

**WE ARE CONSULTING.**

**WE ARE NEWHAM.**

**COMMUNITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND LEISURE**  
Resident Engagement Summary Report 2021/2022

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# INTRODUCTION

## AIMS AND BACKGROUND

## Introduction and aims

The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 50 Steps to a Healthier Borough, outlines the ambitions of the Council and its partners to improve the health of residents. This includes the recognition of the importance that physical activity has in supporting an individual's overall health and mental wellbeing, as well as the positive impact on supporting wider health inequalities. The borough's leisure services play a vital part in supporting these ambitions.

We have an opportunity to redesign the future delivery of leisure services, and consider how we deliver the best possible services that supports as many residents as possible to lead active, healthy lives.

We wanted residents to help us shape services that are fit for purpose and support wider cross council working to improve opportunities for residents to be active. We conducted an online Community Physical Activity and

# WE ARE ACTIVE. WE ARE NEWHAM.

## ONLINE RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT SESSION

Join us on Friday 17th December, 10am – 12.30pm

Help shape our physical activity, community and leisure offer.

To book: [www.eventbrite.com/e/leisure-services-and-physical-activity-community-engagement-tickets-225373798097](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/leisure-services-and-physical-activity-community-engagement-tickets-225373798097)



Leisure Survey to hear the views of residents and people working in Newham. Also throughout December 2021 to March 2022 we held a number of resident engagement sessions (online and face to face) with both adults, mental health service users, young people, young people with disabilities and their families.

### 1. Resident Engagement Survey

A community physical activity and leisure survey was created and posted on the London Borough of Newham's Co-Create Platform from the 14 December 2021 to 30 January 2022. 184 respondents completed the survey.

The survey consisted of 19 questions with multiple choice answers aimed at collecting information on activity levels, attitudes to physical activity, leisure centres, parks and communication preferences.

## **2. Resident Online Engagement Sessions – Adults**

The questions were divided into three themes:

- Leisure facilities
- Parks and open spaces
- Community activation

Three online sessions were held on 17 December 2021, 21 and 26 January 2022. A total of 22 participants attended the sessions with their feedback and comments being captured via a Jamboard. There were a mix of adult male and females from different ethnic backgrounds and a variety of ages in attendance.

## **3. East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) Peer Led Walk and Talk**

Consultation with mental health service users was undertaken with an ELFT peer led walk and talk group on Monday 7th March, 2022. There was a total of 10 participants consisting of adult males and females from a variety of ages and a mix of different ethnic backgrounds.

## **4. Discussion Groups – Children and Young People**

Two online discussion groups took place:

- Pupil Parliament on 12 January 2022 – three primary schools represented with approximately 12 children from Years 5 and 6
- Next Gen Newham on 27 January 2022 – mixture of children, young people and parents represented with approximately 25 in attendance

Three questions were asked:

- What places do you use for sport and activities outside of school?
- What could be better?
- What would you like to do that you can't at the moment?

Participant feedback was captured via a Jamboard and visual minutes.

## **5. GR8 Day to Play Event Consultation**

Further consultation was carried out at a specific Special Educational Needs (SEND) event with children with disabilities or additional needs and their families. The event took place on Saturday 19th February 2022, at Newham leisure centre. There were approximately 30 participants in attendance from a variety of age groups and a mix of different ethnic backgrounds.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Physical activity can be undertaken in many places, not just inside physical buildings such as leisure centres, therefore it was important to cover broader themes during our engagement process. Questions across both the engagement sessions and the survey were divided into 3 themes: Leisure Facilities, Parks and Open Spaces and Community Activation.

Residents told us that they enjoy taking part in physical activity, understand the health benefits and would like to do more. But despite this, just over half of residents we engaged with are not accessing the sports and leisure facilities in the borough. The activities on offer, cost, lack of accessible/convenient facilities and lack of awareness of opportunities available were the top four reasons cited.

The majority of residents use their local park or green space for mental wellbeing, recreation, exercise and nature and wildlife. They would be encouraged to use parks and green spaces more if there were better facilities and equipment, more walking routes, nature trails/natural play and improved amenities such as cafes, toilets and seating areas available. Residents feel they would also be more active if they felt safer and there were extra activities available for them to take part in such as exercise classes and bootcamps.

Solo activities such as walking, cycling, jogging/running and exercise at home were the main activities that residents were undertaking to keep active. Swimming was highlighted as a very popular activity, feedback suggests that there is a big demand for access to the swimming pools and swimming lessons but our current facilities are unable to cope with the demand.

Despite residents telling us that they enjoy physical activity, understand the health benefits, a substantial free activity programme on offer and some improvements to our sporting infrastructure in recent years, participation in sport and physical activity levels in Newham remain among the lowest in England. Feedback from the consultation would suggest a lack of time, affordability of services, a lack of motivation and awareness of opportunities available are the main barriers to an active lifestyle.

The insight gathered from the consultation has helped us build a clearer picture of the needs of residents, helping us to understand the motivations, attitudes and barriers to being active and will help shape the future of leisure services and physical activity in the borough.

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS AND ATTITUDE

I would like to do more activity, but it is difficult to fit it in - would like something/classes that I can do with my children or at lunchtime near home.

I understand I should take part in physical activity but struggle to find activity I feel confident enough to partake in.

As sole carer to my wheelchair-bound husband I have less time than I would like to for activities outside the home.

I've never enjoyed physical activity very much! But I know it's necessary.

I used to be more active, but this has decreased during Covid. Looking forward to improving this again.

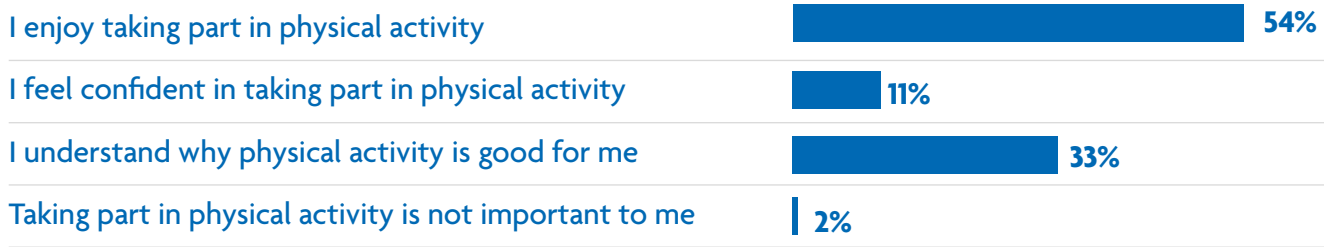
I try to exercise a good amount but don't always have the motivation.



### SURVEY QUESTION 1

Which of the following best describes your current view towards becoming or being physically active?

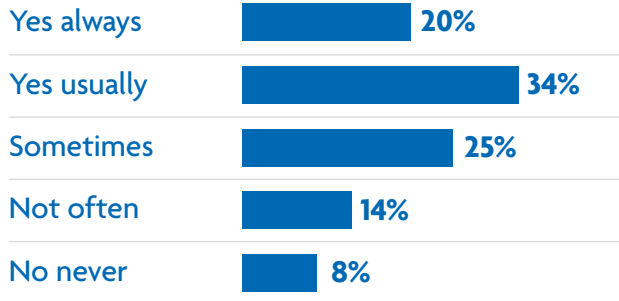
(184 reponses)



### SURVEY QUESTION 2

Over the course of a normal week, do you undertake 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity?

(184 reponses)



## COMMUNITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND LEISURE

Resident Engagement Summary Report 2021/2022

### SURVEY QUESTION 3

Where do you undertake most of your physical activity?

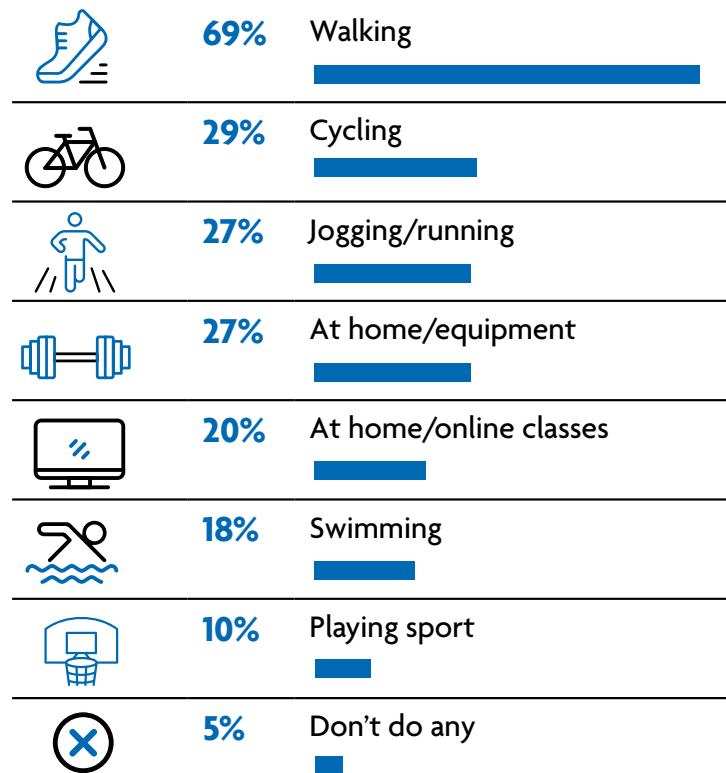
(184 reponses)



### SURVEY QUESTION 4

How do you undertake most of your physical activity?

(184 reponses)



## SURVEY QUESTION 5

### What prevents you from completing 150 minutes of physical activity per week?

(184 reponses)

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 24% | Not enough time – work                               |
| 23% | Affordability of services                            |
| 23% | Nothing, I complete 150 minutes per week             |
| 20% | Not motivated  |
| 19% | Not enough time – childcare                          |
| 17% | Covid concerns                                       |
| 14% | Caring responsibilities                              |
| 12% | Physical/mental health                               |
| 11% | No support   |
| 10% | Not enough time – home                               |
| 10% | Don't know how to find out about services/activities |
| 6%  | Can't find something I like                          |
| 4%  | Not sure how to start                                |
| 2%  | It's not a priority                                  |
| 2%  | Just don't want to                                   |



#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- *There are no gyms or fitness centres within 10 minutes.*
- *Lack of availability of classes and activities.*
- *Little or no women-only provision.*
- *I don't feel safe.*
- *Poor standard of facilities.*

## SURVEY QUESTION 6

What do you think would help you to work towards/achieve the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity each week?

(184 reponses)

The top 4 motivators were:



**43%**  
AFFORDABILITY



**39%**  
PUBLICITY



**36%**  
VARIETY OF FUN  
ACTIVITIES



**28%**  
GROUP ACTIVITIES  
WITH FRIENDS

# 92% of people would like to do more physical activity/exercise!

## SURVEY QUESTION 7

Why did you start taking part in physical activity?

(184 responses)



82%

TO IMPROVE OR MAINTAIN  
PHYSICAL HEALTH



56%

TO IMPROVE MENTAL  
HEALTH/SELF-ESTEEM



49%

TO IMPROVE/MAINTAIN  
BODY TONE/SHAPE



48%

TO MAINTAIN/LOSE  
WEIGHT



43%

FEEL GOOD FACTOR/FUN/  
ENJOYMENT

## SURVEY QUESTION 8

**How important are the following factors to you when thinking about participating in more physical activity?**

(Number of responses)

|            |                              |
|------------|------------------------------|
| <b>171</b> | Access/good quality services |
| <b>169</b> | Time                         |
| <b>168</b> | Cleanliness                  |
| <b>167</b> | Direct costs                 |
| <b>162</b> | Safety                       |
| <b>162</b> | Appropriate activity         |
| <b>159</b> | Location                     |
| <b>157</b> | Personal motivation          |
| <b>149</b> | Confidence                   |
| <b>139</b> | Transport                    |
| <b>134</b> | Covid compliance             |
| <b>86</b>  | Support from peer group      |
| <b>82</b>  | Disability/long-term health  |
| <b>82</b>  | Indirect costs               |
| <b>31</b>  | Cultural/religious reasons   |



### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- *Childcare at Leisure Centres.*
- *Places being more accessible.*
- *Women only.*
- *Variety of offers including online.*
- *More outdoor activities or things in parks.*
- *More walking and cycling provision.*
- *Better run facilities.*
- *More opportunities for swimming.*

# LEISURE CENTRES ACCESS AND USE

**How to videos, showing the facilities and how to access/use them.**

**More opportunities for family activity.**

**Website and app too hard to use. I'm unable to book.**

**Not enough availability of activities I like to do, like swimming.**

**Need more alternative options, pay as you go, drop in, online and outdoor activity.**

**More targeted offers, over 60's, women only and disability offers and classes.**



# 52% of survey respondents to do not use leisure centres in Newham, where as 48% do

## SURVEY QUESTION 9

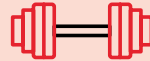
What do you use the facilities for?

(184 responses)



**32%**

SWIMMING



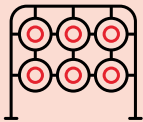
**22%**

GYM



**20%**

GROUP EXERCISE CLASSES



**9%**

CRÈCHE/SOFT PLAY



**5%**

RUNNING TRACK



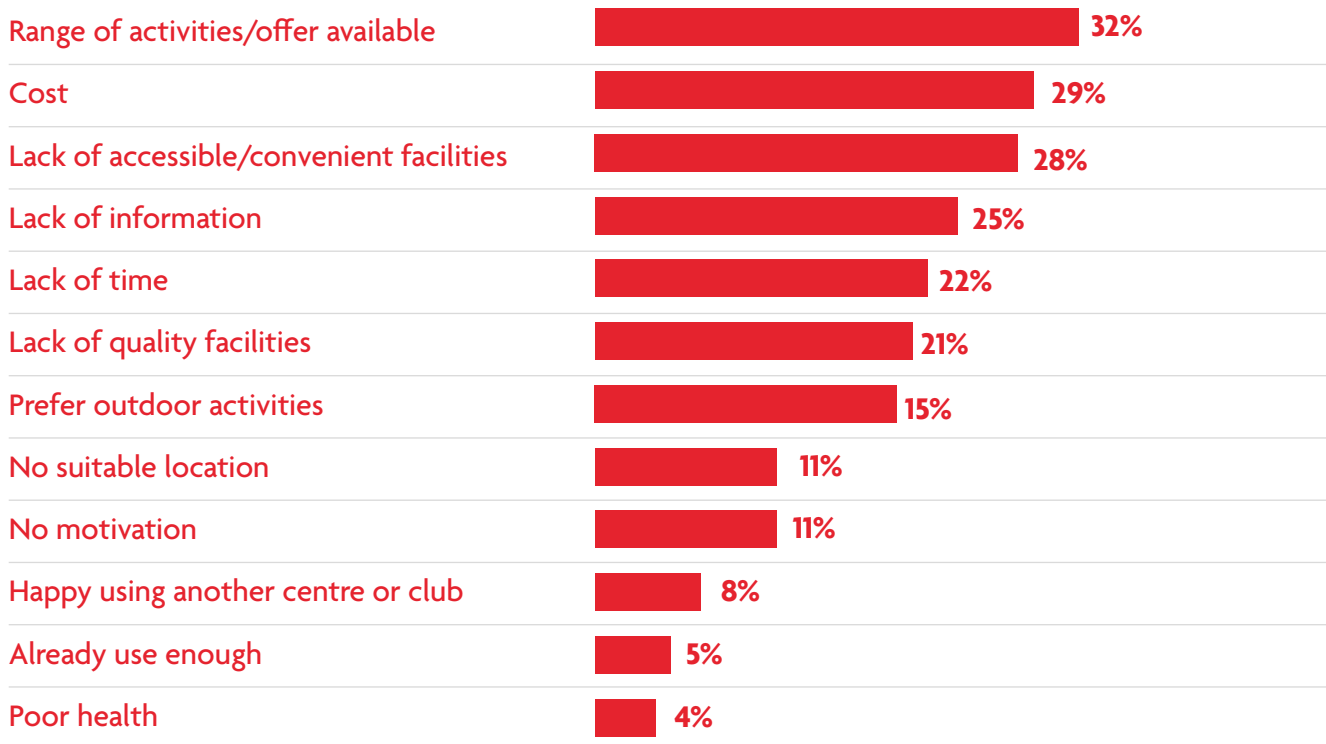
**2%**

COURT/PITCH

## **SURVEY QUESTION 10**

### **What stops you accessing your local leisure centre?**

(184 reponses)



## SURVEY QUESTION 11

What would encourage you to use a leisure facility, or use them more? (Number of responses)



162

BROADER ACTIVITY  
OFFER



156

CLEANLINESS OF  
FACILITIES



151

MORE  
INFORMATION



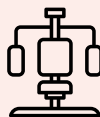
150

LOWER  
COST



148

BETTER PROGRAMME/  
TIMINGS



146

IMPROVED  
FACILITIES



145

BETTER RANGE OF  
FACILITIES/EQUIPMENT



131

COVID-SAFE



119

BETTER QUALITY COACHING/  
INSTRUCTION



111

BETTER  
TRANSPORT



65

CHILDCARE

# KEY FINDINGS – PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & LEISURE CENTRES

These key findings account for information gathered through the online resident engagement sessions and the online resident engagement survey

1. Just over half of residents are not currently accessing the sports and leisure facilities in the borough.
2. The cost of using leisure facilities is too expensive.
3. Communication is a challenge. Residents are not aware of what is available or where to find out about it.
4. Residents would like a wider range of activities and better targeted provision i.e. female only, older people, people with disabilities etc.
5. Customer service can be a barrier to using the facilities.
6. Additional health offers such as healthy eating workshops, healthy cooking classes, sauna, meditation and mindfulness would attract more residents to use the facilities.
7. Access to the swimming pools and swimming lessons is limited.
8. There is a lack of good quality, convenient, accessible facilities.
9. Solo activities such as walking, cycling, jogging/running and exercise at home were the main activities that residents were undertaking to keep active.

# PARKS, OPEN SPACES & COMMUNITY ACTIVATION ACCESS AND USE

**More or better cycle and walking routes/trails between parks.**

**More lighting or well lit areas.**

**Cleaner spaces.**

**Less antisocial behaviour.**

**More wildlife.**

**Safer spaces.**

## 84% USE A LOCAL PARK OR GREEN SPACE!

The most popular Newham parks were Central Park and Plashet Park. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and West Ham Park were also popular, however these parks are not managed by the London Borough of Newham.

### SURVEY QUESTION 12

#### What do you use the park for?

(184 responses)



46%

MENTAL WELLBEING



46%

RECREATION



45%

SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



42%

NATURE AND WILDLIFE



21%

CHILDREN'S AMENITIES



15%

ACTIVE TRAVEL

### SURVEY QUESTION 13

What would encourage you to be more active in your park/green space? (184 responses)



**67%**  
BETTER AMENITIES  
(CAFÉS, TOILETS, SEATING)



**34%**  
MORE ACTIVITIES



**29%**  
MORE OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT



**29%**  
MORE/BETTER SPORTS FACILITIES



**27%**  
BETTER PLAY FACILITIES



**27%**  
IMPROVED INFORMATION BOARDS  
AND SIGNS



## SURVEY QUESTION 14

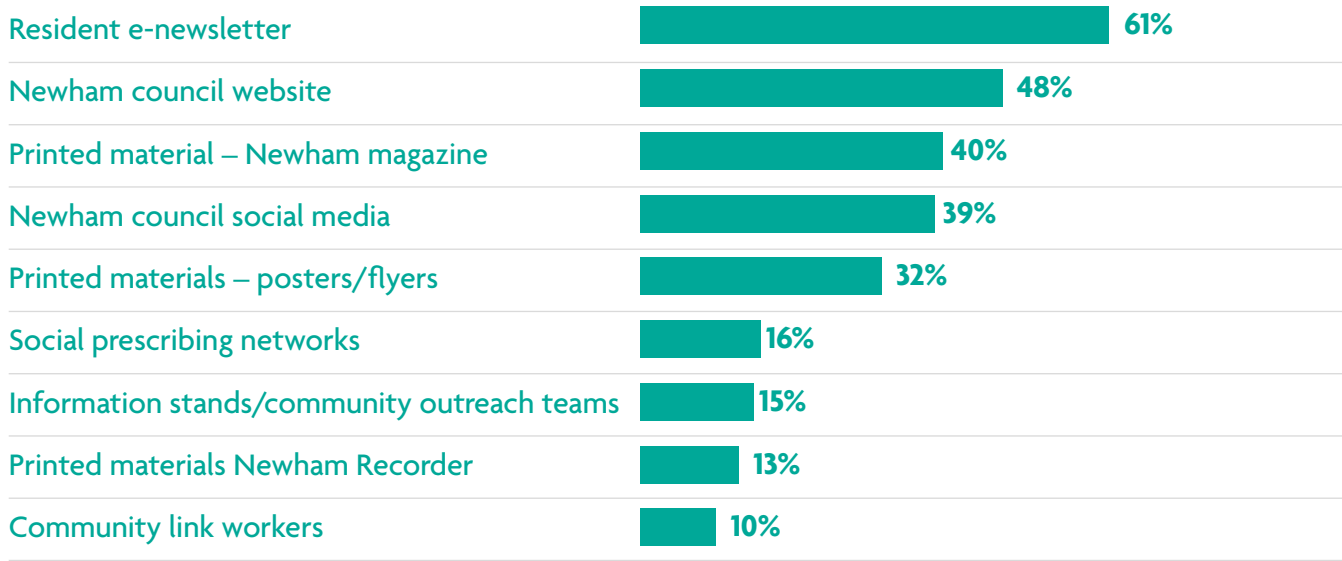
What additional facilities would you like to see as part of our outdoor community offer? (184 responses)



## SURVEY QUESTION 15

### How would you like to hear about information on what's available?

(184 responses)



# KEY FINDINGS – PARKS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVATION

These key findings account for information gathered through the online resident engagement sessions and the online resident engagement survey.

1. Parks such as Central Park and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park are popular as there are a number of amenities available (toilets, cafes etc.).
2. Parks are mainly being used for mental wellbeing, recreation (such as family visits), sport and physical activity (such as walking) and for nature and wildlife.
3. Residents would like to see more activities at flexible times. For example, group exercise, boot camps and running.
4. Residents would like to see additional offers, equipment and amenities in the community. For example, events and fun days, toilets, cafes, outdoor gym equipment, sensory play areas and rewilding.
5. Other locations that residents would use to be active are at home, libraries, community centres, church halls and schools.
6. Residents would like to undertake more activity for their mental wellbeing and to help them socialise.
7. Barriers that prevent residents being more active include their mental wellbeing (low Mood and lack of motivation), there disability or long term health condition, the cost of activities and lack of time.
8. Resident safety was a barrier to accessing parks, green spaces and being more active, with ASB, lighting and cleanliness cited as some of the reasons for this.

# MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USERS FEEDBACK

# KEY FINDINGS – ELFT PEER LED WALK AND TALK



Lack of awareness of what's available.



Booking sessions in advance is problematic due to certain health conditions. You don't know how you are going to feel when you wake up. Need to be able to just turn up.



A chance to try different activities for free before committing to one, how do we know if we like it, if we don't know what's on offer?



Leisure Centre memberships and sessions too expensive.



Gyms too busy and feels overwhelming.



Not knowing what to expect when you turn up at a leisure centre. Feels intimidating.

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DISCUSSION GROUPS

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Three questions were asked.

1.

What places do you use for sport and activities outside of school?

2.

What could be better?

3.

What would you like to do that you can't at the moment?

# KEY FINDINGS – PUPIL PARLIAMENT



Local libraries and leisure centres as well as the Olympic Park are used to be active. Some use Street Tag.



More opportunities for swimming are needed e.g. outdoor swimming and pop up pools.



More activities and equipment in parks e.g. rock climbing and exercise machines.



Cafés or food trucks in the parks – more eating spaces would encourage people to visit and use the parks more often.



More activities that are easy to get to e.g. kickboxing, boxing, swimming, football and sports clubs.



Opportunities for school activities to be available outside of school e.g. handball and netball.



Supporting independence of children and young people is important – opportunities for work experience and job shadowing.



Family coffee mornings for mental wellbeing was highlighted.



# VISUAL MINUTES FROM NEXT GEN NEWHAM



# KEY FINDINGS – NEXT GEN NEWHAM



A safe space for young people to access, do activities with family and friends, or make new friends is important.



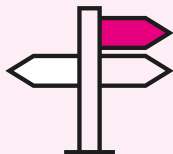
Spaces need to be clean, accessible and welcoming.



Don't know what is available – services should be promoted more.



More free, inclusive and targeted activities/lessons e.g. female-only provision, culturally-specific offers, age-targeted offers.



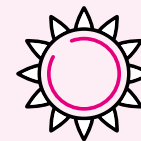
Have pathways into sport-related employment and opportunities.



More sports sessions and fun day in parks would increase use.



More opportunities to take part in cycling and swimming.

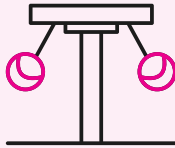


Better mental health support is needed.

# KEY FINDINGS – GR8 DAY TO PLAY CONSULTATION



More swimming, especially specific sessions such as family swims, disability swimming and lessons for children with autism or other additional needs.



More accessible equipment in parks and playgrounds.



Targeted sessions specifically for children with additional needs and their families.



Inclusive activities in parks such as fitness activities, table tennis, family fun days, cycling and cycle training.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Improve marketing and communication of the leisure offer available via a variety of communication channels and networks, including targeted campaigns to reach the intended beneficiaries.**
- **Work in partnership with the Parks and Green Assets Team and wider council departments to improve amenities and infrastructure in the parks and open spaces.**
- **Continue to work in partnership with National Governing Bodies of Sport to introduce new programmes and improve facilities that support residents to be active (e.g. Table Tennis England, LTA, Essex County Cricket, Football Association).**
- **Further develop the current leisure activity offer, ensuring the offer is wide ranging, flexible to changing needs, easy to access and free or low cost.**
- **Using feedback from residents continue to develop targeted provision for specific groups such as children and young people, women and girls, families, people with disabilities and additional needs, older people and those from culturally diverse backgrounds.**
- **Work with the councils leisure operator to improve access to leisure centres, ensuring they are welcoming for all, provide a varied activity offer, are easy to access and widely promoted.**
- **Work in partnership with relevant council services and wider partners, including voluntary, community and faith sector, to ensure residents of all ages feel safe when accessing leisure facilities, activities and programmes.**