

Welcome to the July edition of HertsYOPA18 newsletter

July is Parks Month in Hertfordshire, and throughout the month we will be taking the opportunity to encourage residents to explore their local park, whether that's re-visiting beloved haunts or checking out somewhere new.

Bike Month and this Girl Can Month

Last month's focus on Bike Month and This Girl Can month was a great success, with campaigns and events taking place across the county to celebrate. Read more in this newsletter.

Subscribe

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



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertsyopa18



Further information

If you would like to get involved, please contact Jane Parker at:
hertsyopa18@herts.ac.uk

#HertsYOPA18





Movers and shakers

#HertsYOPA18

This year, we're asking influential people in Hertfordshire to give us insight into their physical activity interests and motivations. In this issue, Headteacher at Hertingfordbury Cowper C of E V A Primary School, Alison Richards answers Piers Simey's 10 active questions...

What do you get out of being active?

I feel more alive, awake and good about myself and ready to tackle my daily job. I have always enjoyed a variety of sports but not always found the time to participate as fully as I would like to.

How do you build physical activity into your busy day?

Even though I sometimes get out of bed feeling tired and lacking in energy, I try to start my day with a swim two or three times a week. I use the stairs at work and walk around the school visiting classes. I'm always surprised that I haven't lost more weight in the process! During the holidays I use the opportunity to embark on more strenuous activity.

What was the hardest exercise you've ever done?

I am a keen walker and I've walked the Coast to Coast and the Pennine Way (in stages) in all weathers! It was great fun, very energizing and a great feeling of achievement.

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

At school I loved all sport, but netball, athletics and tennis were my main focus, along with outdoor activities for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. I've continued with tennis and outdoor activities, although teaching, along with bringing up four daughters, curtailed my opportunities a little! I realised as the years went by that because I was teaching PE in school and encouraging from the sidelines as headteacher, everyone thought I was fit! However in reality I was finding the excuse of being too tired & busy and neglecting my health.

How do you keep active in the winter?

I swim all year and go walking in the hills when I can get out of Herts!

Are you a weekend warrior or daily doer, solitary or social?

I am more an alternate day doer and someone who loves being active on holidays. I am happy to swim alone but I am a social person and I always walk, play tennis, ski and kayak with friends and family.

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

I never had the opportunity to go skiing but took it up at 50 and absolutely love it - I now try to go once a year. I also went ziplining this Easter, which was absolutely amazing and exhilarating!

How do you like to reward yourself after exercise?

After swimming in the morning I am often greeted with a lovely hot cup of tea by one of my staff. If I have been skiing a Gluwein always goes down well! As much as anything the reward is often the thrill of feeling good, feeling fitter and achieving my goal.

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

Exercise comes in many forms. Talk to others and have a positive attitude towards whatever you decide to do. Decide what will fit into your life routine and set yourself a realistic goal. Whatever you choose to do, make sure that it is fun and that you have someone else to encourage you, whether it's playing a sport, joining a fitness or dance class, kayaking, walking or even zip-lining! You might surprise yourself. My mantra has always been that if someone else can do it I must be able to as well! My newest challenge at 60+ is to do the Couch to 5k. My motivation is that people keep posting on social media that they have just run 5K – they may be younger than me but why should that matter? It hasn't stopped me yet. Have a go!



Headteacher Alison Richards took on a 15 zipwire challenge above the tree canopy in Costa Rica



Decide what will fit into your life and set a realistic goal. Have a go!





Shining a spotlight on Parks in Herts for Parks Month



Hertfordshire is blessed with many parks and green spaces, which are designed to provide a rich visitor experience. Many are so well managed that they have won the coveted national Green Flag award.

So, what do you look for in a park?

Water?

Water is always a draw and there are excellent lakes offering a variety of water-based activities at Fairlands Valley (Stevenage), Stanborough Park (Welwyn Hatfield), and Rickmansworth Aquadrome. A quieter waterside experience can also be had at Oughtonhead Common (Hitchin), Cassiobury Park (Watford), Memorial Park (Tring), Barclay Park (Hoddesdon), and Southern Country Park (Bishop's Stortford)

Trees and quiet?

There are woodlands you can retreat to and find a quieter place to yourself, without having to get walking boots on and copy of the rights of way map. Bencroft Woods (near Hertford) Whippendell Woods (Watford), Chipperfield Common and Bricket Wood Common each offer places to escape.

History?

If you like heritage then consider visiting Roman Verulamium Park (St Albans), Castle Gardens - on the site of Edward the Elder's stand against the invading Danes (Bishop's Stortford), Cedars Park with its Tudor and Stuart connections (near Waltham Cross), or the renowned 1960's Jellicoe Water Gardens (Hemel Hempstead).

Fun play facilities?

Most parks have a good range of play equipment for younger visitors but there are splashparks and paddling pools at several sites, such as Howard Park and Gardens (Letchworth), Fairlands Park (Stevenage), and King George Rec. (Bushey). Aberford Park in Borehamwood is a must for the hi-tech interactive Yalp equipment that has been installed.

For more informatin about these and many other parks, plus details and the other facilities they offer such as cafes, please check out www.parksherts.co.uk

#HertsYOPA18





Try a new park for Love Parks Week!

With over 140 council-owned parks and open spaces in Hertfordshire, how many have you visited?

Throughout July, ParksHerts is encouraging people to explore the many parks in the county and use the hashtag #TryANewParksHerts for daily inspiration to help them decide where and how to plan their perfect day out.

So, whether it's free, fun days out during the summer holidays, an interesting new place to visit or walk the dog or somewhere to relax or exercise in nature, ParksHerts will help you find your ideal park.

The ParksHerts website is easy to use and provides information about walking, cycling and running routes; historical and wildlife guides; activity trails; local events; maps, facilities, accessibility and more, so you know what to expect before you set off.

ParksHerts was developed to provide consistent, accessible and good quality online information about the county's parks and open spaces, as well as help address the challenge of rising obesity and reduced physical activity levels in Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Public Health, Richard Roberts, said: "The minute we step in to a park we reap enormous benefits. Natural surroundings help reduce stress and tension and in just three minutes our heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension reduces. It also makes us feel happier, amps up our vitamin D intake, which is needed for healthy bodies, and can even help us age gracefully.

"Physical activity is a nature's prescription; what better tonic is there to help us feel vibrant and healthy during Hertfordshire's Year of Physical Activity than exploring a new park?"

The website is compatible with mobile devices and tablets, so users can find out more about our parks whilst out and about. It can track users' location, so people can find the nearest toilet, discover more about the history of the area or find a new route to explore on the move.

Visit ParksHerts today - www.parksherts.co.uk – and find your perfect park! You can also like us on Facebook/ParksHerts, or follow us on twitter: @ParksHerts and Instagram: ParksHerts.





Have a Field Day!

Have a Field Day is a national celebration of our parks and green spaces, taking place on the first Saturday of July each year.

For 2018, Have a Field Day will be Saturday 7 July, when thousands of people across the UK will come together in their parks and green spaces to celebrate why these spaces are so special to their local communities. Have a Field Day is all about having fun at your local park with friends, family and the community. Have a party or a picnic to celebrate your local park – register your 'Have a Field Day' event online and get additional support materials to help organise a successful day.

[REGISTER HERE.](#)

Hi everyone, YOPA here!

I am the mascot for the Hertfordshire Year of Physical Activity, and I had a blast at Heartwood Forest parkrun on Saturday 23 June.

I heard that it is always sunny at Heartwood Forest, and this weekend didn't disappoint. Thanks for making me and the 20 first timers feel so welcome, and for all the highfives & hugs I received at the marshal point!

Saturday was a very important day as it was the #TGCinHerts parkrun takeover day, and I was thrilled to see Heartwood Forest joining forces with all the other parkrun events in Hertfordshire to promote this. They managed to get 15 female run directors to take charge and I was so proud to be supporting the campaign by wearing my This Girl Can t-shirt in such a magical place.

I think I managed to highfive over half of the 112 people who ran, jogged and walked the beautiful course. 30 people recorded new personal bests, which is amazing news! Thanks to the volunteers for looking after me, what a great bunch of people you are.

They're always on the lookout for more helping hands, so if you're free one Saturday in the future why not drop them an email heartwoodforesthelopers@parkrun.com as I know they'd really appreciate hearing from you.

Please don't be nervous! I hadn't been a marshal before, but got a full briefing from Kate the run director and felt really confident (even threw a few dance moves in!)

Thanks again for having me, and see you all soon! I've still got more Hertfordshire parkrun events to visit this year, so maybe I'll catch you at one of them. Don't forget to come and say hi!



Photo by Richard Underwood





Reflections on This Girl Can in Herts

#TGCinHerts Parkrun Takeover

The Parkrun Takeover event showcased female volunteers, inspiring women and girls to get involved with their local parkrun in a leadership capacity. All 15 Parkrun events took part and in all, 57% of volunteers were female and 1379 women and girls took part, 118 of whom were new!

Westfield Academy

Westfield Academy ran a brilliant week of This Girl Can in Herts activities, holding sessions during PE, at lunchtime and after school. Staff and pupils got involved and TGC t-shirts were given out as prizes. We dropped into one session to see 30 year 8 students taking part in an obstacle course (timed, for a bit of friendly competition). Brilliantly, several girls who don't normally do team sports enjoyed taking part.

Starlets FC

Stevenage Starlets FC received local funding to host a girls football taster session on Saturday 23 June. Over 50 girls of all ages

attended the two hour event, experiencing different types of football activities, game play and team work. It was a great day for the local community, and 30 non-members visited the club for the first time.

Fullerians RFC

Fullerians RFC in Watford is keen to encourage women and girls to the club so #TGCinHerts was an ideal opportunity! They organised a girl's rugby taster evening on 20 June, reached out through social media and other channels and connections, and saw 16 new faces turn up to try touch rugby for the very first time as a result. The daily competition winner for Wednesday, Charlotte, was picked from this session.

St Albans Sub Aqua

A new partner to the #TGCinHerts campaign this year, St Albans Sub Aqua got in touch with us to offer a free Try-dive session during the campaign week. The club usually runs a Try-dive event every month, with eight spaces in each session. We visited the TGC Week session and it was great to see eight women in Westminster Lodge swimming pool all having a go. There are already another six on the list for the next session. One participant said that she lived 10 minutes down the road and hadn't realised that the local club offered something like this.

Lucy Kennedy Fitness

On 24 June, Lucy Kennedy Fitness organised the YOPA and This Girl Can community run/jog/walk event in Broxbourne. It was a fantastic day with 186 people (and a few dogs) taking part, with all proceeds going to Isabel Hospice. Every finisher was given a medal and a glass of prosecco at the finish line, and it was great to see people staying around afterwards to chat about the day (and the World Cup!).



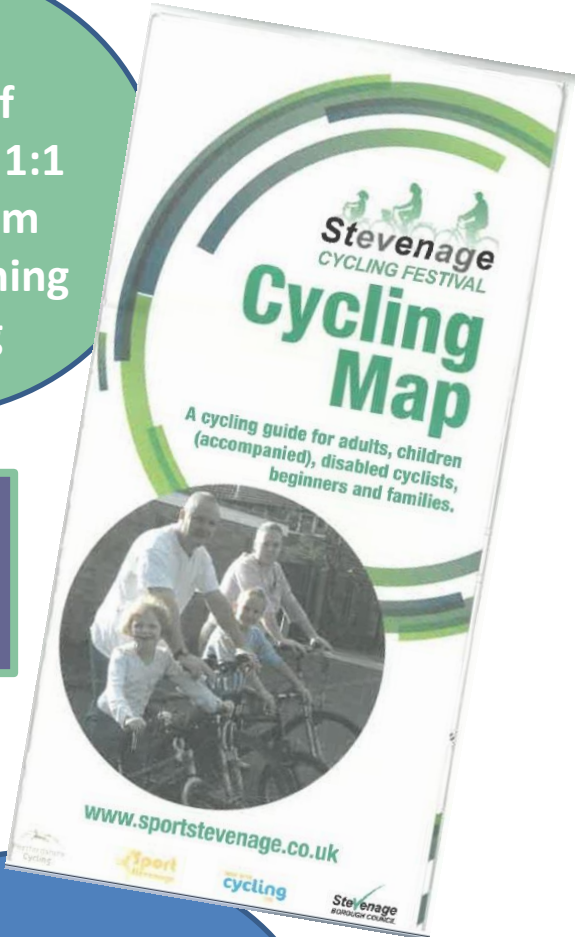


30 women's stories shared through Twitter

Boost in number of requests for 1:1 training from adults returning to cycling

Hertford cycle hub opened at Hartham Common to provide information to visitors

HERTSYOPA18 CYCLING MONTH!!



1000 people attended training (850 through school courses)

#HertsYOPA18





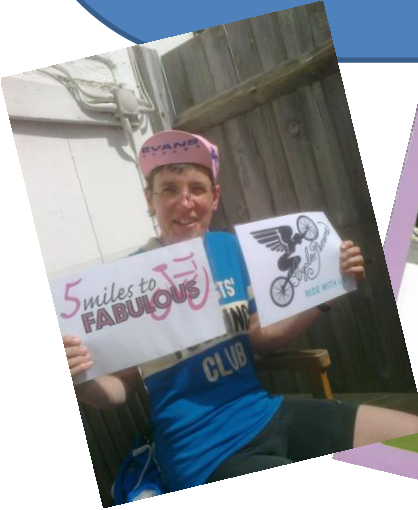
Stevenage cycle hub opened with a fun ride around Fairlands Valley Park



Over 500 Hertfordshire Cycling Maps sent out to Hertfordshire residents and visitors

HERTSYOPA18 CYCLING MONTH!!

Stevenage Cycling Festival 30 June-8 July
[Details here](#)



Two large cycle events (Berkhamstead Castle Revolutions and Fete du Velo

