



Grand Reopening Waltham Cross Playing Fields

Matt Ridley, Waltham Cross Active Local Officer
August 2024



Introduction

On Saturday, 20 July, Waltham Cross Playing Fields celebrated its grand reopening with a landmark community event, the first of its kind in the area. This event, which drew 3,000 residents, was designed to connect the community with local services and physical activity providers, showcasing new facilities funded by the UK government's £14.3 million Levelling Up initiative. The event was used as a catalyst for upcoming projects, giving residents a glimpse into the park's future potential as a vibrant community space for all.

Project background

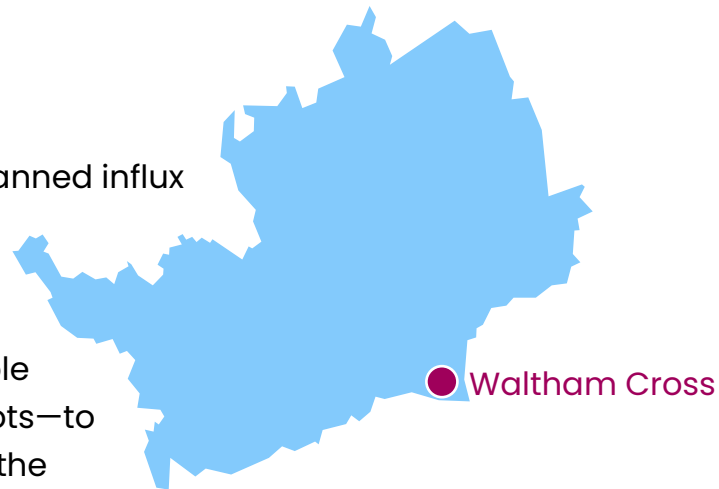
The grand reopening of Waltham Cross Playing Fields was initially conceptualised as a "come and try" event, aiming to connect residents with local services and physical activity providers. However, after initial meetings with the council, it was decided to pool resources from the public engagement segment of the £14.3 million Levelling Up Fund investment to create a larger-scale community event. This approach promoted both the new installations and the range of physical



activity options available locally, amplifying the project's impact locally.

Implementation

The event was developed in response to the planned influx of new activities in Waltham Cross and a need to better support longstanding, yet underserved, local services. It served as a platform to showcase a variety of these valuable community services—many with deep local roots—to help boost memberships and outline plans for the year ahead. Additionally, it provided a vital opportunity for the Active Local brand to grow, allowing the Active Local Officer to connect with residents and further develop the community action plan.



Initially conceived as a smaller “come and try” event, the project expanded significantly through collaboration with key partners, including Broxbourne Borough Council, Maverick Skateparks, and Jupiter Leisure and Play, alongside substantial funding from the UK government’s Levelling Up Fund. The Sport Development Officer played a vital role in coordinating logistics, managing planning efforts, and working closely with the Active Local Officer to align resources, ensuring a seamless, well-organised event. With the Levelling Up Fund supplementing contributions from the central Active Local budget, the partnership team effectively mobilised community support by engaging local stakeholders and reaching a wide audience.

This coordinated effort showcased the park’s new amenities, provided an engaging introduction to a diverse array of local activities, and laid a strong foundation for ongoing community support and participation in Waltham Cross under the Active Local brand.



“Events like this are rare here, so it was wonderful to see the park buzzing with energy. The new amenities are a huge step forward, and it feels like Waltham Cross is finally getting the attention it deserves. My friends and I are already planning to come back for the weekly activities!”



Partnerships

14
Partnerships
Created

12
Local Activities
Highlighted

KEY PARTNERS

Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership

Broxbourne Borough Council

Jupiter Leisure and Play

Mavericks Skateparks

The Great Outdoor Gym

Company

GT United FC

Sporting Aid CIC

Public

Outcomes and Benefits

The event drew in approx. 3,000 attendees, significantly boosting awareness of the park's new installations and upcoming projects. Residents left with a stronger understanding of the amenities, ongoing initiatives, and the role of the Active Local project in tackling inactivity and health inequalities in Waltham Cross. 23 surveys and 13 interviews were completed on the day to further inform local planning. Due to the event's popularity and positive feedback from residents and partners alike, discussions are now underway to make it an annual celebration, strengthening trust and ongoing participation in the community.

Key Learnings

The event demonstrated the importance of community input and collaboration with multiple partners. Residents valued the engagement, but a broader partner presence could enhance future events. Clear communication and streamlined logistics were essential to building trust and sustaining momentum.

Next Steps

1

Launch Regular Park Activities

Organise weekly sports sessions, fitness classes, and community events at Waltham Cross Playing Fields to sustain engagement and promote physical activity.

2

Establish Feedback Mechanisms

Create channels for ongoing resident feedback through surveys, consultations and community meetings to tailor projects and foster trust in future planning.

3

Plan Future Events

Start planning an annual event to showcase park facilities and local services, promoting engagement and the Active Local initiative.



Conclusion

The grand reopening of Waltham Cross Playing Fields was a catalyst event, marking a new chapter in the community's recreational and social landscape. Drawing over 3,000 attendees, the day highlighted the park's new facilities—such as the skatepark, sports pavilion, and outdoor gym—and raised awareness about Active Local's mission to tackle health inequalities in Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire. Positive resident feedback has inspired plans to make this celebration an annual tradition, fostering a stronger sense of community pride and belonging. Moving forward, securing a wider range of partner involvement will enhance the event's offerings and streamline logistics, providing a more robust experience for attendees. This success underscores the Active Local project's ongoing commitment to creating accessible, vibrant spaces that promote well-being for all in Waltham Cross.

3,000

Attendees

