

Shining a spotlight on Families Month

August is Family Month and with 31 days until September, there is still plenty of summer sun and fun to be had with your close ones!

Whether it's mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, cousins, grandparents, aunts, uncles, step-relatives or in-laws, there are lots of people to celebrate life with. Whoever you choose to share your time with, check out the fun activities for all the family in this newsletter.

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To ensure that you receive future editions of the Hertfordshire Year of Physical Activity 2018 Newsletter please subscribe [HERE](#). Please help us to cascade this newsletter across your networks by sharing widely.

Promote your local activities, tagging the accounts below and #HertsYOPA18



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Move More, Feel Great!



In support of making Hertfordshire the most active county [f @HertsYOPA18](#) [@HertsYOPA18](#)

Further information

If you would like to get involved, please contact Jane Parker at:

hertsyopa18@herts.ac.uk

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This year, we're asking influential people in Hertfordshire to give us insight into their physical activity interests and motivations. In this issue local GP, Dr Alka Patel, answers Piers Simey's 10 active questions...

What do you get out of being active?

I feel fitter and have more energy, but for me being active is more about the Emotional Energy it gives me:

- Strength.
- Endurance.
- Resilience.
- Courage.
- Power.
- Achievement.
- Satisfaction.
- Pride.
- Self-belief.

Being active means:
**Strength. Endurance.
Resilience. Courage. Power.
Achievement. Satisfaction.
Pride. Self-belief.**

Do you do something now you could never have imagined you'd be doing when you were a kid?

Definitely a few things!

Playing tennis – or at least getting the ball over the net with a forehand swing and not too bad backhand – I was the one who never got picked for the netball, hockey or tennis teams at school!

Running 10k runs - and I've improved my time each run. We even did a surgery Christmas run all dressed as Santa!

Salsa dancing – a really fun way to exercise with others whilst wearing glittery dancing shoes!

Are you a weekend warrior or daily dose-er?!

Bit of both – lighter during the week, more intense at the weekend.

Was there ever a time when you weren't active, and what led you to change?

I've really only become focused on exercise for myself in the last five years. Mostly born from an interest in lifestyle and preventative medicine. And reading lots of literature on the benefits of exercise. Thought it was time that I practiced what I preached!

What was the hardest exercise you've ever done?

My first ever spin class – after 60 minutes of high speed pedaling my legs didn't belong to the rest of my body; I actually couldn't walk down the stairs and had to have an extra 30 minutes of recovery time before I could move!

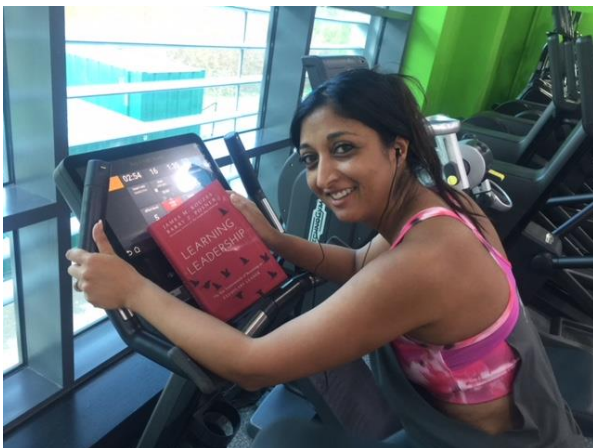
How do you like to reward yourself after exercise?

My reward is usually a mental one – I tend to feel quite effervescent after exercise!

How do you keep active in the winter?

Usually at the gym.

Dr Alka Patel goes to the gym in the winter to stay active





Movers and shakers cont'd

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How do you build physical activity into your busy day?

I was thinking about chair-based exercises for my patients and noticed how much time I sit in my own chair at work.

So I bought myself a small pedal exerciser for under my desk – whenever I'm on the computer, reading letters or results, I pedal while I work – usually bursts of 10 minutes, several times a day. Actually gets my heart rate up! And I can do it whilst still wearing my high heels!

I love this concept of multi-tasked exercise – pedal whilst I read, read whilst I pedal – very time efficient!



Dr Alka Patel pedals while she works, the ultimate in multi-tasking!

Who says you can't cycle in heels?!

This week we started 'Fit in 15' at work to help us all rejuvenate:

- Monday Mindfulness
- Tuesday Targets
- Wednesday Walk
- Thursday Tone-Up
- Friday Freak-Out!

We never seem to have time for ourselves at work. So we've made it a priority to find just 15 minutes when the surgery is closed at lunchtime to all get together in the waiting room. So far there's been a lots of laughter echoing from the waiting room – interspersed with painful groans!

I now keep my gym bag in the car equipped with trainers and leggings. I've managed to get in a few runs down the hill between surgeries – trouble is I need to run back too which is uphill all the way - not as much fun as the thrill of running down hill with the wind in your hair.

Try out new things, start with something you enjoy or try something you've never done before – learning something new is good for the memory!

Are you a solitary or social exerciser?

Generally I've been solitary until recently.

I'm really enjoying the social aspect of 'Fit in 15' at work. My boys are now in their late teens so it's been fun joining in with them at the gym. My daughter has also started to enjoy running recently so it will be nice to run together. And my husband and I do a spin class together most Sundays. I'd like to do more dance-based exercise with others – bit of inspiration from the amazing dancers in Strictly Come Dancing!

What advice would you give someone looking to be more active after a break?

Getting active after a break is the best time – I call it the honeymoon period; the energy, enthusiasm and spark is heightened because it all feels so new – try out new things – start with something you enjoy or try something you've never done before – learning something new is good for the memory too. And my biggest tip would be don't have another break – let the honeymoon period continue!



Shining a spotlight on family activities for Families Month



It's all fun and games

Ditch the Xbox and go back to the days of good old fashion fun!

Enjoy the summer weather and play outside. Throw your bags and t-shirts down and get your game face on, head to the local park to play a game of tag, run-outs, hide and seek or frisbee.

No matter what you choose to play, doing it as a family will make it all worthwhile.



Explore the Great Outdoors

As our 'Parks Month' proved, Hertfordshire is blessed with rolling countryside, parks and green spaces.

Have fun with the family by embarking on an exciting geocaching adventure in a local park; put your pedal to metal with a cycling camping holiday, or find out some history by going on an enchanting woodland walk.

Spending time outside gives you a healthy dose of Vitamin D, which boosts everyone's mood. Enjoy the beauty of nature with your family.

Give back

Spending the day giving back to your community is a great way to help brighten someone's day, while helping to teach children about philanthropy.

Why not contribute your time at a local parkrun, take on a family challenge at a charity fun run or volunteer at a local community sport event?

Giving back to the community is very rewarding and you'll be glad that you spent the day helping others with your family.

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National Playday 1 August 2018



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Playday is the national day for play, traditionally held on the first Wednesday in August each year.

It is the biggest play sector event in the UK, highlighting the importance of play in children's lives. It encourages children, young people and communities to get out and play at hundreds of community events, including street parties, festivals in parks and village greens, mass adventures in woodlands, fields and beaches, and public events at community venues.

Hertfordshire has lots of Playday activities taking place. Visit www.playday.org.uk/playdays/ for details.



Watford Big Beach 4-19 August 2018

Open daily from 10am to 8pm, the Big Beach returns to The Parade by the pond this summer.

Grab your bucket and spade and bring along your family and friends for two weeks of free fun for all the family.

You can join in the daily schedule of free activities or just kick back and relax in the sunshine. The Big Beach is FREE - there is no need to book, just turn up and enjoy!

Daily activities include giant Jenga, Four in a Row, arts and crafts and a dedicated section for under 5's. Each day shells will be hidden in the sand and for every shell found a prize will be given!

Just along from the main beach area will be funfair rides, crazy golf and fairground side stalls, including a coconut shy, hook a duck and much more.

For full details visit: www.watfordbigevents.co.uk/big-beach

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Events and Projects

Hertfordshire is one of the greatest counties in the UK for family sporting events and activities — and there is so much to see and explore right in our own backyard.

Here a few hand-selected activities that will bring the family closer together and help you treasure the time spent under the sun with your loved ones!

Wednesday 1 August: [National Play Day](#) (Broxbourne)

Wednesday 1–14 August: [Family Foot Golf](#) (Welwyn Hatfield)

Wednesday 1–14 August: [Family Pitch and Putt](#) (Welwyn Hatfield)

Wednesday 1–22 August: Family Fun Days (Stevenage)

Wednesday 1–29 August: [Really Wild Play](#) (East Herts)

Wednesday 1–31 August: [Get Active Parks](#) (Three Rivers)

Wednesday 1–31 August: [Lark in the Park](#) (Broxbourne)

Wednesday 1–31 August: [Active Parks](#) (North Herts)

Wednesday 1–31 August: [Play in the Park](#) (St Albans)

Wednesday 1–31 August: [Play Rangers](#) (Three Rivers)

Thursday 2 August: [National Play Day](#) (East Herts)

Thursday 2 August: [Get Park Active](#) (East Herts)

Thursday 2–30 August: [Really Wild Play](#) (Hertsmere)

Friday 3 August: [Big Summer Presents](#) (Welwyn Hatfield)

Saturday 4–19 August: [Big Beach](#) (Watford)

Sunday 4 August: [Family Go Tri](#) (East Herts)

Monday 6–31 August: [Play Rangers](#) (Welwyn Hatfield)

Monday 6: [Mobile Crazy Golf](#) (Welwyn Hatfield)

Wednesday 15 August: Sport in the Park (Stevenage)

Tuesday 21 August: [Fun in the Park](#) (Hertsmere)

Wednesday 22 August: [Fun in the Park](#) (Hertsmere)

Thursday 23 August: [Fun in the Park](#) (Hertsmere)

Monday 27 August: [Family Netball Day](#) (North Herts)

Even if you don't have the chance to explore some of these fun family activities, remember that this month is all about spending time with the ones that you love an cherish most. After all, when school picks up and everyone seems to fall back into their usual busy routines, it can become more difficult to find the time to connect with one another.

Make August really count by planning some fun for your family, this month!





Herts Disability Sports Foundation Picnic

The Herts Disability Sports Foundation (HDSF) held their annual picnic in the park on Wednesday 25 July. The day was an opportunity for the users of the HDSF and their families to enjoy a variety of fun activities.

The team from the Herts Sports and Physical Activity Partnership volunteered their time to help make the day a success. The team have a number of corporate responsibilities and this day was their volunteering one.



Participants and their families really got involved and enjoyed taking part. There were lots of activities on offer, including bikes, bell boats, soft archery, bouncy castle, fishing, dance and much more! It really was fun for all the family!

Stevenage Teddy Bears Picnic



www.facebook.com/events/264515244104507/

'Get Back Into' something this September

September will be *Get Back Into* month, and we will be encouraging people to reacquaint themselves with a sport or physical activity they once loved.

We are calling on all sports clubs to share their ideas for taster sessions, open days and events that welcome those who have left sport behind. A list of opportunities to 'get back into' sport will be available on Herts Sports Partnership's website. If you would like to get your club added please contact Charlie Mann: c.mann3@herts.ac.uk 01707 285026.

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Competition Corner

Share your best family action shots and bag yourself a free family prize!

Simply visit www.facebook.com/HertsYOPA18 and share a photo of your family being active together on a Families Month Competition post, using the hashtag #ActiveFamily

As always follow [@HertsYOPA18](https://www.facebook.com/HertsYOPA18) on Facebook to keep up to date with all activities and competitions, plus YOPA the Stag's appearances throughout the month.

Have you tried Geocaching?

Geocaching is a great way to encourage children to explore local parks and outdoor spaces - they will walk for miles without even realising!

Geocaching is basically an outdoor treasure hunt which you can do for free! The treasure hidden is called a "Geocache", which is usually a large plastic box with small items inside, or it could be a micro-geocache the size of a thimble. You use your mobile phone to see where the Geocaches are located and how close you are to their hidden locations.

Simply download the Geocache app onto your mobile phone, check the map showing all the Geocaches close to your location and click on the one you want to find.

You can get location hints, a description, an indication of the size of geocache and the last date it was found.

Children love navigating to it, and once you've found it you can open it and fill in the log sheet. Make sure no-one is watching as they have to be kept a secret. If there are items in the box, take one and replace with equal or greater value, then hide the Geocache back where you found it and move to the next one. For more information visit: www.geocaching.com/guide/



Share your stories with us!
We'd love to hear where the best Geocache places are in Herts. Share your pictures and experiences on our Facebook page #HertsYOPA18.

Yopa gets dancing at the Herts School Games



Over 1,000 young people from schools across Hertfordshire recently gathered at Oaklands College for the Hertfordshire School Games Level 3 County Finals.

The event was the culmination of a programme of competitive sport in schools across Hertfordshire this year, in which some 50,000 secondary and primary school pupils competed at some level.

The Hertfordshire School Games Final is part of a national initiative, which was established as a lasting sporting legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Organised by the Herts Sports and Physical Activity Partnership (known as HSP), the recent event, held in glorious sunshine, was attended by a range of VIP guests, including headteachers, civic leaders of local authorities, the Youth Sport Trust and Hertfordshire County Council.

Not to miss a great opportunity, YOPA donned his dancing shoes and lead the Herts Dances routine on stage to over 1,000 young people. It was a roaring success and looked fantastic. Everyone really enjoyed getting involved and even the VIPs had a boogie.

We've seen lots of variations of the Herts Dances routine over the past month from dance groups and office workers through to health and wellbeing conferences and they've all been fantastic!

We would love to see yours so visit the Herts Dances Facebook page and get moving!

<https://www.facebook.com/HertsDances/>

A key feature of this year's County Finals Day was the Activity Carousel, which included BMX cycling, fencing, circus skills and an inflatable playground.

It was used as a 'come and try it' area for pupils from schools that had expressed an interest in their students accessing a wider range of sport and physical activity pursuits, but not necessarily those schools that had made it to the County Finals as district winners.

35 outdoor fitness areas

42 woods

93 playgrounds!

30 ponds and lakes



Reflections on #TryANewParkHerts month

Our parks were very busy last month, especially with the fantastic weather in July. Our ParksHerts website had a real boost too, with significantly more visitors this month than usual.

To celebrate and showcase our amazing local parks we encouraged people to #TryANewParksHerts across the month.

That included taking the dog to a new park, trying a new parkrun route, cooling the kids down at a new splashpark or enjoying different woods and lakes to usual - we just wanted people to explore.

The exploring doesn't have to stop here though – visit www.parksherts.co.uk to find your perfect park! You can also follow on Facebook/ParksHerts, Twitter @ParksHerts and Instagram : ParksHerts



58 parks awarded The Green Flag Award

Hemel Hempstead Forum hosted the prestigious Hertfordshire Green Flag Awards on Friday 20 July.

The Mayor of Dacorum, community groups, volunteers, councillors and Hertfordshire County Council officers all came together to celebrate. 58 of our brilliant parks received the Green Flag award, a great achievement for a county of Hertfordshire's size.

The Green Flag logo Award is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK. To be awarded a Green Flag, a park or open space must meet certain standards, including being a welcoming place, healthy, safe and secure, well-maintained and clean and having the support and involvement of the local community.

A Green Flag flying overhead is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities.

The awards rely on partnership working between the Council, town and parish councils and the local community, through friends groups, to maintain high standards in council run parks. Visit the Green Flag Award website for further details.





Hertfordshire's Big Hit celebration is a smash!

HSP proudly hosted a celebration event at the University of Hertfordshire to mark the second anniversary of Hertfordshire's Big Hit boxing project.

The event was attended by boxing champions John Conteh MBE, Ted Cheeseman and Sean Murphy along with over 300 young boxers and their parents.

The Big Lottery funded programme began in 2016, after initial pilot sessions delivered by the Box Cleve charity highlighted the need for an intervention to help tackle local anti-social behaviour.

The project funds 11 programmes at boxing clubs across Hertfordshire. The weekly 'Big Hit' sessions are designed to help those young people who are at risk of 'getting in with the wrong crowd'. The young participants train hard, learn about the sweet science and also benefit from an interwoven educational and awareness programme around resilience, substance misuse, bullying and healthy eating.

Bob Williams, founder of Box Cleve and Boxing Development Officer for the Big Hit project said: "Events like this just don't happen for many of these youngsters – many of whom come from some of the county's more disadvantaged communities.

"Box Cleve and the trainers are proud of how hard these kids work towards their awards. Our celebrity guests have shown them that with dedication comes reward, and that if they set

their minds to it, they can achieve anything.

"I hope that the young boxers from the all of the Box Cleve projects had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed themselves here today. To see them proudly collecting their awards after putting in so much effort over recent weeks, brought a tear to my eye."

The event opened with an interactive group skills session where the young participants skipped and showed off their pad work to parents and carers. They were encouraged by Ted Cheeseman who moved amongst them with his WBA International Super Welterweight belt.

The exhausting practical session was followed by lunch - provided courtesy of Herts Catering Ltd - and the Big Hit awards ceremony at the university's Weston Auditorium, where Hertfordshire dignitaries handed out awards to the local boxers.

Mayors and Chairman were joined by former WBC Light Heavyweight World Champion Conteh Bermondsey, born Cheeseman, Sean Murphy - Anthony Joshua's trainer when he was coming up through the amateur ranks and a champion in his own right, having won gold at the 1986 Commonwealth Games.

All three delivered motivational speeches, urging the young people to have self-belief and work hard to pursue their personal goals.

John O'Callaghan, Director of the Herts Sports Partnership, the Big Hit project co-ordinators and event organisers added:

"I have seen first-hand how sport can be used as a powerful vehicle to raise the aspirations and improve the life chances of our young people - and, this programme is a living example of that.

I am particularly proud of our leadership on this project and indebted to our friends at Box Cleve, and our various funding partners for their unstinting support.

This project is changing lives for the better and it was no co-incidence that we held the celebration event here at the University of Hertfordshire. Exposure to its state of the art facilities, coupled with the presence of fantastic role models in John, Ted and Sean, will hopefully have sown the seeds within some of those young people and their families, that a university education – and all that comes with it in terms of personal development and future opportunities – is well within reach, if they work hard and apply themselves.

I look forward to learning about the continued development of these young people and hopefully to welcoming some of them back to the university as students, in the years to come."

For more information on the project contact Will Slemmings w.slemmings@herts.ac.uk 01707 283249.

