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One of the best things anyone can do to improve their health and wellbeing is to get involved in their local community and be physically active.

In order to give people in the local area the opportunity to do just that we need to have the right facilities in place for community and sporting groups of all types.

One of my main priorities is to help deliver first rate facilities that people of all ages can be proud of and enjoy.

I'm glad to report that hills residents will soon enjoy new community and sporting facilities. Last Tuesday we celebrated the start of construction of the Upwey Tecoma Community Recreation and Sporting Hub, or UTCRASH as it's known.

When UTCRASH is complete it will be a sight to behold.

The new hub will provide a modern and multipurpose space for around 23 local community and sporting groups, including 2,500 members and 1,150 school students and staff. It will feature over 1,100 square metres of multi-purpose community spaces. There will be a commercial kitchen, a gym, canteen, change rooms, offices and meeting spaces. It really is the complete works and I can't wait to see it when it is complete.

It has been supported financially by all levels of government, the participating clubs and Bendigo Bank. I'm proud the State Government has delivered \$1.5m to this exciting project. It's a worthwhile investment and one that will pay itself back over years to come. Healthier, more active and more socially engaged people will be the result.

But much more importantly we must recognise the hard work of all those who made UTCRASH happen. These buildings might seem to appear out of nowhere but the reality is that they are the result of tireless advocacy over many years. People like Andrew Peterson, Andrew Fullagar and Alan Stevenson (and many others) put in the hard yards and worked with all levels of government to secure funding. If it wasn't for these local heroes it simply would never have happened. Our community owes them a great deal. Thank you.

The extensive work by the UTCRASH committee to develop and present a master plan made all the difference. They should be incredibly proud that the first sod has been turned; this project will meet the rising needs of our community and provide a permanent home to many groups who currently move between multiple locations. We want to make things easier for them and UTCRASH will do just that.