

Hillingdon Partnership

Community Sport Update

Outreach in the Community During the Record Heat Wave!

July 2026 will certainly be remembered for its weather. As the driest July since records began, conversations at many summer events were not the usual ones about them being possibly being cancelled due to rain and more about how to survive the record-breaking temperatures and the blustery winds that proved very challenging for the organisers.

Despite the unusual weather, the clement conditions were a bonus for the many school fêtes, community days and summer celebrations held across Hillingdon. The community events throughout July provided the perfect platform to spread the word, inspiring residents to get up and get active, helping them to discover everything their local Better Leisure Centre has to offer this summer



Building Local Connections

Throughout the month, Angie visited communities across both North and South Hillingdon, building new relationships with primary schools, local charities and community organisations. These valuable partnerships continue to help connect people with opportunities to be active, enjoy the outdoors and build stronger, healthier communities.



Hillingdon Council - Party in the Park

One of the highlights of the month was Hillingdon Council's flagship **Party in the Park** event, where hundreds of families came together for a day packed with live entertainment, creative activities and community spirit. Visitors were treated to an impressive gymnastics display from the talented young members of Botwell Green Gymnastics Club, led by Head Coach Shameem Abbas, whose performers wowed the crowds with their confidence and skill. The high energy levels continued as Ravi, a dance fitness instructor from Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre, invited the Mayor of Hillingdon, Reeta Chamdal, and all families to get on their feet and join in a lively Bhangra dance session.

As always, a huge thank you to Hillingdon Council and community groups whose enthusiasm and support help make these events such a success.



Outreach in the Community During the Record Heat Wave.

Festival Fever Hits Hayes – Sunday 26th July

With the summer holidays underway, Hillingdon's sport and leisure centres were delighted to attend the annual Hayes Canal Festival – the annual Hayes Community Day, hosted by the Canal and river Trust and a celebration of the canal that runs through the heart of the town.

Community events like this provide the perfect opportunity for Angie Brydges, Community Sport Manager, to showcase the wide range of activities available across Hillingdon's leisure centres and encourage residents to stay active throughout the summer. From swimming safely in one of the borough's many pools – including the outstanding 50-metre outdoor pool in Uxbridge – to holiday camps, gymnastics at Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre, and a variety of fitness sessions, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

The event also gave leisure centre staff the chance to meet local families in a relaxed and welcoming environment, answer questions about memberships, and highlight some of the exciting programmes on offer. One of the most popular is the intensive swimming crash course, where children take a lesson every day for a week. These courses often help children develop their swimming skills more quickly, build confidence in the water, and improve specific stroke techniques.



Celebrating The Yeading Brook: Community Day – 25th July

A charity called **Let's Go Outside and Learn** which introduces people to natural environments, highlighting the benefits of improved health and wellbeing by spending time outdoors offers, welcomed **GLL/Better** to be part of its Community Day at **Belmore Fields** in Yeading.

The beautiful setting provided the perfect backdrop for a day of free family fun, with activities designed to engage local residents and raise awareness of the improvements being made to the River Crane. Visitors also had the opportunity to learn more about the river's wildlife, habitats and the importance of protecting this valuable local environment and how they can play a part in helping to protect it.

Each year, the charity, which monitors and cares for the River Crane using volunteers, hosts its Community Day at a different location along the river. This year, Hillingdon was the lucky borough to host the event, giving local families the chance to enjoy a fantastic day of free activities while discovering more about their local river and the work being done to enhance it.





Yeading Community Day (continued)

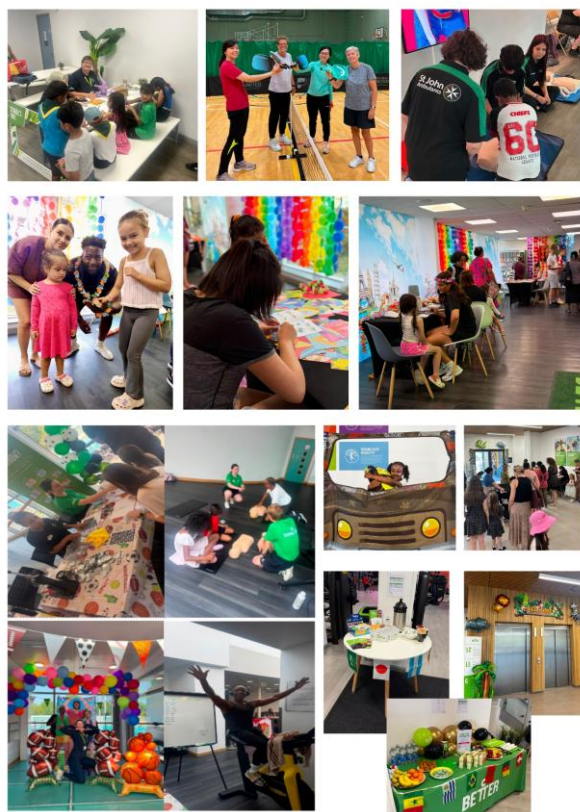
Visitors of all ages enjoyed taking part in the sporting challenges the GLL team offered - on parents and older children put their stamina to the test on the rowing machine, with the London Fire Brigade—who attended many of the July summer events—set an impressive benchmark of rowing 384 metres in one minute which the local residents could not better!

Children were keen to test their shooting abilities at the football dartboard, while the fishing game proved popular with younger children helping to develop coordination and skill. In fact, many adults couldn't resist having a go too! The hand-speed challenge was another favourite – event the Hillingdon Mayor, Reeta Chamdal, enjoyed putting her hand/eye co-ordination to the test.

It was wonderful to see so many families making the most of the summer, learning about their local river, enjoying the outdoors and discovering the wide range of opportunities available through GLL Better Leisure Centres across Hillingdon.

GLL/ Hillingdon Open Weekend – 18th and 19th July

The 2026 Hillingdon Summer Open Weekend was a huge success, bringing together a vibrant mix of sport, wellbeing and family entertainment. With a Commonwealth-inspired sporting theme, complemented by colourful jungle and carnival decorations, leisure centres across the borough welcomed residents of all ages to try new activities and enjoy a packed programme of events.



At **Highgrove Pool and Fitness Centre**, visitors experienced one of the weekend's most memorable attractions. An animal educator, who is also a centre member, introduced a range of tropical creatures, giving staff and customers the rare opportunity to safely hold snakes and lizards between swimming lessons and fitness classes. The interactive experience proved fascinating for all the people who attended on Saturday.

At **Hillingdon Sport and Leisure Centre**, relaxation took centre stage with local yoga practitioner Sabina leading calming gong bath sessions. Participants enjoyed a unique mindfulness experience as the deep vibrations of the gong promoted relaxation and wellbeing. The centre also embraced the Commonwealth theme with a cycling challenge to collectively ride **405 kilometres** on a static bike, the approximate distance from Hillingdon to Glasgow, host city of the Commonwealth Games. By Sunday morning, participants had just 42 kilometres remaining, and thanks to the combined efforts of staff and members, the challenge was successfully completed by lunchtime. Families also enjoyed a fun-filled Pickleball session on Sunday, and children enjoyed participating in the water safety talks.

GLL/ Hillingdon Open Weekend – 18th and 19th July

At **Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre** in West Drayton, the jungle theme came to life as children had their faces painted as their favourite jungle animals before taking part in a lively Jungle Bingo session in reception. Pickleball taster sessions in the sports hall were equally popular, with one participant, Jaz, saying , *"I'm a convert – I'll definitely be back for the social sessions on Thursdays."*

Meanwhile, **Botwell Green Sport and Leisure Centre** in Hayes offered a range of activities designed to get the whole family moving. A multi-sport family session in the sports hall ran alongside additional junior gym and adult gym taster sessions, encouraging visitors to explore new ways to stay active.



The Importance of Water Safety

Talk with 6th Hayes Scouts and Explorers – 16th July

Following the recent water safety incidents highlighted in the media, Angie Brydges, Community Sport Manager, reached out to local Scout groups across Hillingdon to offer engaging water safety sessions delivered by GLL's Swim Teachers.

With the recent heatwave encouraging more children and young people to cool off in rivers, lakes and the sea, GLL is committed to raising awareness of the risks associated with open water and helping children understand how to stay safe around different types of water and how to deal with an emergency situation.

Jo Nash from Hillingdon Sport & Leisure Complex, alongside Wendy from Botwell Green Sports & Leisure Centre and Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre, delivered a presentation to the Scouts. The session finished with a fun quiz, giving the young people the chance to test their knowledge and reinforce the important safety messages they had learned.

Angie also took the opportunity to talk to the group about the role of a lifeguard, highlighting it as a rewarding and flexible part-time job for students in sixth form. The discussion gave the Scouts an insight into the responsibilities of lifeguards, the valuable skills they develop, and the opportunities available within GLL for young people looking to gain experience while studying.

The sessions were well received and form part of GLL's ongoing commitment to promoting water safety within the local community, helping to ensure children and young people can enjoy water safely throughout the summer

Roots – Community Conversation in Uxbridge – 10th July

Park Academy Students Give a Voice to Their Community

Students from Park Academy have once again taken part in **Roots Futures**, a schools exchange programme delivered by community interest company **The Roots Programme**. Angie Brydges, Community Sport Manager, was pleased to be included in the event, alongside representatives of Brentford Football Clubs Community Sports Trust

Roots Futures is a project that brings together young people from different schools and backgrounds, giving them the opportunity to connect beyond their usual social circles, share their perspectives, and discover common ground. Throughout the programme, participants explore their own identities and experiences while learning from one another and reflecting on the similarities and differences between their schools, communities, and wider society.

The Roots Programme has worked with Park Academy for several years, and this year three students from the school were partnered with students from a private boys' school in Marylebone. Together, they collaborated on a meaningful community project designed to encourage local engagement and active citizenship.

As part of the programme, the students organised a **Community Conversation** at Uxbridge Community Centre. The event provided local residents with a welcoming space to discuss the realities of life in their community, share their experiences, and raise issues that matter most to them. The feedback gathered will be shared with the local council to help inform future decision-making and strengthen community relationships.

The event was fortunate to welcome Uxbridge ward councillors **Terence Murray** and **Riley Russell**, who were pleased to meet residents, listen to their concerns, and engage in open and constructive discussions about local issues.

The Community Conversation was a great example of young people taking the lead, creating opportunities for connections among local residents, and making a positive contribution to their local community. Park Academy is incredibly proud of the students involved, whose confidence, leadership, and knowledge of commitment to civic engagement were developed throughout the project.



Walking Netball Host Course – 22nd July

Walking Netball has become an increasingly popular social sport for people aged 50 and over, and Hillingdon Sport and Leisure Complex (HSLC) now hosts Walking Netball sessions three times a month.

To help ensure the sessions can continue when the regular coach is unavailable, Angie Brydges, Community Sport Manager, completed the Walking Netball Host course. This enables her to confidently lead the group and maintain continuity for participants.



