



2025

by Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership

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1. Background

HAPpy's older sister returns for a third year!

Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership (HSP) has been coordinating the Herts Summer Parks programme since it began in 2023, with the aim to strengthen the HAPpy: Holiday Activity Programme* offer for teenagers across Hertfordshire, by creating opportunities for 12–16 year-olds to enjoy their local green spaces, take part in a variety of activities, and receive a free food voucher. Since 2023, the initiative has grown significantly. The 2025 programme put young people at the heart of the planning, with their ideas shaping the activities on offer. More external providers than ever before came on board to deliver activities, combined with a number of support services to connect with young people to show what support is available locally.

This growth has only been made possible thanks to funding from Hertfordshire County Council and Local Authority partners, with delivery led by Sporting Inspirations CIC, who continue to drive the programme forward year after year.

**The Department for Education funded Holiday Activities & Food Programme which is known as HAPpy in Hertfordshire*



2. Changes from 2024



Locations

Youth Voice

Support Services

2. Changes from 2024

Locations:

With the programme expanding year on year, it was essential to carry out a thorough review to ensure delivery was taking place in the right locations and that the overall offer continued to reflect the interests of young people.

The process began by contacting all ten local authorities to establish whether they wished to host Summer Parks in their area. Once responses had been received, further research was undertaken to confirm that delivery would remain focused on areas with the highest levels of need, where there is a significant proportion of young people eligible for free school meals (FSM).

Working with the HSP Monitoring, Insight and Evaluation team, the latest IDACI and FSM data across the county was reviewed to identify the areas of greatest need. Following this analysis, and discussions with partners, it was agreed that the 2025 programme would be delivered in the following areas:

- **King George V Playing Fields, Welwyn Garden City**
- **King George V Playing Fields, Watford**
- **Meadow Park, Borehamwood (site used in 2023)**
- **Waltham Cross Playing Fields, Broxbourne (new site)**
- **King George V Playing Fields, Stevenage**



Meadow Park in Borehamwood, which was previously used in 2023, was reintroduced following a review of the 2024 location at Borehamwood Youth FC.

While the Youth FC facility was suitable, it was somewhat isolated from the community which resulted in lower attendance compared to Meadow Park. With the addition of the new pump track built at Meadow Park this year, it was expected that the site would naturally attract a larger number of young people during the summer holiday period.

Last year's programme at Grundy Park in Cheshunt saw high attendance, however, it was noted that the majority of attendees did not fall within the target demographic, with 56% not eligible for FSM.

To better align with the programme's objectives, and in line with the HSP Active Local offer (place-based work supported by Sport England) the decision was made to move the programme to Waltham Cross Playing Fields, in one of Hertfordshire's most deprived wards.

2. Changes from 2024

Youth Voice:

The second stage of the review focused on ensuring that the activities provided reflected the needs and interests of young people in Hertfordshire.

To do this, an online youth survey was distributed to all secondary schools within the five delivery areas. Pupils were asked to select their top three sporting activities and their top three arts and crafts activities from a list put together by the team, reflecting what could realistically be delivered.

In addition to the survey, three face-to-face sessions were held within our supported place areas with **Broxbourne Youth Council, Hertswood Academy, Borehamwood** and **St Mary's School, Cheshunt**.

During these sessions, a list of potential activities was displayed on a board to provide inspiration and prompt discussions. Young people were then invited to select the activities that most appealed to them, rather than being asked to think of ideas on the spot.

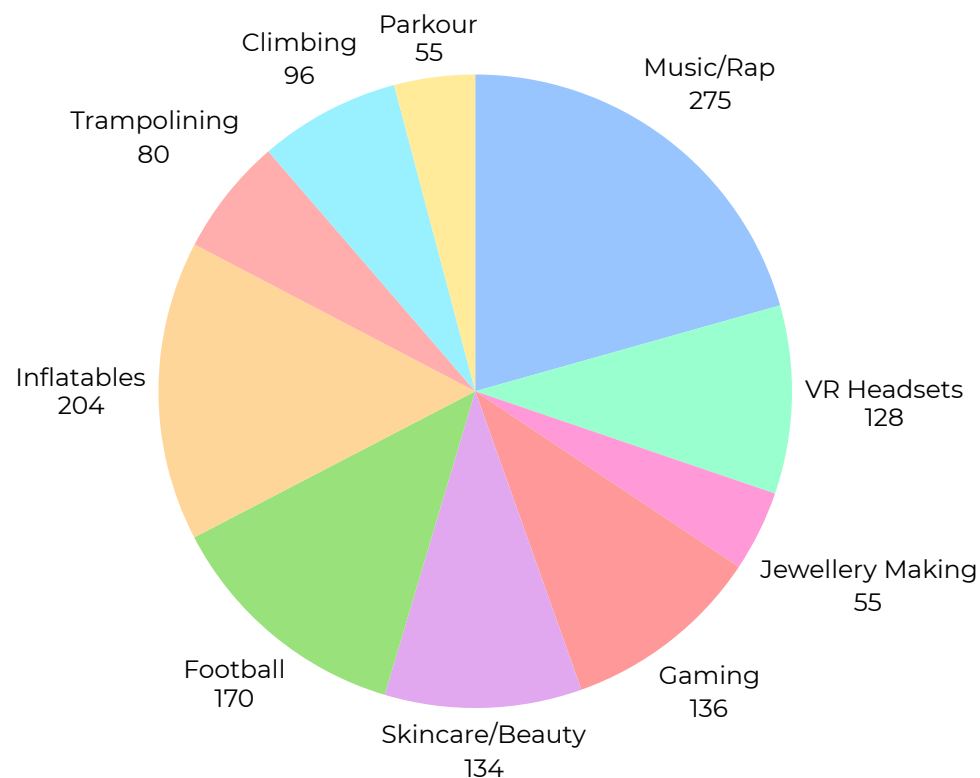


Together, the online survey which received 436 responses and the face-to-face sessions provided a strong evidence base of young people's interests.

These insights directly informed the whole design of the programme ensuring that the offer was completely shaped by young people.

Following this evidence, work started to identify and confirm external providers to deliver these activities.

The activities identified as most popular by young people were: *(chart shows number of selections)*



2. Changes from 2024

2024



2025



Following the consultation, the team collaborated with Jamie from Crxss Design to develop the marketing materials.

The flyer had the same branding and logo as in previous years however the colours and content were changed following feedback from young people.

Making sure the flyers give an accurate picture of what's on offer is key to attracting young people. By keeping the design age-appropriate, highlighting popular elements such as the food provision, and showing the full range of activities, the marketing is more likely to catch their attention in the first instance.

Youth Voice:

The face-to-face consultations also gathered feedback on the programme's marketing. Last year's flyers were shown to young people, who were then asked to share their thoughts. The aim was not only to make sure the activities reflected their interests, but also that the marketing and the way the programme is presented felt relevant to them.

Young people highlighted the following points:

"Too many colours, it looks childish"

"The food offer should be highlighted more as this would be a big attraction for young people"

"When I look at the flyer, it makes me think it's a sporty competitive event so I wouldn't go"

"If the age wasn't on there, I would have thought this was an event for little children"

The Waltham Cross flyer adopted a tailored approach in response to data and insight found by the HSP Active Local officer.

Adaptions were made to the flyer to better reflect the local demographic, particularly the proportion of young people from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. The flyer was redesigned to be more culturally inclusive and representative.



2. Changes from 2024

Support Services:

Reflecting on the previous year, a clear gap within the programme was identified. With large numbers of young people gathering in one place, there was a missed opportunity to connect them with local services and raise awareness of where they could access advice and guidance on health-related topics.

To address this, a range of support services were invited to attend the Summer Parks programme, including:

Beezee Bodies – Provided information on nutrition and engaged participants through a smoothie bike.

Metro – Offered sexual health support and advice.

Lives Not Knives – Engaged young people around the Knife Angel legacy, with a campaign to recruit 10,000 anti-violence ambassadors across Hertfordshire.

Leaders Unlocked – Youth Voice approach, gathering young people's perceptions on crime and policing.

Herts Young Homeless – Offered a stand providing advice and support for any young person at risk of homelessness.

InspireAll – Promoted local leisure centre services and engaged participants through a spinning wheel with prizes.

Hertfordshire Constabulary – PCSO's to foster youth engagement.

Broxbourne Public Health Nursing Team – Promoted the Chat Health service, a confidential text service for 11–19-year-olds in Hertfordshire schools, offering support on issues such as emotional health, healthy eating and more.



3. Bringing Summer Parks to Life

Pre-Planning

Staff Training

Activities & Food

Marketing

3. Bringing Summer Parks to Life

Pre-Planning

Sporting Inspirations continued to be the main delivery partner.

Monthly planning meetings with the Project Lead and Chief Operating Officer were scheduled, which provided the opportunity to discuss upcoming elements in detail, and they were able to provide insight from their previous on the ground.

Work was done to complete the Safety Plans and Risk Assessments. Stevenage Borough Council's, Health & Safety team were commissioned once again to ensure all documentation was of high quality and covered all areas relating to current guidance.

This process required site visits to all locations to identify any significant changes within the parks that needed to be considered. This model, which has been used year on year, continues to be effective in ensuring that all necessary areas are covered in advance.

Training with Sporting Inspirations

In July, a two-day training session was held with Sporting Inspirations. This was first introduced in 2024 to ensure all staff were fully prepared ahead of programme delivery.

The content of the training was shaped through discussions with the Sporting Inspirations strategic team to ensure all key areas were covered and to address any gaps identified from the previous year. One area highlighted was the need for greater clarity around the registration process, including the use of tablets and the sign-in process. Therefore, day one provided an overview of the programme, set out expectations and standards, park overviews, safeguarding, first aid and risk assessments and a practical session using the registration tablets.

Delivering a programme of this nature requires staff to be prepared for a wide range of situations. In light of previous challenges, day two of the training focused on reinforcing the importance of handling incidents correctly and following the set procedures. The session included realistic scenarios that the team might encounter during delivery which provided the team with the opportunity to review how situations should be handled and how staff would respond in line with the correct protocols.

After this session a new practical element was introduced which was the set-up and take down of new equipment. Using a sports hall, all new equipment was brought in and the team practised setting it up and taking it down correctly. This hands on approach ensured that staff were confident in using the equipment, helping the delivery to be as smooth as possible on the day.



"It was fantastic. The training was brilliant. I got to know everyone involved and I liked the team building aspect of it so that I could form partnerships with other staff before the programme. I also found a lot of the practical stuff really helpful too- like where to park, the map of the sites, where equipment was due to be located at each site etc. It really helped me being new to the programme!" (Ewan- new staff member to summer parks)

3. Bringing Summer Parks to Life

In its third year of delivery, the programme was expected to attract a greater number of young people to each site. To ensure there were plenty of opportunities, the offer changed slightly by increasing the number of external providers from three to four each week. Additional equipment such as archery sets, badminton equipment, swing ball, and volleyball sets were also purchased to ensure there was plenty of provision across the sessions.

Given the popularity of football since the programme launched and the feedback from the youth voice, it was agreed that football would be included as a structured coach-led activity, overseen by someone with knowledge of the game and rules and experience managing games.

All activities below are reflected by the youth voice gathered in the planning phase.

Week	External Activity	External Activity	External Activity	External Activity
1	Coach-led Football	Inflatables (The Fun Firm)	Fitness Bootcamp (FitKidz)	Jewellery Making (ArtbyVanessa)
2	Coach-led Football	Graffiti Art Workshop (Demografix)	Inflatables (APEX)	Hair band designing (ArtbyVanessa)
3	Coach-led Football	Music/ Rap Workshop (Everyone Loves Music)	Inflatables (APEX)	Gaming (Vojo's GamingVan)

3. Bringing Summer Parks to Life

Food Offer

The food offer remained consistent with previous years, partnering with two local food providers in each of the five areas to ensure there was a varied selection for young people to choose from. Ahead of delivery, large posters were given to all providers to display in their windows so young people could easily identify which venues were part of the summer parks programme.

The previous food providers for Borehamwood were re-engaged due to their popularity and positive feedback from young people from previous years.

In Waltham Cross, the aim was to engage two food providers, including an Afro Caribbean restaurant, to reflect the local demographic profile. Several providers declined to engage, but Subway accepted and became the sites main offer.

The following food providers were part of the programme this year:

Welwyn Garden City: Simmons & Tikka Masala

Stevenage: Misya Meze Grill & Georges Fish & Chip Shop

Watford: Watford Cycle Hub & Vikings Fish & Chip Shop

Borehamwood: The Arch & Aberford Café

Waltham Cross: Subway



3. Bringing Summer Parks to Life

Marketing

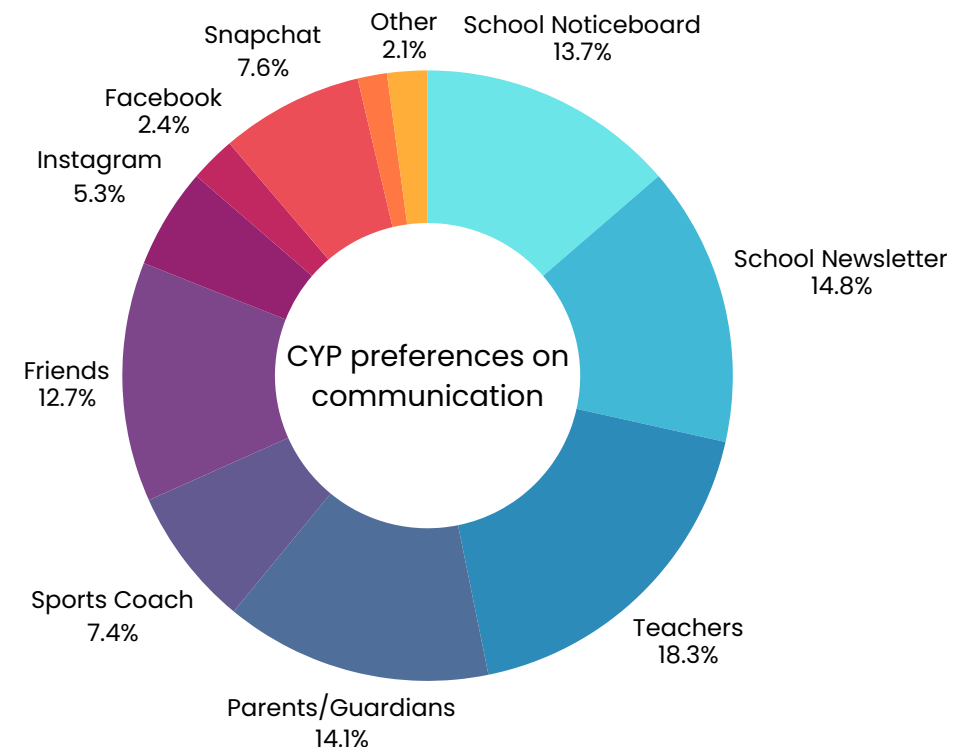
The marketing and communications became a key component to bringing Herts Summer Parks to life; before, during and after the three weeks. Aiming to maximise engagement from young people across the county, varied communication methods were used throughout. Prior to the events taking place, a marketing plan was developed to prioritise action plans so that the correct messaging was getting across to families, young people and professionals.

During the initial planning stages, the potential of using popular social media platforms such as TikTok and Snapchat were explored to engage young people. While this approach could have significantly boosted awareness, limited capacity and the nature of business-to-business social media accounts meant producing content on a consistent weekly basis would have been a struggle.

Instead, park-specific reels were created using video footage collected in 2024, which then got shared through existing platforms, leading to a 49,957 reach and 207,564 impressions. However, Meta has restrictions for advertising to anyone under the age of 18.

As the chart on the right shows, insights from the youth voice survey revealed that young people preferred receiving information through schools and teachers. Based on this feedback, school-based communication was prioritised over a social media-heavy approach.

Due to the barrier of getting content out to children under the age of 18, we decided to take a new approach of contacting all previous HAPpy attendees aged 12-16 in both Waltham Cross and Watford to up the attendances.



3. Bringing Summer Parks to Life



Prior to the launch, messaging reached families, young people, and professionals effectively, leading closely to one hundred sign-ups within the first two days of the launch. With a main approach focused on flyer-based promotion, supported by a wider outreach strategy. A professionally designed flyer was created using consistent branding from the previous year to maintain visual continuity. This flyer was shared extensively through partner organisations, who were encouraged via email to distribute it through their networks.

Additionally, targeted emails and text messages were sent to individuals who had previously attended a Herts Summer Parks event and had opted in for future updates.

Through partners, stakeholders, colleagues, and Active Local Officers, we were able to amplify reach and generate engagement. Printed materials including flyers, large posters, and Herts Summer Parks cards, were distributed to relevant officers and local authorities to support these efforts, with strategic placement of printed materials in high-footfall areas, ensured visibility and supported strong engagement throughout the summer.

Outreach activities continued throughout the programme, with communications delivered through various channels including newsletters, school engagement, social media, town centre drop-offs, and HAPpy programme messaging targeting families eligible for Free School Meals. Community engagement was also supported through Facebook groups and partnerships with local organisations to build awareness and excitement.

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Data

Food Provision

VIP Visits

Marketing

Feedback

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Herts Summer Parks was successfully delivered on 15 out of the 15 planned delivery days between the 4th of August to the 22nd of August.

The programme ran from 3pm – 6pm each day with set up starting at 1pm. Weather conditions were generally warm throughout the three-week period, with the exception of the programme's first day, which experienced heavy rain and strong winds.

All analysed data excludes individuals from the local contingency hotels as only their names and medical details were collected on the day of the events.

St Albans City & District Council, Communities 1st, and the Refugee Council collaborated to coordinate multiple visits for a community group to attend the Welwyn Summer Parks sessions.

Communities' 1st provided transport, funded by St Albans City & District Council, with two designated pick-up locations to enable individuals and families to access the provision.

In addition, a local contingency hotel in North Hertfordshire arranged a minibus to bring young people to the Summer Parks sessions in Stevenage.

Through these coordinated efforts, these groups of young people were able to take part in the full range of activities offered each week and benefitted from free food vouchers.

Total number of unique individuals: 1006

(+ 25 individuals from the hotels)
= 1031

Total number of attendances including returnees: 1192

(+ 65 attendances from the hotels)
= 1267

Total unique attendances split by park:

- Welwyn Garden City = **315**
- Watford = **173**
- Borehamwood = **290**
- Waltham Cross = **176**
- Stevenage = **303**

As split by week (across all parks):

- Week 1 – **276**
- Week 2 – **448**
- Week 3 – **533**



Together...

486

Young people had
their say on the
Summer Parks
Programme

Local Food Provider
Investment

£9,970

Overall
Contribution from
Local Authorities

£5,000

15 Delivery
days
delivered

14 Service &
Delivery
Providers

Total
attendances

1,267

Highest park attendance
in a single day

Welwyn Garden City: **149**

Attendees by gender

70% male

1% other 29% female

3% increase in
FSM



4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Gender Split

The gender breakdown of the programme was 70% male, 29% female, and 1% identifying as transgender.

Over the three years that the programme has been running, it has always tended to attract more males despite changes made to activities to try and increase engagement among girls.

On reflection, it appears that boys are generally more likely to spend time in larger groups outside whereas girls may engage differently.

Addressing this requires more than just changing activities, it involves exploring different approaches such as offering female only sessions or designated spaces, as well as building stronger links with local all-girls schools to promote the programme directly.



SEND

There has been a 2% increase in participants who declared a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) upon registration.

The majority of these needs were related to Autism and ADHD. Among the five sites, Stevenage had the highest proportion of participants with SEND, which was reflected by staff observations on the ground. Staff noted that more young people in Stevenage required additional support.

Looking forward to the Hertfordshire Year of Disability Sport and Physical Activity 2026, there should be a greater emphasis on supporting participants with SEND and ensuring activities are accessible and inclusive across all sites.



Free School Meals

Of the individuals who attended the programme, 30% reported that they were eligible for free school meals (FSM), while 9% were unsure and 5% chose not to disclose.

This represents a 3% increase in FSM participation compared to the previous year.

Across the five sites, Waltham Cross had the highest proportion of participants receiving FSM, with 47% reporting eligibility compared to 41% who were not eligible.

Although overall numbers were lower than the previous year at Grundy Park, this supports the decision to deliver the programme in Waltham Cross and demonstrates that the programme successfully reached its target audience, ensuring that children from lower-income backgrounds were accessing provision and opportunities during the summer holidays.



Average Age

The average age of participants was 13.4 years, consistent with the previous two years.

A higher proportion of 12- and 13-year-olds were recorded at Welwyn, Watford, and Waltham Cross. Borehamwood, however, saw a larger proportion of older children, which is believed to be influenced by participants attending from the Borehamwood Football Club, who were at the upper end of the programmes age range.

This is not necessarily a negative outcome. Engaging younger children allows them to participate in the programme year after year however participants at the older end of the age range may only have one or two years of eligibility.



4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Data

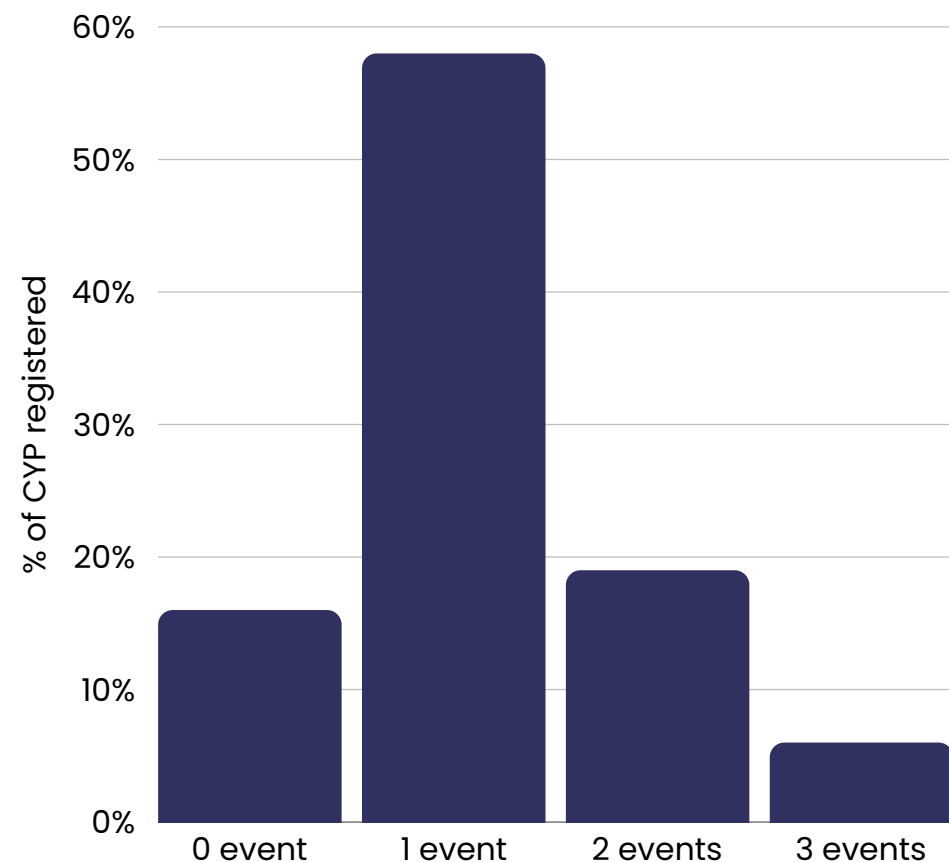
Analysis of the data shows that **161 participants registered but did not attend**. Of these, **114 registered in June before the programme** started and **46 registered during the delivery period**. While this demonstrates strong early interest and forward planning from parents and young people, it highlights the need for improved engagement in the lead up to delivery.

Data also shows that **58% of participants attended only one session**, compared with 71% in 2024. This improvement indicates that young people were more engaged and more likely to return for multiple sessions. This may be due to the range of activities on offer or the strong relationships built between staff and participants, with many young people noting that they felt recognised by the delivery team. On most days, staff proactively engaged with young people in the local town centres or nearby parks, which may have contributed to this as well.

Stevenage and Watford both recorded higher retention rates than other locations, possibly due to greater community awareness and word-of-mouth promotion. Understanding what worked well in these areas could inform best practice for future delivery.

Overall attendance was slightly lower than in 2024 however, the final week achieved the highest attendance since the programme began, showing that engagement builds momentum over time. In Waltham Cross, feedback from young people and police indicated that negative local perceptions linked to anti-social behaviour may have impacted the attendance. However, the programme successfully reached and engaged the target audience.

Number of events attended



4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Food provision

Overall, the food provision was once again a great success. The process continues to run effectively year on year, with the majority of young people redeeming their food voucher on the evening of the programme. All providers reported no issues across the delivery period and highlighted how appreciative the young people were to receive a free meal.

Securing food providers for the programme proved challenging in Waltham Cross. Reflection on the process highlighted that not enough time was allocated to this. Providing some form of case study or examples of how other businesses have successfully benefited from involvement in the programme may help to strengthen engagement in the future.

All nine food providers did offer options within the £10 budget this year however many indicated that for future involvement, their prices would need to go above this maximum rate due to cost-of-living pressures. This has important implications for future delivery, as additional funding may be required to ensure the food offer is attractive to the local businesses.

For the first time, all nine food providers agreed to be paid in full at the end of the programme rather than receiving 50% upfront and the remainder post-delivery.

While this approach did work, it must be recognised that earlier payments may still be required in some cases to secure any new providers.

Moving forward, greater time and resource needs to be given to these discussions, supported by clear evidence of the positive impact the programme can have on local businesses.

Food venue	Food vouchers redeemed
Borehamwood – Aberford Cafe	52
Borehamwood – The Arch	183
Welwyn Garden City – Tikka Masala	34
Welwyn Garden City – Simmons	299
Stevenage – Misya Meze Grill	94
Stevenage – The Fish & Chip Shop	146
Broxbourne – Subway	132
Watford – Vikings Fish & Chip Shop	103
Watford – Watford Cycle Hub	81

4. Monitoring & Evaluation



Engaging Services

It was essential that each support service provided an interactive element in their delivery. This approach helped attract young people, creating a natural entry point for conversation and engagement. All providers offered some form of interactive activity or game, which meant there was much more engagement from young people this year compared to last year with 6% of children reporting that by attending Summer Parks they have learned more about youth services. A small but important step forward in raising awareness and connecting young people with support.

Youth voice played a central role in shaping the Summer Parks programme this year. The approach used proved effective, with the responses collected providing a broad range of evidence to inform changes and improvements. The use of visual prompts on boards, alongside examples of activities listed on the online survey, encouraged young people to share their thoughts and feelings.

Face-to-face consultations further supported valuable discussions and insights. Although more effort could have been made to ensure representation was equal across all five districts, this approach should continue to be utilised in any future delivery to ensure the offer remains reflective of the needs and interests of teenagers.



Water and Environmental Sustainability

Each year, a large number of single-use plastic water bottles are distributed to young people during the programme. In an effort to make the programme more environmentally sustainable, the team explored the access of drinking water points at each site to reduce the amount spent on single-use plastics.

While plastic bottles were still provided at the majority of sites, drinking water points at certain parks were utilised wherever possible. Hertfordshire Sports Village kindly donated reusable water bottles, with 192 distributed during the sessions. By combining the use of drinking access points with the distribution of reusable bottles, the overall purchase of single use plastics was reduced.

Looking ahead, more effort is to be made to further minimise single-use plastic by identifying other ways to provide water sustainably at all sites.

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Marketing and Recommendations

Having identified 12-16 year olds as a harder to reach market on social media (due to paid advertising restrictions), the programme took the decision to effectively use its social media presence to market to friends, family and other members of the community, making clear actions to share with anyone they knew within the target audience.

Although the programme cannot identify the exact effectiveness of this method, there was a clear increase in the registration data of nearly 50% of participants signing up to the programme saying they heard about it from a friend. This method, although more anecdotal as to its effectiveness, is believed to have been a highly effective and cost-effective method to reaching the families and members of the community within our target areas.

Physical assets produced for the programme were also a success in creating a strong rapport with the target audience. Following research with local young people, flyers and other marketing materials were created specific to the target audience's preferences, giving them a brand which they could identify and connect with. This was reinforced on delivery days where large banners were used to build a strong atmosphere around the park. This allowed the audience to feel part of this large event which they created.

Looking at opportunities for further growth, the programme would look to develop key relationships with local GP surgeries, leisure centres, and Neighbourhood Watch groups, so that the programme can expand its reach and visibility across the area. For this, it was suggested to create a full brand package for the programme, which would include flyers, email templates, and key information for partner organisations to share with their audiences.

161 individuals who registered interest did not attend at all, and 58% of attendees participated only once. This highlights the importance of consistent and proactive communication before the programme launches, ensuring individuals are regularly reminded about upcoming events.

The pre-registration launched on the 17th of June, which was four weeks earlier than previous years. This was intended to allow more time for engaging with secondary schools before they closed for the summer period and to try and get enough preregistrations.



HSP & Sporting Inspirations team with High Sheriff of Hertfordshire and Mayor of Stevenage

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

Feedback highlighted the top four activities enjoyed most by young people were inflatables, football, graffiti, and the gaming van. Expanding from three external activities to four proved effective, particularly given the high number of participants on site at one time, as it ensured there was enough provision across the three hours.

The activities reflected what was found within the youth voice, with many young people stating they want more of the same activities for next year. This reinforces that the activities currently on offer align well with young people's interests.

The process of planning and securing external providers did have some challenges. As youth voice results took longer than anticipated, less time was available to identify and engage providers. With many organisations fully booked during the summer period, it was difficult to secure some of the suggested activities.

Suggestions from young people included a beauty or skincare workshop and hair styling. The team did approach local FE colleges and venues, but there was no success. Fortunately, ArtByVanessa was able to deliver a second week of hair band designing, which offered a similar experience to what was originally asked for.



To keep the programme fresh and engaging, a new approach was introduced for the graffiti workshops. Instead of the previous name designs on canvases, young people created personalised graffiti T-shirts, which proved very popular.

The workshop also included a community element, where young people worked together to create one large canvas representing their local areas. These artworks are now displayed in local community spaces to celebrate and showcase the Summer Parks programme.

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

VIP Visits

Across the three weeks a number of high-profile visits took place, including County and Local Councillors, Portfolio Holders, the High Sheriff, and members of Hertfordshire County Council.

These visits included a tour of the programme and visitors engaged directly with young people and even participated in some activities. This provided a valuable opportunity to showcase the programme, highlighting the impact and importance of teenage provision in Hertfordshire.

HSP and Sporting Inspirations team with the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene, Parks, Leisure and Culture & Councillor for Potters Bar Furzefield ward, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Hertsmere.



Mayoress of Hertsmere and Community Sports Officer at Hertsmere Borough Council



Portfolio Holder for Street Scene, Parks, Leisure and Culture & Councillor for Potters Bar Furzefield ward

From 153 responses on the feedback survey, young people reported that the programme enabled them to make new friends, try new activities, learn new skills, and spend more time outdoors.

These outcomes not only evidence the personal benefits to young people but also strengthens the case for this type of provision.

The visibility gained through VIP engagement, combined with the positive impact reported back by young people, hopefully has put Summer Parks on the radar of key stakeholders and advocates, supporting the case for this programme to continue in the future.

4. Monitoring & Evaluation

"They LOVED it—the girls especially loved the craft activities. Also, £9 worth of Simmons" **Refugee Council coordinator**

"The Summer Parks programme was a fantastic initiative that brought communities together in such a joyful and engaging way. Highlights for us was seeing children fully immersed in bike-based activities – from obstacle courses and slow races, bike football and BMX. These sessions not only promoted physical activity and confidence but also sparked so much laughter and teamwork among the kids. It was heartening to witness how inclusive and accessible the programme felt. The involvement of local partners and volunteers added a real sense of community spirit. Thank you again for including us – we're proud to have been part of such a meaningful programme." **Aparna Shah – Community Developer for British Cycling**

"The staff were really friendly and made me feel at ease" – **Young Person**

"I would like it to run on every week because I could only go to Welwyn on Monday three times and I wanted to go more. I did had a lot of fun" – **Young Person**

"The staff went to great lengths to make sure that my child was happy and participating. The respected their boundaries, but kept checking and eventually they joined in. It was great to see they cared about the children having fun and getting involved" **Parent**

"Summer parks was well planned, delivered and managed this year. The training for staff was useful in bringing them together prior to delivery and the support from HSP and other partners was excellent.

Young people thoroughly enjoyed the programme and formed good relationships with the staff team. It was a highly successful programme with positive outcomes for young people"

Russell Cairns – Chief Operating Officer



"Fit Kidz CIC were privileged to be involved with the Summer Parks program this year. It was amazing to see the young people attending these events get so stuck into to the various activities on offer including my own. Some were there to enjoy themselves, some came in small friendship groups which inevitably led to a more competitive approach to activities, and some made new friends along the way. There was such a broad range of activities on offer that there was something for everyone, making the events all encompassing." – **Chris Bull – Managing Director of Fit Kidz**

5. Key Observations

Feedback – Goods for Good

Learnings

Recommendations and Future Considerations

Thank you

Case Study – Leaders Unlocked

5. Key Observations

Feedback – Goods for Good

As part of the Herts Summer Parks Programme, young people were given the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience through an online survey. The survey captured what participants enjoyed most, what they thought of the food and areas for improvement.

To encourage engagement, participants who completed the survey were able to enter a prize draw to win sports kit, generously donated by Goods for Good.

This charity redistributes unused items such as clothing, footwear, hygiene essentials and other items to prevent them from going to waste and supporting communities in need.

Ahead of the programme, the team visited their Northampton base to collect a number of unused Nike trainers. All items were brand new. These were distributed with the aim of encouraging young people's ongoing participation in sport and physical activity.

A total of 24 pairs of Nike trainers were distributed to young people across the five delivery areas.

4.57 average rating for the food provided



4.82 average rating for the staff involved



Goods FOR Good

5. Key Observations

Key Learnings

- Weather continues to be a big factor influencing participation.
- A huge amount of preparation went into the programme, and strong partnership working across HSP, Sporting Inspirations, local authorities, Hertfordshire County Council, and other local services contributed to its success.
- Involving Sporting Inspirations in the planning phase worked well.
- Recruitment of food providers needs to start earlier, as securing an additional provider in Waltham Cross proved challenging.
- The programme continues to attract more boys than girls.
- Need to strengthen messaging around the target age group (12–16), as a number of younger children and parents attended which may have deterred older participants.
- Arts and crafts were very popular, particularly activities where young people could take their work home (e.g. bracelet and hairband design, graffiti T-shirts).
- Archery was well received and should be used again.
- Some activities (e.g. badminton) are less effective outdoors due to wind.
- Many young people cycled to sessions.
- The existing registration process worked but poor signal in outdoor settings caused issues.
- Promotional materials (e.g. banners, feather flags, pop-ups) were available and effective when consistently used to increase visibility across sites.



5. Key Observations

- Include back-up plans for poor weather and provide shaded areas on hot days.
- Refresh or adapt outdoor activities to be more weather-appropriate.
- Consider introducing a portable bike rack at each site and cycling related activities and content.
- Start recruitment of activity and food providers earlier.
- Create one clear, visual flyer covering all parks.
- Start communications 5–6 weeks before launch with consistent reminders.
- Strengthen messaging and controlled entry points to focus on the 12–16 age group.
- Introduce “girls-only” sessions or spaces to increase female participation.
- Explore opportunities for providers to deliver competitions to help maintain engagement.
- Expand youth engagement via TikTok/Snapchat with partners (e.g. Sporting Inspirations).

Recommendations / Future Considerations

- Introduce incentives (e.g. points/reward system) to encourage repeat attendance.
- Use data-driven outreach (e.g. HAPpy database) for targeted invitations.
- Strengthen marketing and comms capacity for consistent campaign delivery.
- Explore a more robust booking system to overcome outdoor signal issues.



5. Case Study

Leaders Unlocked

The Youth Commission on Policing and Crime is a Leaders Unlocked project, funded by The PCC for Hertfordshire, Jonathan Ash-Edwards.

The project seeks to engage with young people in schools, colleges, and youth spaces across the county, gathering their perspectives on the key issues facing young people today.

In August, eight representatives from The Youth Commission participated in visits to all five parks, leading conversations on their five key priority areas:

- 
- Antisocial Behaviour
 - Violence Against Women and Girls
 - Hate Crime
 - County Lines and Exploitation
 - Police Powers



"I learned that young people have really good ideas about how the community should be run but aren't given the right platform to express their ideas."

"The conversations I had with young people at Herts Summer Parks made me look at so many different perspectives that I had previously overlooked. Especially as a youth commissioner, I think it's key for me to interact with several youth groups outside my own community so I can bring up problems that the youth face today."

Key Themes

Youth Voice:

- Many young people felt they aren't consulted enough about decision-making in their local area, despite a desire to get involved

Youth Spaces:

- A significant number of young people expressed that increased access to safe spaces for young people was essential to reduce youth crime.
- Participants often described that there are not enough safe spaces where they can play or socialise with other young people during after school hours.
- Young people generally agreed that having youth clubs and extracurricular activities prevents antisocial behaviour

Educational initiatives:

- A notable proportion of participants commented on the link between education and victimisation.
- Many believed addressing gaps in awareness could reduce the risk of involvement or being victimised by someone else.
- Workshops were cited as a tool to better recognise the signs for when they or someone they know might be in danger.
- For most participants, having workshops be peer-led was a priority

**LEADERS
UNLOCKED**



Police & Crime
Commissioner
FOR HERTFORDSHIRE

3. Thank you

The successful delivery of the programme, and the positive experiences enjoyed by young people throughout the summer, would not have been possible without the invaluable support of the organisations listed below. Their contributions were key to ensuring the programme's success, and sincere thanks are extended to each of them.





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Hertfordshire's
Holiday Activity Programme

