



# ParkPlay in Herts

## Impact Report 2023-24

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# Introduction

**ParkPlay is a programme that provides a wonderful opportunity for individuals of all ages in Hertfordshire to engage in two hours of free community play every Saturday from 10am to 12pm in a park, school or public area. This initiative is perfect for those who might not typically take part in conventional sports. It offers engaging, fun, informal games, so that participants can stay active almost without even realising it whilst enjoying quality time with family, friends, and the local community.**

## Project background

ParkPlay promotes outdoor physical activity and fosters community engagement. The Hertfordshire programme was commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council through their Building Life Chance Funding. The Partnership was tasked with coordinating and implementing the development of ParkPlay across at least 8 sites within the county.

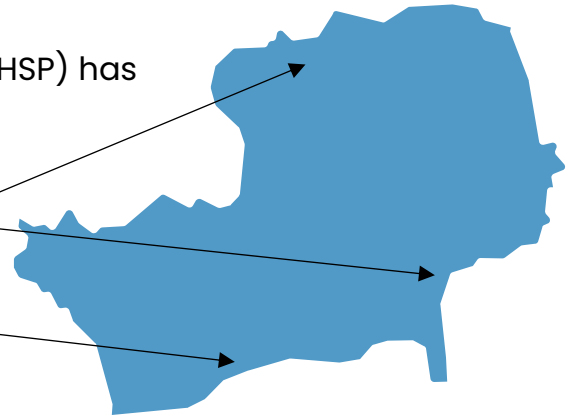




## Implementation

To date Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership (HSP) has successfully launched ParkPlay at three locations:

- Broxbourne – Cedar’s Park
- Letchworth – Jackmans Creamery
- Borehamwood – Aycliffe Park



In addition to the funding provided by the County Council, HSP has partnered with each local authority to support the selection of individual sites, the selection of play leaders and to generally support the development and promotion of the programme. To date the programme has received financial support from North Herts Council, Hertsmere Borough Council and Broxbourne Borough Council.

The programme also requires each site to have a Play Leader who is either employed or volunteers from a local community organisation. It is these organisations that are responsible for the Saturday morning delivery of the programme. In Hertfordshire the programme uses three different organisations in this role InspireAll (Aycliffe), Active in The Community (Jackmans Creamery) and Time for Change (Cedars).




HSP's role is to facilitate the launch of ParkPlay events by working with the Local Authority and local community partners as well as the day-to-day liaison with the ParkPlay national team.

Plans and agreements are in place to extend future ParkPlay programmes throughout the county, including Welwyn Garden City, South Oxhey, Stevenage,

Watford, Bishop's Stortford, and Hemel Hempstead over the next 18 months.

These programmes have been funded through Hertfordshire County Council Building Life Chances funding, District and Borough Council contributions and the Department of Education's Opening School Facilities Fund. HSP and partners see the initiative playing a vital role in strengthening communities, improving well-being, and tackling issues related to social isolation and mental health.



**“After a week of working I look forward to every Saturday morning attending ParkPlay with my granddaughter. We were made to feel so welcome by everyone such a lovely activity to be part of! We get to see people from our town and love to share our Saturday mornings with them all”**

## Partnerships

**250+**

ParkPlay  
registrations

**11**

Park Play Leaders  
Trained

### ParkPlay in Hertfordshire

Cedars ParkPlay - Launched

Aycliffe ParkPlay - Launched

Jackmans ParkPlay- Launched

Woodhall (KGV) ParkPlay – Coming  
Soon

Leavesden Green ParkPlay – Coming  
Soon

Hemel Hempstead ParkPlay – Coming  
Soon

South Oxhey ParkPlay – Coming Soon

Hampson ParkPlay – Coming Soon

Snowley Park – Coming Soon

## Outcomes and Benefits

The programme is providing free opportunities for targeted families within some of the County's most under-served communities where 'free' play is currently not available or limited. The programme will continue to expand with the introductions of new partnerships between individual sites, park play leaders and community groups.

**"It's fantastic to have a couple of hours on a Saturday to just let my hair down, embrace my inner child and get some fresh air. The PlayLeaders who guide the sessions are great, they make everyone feel really welcome and relaxed. My kids come along with me too and the smiles on their faces say it all really – they absolutely love it!"**

## Key Learnings

- The right site and the right play leaders make the programme a success.
- Consistent marketing ensures that families are constantly reminded about the programme.
- The weather has a significant impact on attendance, however, it is vital that play leaders are still there to engage with the community regardless.

## Next Steps

1

### Monthly Meetings

with partners have been put into place to ensure shared learning across the county.

2

### Active In the Community

have been commissioned by the Partnership to act as the Play Leader coordinator for all future ParkPlays.

3

### Relaunch Cedars Park and

Aycliffe now that the weather is better to re-engage and energise the community.



## Conclusion

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The programme takes a collective effort from ParkPlay as the national partner, HSP as the programme coordinator, the County Council, each Local Authority, the Play leaders (and their hosted organisation) and local community organisations who are seen as 'trusted' organisations to our targeted families.

Investment in a consistent marketing effort will be key to the success of the programme.

The Partnership is working closely with the ParkPlay national team to see how we could activate a 'Pop-Up' or 'On the Road' ParkPlay within Hertfordshire to showcase what ParkPlay is, and its benefits.

The Partnership will continue to work closely with all three host organisations of the ParkPlay Leaders to ensure they are supported and developed into strong community assets.

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# 7

New Park Plays  
launching in the next  
18 months





ParkPlay

