



Crime and Disorder Select Committee

Play and informal sport
background information





Play England advice

The 10 principles for designing successful play spaces

Successful play spaces...

- are 'bespoke'
- are well located
- make use of natural elements
- provide a wide range of play experiences
- are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children
- meet community needs
- allow children of different ages to play together
- build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge
- are sustainable and appropriately maintained
- allow for change and evolution.

Play England is the national children's play charity for England. Its vision is for England to be a country where everybody can fully enjoy their right to play throughout their childhood and teenage years.

Play England advice

Successful play spaces offer:

- **Movement and physical activity**
- **Stimulate the five senses**
- **Good places for social interaction**
- **Allow children to manipulate natural and fabricated materials**
- **Offer children challenge**



Association of Play Industries

The Association of Play Industries (API) is the lead trade body in the play sector. It represents the interests of manufacturers, installers, designers and distributors of both outdoor and indoor play equipment and safer surfacing. The API promotes best practice and high-quality play provision within the play industry.

Aims and Objectives

- To promote good play space design, installation and workmanship within the industry.
- To promote an understanding of play and risk.
- To maintain and assist the development of British, European and other Standards for play.
- To liaise closely with governing bodies of play, nationally and internationally.
- To ensure members comply with standards and good practice.
- To provide a united voice for the play industry.



RoSPA

The British and European safety standard BS EN1176 and the Health & Safety Executive strongly recommend that all play areas are inspected annually by an independent qualified body such as RoSPA (Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents)

We commission RoSPA to carry out the following independent inspections and assessments:

- Annual Inspections of existing play areas and safety surfacing (sites should be as safe as they need to be, not as safe as possible).
- Assessments of the 'life expectancy' of play equipment and play areas
- Post Installation Inspections of new sites - ensuring equipment and surfacing have been correctly installed and meet safety standards
- Play Value Assessments....



RoSPA – Play Value Assessments

These can be used to assess play value of existing play areas or new designs

Three broad aspects of a site are assessed:

- The Overall Site (ignoring equipment, but including the landscape setting, site safety and so on)
- Ambience (visual appeal, condition and layout)
- Suitability and value of play equipment and features for the age groups for which the site is designed (toddlers, juniors or teenagers)

A detailed set of criteria are used and sites are given overall ratings (*excellent, good, average, below average or poor*) for each of these three elements.

The Operator should aim for a minimum rating of 'good' for all sites.



Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The 1995 Disability Discrimination Act aims to ensure that all those who are disabled have the same access to public services (and by implication, public parks and playgrounds) as those who are not disabled. Successful play spaces should, as far as is reasonably possible, offer the same quality and extent of play experience to disabled children and young people as is available to those who are not disabled, whilst accepting that not all equipment can be completely accessible to everyone.

Inclusion by Design (Goodridge, ed. Douch, 2008) sets out the following six principles, established by the Disability Rights Commission, which form the foundation of inclusive design:

- Ease of use
- Freedom of choice and access to mainstream activities
- Diversity and difference
- Legibility and predictability
- Quality
- Safety

Information from other authority officers

Barnsley

'Barnsley have so far not considered rationalisation of its play spaces, however, since 2018, any new play spaces that are required within in new housing developments as part of the planning process, will not be adopted by BMBC.

These will need to have a management company in place to maintain/inspect and repair.

Any 106 off site contribution raised from any new development will go to support existing play spaces for refurbishment or replacement.

Wakefield

Wakefield are looking at a current proposal to remove 5 play areas across Wakefield – all of which are on tarmac surfacing, and 3 of which are of poor play value. All the visual evidence points to these swings receiving very little use, to the extent that there's moss on the seats at one of the sites.

We are looking at reducing our play area provision, not so much for financial reasons, but more around compliance and quality of what we are actually providing.

Leeds

Leeds are increasing our provision, but also removed a couple in consultation with ward members and residents.

New provision is installed where we have never had a play area and we have obtain a commuted sum.

where possible we like to refurbish existing play areas before building new.

Local authority publications

Brighton & Hove City Council

Describes the unavoidable impact of aging play equipment and makes suggestions to protect play provision across the city in the future (Sep 16)

<https://democracy.brighton-hove.gov.uk/documents/s104342/Enc.%20%20for%20The%20Big%20Conversation%20-%20An%20Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%20for%20Brighton%20Hove.pdf>

Burnley Council

Burnley's Play Area Strategy 2017-2026

https://burnley.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Burnleys-Play-Provision-Strategy-2017-2026_0.pdf

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Children's Play Areas / Playgrounds (Nov 21)

<https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/documents/s56146/Adroddiad%20Pwyllgor.pdf?LLL=1>

Newcastle City Council

Inclusive play

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/inclusive-play-newcastle--d74.pdf>

Play Area Investment Plan

<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/environment-and-waste/green-spaces/play-areas>

Rochdale Borough Council

Play Area Strategy 2022-2031

<https://democracy.rochdale.gov.uk/documents/s94814/Play%20Area%20Strategy.pdf>

Walsall Council

Public consultation opens for proposed £1.6million investment in play facilities (Jan 23)

<https://go.walsall.gov.uk/newsroom/public-consultation-opens-proposed-ps16million-investment-play-facilities>

Examples of informal play



15/02/2014 10:00

Suggested principles-discussion points

1. Our existing revenue budget does not allow us to maintain the existing formal play parks to the standard we desire.
2. We have an unequal distribution of play facilities within the Borough, we should work to 'balance' provision to allow as many people as possible, to benefit from play.

So we need to consider our options for the future, for example should we:

- Consider rationalisation of facilities while ensuring all communities have equitable access to play?
- Encourage informal play or play outside of a formal setting?
- Only develop/encourage new sites where there is a clear lack of provision and where we have a clear commitment of revenue for appropriate upkeep and renewal.
- Focus resources on a smaller number of larger, 'Destination' sites which can cater for a wider demographic/catchment? This would allow to invest our limited resources to ensure they meet a wider range of users and concentrate our revenue obligations.
- Deliver/encourage doorstep or neighbourhood facilities only in areas where residents cannot easily access destination sites?
- Continue to provide formal play provision in our rural country parks or should we prioritise urban, local provision?
- Require officers to develop a strategy for play provision based on the guidance of scrutiny?

