety in the region</li> <li>• Sensible health and safety is a cornerstone of a civilised society</li> <li>• Sensible health and safety is about managing risks not eliminating them</li> </ul> <p>5. A week long programme of events</p> <p>6. The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together</p> | <p>Stakeholders<br/>Working population<br/>Businesses</p> |
| <p>24<sup>th</sup> April</p>            | <p>Spotlight on emergency services stakeholder sign up. <b>Picture opp to be identified.</b></p>   |                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a partnership initiative – we are</li> </ul>  |   |

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|                       |   |                   |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------|---|---|
|                       |   |                   | <p>working together to improve health and safety</p> <p>1. A week long programme of events for all to take part</p>   |   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> May   | <p>Joint press release - invitation/programme to local businesses to attend one of events to be held during week.</p> <p><b>PICTURE OPP</b></p> | Awareness raising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sensible health and safety is about managing risks not eliminating them</li> </ul> <p>7. A week long programme of events for all to take part The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together</p> | <p>Business community</p> <p>Working population</p> |
| Week commencing 8 May | <p>Spotlight on events – eg retail – case study ASDA???</p> <p><b>(1) Picture opp with stakeholder</b></p>                                      |                   | <p>2. This is a partnership initiative – we are working together to improve health and safety</p> <p>3. A week long programme of events for all to take part</p> <p>8. The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers</p>   | <p>Business community</p> <p>Employees</p>          |

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|  |   |                          |   |  |
|--|---|--------------------------|---|--|
|  |   |                          | <p>who work in them. They do this best by working together</p>  |  |
|  | <p>Spotlight on a stakeholder event TBC<br/><b>(2) Picture opp</b></p>  |                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a partnership initiative – we are working together to improve health and safety</li> </ul> <p>9. A week long programme of events for all to take part The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together</p> <p>10. The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together</p> | <p>Stakeholders<br/>Business<br/>community<br/>Employees</p> |
| <p>Week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> May</p> | <p>Inspections begin<br/>Possible <b>press call or pictures of an inspection</b> at an appropriate business – how likely is that???? Spotlight on case study – eg APS Packaging</p> | <p>Awareness raising</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a partnership initiative – we are working together to improve health and</li> </ul>  | <p>Business<br/>Employees</p>                                |

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|                                      |  |                   |  |                         |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|-------------------------|
|                                      |  |                   | <p>safety</p> <p>4. A week long programme of events for all to take part</p> <p>11. The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together</p> |                         |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> May                 | <p>Press Call<br/>Local Authority sign up</p> <p><b>Again recommend an alternative venue and pic opportunity</b> - eg at local authority works dept – eg gardening/ start of new parks maintenance programme</p> |                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a partnership initiative – we are working together to improve health and safety</li> </ul> <p>5. A week long programme of events for all to take part</p>                             | Stakeholders            |
|                                      | Healthy Business awards – press release/pics??   |                   |  |                         |
| Week commencing 22 <sup>nd</sup> May | Regional launch of Working at height campaign – include reference to Safer working towns   | Working at height | Safe working at height   | All                     |
|                                      | <p>Spotlight on event – eg care home sector/manual handling – case study- press release/pics</p> <p>Case study from specialist</p>   | Awareness raising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sensible health and safety is about managing risks not eliminating them</li> </ul> <p>12. The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers</p>            | Businesses<br>Employees |

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|  |  |                   |  |                         |
|--|--|-------------------|--|-------------------------|
|  |  |                   | who work in them.<br>They do this best by<br>working together  |                         |
| Week beginning<br>29 <sup>th</sup> May | Joint article on the importance of health and<br>safety in the workplace – HSE/BVBC Target<br>– News Post leader | Awareness raising | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sensible health<br/>and safety is the<br/>corner stone of a<br/>civilised society</li> </ul>  | All                     |
|  | Spotlight on event – eg retail<br>sector/hairdressing – case study.<br><b>(3) Pucture<br/>opp???</b>             | Awareness raising | <p>13. Sensible health and<br/>safety is about<br/>managing risks not<br/>eliminating them</p> <p>14. The people best placed<br/>to make workplaces<br/>safer from harm are<br/>the staff and managers<br/>who work in them.<br/>They do this best by<br/>working together</p> | Businesses<br>Employees |
| 5 June                                 | Daily Radio interviews???<br>Eg Drive time/Mike Parr   | Awareness raising | Daily overview of that day's<br>events   |                         |
|  | Spotlight on stakeholder – eg SESS –<br>warehousing  | Awareness raising |  |                         |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> June                  | Post event success press release   |                   |  | All                     |

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**APPENDIX 3**

| Day / Time                        | 10.00 - 11.00   | 11.00 - 12.00   | 12.00 – 13.00   | 13.00 – 14.00   | 14.00 - 15.00  | 15.00 - 16.00  | 16.00 – 17.00                 | 17.00 – 18.00  |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Monday<br>5 <sup>th</sup> June    | Enforcement Inspectors Briefing<br>Seaton Delaval                           |   |   |   | Workplace Transport Fergusons Blyth                        | HSE MC Board Room  |                               | Meet the Experts<br>Chamber HSE 1 PJ                   |
|                                   |   |   | Council Chamber   | Violence at Work Retail, Pubs, Clubs & Leisure<br>Tony Moran & Northumbria Police |  |  |                               |  |
| Tuesday<br>6 <sup>th</sup> June   | Introduction<br>How to undertake<br>Risk Assessments<br>Stannard Room PJ MC |   | Fire Risk Assesment<br>Major Employers<br>KW PJ                 |   | Working at Height<br>Meet the Experts HSE 1 CL             | ISIS FV HSE  | Construction Safety<br>HSE AW | Meet The Experts &<br>Workplace Connect<br>HSE 1 CL RB |
| Wednesday<br>7 <sup>th</sup> June | Care Homes<br>Manual Handling<br>Blyth Hospital<br>CM2                      | PJ/MC<br>Risk Assessment<br>Care Homes<br>Manual Handling<br>Carole Mercer<br>CM2 | PJ/FV<br>Manual Handling<br>Fire Risk<br>Assessment<br>K. Wylie | Fire Risk<br>Assessment<br>K. Wylie   | ISIS Slips Trips N<br>Stress in the<br>Workplace CM<br>HSE | Falls, Manual Handling<br>Risk Assessment<br>SESS SAFE WAREHOUSING PP CL<br>Workplace<br>Dermatitis & Asthma<br>HSE CM | MC FV                         |  |
| Thursday<br>8 <sup>th</sup> June  | Meet the Experts<br>HSE CL  |   |   | Business Link<br>New & Small Business Safety HSE                                  | Blyth Port Safe Loading & Sheeting<br>HSE Fergusons MC     |  | Fire Risk<br>Assessment<br>KW | Fire Risk<br>Assessment<br>KW                          |
|                                   |   |   | Builders Merchants SESS. HSE PJ                                 |   |  |  | HSE CONSTRUCTION PJ AW        |  |
| Friday<br>9 <sup>th</sup> June    |   | KW<br>Fire Risk<br>Assessment   | KW<br>Fire Risk<br>Assessment                                   | CL RB<br>Meet the Experts<br>WP Connect   | Closure Ceremony   |  |                               |  |

| <b>II. Colour Code</b>  | <b>Venue Location</b>  |
|---|--|
|  | Civic Chamber, Civic Centre, Blyth   |
|  | Stannard Room, Civic Centre, Blyth   |
|  | Fergusons Transport, Kitty Brewster Industrial Estate, Blyth                 |
|  | SESS, Training Room, 8 Trafalgar Court, South Nelson Ind Estate, Cramlington |
|  | ISIS, Training Room 7 Arcot Court, Nelson Park, Cramlington                  |
|  | Blyth Community Hospital   |

| <b><i>Initials</i></b> | <b><i>Name</i></b> | <b><i>Organisation</i></b>           |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| CL                     | Colin Long         | Blyth Valley Borough Council         |
| PJ                     | Peter Judd         | Blyth Valley Borough Council         |
| MC                     | Mick Carss         | Blyth Valley Borough Council         |
| TM                     | Tony Moran         | Blyth Valley Borough Council         |
| PF                     | Peter Fielding     | Health & Safety Executive            |
| GA                     | Greg Anson         | Health & Safety Executive            |
| CM                     | Cain Mitchell      | Health & Safety Executive            |
| DC                     | Dave Cole          | Health & Safety Executive            |
| BM                     | Bill McKay         | Health & Safety Executive            |
| CF                     | Carol Forster      | Health & Safety Executive            |
| CM1                    | Claire Mason       | Health & Safety Executive            |
| AW                     | Annette Wingate    | Health & Safety Executive            |
| KW                     | Kevin Wylie        | Northumberland Fire & Rescue Service |
| MS                     | Maureen Shepherd   | NHS Trust Health Business Award      |
| CM2                    | Carole Mercer      | Northumberland NHS Trust             |
| FV                     | Fraser Venters     | ISIS                                 |
| PP                     | Phil Pinel         | SESS                                 |