



Following the successful pilot of the Active New Communities project at Alconbury Weald, Urban&Civic is working with the local Councils and Living Sport - an independent charity focused on improving the health, happiness and wellbeing of the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - to roll out the programme to support existing and new communities to lead active and healthy lives at Waterbeach.

The principle of designing healthy living into new places has been a goal of both public policy and best practice masterplanning for a long time: with the focus sharper than ever in the wake of the pandemic, and major public health challenges of both obesity and mental health.

The design and layout of Alconbury Weald, Wintringham and Waterbeach have all drawn from a range of good practice guidance, including by Sport England and NHS England, on how to put health into the heart of each new place. But critically, the design only comes to life when the spaces and connections created are activated and enjoyed by people.

Drawing from the lessons of the Healthy New Town's Programme, Living Sport has been trialling Active New Communities at Alconbury Weald since January 2020. Through a series of events and initiatives, Alconbury Weald now has a wide range of regular fitness classes, sports clubs and healthy activities, in addition to extensive footpath, cycleways and green spaces, supporting residents of all ages to embrace an active lifestyle.



Innovation



Human

Sally Gibson, Head of Programmes for Living Sport, said: *“The opportunities at Waterbeach are amazing. There are some fantastic local sports teams and a full calendar of events and activities in the existing village, and the former Barracks is already part of that with the refurbished Sports Hall, Studio and squash courts in regular use.*

*“When you add in some of the lovely features coming in the new development, such as the walking loop around the lake at Waterbeach, combined with extensive footpaths and cycle connections, then we have a great opportunity to not just get more people leading healthy active lives, but also bringing them together to enjoy those activities: literally building communities and connections that make us all happier and healthier.”*

South Cambridgeshire District Council’s Lead Cabinet Member for Communities, Cllr Bill Handley, said: *“The work taking place at Waterbeach is all about helping people to get involved — and stay involved — in sport and a healthy, active lifestyle. This is especially important when arriving at a new community because moving home can disrupt exercise routines, and we want to help with that by highlighting the sport and exercise opportunities on offer nearby.*

*“Between the village and the new development, there are some fantastic facilities on the doorstep that residents can take advantage of. Whether you are taking part in a sport for the first time — or are someone who is used to regular clubs and activities — I really hope that these initiatives and facilities support you. I’m looking forward to seeing how this project contributes to health and wellbeing locally.”*

