

# Play in the Park Report - August 2022

Thanks to the funding from Rotary Club of Wolverhampton and James Beattie Charitable Trust, Wolves Play Café were able to deliver a total of 4 stay and play sessions to encourage physical activity in West Park Wolverhampton. From this initial grant, we were able to match-fund the project with further support from Sports England/National Lottery funding from Active Black Country to double the session duration at West Park and add an additional site of Phoenix Park which further strengthened the overall project. This report focuses on the impact at West Park, where the Rotary small grant was focused. Our aims were to engage with 60 children and 45 adults. We were able to achieve and surpass these numbers.



This year, drawing on feedback from beneficiaries, we delivered these sessions as drop-in between 10.00 and 2.00pm during the school summer holidays through August 2022 to enable us to reach more families and in response to Covid-19 guidelines changing from previous years. For the final play session, we were able to partner with the Dr Bike team who brought along the opportunity to celebrate the location of the Commonwealth Games Cycling Trials at West Park including balance bikes. We linked our songs and activities to cycling and beneficiaries who had attended other Play in the Park sessions over the summer really enjoyed this special event and opportunity.



## Who came to play at West Park?



## Happy Stories and Impact Measurement

### I like...West Park

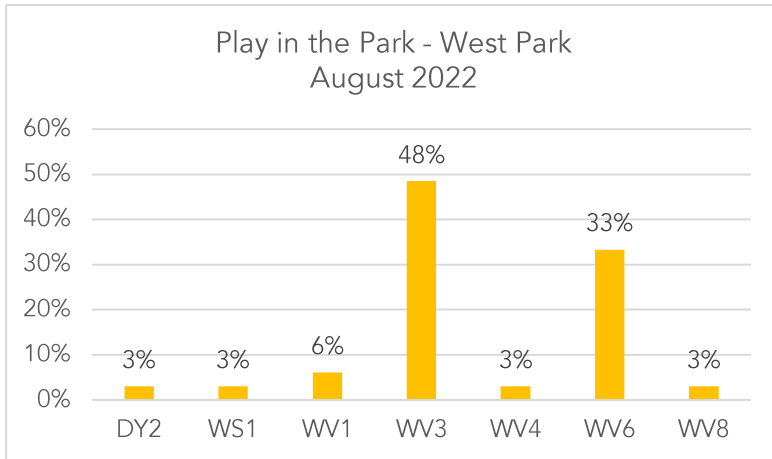
- Meeting new people & other parents
- My daughters love coming here and what they love most are the friendly organisers, you are dedicated professionals, and we can feel your love for kids!
- Friendly, lots of toys
- We look forward to the sessions as we can engage + explore
- Very friendly & love the singing
- The singing + physical activities which are fun + help develop children
- The open-ended play items
- We love singing and dancing too



We regularly ask participants to tell us about their experiences at the sessions to inform improvements using easily accessible methods for children and speakers of English as second language such as pictures of activities to choose favourites and having lots of chats as we play.

## Budget and Use of Resources

All spend was completed as allocated in original project budget. Marketing channels included targeted emails to previous attendees, social media local groups, posters on the Park, local schools and nurseries, shops and QR codes on these posters to encourage booking and commitment prior to the sessions starting, as well as signs in the park to encourage on the day drop-in. The local marketing approach was important to us to ensure hyperlocal attendance for local children and adults in walking distance of the parks.



## Challenges and Learnings

The first 2 weeks coincided with very hot weather and we made necessary adjustments to ensure safety of beneficiaries who attended. Due to starting the play sessions a week later in West Park due to the

Commonwealth Games, the cycling event on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September coincided with some children returning to school, so this was quieter than expected. However, the engagement from those who took part was deep and some of the children who took part had not ridden a bike before or have access to one at home.

Feedback for future sessions includes:

- *'Themed events would be good e.g., Bear Hunt'*
- *'I want to thank you for what you already do. I would introduce some nature arts and crafts for the older children, sand and water play for hot days.'*
- *'Although the children do occasionally engage with one another, introducing who is who children wise and helping them engage with one another more so would help them build relationships with one another.'*
- *'Also incorporate the great ideas on the cards we take home into sessions would be amazing.'*

## Future Project Plans

Wolves Play Café and the local families of the parks are very grateful to Rotary Club of Wolverhampton and James Beattie Trust Community Fund Scheme for enabling the successful Play in the Parks sessions at West Park this summer to go ahead. We will look to secure further funding to ensure accessible play sessions for young children in the city can continue in the spring and summer school holidays to August 2023, providing opportunities to deepen long-term play relationships with little ones and their caregivers, in turn creating long-term positive impacts and outcomes for physical and mental wellbeing in Wolverhampton.

**West Park**

The postcode analysis demonstrates 87% of attendees were from the immediate postcode of the park or the surrounding postcode areas of WV1, WV3, WV6.

