

Guildford Play Strategy

2016-2021



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Section 1

The Play Strategy

Foreword

Guildford has a proud history of supporting play opportunities across the borough. Even under the continued financial pressures we face, Guildford Borough Council has shown how important we think play is for our children and young people in Guildford, by providing projects such as FISH and Playrangers, and our continued investment into play facilities across the borough.

I am delighted to be supporting the Play Strategy 2016-2021. It sets out how we, and our partners, will continue to support and grow our already rich history of play provision, and will show a coordinated approach on how we aim to develop play opportunities until 2021 and beyond.

Play is key to every child and young person's development but more and more we see these opportunities dwindling due to the perceived lack of safety, perceived high rate of crimes and the games console culture.

In preparing the final version of this strategy, we have asked many children and young people what their barriers to accessing play are, as well as their parents and guardians. You will see that we will address these barriers over the next five years as well as targeting those most in need, including children with disabilities and children with less life opportunities.

Whilst the strategy is a great focal point for our continued journey, we will develop a yearly work plan, which sets out where our investment will be, as well as our priorities. This will hold our partners and us accountable and ensure we know if we are making a difference. This will go alongside an annual review of the work programme, which will highlight the work gone on in that year as well as any areas for improvements.

I would personally like to thank all the children, young people, parents, guardians, residents and partners who have taken the time to feed into the strategy, and I look forward to working with you all, to ensure we achieve the priorities set out in this document.



Councillor Iseult Roche

Lead Councillor for
Community, Health,
and Sport

1.1 Introduction

Guildford Borough Council has an aspiration for our children and young people to have the space and freedom to play, we would like to see more children playing, more often.

An effective play strategy identifies the real needs and wishes of the community and relates them to the existing provision and resources available. This document therefore gives an overview of the current play provision in Guildford and highlights gaps. It identifies key themes based on the current provision and feedback from children, parents and key partners. This strategy is inclusive and representative of the community.

The strategy sets a framework for the Council to advocate for children's right to play and identify priorities within play development. It looks at the play opportunities available for children and young people in the borough and identifies barriers they face in accessing opportunities for play.

It is separate, but aligned to, a Fixed Play Equipment Strategy which:

- gives a rationale for investment in play provision
- identifies the play provision that exists, its value and gaps in provision
- sets standards for investment in play provision
- presents a development plan identifying priorities for future investment

The key themes in this strategy will enable the Council to plan community based play services and the future development of fixed play equipment, whilst taking into consideration current and future resources available to tackle the highlighted need.

This strategy promotes health and wellbeing benefits related to play and therefore encourages children's play to be placed at the heart of our local agenda.



1.1.1 What is play?

Play is what children choose to do in their free time, it can and does happen anywhere. Children's play needs are diverse and so too are people's definition of what play is or is not. In order to set a framework for delivering and developing play in the borough, we define play as:

Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is biological, psychological and social necessity and is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of individuals and communities.

Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group 2005

Play can take place in many different places; from designated play areas to green open spaces, woods, beaches, the streets where children live and on the way to places where children go.

There are opportunities for play to take place within educational settings, allowing children to extend what they are learning by providing a meaningful context to learn concepts and skills. However, this play tends to be outcome focused and follows adult agendas. It is not always child led, where children are free to express themselves.

Play can include informal sports played in unstructured, unsupervised environments. This play can capture many of the elements that are linked with the developmental benefits of play for children. These environments offer children the freedom to self-govern, create rules, problem-solve and resolve social conflicts on their own terms. Play does not encompass formal sports.

1.1.2 Why is play important?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations in 1989, spells out the basic human rights to which every child, everywhere, is entitled. The United Kingdom has been bound by the Convention since 1991.

The Convention sets out a number of statements called articles. These are the rights of all children and young people up to the age of 18. These include Article 31, the right to engage in play and recreational activities.

Article 31 of the UN Convention on the rights of the child

1. 'States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.'

1.1.3 Why do we need a play strategy?

Play is a crucial part of a child's development and wellbeing. Play author Tim Gill writes, "play is arguably a neglected, undervalued time in children's lives"¹. Adrian Voce, former Director of both Play England and the Children's Play Council, adds "the nature of children's play tends to cause it to be over looked"². It is something we take for granted that children do naturally - and they do. However, the more complicated, busy and risk averse our lives become, the fewer opportunities there are for children to play freely. Play provision is therefore part of the necessary infrastructure, which needs to be planned and sustained, in order to play its part in sustaining healthy communities.

Local authorities are one of the main providers of play provision and facilities. It is important that this provision is what is required and requested locally and is provided for through a co-ordinated approach, whilst making best use of resources.

1.1.4

Our vision for play in Guildford

- our communities have play spaces that are attractive, welcoming, challenging and accessible for all local children and young people
- our parks and open spaces are attractive and welcoming to children and young people and allow them opportunities for a wide range of play
- our communities have a range of accessible, supervised and unsupervised spaces and places for play
- local communities are safe and interesting places to play freely
- adults within our communities acknowledge the needs of children and young people and the positive contribution they make to community life
- children, young people and their parents take an active role in the development of local play spaces

1.1.5 Scope of strategy

This strategy embraces the delivery work undertaken by the Council's play development service. It does not include any commercial play activities nor play opportunities located or delivered outside of the borough. There is no focus on childcare nor on youth services, both of which are provided under the statutory duty of Surrey County Council as the 'local authority'.

The Council recognises that the play children engage in at home and at school is important to their development, but these play experiences are not under the control of the Council, and are therefore not included within this strategy.

The aligned Fixed Play Equipment Strategy will aim to address the play needs of children in the borough by producing a detailed breakdown of the refurbishment and development of fixed play structures within the Council's ownership. It is not able to govern play areas not owned by the Council. The Fixed Play Equipment Strategy will provide guidance on the standards for play provision, which we will encourage parish councils and other play area developers to adopt.

¹ 'The Play Return' Tim Gill 2014

² 'Policy for play' Adrian Voce 2015

1.1.6 Barriers to Play

There are a number of common barriers identified through a wealth of research, which stop children playing out as much as they have in previous years.

Traffic

A survey commissioned in 2013 by Play England, Play Wales, Play Scotland and PlayBoard Northern Ireland, found that over 53% of parents had concerns about traffic, which consistently appears high on the list of factors restricting outdoor play. The growing dominance of the car in residential streets, along with concerns about road safety, restricts the space and opportunity for children and young people to engage in active outdoor play. Street design surrounding play areas can present significant obstacles to children and young people's ability to reach a play space independently by walking or cycling.

Negative attitudes

Children themselves can be a cause of concern in the community. Children are often told to stop playing in the streets or area near their home. There is a perception of children being a threat when they congregate in groups, but to the children themselves this gives them a sense of security. Social barriers such as fear, or discriminatory attitudes seem to lead to a lack of distinction in the minds of some adults between young people socialising in public space and anti-social behaviour. These types of negative attitudes towards children have led to the banning of activities that appeal to younger people, such as ball games and skateboarding in community spaces.

Outcomes focussed play provision

The replacement of free, self-directed play, with an increase in prescribed educational activities or childcare outcomes restricts children's opportunities for playing. The role of free play in physical and psychological well-being has been 'overlooked' in many areas and much play provision has become outcome-orientated. Play has therefore become an 'unaffordable luxury' in modern society, pushed aside to make way for organised activities that are seen as more educational. In organised activities, children do not have the opportunity to direct their own play and create their own boundaries.

Reduction in free time

There are competing demands on children's time, and so time to play freely is limited. Added to that, many parents are faced with time pressures of their own, which can impact on how children are transported to play areas, especially children living in more remote areas. This contributes to children having a more sedentary lifestyle, as they turn to games consoles in replacement of active, outdoor play.

Parental anxiety

Perceived dangers and parental fears can reduce the amount of time children spend in outdoor open space³. It is therefore important to establish parents' and children's confidence in using open spaces for play and exploration, so that families use the open space that is around them. Investment in play development helps to develop that confidence.

In the current climate of parental anxiety about children playing outdoors due to traffic speeds and volumes, 'stranger danger', bullying, dog fouling and other fears, play development services are critical to restoring parents' and children's confidence about using outdoor spaces for play. Guildford Borough Council is unique in Surrey in having maintained its Playranger service for the benefit of local communities. This service uses public open spaces and, in drawing families out to participate, helps to combat social isolation, increase public confidence and improve the wellbeing of communities.

³ Tim Gill's study of the use of open space in London, found that although 2/3 of London's area consists of green space and water, London has half the level of participation in outdoor spaces than the national figure - 15% of under 12's have no contact with nature, primarily because of parental anxiety [www.londonsdc.org/news/4/Sowing-the-Seeds--Reconnecting-Londons-children-with-nature].

Modern living has thrown up a range of barriers to children playing. More traffic, less open space, real and perceived dangers from crime, changes in family life and new patterns of work have all conspired to deny more and more children the opportunities that previous generations took for granted. The consequences are profound. Increasing childhood obesity, 'anti-social behaviour' and mental health problems have each been at least partly attributed to young lifestyles that are more sedentary and restricted than at any time in our recent history.

Adrian Voce, Director of the Children's Play Council, Planning for Play

1.1.7 Learning journeys through play

From birth, children are active participants in building their own understanding. They do this by experimenting, observing, and participating with other children and adults.

As a child learns to reach, grasp, crawl, run, climb and balance, physical skills are developed. Dexterity develops when the child handles toys or other objects. Language increases as a child plays and interacts with others. A baby's cooing games with parents evolve into the language skills of a child sharing stories. Learning to cooperate, negotiate, take turns and play by the rules are important interpersonal lifetime skills, all of which play fosters.

Positive play experiences develop positive emotional wellbeing. Through play and imagination, a child can fulfil wishes and overcome fears of unpleasant experiences. Play helps the child master the environment. When children feel secure, safe, successful and capable, they acquire important components of positive emotional health. Sharing play experiences can also create strong bonds between parent and child.

Both solitary and social play is necessary for a child's development. A child can play with a building toy alone and in the process, develop independence, self-sufficiency and persistence. Playing with the same toy with others, the child acquires social skills such as sharing, empathy and cooperation.

Children's play journeys are all unique; however, their needs are similar at comparable ages. For example, toddlers benefit from furniture, equipment and environments sized for their success, open space to play, safe environments that promote independence and exploration, and decision-making opportunities. Toddlers are observed as regularly using schemas in their play; schemas are patterns of play that children exhibit when they are exploring the world and trying to find out how things work. Children may try out the same action on a variety of different objects or a wide variety of actions on one object. They come up with their own theories about how things work.

As they progress to primary school age their skills develop and they experiment with different play types. Play becomes more complex. For example, games with rules teach children a crucially important concept- life has rules (laws) that we all must follow to function productively. Children's play is rich, varied, organic and constantly evolving. It can explore different play types at the same time, flow from one to another and back again. Defining children's play in 'play types' is useful in helping us be more specific when we are talking about children's play and when planning for play provision. However, each play type will only ever capture a narrow aspect of the wealth of children's play. The list of play types is also constantly evolving and should not ever be assumed complete. For a full description of the play types please refer to Appendix 1.

1.1.8 The roles and responsibilities of adults

Children need an element of freedom in their play that is seldom granted to them. As adults, we affect children's play significantly. In 'The Role of Adults in Children's Play'⁴ it is determined that adults affect what children experience by the permissions granted to them; by regulating time for play opportunities, by the space made available to them and by the materials provided, or denied, for play. Adults, particularly parents, need to be advocates for play, by demonstrating a supportive attitude towards play, by listening to children's needs and by enabling play to happen.

Staffed provision can provide a highly valued contribution to local play opportunities, but it is important not to confuse staffed play provision with structured activities. Staffed play provision can enhance opportunities for play through the provision of play equipment, materials, play mates and safe spaces. It can help nurture adult - child relationships and establish a sense of trust that is often absent in the current social context.

Staffed play provision is often provided for by Playworkers. Playwork is a highly skilled profession that enriches and enhances children's play by working with the child's agenda. It takes place where adults support children's play, but it is not driven by prescribed education or childcare outcomes. Playworker's practices are underpinned by the Playwork Principles (see Appendix 2), providing high quality, accessible play opportunities for children and young people. A good Playworker should offer low intervention in children's play.

The Playwork team that delivers play services for the Council actively engages with children and young people, and responds appropriately to their needs by delivering a range of planned and unplanned games, ideas and activities using a wide range of resources. This role is demanding and requires a highly adaptive, dynamic and skilled workforce to deliver quality play opportunities, which the Council prides itself on.

The value of free play opportunities, and of access to a place and adults who respect this play, is vital and apparent to children - but not just to them. Again and again, parents and a raft of policy stakeholders told us about the value they saw in these sites, and how the opportunities to play are shaped by the people who work there. Therefore, we would assert that the current round of investment should include careful and considered investment in the 'software' that is shown to underpin the success of play provision. This is crucial if play provision is to make a real difference to children and young people, to their parents and to the community.

People Make Play, Play England 2010

⁴ 'The Role of Adults in Children's Play' Play Wales 2013

1.1.9 National guidance on play

The wealth of documents and guidance developed by both play organisations and play professionals provides the framework under which this strategy has developed. Such documents validate our investment in play. They also provide useful tools for evaluating play provision, which helps us in developing a better understanding of the play needs of children and young people so we can deliver better play opportunities to meet those identified needs.

Play England

Play England was launched in 2006 to support the infrastructure, development and sustainability of play strategies being written by local authorities across the country. They offer a national voice for play services.

Play England state that their vision is *'for England to be a country where everybody can fully enjoy their right to play throughout their childhood and teenage years, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31 and the Charter for Children's Play'*⁵.

To achieve this, Play England's aims are to ensure that:

- All children and young people have the freedom - time, space, permission and opportunity - to play throughout their childhood and teenage years;
- All residential neighbourhoods are child friendly places where children and young people can regularly play outside; and
- Everyone is aware of the importance of play - outdoors and indoors - as part of children and young people's daily lives.

Best Play: What play provision should do for children (2000)

Produced by a partnership between the National Playing Field's Association, PLAYLINK and the Children's Play Council, *Best Play* draws on research, theories and practice from a number of disciplines applying it to both supervised and unsupervised public play provision.

Best Play sets out how children benefit from play opportunities and how play services and spaces can best provide these benefits. It highlights best practice in playwork with suggested evaluation methods for ensuring play provision meets the objectives set out in order to create a rich play environment.

Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation guide

This guide offers advice on how play providers can develop their approach to risk management so that it takes into account the benefits to children and young people of providing challenging opportunities for play. It explores how to balance risks with benefits by means of a risk-benefit assessment. It aims to help providers achieve two objectives, which are fundamental to play provision: to offer children and young people challenging, exciting, engaging play opportunities, while ensuring that they are not exposed to unacceptable risk of harm.

5 Play England 2007



1.2 The benefits of play

Research shows that play has many benefits for children, families and the wider community, as well as improving health and quality of life, as illustrated in our diagram below:



There is a wealth of data from academic research⁶, using both qualitative and quantitative studies, that demonstrates the benefits of play for children and families.

Play England's literature review, 'A world without play'⁷ considers the effects of a lack of play on children's lives. It highlights 'the importance of play, particularly outdoor play, for increasing levels of physical activity, alongside other positive influences on a child's well-being', such as opportunities to understand and respect the natural world.

⁶ Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)

⁷ A World without play, Josie Greave, Issy Cole-Hamilton, 2012.

1.2.1 Play and health

Physically active play can make unique contributions to children's health, wellbeing and holistic development, which cannot be obtained from more structured forms of physical activity or formal sport. Anyone can take part in it; there is no cost, low skill entry level, no specific rules, no specific equipment, no uniform.

Research supports the assertion that physical activity is vital for children's learning and for their physical wellbeing. However, recent research has shown that activity levels in the UK, along with those in much of the developed world, are falling⁸ and that only half of 7-year olds in the UK achieve an hour's physical activity a day. Research from *Designed to Move: A Physical Activity Action Agenda*⁹, shows that from 1961 to 2005, levels of physical activity in the UK dropped by 20% and if current trends continue, will reduce by more than 35% by 2030¹⁰.

Research by the British Heart Foundation supports active play as vital for children's learning, as well as their physical wellbeing.

Active play is the most common type of physical activity that children take part in outside school and outdoors. Unstructured play may be one of the best forms of physical activity for children.

British Heart Foundation (2009)¹¹

The following section considers how play can increase physical activity and contribute towards *Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board's* priorities.

- a) **'Improving children's health and wellbeing'**. The outcomes include the following to which play can contribute:
 - more families, children and young people will have healthy behaviours
 - health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers will improve
 - more children and young people will be emotionally healthy and resilient
- b) **'Developing a preventative approach'**. There are a number of outcomes to which playful physical activity can contribute to this priority:
 - helping more people to be physically active
 - helping more people to be of a healthy weight
 - encourage children and young people to be physically active, alongside their families
- c) **'Promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health'**. Play can contribute to a number of outcomes under this priority:
 - more people will have good mental health
 - more people with mental health problems will recover
 - more people with mental health problems will have good physical health

The immediate priorities in Guildford's *Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2017* include improving physical activity levels for children and reducing the health inequalities between the most and least deprived areas of the borough.¹² Physically active free play can therefore contribute significantly to this priority as anyone can take part irrelevant of economic background.

8 BMJ "How active are our children? Findings from the Millennium Cohort Study" by Lucy Griffiths, Mario Cortina-Borja, Francesco Sera, et al.

9 MacCallum L., Howson N., Gopu N, *Designed to Move: A Physical Activity Action Agenda* (2012).

10 Ng S. W. and Popkin B. "Time Use and Physical Activity: a shift away from movement across the globe."

11 British Heart Foundation (2009) 'Couch Kids: The Nation's Future', London: BHF, Mackett, R and others (2007)

12 Guildford Health Strategy 2015-2017, Guildford Health & Wellbeing Board

Surrey's Physical Activity Strategy 2015-2020 encourages all people, including children and young people to



The strategy states that currently (2015) 55,000 children in Surrey are obese. Active play supports this ideal of regular physical activity and would help many of those young people dramatically reduce that statistic. Specifically, *the Independent Annual Report of the Director for Public Health - Surrey County Council (2014)* highlighted the Guildford ward of Ash Vale as having the highest levels of obesity in Surrey for children in year 6, at 28%. People who are physically active as children are likely to remain physically active as adults, leading to habitually healthier lifestyles.

The current Department of Health physical activity guidelines recommend three hours a day of physical activity for children under five, and at least an hour's physical activity each day for school aged children. The guidelines cite energetic play, such as climbing, bike riding, running, chasing games, walking, skipping, swimming and football as ways of achieving this target.

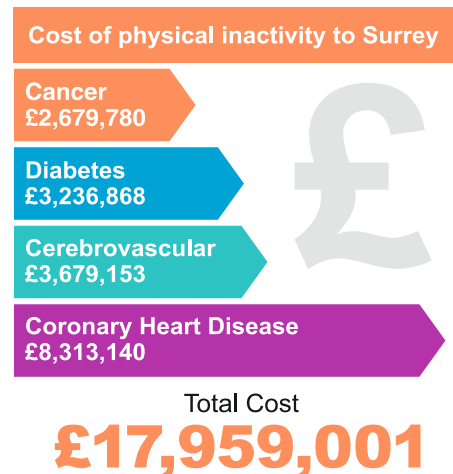
There is evidence to show that the more children are encouraged to use outdoor spaces, the more likely they are to continue to use them as adults. There is also evidence to show that a lack of opportunities for outdoor play can affect children's mental health¹³ as well as their physical health. Consequences of play deprivation in children include lower levels of physical activity, poorer ability to deal with stressful or traumatic situations and poorer social skills.

1.2.2 Play and social communities

Children have a role in bringing neighbours together and in building cohesive communities. Over the past couple of decades, there has been a decline in community spirit. People no longer interact with each other at a local level, which affects children playing out where they live. This is most likely a result of busy lifestyles, an increase of car usage and advances in modern technology.

When children play out in their community, levels of contact and interaction between adults increases. This creates a stronger sense of community and makes it more likely that parents will feel happy about giving their children greater freedom outside the home as they grow up. By playing out, children learn and develop in themselves, in their relationships, and within the social and cultural boundaries as members of their own communities.

The more community spaces are put to good use means the less such spaces will be neglected, discouraging crime and anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour in a community is often a negative response to a lack of, or inappropriate play provision. Where children and young people's play needs are met, this will have a positive impact on anti-social behaviour and therefore a positive impact on the wider community.



Play areas often act as focal points for the community, providing a meeting area for children and parents alike. As the number of youth clubs and associations decreases, dismissed by a generation more concerned with the latest technology than social interaction, the importance of playgorunds must not be underestimated in bringing people together. They offer a place for children to play and forge new friendships, while ensuring they remain healthy and active

John Croasdale, Chairman of the Association of Play Industries (2010)

¹³ Layard and Dunn (2009) 'A Good Childhood: Searching for values in a competitive age'

1.2.3 Play and green spaces

Children require the diverse and flexible environments that are provided by outdoor green space for play as this allows them to realise their brain potential creatively and emotionally, whilst developing muscle and co-ordination skills. It also helps to build an affinity with nature and an understanding of how the natural world works and needs caring for in light of the many pressures facing the environment now and in the future.

Green spaces offer opportunities for activities to improve health through physical activity and play, for example; green gyms, walking, cycling, playing, wild adventures, and social interaction.

Green spaces take many forms. It might be a place designated for wildlife such as a nature reserve or woodland. However, in the majority of cases people's contact with nature takes place in local neighbourhoods - a village common, the local park, the area of grass at the bottom of the street. These places should be no less special than 'official' sites.¹⁴

Tim Gill's study of the use of open space in London, found 15% of under 12's have no contact with nature, primarily because of parental anxiety¹⁵. It is therefore important to re-establish parents' and children's confidence in using open spaces for play and exploration so that families use the open space that is around them. In the current climate of parental anxiety about children playing outdoors, due to traffic, 'stranger danger' and other fears, formal play spaces are a stepping stone to achieving that confidence. There is no doubt that play development work, such as Guildford's Playranger scheme, is the most effective means of overcoming these anxieties and developing confidence in green spaces.

There are innumerable pieces of international research that emphasise the importance of children spending time in natural outdoor spaces. Some of the main themes of theories and research are:



Physical health benefits

Increased oxygen levels outside increase brain function. Increased gross motor movement reduces chance of obesity and increases bone density (reducing chances of osteoporosis). Sunlight increases vitamin D production and increased resilience to illness.

Mental health benefits

Spending time in green spaces reduces Cortisol (a stress chemical) levels in the brain, therefore has a calming influence. The reduction in Cortisol also increases receptivity for building neural pathways (learning) in the brain.

Social benefits

Research suggests that in natural play areas the leaders tend to be the most intelligent and imaginative, compared to hard-standing play areas where the dominant children are those who are the physically strongest. When playing outside, communication, teambuilding and language skills are developed.



Risk awareness

Playing outside allows children to learn about risk assessment and risk taking. Children that are exposed to acceptable levels of risk at a young age are less likely to make bad judgements in the future.

Behaviour

Due to the calming effect on the brain and the increase in physical space outside, improved behaviour is often noticed. Research is also looking at Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and the outdoors, as ADHD symptoms are not as apparent when children are playing in a natural space.

¹⁴ Nature Nearby; Natural England 2010

¹⁵ www.londoncdc.org/news/4/Sowing-the-Seeds--Reconnecting-Londons-children-with-nature, Tim Gill for London Sustainable Development Commission, 2011

Creating a physical environment in which people can live healthier lives with a greater sense of well-being is a hugely significant factor in reducing health inequalities...Numerous studies point to the direct benefits of green space to both physical and mental health and wellbeing. Green spaces have been associated with a decrease in health complaints, blood pressure and cholesterol, improved mental health and reduced stress levels, perceived better general health, and the ability to face problems. The presence of green space also has indirect benefits: it encourages social contact and integration, provides space for physical activity and play, improves air quality and reduces urban heat island effects

The Marmot Review (2010)¹⁶



¹⁶ The Marmot Review. Marmot, M. (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post 2010.

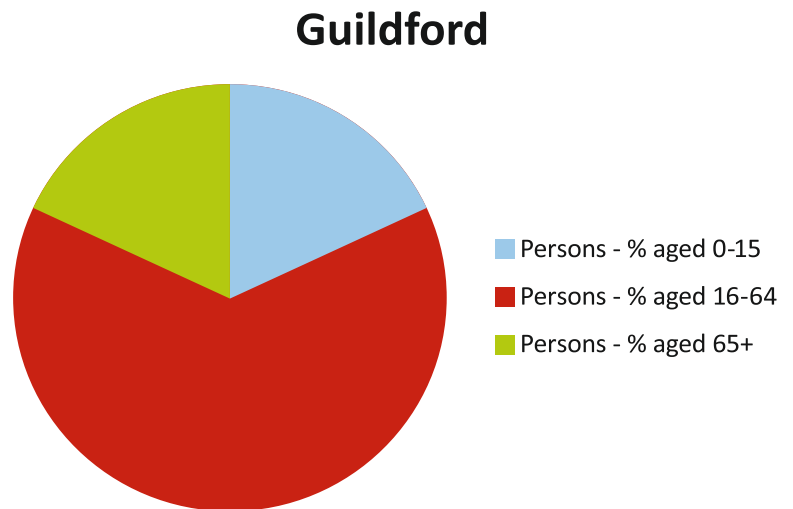
1.3 Play in Guildford

1.3.1 Profile

Guildford Borough is the second largest borough in Surrey, consisting of 22 wards. The borough covers approximately 269 square kilometres (104 square miles) of which 89% is land designated as Green Belt. The south of our borough lies within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Regionally Important Geological Sites and local Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and nature reserves.¹⁷

1.3.2 Population

75% of Guildford's population live in the urban areas¹⁸ (Guildford town and the areas around Ash and on the borders of Aldershot), with the remainder of the population living in smaller communities. Guildford's population was 139,700¹⁹ in 2012, an increase of 1.8% since the 2011 census figure of 137,183. The census recorded 18.5% of people in Guildford as aged between 0 and 15 years, as shown below. The average age of people in Guildford is 39, while the median age is lower at 38.



1.3.3 Corporate priorities

The Council's current corporate priorities (2015-2020) are set out around five fundamental themes: Our Society, Our Infrastructure, Our Economy, Our Borough and Our Environment. Play has a link to Our Society through improving public health and wellbeing, improving the lives of our residents, particularly in areas of less advantage, reducing social inequality, encouraging self-reliant communities, particularly in our less advantaged areas and continuing to reduce our low levels of crime. It links to Our Borough with enhanced leisure offer, and links to Our Environment through improving facilities with our environment.

1.3.4 Areas of need

The less advantaged communities within Guildford are the wards of Westborough and Stoke. The Index of Multiple Deprivation²⁰ also shows a need in Ash Wharf specifically in relation to low income affecting children. These wards are therefore where our resources are currently focused.

¹⁷ Guildford Borough Council corporate plan 2015-2020

¹⁸ JSNA, population estimates and projections, population densities, www.surrey.gov.uk

¹⁹ Guildford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2015-2020

²⁰ www.gov.uk

1.3.5 Principles of our play provision

The primary purpose of a play service is first and foremost to support effective playwork practice and provide appropriate spaces where children can play.

Play England's *Charter for Children's Play*²¹ sets out their vision for play. 'It aims to be a catalyst for individuals and organisations to examine and improve how they provide for children and young people's play and informal recreation'. The Charter states:

- children have the right to play
- every child needs time and space to play
- adults should let children play
- children should be able to play freely in their local areas
- children value and benefit from staffed play provision
- children's play is enriched by skilled playworkers
- children need time and space to play at school
- children sometimes need extra support to enjoy their right to play.

These statements shape the way the Council develops its own play service and how and when it engages in other local and national projects and initiatives.

Developed by the play sector as fundamental statements about the relationship between children's play and playwork, the Playwork Principles (Appendix 2) underpin the ethics and standards in which quality playwork should be delivered. Playwork staff employed by the Council and volunteers who support our projects and services undertake a comprehensive programme of both formal and informal training and peer mentoring which is directed by the Playwork Principles.

*Best Play*²² identifies seven objectives which are intended to define the values and principles recognised as good quality play provision. They form the basis against which all our play services and facilities are delivered and evaluated.

1.3.6 Inclusion

Inclusive play is primarily about all children and young people having equal access to and equal participation in local play and leisure opportunities. It is important to remember that the principles of inclusion apply to children of all abilities, ethnic and social backgrounds and ages as people's perceptions can often focus on children with disabilities only.

We recognise this broad scope of inclusion and provide for those children with special educational needs, disabilities, learning, physical and developmental delay, social, poverty and economic disadvantage and those that are sometimes discriminated against due to their behaviour or family circumstances. Inclusion is something that we actively support and promote in all our work.

²¹ Play England 'Charter for Children's Play' 2007

²² Best Play written in partnership by the National Playing Fields Association, PLAYLINK and the Children's Play Council 2010.



1.3.7 Play and risk

Some play activities involve an element of danger, with hazards and risk present. The Council takes a risk-benefit approach to play, which considers the benefits to children alongside the risks involved. This allows the Council to address the two important objectives of play provision: providing challenge whilst also offering protection from unacceptable harm.

The Council recognises that positive risk-taking has a role to play in fostering children's optimal health and development. During their development, all children during normal play and learning life will have accidents causing minor injury. They will learn from this experience and develop an awareness of hazards in the environment and the precautions that they need to take to avoid them. When children sustain or witness injuries they gain direct experience of the consequences of their actions and choices, and through this an understanding of the extent of their abilities and competencies. However, children deserve protection against fatal or permanently disabling injuries, to an even greater degree than adults.

Children have an extensive range of physical competencies and abilities, including a growing ability to assess and manage risk, which adults arguably tend to underestimate. However, children typically have less experience than adults of assessing the broad range of risks and hazards that they may encounter. Hence, it is important to give them appropriate controlled environments in which they can learn about hazards and risk. It is important that playworkers ensure children understand the risks involved in undertaking any activity, and of the precautions, they need to take to reduce unacceptable risk. This will help inform and advise children and young people, and build within them the capacity to assess risk for themselves.



All children need to take some risks in life to grow and develop. We think this is especially important for disabled children, as they may have fewer opportunities for adventurous play

Warren Kochler, Regional Director, KIDS London



The play development team have written a comprehensive risk assessment document, which is developed and updated on a regular basis and informed by current advice and guidance from the Play Safety Forum.

The Play Safety Forum exists to consider and promote the wellbeing of children and young people through ensuring a balance between safety, risk and challenge in respect of play and leisure provision. It is an independent body hosted by Play England.



Managing Risk in Play Provision: A position statement from the Play Safety Forum:

Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of death or serious injury.

1.3.8 Current play provision

The Council is proud of its current play initiatives, which include an outdoor, term time after school scheme; Playrangers, and a school holiday provision; FISH (Fun in School Holidays). The 2014 departmental business review for both elements of the play development service demonstrated good value for money, achievement of play development objectives and their continued contribution towards the Council's corporate objectives.

Guildford Playrangers

The Playranger scheme currently operates in term time over five sites across the borough from 3.30-5.30pm every school day. It is an open-access scheme, which is delivered outdoors, whatever the weather.

The scheme was set up in 2010 to address the five objectives identified in Guildford's previous play strategy as barriers to play:

- removing transport barriers from play opportunities
- improving physical health and fitness in young people
- dealing with inequality and exclusion
- staying safe
- enabling enjoyment and achievement

The scheme was grant aided by the Big Lottery Children's Play Programme and later endorsed by them as having met those objectives at the end of its initial grant in 2011 and it has continued to do so.

The five communities where Playrangers deliver each have recognised barriers to opportunities for play within those communities. The service delivers freely chosen, freely accessible and free of charge outdoor play. This criterion was modelled closely on the seven objectives of *Best Play* from the original Children's Play Council guidance.



The Guildford Playranger sessions have an overall aim to encourage, support and widen accessibility to opportunities for children within the borough to play freely and enjoy the benefits of playing in the outdoors in their own community. The primary age range of children proposed for this service was eight to twelve years.

The open access design of the Playranger service delivers a unique doorstep play service, which is not available through any other service delivered in the borough. The uniqueness of this delivery provides a service for a wider range of users who may otherwise face a wide range of physical, financial and particularly social barriers to accessing quality, safe places to play. This, in turn, creates stronger community cohesion and a sense of ownership and belonging.

Playranger sites are out of the town centre where lack of, or difficulty to access transport is recognised as being a barrier to many services for children and young people, including the provision of play. The children accessing these sites receive the benefits of door step provision - this style of provision does not exclude those who do not have access to a car or have parents who are unable to or unwilling to drive them to provision.

The Playranger service is also unique from any other service in that it delivers throughout the year in the outdoors where other projects only deliver during the summer. Continued attendance at dark and cold winter Playranger sessions have demonstrated that children and young people clearly want to be able to play safely outdoors, even during these months.

Guildford Playrangers have a van, which is used to transport a range of resources, materials, tools and play equipment to each of the play sites. The sessions offer free play where the children can help themselves to, and create whatever play they want to, from the materials and play resources available. The Playrangers also plan for and initiate one or two semi-structured activities each session which are intended to broaden the children's experiences, learning, creativity, confidence and skills.

No two Playranger sessions are the same. The content and intent of the play is determined by the children's choices, the resources available, how they choose to use different resources, the different children that may attend that day, the weather, the season, the relationships and friendships within the community. These are all factors that help make the Playranger service so closely connected to and adaptive to the communities in which the children live and play in.

FISH (Fun in School Holidays)

FISH is a holiday playscheme for 10-16 year olds delivered in the north Guildford ward of Westborough, one of the less advantaged communities in Guildford. The aim of FISH is to provide a holiday playscheme, which supports an environment where young people have space and freedom for play, and to participate in sports and arts opportunities.

The following objectives set our purpose for delivering FISH:

- maximise the range of play and leisure opportunities available to young people by supporting freedom and choice in their play and leisure
- create a challenging space for young people where they are able to explore and test boundaries whilst being safe from unnecessary harm
- encourage young people's respect for others and offer opportunities for social interaction
- support young people's wellbeing, health, development, knowledge, understanding and creativity through play and leisure opportunities
- offer young people with additional needs the opportunity and benefits of a mainstream setting through inclusive provision and support
- widen accessibility by challenging the barriers which prevent some young people from accessing opportunities for play and leisure and targeting those more disadvantaged groups and individuals

FISH prides itself on providing play opportunities for teenagers, something which is often neglected. FISH recognises the importance of free play for teenagers and providing them with space and time to relax, socialise and play, away from the pressures of home and school life.

Over the last 16 years FISH has been committed to identifying the barriers to access play opportunities faced by the young people in our communities and we have worked hard to address each one. By doing so, a unique and stimulating play environment which is accessible to all has been created.

FISH actively obtains feedback from all involved and acts on it. FISH is a forward thinking, proactive project that strives to promote better play opportunities.



Continued →

On site provision for play and activities:

The format of play and activity provision for FISH is determined by the objectives stated above and the overarching aim to offer the young people a safe space with freedom and choice. FISH delivers a stimulating, self-accessing environment for the young people where they are able to move freely within the site, choosing what play and activities they wish to engage with and when from a wide variety of choices.

Play resources and playworkers are complimented on site by a programme of facilitated activities led by qualified coaches or artists. These activities further develop the young people's opportunities, experiences and skill development. These activities require specialist equipment, coaching or instruction beyond the resources or skills available within the playwork team.

Off site activities:

Each day of FISH includes a planned programme of off site activities. Many young people do not get the chance to embark on days out with their families, so this aims to provide them with further experiences and opportunities.

Standard and extended day:

As well as the standard day of 10am to 4pm FISH offers an extended day, 8.30am to 5.00pm. This offers additional chill out time and informal play hours either side of the core hours and is primarily aimed at supporting working parents.

Transport:

FISH provides a heavily subsidised programme of transport to support young people specifically living in the Stoke and Ash wards to be able to access the scheme. Heavily subsidised transport is included in the scheme as a direct response to the objective of breaking down transport barriers for young people living in less advantaged communities as identified in our previous play strategy.

Inclusion:

FISH is committed to being an inclusive scheme, offering concessionary rates for families on benefits, experienced staff to support young people with additional needs and a subsidised transport scheme. FISH works hard to maintain affordability for all and continues to subsidise all scheme fees; making it one of the biggest and most affordable schemes in Surrey. This is evident in the clear vision for FISH, and in the policies and procedures, which support that vision.

FISH offers children and young people access to a mainstream setting where they are able to freely access play and leisure and make choices for themselves in a supported environment. This is recognised in parent feedback as being a significant step forward for many children and young people who usually access specialist provision.

Keyworkers are employed to utilise the information provided by parents and carers to support the individual needs of a young person to access the opportunities on FISH on a one to one basis.

Buddy's are Playworkers who have additional responsibilities to support the needs of a small group of young people (2-5) who may need extra reassurance, support to manage their own behaviour or physical support with accessing certain activities.

Partnerships and stakeholders:

The value of partnership working is recognised as being key to the successful delivery of FISH. Established partners support the delivery of activities, the onsite delivery of the scheme, referrals for quality and experienced staff, volunteers, coaches and artists and most significantly, the referral and engagement of vulnerable young people and their families. Established partners continue to develop and be reflective of the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people attending FISH and within the local communities.

1.3.9 Street Play

Street Play is a new initiative for Guildford, and is part of a national scheme endorsed by Play England. The Street Play vision is for every child to have the freedom to regularly play actively and independently near their own front door, contributing to a healthy lifestyle and healthy communities. A typical Street Play session is an after-school or weekend session led by neighbours for neighbours and only publicised within the immediate streets. A residential road is closed to through traffic, with volunteer stewards at each road closure point to redirect through traffic and escort residents' cars in and out safely.

The emphasis is on free, unstructured play and people usually bring their own toys. Children are simply given the chance to play in the street, whilst adults have a chance to meet and get to know their neighbours better.

The Council is keen to actively promote and support opportunities for Street Play to start up and flourish in the borough. The Council recognises the potential for Street Play to be a catalyst to transform communities by offering opportunities for community members to take part and provide valuable play opportunities for their children.

1.3.10 Community grant aid

The Council supports local play projects and schemes through grant aid. This annual programme of grant aid support is available to charitable, social enterprise, community and voluntary organisations. It particularly aims to support new projects that will become self-sustaining. This includes projects that achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities. This scheme offers funding for community projects and initiatives that support the following priorities:

- projects that improve access to training, skills and work opportunities
- projects that improve support networks for the unemployed and working age people on benefits
- projects that involve local communities actively working with partners to improve where they live, in ways that matter to them
- projects that improve the lives of vulnerable groups
- projects that establish or support the development of social enterprise in our least advantaged communities
- projects that support those most affected by welfare reform
- projects that achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities, including by encouraging participation in sport and leisure activities by all ages
- projects that prevent homelessness and support homeless households

1.3.11 Consultation and engagement

Consultation with children and young people in the borough, plus residents, parents and stakeholders, plays a key role in our strategic approach to providing for children's play in Guildford.

The consultation process for the Guildford Play Strategy 2016-2021 involved the following approaches:

- online questionnaires
- stakeholder engagement evening
- community engagement session

The main aim was to ensure residents had the opportunity to give their views on play in Guildford, to help shape and direct the play strategy and to make sure the priorities reflect the needs of the community.

The process sought to discover views on the Council's current playschemes, examples of where children and young people most enjoy playing, how often they play out, how children and young people like to play, perceived qualities of a good play area, what barriers children are facing to play opportunities and the level of agreement with the proposed themes.



1.3.12 Residents views of current play provision in Guildford

The views of residents collated in the consultation and engagement process on our playschemes are vital to the Council when considering continued service provision. Findings are summarised below:

Playrangers - almost half (45%) of all respondents who are either parents or residents of Guildford said they were aware of the Council run Playranger service. They were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the service supported fun and imaginative outdoor play opportunities and the majority (33%) agreed or strongly agreed (36%). Of the 28 respondents who gave a response to the question how could the Playranger service be improved, half said that the Playranger scheme should be made available at more locations, whilst 29% said it should be better advertised.

There was a strong consensus through the children's and young people's comments that said that they would like to see Playrangers available at more locations, with a broader range of activities, with more days and times available.

Playrangers to be on at the weekend too, Saturday and Sunday.
- Guildford young person

Increased sessions for all Guildford children - with increased number of sites so more children can access - Guildford parent

FISH - Awareness of the FISH holiday playscheme was positive with 55% of all respondents indicating they are aware of the scheme. Of those respondents, more than two-thirds either agreed (34%) or strongly agreed (34%) that the playscheme supports an environment where young people have space and freedom for play and to participate in sports and arts opportunities. When asked for any other suggestions as to how the FISH playscheme could be improved a third said it should be more inclusive of all children such as younger children and more than a quarter (28%) said it should be available at more locations across the borough.

Fish should be on for more of the holidays
- Guildford young person

(FISH) is the most amazing service and has continued to improve year on year. Its value should be more publicised in the wider community to emphasise the need for play in children's lives. More PR. - Guildford parent

Respondents were asked if there was anything else they think would make Guildford a better place to play in and 26% felt a broader range of activities and facilities were required. This was also the most frequent response by children and young people (62%).

Keep it free. My mum doesn't have much money. Better details on local parks.
- Guildford young person

...Our children being able to build their own memories based on fun play in the great outdoors, a real privilege. Playing with friends and making new ones. Freedom to play and just be. It is more about getting this message across. - Guildford Parent

A community indoor area would be nice... - Guildford parent

These views have informed both the strategy's themes and action plan. The action plan ensures that the expectations of residents are managed in line with the resources available to deliver the best quality of service. Please see Appendix 3 for a further analysis of the above and the consultation and engagement process.

1.4 Future priorities for play in Guildford

The Council has a responsibility, which we share with our communities and stakeholders, to embed play across the borough. The following themes are the principles on which we propose to develop our play provision, and are the key themes for this strategy moving forward. They have been considered in line with what resources we have available to us.

The themes have developed through our initial research and experiences from our front line staff and have been consulted on with residents including young people and children, parents and with our partners and stakeholders:

- widening accessibility and participation in play
- to advocate for play
- improve children's health and wellbeing through play
- balancing risk in play

1.5 Action Plans

The Play Strategy

The vision of the Play Strategy and delivery of its themes will be implemented through an annual action plan. The year one action plan has been informed by the consultation and engagement, and developed by the Play and Youth Development Officer and review panel to deliver within the resources available. The action plan will engage partners and stakeholders in supporting the delivery of its themes and services through advocacy work.

A review of the action plan will be twice per year; in June to review progress on current targets and then December to set new targets for the coming year. The ten year fixed play equipment development plan will be monitored annually within this review structure. The review panel for this will consist of key members from the Project Board, including the Play and Youth Development Officer, Parks Development Officer, Leisure Development Officer, Leisure Development Manager, Parks and Countryside Manager, the Lead Councillor for Community Health and Sport and the Lead Councillor for Rural Economy, Countryside, Parks and Leisure.

The full Action Plan can be found in Section 3



The Fixed Play Equipment Strategy

The Fixed Play Equipment Strategy seeks to provide guidance for Council decisions related to play space provision for the next 5-10 years (to be reviewed in 2021).

The Council will continue to replace and refurbish its play spaces in order to provide for local needs. As proposed and agreed through consultation, improvements and replacement of existing sites will be continually informed by inspection reports, play value assessments and the lifetime of equipment in conjunction with local needs. The priorities for replacing existing sites are set out in the aligned Fixed Play Equipment Strategy in Section 2.

Appendix 1

Play types:

Bob Hughes; A Playworker's Taxonomy of Play Types 1996

Symbolic play - play which allows control, gradual exploration and increased understanding without the risk of being out of depth e.g. using a piece of wood to symbolise a person or an object, or a piece of string to symbolise a wedding ring.

Rough and tumble play - close encounter play which is less to do with fighting and more to do with touching, tickling, gauging relative strength. Discovering physical flexibility and the exhilaration of display. This type of play allows children to participate in physical contact that doesn't involve or result in someone being hurt. This type of play can use up lots of energy.

Socio-dramatic play - the enactment of real and potential experiences of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature e.g. playing at house, going to the shops, being mothers and fathers, organising a meal or even having a row

Social play - play during which the rules and criteria for social engagement and interaction can be revealed, explored and amended. E.g. any social or interactive situation which contains an expectation on all parties that they will abide by the rules or protocols, i.e. games, conversations, making something together.

Creative play - play which allows a new response, the transformation of information, awareness of new connections, with an element of surprise. Allows children to design, explore, try out new ideas and use their imagination. They can use lots of different tools, props, equipment. It can have a beginning and an end, texture and smell. e.g. enjoying creation with a range of materials and tools for its own sake. Self expression through any medium, making things, changing things.

Communication play - play using words, nuances or gestures e.g. mime / charades, jokes, play acting, mickey taking, singing, whispering, pointing, debate, street slang, poetry, text messages, talking on mobiles / emails/ internet, skipping games, group and ball games.

Dramatic play - play which dramatizes events in which the child is not a direct participator. For example presentation of a TV show, an event on the street, a religious or festive event, even a funeral.

Locomotor play - movement in any or every direction for its own sake. E.g. chase, tag, hide and seek, tree climbing.

Deep play - play which allows the child to encounter risky or even potentially life threatening experiences, to develop survival skills and conquer fear. E.g. light fires with matches, make weapons, conquer fear such as heights, snakes, and creepy crawlies. Some find strength they never knew they had to climb obstacles, lift large objects, etc. E.g. leaping onto an aerial runway, riding a bike on a parapet, balancing on a high beam, roller skating, assault course, high jump.

Exploratory play - play to access factual information consisting of manipulative behaviours such as handling, throwing, banging or mouthing objects. E.g. engaging with an object or area and, either by manipulation or movement, assessing its properties, possibilities and content, such as stacking bricks.

Fantasy play - This is the make believe world of children. This type of play is where the child's imagination gets to run wild. Play, which rearranges the world in the child's way, a way that is unlikely to occur. E.g. playing at being a pilot flying around the world, pretend to be various characters/people, be where ever they want to be, drive a car, become be six feet nothing tall or as tiny as they want to be the list is endless as is a child's imagination.

Imaginative play - play where the conventional rules, which govern the physical world, do not apply. E.g. imagining you are..., or pretending to be, a tree or ship, or patting a dog, which isn't there.

Mastery play - control of the physical and affective ingredients of the environments. E.g. digging holes, changing the course of streams, constructing shelters, building fires.

Object play - play which uses infinite and interesting sequences of hand-eye manipulations and movements. E.g. examination and novel use of any object such as a cloth, paintbrush, cup.

Role play - play exploring ways of being, although not normally of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature. For example brushing with a broom, dialing with a telephone, driving a car.

Recapitulative play - play that allows the child to explore ancestry, history, rituals, stories, rhymes, fire and darkness. Enables children to access play of earlier human evolutionary stages.

Continued →

Appendix 2

Playwork Principles

These principles establish the professional and ethical framework for playwork and as such must be regarded as a whole. They describe what is unique about play and playwork, and provide the playwork perspective for working with children and young people.

They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

- All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
- The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
- For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and Playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
- The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
- The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
- Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
- Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and wellbeing of children.

The Playwork Principles were developed by the Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group, convened by Play Wales and adopted by Skills Active in 2005.

Appendix 3

Overview of consultation and engagement results

Contents

1. Online Questionnaires
2. Stakeholder Consultation Evening
3. Community engagement session
4. Demographic breakdown of responses

Introduction

Consultation with children and young people in the borough, residents, parents and stakeholders, plays a key role in our strategic approach to providing for children's play in Guildford.

The consultation process for the Guildford Play Strategy 2016-2021 involved the following approaches:

- online questionnaires
- stakeholder engagement evening
- community engagement session

The main aim was to ensure residents had the opportunity to give their views on play opportunities and local facilities to shape and direct the Guildford Play Strategy 2016 -2021 and to make sure the priorities reflect the needs of the community.

The key objectives of the consultation were to understand and identify:

- levels of outdoor play
- barriers to play
- favourite types and places of play
- awareness of Playrangers
- awareness of FISH
- perceived qualities of a good play area
- levels of agreement with proposed themes

1. Online questionnaires

1.1 Methodology

Three separate but aligned questionnaires were designed by the Play and Youth Development Officer. The Council commissioned SMSR Limited, an independent research company, to support the consultation through questionnaire design advice, hosting of the questionnaires and analysis of results.

The questionnaires were specifically tailored to suit our varied user groups:

- children and young people questionnaire
- parents and residents questionnaire
- stakeholder and partners questionnaire

These questionnaire templates are available on request from the Play Development Officer.

The links to the questionnaires were promoted in various ways; including targeted email communications, social media posts at varied times throughout the day, directly to partners, at community network events and directly to members of the public at community events over the half term week and at Playranger sessions in five communities.

To further promote the online questionnaires the Lead member for Community, Health and Sport, Councillor Iseult Roche, was also interviewed for 96.4 Eagle Radio, which was aired on Sunday 22 November 2015.

The online questionnaires were available from Monday 26 October to Monday 7 December 2015. In total, 237 responses to the survey were received; 73 children and young people, 135 parents and residents, and 29 partners and stakeholders.

Continued ➔

Appendix 3

1.2 Headline findings

1.2.1 Qualities of a play area

When considering what makes a good play area, both parents and stakeholders/partner feedback indicated that the provision of opportunities for children to be physically active in their play (81% and 72% respectively) was one of their five most important qualities. The children and young people reinforced this in their feedback as three-fifths of respondents mentioned things to run, slide, swing, balance or jump on as a key ingredient to a good play area (the most frequent quality mentioned).

In addition both sets of adult respondents (parent and stakeholder/partner) more frequently said that one of their five priorities would be for an area to provide some natural features such as trees, plants, bushes sand and rocks (60% and 62% respectively). Young people and children also frequently cited trees, plants, bushes, sand and rocks to play as one of their five aspects that they think a good play area should have (50%)

The least mentioned quality by all respondents was that an area has a range of materials, equipment or loose parts that can be moved around, changed or manipulated (16% and 21% respectively).

Qualities of a play area were originally considered by officers when producing the play value assessments. The data gathered at the consultation, alongside the play value assessments and the advice offered by *Design for Play*, will be used by the Council to reflect back on when looking at options for consulting on new play areas.

1.2.3 Access priorities

There was also common ground with regard to access, as over two-thirds (69%) of parents said the area and access routes to a play area being made to feel safe at all times of the day was the highest priority, a further 16% ranked this as their second priority. More than half (54%) of all stakeholders said it was their number one priority; with a further 18% that ranked it as the second most important priority.

A play area that is open when children want to be able to play and an area that is accessible for all children was a high priority for all respondents when compared to parking, which was identified as the highest priority for just 3% of stakeholders / partners and 10% of parents.

Consideration for access priorities has been cited in the Action Plan and within the themes of the strategy. The feedback from the consultation will be considered in the future development of play areas.

1.2.4 Travel considerations

The majority of all respondents across all three modes of transport said that less than 15 minutes was a reasonable time for children and young people to travel to a play area especially when walking, or cycling. Travelling for up to 30 minutes was considered more reasonable when travelling by car.

These results have been considered by officers when mapping current play provision provided by the Council across the borough. This feedback will contribute to decisions on where to site new play opportunities. Travel considerations are included within the theme 'widening accessibility and participation in play' in the Action Plan.

1.2.5 Barriers to access

Parent's anxiety and perceived dangers were considered the most significant barriers that stop children and young people accessing play opportunities with 32% of parents rating this as the most significant, 43% of stakeholders / partners and 54% of children and young people.

Other barriers that were frequently rated as significant by all respondents were an inability to get to a play area / transport barriers and busy roads / railway lines. Parents and stakeholders / partners mentioned expense frequently whereas, young people and children were more likely to suggest being too busy as a barrier (which was cited as low in significance by parents and partners / stakeholders).

Fences and hedges were rated as the least significant barrier to access by all three types of respondents.

The free of charge, doorstep delivery of play offered by the Playranger service is key to overcoming the barriers reported to have the biggest impact on families. Instilling confidence in parents to let their children play out at no cost to the parents and eliminating the need to travel.

The Council's holiday playscheme, FISH, offers transport to and from the venue. The feedback from the consultation demonstrates that this is needed and a worthwhile offer for families to overcome transport barriers.

Children and young people who felt 'too busy' to be able to play may benefit from playworkers and our partners advocating for their right to play, reminding families of the benefits of 'free play' opportunities and the down-side of over-scheduling children. This has helped to inform the strategy's theme 'to advocate for play'.

1.2.6 Frequency of play

More than half of all children and young people said that they play outside most days; 31% said that they play outside a couple of times a week and 15% said they sometimes play outside.

These figures show that a high percentage of children and young people are not taking advantage of the play opportunities provided by nature, or those provided by the Council or our partners. The theme 'Improve children's health and wellbeing through play' and the associated action plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to tackle this, via the Council's targeted services including FISH and Playrangers, and via our play areas.

1.2.7 Play preferences

More than two-thirds (67%) of children and young people who responded said they liked play to be active and over half (54%) said they liked it to be adventurous. Just less than half (46%) indicated that their favourite type of play was to use wheels; a third said it was hanging out and 31% said it was making things. Less than a tenth (8%) mentioned being quiet as one of their three favourite ways to play.

The results show that although children and young people are all unique with their own preferences and play needs, there are similarities in how they enjoy fulfilling such play needs. This is useful in planning for play and the data collected will be used in the development of future play opportunities. It also demonstrates the desire for elements of risk and challenge in their play. Parents showed support for 'measured' or 'considered' risk in play, and the strategy theme 'Balancing risk in play' and the Action Plan have been altered to reflect this.

A local park or grassy area was the most frequent response from children and young people as one of their favourite places to play (41%) this was followed by at play parks (38%) or in their own garden or a friend's garden (37%). Aside from these, opinion was fairly divided; less than a tenth mentioned places that feel safe from traffic (9%), streets and corners near home (7%) and community centres or leisure centres (6%).

The Council believes that all children and young people should have easy access to play spaces close to where they live. The statistics show the top two places favoured by respondents were local public spaces which is very encouraging, but many chose the security and convenience of gardens. Understanding children's play needs will help the Council to create stimulating, adventurous spaces that attract and inspire children.

1.2.8 Playrangers

Almost half of parents (45%) and children and young people (44%) said they were aware of the Playranger service and the remaining 55% and 56% respectively were unaware of the service.

The majority of all respondents agreed that the service supported fun and imaginative outdoor play opportunities (93% stakeholders /partners; 81% children and young people; 69% parents). Disagreement was a minority; whereas levels of neither agree nor disagree appeared regularly especially with parents, who perhaps felt less able to comment.

The most frequent response across all groups in terms of suggestions for improvement of the service was that the Playranger scheme should be made available at more locations.

The feedback indicates the service is highly valued by those who are aware of it, but that more needs to be done to increase public awareness of the scheme. This has been incorporated to the Action Plan accordingly. Also included in the Action Plan is to deliver sessions in more locations throughout the borough, such as at community events, so the service can reach more children and young people than currently.

Continued 

Appendix 3

1.2.9 FISH - Fun in the School Holidays

Awareness of the FISH holiday playscheme was fairly high with 55% of all parents aware of the scheme and 42% of children and young people aware of the scheme.

Agreement was also high from all respondents that the playscheme supports an environment where young people have space and freedom for play and to participate in sports and arts opportunities (85% stakeholders / partners; 68% parents; 63% children and young people). Levels of disagreement were very small or non-existent, however parents (29%) and children and young people (33%) and to some extent partners / stakeholders (15%) did say that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

When asked for any other suggestions as to how the FISH playscheme could be improved the most frequent responses were that it should be more inclusive of children of all ages and said it should be available at more locations and more often.

The responses are similar to those of the Playrangers; the service needs a stronger communications plan, which has been reflected in the Action Plan. It is seemingly greatly appreciated by those who use it or are aware of it, with a high demand for further opportunities for the expansion of FISH.

1.2.10 Strategy themes

The vast majority of both parents and stakeholders were in agreement with all four of the proposed themes suggested for inclusion in the strategy, with the majority across all four themes indicating strong agreement.

No respondents indicated a level of disagreement with the theme 'widening accessibility and participation in play' and 'improving children's health and wellbeing through play'. Just 4% or less disagreed with the theme 'to advocate for play' or 'balancing risk in play'.

With such overwhelming support for each of the themes in the draft strategy they have all been retained as the principles on which we propose to develop our play provision, however some fine-tuning of the priorities within each theme have been undertaken to reflect the feedback received.

1.2.11 Maintenance and investment programme

More than four-fifths of stakeholders / partners (82%) and parents (81%) agreed with the Council's intentions to use the data collected from the play value assessments to develop a maintenance and investment programme and priorities. Just 2% of parents disagreed and no stakeholders or partners disagreed with this idea.

Such a strong level of approval with the play value assessment process indicates that there is confidence that our assessments are relevant and robust, signifying this is an effective tool to plan and monitor our play area development process against.

2. Stakeholder engagement evening

A stakeholder engagement evening held on 2 November 2015 provided a strategic view from a wide range of professionals with backgrounds in the fields of youthwork, playwork, inclusion and community development and local Councillors. Guildford Borough Council considers it is important to ensure young people had a voice within this process, the stakeholder engagement was attended by 28 adult professionals and 3 young people from both Guildford and Surrey Youth Councils.

2.1 Barriers to play

In groups, the attendees considered what barriers there are which may stop children and young people from accessing opportunities to play. The draft Play Strategy identified the following common barriers:

- traffic
- negative attitudes
- outcomes focussed play provision
- reduction in free time
- parental anxiety

The groups came up with extensive lists including aspects from the themes identified above. In addition, how particular natural barriers can affect children's play, such as poor weather, or that during the winter months it is dark for a

considerable amount of children's personal playtime was a reoccurring theme discussed. Anti-social behaviour, drug use and vandalism were concerns mentioned, particularly in relation to the older generation of young people. Also considered were dogs, a lack provision or investment in provision and that children no longer know how to play freely. None of the groups considered that some children and young people actually may not like to play out, or that their lives are so over-scheduled there is no time for them to play freely.

Each group looked at possible solutions to the barriers they had identified. The overarching themes that came through these discussions were:

- More investment in play- both fixed equipment and staffed provision to improve access and raise quality and standards. Use of corporate money in exchange for sponsorship of a play area.
- Better design- through planning and engagement of young people and adults in the community to ensure that the most effective play is provided in the right places. Involving children and young people is key to developing better design and gaining greater respect for the provision.
- Improved transport- recognised issues with transport across the borough, in particular with public transport. It was suggested an influencing role should be taken at borough level.
- Advocacy and education- benefits of play for children, parents and the community. Changing perceptions of children and young people. Cross generational projects.
- Increase in trained playworkers- such as Playrangers who can offer inspirational and creative play ideas.

2.2 Designing a play space

The groups were asked to consider what makes an area good to play in. The broad range of answers included variations in the provision of equipment, materials, play opportunities, ancillary items and services, landscaping, access, staff resources, and additional youth provision. Opportunities for children and young people of all ages to play together was cited by each group, and places where children can 'just be'. Safety considerations were discussed and the need for risk to be managed, with a varied level of challenge. The responses clearly established that there are an extensive variety of play needs specific to varying individuals, communities or to geographical locations. This provides further evidence of the need for better design through planning and engagement of individual communities from early in the development process through to delivery and beyond. All of which is supported by the guidance in *Design for play*.

2.3 Strategy themes

Each group was given one of the proposed themes from the strategy to discuss in detail. The groups were asked to consider the appropriateness of the theme within the strategy and to provide any further comments or suggestions.

Feedback from the group considering the first theme, **widening accessibility and participation in play**, established that they agreed with the overall theme but further emphasis should be made in the strategy to ensure play opportunities are provided for all children and young people, not just those with disabilities and those who may be more vulnerable than others. The Play and Youth Development Officer has ensured that diversity and equality are reflected within the theme, and has fine-tuned the priorities within the theme and the Action Plan accordingly.

The group felt that stronger marketing and communication of our schemes would assist the Council in achieving the theme; this too was incorporated into the theme's priorities and Action Plan.

The group who discussed the second theme of the strategy, **to advocate for play**, debated why it was that the Council needs to advocate for play, and ways in which the Council could do so. Ideas included challenging stereotypes and keeping play in the forefront of people's minds.

The priority within the theme '*offer support, advice and signposting for local community groups. This includes, but is not limited to, grants advice and Safeguarding advice and training*' was deemed not necessary, as most of it should be a 'given' with the role of Play and Youth Development Officer. This was therefore removed as a priority yet aspects of it were included within the action plan.

The group looking at the theme **improve children's health and wellbeing through play** had a comprehensive discussion about the subject area in general and ultimately agreed with this being an important strategic themes. They expanded discussions on each of the priorities within the theme, clarifying in which direction they felt the strategy should follow in line with the context of this theme, this is reflected in the action plan.

The final theme proposed in the draft strategy is **balancing risk** in play and this was considered by the group to be a significant aspect to include. Discussion considered all aspects of risk that children need to be subjected to, and how important it is for them to fail and to cope with that failure. Be it a grazed knee or a damaged ego. Advice from the stakeholders and partners was to ensure this theme was specific and achievable. These points were considered carefully when creating the action plan and the priorities within it.

Continued →

Appendix 3

3. Community engagement

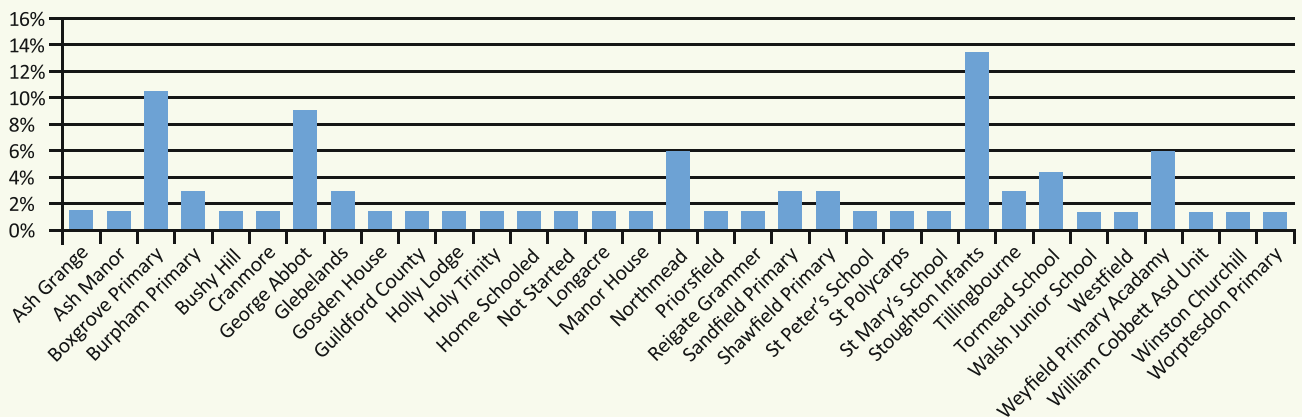
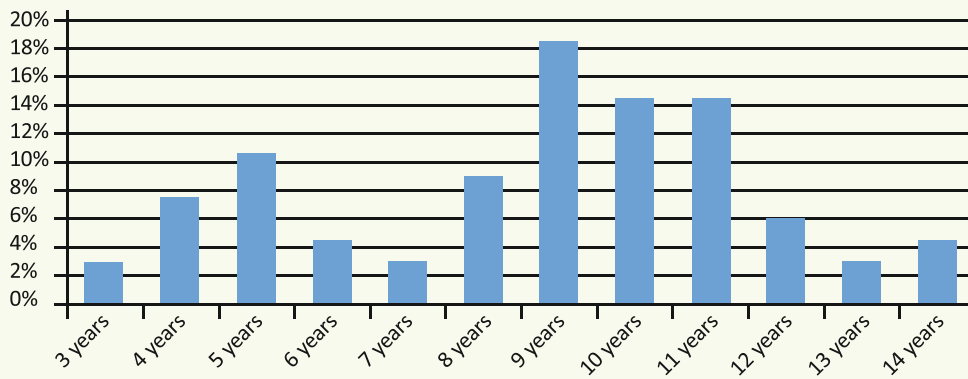
During the consultation period, a small community engagement activity was facilitated within a Playranger session, with a mixture of young children and parents.

The feedback highlighted the diverse range of barriers commonly encountered, which were quite specific to everyone's personal circumstances. There was a wide variety of play preferences, of how the children and young people most enjoy playing, with the use of wheels being the most popular (such as scooters or bikes), closely followed by getting wet or grubby by paddling, digging, or similar. There was diversity in what makes a good play area with parents choosing shade, shelter and somewhere to sit, and children choosing things to slide, swing, balance and jump on.

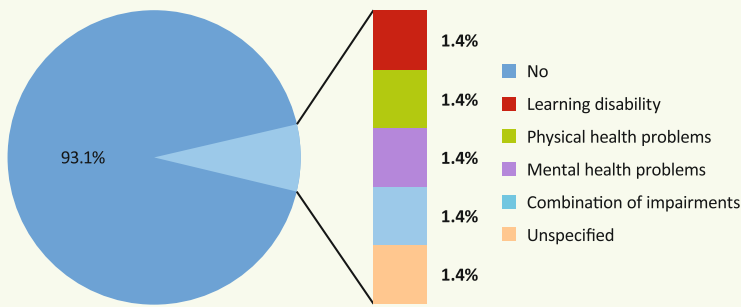
Their responses of where they like to play were more aligned, with parks, gardens and natural play spaces generally being the top choices. None of the families wanted to walk or cycle more than 15 minutes to a play area. Only one of the families had a car, and they would be willing to drive for up to half an hour to access a play area.

The Playranger service was considered to be "great", but requests were noted for shelter and seating to be provided at sessions.

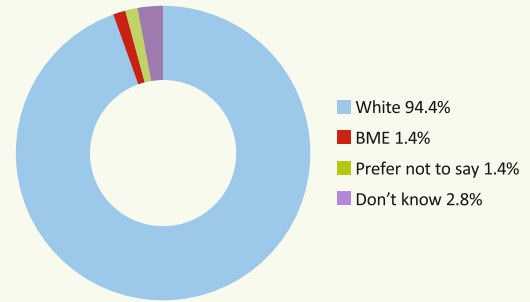
4. Demographic breakdown of results for children and young people



Are you considered disabled?

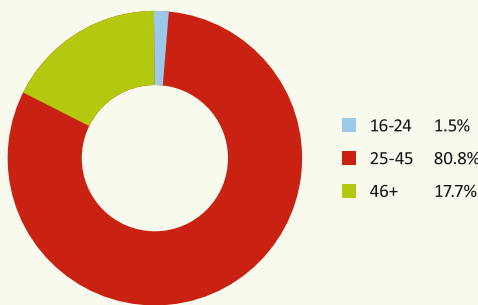


Ethnicity

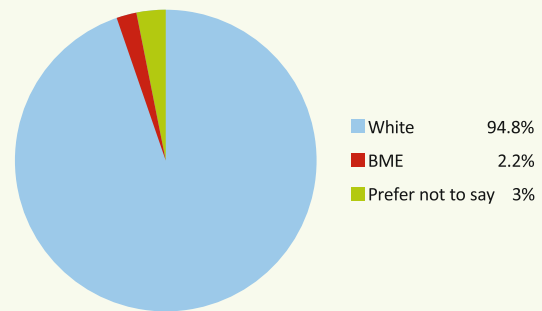


4.2 Demographic breakdown of results for parents and residents

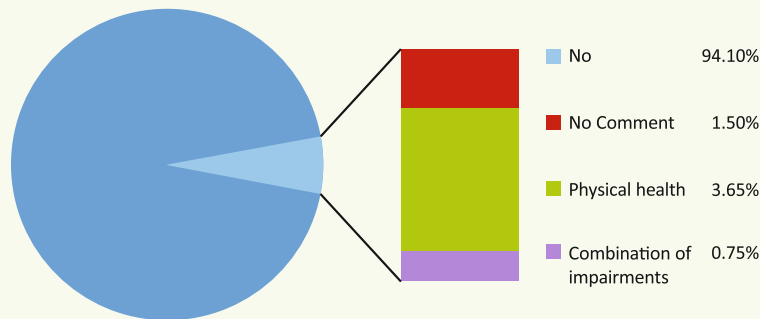
How old are you?



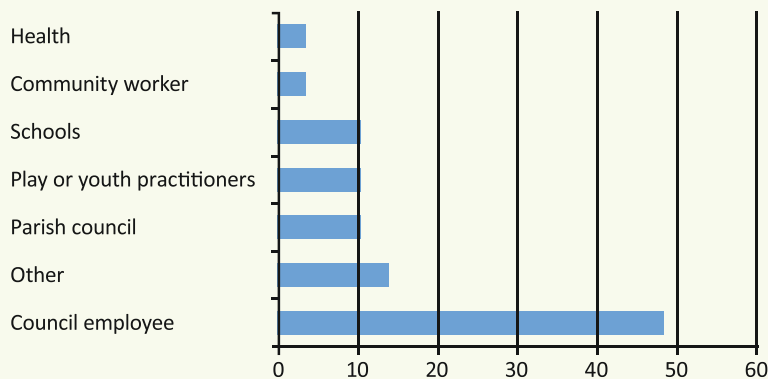
Ethnicity



Are your day to day activities limited by long-term disabilities?



4.3 Demographic breakdown of results for stakeholders and partners



For more information on the consultation process and to request a copy of the full report, please contact the Guildford Play and Youth Development Officer: playdevelopment@guildford.gov.uk or 01483 444764



Section 2

The Fixed Play Equipment Strategy

Foreword

This strategy sets a framework for the Council to advocate for children's right to play. When we started this review process, we decided to divide the strategy into two key sections. This is the second part of the strategy and will focus on Guildford's fixed play assets.

The challenge in respect of play areas and play spaces is to make sure they deliver a good experience for their users. Children want play spaces they can enjoy. Adults want play spaces where children can develop physical and decision making skills that will help them in all parts of their lives. To do this a play area must have an element of risk otherwise, the learning opportunities derived from risk based decision making are lost and it reduces the fun.

The Council needs a plan to maintain the existing play areas to the best standard they can. Residents naturally regard play areas as valuable community assets and so do we. These assets must be maintained so they can meet the expectations of the community that use them. We need good parks in the right places and this strategy will help to ensure this is the case going forward.

The resources that are available to us are not limitless. We are fortunate to have some wonderful facilities and green spaces within the borough and some of the parish play facilities are outstanding. Working with the parish council's is crucial to meeting community needs.

I am pleased that we have produced a plan that will contribute to safeguarding good quality play areas for future generations to be active in, to learn from and, perhaps most important of all, have a good time in.



Councillor Richard Billington

Lead Councillor for Parks
and Leisure

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2.1. Introduction

This part of the Play Strategy relates to fixed play equipment (such as slides, swings and roundabouts) within the borough.

In order to be able to set out a plan to maintain and develop excellent play spaces we need to understand the overview of the current position including the different types of play space and the guidelines that set out the best practice. We must be aware of the planning context so that new developments can have suitable facilities to help build new communities. We also have to understand the nature and quality of the existing play spaces so we can target resources at the locations most needing them.

We have profiled the key demographic information for each ward within the borough and mapped each play area to identify gaps in provision so that we can plan for the future. Excellent play provision has to meet the needs of the local community and in order to find out what is important to the users we have consulted on this strategy and will continue to consult during the refurbishment or installation of play areas to meet local needs as best we can.

A plan to manage assets can only be successful if it recognises the availability of resources to deliver it. The plan for the first five years of this is set out at Appendix A.

In summary, this Fixed Play Equipment Strategy:

- gives a rationale for investment in play provision as an important part of infrastructure in the borough
- identifies the play provision that exists, its value and gaps in provision
- sets standards for investment in play provision in Guildford
- presents a development plan identifying priorities for future investment

2.1.1 Rationale for play provision

The Play Strategy establishes that 'play provision is part of the necessary infrastructure for healthy communities'. It outlines the evidence for the enormous value of outdoor play for healthy learning and development.

Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity and is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of individuals and communities.

Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group 2005

Although children's impulse to play is innate and is fundamental to development and well being, the more complicated, busy and risk-averse our lives become, the more opportunities for children to play need to be planned by public authorities, who are one of the main providers and facilitators of play spaces.

"There are many barriers to play today - traffic, commerce, a public realm that takes little account of children, fear of predators and bullying, increased demands on their structured time and society's ambivalent attitude to young people. Increasing anti-social behaviour and obesity may be just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the potential damage to our future generations."²³ In acknowledging play as part of the infrastructure for healthy communities, the Council is committed to preserving and equipping open space for play, as an integral part of existing and new residential areas.

2.1.2 Why the provision of outdoor facilities for play is important

The last 15 years have seen academic research, both qualitative and quantitative, that demonstrates the benefit of play, particularly outdoor play, for children and families in terms of keeping families active and healthy, maintaining positive contact with the natural world and developing communities.

Research has evidenced the positive role of open space and physical activity for children and adults alike in reducing health inequalities and improving mental as well as physical health.²⁴ Outdoor activity has been shown to benefit children who find it difficult to concentrate indoors,²⁵ to benefit mental health and general physical health and thereby contribute to healthy communities. There is also evidence that the more children play outside, the more likely they are to use outdoor spaces as adults²⁶ and therefore go on to encourage their own children to play outside. This research is reflected in the physical activity guidelines for children and adults produced by the Department of Health.

An overview of this research is considered more fully in section 1.2 of the main body of the Play Strategy.



23 Catherine Prisk, Director, Play England, April 2010 - British Psychological Society's Annual Conference

24 Marmot, M. (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post 2010. The Marmot Review - Policy objective E: 'Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities'.

25 See 'Sowing the seeds - reconnecting London's children with nature', Tim Gill, 2012;

26 Layard and Dunn (2009) 'A Good Childhood: Searching for values in a competitive age' - quoted in 'Natural Childhood', Moss/National Trust (2012)

2.1.3 Policies and guidance relating to outdoor play and open space for recreation and sport

Fields in Trust benchmark guidelines

Fields in Trust (FIT) is the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association, whose core principle is to protect outdoor space for sport and recreation. Within its work to protect these spaces, FIT has offered guidance for practitioners on open space provision and design since the 1930's. The 'Six Acre Standard' (minimum standard for outdoor playing space per 1,000 populations) has influenced various reviews of this guidance since the 1930's: *Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play* (2008) and most recently '*Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015)'.

Whilst retaining the primary rates of provision, the 2015 guidance draws out new recommendations for accessibility, the application of standards and the minimum dimensions of formal outdoor space under the following benchmarks:

- quantity descriptions
- accessibility
- quality
- spatial requirements
- buffer zones

Fields in Trust's benchmarks form a suitable basis for informing planning policies, decisions and proposals, which include the provision of outdoor play at borough or neighbourhood levels. Using the most current guidance will help the Council ensure that the provision of outdoor play is of a sufficient size for effective use; is located in an accessible location in proximity to dwellings; and of a suitable quality to maintain longevity for continued use.

The guidance recommends that equipped or designated play spaces are grouped under the following descriptions:

- A **Local Area for Play (LAP)** is a small area of open space, specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children to play close to where they live (i.e. within 1-3 minute walking time). The LAP is a doorstep play area. It could be a grassed area, open space, residential street in a home zone or a small designed play area, where young children can play within sight of known adults.
- A **Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)** is an area of open space specifically designated and laid out with features including equipment for children who are beginning to go out and play independently close to where they live, usually within 5 minutes walking time. It could be a grassed area, small park, local open space designed for play or informal recreation or a school play area open out of school hours. Play features, including equipment, are an integral and attractive part of the LEAP.
- A **Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)** is an area of open space specifically designated, laid out and equipped mainly for older children but with play opportunities for younger children as well. It is designed for children and young people who are used to travelling longer distances independently to get to safely on their own. It might be a park, playing field, recreation ground or natural open space, such as a woodland, moorland or beach - accessible and attractive to older children and young people. It might include ball courts, multi-use games areas (MUGA) or skateboard areas. The area should be capable of meeting the needs of children with a range of impairments.

More detail of the criteria for the above designations is set out at Appendix B.



Design for Play: A guide to creating successful play spaces

Produced by Play England in association with the Free Play Network to support the previous government's Playbuilder and Pathfinder programme, *Design for Play* explains how good play spaces can give children and young people the freedom to play creatively, while allowing them to experience risk, challenge and excitement.

It shows how good play space can be designed to be affordably maintained, challenging some of the myths and risk averse thinking that has created a culture of uninspiring play spaces with prescriptive equipment that lacks any challenge or adventure.

The guidance is underpinned by ten principles:

1. are 'bespoke'
2. are well located
3. make use of natural elements
4. provide a wide range of play experiences
5. are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children
6. meet community needs
7. allow different children of different ages to play together
8. build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge
9. are suitable and appropriately maintained
10. allow for change and evolution

Design for Play advocates for good play spaces as being good for all of the community.

Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation guide

This guide shows how play providers can develop an approach to risk management that takes into account the benefits to children and young people of challenging play experiences, as well as the risks. It aims to help providers achieve two objectives, which are fundamental to play provision: to offer children and young people challenging, exciting, engaging play opportunities, while ensuring that they are not exposed to unacceptable risk of harm.

Fundamental to the approach within this guidance is a commitment to offer opportunities for risk and challenge in the provision of play facilities. This then forms the framework for the use of risk benefit assessments, which are supported by a technical play inspection.

The Council's overall approach to the management of risk is informed by this guidance and is summarised in section 1.3.7 of the Play Strategy. This is further discussed in relation to the provision of equipped play provision in section 3 of this strategy.



Appendix C sets out the general design principles encompassed in the FIT guidance, alongside those of 'Design for Play' and 'Managing Risk in Play Provision'

National Planning Policy

In 2002, the government established a requirement for local authorities to undertake an audit of their open space, sport and recreation facilities to inform their local planning policies. This national planning policy guidance is referred to as PPG17. The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012²⁷ meant that PPG17 was no longer a requirement. The NPPF forms the key national policy document and is a material consideration in planning decisions. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides additional guidance to the NPPF, including in relation to open space, sports and recreation, in the form of an online resource.

²⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

Continued →

The Council's Planning Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), (2011) sets out the principles for the contributions the local authority will require developers to make towards the provision of open space in new developments. See Appendix E for a summary.

Although no longer current, the PPG17 guidance, is still of practical value and the findings of the PPG17 study undertaken by the Council in 2006 are the evidence base for the Borough's current local development framework and provides baseline data for establishing quantity of play provision in the borough.

Planning conditions on a developer - Section 106

When the Council grants planning permission and wishes to impose requirements on a development, this is normally secured by planning conditions. These requirements usually come in the form of infrastructure provision or a financial contribution towards that provision. This includes the provision of green spaces and facilities for children's play. Developer contributions are secured through a Section 106 (S106) Agreement [Town and County Planning Act 1980], which forms part of any planning permission granted.

The limitations of S106 contributions is that the financial contribution or infrastructure provision is directly associated with specific development therefore, can only be used to develop or improve play provision within a limited distance from the development. S106 contributions are also required to be delivered within a set time frame. The result of this can be that areas where new developments are prevalent become saturated with provision for play that is not necessarily delivered in the best place and with the best use of resources. Similarly, areas of the borough without new development lack continuous investment in infrastructure and facilities for play.

The Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL) which came into force in 2010, is a tariff based method of collecting funds from development to pay for necessary infrastructure. CIL funds are capable of being used to fund local sport and recreation facilities including play. CIL will operate alongside S106 contributions. Developers will be required to contribute through either S106 or CIL depending on which is most appropriate within planning regulations. The monies raised from CIL can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure needed to support new development within the borough, not necessarily in the location where the money is raised.

The Council is currently working towards introducing CIL in the borough, which will change the way developers contribute to play facilities. The impact on the developer funds available for the provision of play is therefore a changing landscape in Guildford.

Tools for evaluating play provision- Play England

In conjunction with the introduction of a national indicator for play during the previous government's administration (2009), Play England developed a suite of local play indicators to support local evaluation of children's play. Based on the collection of data, the indicators measure the extent to which children have access to spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation.

Play indicators:

- participation
- access
- quality
- satisfaction with play provision

Methods for collection of data

- household survey to establish local play participation levels
- applying classification of play spaces and distance thresholds in play strategy audits and GIS mapping to establish access
- using play value assessment tools to establish quality
- using surveys of children and young people to establish satisfaction with provision

The national indicator for play was withdrawn along with other national indicators with the change in government (2010). However, this guidance provides the Council with a set of indicators and tools to better understand and meet the play needs of local children and young people, which supports the development of its strategy for play.



Appendix B provides a summary of classifications of local and neighbourhood play areas, introduced in the FIT and 'Tools for evaluating local play provision'²⁸ guidance.

The Council has used the guidance set out above to develop its strategy for play, identifying requirements for play provision in each of its wards. Evidence of the application of the various tools and guidelines can be found throughout the Play Strategy and Fixed Play Equipment Strategy. These guidelines will continue to provide a rationale for investment in play and to influence the design of new or development of existing local play provision.

2.2 Standards for design and maintenance of play provision

'Children play in many different ways according to their own interests and abilities and enjoy different forms of play at different times and places.'²⁹



Tilehouse Open Space

The Council aspires to create and manage play space that enable children and young people to experience different types of play within a progressive and challenging environment. In its statutory role as a Local Planning Authority, the Council encourages developers to incorporate play into the design for new developments, as an important part of the community's infrastructure.

This section sets out the standard of play provision the Council aspires to achieve, in order to maximise the range of play opportunities for children and families in Guildford.

²⁸ 'tools for evaluation play provision' Play England, Ashley Godfrey Associates, INSPIRE, Bristol City Council, Oct 2009. <http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/202750/tools-for-evaluating-play-provision.pdf>

²⁹ Children's Play Council, National Playing Fields Association and PLAYLINK 2000, quoted in "Design for Play: A guide to creating successful play spaces", DCSF 2008.

2.2.1 Quantity of play space

The quantity of play spaces in the borough has been established through the findings of the PPG17 Audit and GIS mapping which has contributed to the ward profiles.

The detail of this data can be found in Appendix G.



The Council's current SPD for planning contributions (March 2011) requires a contribution of play space of 0.8ha per 1,000 people, which is the same as recommended by FIT. The FIT benchmark is broken down into 0.25ha /1000 of equipped play space and 0.55ha/1000 of informal play space.

The PPG17 Audit identified an overall deficiency in open space of 96.37ha in 2005. With the exception of Christchurch ward (in which Stoke Park is situated), all urban wards in Ash and Guildford show a deficit of open space per 1000 population. Although there is a surplus in some more rural areas (the wards of Effingham, Lovelace, Normandy, Shalford, The Pilgrims and Tillingbourne), it is outweighed by the deficit in the more urban areas, particularly Ash South and Tongham, Stoughton, Westborough, Onslow, Merrow and Friary and St Nicholas. Most settlements, with the exception of Flexford, Puttenham and Send Marsh were found to have access to a playing field, park or amenity open space for informal play or recreation.

Through planning contributions, open space can be sought within new developments to ensure demand from increased numbers of residents is met, but contributions are unlikely to be used to make up for an existing open space deficit beyond the development.

Land is rarely available for use as recreational open space. Where possible, the Council has improved the availability of play space. For example in Ash, with the development of a natural play area at Lakeside Nature Reserve in 2010. Westborough Woods was also developed as a natural play area in 2012 and then connected with the open spaces at Foxburrows, Coachlads, Burrows Close and Woodside Road through a trail of outdoor fitness equipment.

The Council will continue to use the latest FIT *Guidance for Outdoor Space and Play* (2015) as a benchmark for the provision of play areas across the borough.

2.2.2 Quality of play provision and play space design

The quality of local provision for play across the borough has been established through play value assessments.

Play value

Play England and Fields in Trust have identified a list of key play values, all of which are important to children's enjoyment and day-to-day experience. It is not possible to incorporate every play type into every play area design; some will only be revealed when children are playing. In endeavouring to create spaces that maximise play opportunities, new designs and plans for refurbishment take the different types of play and different abilities into account.

The Council have undertaken play value assessment of the borough's play areas. These assessments have informed the recommendations for future investment.



2.2.3 Play space design

Where appropriate, the Council will design a play space that is in keeping with the principles of *Design for Play*, aspiring to create successful play spaces in their own right, specially designed for their location, in such a way as to provide as much play value as possible. As such, a Guildford play space will follow these ten principles of design:

1. designed to enhance its setting - inspired by the background, whether that's a park, open space or urban landscape
2. located in the best possible place - where children naturally play, away from dangerous roads, noise and pollution, but near through routes and well-used public footpaths
3. Close to nature - many studies have shown that children benefit from access to natural environments. In densely populated urban areas, the use of grassy mounds, planting, logs and boulders can help to make a more attractive and playable setting for equipment.
4. designed so that children can play in different ways, incorporating different ages, abilities and interests
5. designed so that disabled and non-disabled children play together
6. loved by the community
7. a space where children of all ages have the opportunity to play together where there is space to do so
8. a space where children can stretch and challenge themselves in every way
9. maintained for play value and environmental sustainability
10. a space that evolves as children grow where there is space to

The *Design for Play* principles were drawn up to counteract a reductionist approach to play provision, where risk was minimised and maintenance simplified. They are complemented by *Managing Risk in Play Provision*, which encourages play providers to respond to the needs children have to take risks when they play, offering stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities, whilst aiming to manage the level of risk to which they are exposed, rather than taking a risk averse approach. Given the pressure on land use, it is not always possible to choose the ideal location of a play space, to change the fundamental layout of an existing play area or to separate types of play spaces, but these principles remain the basis of the Council's design, evaluation and development of play spaces.



2.2.4 Accessibility of play provision

Access to play provision has been established through applying the classification of play spaces and distance thresholds in the play strategy audit through PPG17 findings and GIS mapping which have contributed to ward profiles.

The PPG17 target for accessibility is to use the Fields in Trust median accessibility standard, which is defined in terms of walking distances from home to play areas:

Local Areas of Play (**LAPs**): accompanied walking distance **100m** (1-3 minutes' walk).

Local Equipped Areas of Play (**LEAPs**): walking distance **400m** (5 minutes' walk).

Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (**NEAPs**): walking distance **1,000m** (15 minutes' walk).

In acknowledging the difficulty in achieving this standard, especially in urban areas, the PPG17 study proposes that open spaces used for other purposes be opened up to play and that existing areas offer a greater variety of play opportunities where space allows. This policy requires a local solution, as play provision for older children and young people is often considered to disturb other uses of open space and those living adjacent. There are many examples of villages investing in skate parks or multi-use games areas, as they acknowledge that older children and young people also need somewhere local to play. This approach is consistent with enabling play spaces to be adapted to children and young people's needs.

2.2.5 Inclusive design

A fundamental aspect of accessibility is ensuring that play spaces offer opportunities for children and young people of all abilities. It is tempting to invest more heavily in equipment that can be accessed by children with mobility difficulties at larger sites where there is access to car parking, changing facilities and refreshment facilities. However a National Playing Fields Association study by Rob Whewey and Alison John in 2004 found that disabled children have a desire to use their closest play areas for everyday play, and to play locally with their friends, not only at neighbourhood or destination play areas, just like other children. They found that there are a number of social and educational barriers to this, beyond the design of the play area. Some play areas are situated in locations that are just less accessible due to the topography of the area but it may be possible to make physical adjustments to play areas to enable better accessibility. Suitable design and adaptation is also important.



A different way to spin and swing for a range of abilities 'Titan' at Tilehouse Open Space, Stoughton.

Where possible, new and refurbished play areas will be designed and include equipment that enables all children and young people to experience different types of play, in keeping with *Design for Play* principles. There may be conflicting choices to be made: ‘A play space offering little in the way of texture, light and shade or planting can limit engagement for some young people with sensory and cognitive impairments... (but)... play areas designed to maximise sensory engagement may compromise access for other children.’³⁰ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister’s (ODPM) guide *Developing Accessible Play Space* (2003) contains a list of popular ranges of equipment that promote accessibility (see appendix D).

2.2.6 Risk and challenge in play

Safety standards

“Play area risk is exceedingly small in terms of fatalities, and in terms of lesser injuries is far lower than for most traditional sports which children are encouraged to engage in” (Ball 2007).³¹

A qualified Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII), annual inspector, assesses new play areas and an independent inspector, inspects all play areas annually. In addition, regular operational checks, where frequency is assessed by the type of site and its level of usage, are conducted throughout the year, to advise the play area manager about hazards and maintenance needs. These inspections are carried out to check the play equipment and play area against the recommended British and European safety standards. The recommended safety standards related to play provision in Britain are BS [EN 1176](#) and BS [EN 1177](#). They are concerned with ensuring that any play equipment is installed safely, that there are appropriate distances between the equipment and adjacent materials (free fall zones) and that there is sufficient safety surfacing to reduce the severity of the impact of any falls from heights. There are other elements involving trip hazards, finger or head entrapments and general maintenance of play features.³²

Where there is a discrepancy between a piece of play equipment and the standard, an assessment should be made on the risk of an accident against the benefit for children’s play and development from using the equipment. This will be done by the site owner in the design stages, with input from both the designer and an inspector registered with the RPII scheme and experienced in assessing play provision.³³

Risk management



Childhood is being undermined by adults’ increasing aversion to risk and by the intrusion of that fear into every aspect of their lives.

Tim Gill, 2007



Much has been written about our risk adverse society; the increasing need we feel to protect children from risk and the long-term damage this can do to children and to our communities. Exposure to risk is an essential part of ensuring children grow, develop, and are equipped with the skills and ability to fulfil their adult life.

Applying the fundamental principles of risk management outlined in *Managing Risk in Play Provision*, the Council takes a risk-benefit approach to play provision. This approach weighs up the potential risk involved in using a play space or item of play equipment against the potential benefit to children’s play. It gives the Council the opportunity to move away from a risk averse approach that tended to incorporate rubber safety surfacing, fencing and gates, for good economic and insurance reasons, sometimes at the expense of the benefit to children’s play. The Council recognises that ultimately, children will play and if play spaces do not offer them the level of challenge they desire, they will play elsewhere, possibly in less safe spaces.

30 *Developing Accessible play space*, ODPM, 2003

31 Quoted in ‘Risk Management in play provision: implementation guide, 2012

32 <http://www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/adviceandinformation/playsafety/en1176-play-area-equipment-standard.aspx>

33 <http://www.playinspectors.com/RPII-Inspectors>

Continued →

Designing a play space to fit its environment often leads to a preference for natural materials, which in some cases include using fallen trees, boulders or stepping stones as climbing/play structures. These sorts of structures will not come with confirmation of meeting play safety standards (such as BS EN 1176), so their use needs to be risk assessed on site. Immediate hazards should be minimised, for instance:

- the removal of small branches at height that could snap easily when stepped on
- consideration of some form of safer surfacing if children could jump from a height

These should then be monitored for changes (such as branches becoming fragile with use or bark coming off, leaving more slippery surfaces). Similar risk assessment should be undertaken for the use of water in play provision (e.g. ponds and pumped water).



*Use of natural materials for play:
logs, ditches, boulders and bridges Lakeside
Nature Reserve, Ash*

Fencing, boundaries, animals and children's play space

The BS EN 1176 and 1177 standards do not specify fencing, gates or wet-pour as necessary to children's safety, but specify standards for these features if they are used.

A boundary is useful for play spaces for many reasons, but a play area does not need to be fenced. In fact, fencing around play areas is not as common in many European countries as it is in the UK. The key issue in using fencing is to determine whether children need to be protected from danger. An unfenced area may prove more of a danger to small children than to older ones. An area adjacent to a busy road or a car park is likely to prove dangerous for all children. An area within a larger park is unlikely to need fencing. Despite the belief that fencing will protect children from animals, in particular from dogs, there is little evidence to show that this is the case. Clear boundaries are important as many children, particularly those with certain disabilities, need to know where the boundaries of a space are. However, boundaries may be denoted using planting, surfacing or mounds rather than fencing.



Funds spent on fencing will detract from the amount available for play features. The key question therefore, is what additional value fencing will add to a play space. In some cases it will be significant, in others, the lack of fencing may well add to the play opportunities available. A risk-benefit analysis, on a site-by-site basis, is the best approach. *Managing Risk in Play Provision* provides useful guidance setting out some risks and benefits relating to fencing.³⁴

³⁴ *Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation guide 2nd Edition*, Play Safety Forum, Play England, 2012. See also: 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play', Fields in Trust, 2008 section 6.1.15

2.2.7 Types of safer surfacing and moveable/'loose' parts

A similar risk-benefit approach should be applied to different types of surfacing and use of moveable parts. Different textures and the ability to move things around as children play (such as logs, sand and water) adds to the play experience, although the risk of harm from enabling this sort of play on unsupervised play areas must also be taken into account. For instance, sand and bark surfacing may have additional play value, but need to be checked for sharp objects or animal faeces frequently and need regular topping-up to maintain the correct impact absorbency. Rubber matting-type surfacing (grass mat for example) is economical. To work well it should have a good swath of grass growing through it, so it must be maintained so that the grass grows fully. This is not always easy in high wear areas so the impact absorbency of the surfacing is reduced. Wetpour (rubber bonded crumb) is expensive to install and expensive to repair; it can include graphics that increase play value and is relatively long lasting. However, its tendency to shrink around the edges and the difficulty of creating seamless joins increases the cost of maintaining it.

2.2.8 Vandalism and maintenance

A high standard of maintenance is essential across all play provision. This includes litter collection, making safe unexpected hazards as well as repair and replacement of play equipment. If play areas have equipment that is not working or appear poorly maintained, they soon become vulnerable to further damage. All Council managed play areas will be inspected a minimum of once a week by a qualified inspector, with high use play areas (Stoke Park Gardens, Sutherland Memorial Park, Stoke Recreation Ground, Stoughton Recreation Ground and any new play area [for the first few months or longer if any vandalism issues surface] being inspected a minimum of twice a week. These inspections concentrate on wear and tear, damage, minor maintenance and cleanliness. Currently the reporting of issues is currently carried out via *Playsafe*, a paperless asset management system, whilst the inspector is on site. This system helps highlight trends and any repeat problems, whilst also keeping a record of the results of every inspection. An independent annual inspection will be carried out across all sites in accordance with BS and EN guidelines.

Signage is fitted at all play sites. These include contact details for reporting issues so visitors can report damage of the play areas directly to the correct provider. They should all be welcoming and in keeping with the Green Flag guidance for high quality parks (see appendix F 'Green Flag award scheme'). The Green Flag Award is one of a number of accreditation schemes that recognises excellence in the management of our public spaces.

2.2.9 Stakeholder and community engagement

The Council has a process in place for ensuring stakeholder involvement and expert advice is included when developing a play area so that all of the above points are included as practically as possible. The views of parents and children are incredibly valuable to delivering a successful facility in the community.

Wherever possible, the process for developing a new play area or refurbishing a large part of one is:

1. consult with the community to set the design brief
2. obtain designs from play companies (tender)
3. assess designs in accordance with our play value and quality requirements, public opinion, and price evaluation
4. appoint contractor
5. minor refinements to the design/equipment through public consultation

Information concerning play areas shall continue to be made available throughout all of the stages above using social media and the Council's website. This includes keeping residents informed when play areas are partially closed for repairs or equipment replaced.

2.2.10 Summary

Good design for play requires knowledge of the site, of local needs (based on local consultation) and technical skill. The play needs of different communities vary over time, so design for play areas needs to take a long term view and balance the benefits of different types of play with its inherent risks.

2.3 Current play provision in Guildford Borough

2.3.1 Council owned play provision

The Council owns and manages 63 play facilities across the borough. These are:

- a BMX track at Kingston Meadows
- nine fitness trails
- 32 children's play areas (plus Park Barn Drive play area managed through a lease from Surrey County Council - 33 play areas in total), ranging in size and types of play equipment - 10 are Local Areas for Play (LAP), seven are Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) with Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA), 15 are LEAPS (no MUGA), and there is one Neighbourhood Equipped Play Area for Play (NEAP)
- 13 MUGAs (total)
- two skate parks
- one paddling pool
- one free to use table tennis table
- two all year goal posts

Other facilities available at a small charge:

- one table tennis table
- one mini golf course with 18 holes

2.3.2 Recent developments

The Council's previous fixed play strategies identified three priority groups of Council owned play areas for improvement supported by a three-year capital investment programme. This capital funding ended after year one and therefore further refurbishment of play areas was limited to S106 funds from developments in specific wards and not the planned programme of 'need' identified in the strategies. A new capital investment programme combined with other sources of funding (such as CIL) aims to redress the balance over the next ten years.

The previous strategy also highlighted 16 sites available for the provision of additional youth facilities. Many of these have been achieved. Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) have been added or improved at:

- The Briars (Ash),
- Avondale (Ash),
- Onslow Recreation Ground,
- Stoughton Recreation Ground (Westborough),
- Sutherland Memorial Park (Burpham),
- Kingston Meadows (Clandon and East Horsley),
- Bushy Hill (Merrow),
- Tilehouse (Stoughton),
- Waterside Road (Stoke)
- Guildford Skate Park (Stoke Park, Christchurch) has been expanded
- and outdoor gyms added at Stoke Park, Bushy Hill as well as the five locations in Westborough mentioned above.

Between 2013 and 2015, four play areas have had equipment added (Waterside Road, Bannisters Field, Sutherland Memorial Park, Bushy Hill play area and MUGA fencing added to Bushy Hill and Stoughton MUGAs.) Outdoor gyms have been added in Westborough: Woodside Road, Coachlads, Burrows Close, Foxburrows, Southway, Kingston Meadows. The tennis courts at Kingston Meadows have been converted into a new MUGA and tennis court (upgrading the play area from a LEAP to NEAP) and Stoke Park mini golf has been rebuilt with six extra holes added. Stoke Park paddling pool (free to use) re-opens in the spring of 2016

refurbished with new jets, new surfacing and new plant room with a completely new filtration system. Two table tennis tables have been added in Stoke Park Gardens and Sutherland Memorial Park. Two kick-about permanent goal posts have been added at Hurtmore Field and Bannisters open space.

In the last ten years, the Council's commitment to improving playable open space, including play areas with fixed equipment, has resulted in the refurbishment and expansion of 23 play areas as well as an expansion in the range of facilities provided.

2.3.3 Parish council owned play provision

Parish councils manage a further 38 play areas in the borough, which include:

- two 2 Local Areas for Play
- 34 Locally Equipped Areas for Play
- two Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play

In addition, the following Guildford Borough Council owned land is leased to parish councils for play areas:

- The Green, Sandfields, Send - leased to Send Parish Council
- Pound Place and Oakdene Road, both in Shalford - leased to Shalford Parish Council
- Poyle Road, Tongham - leased to Tongham Parish Council

2.3.4 Other equipped and playable spaces

There are other providers of equipped outdoor play and youth areas that are not included in this strategy, for example:

- play areas on private housing developments
- local children and youth charities and voluntary organisations
- school sites
- third sector providers such as The National Trust and Forestry Commission

The majority of Council owned sites cater for 0 to 8 year olds (67%). 17% of the parks surveyed catered for 'seniors' (9-14 years), and 13% of parks had suitable equipment (a MUGA, skate park, basketball hoops) for '15+'.

A significant contribution to Guildford's play areas are 'playable space', defined by Fields in Trust as 'Local Landscaped Area for Play', which are not identified in any of the figures above. Fundamentally, this unequipped space is specifically laid out to allow imaginative play for all ages. It is beyond the scope of this strategy to consider all of these areas as they cover woodlands, opens space, and grasslands and are managed and provided by a range of land owners including the Council, National Trust, Surrey Wildlife Trust and Surrey County Council.

2.3.5 Views about play and play provision

As part of the process to produce this strategy, a consultation with children and young people, parents, and residents took place to establish current participation, views on play space design, access to and quality of current provision. The key findings from the complete consultation are included within the Play Strategy both in section 1.3 and in the strategy's Appendix 3. The key consultation findings relating to the provision of fixed equipment play areas are outlined below.

2.3.6 Children and young people's views

Participation in play:

- more than half of all children and young people said that they play outside most days
- 31% said that they play outside a couple of times a week
- 15% said they sometimes play outside
- no respondents said that they never play outside
- a local park or grassy area was the most frequent response to the question, which three places are your favourite places to play (41%)
- this was followed by play parks (38%) or in their own garden or a friend's garden (37%)
- aside from that, opinion was fairly divided; less than a tenth mentioned places that feel safe from traffic (9%), streets and corners near home (7%) and community centres or leisure centres (6%)

Play area design

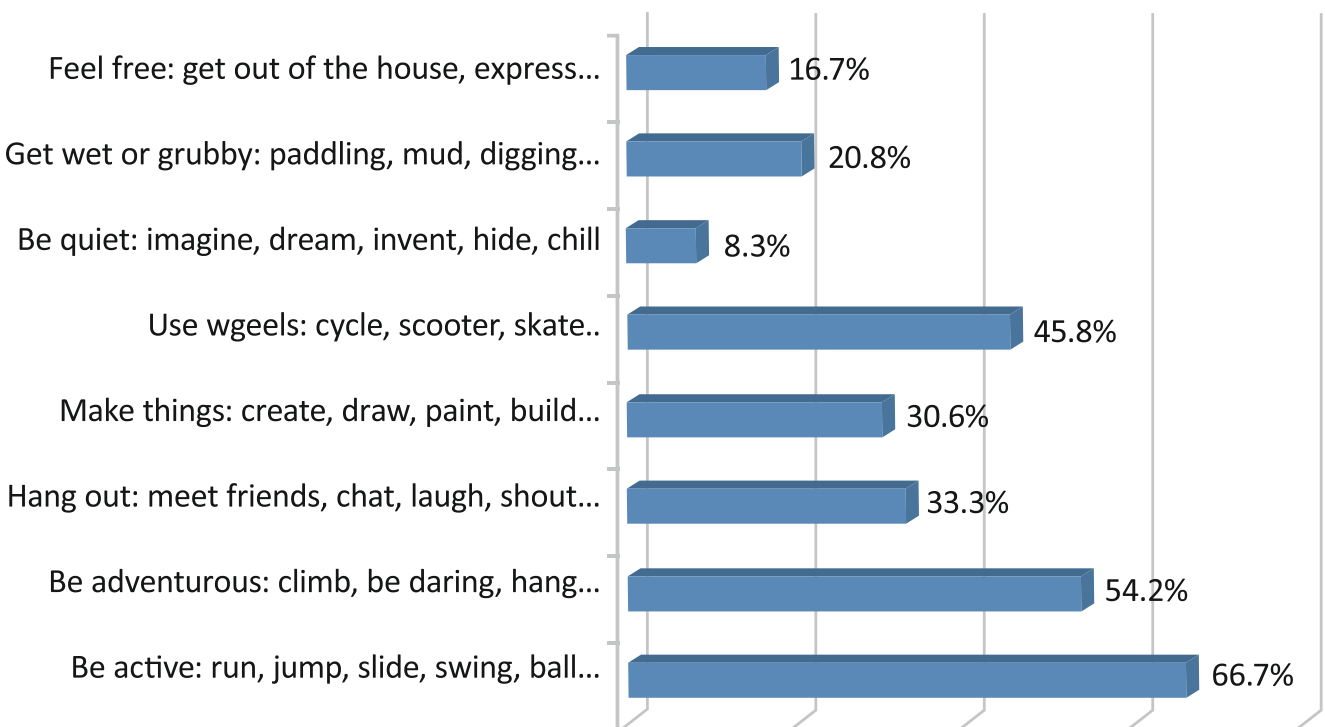
- three-fifths of respondents mentioned things to run, slide, swing, balance or jump on as a key ingredient to a good play area
- half mentioned things to play on that are challenging
- somewhere to meet with other children and trees, plants, bushes, sand and rocks to play was one of the five aspects that they think a good play area should have

Transportation

- around a third of children and young people said that less than 5 minutes would be how far they would go to get to a play area if walking (30%)
- or less than 5 minutes on their bike (32%)
- the majority said that they would walk under 15 minutes (61%) to get to a play area
- or cycle under 15 minutes (48%) to get to a play area

The table below shows the results from the consultation for children and young people's favourite ways to play.

What are your favourite ways to play? Choose your favourite three (Base 72)



2.3.7 Parents and residents' views

Play area design

Respondents were asked to prioritise what made a good space for play

- 60% said that one of their five priorities would be for an area to provide some natural features such as trees, plants, bushes sand and rocks
- more than half of respondents prioritised an area that can be used by different ages in different ways (58%)
- and that an area, including its equipment and design, has opportunities that challenge children and incorporate risk (52%)
- the fifth most frequently mentioned quality was that there is seating available (49%)

Accessibility

Respondents were asked to prioritise four different access considerations to play areas:

- over two-thirds (69%) said the play area and access routes to it, feeling safe at all times of the day was their top priority
- a play area being open at all times when children want to be able to play was the number one priority for 32% of respondents, with 26% that suggested it was their second highest priority
- just less than a quarter (23%) said that an area that is accessible for all children was their highest priority and a further 37% said it was their second highest priority

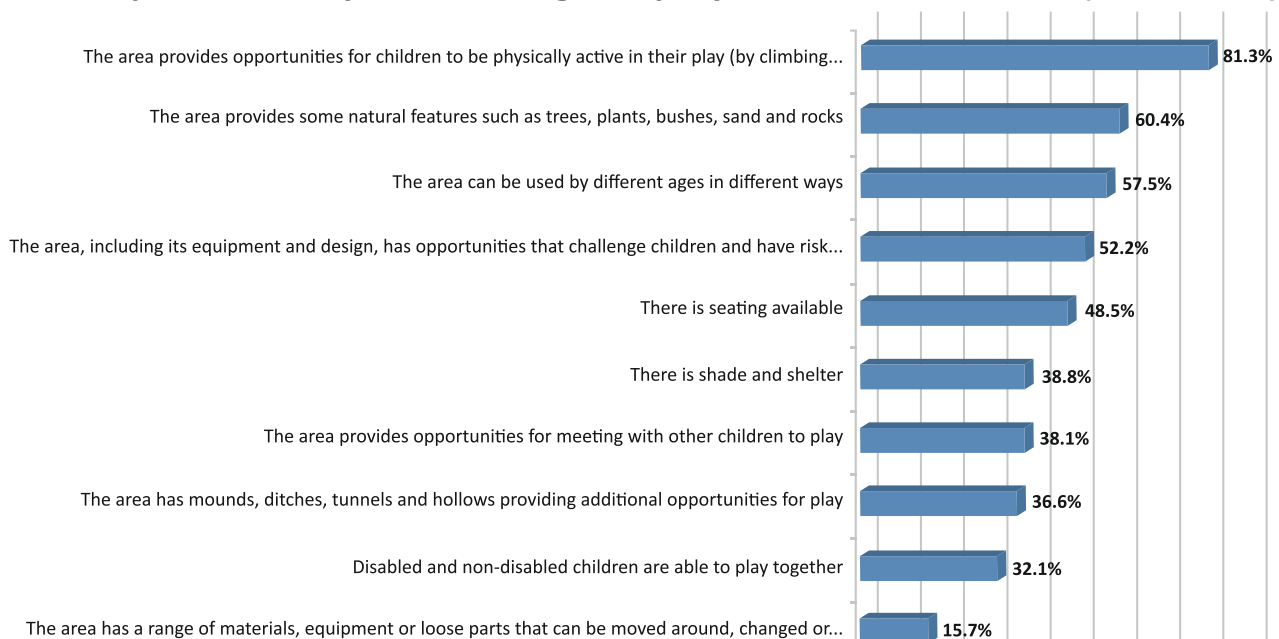
Transportation

Respondents were asked about access to play areas, and how far they would travel:

- a play area with parking was considered the least important priority with 59% indicating this was their lowest priority and just 10% that suggested it was their highest priority
- the majority of respondents said that less than 15 minutes was a reasonable time for children and young people to travel to a play area by any transport method
- travelling for between 15 and 30 minutes was considered more reasonable when travelling by car (41%), although less so when thinking about travelling by cycle (19%) or walking (17%)

The table below shows the results from the consultation for qualities considered important for a good play area identified by parents and residents.

What qualities do you think a good play area should have? (Base: 134)



Continued →

On average across the groups who responded, 76.5% agreed that the opportunity to be physically active was within the top five qualities of a good play area.

Respondents were asked at the end of the survey if there was anything else they think would make Guildford a better place to live:

- almost a third of parents and residents (30%) said better maintenance and modernisation of play areas would help and
- 26% felt a broader range of activities and facilities were required

When children and young people were asked the same question, the most frequent comment was:

- the need for a wider range of facilities and activities (62%).
- in addition 24% wanted better maintenance of play areas and
- 19% suggested an increase in the number of play areas in the borough

A full consultation report has been produced separately that can be viewed by contacting the Council's Play and Youth Development Officer.

The consultation results alongside the guidance and policies relating to play highlighted in the previous section inform the standards to which the Council aspires to design and maintain play spaces in the borough.

The next section summarises the methodology for play value assessments undertaken by the Council and identifies priorities for the borough's play area refurbishment action plans.

2.4 Play value assessments and findings

In 2014, the Council commissioned play value assessments of all sites within its ownership and the ownership of parish councils to inform the Play Strategy. The specific aim of the play value assessments is to establish the quality of provision and priorities for improvement and investment using established assessment criteria. All scores date to the middle of 2014 and do not include any play area refurbishments after this date. These scores will be updated during 2020/21 as part of the review of this strategy.

In combination with maps locating the three classifications of play areas and locations of MUGAS, this work also contributes to understanding wider deficiencies in play where there is limited or no provision set against the FIT six acre standard and former PPG17 assessments.

2.4.1 Methodology

The Council reviewed the available guidelines and assessment tools from Play England, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) and Fields in Trust (FIT) and produced a play value assessment template and methodology. The template was trialled by council officers and peer reviewed by officers from the Surrey Parks and Countryside Forum. The assessments were undertaken by an independent inspector.

The survey used a simple scoring scale with guideline assessment criteria for the assessor. According to the type of play areas: Local Area for Play (LAP), Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP), and Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP), a maximum score was established for each type and they were then assessed giving a score for each category.

The following components of play area provision and value were assessed:

- general access and safety
- landscape and environmental quality
- general play layout
- ancillary facilities
- equipment
- safety
- general

Within each category, various subcategories were assessed to give a category score; these were then totalled to give an overall play value score for each site. All sites could then be ranked giving priorities for improvement as well as priorities for category deficiencies, for example, landscape and environmental quality and priorities for each ward.

Arising from the assessments, council officers have set a minimum target score for each type of play area that the Council will endeavour to achieve. It must be born in mind that due to local site conditions it may not be physically possible to achieve the target score or exceed it. The target score for each type of play area is as follows:

LAP: 59%, (68/117 available points)
 LEAP: 63% (78/126 available points)
 NEAP: 63% (78/126 available points)

Using this target score a costed development plan, shown at Appendix A, for Council owned sites has been prepared to address deficiencies, inform expenditure and allocation of external funds.

2.4.2 Play area bands ('gold', 'silver' and 'bronze')

The play area scores are also represented by a simple 'gold', 'silver' and 'bronze' level to broadly reflect the overall experience the play area offers visitors. These levels are allocated according to the percentage score for all the elements that have been scored including play equipment, access, landscaping, layout, and ancillary facilities.

Nine play areas have a 'gold' level of play facilities; eight are managed by the Council and one is managed by a parish council. These are the play areas that are likely to offer the best play experience. They are:

- Stoke Park Gardens in Stoke Park (includes a large skate park and fitness equipment within the park)
- Sutherland Memorial Park in Burpham (includes a half MUGA)
- Waterside Road play area in Stoke (includes a MUGA)
- Hazel Avenue play area in Stoke
- Tarragon Drive play area in Stoughton (includes a MUGA)
- Kingston Meadows play area in East Horsley (includes a MUGA and fitness equipment)
- Park Barn Drive play area in Worplesdon
- Bushy Hill Drive open space in Mellow (includes a MUGA and fitness equipment)

The parish owned play area that met the 'Gold' level is:

- The Recreation Ground play area in Send

Continued ➔

2.5 Findings and priority sites

Guildford Borough Council sites

The development plan that follows in Appendix A is a long-term plan covering more than ten years. The development plan includes estimated costs for raising each of the play areas to the designated pass percentage score for each of the three play area types (LAP, LEAP and NEAP). Also included is the life expectancy for the play area and an allocated year to carry out improvements. These dates may change as funding or other resources change, but the development plan and play scores (via an independent inspection) will be reviewed every five years to keep account of changes. The exception maybe where developer's funds are available, creating a need to fast track these play areas in order to meet target spend dates. There are fourteen play areas identified as scoring below the pass percentage mark.

Within the shorter term of five to six years, priority sites have been identified for improvement. There are twelve sites that fall into this category plus one new play area for Friary St Nicholas ward that has been identified as lacking in play provision.

Investment in play provision also needs to consider the resources available, potential development sites and play areas where large pieces of equipment that offer high play value may need replacing. Five to six years to refurbish these maybe optimistic and its likely these may take longer to resource. A year's gap is shown (2022-2023) on the development plan to allow for the review of the strategy and complete refurbishment objectives as needed. Current funds available are estimated to have a shortfall of £190,000 to complete these priority sites. Other sources of partnership and grant funding will be sought to complete these sites.

One of these sites that falls slightly short of the 'pass' percentage is Westborough Woods, in the Westborough ward. This relatively low score relates to its location on a steep hill in woodland reducing its access and facilities score rather than issues with the equipment itself, which is fairly new and challenging. These are not issues that can be easily resolved in this location.

The PPG17 audit identified urban areas within the borough as deficient in play space. Each area has a number of play facilities, but the needs of individual communities need to be considered in identifying priorities for keeping, improving or combining play facilities.

- three priority sites are in the Ash area, seven in the Guildford central areas and two in Worplesdon
- of those in Ash, two are in Ash and South Tongham ward and one in Ash Vale
- there are eleven play areas within Ash Vale, five owned by the Council and six by the Parish Council
- Ash Vale and Tongham show the highest deficit in play provision (at 0.98ha of open space per 1,000 population); although Lakeside Nature Reserve play area (gold play value score) has been developed since the audit
- Five priority sites are situated in Westborough ward. The PPG17 audit showed Westborough as having a deficit of 15.57 ha of open space. However, Westborough Woods play area has been developed since the audit and there are eight Council owned play facilities all together in this ward. Local community consultation should be held about whether it is valuable to continue to maintain local areas for play at Chapel House, Barnwood Road and Derby Road. It may well be that these are valued by local residents who are keen to keep and improve them, or it may be that the demographic has changed and provision they require is different or met elsewhere. Equally, four play areas in Westborough: Chapel House, Derby Road, Kings College and Woodside Road; should be considered together as they are within a short walk of each other
- Two sites in Worplesdon ward are identified as a priority by the play value audit. Although there are seven other play facilities in Worplesdon, it is noted that Baird Drive is in Wood Street Village, which is a distinct community without other play provision

Devoil Close is the only play provision other than Sutherland Memorial Park in Burpham.

2.6 Historical resources deployed for play provision

The last programme of fixed play space refurbishments for Council owned areas, beginning April 2005, was paid for from capital funding sources:

Guildford Borough Council capital: £540,000
 S106 from planning gains from developers: £1,252,500
 Total spend of £1,292,500 on play areas, or £129,250 per year.

Over the same ten-year period, revenue investment on fixed play provision in Council parks and open spaces is estimated to be £550,000 (£55,000 per year). In addition, there is a further estimated £350,000 for staff costs that includes a dedicated play area inspector.

This gives a total estimated investment of £2,192,500.

Based on a population figure of 137,200 adults and 27,613 children (under 18s) for Guildford Borough (2011 census), investment in Council play areas for the period 2005-2015, averaged over the ten years, is estimated to be £1.59 per resident per year, or £7.94 per child per year.

2.6.1 Investment required to 2021

The development plan has highlighted that the estimated capital investment required over the next five to six years is £1,200,000. This figure excludes day-to-day maintenance and staff costs and is for the Council owned and managed sites alone.

Funding for refurbishment/new sites

Guildford Borough Council currently identified capital investment funds: £625,000
 Planning obligations - S106 and CIL - Developer funding is dependent on the developments that will take place and their locations. As a result, likely figures for income from the developing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or S106 for the next five years are not guaranteed.

Maintenance funding

Guildford Borough Council - Estimated revenue costs for day-to-day maintenance is: £450,000 (£90,000 per year or approximately £1,475 per play facility per year) plus staff and transport costs.
 Parish Council maintenance funds

Parish Council maintenance funds

The annual maintenance budget identified by parish councils ranges from £300 to £5000 per play facility per year. The budget depends on the priority the parish council gives play areas, the complexity of the venue and the plans for maintenance for that particular year.

2.6.2 External funding

Funding to support the provision of play within the borough can also come from:

- grants
- awards
- loans
- corporate donations

These are usually available for not-for-profit organisations such as social enterprises, community groups and charities. Sometimes funds are available for statutory organisations including local authorities. These may come from grants awarded by charitable trusts or foundations, new initiatives delivered from central government, the National Lottery and local businesses. Opportunities for sourcing additional external funding will be explored where feasible. It is therefore imperative that the Council develops effective partnerships with external organisations to secure such funds for the benefit of communities.

2.7 Summarising our policy for fixed play equipment

The Fixed Play Equipment Strategy seeks to provide guidance for the Council's decision making processes related to play space provision for the next 5 to 10 years (to be reviewed in 2021).

2.7.1 Our approach to play

The Council acknowledges that children's play areas are one of the safer activities in which children engage. The approach to future provision will continue to be underpinned by risk-benefit assessment. Play space design will reflect the *Design for Play* guidelines, balancing the benefits for children's play and the needs of a local community with the risks involved.



2.7.2 Partnership working and advocacy

It is important that this document encourages partnerships to be developed, to ensure that open spaces are seen as a vital aspect of community life. In particular, increased partnerships will be developed between the Council and parish councils to improve the quantity and quality of play provision across the whole borough.

2.7.3 Sustaining and delivering new play provision

Developers of all new housing within the Borough will be required to contribute to on or off site play provision in accordance with the standard of 0.8ha per 1000 people.³⁶ On-site provision will be made where possible or off site contributions to additional or improved play space will be sought where we are able to secure it by S106 planning obligation.

The Council will secure clear conditions with developers for ongoing maintenance of on-site play spaces that are adopted by management committees/residents' associations, rather than the Council.

All existing play areas should be retained unless it is identified through consultation with residents that there is an over provision within certain locations within the borough, or that the provision is no longer needed or can be sustained through a different mix of play facilities within an area.

The Council will continue to replace and refurbish its play spaces in order to provide for local community needs. Improvements will be based on inspection reports, play value assessments, life expectancy and needs identified through local consultation, with a view to creating play provision for young children, juniors and young people in any given community.

36 as identified in Local Plan 2003 Policies R2 and R3 and the Planning Contributions SPD

2.7.4 Resources and funding

The priorities for replacing existing sites are as shown in the findings section and development plan based on play value assessments. However, these will be balanced against available resources, knowledge about the lifetime of equipment gained from regular inspections and opportunities that may arise (for example from external funding).

The Council will continue the inspection and maintenance of play areas to British and EN standards and it's ongoing capital investment for improving existing play areas to ensure they meet local needs.

Once CIL is in place, funding for play area refurbishments will be sought alongside other sources and opportunities for funding as necessary in order to carry out the development plan.

The Council will continue to improve both access to, and the quality of information relating to play provision through signage, social media, press releases and the Council website.



Appendix A

Guildford Borough Council managed play area development plan

| PLAYGROUND NAME | WARD | POST CODE | TYPE | GENERAL ACCESS & SAFETY | LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY | GENERAL PLAY LAYOUT | ANCILLARY FACILITIES | EQUIPMENT | SAFETY | GENERAL | SCORE | MAXIMUM SCORE | % | WHAT NEEDS DOING | COST (£1000) | TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDING REQUIREMENT | YEAR OF REFURBISHMENT | PLAY AREA BAND (GOLD 72.0%+, SILVER 56.0%-71.0%, BRONZE 40.0% TO 55.0%) | LIFE EXPECTANCY |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|---|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|-----------------|
| TBC | Friary St Nicolas | N/A | LAP or LEAP | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | New play area | £65.00 | £65,000.00 | 16-17 | N/A | 2035 |
| Onslow Recreation Ground | Onslow | GU2 7SW | LEAP | 21 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 11 | 2 | 8 | 75 | 126 | 59.52 | New design, replace and extend. | £150.00 | £235,000.00 | 16-17 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Chapel House | Westborough | GU2 8EE | LAP | 25 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 53 | 117 | 45.30 | New design, landscaping | £25.00 | £260,000.00 | 17-18 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| Derby Road | Westborough | GU2 6EP | LEAP | 20 | 4 | 12 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 9 | 60 | 126 | 47.62 | New design, replace equipment, remove fencing? | £85.00 | £345,000.00 | 17-18 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| Woodside Road | Westborough | GU2 6HW | LEAP | 17 | 6 | 12 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 8 | 64 | 126 | 50.79 | New design, replace equipment, landscaping | £100.00 | £445,000.00 | 17-18 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Kings College | Westborough | GU2 8EF | LEAP | 22 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 12 | 2 | 7 | 76 | 126 | 60.32 | Consider additional equipment and landscaping | £30.00 | £475,000.00 | 17-18 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Devoil Close | Burpham | GU4 7FQ | LAP | 20 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 56 | 117 | 47.89 | New design and replace equipment and fencing | £60.00 | £535,000.00 | 18-19 | BRONZE | 2020 |
| The Briars | Ash and South Tongham | GU12 5DN | LAP | 21 | 5 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 59 | 117 | 50.43 | Replacement and extend equipment | £85.00 | £85,000.00 | 19-20 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Parish Close | Ash and South Tongham | GU12 6NU | LAP | 23 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 64 | 117 | 54.70 | New design and replace equipment | £85.00 | £620,000.00 | 19-20 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Old Farm Place | Ash Vale | GU12 5SF | LEAP | 24 | 6 | 11 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 70 | 126 | 55.56 | New design and landscape. Potential to increase size with new equipment | £60.00 | £680,000.00 | 19-20 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| Barnwood Road | Worplesdon | GU2 8WB | LAP | 23 | 6 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 69 | 117 | 58.97 | Consult - remove play area and landscape or replace equipment | £60.00 | £740,000.00 | 20-21 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Baird Drive | Worplesdon | GU3 3EF | LAP | 25 | 5 | 14 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 9 | 73 | 117 | 62.39 | New design and replace equipment | £85.00 | £825,000.00 | 20-21 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Stoughton Rec Gnd | Westborough | GU2 6RS | LEAP | 21 | 6 | 16 | 11 | 11 | 2 | 9 | 76 | 126 | 60.32 | New design and replace equipment | £110.00 | £935,000.00 | 21-22 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Westborough Woods | Westborough | GU2 8HW | LEAP | 17 | 14 | 16 | 7 | 11 | 2 | 9 | 76 | 126 | 60.32 | Add seating, improve access and extend ropeway | £15.00 | £950,000.00 | 23-24 | SILVER | 2030 |
| St Lukes Square | Holy Trinity | GU1 4JS | LEAP | 24 | 6 | 16 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 78 | 126 | 61.90 | Add set of swings and landscape | £25.00 | £975,000.00 | 23-24 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Bannisters Open Space | Westborough | GU2 7QS | LAP | 23 | 7 | 12 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 70 | 117 | 59.83 | Potential to extend subject to consultation | £50.00 | £1,025,000.00 | 24-25 | SILVER | 2035 |
| Beaufort Road | Ash Vale | GU12 5SB | LAP | 25 | 6 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 70 | 117 | 59.83 | Install new basket swing | £15.00 | £1,040,000.00 | 26-27 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Avondale Open Space | Ash Vale | GU12 5SN | LEAP | 24 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 11 | 2 | 8 | 78 | 126 | 61.90 | New multi play unit, extend MUGA to two ends | £65.00 | £1,105,000.00 | 26-27 | SILVER | 2030 |
| The Oval | Onslow | GU2 7TP | LEAP | 21 | 6 | 16 | 10 | 18 | 3 | 11 | 85 | 126 | 67.46 | Landscaping around the play area | £15.00 | £1,120,000.00 | 27-28 | SILVER | 2035 |
| Wyvern Close | Ash Vale | GU12 5SH | LAP | 25 | 6 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 72 | 117 | 61.54 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 28-29 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Lakeside Nature Reserve | Ash Vale | GU12 5AN | LEAP | 19 | 15 | 17 | 8 | 17 | 3 | 9 | 88 | 126 | 69.84 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 28-29 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Stoke Park Gardens | Christchurch | GU1 1EP | NEAP | 27 | 7 | 15 | 12 | 18 | 2 | 11 | 92 | 126 | 73.02 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 29-30 | GOLD | 2030 |
| Artillery Road | Friary St Nicholas | GU1 4NX | LAP | 24 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 3 | 8 | 71 | 117 | 60.68 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 29-30 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Parsons Green | Stoke | GU1 1QY | LEAP | 24 | 5 | 14 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 73 | 117 | 62.39 | Replace as needed and create more play value | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 29-30 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Foxenden Quarry | Holy Trinity | GU1 4DN | LEAP | 21 | 14 | 15 | 8 | 15 | 3 | 11 | 87 | 126 | 69.05 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 29-30 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Stoke Recreation Ground | Friary St Nicholas | GU1 1HQ | LEAP | 27 | 5 | 18 | 11 | 15 | 3 | 11 | 90 | 126 | 71.43 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 29-30 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Sutherland Memorial Park | Burpham | GU4 7LP | NEAP | 25 | 6 | 18 | 12 | 18 | 3 | 11 | 93 | 126 | 73.81 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 29-30 | GOLD | 2030 |
| Waterside Road | Stoke | GU1 1RF | LEAP | 25 | 11 | 17 | 10 | 14 | 3 | 11 | 91 | 126 | 72.22 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 30-31 | GOLD | 2035 |
| Tarragon Drive | Stoughton | GU2 9YR | LEAP | 24 | 9 | 17 | 12 | 17 | 3 | 12 | 94 | 126 | 74.60 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 31-32 | GOLD | 2035 |
| Hazel Avenue | Stoke | GU1 1NS | LEAP | 26 | 9 | 19 | 11 | 15 | 3 | 12 | 95 | 126 | 75.40 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 33-34 | GOLD | 2035 |
| Kingston Meadows | Clandon and Horsley | KT24 6QT | LEAP | 25 | 8 | 19 | 10 | 17 | 3 | 12 | 94 | 126 | 74.60 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 34-35 | GOLD | 2035 |
| Park Barn Drive | Worplesdon | GU2 6EU | LEAP | 26 | 6 | 19 | 11 | 14 | 3 | 12 | 91 | 126 | 72.22 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 34-35 | GOLD | 2035 |
| Bushy Hill | Merrow | GU1 2UG | LEAP | 27 | 8 | 19 | 12 | 19 | 3 | 12 | 100 | 126 | 79.37 | Budget for life expectancy | After plan | £1,120,000.00 | 34-35 | GOLD | 2035 |

KEY: Score falls below quality standard



Appendix A2

Suggested parish council play area development plan

Parish council sites

The range of play value scores on parish council managed sites is between 38% and 80%, compared to an average of 45.3%-80% on the Council's managed sites. This is not unusual due to the amount of resource a parish may have to invest in a new play area.

Of the 35 play areas, four pass the strategy's percentage pass scores of 58% for LAPS and 62% for LEAPS and NEAPS. These are: Harpers Recreation Ground in Ash, Send Recreation Ground play area, West Horsley Village Hall and Normandy Hunts Hill play area.

Rural communities tend to be much more distinct than more urban areas, so play areas offer a central facility for a village.

Of the eleven priority sites in terms of scoring the lowest overall percentage score (under 50%):

- three are in Shere
- one in Albury
- two are in Worplesdon
- two in Tongham
- one in East Clandon
- one in West Clandon
- and one in Shalford

This suggested development plan for the parish sites has been prepared for the individual parishes to consider in the context of their other plans for expenditure and available resources. It has been organised by ward and percentage score for ease of reference.



Parish council managed play area development plan

| PLAY AREA NAME | PARISH | WARD | TYPE | GENERAL ACCESS AND SAFETY | LANDSCAPE & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY | GENERAL PLAY LAYOUT | ANCILLARY FACILITIES | EQUIPMENT | SAFETY | GENERAL | SCORE | MAXIMUM SCORE | % | PLAY AREA BAND (GOLD 72%.0+, SILVER 56.0 TO 71.0%, BRONZE 40.0 TO 55.0%) | LIFE EXPECTANCY |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|--|-----------------|
| Westonfields | Albury | Tillingbourne | LEAP | 16 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 9 | 60 | 126 | 47.62 | BRONZE | 2035 |
| Ash Hill Road Rec | Ash | Ash Wharf | LEAP | 23 | 7 | 13 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 67 | 126 | 53.17 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Shawfield Recreation Ground | Ash | Ash Wharf | LEAP | 26 | 6 | 15 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 69 | 126 | 54.76 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Blackwater Close | Ash | Ash South and Tongham | LEAP | 26 | 6 | 14 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 69 | 126 | 54.76 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| Carrington Recreation Ground | Ash | Ash Vale | NEAP | 22 | 6 | 14 | 6 | 12 | 2 | 8 | 70 | 126 | 55.56 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Harpers Recreation Ground | Ash | Ash Wharf | LEAP | 26 | 6 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 3 | 9 | 82 | 126 | 65.08 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Compton Recreation Ground | Compton | Shalford | LEAP | 20 | 6 | 15 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 9 | 67 | 126 | 53.17 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| East Clandon Recreation Ground | East Clandon | Clandon & Horsley | LEAP | 16 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 51 | 126 | 40.48 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Effingham King George V Playing Fields | Effingham | Effingham | LEAP | 20 | 6 | 16 | 5 | 16 | 2 | 9 | 74 | 126 | 58.73 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Normandy Manor Fruit Farm | Normandy | Normandy | LEAP | 22 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 64 | 126 | 50.79 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Hunts Hill | Normandy | Normandy | LEAP | 20 | 10 | 14 | 7 | 16 | 2 | 10 | 79 | 126 | 62.70 | SILVER | 2030 |
| The Green | Pirbright | Pirbright | LEAP | 21 | 7 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 2 | 7 | 72 | 126 | 57.14 | SILVER | 2020 |
| Puttenham School Lane | Puttenham | Pilgrims | LEAP | 19 | 6 | 16 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 9 | 71 | 126 | 56.35 | SILVER | 2025 |
| The Green | Ripley | Lovelace | LEAP | 21 | 6 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 3 | 9 | 71 | 126 | 56.35 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Sands Recreation Ground | Sands | Pilgrims | LEAP | 21 | 5 | 12 | 10 | 13 | 3 | 9 | 73 | 126 | 57.94 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Seale Recreation Ground | Seale | Pilgrims | LEAP | 22 | 6 | 14 | 8 | 15 | 2 | 10 | 77 | 126 | 61.11 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Sandfields | Send | Lovelace | LEAP | 23 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 64 | 126 | 55.00 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| Maple Road | Send | Lovelace | LEAP | 22 | 5 | 13 | 11 | 12 | 2 | 9 | 74 | 126 | 58.73 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Send Recreation Ground | Send | Lovelace | LEAP | 27 | 10 | 19 | 15 | 17 | 3 | 11 | 102 | 126 | 80.95 | GOLD | 2030 |
| Shackleford Parish Council | Shackleford | Pilgrims | LEAP | 16 | 6 | 13 | 12 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 64 | 126 | 50.79 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Brookwood Sports Field | Shalford | Shalford | LEAP | 19 | 5 | 12 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 58 | 126 | 46.03 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Pound Place, Shalford Common | Shalford | Shalford | LEAP | 17 | 6 | 12 | 13 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 67 | 126 | 53.17 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Peasmarsh Common | Shalford | Shalford | LEAP | 20 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 8 | 67 | 126 | 53.17 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Hornhatch Green | Shalford | Shalford | LEAP | 22 | 6 | 14 | 7 | 10 | 2 | 8 | 69 | 126 | 54.76 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Shere Play Area | Shere | Tillingbourne | LEAP | 20 | 6 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 61 | 126 | 47.62 | BRONZE | 2020 |
| Holmbury St Mary | Shere | Tillingbourne | LEAP | 17 | 7 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 61 | 126 | 48.41 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Tower Hill Play Area | Shere | Tillingbourne | LEAP | 16 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 9 | 60 | 126 | 48.41 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Peaslake | Shere | Tillingbourne | LEAP | 18 | 7 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 63 | 126 | 50.00 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Millennium Play Area | Shere | Tillingbourne | LEAP | 17 | 7 | 12 | 9 | 12 | 3 | 8 | 68 | 126 | 53.97 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| The Moors | Tongham | South Ash & Tongham | LAP | 14 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 49 | 117 | 42.00 | BRONZE | 2020 |
| Poyle Road | Tongham | South Ash & Tongham | LEAP | 21 | 6 | 14 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 61 | 126 | 48.41 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| West Clandon Recreation Ground | West Clandon | Clandon & Horsley | LEAP | 19 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 15 | 2 | 10 | 60 | 126 | 47.62 | BRONZE | 2030 |
| West Horsley Village Hall | West Horsley | Clandon & Horsley | LEAP | 22 | 9 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 3 | 8 | 78 | 126 | 61.90 | SILVER | 2025 |
| Worplesdon Village Green | Worplesdon | Worplesdon | LAP | 13 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 45 | 117 | 38.46 | | 2025 |
| Worplesdon Jacobs Well | Worplesdon | Worplesdon | LEAP | 17 | 7 | 11 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 61 | 126 | 48.41 | BRONZE | 2025 |
| Fairlands Avenue | Worplesdon | Worplesdon | LEAP | 23 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 9 | 70 | 126 | 55.56 | SILVER | 2030 |
| Memorial Gardens | Worplesdon | Worplesdon | LEAP | 22 | 6 | 12 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 71 | 126 | 56.35 | SILVER | 2030 |

KEY: Score falls below quality standard

Appendix B

Classification of play areas, Fields in Trust (FIT)

Summary of definitions of local and neighbourhood play areas

Source: **Fields in Trust *Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play***

The following section summarises the qualitative aspects of the FIT guidelines:

A **Local Area for Play (LAP)** is a small area of open space, specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children to play close to where they live (i.e. within 1 minute walking time). The LAP is a doorstep play area. It could be a grassed area, open space, residential street in a home zone or a small designed play area, where young children can play within sight of known adults. The space could incorporate some interesting and attractive landscaping features and/or a small number of items of play equipment and create an environment that will stimulate young children's play, providing opportunities for a variety of play experiences, bearing in mind that older children and young people may also use the space from time to time. It should be capable of catering for the needs of children with a range of impairments. Seating may be available for carers to be able to sit, watch and meet other people. It should have the following characteristics:

- it is intended primarily for children up to the age of 6, though it will be used by older children at different times of the day or evening
- it is best positioned beside a pedestrian route that is well used
- it occupies a well-drained, reasonably flat site surfaced with grass or a hard surface
- the recommended minimum activity zone is 100 sq. m
- A buffer zone of 5 metres minimum depth normally separates the activity zone and the forward-most part of the nearest dwelling that faces the LAP. Gable end or other exposed walls can be protected from use for ball games by, for example, providing a dense strip of planting of 1 metre minimum depth. The buffer zone includes varied planting to provide a mix of scent, colour and texture.
- it may contain demonstrative features that allow young children to identify and claim the space as theirs
- Depending on location, it may have a 600mm guard rail, low fence or planting to indicate the perimeter. Similarly, depending on location, there may be a need to be a barrier limiting the speed of a child entering or leaving the LAP.
- there should be a sign indicating that the area is for children's play and that dogs are not welcome
- the activity zone of the local area for play counts towards the quantitative element of these recommendations and local standards

A **Locally Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)** is an area of open space specifically designated and laid out with features including equipment for children who are beginning to go out and play independently close to where they live, usually within 5 minutes walking time. It could be a grassed area, small park, local open space designed for play or informal recreation or a school play area open out of school hours. Play features, including equipment, are an integral and attractive part of the LEAP. The space should provide a varied and interesting physical environment including natural features such as sand, water and varying levels and contours. There might also be features designed for specific activities such as ball games, wheeled sports meeting places or play equipment. Children who use these spaces ought to feel safe and be able to interact with individuals and groups of other children of different ages. It is also important that the space can be used for physical activity and games. Because LEAPs can be used for boisterous games, they should be properly sited, overseen and maintained, in order to meet the needs of children, without being a source of nuisance to other residents. The characteristics of LEAP include:

- it is intended primarily for children who are beginning to go out and play independently
- it is best positioned beside a pedestrian route that is well used
- it occupies a well-drained, reasonably flat site surfaced with grass or a hard surface, together with impact absorbing surfaces beneath and around play equipment or structures as appropriate
- the recommended minimum activity zone is 400 sq. m
- The area is designed to provide a stimulating and challenging play experience that may include opportunities for balancing, rocking, climbing, overhead activity, sliding, swinging, jumping crawling, rotating, imaginative play, social play and play with natural materials. Provision for a minimum number of six play experiences is recommended, although the exact amount and nature of equipment will depend on local decision.
- A buffer zone of 10 metres minimum depth normally separates the activity zone and the boundary of the nearest property containing a dwelling. A minimum of 20 metres should normally be provided between the activity zone and the habitable room façade of the nearest dwelling. Where these minimum distances do not apply, careful consideration needs to be given to the:
 - design of any means of enclosure, planting scheme and/or other physical features on the boundary of the residential property
 - siting of features including equipment within the activity zone, to preclude opportunities for overlooking nearby gardens or dwellings, potential loss of privacy and creation of nuisance.

To enhance accessibility, **LEAPS** will have...

- Play equipment that is inclusive, by offering choice of play experiences for children with different abilities. These may include lower-level nets for crawling/scrambling/lying on; swings with support (cradle, nest swings or possibly specialist swings), roundabouts that are flush with the ground, play panels that are low-level and tactile, access ramps to some equipment to enable children to get higher if they cannot climb independently, double width access steps, with rails and double-width slides.
- pathways to the entrances
- flat entrances
- sufficient circulation space for wheelchairs (and buggies) to move between equipment
- seating for parents, carers and families - some with access for wheelchairs

A **Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)** is an area of open space specifically designated, laid out and equipped mainly for older children but with play opportunities for younger children as well. It is designed for children and young people who are used to travelling longer distances independently to get to safely on their own. It might be a park, playing field, recreation ground or natural open space, such as a woodland, moorland or beach - accessible and attractive to older children and young people. It might include ball courts, multi-use games areas or skateboard areas. The area should be capable of meeting the needs of children with a range of impairments.³⁷

- it is intended primarily for use by older children of relative independence, who have the freedom to range further from home
- it is within 15 minutes' walking time of the child's home
- it is best positioned beside a pedestrian route that is well used
- it occupies a well drained site, with both grass and hard surfaced areas, together with impact absorbing surface beneath play equipment or structures as appropriate
- the recommended minimum activity zone is 1000 sq. m, comprising an area for play equipment and structures and a hard surfaced area of at least 465 sq. m (the minimum needed to play 5-a-side football)
- The area is designed to provide a stimulating and challenging play experience that may include opportunities for balancing, rocking, climbing, overhead activity, sliding, swinging, jumping, crawling, rotating, imaginative play, social play and play with natural materials, ball games, wheeled areas or other activities. Provision for a minimum number of nine play experiences is recommended, although the exact amount and nature of equipment will depend on local decision.
- A buffer zone of 30m minimum depth normally separates the activity zone and the boundary of the nearest property containing a dwelling. A greater distance may be needed where purpose-built skateboarding facilities are required.³⁸
- there is adequate space within the area of the NEAP to allow for children to be generally active and play chase type games
- boundaries should be recognisable by landscaping
- seating for accompanying adults and siblings should be provided, together with one or more litterbins
- there should be a sign indicating that the area is for children's play and that dogs are not welcome, along with the name and telephone number of the facility operator and an invitation to report any incident or damage to the operator
- convenient and secure parking facilities for bicycles should be provided

³⁷ Tools for evaluation local play provision: A technical guide to Play England local play indicators

³⁸ See para 6.2.13 of the Field in Trust's 'Planning and design for outdoor sports and play' 2009 for detail

To enhance accessibility, **NEAPS** will have:

- car parking, with disabled bays next to the access route
- Play equipment that is inclusive, by offering choice of play experiences for children with different abilities. These may include lower-level nets for crawling/scrambling/lying on; swings with support (cradle, nest swings or possibly specialist swings), roundabouts that are flush with the ground, play panels that are low-level and tactile, access ramps to some equipment to enable children to get higher if they cannot climb independently, double width access steps, with rails and double-width slides.
- pathways to the entrances
- flat entrances with gates of at least 1m width to allow for wheelchair access
- self-closing gates, closing in between 3 and 5seconds (to allow time for access with wheelchairs or prams/buggies)
- Pathways within the area, at least 1.2m wide and with passing spaces for wheelchairs (1.8m). Sufficient circulation space for wheelchairs (and buggies) to move between equipment
- Seating for parents, carers and families - some with access for wheelchairs (arm rests and the ability to place wheelchairs at tables). Provision of seating along pathways of more than 50metres.
- Equipment that can be accessed in a wheelchair - based on tarmac, wetpour/rubber crumb, or reinforced grass that has access ramps. Reinforced grass matting must be fitted according to manufacturers' instructions and be flush with the ground and have grass growing through it.³⁹

Destination play areas are defined as those within key sites, aimed at attracting family and similar groups for longer visits. Most children will be accompanied by adults. There should be a greater variety of equipment and facilities for car parking and access to café's and public toilets. Disabled children should be made to feel welcome, with suitable access arrangements in place and adaptations being made to equipment where appropriate.

Classification of play areas, Play England

Source: *'Tools for evaluating local play provision: A technical guide to Play England local play indicators'*, Ashley Godfrey Associates, INSPIRE, Bristol City, October 2009

Type A: 'Door-step' spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation

A small space, within sight of home, where children, especially young children, can play within view of known adults.

For example, this could be a grassed area, open space, residential street in a home zone or small designed play area. The space could incorporate some interesting and attractive landscape features and/or a small number of items of play equipment and create an environment that will stimulate young children's play, providing opportunities for a variety of play experiences, bearing in mind that older children and young people may also use the space from time to time. A doorstep space would be sufficiently close to home for the children who use it to feel safe and be able to interact with individuals and groups of other children. It should also be capable of catering for the needs of children with a range of impairments. Seating may be available for carers to be able to sit, watch and meet other people.

³⁹ This information is taken from RoSPA's accessibility assessment of play areas.

Type B: 'Local' spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation

A larger space which can be reached safely by children beginning to travel independently and with friends, without accompanying adults and for adults with young children to walk to with ease.

For example, this could be a grassed area, small park, local open space, designed space for play or informal recreation or school play area open out of school hours, which is attractive to children as they begin to move around their neighbourhoods without being accompanied by adults. These spaces and facilities provide varied and interesting physical environments including, for example, natural features, sand and water, and incorporate landscape features with varying levels and contours that test children's capabilities. There might also be features designed for specific activities such as ball games, wheeled sports or meeting places and/or several items of play equipment offering a variety of play experiences. Play facilities might also include local staffed play provision such as play centres, playschemes, play ranger projects and adventure play areas. These spaces and facilities should also be capable of catering for the needs of children with a range of impairments. The children who use these spaces and facilities ought to feel safe and be able to interact with individuals and groups of other children of different ages.

Type C: 'Neighbourhood' spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation

A larger space or facility for informal recreation that children and young people, used to travelling longer distances independently, can get to safely, spend time in play and informal recreation with their peers, and have a wider range of play experiences.

For example, this might be a park, playing field, recreation ground or natural open space such as woodland, moorland or a beach, accessible and attractive to older children and young people. The space or facility provides for a variety of age appropriate play and informal recreational experiences. It might provide a varied and interesting physical environment incorporating some interesting and attractive landscape features with varying levels and contours. There are likely to be more challenging items of equipment that meet the needs of older children and young people. Larger facilities, specifically designed for informal recreation could be present, such as a ball court, multi-use games area or skateboard area, which can provide the opportunity for a variety of experiences to young people with differing skill levels. These spaces and facilities should also be capable of catering for the needs of children and young people with a range of impairments. There is likely to be sufficient space to play large group ball games and seating/shelter to enable young people to socialise with their friends.

Appendix C

General design principles - Fields In Trust (FIT) guidance, *Design for Play* and *Managing Risk in Play Provision*

This appendix sets out the general design principles encompassed in the FIT guidance, alongside Play England *Design for Play* and *Managing Risk in Play Provision*.

Both sets of guidance aim to achieve good quality children's play provision. The first offers some detailed advice, which has sometimes been implemented in a risk-averse (or reductive) fashion. The second encourages play site developers to aspire to create great play spaces and undertake an analysis of the benefits to children, alongside the risks.

General design principles for children's play areas ⁴⁰

- appropriate to the needs of the local community
- accessible for every child within the appropriate walking time for LAP, LEAP and NEAP
- accessible without having to cross main roads, railways or waterways
- sited in open, welcoming locations
- separated from areas of major vehicle movements and accessible directly from pedestrian routes
- sited on land of natural topography or on land capable of being landscaped for the type of play experiences intended
- designed in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995
- designed so that any high climbing structures are as far as possible from nearby dwellings and any potential visual intrusion is minimised
- integrated, as far as possible, with other open spaces and areas of amenity planting, to provide separation from nearby dwellings
- visible from nearby dwellings or well used pedestrian routes
- accessible by footpaths with a firm surface
- surfaced in a manner fitting to the intensity of use
- provided with seating for accompanying adults, carers and siblings
- Designed to provide a stimulating and challenging play experience that may include equipment and other features providing opportunities for balancing, rocking, climbing, overhead activity, sliding, swinging, jumping, crawling, rotating, imaginative play, social play, play with natural materials such as sand and water, ball games, wheeled areas or other activities
- All equipped play areas should be subject to an independent post-installation inspection; details of certificated inspectors can be obtained from the Register of Play area Inspectors International (RPII)

Continued →

- provided with impact absorbing surfacing beneath and around all such equipment as appropriate
- designed with appropriate physical features on the perimeter to enable recognition as a play area

The *Design for Play*⁴¹ principles focus on creating successful play spaces in their own right, specially designed for their location, in such a way as to provide as much play value as possible. They are aspirational, concerned less with aspects such as buffer zones, post installation and safer surfacing and more with the types of play a good play space can promote.

Design for Play is accompanied by an implementation guide, *Managing Risk in Play Provision* which promotes a risk-benefit approach to the design and management of play spaces. "Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of death or serious injury."⁴²

The *Design for Play* principles promote play spaces that are:

- designed to enhance their setting - inspired by the background, whether that is a park, open space or urban landscape
- located in the best possible place - where children naturally play, away from dangerous roads, noise and pollution, but near through routes and well-used public footpaths
- Close to nature - many studies have shown that children benefit from access to natural environments. In densely populated urban areas, the use of grassy mounds, planting, logs and boulders can help to make a more attractive and playable setting for equipment.
- designed so that children can play in different ways, incorporating different ages, abilities and interests
- designed so that disabled and non-disabled children play together
- loved by the community
- spaces where children of all ages play together
- spaces where children can stretch and challenge themselves in every way
- maintained for play value and environmental sustainability
- able to evolve as children grow

40 Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play. Fields in Trust, 2008, paragraph 6.1.9

41 'Design for Play: A guide to creating successful play spaces', Aileen Shackell, Nicola Butler, Phil Doyle and David Ball, DCMS/Play England/Big Lottery Fund 2008

42 'Managing Risk in Play Provision: implementation guide', David Ball, Tim Gill and Bernard Spiegel, DCMS/Play England/Big Lottery Fund, 2008.

Appendix D

Design of accessible play spaces

Play spaces are unique to their location and community. Their design should take into account the range of play needs found in the community, which includes those of children (and carers) with disabilities as well as the play principles outlined in appendix C.

Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA), in association with Kids, the disability children's charity, have produced a checklist to assess the inclusion of the design of play areas. The checklist can be accessed via the website (www.inclusiveplay.com) which includes examples of products that improve inclusive play in play areas.

The following principles are taken from *Inclusion by Design: A guide to creating accessible play and childcare environments*. This publication cites seven principles of inclusive design, gleaned from visits to and research about different play environments. The team visited eight sites, of which three were unsupervised environments. The guide contains some useful information and pictures, but some of the principles may be more difficult to apply to unsupervised public play areas:

- **Ease of use:** facilitate the fact that disabled children may well travel a distance to an inclusive facility by providing services such as car parking, toilets (with changing space and assisted showering facilities), level access between play spaces, low level facilities that encourage independent use
- **Freedom of choice:** choose equipment and activities that can be used by different children in different ways, e.g. multi-user swings, boats and cradles, sandpits
- **Diversity and difference:** hiding places, manipulation of scale, pattern and texture, use of sand and water
- **Legibility and predictability:** use of planting and hard and soft landscaping to enable children to navigate around the different parts of a play space without necessarily having to read signs (e.g. scents, sight lines, heights, tactile surfaces)
- **Quality:** aesthetically pleasing as well as functional play features
- **Safety:** appropriate supervision and risk management processes
- **Inclusive process:** consultation with and involvement of all children and facilities in the design and management of play settings (e.g. in relation to gradients, path widths, places to hide, boardwalks, planting, story-telling chairs, stepping stones, textures)

Source: *Inclusion by Design: A Guide to creating accessible play and childcare environments*, Goodrich et al. KIDS/DCSF, 2008.

Appendix E

New residential developments

The selection of sites for children's play environments should be an integral part of the design process for all new housing developments. The pattern and landscape of streets, paths, open spaces, the gradient of footpaths, the size of steps, the height of handrails and other factors must all be considered from a child's perspective'.⁴³ Safe access to and from the designated play space should be incorporated into the design.

The Council's Planning Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), March 2011⁴⁴ sets out principles for the contributions the local authority will require developers to make towards the provision of open space in new developments:

- New residential developments are expected to provide an open space of suitable size, nature and specification on site, or for smaller developments, by a financial contribution.
- Local Plan policies R2 and R3 require developers to provide a total of 2.8ha per 1000 population of open space; 1.6ha of formal playing space, 0.8ha of playing space and 0.4ha of amenity space. This requirement may be reduced where the provision of local open space is already adequate (by Fields in Trust standards).
- Developments of 25 or more new homes should provide public open space on site. For smaller housing developments, a contribution to enhance or improve local open space is more practical, although this requirement may be reduced if the provision of local open space is already adequate.

The SPD uses the Fields in Trust standards as the basis for play space.

Children's need for play changes with age and the best play spaces are those that can change to meet local needs. Therefore, in communities where there is no existing neighbourhood equipped area for play, land should be allowed, or a site identified, to enable the provision of a neighbourhood equipped area for play, to cater for children and young people as the housing development matures.

Where funding is made available to support the play infrastructure from smaller developments, thought will be given to how existing local play areas can be enhanced and accessed. This might include footpaths for improved access, the provision of accessible equipment, the provision of crossings on busy roads, or combining the funding with other funding to create an enhanced or refurbished play area. Where there is a proven need for improved facilities for young people (age 14+), additional facilities may be added to existing areas for play.

⁴³ Fields in Trust, "Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play" 2009, Ch. 6 - The Design of Outdoor play and sports facilities" para 6.1.6

⁴⁴ <http://www.guildford.gov.uk/contributionsspd>, see pages 23-26

Appendix F

Green Flag Award Scheme



The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The award scheme began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. It was also seen as a way of encouraging others to achieve the same high environmental standards, creating a benchmark of excellence in recreational green areas.

To be awarded a Green Flag, parks and green spaces must meet the following key criteria. These points must also be demonstrated in a management plan.

A welcoming place

For example, the site should have safe access for all and there should be signage/interpretation in the site.

Healthy, safe and secure

Equipment on site must be safe and the whole site is safe and secure with limited anti-social behaviour, for example. Health and safety policy and dog fouling also needs to be addressed.

Clean and well maintained

To be aesthetically pleasing, litter and cleansing (including graffiti removal) regimes must be in place and the site should be maintained to a high standard.

Sustainability

Management of the site should be carried out in an environmentally sound manner, including resource conservation and waste recycling, and limited use of pesticides.

Conservation and heritage

Management should include appropriate conservation of natural features, wildlife and historic/structural features of buildings.

Community involvement

Active encouragement of involving the community should be evident, facilities for recreation are provided and knowledge of user groups should be demonstrated (e.g. a user survey).

Marketing

The site should be well promoted and information should be provided to users (e.g. events).

Management

Planned management of the site must be documented in a management plan. It must address all of the above issues and other aspects as necessary including financial.

The Green Flag Award Scheme is the impetus to an ever-increasing improvement in the quality of our parks and green spaces.

Continued ➔

Appendix G

A ward profile for Christchurch sample ward is shown below to demonstrate the content available. However, due to its size, a complete version of this appendix for all wards is available separately upon request. Each ward profile includes ward maps identifying the locations of play areas owned by Guildford Borough Council and parish councils and statistics relating to the number of residents and children in the ward from the last census.

Please contact Guildford Borough Council's Parks and Leisure Services for a pdf file of the ward profiles by email. **Email: parks@guildford.gov.uk**



Christchurch Ward sample information

Play areas

| | Play area Name | Address | Postcode | UPRN | Ward | Play area Type | SOA | Ownership |
|---|----------------|-----------------------------|----------|------|--------------|------------------|-----|-----------|
| 1 | Stoke Park | Nightingale Road, Guildford | GU1 1EP | | Christchurch | NEAP/Blue | | GBC |
| 2 | Stoke Park | Nightingale Road, Guilford | GU1 1EP | | Christchurch | Fitness EQ/ Pink | | GBC |

5.3 Children and young people profile

| Age Range & Gender of Children and Young People | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|---------------------|----|-----|
| | Name/type | Age Range | Play area Catchment | | |
| | | | M | F | Tot |
| 1 | Stoke Park (Fitness EQ) | (0 - 4) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | (5 -15) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | (16 -17) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Stoke Park Gardens (Neap) | (0 - 4) | 30 | 33 | 63 |
| | | (5 -15) | 82 | 90 | 172 |
| | | (16 -17) | 20 | 22 | 42 |

5.6 Poverty and Deprivation

| Super Output Area Code | Ward | Rank in England (Out of 32,482 SOA's) |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| E01030450 | Christchurch | 25,107 |
| E01030439 | Christchurch | 31,124 |
| E01030437 | Christchurch | 32,404 |
| E01030438 | Christchurch | 25,617 |

5.4 Ward and Borough Young People Profile

| Age | Christchurch (260)ha | | | Guildford Borough District | | |
|---------|----------------------|-----|-----|----------------------------|------|-------|
| | M | F | Tot | M | F | Tot |
| 0 - 4 | 124 | 136 | 260 | 4014 | 4104 | 8118 |
| 5 - 15 | 340 | 369 | 709 | 8159 | 8325 | 16484 |
| 16 - 17 | 83 | 90 | 173 | 1490 | 1521 | 3011 |

5.7 Schools

| Schools | Number | Location |
|-------------------|--------|--|
| Primary Schools | 1 | Guildford High School, London Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 1SJ |
| Secondary Schools | 1 | Guildford High School, London Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 1SJ |
| Special Schools | 0 | |

5.5 Ethnicity Profile

| Category | Holy Trinity Ward | Guildford Borough District |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------|
| All People | 5101 | 137,183 |
| White British | 4075 | 114,547 |
| All other white ethnicities | 459 | 10,151 |
| All mixed/multiple ethnicities | 132 | 2469 |
| All black/African/Caribbean/black British | 40 | 1646 |
| All Asian British: Indian | 117 | 1646 |
| All Asian British: Pakistani | 10 | 548 |
| All non-white ethnic groups | 566 | 12,483 |
| All non-white British ethnic groups | 1020 | 22,635 |

5.8 Play Provision

| Name of Site | Type of Provision | Area (Ha) | Facilities | Owner |
|--------------|-------------------|-----------|--|-------|
| Stoke Park | | 52 | Play area Area, Sports Pitches, Skate Park, Tennis Courts, Paddling Pool | GBC |

5.9 Equipped Play Sites

| Name of Site | Type | Owner/ Provider | Condition / NPFA Play Value |
|--------------|------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Stoke Park | NEAP | GBC | 88 Gold |

5.10 Key Issues

| No. | Key Issues For Children's Play & Young People's Activities in Parish/Ward |
|-----|--|
| | Consider play provision in developing masterplan for park and additional play area to serve the East of the ward |





Section 3

Play Strategy Action Plan 2016-17

Themes

Widening accessibility and participation in play

Increasing awareness of opportunities whilst ensuring that our own provision is accessible and inspiring to all children by removing the barriers that restrict children's access to play.

To advocate for play

Promoting children's right to play through increasing understanding of the importance of play and embedding children's play needs into local communities.

Improve children's health and wellbeing through play

Promoting and increasing confidence in participation of a wide range of safe and physically active play opportunities.

Balancing risk in play

Embedding a risk benefit approach to managing the design, delivery and development of a broad range of challenging and inspiring opportunities for play.



| Indicator | Action | Key Strategy Theme(s) | Baseline (2015) | Target / Milestone | Responsibility | Target date(s) | Annual review |
|---|---|--------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|
| Increase awareness of opportunities for play | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Plan for and deliver an annual marketing and communications plan for Play Development services using key events to raise the profile of play opportunities in the borough | • widening accessibility | New | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and deliver detailed and coordinated marketing and communications plans for FISH and Playrangers to be written into project business reviews 2016-18 Design a template communications plan to be adopted when planning for play events Review and update stakeholder engagement strategy's written into project business reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR LAO Communications team Web team | November 2016 June 2016 November 2016 | Annual review and update |
| 3.2 | Plan for and deliver coordinated communications plans to ensure community engagement in the delivery of the play area development plan | • widening accessibility | New | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a template process and plan to be adopted when delivering new and refurbishing existing play areas Explore the possibility of delivering online consultations for developing new and refurbishing existing play areas Develop the Council Parks and Leisure web pages to engage communities in the development of new and refurbishment of play areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPO Web team Communications team Legal services-procurement | September 2016 January 2017 January 2017 | Annual review and update |
| 3.3 | Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies to promote opportunities for play to our most vulnerable communities | • widening accessibility | Partnerships with key agencies to promote activities exist but are not consistently coordinated and communicated within project plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate key partner and agencies into project communications plans for all play development services and events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR FST CW SCC HSLW | Continuous review | |
| 3.4 | Identify and coordinate targeted opportunities for promoting activities | • widening accessibility | Existing gaps in communication to agencies and partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate and deliver stakeholder engagement strategy for FISH and Playrangers Attend a minimum of 5 community network meetings per annum in less advantaged wards Attend a minimum of 5 community events per annum to promote play development initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LAO | March 2017 March 2017 March 2017 | Annual programme of presentations Annual Annual |
| 3.5 | Ensure parents receive effective information by delivering a broad programme of holiday activities information on the website | • widening accessibility | 10,066 unique web page views in 2015 on holiday activities web pages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase website stats by 5% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAO PDO | March 2017 | Annual |
| 3.6 | Develop new play development web pages through the corporate website development programme | • widening accessibility | 4,097 unique web page views in 2015 FISH 2,117 unique web page views in 2015 Playrangers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend website development focus groups Increase web page traffic for FISH - 5% and Playrangers- 8% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | March 2017 | Annual |

Key: PDO = Play Development Officer PPO = Parks Project Officer LPR= Lead Play Ranger LAO = Leisure Administration Officer FST = Family Support Team SCC = Surrey County Council
 CW = Community Wardens HSLW = Home School Link Workers LDO = Leisure Development Officer

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| Indicator | Action | Key Strategy Theme(s) | Baseline (2015) | Target / Milestone | Responsibility | Target date(s) | Annual review |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 3.7 | Identify community events where play activity can engage the community and increase awareness of opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility | Playrangers attendance at 7 community events within Playranger delivery areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver 5 community events in Playranger service areas per annum Deliver play activity at 3 additional events increasing awareness of both FISH and Playrangers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR CW | March 2017 | Annual |
| Design and deliver play opportunities for all children especially those who are disabled or vulnerable; places, cost to participate, equipment and activities | | | | | | | |
| 3.8 | Provide a Playranger service that reduces barriers to play in relation to cost, transport, outcomes focussed provision, negative attitudes and parental anxiety. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility | 2014 business review Playranger contacts 4400 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Playranger business plan 2014 Develop Playranger business plan 2016-18 Deliver annual action plan March 2017 increase Playranger contacts by 10% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | September 2016 March 2017 | Annual review |
| 3.9 | Deliver FISH for all children in the borough to be able to access. Through a planned and coordinated approach ensure disabled and vulnerable children have equal access of opportunity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Easter FISH occupancy: 103/120 places 11 Keyworker 25 Buddy summer FISH occupancy: 125/160 places 27 Keyworkers 36 Buddy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review FISH business plan 2014 Develop FISH business plan 2016-18 Deliver annual action plan April 2017 increase overall occupancy rates by 5% overall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO | November 2016 April 2017 | Annual review |
| 3.10 | Increase participation of children from vulnerable communities on FISH, by working in partnership with key agencies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Easter vulnerable target group attendance: 52% Summer vulnerable target group attendance: 42% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase vulnerable target group bookings by 5% overall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO | April 2017 | Annual |
| 3.11 | Continue to deliver 'core offer' of Keyworker spaces and buddy spaces at FISH for young people with additional needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Easter FISH availability Keyworker spaces 6 Buddy spaces 15 Summer FISH availability Keyworker spaces 6 per week Buddy spaces 15 per week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure external funding for 6 Keyworker spaces in 2016 Ensure existing budget is allocated to maintain core offer baseline where external funding is not secured | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO SCC | March 2017 | Annual target to be reviewed |
| 3.12 | Continue to provide needs based transport for young people from target wards to access the FISH playscheme reducing transport barriers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility | Subsidised transport provided for an average of 34 young people per week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review transport requirements and occupation rates through FISH business review 2016-18 Ensure existing budget planning can maintain transport needs for vulnerable children in target wards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO | November 2016 | Annual review |
| 3.13 | Deliver FISH through a realistic and planned fee strategy that supports children and young people to access the scheme where cost is a barrier | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility | Current 3 year fee structure plan in 2014 business review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver a 2 year fee structure plan within business review for 2016-18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO | November 2016 | Annual review |
| 3.14 | Work with statutory and voluntary partner agencies to encourage referrals of vulnerable children and young people into FISH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | 23 referrals from agencies in 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of referrals to 26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO SCC HSLW CW FST | August 2016 | Annual review |
| 3.15 | Work with local and regional play and youth organisations to encourage, support and advise on the delivery of community play development opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility | ongoing need | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend 3 Guildford Youth Practitioner meetings per annum Attend 3 RE:Play South East Play Association meetings per annum Attend 4 CHIPS playscheme meetings per annum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | March 2017 | Annual |

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Continued →

| Indicator | Action | Key Strategy Theme(s) | Baseline (2015) | Target / Milestone | Responsibility | Target date(s) | Annual review |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| 3.16 | Design new and refurbish existing play areas applying standards for play provision as set out in the strategy to increase accessibility for all users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Play Value Assessments results undertaken in 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review play value assessments of site when developing new or improving provision to identify accessibility needs and increase values where required Undertake community engagement process when developing new or improving provision to identify local need | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO PTO | In line with play area development plan | |
| Develop and maintain inspiring places to play that match local community need | | | | | | | |
| 3.17 | Increase play value assessment scores for borough owned play areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Play area development plan 2016-21 | Two play areas to have an increased play value in the first year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO PTO | March 2017 | Monitor annually re-evaluate 2020/21 |
| 3.18 | Develop partnerships with parish councils and community groups to encourage them to adopt the standards for play provision set out in the strategy improving the access, quantity and quality of play area provision across the borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | ad hoc communications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a presentation to introduce the standards for provision and play value assessment tool Deliver presentation to Parish Liaison Group meeting Provide all parish councils with a printed copy of the Design for Play guidance Produce and distribute a resource sheet providing links to further information and advice on developing community play spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPO PDO PPO PDO PPO PDO | July 2016 August 2016 July 2016 July 2016 | |
| 3.19 | Evaluate FISH and Playrangers to ensure children and young people's needs are reflected in the design and delivery of services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Ongoing Evaluations of FISH following each scheme. Return rate of 7% from parents and 4% from the young people in summer 2015 Playranger session review sheets completed by staff to provide direct feedback on resources and play activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase return rate of FISH evaluations to 12% overall Design and deliver a bi annual evaluation of Playrangers to engage the views of children and young people attending Design and deliver an innovative evaluation activity on site at FISH that is designed to engage all participants in providing feedback about the service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LAO PDO LPR PDO LPR | September 2016 March 2017 August 2016 | Annual review |
| Design and deliver play opportunities that contribute to better health outcomes for children and young people | | | | | | | |
| 3.20 | Design and deliver the Playranger service and FISH to create varied and interesting environments that maximise the potential for physical activity, socialising, creativity, imagination, resourcefulness and challenge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> balancing risk improving health and wellbeing | Current activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Play England guide 'tools for evaluating play provision' and 'Best Play' to assess the play opportunities provided by Playrangers and FISH in preparation for business plans Prepare action plans to increase opportunities identified in assessments Increase child contacts at Playrangers by 10% April 2017 increase FISH occupancy rates by 5% overall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | November 2016 March 2017 March 2017 | Annual review and update of business plans |
| 3.21 | Design and deliver the Playranger service and FISH to create self accessing free play opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving health and wellbeing widening accessibility | Current activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above use of Play England and 'Best Play' guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | November 2016 | Annual review and update of business plans |

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 CW = Community Wardens HSLW = Home School Link Workers LDO = Leisure Development Officer

| Indicator | Action | Key Strategy Theme(s) | Baseline (2015) | Target / Milestone | Responsibility | Target date(s) | Annual review |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| 3.22 | Develop play areas that are safe, stimulating and physically challenging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving health and wellbeing widening accessibility | Play value assessments 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review play value assessments when refurbishing or renewing play areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPO | Ongoing | Annual review of development plan |
| 3.23 | Develop play areas that are safe to access through better design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving health and wellbeing | Play value assessments 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review play value assessments when refurbishing or renewing play areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPO | Ongoing | Annual review of development plan |
| 3.24 | Work in partnership to deliver play opportunities in target areas where health inequalities are recognised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving health and wellbeing widening accessibility | existing provision delivered in less advantaged areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend Project Aspire Wellbeing Group meeting to coordinate priorities and promote services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDO | Ongoing | |
| 3.25 | Support community led initiatives that reduce the barrier of traffic for children accessing play opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improving health and wellbeing widening accessibility advocate for play | new | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and design accessible community resources to support the 'Streetplay' initiative Produce a 'Streetplay' presentation that can be delivered to communities wishing to lead the initiatives Deliver a 'Streetplay' publicity and marketing campaign to raise awareness of the resources available | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | September 2016 October 2016 March 2017 (linked into Outdoor Playweek campaign) | |
| 3.26 | Challenge perceptions of risk in play through a risk benefit approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> balancing risk advocate for play | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate explicit statements on risk policy into written procedures and parent information packs Review and update play risk benefit assessments Produce written dynamically assessed play activity and update play risk folder Plan and deliver Playranger and FISH activities to incorporate challenge and risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR PDO LPR PDO LPR | December 2016 From May 2016 onwards From May 2016 onwards | |
| Increase playworker knowledge and skills to facilitate high quality play opportunities | | | | | | | |
| 3.27 | Review, design and deliver playworker training programmes for FISH and Playrangers based on the Playworker Principles and 'Best Play' guidance and effective risk management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> widening accessibility improving health and wellbeing balancing risk | Existing training programme for FISH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design new training programmes to be delivered to staff through 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | Design December 2016 Delivery January 2017 onwards | Annual review and delivery programme |
| 3.28 | Review play policies and procedures to ensure good playwork practice is embedded in delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocate for play | Existing policies and procedures for FISH and Playrangers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and produce updated policies and procedures for FISH and Playrangers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | March 2017 | Annual |
| 3.29 | Facilitate relationships between children and adults within communities supporting children to negotiate space for their play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocate for play widen accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Some existing relationships with communities around Playranger sites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate playwork advocacy into playworker training to support staff to negotiate spaces for play when working in communities Review and update Playranger stakeholder engagement strategy to engage local communities surrounding Playranger sites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO PDO | Delivery from January 2017 onwards November 2016 | Annual review |

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| Increasing parental understanding to support children's play | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|---------------------------------|---|
| 3.30 | Educate and inspire parents to recognise the value of children's play and what good play provision looks like | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocate for play widen accessibility improving health and wellbeing | new | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and produce playful marketing and promotional material for FISH and Playrangers Review and produce parent information packs for FISH and Playrangers Build in opportunities to advocate for play through communications plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | November 2016 | Annual review |
| 3.31 | Build parental confidence to allow children to play outside in their communities. Deliver doorstep provision that is easily accessible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocate for play widen accessibility improving health and wellbeing | Current Playranger service delivery sites | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess Playranger delivery sites within business reviews to meet community need | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO LPR | November 2016 | |
| Safeguard children at play | | | | | | | |
| 3.32 | Regularly review the Council's policies on safeguarding children and young people to reflect the needs of children's play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocate for play improving health and wellbeing | Current Safeguarding Children policy and safeguarding working group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Council's Safeguarding Children policy in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 Update changes to policy document Seek approval of changes through Executive report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDO LDO | September 2016 December 2016 | Annual review or in line with statutory guidance changes |
| 3.33 | Design and deliver a Playworker training programme to ensure safeguarding is embedded in the provision of play services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocate for play improving health and wellbeing | Current internal delivery of training and access to external courses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review mandatory and external opportunities for safeguarding training through Surrey Safeguarding Children Board. Plan and deliver an annual programme of internal and external playworker training to meet the needs and levels of all playwork staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDO PDO | May 2016 August 2016 | Bi annually in line with SSCB training programme release Annual delivery programme |



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