

April 2022 saw the start of a new Leisure Services Contract with Greenwich Leisure Ltd to manage the Authorities main sports venues. GLL has taken on responsibility for VeloPark, the White Water Centre, Hockey and Tennis Centre, the Athletics Centre at Edmonton, Riding Centre, and the new Ice Centre. The contract further cements the future of these venues and is part of a commitment to the many communities served by the Park Authority. As part of the partnership Lee Valley Regional Park Authority will continue to invest in the venues to ensure that they go from strength to strength, delivering real impact for communities.

2022 was the tenth anniversary of London 2012 and saw an exhibition set up at Lee Valley VeloPark which was opened by Dame Laura Kenny and Paralympians Neil Fachie MBE and Lora Fachie MBE. Other activities included a new walks programme, a series of installations across the park challenging visitors to run or jump Olympic distances and the publication of a new document detailing the authorities' contribution to the sporting legacy of the Games.

As part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games the Velopark hosted the track cycling events. This saw the venue becoming the only one in the world to have hosted an Olympics, Paralympics, World Championship and Commonwealth Games in the same sport. More than 30,000 people saw seven sessions of top track action in what was the largest and most complex event the venue had held since 2012, a tangible demonstration of the legacy from London 2012. The venue hosted a leg of the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay which also included the Lee Valley White Water Centre.

Other major events have included the Track Champions League finale in December at Lee Valley VeloPark which attracted 11,000 people, the International Hockey Federation Pro League at Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre with crowds of 7,000 and a two day music festival on the Showground site at Waltham Abbey which attracted 26,000 people.

The park's open spaces retained seven London in Bloom awards including for the Gunpowder Park and Waltham Abbey Gardens as well as nine Green Flags which included the River Lee Country Park and the Gunpowder Park. Access to high quality open space has never been so important and the authority staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that they are providing the very highest of standards for visitors. These awards are not only a fitting tribute to all the staff but also to the many volunteers who work extremely hard to maintain these vital open spaces on our doorstep.

There is a continuing programme of improvements in the Authority's open spaces with a £6m programme in place for the next five years which includes St Paul's Field near Nazeing and sites across the Valley.

The main project this year has been a new £30m Lee Valley Ice Centre on Lea Bridge Road, Leyton. This is a replacement for the old centre which had reached the end of its operational life after 34 years. The new centre is one of only three in the country which have two Olympic-sized rinks and is expected to attract half a million visitors a year, double that of the old Lee Valley Ice Centre which could not cope with demand. The centre also has a gym, dance studios, community spaces and café.

Alongside elite level facilities for top skaters there will be public skating sessions where anyone can come and skate, plus ice dancing, synchronised skating, ice hockey and ice

discos. The centre will also be home to clubs and ice hockey teams. Work on the new venue is almost complete and it is expected to open in May.

The Authority continues to invest in its other venues. A £480,000 replacement Mondotrack® at Lee Valley Athletics Centre has been installed to replace the worn old indoor track. The meeting rooms at Lee Valley White Water Centre have been upgraded to increase the Authority's ability to attract business bookings which will help its long-term financial sustainability. New funding has been agreed for a project which will include a new community gym, refurbished fitness studio, changing rooms and a strength and conditioning suite at Lee Valley Athletics Centre.

Work is continuing to explore the possibility of an inland surfing destination at Lee Valley Leisure Complex in Edmonton and there has been investment in visitor accommodation with improvements to existing campsites including those at Dobbs Weir and Sewardstone Road

A new Environment Policy will shape the Authority's commitment to dealing with the climate emergency. An £800,000 project to replace lights at Lee Valley VeloPark with LEDs will reduce energy bills and the venue's carbon footprint and other sites are being explored for similar changes.