



THURROCK BIG LUNCHES

#HAF2025

Thurrock Big Lunch events began last summer as a way to unite the community in local parks. This year, the focus was on physical activity, with a wide range of local providers encouraging families to get moving and try something new through engaging "Come and Try" sessions.

Highlights included skate park demos and coaching, basketball competitions, tennis coaching from the Lawn Tennis Association, plus energetic sessions in Zumba, yoga, karate, crazy golf, and diverse dance styles, from traditional Maypole to vibrant Bhangra.



Attendances across the 7 Big Lunches



Free meals given to children engaged in the Essex ActivAte programme



Community stalls many offering discounted or free services and goods

The 6 Big Lunches were held in South Ockendon, Aveley, Grays, Purfleet, Chadwell St Mary, and Corringham, and a Community Picnic in The Park in Tilbury. These events invited local communities to stroll to their nearby parks with friends and family to partake in free activities. By uniting the communities throughout Thurrock, the event strengthened relationships and provided organisations the opportunity to showcase their valuable services.

Survey highlights



Great activities for the kids, bouncy castles, face painting, stalls, crazy golf



Spending time with people and having fun



The buzz of people. Live performance and live dj!



Basketball, park equipment, trampoline, big Jenga, and skateboarding were all great!



Successes

The Big Lunches in Thurrock provided an excellent opportunity for collaborative efforts within the community. They successfully brought together sports, arts, and local services, while also allowing community delivery partners to showcase what their organisations can offer to local residents.

Key Learnings

- Growth:** Big Lunch attendance has doubled since last year, requiring careful planning around venue size and parking for future events.
- Funding:** Continued financial support is essential to keep the events free and accessible for families.

“ The amount of free activities for families - this was so refreshing during expensive school holidays. It was great to see all the children having such fun... all the activities were excellent!
— PARENT, THURROCK ”

