

# **Fareham Play Strategy**

**June 2007**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Play Strategy is to bring together all agencies in Fareham who have an interest and involvement in Children's Play, to improve play opportunities for all children in the area. The intention is that this process will create a long-term Play Partnership that will work together to plan for the future, and in particular to oversee the implementation of the Partnership's first 5 year Action Plan arising from the Strategy.

## 1.2 The Fareham Play Partnership

This Strategy has been prepared by a local Play Partnership comprised of representatives from:

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<b>COUNCIL</b>	
Leisure including Parks	FBC – Leisure & Community
Grounds maintenance	FBC – Streetscene
Planning	FBC – Planning Policy
Housing	FBC – Housing
Transport	FBC – Transport
Community Safety	FBC – Community Safety
Early years	FBC, Hampshire County Council (HCC) – Community Health, Development & Childcare
Early years	FBC – Community Health, Development & Childcare
Young people	FBC – Community Development
Youth Service	HCC – Youth Service
Education	HCC – Education
Education	HCC - Extended Schools
Children's Services	HCC - Children Centres Development
Children's Services	HCC - Children's Services (Social Services)
HCC Play Strategy	HCC – Early Education & Childcare unit
<b>EXTERNAL</b>	
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)/Sure Start	EYDCP/ Surestart
Home Start	Homestart Gosport & Fareham
Under 14s & families	Hampshire Children and Families Forum (Fareham Branch)
Play Organisations	Oak Meadow Centre Childrens Centre

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Disabilities Group	Fareham Access Group
Play Organisations	Let Us Play Scheme (LUPS)
Children with Disabilities group	KIDS South East
	Pre-school Learning Alliance
After School Clubs	
Private Play Providers	
Police	Hampshire Police
Primary Care Trust (PCT)	NHS
Children's Fund	Hampshire Children's Fund
Youth Offending Team (YOT)	Portsmouth & SE Hants YOT
Forum	Hampshire Children & Families Forum
Connexions	South Central Connexions
	Positive Parenting
Church	Churches Together
Church	Locks Heath Free Church
School	Brookfield Community School
	Gosport BC
College	Fareham College
	Rainbow Centre
<b>COMMUNITY</b>	
Residents Associations	Kenneth Prangnell
Residents Associations	Mike Stratton-Brown
Residents Associations	S J Allen
Residents Associations	Arthur Hackney
Residents Associations	Don Frost
Residents Associations	Mrs Judy Keith-Smith
Residents Associations	Julia Orr
Residents Associations	Alan Russ

The Terms of Reference for the Play Partnership are attached as Appendix 1. The Play Partnership has an ongoing role in relation to the implementation and monitoring of the strategy over its 5 year life.

### **1.3 Definition of Play**

There are a number of possible definitions of Play and for this strategy the Play Partnership has agreed that this will be based on that contained in the “Dobson Report<sup>1</sup>” and the Children’s Play Council’s document *Best Play (2001)*.

### **Definition of Play**

“Play is what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationship with them, as well as experimenting with various ways of responding to the challenges their play provides”.

## **1.4 Scope of Strategy**

This Strategy seeks to inform the shape and direction of the Play Partnership’s policy priorities and proposed service developments for Play and Young peoples facilities over the next five to ten years. It sets out the role and case for Play in the context of Hampshire County Council’s statutory Children and Young People’s Plan, and the Borough’s Community Strategy and other relevant policy. It aims to provide a strategy for Fareham Borough in general, recognising the potential contributions of all partners involved in providing and developing Play and facility opportunities for children and young people of the Borough.

It aims to complement relevant regional and national strategies while placing the needs and aspirations of local people at its core. In so doing it will set the development of local Play opportunities in the wider regional and national context.

### **1.4.1 The scope of the strategy includes:**

- Unsupervised spaces and facilities used for play.
- Supervised play-schemes and out-of-school provision.
- Facilities for young people and informal Activity Schemes.

The primary focus for the strategy is “free” play falling under the “3 Frees” concept that is:

- Free – no charge
- Free – children/young people choose play activity
- Free – children/young people free to attend or not (child/young person’s choice)

The age range for the Strategy is for children and young people up to 19 years old; and, up to 25 years for children with disabilities.

In general terms, the Strategy is intended to provide an overview for the development of Play facilities and services within the Borough, and to

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<sup>1</sup> Getting Serious about Play - A Review of Children’s Play - January 2004

complement specific, detailed service based strategies and studies.

The Strategy aims to inform the development of specific work programmes and action plans for those services and partners involved in the delivery of Play and informal recreation services to children and young people. It will aim to encourage greater partnership working across all agencies and organisations in the public, private, voluntary and commercial sectors that have a part to play in providing opportunities for children and young people in the Borough.

The Strategy has been produced through an extensive consultation process. Consultation has included key stakeholders such as parents and local residents associations. As will be seen from the above membership of the Local Play Partnership, important strategic partners have been directly involved; and most importantly direct consultation has been undertaken with children and young people through schools, play centres and services for young people.

## **1.5 Vision, Aims and objectives of the Strategy**

### **1.5.1 Vision, aims and objectives of the Fareham Play Strategy (draft)**

#### ***Vision Statement***

“Working through the Fareham Play Partnership to ensure all children in the Fareham have fair access to high quality inclusive play opportunities”.

#### ***General Aims.***

The aims of the strategy are:

- To enable the provision of an integrated range of high quality informal opportunities in play that is sufficient to meet the needs and aspirations of the Borough’s children and young people.
- To ensure that such provision is effectively planned and co-ordinated.
- To ensure that the strategy supports the aims of relevant national strategy such as *Every Child Matters* and key local strategic documents such as the *Children’s and Young People’s Plan* and the *Community Strategy*.

#### ***Objectives***

- To ensure inclusive play opportunities are provided where they are needed and help facilitate the provision of high-quality facilities that are accessible to users.
- To ensure that play opportunities should meet demand, encourage participation and enable children and young people “to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child” (Article 31 UN Convention).
- To provide evidence of the need for play opportunities and facilities identifying shortfall and surpluses in provision to enable an informed approach for the future.
- To analyse existing provision and establish the future policy of children’s play provision within the local authority area.
- To provide a practical Action Plan to detail concrete outcomes that the Council and its partners will aim to achieve over the next 5 years.

- To help identify a portfolio of projects to be submitted for funding to the BIG Lottery Children's Play Programme.

### ***General Principles***

- The Strategy is for Fareham as a whole – not just the Borough Council. Through the establishment of a Play Partnership it will aim to encompass the roles and contributions of all partners involved in Play in the Borough.
- The scope of the Strategy will be sufficiently wide to encompass informal facilities and activities for children and young people (for example playgrounds, young peoples facilities, playschemes, play centres and informal activity programmes).
- The scope of the Strategy will include all children and young people up to 19 years; and, up to 25 years for those with disabilities.
- Consultation will be a key element and will aim to be as extensive as possible (involving direct consultation with children and young people).
- The Strategy will place local issues in the context of relevant local and national policy.

## **1.6 Play Partnership Policy**

### **1.6.1 General Statement of Play Policy**

(Directly adapted from the Audit Commission's Best Value Performance Indicators Library - BVPI 115)

The Fareham Play Partnership recognises the significance and value of play and the poverty of play opportunities in the general environment. It is committed to ensuring that all children have access to rich, stimulating environments (both in and out of doors) that are free from unacceptable risks, giving them the opportunity to explore through their freely chosen play. Policy will be based on the understanding that every child needs opportunities to play both on their own and, crucially, with others.

The Partnership is committed to ensuring that environments, services and provision for play are attractive, welcoming and accessible to every child irrespective of age, gender, background or origin, or of individual capacities and abilities.

The Partnership will work towards increasing play opportunities for and eliminating barriers to the take-up of play provision by disabled children and children with specific cultural needs. This will take the form of developing increased inclusive provision or, if necessary, separate provision, recognising that separate provision may sometimes be a valuable staging post for particularly vulnerable children. Use of specialist services should only be at the choice of the child or their advocate and all mainstream services must be welcoming and accessible to all children.

The Partnership recognises that:

- children play in a variety of public spaces as well as in dedicated provision;

- play environments should provide safe, stimulating play opportunities that place children at the centre of the play process;
- children need to encounter and learn to manage an acceptable level of risk in their play;
- children’s views should be sought and listened to; and,
- children should have access to the widest possible range of play experiences and play environments, both indoors and outside.

Judgements about quality in provision will be based on the degree to which children are provided with opportunities to experience directly:

- the natural elements – earth, air, fire and water;
- fabricated and natural materials and tools – consumables, ‘loose parts’;
- challenge – in the physical environment, in the social context and in private;
- free movement – running, jumping, climbing, rolling, balancing emotions – both painful and pleasurable, the chance to validate a range of feelings;
- a variety of stimulation to the senses – hearing, taste, smell, touch, sight;
- play with identity – drama, dressing up, role plays, masks, face painting;
- varied social interactions – freely chosen across the age, ability, gender, ethnic and cultural barriers, co-operating, resolving conflict, chatting, negotiating, sharing; and,
- change – building/demolishing, transforming environments, the effect of the seasons and weather, growth and decay, predicting and planning, interesting physical environments – plantings, varied levels, enclosed/open spaces, mounds, steps, walls, shelters, surfaces, platforms, seating, privacy, vistas, flexibility.

### 1.6.2 Strategy Policy Statements

The Policy Statements are structured in relation to the 5 key themes of the Hampshire Children and Young People’s Plan.

<b>Being healthy</b>
<p>P1. The Strategy recognises that Play and Informal Activity opportunities have a vital part to play in improving the health and well-being of children and young people through the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>P2. Play Partners will work towards ensuring that a wider range of play opportunities are available for disabled children and children in need, and that all provision aims towards becoming fully inclusive and accessible.</p>
<b>Staying safe</b>
<p>P3. Play Partners will seek to improve play and facilities for young people (and access to them) in the Borough in relation to children and young people’s safety and security and to develop appropriate management regimes. The partnership also recognises that play and facilities for young people need to be stimulating and</p>

challenging and that “controlled risk” is an essential part of their design and management.

P4. Play Partners will aim to make public spaces in general as child friendly as possible; ensuring that parks, thoroughfares, schools, young peoples settings, housing estates, shopping areas and other public spaces within the Borough are as safe and conducive as possible to children’s play and outdoor activity.

P5. The Strategy recognises the role Play can have in promoting community cohesion through providing opportunities for children from varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds to play together. It also recognises the need to provide a range of play opportunities that are culturally appropriate to the Borough’s local communities.

#### Enjoying and achieving

P6. Enjoyable Play opportunities will be provided on the basis of a strategic analysis of local need, with the aim of providing an equitable distribution of opportunities across the Borough. Priority will be given to provision where it is most needed.

P7. The Strategy recognises that as well as being fun, Play and Informal Activity opportunities have a key role in enriching the lives of young people and providing them with a range of personal development opportunities. Play and activity schemes provide stimulating and rewarding alternatives to anti-social behaviour, as well as providing a strong sense of achievement.

P8. The Strategy recognises the importance of ensuring that Play opportunities in the Borough are effectively promoted and publicised, encouraging integrated promotion from the various partners involved in provision.

#### Making a positive contribution

P9. Children, young people and their parents/carers will be positively engaged in the planning of play opportunities provided in the Borough through appropriate consultation and active involvement. Consultation will encompass “hard-to-reach” communities and children and young people at risk from social exclusion.

P10. The Strategy acknowledges the vital role played by the Community and Voluntary sector, the County Council, and several other partner agencies in relation to the provision of play opportunities. Wherever possible the Borough Council will work in partnership to support their efforts.

P11. The Strategy recognises the specific issues relating to play provision in geographically outlying areas and will seek to improve access to play for children and young people in such areas.

#### Achieving economic well-being.

P12. The Strategy will seek to maximise the potential of planning obligations and agreements with developers in order to facilitate the improvement and enhancement of Play and Young people’s facility provision and to support its future maintenance.

P13. The Strategy will aim to ensure training needs are identified for play and youth workers, and that partners provide appropriate training to meet these needs in relation to professional development.

### 1.6.3 Policy Positions relating to Policy Statements

The Strategy adopts 'policy positions' in relation to the broad statements above and for convenience these are brought together below. As will be seen these are based on established and recognised good practice.

	Being healthy
P2	The Strategy adopts recommended models of good practice for provision for children with disabilities; specifically those produced by KIDS (the service delivery charity for disabled children and their families) in relation to play activities; and <i>Developing Accessible Play Space - A Good Practice Guide (2003)</i> published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).
	Staying safe
P3	The Strategy adopts the Play England recommended statement on <i>Managing Risk in Play Provision</i> drafted by the nationally recognised <i>Play Safety Forum</i> .  The Strategy confirms that all staff and volunteers working with children will be CRB screened in relation to recruitment and ongoing checks.
P4	The Strategy confirms that <i>Secured by Design</i> principles will be followed in relation to all new play provision and refurbishments  The Strategy confirms that in relation to future housing developments, full account will be taken of elements of residential design and the design of public open space early in the planning cycle, to specifically recognise the needs of children and young people as key users of public open space and the outdoor environment.
	Enjoying and achieving
P6	The Strategy adopts a model of good practice relating to the design of play areas that will be followed in relation to new provision and refurbishments.  The Strategy provides a <i>Priority Assessment Tool</i> to be used as a basis for the Play Area /improvement Programme, and all other decision-making regarding future provision of play spaces.
P8	The Strategy confirms that the positive engagement of children and young people in planning their own play opportunities will be publicised wherever possible.  The Strategy confirms that schools will promote the availability of all play opportunities within their catchments (on and off-site).
	Making a positive contribution
P9	The Strategy confirms that Play Partnership members will sign up to the <i>Hear by Rights Framework</i> which is a nationally recognised good practice guide for consulting and engaging with children, young people and their families.
P10	The Strategy confirms that Play Areas in outlying geographical areas will be developed with local people, and appropriate partnership projects will be implemented to meet local needs and circumstances.
	Achieving economic well-being.
P12	The Council will adopt local standards for Planning (in accordance with the principles of PPG17) that are appropriate to the local circumstances and needs of the Borough. These will be included in the Open Space Strategy currently being developed.

## 1.7 Glossary of terms

In a document like this the use of a few technical and perhaps unfamiliar abbreviations is unavoidable. Where first used they have been defined at the relevant point in the text. However, for convenience they are also reproduced below.

<b>Term</b>	<b>What it means</b>
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CPC	Children's Play Council
CVS	Council for Voluntary Services
CYPP	Children and Young People's Plan
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
GIS	Geographical Information system – Mapping system
Homezone	Street designed with facilities for pedestrians and children foremost in mind
IDACI	Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index – indicator of child deprivation
KIDS	National charity for disabled children and their families
LAP	Local Area of Play
LEAP	Local Equipped Area of Play
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MUGA	Multi-Use Games Area
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play
NPFA	National Playing Fields Association
NYA	National Youth Agency
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education - The official body for inspecting schools, childcare and play services
PPG 17	Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (Sport and Recreation)
SOA	Super Output Area (smaller area than ward used in statistical analysis)
YSQM	National Quality Mark for Services for Young People

## 2. Planning for the Future: Summary of Strategy Outcomes & Agreements

This section highlights the main issues arising from the Strategy development process, and summarises all the Strategy's agreements (found throughout the main body of this document) as to how the Play Partnership can respond in order to improve play provision across the Borough. The section is structured in relation to the 5 key themes of the Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan.

The → symbol shows a link to an action in the Action Plan, these Actions can include:

1. An action/agreement about a policy position that is adopted as part of the overall Play Strategy.
2. An action/agreement adopted as 'Strategic' action that is of a more complex/long-term nature and will take place over an extended period of time.
3. An action/agreement adopted as a 'Tactical' action, that is of a less complex nature and can be started and completed within a reasonably short-period of time

### 2.1 Being Healthy

#### **Health and Wellbeing**

The Strategy recognises that Play and Informal Activity opportunities have a vital part to play in improving the health and well-being of children and young people through the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles. →1.1, 1.2

#### **Children in need**

The need for improved access to provision for children and young people with disabilities (and their families) and other children in need was raised widely throughout the consultation both by children and young people with disabilities, their families and indeed by the wider community. It is agreed that:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liaison with FBC's access officer and a local disability group will take place to assess play areas and identify means by which they could be improved to be more appropriate to children with various disabilities and special needs. A programme of improvements will then be drawn up. →1.5</li><li>• Survey work will be undertaken in partnership with a local disability group to establish priorities in relation to access to play provision for children and young people with special needs. This will include identifying the needs of parents and young carers. →1.3</li><li>• Work will be undertaken with existing and proposed Extended Schools to improve access to specialist play facilities at special schools out of school time. →1.7</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities to expand special needs play and activity schemes will be identified through the consultation process. →1.4</li><li>• Training will be provided re disability and inclusion for front line play and youth worker staff as noted above. →5.4</li></ul>  |

## 2.2 Staying Safe

### 2.2.1 Risk and Play Provision

The Strategy recognises the potential conflict between offering challenging and stimulating play opportunities and health and safety concerns. It therefore adopts the following Position statement as recommended by the Play Safety Forum (2002).

#### **Managing Risk in Play Provision →2.1**

- 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.

### 2.2.2 Safety and Security

Issues around safety and security in relation to open access play areas and facilities for young people were identified throughout the consultation process. It is therefore agreed that:

- Secured by Design principles will be adopted in relation to all new play provision and refurbishments →2.4
- All staff and volunteers working with children will be CRB screened in relation to recruitment and ongoing checks. →5.3
- Consideration will be made by all partners as to targeting detached and outreach staff at open access play and youth facilities. →3.8
- Consideration will be given to providing lighting at existing and future facilities for young people, in the first instance at appropriate facilities in the more deprived wards. →2.2
- The Play Partners will promote awareness and identify measures aimed at addressing concerns with bullying and “stranger danger” →2.3

### 2.2.3 Safe Access Routes to Play

The consultation process has shown that good access to nearby play facilities and relevant services is very important. Access to good, safe walking and cycling routes to play opportunities and relevant services is essential in order to maximise their use.

- The Play Partnership will support initiatives aimed at improving safe and secure off road routes to play opportunities. →2.5

### 2.2.4 Play in residential developments

The consultation has highlighted not only the need for accessible local spaces for play and for young people, but also that users would like to be involved in the planning and design of relevant spaces. It is therefore agreed that:

- In relation to future housing developments, full account will be taken of play space and the general design of public open space early in the planning cycle to specifically recognise the needs of children and young people as key users of public open space and the outdoor environment. This will involve considerations such as Secured by Design principles, homezones, seating and meeting places within the development, as well as provision of specific play and facilities for young people. →2.4

## 2.2.5 Community Cohesion

Play and young people's activity can help promote community cohesion, by providing opportunities for children and young people from different backgrounds to mix and gain understanding of each other through shared play and leisure activity. Equally, note has been made of the need to be culturally aware of forms of play and leisure activity relating to children and young people from different backgrounds.

- The Play Partnership will support suitable projects in the future that maximise play's contribution to building community cohesion. →2.6

## 2.3 Enjoying and achieving

### 2.3.1 Quality of Play Provision

The Strategy highlights various elements of good practice and quality models in relation to Play Provision. It is therefore agreed that:

- All the quality and good practice models included in the Strategy (e.g. for the design of new and refurbished play areas, improving inclusivity in play services and facilities, and providing challenging and stimulating play equipment and environments) will be used for all play facility refurbishments and new works. →3.1

### 2.3.2 Play Spaces

The overall Strategy for provision of these free play opportunities in relation to future planning is to adopt the long term aim of Local Standards for provision that may be developed arising from this work, as well as the findings and conclusions of the Borough Council's Green Spaces Study. This is combined with the adoption of national guidance and recognised models of good practice in relation to the design and quality of provision (for example in relation to inclusivity and risk management).

For Play Spaces and outdoor open access facilities for young people Local Standards must be based upon the principle of providing reasonable access (in terms of walking time) to various kinds of high quality inclusive play and youth facilities designed to meet the needs of different age groups for all of the Borough's children and young people.

### 2.3.3 Prioritisation for Improvements/additions to Play Spaces

The achievement of play and provision for young people across the Borough based upon locally justified Standards is a long term goal. In the shorter term there will be a need to determine which of the play areas and facilities for young people should be brought "up to standard" and where new provision should be. That is, what are the priorities for new or improved play areas and facilities for young people?

'Planning for Play' suggests that this question should be answered by prioritising provision in those areas where it is most needed<sup>2</sup>.

The Strategy therefore proposes a new assessment tool, which could be used by the Borough Council to prioritise work on refurbishments and new facilities as part of the ongoing Play Area Improvement Programme.

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<sup>2</sup> Further detailed criteria for prioritisation are provided in Section 7.4

- The Priority Assessment Tool will be used by members of the Council in conjunction with outcomes already identified in the Green Spaces Strategy to help guide decision making regarding provision of new and refurbished play spaces. Where it is difficult to choose between projects (as the projects appear to meet the criteria equally well) the poorest quality site should take precedence for refurbishment. →5.1. (Sections 7.3 and 7.4 provides a general assessment of the nature, quality and accessibility of existing play spaces.)

#### **2.3.4 Other Play Services**

In relation to Play Services, the following summarises the main observations and agreements for future development. In line with the primary focus of the Strategy, these do not generally cover play opportunities provided in settings primarily providing child care.

- ***Children's Centres***

There is one Children's Centre in the Borough, which is the Oak Meadow Centre. This is located in the middle of the Fareham North West ward which is one of the most deprived in the Borough measured by indicators explained elsewhere in this document. However, this facility is not easy to walk to from other parts of the Borough, including those areas where there are also relatively high levels of childhood deprivation.

- ***Out-of-School provision (5-11s)***

Some wards (Hill Head, Locks Heath, Fareham West, and Park Gate) have no provision. Some wards clearly have a much higher level of provision than others. There are many parts of the Borough that are not within easy walking distance of an out of school club, including much of the central part as well as parts of the west and east of the Borough.

- It is therefore agreed that, when opportunities arise, partners will support out-of-school provision in appropriate locations in the wards of Sarisbury (part), Parks Gate (all), Locks Heath (part), Warsash (part), Titchfield (part), Stubbington (part), Porchester West (part), Fareham North (part), and Fareham East (part). →3.5

- ***Playschemes and Holiday Clubs (5-11s)***

Two wards (Hill Head, Locks Heath) have no provision. Some wards have a much higher level of provision than others. The geographical spread of provision is poor in much of the central, south west, north west, east and north east parts of the Borough, and in these areas it may not be easy to walk to provision elsewhere. The main gaps in the higher deprivation areas are largely in relation to the Park Gate and Stubbington wards.

- It is therefore agreed that when opportunities arise partners will support additional playscheme provision in Park Gate ward (part), Stubbington ward (part), Sarisbury ward (part), Warsash ward (part), Titchfield ward (part), Hill Head ward (part), Fareham North ward (part), Fareham East ward (part) Porchester West ward (part). →3.5

### 2.3.5 Community Use – School sites (Extended Schools)

The potential for school sites and facilities for providing play opportunities has been mentioned within the consultation process. The new Extended schools programme will allow for greater community use of school facilities. This could be of particular value in the outlying geographical areas where the local school may be one of the few community resources available. It is agreed:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schools should promote the availability of all play opportunities within their catchment (on and off-site). →3.9</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School sites be considered when reviewing potential play scheme venues and in relation to out-of-school and holiday club provision. →4.3</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That a pilot project be identified to develop open access dual-use play or facilities for young people at an outlying school. →4.3</li></ul>

### 2.3.7 Provision for Teenagers

A consistent message from the consultation process was that provision for teenagers could be much better. Equally clear was that the kind of provision needed was for informal, unstructured, meeting places without adult organised activities or “education”. This clearly fits within the free play concept.

In terms of responses to this need, the clear priority is for meeting places; both indoor and outdoor. For outdoor spaces, Youth Shelter-type provision and Multi-use Games areas fit the bill. Crucial in such provision is the active involvement of local young people in the design and location of such facilities. The indoor equivalent is the non-alcohol bar or youth café model. The “old fashioned” youth club with pool, table football, table tennis etc also meets these needs. It is agreed that:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MUGAs and Wheeled Sports generally come high on the preferences of young people, and wider provision is a key part of the strategic vision for the future. In the Borough the long term aim will be to provide a network of sites with provision for young people so that access is within 10 minutes of homes. →3.2</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the outlying areas, provision for young people should be considered in consultation with local groups. →3.2</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A programme for provision of additional provision for young people in priority areas will be developed in response to local demand from young people. This must involve young people’s engagement in both design and location. →3.7</li><li>• The Play Partnership will work through the voluntary and statutory young people sectors to identify potential café for young people and youth club developments. →3.7</li><li>• In terms of gaps, areas that stand out as being short of this goal are within Sarisbury, Park Gate, Warsash, Titchfield Common, Titchfield, Stubbington, Fareham North, Fareham West, Fareham South, Fareham North West, Fareham East, and Porchester West wards. When deprivation and other factors are taken into account, wards with high priorities for new provision might be considered to be Fareham North West, Fareham South, Stubbington, and Park Gate. →3.2</li></ul>

### 2.3.7 Play in the natural environment

Many children, young people and parents expressed the view that more should be made of the potential for free play in natural “wild” areas for imaginative play, den-building, hide and seek, climbing trees etc. Fareham Borough has a number of sites where this idea could be further developed, for example, local nature reserves and countryside sites. Also, it is possible to make more of unequipped “amenity” sites and other areas of green space in this respect. It is agreed that:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of open space will be identified across the Borough that lend themselves to safe natural play, and these will be promoted along with equipped areas as child friendly spaces. →3.3</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The partnership will explore project ideas to develop play on local nature reserves and other suitable countryside and environmental sites. →3.3</li> </ul>   |

### **2.3.8 Improving communications, publicity and promotion**

Both the facility and service audit conducted for this Strategy has shown that there are already many play opportunities within the Borough. The consultation and representation on the Play Partnership also illustrates the extent of interests involved with promoting play opportunities. However, there is perhaps not enough co-ordination and communication between the various council departments and agencies involved in children’s play and provision for young people. There could be better co-ordination between the various partners regarding publicity and promotion of existing facilities and schemes.

It is therefore agreed that:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Play Partnership will consolidate its role as an ongoing mechanism for effective communication and review its membership to ensure all relevant agencies and organisations are included.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The positive engagement of children and young people in planning their own play opportunities will be publicised wherever possible. →3.9</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for improved joint publicity and promotion will be explored and an awareness campaign will be planned and implemented promoting available play opportunities. →3.9</li> </ul>             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify voluntary sector play and provision for young people so that the availability and access to such provision can be promoted. →4.2</li> </ul>  |

## **2.4 Making a positive contribution**

### **2.4.1 Consultation and Engagement with Children and Young people**

Ongoing consultation and engagement with children, young people and their families is crucial for the success of the Strategy and children and young people will continue to be involved in the planning and delivery of the Strategy Action Plan.

<p>It is agreed that Play Partnership members will sign up to the Hear by Rights Framework<sup>3</sup> →4.1</p>
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### **2.4.2 The Voluntary and Community sector**

The voluntary and community sector plays an important role in supporting play and opportunities for young people.

<p>The Play Partnership will wherever possible support voluntary sector organisations involved in promoting play and opportunities for young people. A starting point could be to provide practical assistance for their continued attendance at future Play Partnership meetings → 4.2</p>
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<sup>3</sup> Nationally recognised good practice guide for consulting and engaging with children, young people and their families.

## **2.5 Achieving economic well-being.**

### **2.5.1 Play/youth Space Standards**

The Strategy consultation process and other issues highlighted clearly suggest that play is “More than Swings and Roundabouts”. The recommendations of the NPFA (National Playing Field Association) have been used by the Borough Council to plan new play space provision in conjunction with residential development. However the NPFA guidance largely relates to equipped space, and does not provide much guidance in relation promoting play opportunities within natural settings, informal space and within heavily developed urban environments where the space may not exist to plan and provide in the conventional way. Neither does it provide much guidance on how best to meet the needs of older teenagers. It will be very important for the Borough Council to supplement its current standards with views of children and young people to take into account the various dimensions to outdoor play, and the need to cater for the full age range of children and young people.

The Council will adopt local standards (in accordance with the principles of PPG17) as a basis for provision but will adapt them as necessary to take account of local circumstances and needs of the Borough. →5.1
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### **2.5.3 Play and Youth Workers – training and staff development**

The consultation process has shown that local communities value play and activity schemes for young people. Youth services being cut back at a time when the perceived need for them is perhaps greater than ever. However, the provision of more organised young people and play activity must be developed in parallel with training and staff development. This covers both longer term professional qualifications and short courses; for example, Managing Challenging Behaviour. Another area of training may be in relation to disability awareness and inclusion. It is therefore agreed that:

<b>→5.4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partners will undertake a review of “front line” play/youth work staff training needs and provide staff with a professional development plan appropriate to these needs.</li><li>• Partners will work to ensure that there is sufficient provision of accessible qualification training in the area.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding will be sought to subsidise part-time and volunteer play and youth workers in relation to training and courses relating to their professional development needs.</li><li>• Disability awareness and inclusion training be provided as appropriate for front line staff.</li></ul>

### **3 The Case for Play**

#### **3.1 The General Case for Play<sup>4</sup>**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government in December 1991 recognises the importance of play for the child. Article 31 of the Convention says that:

"States recognise 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."

Related to that right are the child's rights to freedom of expression and association, enshrined in Articles 12, 13, 14, and 15 of the UN Convention.

The importance of Play can be illustrated from two perspectives:

- The benefits of Play for children
- The wider social benefits

##### **3.1.1 The benefits of play for children**

It is widely accepted that play is a vital activity in relation to healthy child development, for example, Play:

- Provides children with opportunities to enjoy freedom, and exercise choice and control over their actions.
- Offers children opportunities for testing boundaries and exploring risk.
- Offers a very wide range of physical, social and intellectual experiences for children.
- Fosters children's independence and self-esteem.
- Develops children's respect for others and offers opportunities for social interaction.
- Supports the child's well-being, healthy growth and development.
- Increases children's knowledge and understanding.
- Promotes children's creativity and capacity to learn.

##### **Play Deprivation**

There is also a growing consensus about some of the possible implications of play deprivation, based on reasonable assumptions about the role of personal experience and self-directed activity in the development of a range of competences. Depending on the types of play opportunity that are lacking, children could be affected in the following ways:

- Poorer ability in motor tasks

<sup>4</sup> Much of this section is drawn from Best Play – NPFA, CPC, Playlink (2000)

- Lower levels of physical activity
- Poorer ability to deal with stressful or traumatic situations and events
- Poorer ability to assess and manage risk
- Poorer social skills, leading to difficulties in negotiating social situations such as dealing with conflict and cultural difference

### **3.1.2 The Social benefits of Play**

In summary, Play:

- Helps reduce the involvement of children and young people in anti-social behaviour, in the short term; and plays a part in promoting social cohesion in the longer term.
- Supports families and communities, by providing a focus for informal networks of family support, and by allowing children autonomy within an environment which parents feel secure about.
- Makes an important contribution, in parallel with education, in developing adults who are creative and effective in the social and economic sphere
- Offers opportunities for exploring cultural identity and difference

These outcomes, which are in part the consequences of play, as well as of family life, genetic inheritance, education and so on, are of importance to a range of stakeholders. The potential benefits are of relevance to community health targets, social and economic regeneration and youth justice, for example.

The Fareham Play Strategy recognises these benefits and on this basis the Play Partnership believes it is of crucial importance to invest in Play services within the Borough.

## **4 Background and Policy Context**

### **4.1 Introduction – Local Profile**

The Borough of Fareham lies on the Solent coastline between the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton, covering an area of 18,300 acres. The strategic location of the area has led to rapid development over the past 50 years. The population has increased from 42,500 in 1951 to 108,000 in 2003. It remains the Borough Council's priority to accommodate and control this growth whilst maintaining the character of the area.

The 2001 Census demonstrated that 20% of the resident population were aged under 16, 58% were aged between 16 and 59 and 22% were aged 60 and over. The ethnic structure of the Borough shows that 98.3% are white, 0.6% mixed, 0.5% Asian or Asian British, 0.2% Black or Black British and 0.4% Chinese or Other.

The residents of the Borough are generally affluent with higher average incomes than in the two neighbouring cities (Portsmouth and Southampton). There are small pockets of acknowledged deprivation predominantly in the wards with high proportions of social housing.

Housing development has occurred throughout the local area. Fareham remains the largest town in the Borough but the 'Western Wards' (Locks Heath, Sarisbury, Park Gate, Warsash and Titchfield Common) are now almost as large. Portchester and Stubbington/Hill Head have grown from small villages to large residential suburbs containing over 6,000 dwellings. Only Titchfield and BurrIDGE retain a village scale and character. New industrial, commercial and office development over the past 20 years has been concentrated around Junction 9 of the M27.

Despite the significant scale of development taking place, approximately 60% of the Borough remains as countryside. There is much land of high nature conservation value and large areas are in active recreational use. The Southern and Western boundaries of the Borough are formed by the Solent and River Hamble respectively which are internationally recognised for their environmental and recreational value.

Whilst the Council has worked hard to encourage the provision of a wide range of social facilities to support the rapid growth in housing, some facilities have not been provided in step with development and some remain outstanding. The Borough Council identifies a key challenge to ensure that residential development contributes to a balanced housing market and is accompanied by the necessary growth in our social and physical infrastructure.

### **4.2 National Policy Framework**

The need to improve the provision that is made for children to play is acknowledged in a range of national policy areas: from planning, open spaces and transport to health, education and childcare. Local authorities in England

have a statutory duty, under the Children Act (2004), to co-operate in their provision for the enjoyment of play and recreation as part of the five key outcomes for all children.

Play is now appreciated by government not simply for its own intrinsic value, but also for its potential contribution to achieving other government objectives relating to health and urban renaissance, for example:

- Play helps promote active lifestyles, and can therefore help to meet national targets set by government for physical exercise and recreation (see for example 'Gameplan' from the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit).
- Play and playspace in general is a user of open space, and can therefore help in improving and conserving the stock of open space in towns and cities. This will not only have benefit for play, but also for local amenity, health and in realising 'sustainable communities', as promoted by the government. (See for example various publications available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.)

The following provides a general flavour of the range of government and other national guidance available that should influence local planning for and management of play. More detail can also be found in **Appendix 3**.

#### **4.2.1 Getting Serious about Play - A Review of Children's Play**

The report led by Frank Dobson provides a national framework for development of play. The report outlines how the £200m pledged by the Government for play should be spent and allocated. The aim of the report and the funding is to improve play based opportunities for children and young people aged 0-16 years.

The report recommended that local authorities should be allocated resources based on child deprivation in their area, partnerships should be formed with local partners and high quality projects should be developed which meet local needs and which have reasonable prospects of being a long term success.

#### **4.2.2 Every Child Matters: Change for Children**

The Government's 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' strategy published in December 2004, provides a national framework to guide change at local authority level. The ten-year strategy for early years and childcare was published at the same time. Together, these documents set out the bigger picture in terms of national and local change. The five main outcomes for children and young people, described as key to well-being in childhood and later life, are:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- achieving economic well-being.

The Play Strategy can make a major contribution to the Government's Every Child Matters agenda. The benefits of children's play are closely linked to the five outcomes for children and young people as illustrated below:

**1) *Being healthy***

Play is important in relation to health and development throughout childhood. It contributes to social, physical, intellectual, cultural, emotional and psychological development. Physical activity involved in play provides children and young people with a significant amount of their regular exercise. In relation to mental health good play opportunities give children and young people the chance to try out and experience a range of emotions in a 'safe' way. It allows them to learn and develop emotionally by promoting resilience and fostering self-esteem.

**2) *Staying safe***

One of the main reasons children and parents give for not playing outdoors more is that they are afraid for children's safety. "Stranger danger", traffic risks and bullying are all barriers to more outside play. Good play provision reduces unacceptable levels of danger, while allowing children the opportunity to challenge themselves and use their initiative. Play enables children to take risks, to think through decisions and gain increased self-confidence and greater resilience.

**3) *Enjoying and achieving***

Playing is all about enjoyment! When playing, children define their own goals and interests, decide what is success or failure and pursue those goals in their own way. Children's enjoyment through play is linked to the control and choice they are able to exercise. Giving children the chance for free, uninhibited play allows them a psychologically safe space in which to try out new roles and experiences and enhances their enjoyment of life.

There are many developmental benefits associated with children's play, such as the development of problem-solving and language and literacy skills. Play is also important in the development of children's imaginations and creative interests and abilities. Play allows children and young people to explore boundaries, be fully absorbed in what they are doing and feel satisfied with what they have achieved

**4) *Making a positive contribution***

Children's involvement in the development of their own play is of great importance. In good supervised play provision, adults involve the children and young people in decisions about resources and facilities that might be available to them.

Increasingly local authorities are involving children and young people in the development of local play areas and discussions about their play and free-time needs. This often results in more appropriate provision, helps children and young people develop their skills and knowledge and ensures they are valued as active community members. Respecting and incorporating children and young people's views into plans and provision helps develop motivation and, potentially, participation in society.

### **5) Economic well-being**

Comprehensive play provision can enable parents to work or train and allows them to feel their children are happy, safe and enjoying themselves. Play provision often acts as a focal point for parents and carers to meet, giving them an opportunity to socialise with other adults.

Good play provision promotes community well-being and security. It brings economic benefits through providing jobs and training. Good play provision, which offers those seeking it genuine challenge and excitement, can help prevent bored children and young people behaving in ways that are socially unacceptable. Development of outside play and recreation spaces has been shown to have a measurable impact on local interaction, new friendships, community cohesion and community safety.

#### **4.2.3 Planning for Play**

Guidance on the production of local play strategies was jointly published by the Children's Play Council and the BIG Lottery Fund in April 2006. The purpose of this document is to support local authorities and their partners in preparing strategies for improving children's play opportunities within the framework of national policy.

The Fareham Play Strategy process has been completed in line with the guidance provided in "Planning for Play".

#### **4.2.4 Other Links with National Policy**

There are many other national policy and strategy initiatives to which Play is strongly linked:

- The Youth Matters Green Paper
- The Extended Schools Initiative
- Choosing Health White Paper
- Joint area review (Every Child Matters)
- Living Spaces: Cleaner, Safer, Greener
- National Planning Policy Guidance Note 17– Sport and Recreation (PPG17)
- The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Six-Acre Standard (2001)
- Safety standards and legislation, for example, European safety standards for playgrounds – EN1176 and EN 1177–
- Transport strategies.

Detail on how play links in to the above can be found in **Appendix 3**.

### **4.3 Local Policy**

The two key strategic frameworks that the play strategy needs to tie in with are the "Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan" and the "Fareham Community Strategy". Other important local strategies of relevance are also covered in this section.

#### **4.3.1 Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan**

The Hampshire Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) is a statutory and overarching plan for all services affecting children and young people aged 0-19 in Hampshire. It focuses on services available to children and young people throughout their pre-statutory, statutory and post-statutory schooldays.

<p><b>Vision</b></p> <p><b>“Every child and young person, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged has the best possible start in life and develops to their full potential.</b></p> <p>They should expect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receive excellent healthcare;</li> <li>• be able to grow and develop in safety and free from prejudice and discrimination;</li> <li>• receive an excellent education in preparation for a fulfilled life</li> <li>• have their achievements celebrated;</li> <li>• be listened to and have their views taken into account;</li> <li>• be treated with respect;</li> <li>• have easy access to the information and support they and their families need to help them responsibility for their lives;</li> <li>• belong to and be values by their community; and,</li> <li>• see their needs and interests at the heart of everything we all do.</li> </ul>
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The identified 20 Plan outcomes are presented under the five core outcomes as set out in the Children Act 2004.

<p><b>Be Healthy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased access to excellent general healthcare provision</li> <li>• increased healthy eating and physical activity and reduced obesity</li> <li>• increased availability of mental health services</li> <li>• improved sexual health, reduced teenage pregnancies and support to young people</li> <li>• reduced substance misuse</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stay Safe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improved safety awareness and child protection</li> <li>• increased prevention work to reduce youth crime, anti social behaviour and exclusion</li> <li>• increased identification, protection and support for young people affected by domestic violence</li> <li>• reduced incidences of bullying</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enjoy and Achieve</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased access to excellent general education</li> <li>• increased numbers of children and young people in school and improved support for those not in school</li> <li>• increased access to play, leisure and recreation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Make a Positive Contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased accessibility and quality of information on services</li> <li>• increased access to voluntary opportunities</li> <li>• increased numbers of positive local news stories about children and young people</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achieve Economic Well-being</b></p>

- increased practical and work-related learning opportunities for 14-19 age group
- improved transport options and reduced costs
- improved housing arrangements for those in unsuitable accommodation

The promotion of play opportunities has obvious links to some of the above outcomes, and in particular the desire for increased play, leisure and recreation. There is other less clear, but nonetheless important links. For example, provision of appropriate facilities and activities for children and young people can help reduce the risk of a vulnerable minority drifting into antisocial behaviour and crime for want of constructive alternatives. Helping children and young people to 'Stay Safe' may help encourage them to play with and meet friends in the outside environment, without fear of coming to harm.

The Play Strategy will therefore play an important role in helping meet the needs identified and achieve the outcomes set within the Children and Young People's Plan.

#### **4.3.2 The Fareham Community Strategy**

Each local authority now has a duty to prepare a statutory community strategy, for enhancing the quality of life of its local community. The process, by which it is prepared, in partnership with local people and a range of other organisations, is known as community planning.

A principal driver in achieving the vision is the Community Strategy which has been developed by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) known as Networkfareham. The LSP comprises 15 members including Hampshire County Council, Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust, Hampshire Constabulary and other group's representative of voluntary organisations, employers and faith groups throughout the borough.

This Community Strategy was written in 2004, to cover the following 10 years, with an intended review after 5 years. The Vision for the Strategy has been phrased as a series of Objectives covering a range of themes, e.g. health, community safety and transport. All the partners within the LSP will assume responsibility for their implementation.

The Strategy objectives are:

1. To promote active citizenship and enable everyone in the community to play an active part in society;
2. To promote community cohesion and neighbourliness, and encourage a better understanding of different communities, in and outside the Borough;
3. To develop the expertise and skills of local people to meet the future needs of the area and economy, and to encourage the provision of more life-long learning opportunities, underpinned by quality and choice;
4. To encourage a varied and sustainable business economy, supported by a skilled local labour force;

5. To promote the importance of an integrated and affordable public transport system, and an associated reduction in car travel;
6. To encourage the provision of affordable and accessible leisure and community facilities which will meet local needs;
7. To ensure all residents are able to experience good physical health and mental well-being;
8. To reduce health inequalities throughout the Borough;
9. To promote community safety in order to improve the quality of life for residents and ensure Fareham remains a safe place in which to live and work;
10. To promote the need for good quality housing with a range of dwelling types to meet local and key worker needs, and to ensure that there is an adequate associated social and transport infrastructure;
11. To ensure the protection of and improvement to the urban and rural environment, ensuring that development and change are sustainable, and also result in viable town and district centres.

#### **4.3.3 Fareham Borough Local Plan Review**

In March 2000, the Council adopted the Local Plan Review which sets out the current policy context for determining applications for development and the allocation of land for this purpose. The Local Plan, together with associated supplementary guidance has a major role in protecting existing community provision (including play sites and other relevant open space), and securing the development of additional opportunities to meet the needs of new residential development, in particular.

In time, the existing Local Plan will be replaced by a new Local Development Framework for the Borough (as required by national legislation). The Fareham Local Development Framework will consist of a number of documents prepared in turn over the next few years.

The existing Local Plan states that the provision of (dedicated) children's playspace is inadequate. It is also important to take account of accessibility to children's playspace as well as the quantitative provision of such areas. Where children's playspace has been provided in association with new development, provision as well as accessibility is generally adequate. However, in the older urban areas where there is more reliance on traditional recreation grounds (although open space of this kind is still an important play opportunity), accessibility to play areas is poor in some areas and overall provision at ward level is inadequate.

The Local Plan states the importance of protecting existing children's playspaces and other open areas from development, and of making proposals for new public open space to meet the needs resulting from new housing development.

The Local Plan also recognises the value of many forms of open space recreation of all kinds for recreation (and therefore also for general play).

The Council's Local Plan open space standard of 2.8 hectares per 1,000 population is based on advice from the National Playing Fields Association and the Structure Plan Review. The overall standard includes 1.2 hectares/1,000 people or sports pitches, 0.8 hectares/1,000 people for informal open space, and 0.8 hectares per 1,000 people for children's play space (of which 0.2 hectares is for equipped areas). The standards are the minimum requirements considered acceptable by the Borough Council. Wherever possible, the Council will encourage a higher standard of provision to improve the range and accessibility of open space.

For many smaller developments, the Local Plan accepts the impracticability of providing open space on-site. Therefore, the Borough Council will require a financial contribution towards the provision of open space or facilities in lieu of on-site provision. For some developments it may be appropriate to provide part of the open space requirement on-site (e.g. children's playspace) and to make a financial contribution for the remainder of the requirement (e.g. sports pitches).

#### **4.3.4 Community Safety Strategy**

Fareham's Community Safety Strategy represents a partnership commitment to tackling crime and disorder in the Borough to improve the quality of life for its residents.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was established in 1998 in response to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It comprises the Borough Council, the Wessex Youth Offending Team, Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust, Hampshire Drug Action Team, the Probation Service, Hampshire Fire and Rescue, Hampshire County Council, Fareham Police Division and Hampshire Police Authority.

The CSP is responsible for the development and implementation of a strategy to reduce crime and disorder in the Borough. In 1999 it undertook its first audit of crime and disorder which informed the production of the first Community Safety Strategy.

Further audits were undertaken in 2001 and 2004 and based on the results of the latter, a new Community Safety Strategy covering the period from 2005-2008 has been produced. The strategy has a clear Action Plan, which is reviewed annually, based on a combination of residents' concerns and national priorities.

Derived from the results of the audit and consultation processes, and taking account of national priorities for crime reduction, the Strategy identifies four main priorities:

- Acquisitive Crime - Burglary and Vehicle crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour

- Illegal Drugs
- Alcohol Abuse

As mentioned earlier, provision of appropriate facilities and activities for children and young people can help reduce the risk of a vulnerable minority drifting into antisocial behaviour and crime for want of constructive alternatives.

#### **4.3.5 Health Improvement Plans**

Changes within the health sector have meant that the last Health Improvement Plan which covers Fareham and Gosport was published in April 2000. A local Delivery Plan was published in early 2003. This covers the whole of the Strategic Health Authority area of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight but is underpinned by plans at Primary Care Trust level. These plans identify expected progress on delivery of each of the NHS priority areas over the period 2003-2006.

The provision of good local play opportunities will potentially assist in the improvement of the general health of children and young people.

#### **4.3.7 (Hampshire) Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011**

The Hampshire County Council is the high authority covering Fareham. This authority does not just relate to roads, and motorised transport, but also to walking and cycling, which are obviously very important in making play opportunities accessible to children and young people.

The LTP sets out the County Council's transport strategy for the next five years. It has been designed to achieve wider policy objectives, such as

- improving quality of life,
- protecting the environment, and
- securing economic prosperity.

The strategy is rooted in a thorough examination of current and future problems and opportunities. It is also firmly set within the context of emerging regional and national policies.

The Strategy provides policies for walking and cycling with a view to offering greater choice in sustainable transport modes, and with particular regard to those who may be dependent on such means of travel (which will include children and young people).

#### **4.3.7 Other Plans**

Other plans which have a bearing on this strategy and which have therefore been taken into account in its development include:

- Leisure Strategy
- Environmental Strategy

- Parks and Open Spaces
- Youth Strategy
- The Fareham Cycling Strategy

## 5 Review of Community Engagement

### 5.1 Approach

This section details the various methods through which information has been gathered to establish the needs and aspirations of children and young people (CYP), parents or carers and the wider community in relation to play provision for CYP in Fareham. Consultation and engagement has been achieved through:

#### A) Questionnaire and surveys

Questionnaires to children  
Questionnaires to young people  
Surveys of parents/carers  
A survey of members of Fareham Play Partnership.

#### B) Focus groups and direct contact

- Shadow Play Partnership
- Fareham Play Partnership
- Youth Workers – various settings
- Fareham Borough Council: Community Safety Officer, Diversity Officer, Parks Officers, Community Development Worker, councillors
- Resident's associations
- Locks Heath Free Church
- Pre-school Learning Alliance
- Let Us Play Scheme
- Hampshire Children and Families Forum
- Heathfield Special School
- Wallington Village Hall Pre-school Group
- Community Health Development Manager
- Rainbow Centre for Conductive Education
- Fareham Leaving Care Team
- Young people at 'Thursday Club' at Odyssey Youth Centre
- Young people met on streets during a trip with outreach youth worker (Broadlaw Walk, Stubbington Green).

A full consultation findings report is included as **Appendix 6** to this Strategy.

### 5.2 Key issues identified

The following table outlines the main findings of these various consultation exercises as the key issues in relation to the development of the Fareham Play Strategy.

#### Play spaces and outdoor facilities for young people

1. The usefulness of a play area is highly dependent on location, particularly for younger children in Fareham. It is important that younger children have access to some kind of local play space within 5 minutes' walking distance from home.
2. Teenagers should have access to spaces where they are allowed to hang out independently and play with friends within 10 minutes' walk from home, although many would be willing to walk further for something more challenging, interesting and suitable for their age group. Skateparks should be places where they can meet up, not just skate.
3. Traffic, fear of strangers and bullying all put parents off letting their children access open public spaces, but they are less cautious than children and young people about younger children using play areas unaccompanied. One explanation for this could be that many Fareham youngsters say bullying and intimidation from older children are barriers to using parks more.
4. Children and young people and the wider community want more interesting provision that caters more for different age groups. Many believe that if there were specific provision for teenagers they would be less likely to monopolise younger children's provision.
5. Children and young people and the wider community think public open spaces should be better maintained, more local, and have natural spaces designed for adventurous play, as well as equipped areas.
6. Fears of 'stranger danger' and bullying and concerns about vandalism mean parents are reluctant to allow children and young people of all ages to use playspaces. For this reason security issues will be important in terms of future planning. Requests for more supervision of places where children and young people play, CCTV and lighting of 'young peoples' provision need to be considered, especially when negotiating with developers.
7. The main priority for all ages is places where they can meet up with friends, to sit and chat. Bigger wild natural play areas with grass, ponds, and trees for climbing are also in demand and traditional equipped play areas are also wanted by all ages. Kickabout areas, MUGAs and wheeled sport facilities feature in the 'want more of' lists for all ages, especially for males.
8. Under 6s still want traditional playgrounds as well as wild play areas and places for safe cycling. Bigger and landscaped spaces are also wanted.
9. Resources for fixed play facilities are limited and much of the available budget is spent on repairs to vandalised provision.
10. Most children and young people want to have their say on improving existing and building new playspaces.

#### Play Services

1. The majority of children and young people of all ages appear to attend supervised play and are generally happy with the activities they attend. The main reason

for non-attendance is that children and young people prefer to do other things. Cost is also an issue for some teens.

2. Children and young people and the wider communities think there need to be more play services. Priorities for future service provision are youth clubs and play centres, playschemes, sports and arts activities.

3. Youth and play services need to operate in the evenings and at weekends and during school holidays. Facilities like the Genesis Centre are useful resources for children and young people, but their impact is reduced by the financial constraints that result in restricted opening times.

4. There is cross-organisation agreement that dispersal orders are not useful if used in isolation. Orders should aim to avoid coverage of spaces allocated to children and young people, such as youth shelters and MUGAs.

5. The Youth Service are proactive, co-ordinate well with, for example, the community safety teams and do deliver effective interventions.

6. Outreach and detached youth work is a way of bringing play opportunities to where young people are, but need to be consistent and frequent, to give a chance for relationships, respect and mutual trust to grow.

7. Expenditure on the County Youth Service is too low and this means opening times of youth centres are too limited, the number of children and young people reached through outreach work is restricted and detached activities are limited by lack of staff and equipment.

8. There may be a lack of toddler and pre-school groups in Fareham and need for a toy library.

#### Inclusive Play

1. Provision for outdoor play for children with disabilities and access to play areas parks, woods and countryside are generally poor. There is no wheelchair friendly equipment, even where play areas are accessible, and there are no facilities for changing incontinent children.

2. There are more constraints on play activities over the last 20 years due to regulation with regard to health and safety, manual lifting and handling and problems around the acceptance of touch.

3. Carers for young people with disabilities want acceptance, not equality and greater recognition that equipment that is suitable for those with greatest need can still be fun for other young people and does not need to be separate

4. Disabled young people are often unable to use traditional free play opportunities like gardens and playing fields because of access problems. This means they may be more dependent on paid-for playspaces than others. The Odyssey Centre's 'Thursday Club' is an example of a service for children and young people with disabilities that is successful, but does not run enough.

5. There is a need to for more consultation with children and young people with disabilities and looked-after and black, minority, ethnic (BME) children and young people (and their families), to identify issues from their perspective.

6. Minority ethnic children and young people can feel quite isolated and can also feel very "visible" in public because of this isolation. They may experience racial abuse or harassment which may put them off using play facilities. This is likely to be under-reported.

7. It might be helpful for those working with the children and young people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to have training on the implications of cultural and ethnic differences.

8. Greater understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity might also be promoted by informal education of children and young people.
9. More supervision of open-access play would mean fewer minority ethnic children and young people, looked after children and children and young people with disabilities might be deterred from accessing such opportunities.
10. Returns do not indicate that there are significant gender-based problems in relation to play.

## 6 Fareham Child Population and Deprivation Profile

Before analysing in detail the supply and need for play services and facilities in the Borough it is important to understand the demographic profile of children and young people in Fareham.

### 6.1 Child Population Profile

The estimated 2007 child population (under 18) of Fareham is 24,017 or 22% of the total population of 108,576. This breaks down as:

AGE RANGE	Thousands	%
AGES 0-4	5486	5.1%
AGES 5-9	6197	5.7%
AGES 10-14	6617	6.1%
AGES 15-18	5717	5.3%
	24017	22.20%

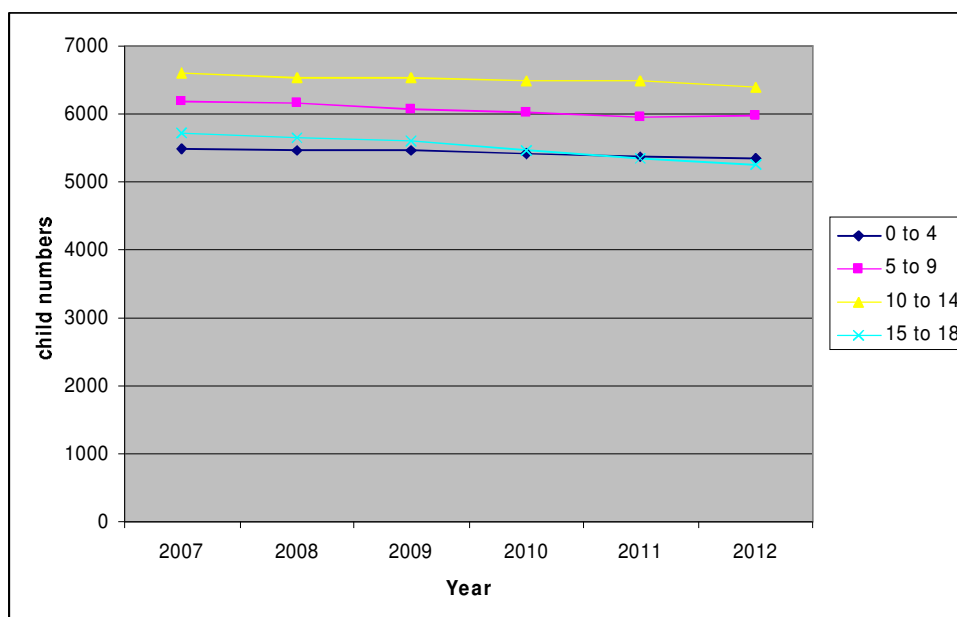
The distribution of the child population across the Borough is shown in the table below.

Name of Ward	Ward population aged - 0 and 18 years	Total ward population	% of total ward population 18 years or under
Fareham East	1579	14316	11.0%
Fareham North	1556	14206	10.1%
Fareham North-West	1544	13631	11.3%
Fareham South	1604	13253	12.1%
Fareham West	1407	13769	10.2%
Hill Head	1528	14549	10.5%
Locks Heath	1504	13592	11.1%
Park Gate	1654	14598	11.3%
Portchester East	2023	21355	9.5%
Portchester West	1322	13628	9.7%
Sarisbury	1869	13769	13.6%
Stubbington	1527	15100	10.1%
Titchfield Common	1816	14438	12.6%
Titchfield	1525	13299	11.5%
Warsash	1560	13651	11.4%

5.2% of the Borough's population belong to an ethnic minority, compared to 22.1% for England as a whole.

### 6.2 Child Population Projections

The table below shows the projected child population change in the Borough. The projected total population will rise slightly by the year 2012, although the table shows that the child population will also fall slightly as a percentage of the overall population.



It is very difficult to draw any conclusions from these projections, other than:

- a) the child population of Fareham Borough will remain a very large component of the overall population; and,
- b) the (relative) changes projected are highly unlikely to result in 'over provision' as a consequence of the implementation of strategy recommendations on the provision of new play sites.

However, small local geographical areas might experience changes at odds with these general projections, and where the child and teenage population may increase markedly (primarily in relation to new residential developments).

### 6.3 Child Deprivation Profile

The development of the Hampshire Children & Young People's Plan drew upon a wealth of data relating to the social and economic circumstances of this age group within the County, providing comparisons between constituent local authorities. There are background papers available for further reading on this topic<sup>5</sup>

When planning for new or improved play opportunities it is important to consider children from poorer families who are likely to be most in need of play provision and for whom barriers such as cost and transport are likely to be most significant<sup>6</sup>. In this respect a good tool for analysis is the index of

<sup>5</sup> "Data Collected within District Council Areas" (a working paper produced by the Hampshire County Council to inform the preparation of the Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan).

<sup>6</sup> This factor is therefore included within the prioritisation criteria for play space projects and is a key factor relating to supervised free Play Service provision.

deprivation within the governments Index of Multiple Deprivation named *Income Deprivation Affecting Children*.

### **Income Deprivation Affecting Children (IDACI)**

Income deprivation affecting children is a subset of the income deprivation measure. It comprises the % of a Super Output Area's<sup>7</sup> (SOA's) under-16 population living in families in receipt of Income Support and Income Based Job Seekers Allowance or in families in receipt of Working Families/Disabled Persons Tax Credit whose income is below 60% of the national median, before housing costs.

An easy way of interpreting the index score is by noting that it directly relates to the proportion of the under 16 population living in households claiming means tested benefit. For example, a score of 0.18 in Fareham South Ward means that 18% of the under 16 population in that ward live in households claiming at least one of the stated means tested benefits.

The following table the average IDACI scores for each Borough ward. The wards have also been given a local ranking (with '3' meaning that they are in the 'worst 3<sup>rd</sup>' of wards in terms of incidence of income deprivation affecting children).

The worst scoring wards, by some distance, are the Fareham North-West, and Fareham South Wards.

<b>Ward Name</b>	<b>Local IDACI ranking</b>	<b>IDACI score</b>
Fareham East	2	0.07
Fareham North	1	0.06
Fareham North-West	3	0.20
Fareham South	3	0.18
Fareham West	2	0.06
Hill Head	1	0.04
Locks Heath	1	0.04
Park Gate	3	0.09
Portchester East	3	0.09
Portchester West	2	0.07
Sarisbury	1	0.03
Stubbington	3	0.07
Titchfield Common	2	0.07
Titchfield	2	0.07
Warsash	1	0.05

Looking at IDACI scores at the ward level can conceal very local pockets of this form of deprivation. For example, within the Fareham North-West Ward there is an SOA with an IDACI score of 0.41 (which is high, even in national terms).

<sup>7</sup> Super Output Areas (SOAs) are a new geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are smaller than wards.



## 7 Local Provision Examined

### 7.1 Summary of Audit Methodology

*Planning for Play* highlights the importance of a comprehensive audit of both play spaces and play services in order to establish a “base line” from which to plan for future provision.

A play space audit was undertaken as part of a wider Green Spaces Study conducted by the Council’s Planning Department, in line with government guidance.

This Strategy builds upon the audits and assessments undertaken in the above study.

#### 7.1.2 Play Space Typology

The above study categorised play sites according to a locally derived typology as outlined below:

Type	Sub type
1) Children Equipped Play Space	a) Below LEAP standard
	b) LEAP standard
2) Young Peoples Related Recreation	a) Hangout/MUGA
	b) MUGA
	c) Skateboard
	d) Skateboard/Hangout

The term LEAP relates to a form of equipped play space promoted by the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) through its ‘Six Acre Standard’, and this is explained more fully in **Appendix 4**.

The Play Services audit was completed on the basis of information gained through internet trawls, and supplemented by members of the Local Play Partnership.

#### 7.1.3 Geographical Information System (GIS) Mapping

All the Play Spaces and Services have been entered onto a database. GIS mapping has been utilised to analyse the distribution of key play spaces and services and to highlight gaps in service when analysed against child population demography and deprivation indicators.

## 7.2 Summary of Audit Findings

### 7.2.1 Children's centres

Oak Meadow Children's Centre is a full core Children's Centre (established under the Sure Start programme) primarily for North and North-West Fareham although currently as the only Children's Centre in Fareham. It situated on the same site as Oak Meadow Primary School within large school grounds. The overall aim of the Centre is to provide services, facilities and support for children and their families. It works closely with other agencies – statutory, community and voluntary. It currently offers –

- A Family Learning Programme
- Toddler groups
- Drop- ins for families with young children
- Toy Library
- Young Parents Group
- Parents Supporting Parents (support group for parents with Special Needs children)
- An Autistic Spectrum Support
- Speech and Language Early Intervention Project
- Family Workers Support Team
- Sensory play Room – currently being constructed in the Centre.
- Health Teams
- A Community Childcare Centre
- Saturday Fun Club.

### 7.2.2 Pre-school and Childcare Play Services

- ***Pre-schools and Nurseries***

There are over 60 pre-school and nurseries that have been recorded through the Borough. In addition there are probably a number of additional commercial venues that have not been identified.

- ***Parent and Toddler Groups***

There are 32 known Parent and Toddler groups in the Borough.

Ward Name	Local IDACI ranking	Parent and toddler
Fareham East	2	6
Fareham North	1	2
Fareham North-West	3	2
Fareham South	3	3
Fareham West	2	3
Hill Head	1	0
Locks Heath	1	1
Park Gate	3	2
Portchester East	3	3
Portchester West	2	1
Sarisbury	1	4

Ward Name	Local IDACI ranking	Parent and toddler
Stubbington	3	2
Titchfield Common	2	1
Titchfield	2	1
Warsash	1	1
		<b>32</b>

The table suggests there to be generally good coverage across the wards, each having at least one group with the exception of Hill Head Ward. However, some wards clearly have a much higher level of provision than others.

- ***Out-of-School clubs and Holiday Care Schemes***

There are 16 Out-of-School/Holiday Care Schemes operating across the Borough. These provide out of school care primarily for children from the ages of 5 to 11. Most of these schemes operate independently under a variety of management arrangements ranging from charitable trusts, schools, through to private commercial organisations.

Out-of-School Clubs are flexible and can offer either full or part-time places, depending on what parents and children want. During term time, lots of clubs offer collection from nearby schools and children remain in the care of a playworker until a parent can collect them.

Wards benefit from provision as shown below:

Ward	Local IDACI ranking	Out of school clubs
Fareham East Ward	2	3
Fareham North Ward	1	1
Fareham North-West Ward	3	2
Fareham South Ward	3	2
Fareham West Ward	2	0
Hill Head Ward	1	0
Locks Heath Ward	1	0
Park Gate Ward	3	0
Portchester East Ward	3	1
Portchester West Ward	2	1
Salisbury Ward	1	1
Stubbington Ward	3	1
Titchfield Common Ward	2	2
Titchfield Ward	2	1
Warsash Ward	1	1
		<b>16</b>

As can be seen, some wards (Hill Head, Locks Heath, Fareham West, and Park Gate) have no provision. Some wards clearly have a much higher level of provision than others.

In general such schemes provide care before and after school and during school holidays (though some of these schemes do not operate during school holidays).

### 7.2.3 Children's Play Services (not primarily care-based)

- **Holiday Playschemes**

Playschemes are not primarily aiming to provide childcare and tend to operate during some or all of the school holidays providing a range of "recreational" play opportunities.

They may run sessions morning and afternoon 5 days a week right through the holiday period or for as little as a morning or afternoon session for part of the holidays. Generally there is a nominal charge per session/day but some may be free of charge.

Management is varied between the public/ private and voluntary sector. There are 23 known playschemes in the Borough. Provision by ward is shown below in the following table.

Ward Name	Local IDACI ranking	Holiday playschemes
Fareham East	2	3
Fareham North	1	1
Fareham North-West	3	2
Fareham South	3	3
Fareham West	2	1
Hill Head	1	0
Locks Heath	1	0
Park Gate	3	1
Portchester East	3	3
Portchester West	2	1
Sarisbury	1	1
Stubbington	3	1
Titchfield Common	2	2
Titchfield	2	3
Warsash	1	1
		<b>23</b>

As can be seen, two wards (Hill Head, Locks Heath) have no provision. Some wards clearly have a much higher level of provision than others.

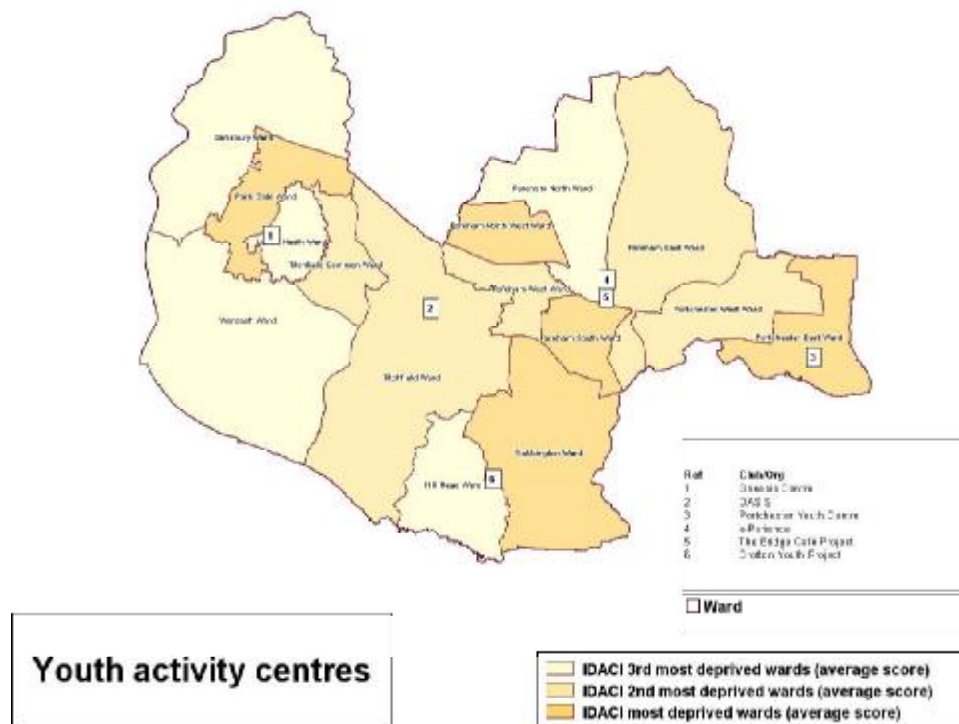
### 7.2.4 Youth Services/Activity Centres

Young people's activity centres (including youth clubs and centres) operate from several venues across the Borough, the majority being provided through Hampshire County Council Youth Services. The following table shows provision in relation to wards.

Ward Name	Local IDACI ranking	Youth activity
Fareham East	2	0
Fareham North	1	2
Fareham North-West	3	0
Fareham South	3	0

Fareham West	2	0
Hill Head	1	0
Locks Heath	1	1
Park Gate	3	0
Portchester East	3	1
Portchester West	2	0
Sarisbury	1	0
Stubbington	3	1
Titchfield Common	2	0
Titchfield	2	1
Warsash	1	0
		<b>6</b>

There are several wards with no provision (including some of those being worst of in terms of the IDACI ranking).



It is suspected that there are other initiatives in existence locally, although no comprehensive list exists. It is recommended that the Play Partnership works with these organisations to establish the full extent and range of such provision in the Borough.

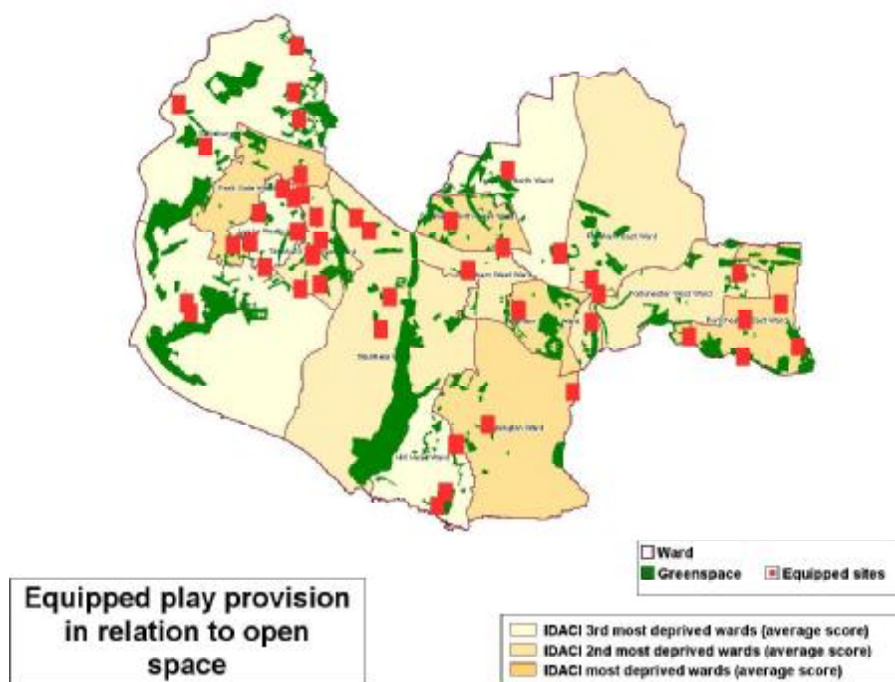
### 7.2.5 Play Spaces and Facilities for Young People

The chart below summarises play area and young people’s facilities provision by ward:

Ward Name	Ward population aged 0 - 18 years	Local IDACI ranking	Youth related recreation sites	Children per youth site	Children's equipped play space	Children per equipped play space
Fareham East	1579	2	0	No provision	3	526
Fareham North	1556	1	1	1556	2	778
Fareham North-West	1544	3	1	1544	1	1544
Fareham South	1604	3	1	1604	1	1604
Fareham West	1407	2	1	1407	1	1407
Hill Head	1528	1	0	No provision	2	764
Locks Heath	1504	1	2	752	4	376
Park Gate	1654	3	0	No provision	2	827
Portchester East	2023	3	1		4	506
Portchester West	1322	2	0	No provision	1	1322
Sarisbury	1869	1	1	1869	5	374
Stubbington	1527	3	1	1527	3	509
Titchfield Common	1816	2	1	1816	6	303
Titchfield	1525	2	0	No provision	4	381
Warsash	1560	1	0	No provision	3	520

As can be seen the relative level of provision per population between 0 to 18 years varies greatly. There are far more equipped sites for (younger) children, compared with provision for youth. Of particular note is the comparatively poor provision in the wards of Fareham North-West, Fareham South, and Park Gate. Each of these three wards are ranked in the 'worst' third in terms of the local IDACI scores.

The overall distribution of sites across the Borough is shown on the following map. The map also shows the distribution of all open space within the Borough (as identified by the Borough Council's Green Space Study). The map shows these open spaces simply to emphasise that equipped play sites is but one component in the overall supply of outdoor play opportunities.



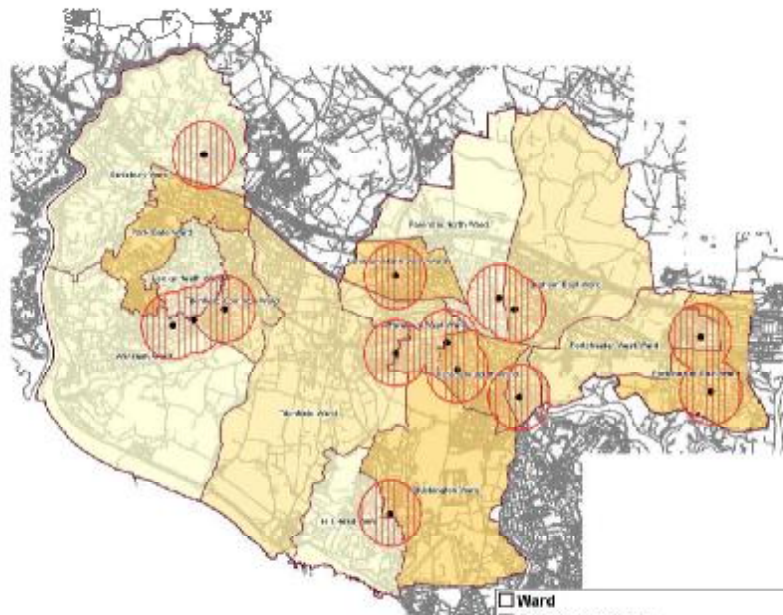
### 7.3 Analysis of Provision

The recommendations included here can be found summarised in Section 2, 'Planning for the Future'.

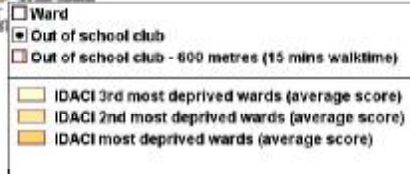
#### 7.3.1 Pre-school and Childcare Services

- ***Out-of-School provision (5-11s)***

Some wards (Hill Head, Locks Heath, Fareham West, and Park Gate) have no provision. Some wards clearly have a much higher level of provision than others. The following map shows that there are many parts of the Borough outside easy walking distance of an out of school club, including much of the central part as well as parts of the west and east of the Borough.



**15 minutes walk to an Out of School Club**



- It is therefore agreed that, when opportunities arise, partners will support out-of-school provision in appropriate locations in the wards of Sarisbury (part), Parks Gate (all), Locks Heath (part), Warsash (part), Titchfield (part), Stubbington (part), Porchester West (part), Fareham North (part), and Fareham East (part)

### 7.3.2 Play Services (not primarily care-based)

- **Extended Schools**

School based opportunities (available to the community) are felt to be potentially a valuable form of provision. They could offer opportunities to spend more time with school friends, as well as those from different schools. They could also offer an alternative to the structured ‘teaching environment’ children might normally associate with a school.

There are important issues to address in opening up schools for ‘Free’ play. For example:

- There must be sufficient indoor and outdoor space that is designed and used specifically for play.
- Provision must be fully open to the local community of children (not restricted to the particular school’s pupils).
- Issues of management arrangements and access will need to be resolved with the schools themselves.

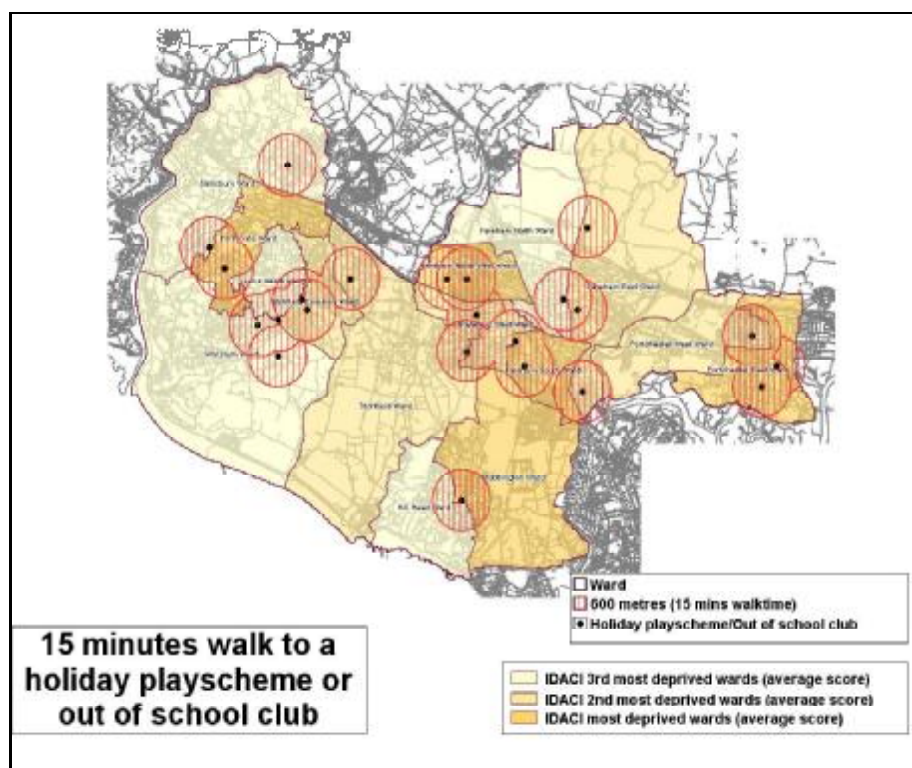
Schools represent a valuable opportunity to improve provision of all kinds in areas currently lacking easy access to play services and facilities of all kinds. It is therefore agreed that:

- A review should be undertaken as to how the local extended schools initiative might offer scope to provide play service bases in appropriate locations. Schools should promote the availability of all play opportunities within their catchment (on and off-site).

- ***Out of School Clubs and Holiday Playschemes***

The following map indicates that the geographical spread of provision is poor in much of the central part of the Borough, as well as parts of the north eastern, south western, and north western areas.

In such areas it will not be easy to reach opportunities elsewhere by foot.

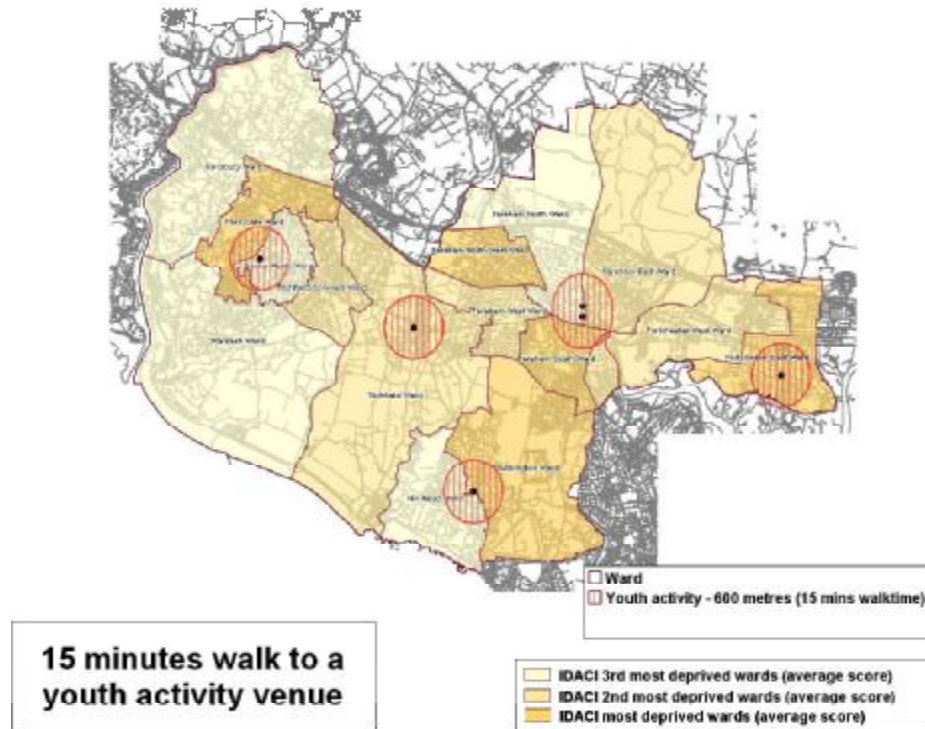


It is therefore agreed that:

- When opportunities arise partners will support additional playscheme provision in Park Gate ward (part), Stubbington ward (part), Sarisbury ward (part), Warsash ward (part), Titchfield ward (part), Hill Head ward (part), Fareham North ward (part), Fareham East ward (part) Porchester West ward (part).

### 7.3.3 Services for young people

The following map indicates general accessibility to known activity venues for young people. Although existing opportunities are well spread there are large tracts of the Borough outside easy walking distance of these venues. These areas include much of the west, central, southern and eastern parts of the Borough.



It is therefore agreed that:

- The Play Partnership will work towards improving access to young peoples activity venues in Sarisbury, Park Gate, Warsash, Titchfield Common, Titchfield, Stubbington, Fareham North, Fareham West, Fareham South, Fareham North West, Fareham East, and Porchester West wards. When deprivation and other factors are taken into account, wards with high priorities for new provision might be considered to be Fareham North West, Fareham South, Stubbington, and Park Gate.

### 7.3.4 Play Spaces and Facilities for Young People

This Strategy and the underlying study highlights the kind of play opportunities local children and community want. In terms of outdoor free provision in the public realm, future provision should be *guided* by the application of local standards. For local standards to have credibility, they must be adopted within the 'Local Development Framework', so that they can be used to guide new play opportunities provided directly or indirectly by the Council, developers and others. Adopted standards can also help to highlight where there may be

general deficiencies in opportunities currently, and so where improvements should be made.

The Borough Council has developed standards of provision for children's and young people's spaces arising from the wide-ranging study of Green space. The site survey underpinning the Borough Council's work had the following two stage process:

- survey work to identify and record site characteristics; and,
- data analysis to provide an assessment of site quality.

The surveys have noted the following:

- The type of uses on the site and a general description (e.g. in terms of uses, size, location, setting and configuration);
- Problems (e.g. in relation to litter, graffiti, dog fouling and evidence of misuse);
- The range and condition of any facilities;
- Means of accessibility, both onto and within the site including disabled access;
- Physical characteristics such as topography, configuration and the surrounding environment;
- The range and condition of planting and landscaping and its condition and the overall appearance of the site; and,
- The scope for potential improvements to the site.

The output of this survey work can be combined with other information obtained from the Play Strategy development work to assess equipped provision for children and young people within the Borough. The following evaluation considers the general location, accessibility and quality of equipped provision. The sites were classified according to the general headings described in paragraph 7.1.2 (earlier). As a result of the Play Strategy consultation, it is concluded that children might be expected to walk (accompanied or unaccompanied) up to 5 minutes to an appropriately equipped play site; with young people being prepared to walk further (around 10 minutes). This concurs with the Green Spaces Study.

### **7.3.5 Children's provision: general**

The following map shows the overall accessibility to children's play facilities within 300 metres (an approximate 5 minutes walk). It is clear that the distribution of facilities is inadequate. There are many areas that don't have reasonable access to facilities. A few areas show an overlap in catchments.

Park Gate, Porchester West, Fareham East, Fareham North West and the East of Titchfield show the largest access deficiencies in play facilities. The Park Gate ward is one of the most deprived areas in terms of the IDACI rankings, and has the least amount of children's play facilities.

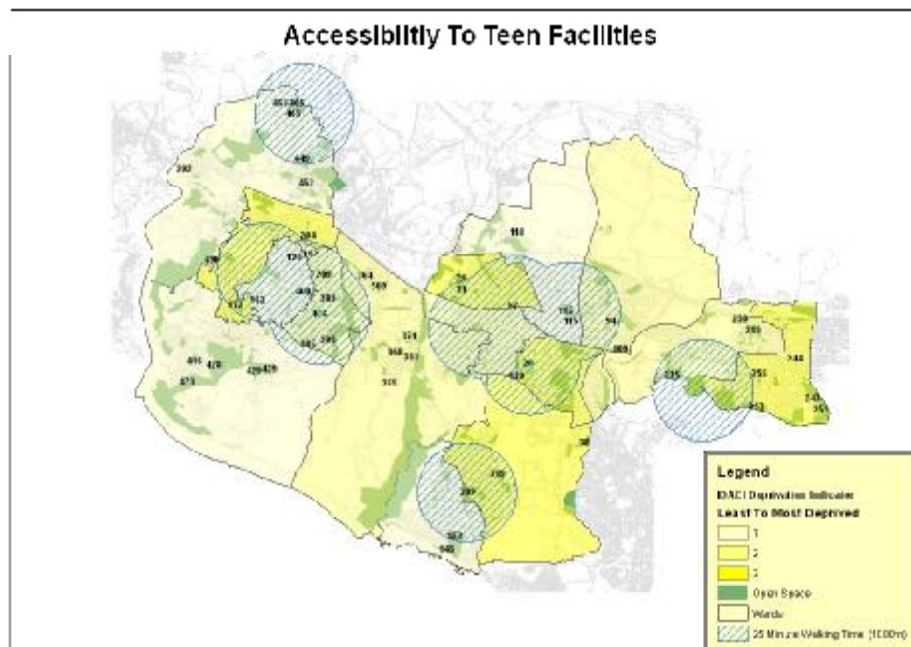
Along with Park Gate, Fareham North West, Fareham South, Stubbington and Portchester East show the highest levels of deprivation. Portchester East has reasonable although incomplete coverage.

In terms of the IDACI indicators once again Park Gate, Fareham North West, Portchester East and Stubbington wards (which have the worst local IDACI ranks) offer poor access.



### 7.3.6 Teenagers provision: general

The following map shows the overall access to teenage facilities using a 1000 metres catchment (an approximate 10 minutes walk). The distribution of facilities is inadequate, as the majority of wards offer poor access. The IDACI worst ranking wards are generally poorly served. Again Locks Heath and Titchfield Common are showing significant overlap in provision.



### 7.3.7 Quantity and accessibility

The following maps and site assessment scores have been provided directly from the Green Spaces Study.

The following map shows access to children's equipped play areas that have been given a site assessment score of 70% or higher. The identified sites are therefore of good quality, although management and maintenance might be improved in certain ways. The numbers relate to the Borough Council's green spaces study survey database.

99	West Street Fareham	70.0
110	Funtley Recreation Ground	70.2
114	Park Lane Recreation Ground	70.6
180	King George V Recreation Ground	71.4
420	Warsash Recreation Ground	71.4
171	Priory Park	71.4
149	Seafield Park	71.4
211	Longacres Open Space	72.3
399	Locks Heath House Park	73.1
320	Metcalf Avenue Open Space	73.9
243	Newtown Open Space	75.3
205	Badgers Copse	77.1
146	Salterns	77.1
248	Castle Street Recreation Ground	79.2

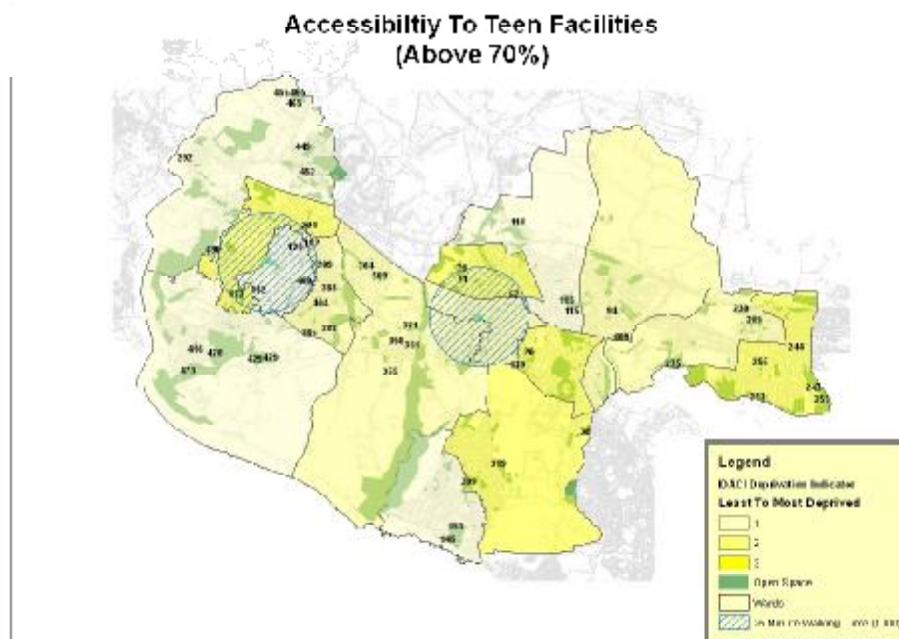


The following map shows access to teenage facilities that have a score of 70% or higher.

The sites identified are:

471	Locks Heath Centre Young peoples facility	70.0
3	Blackbrook Park Young peoples facility	75.3

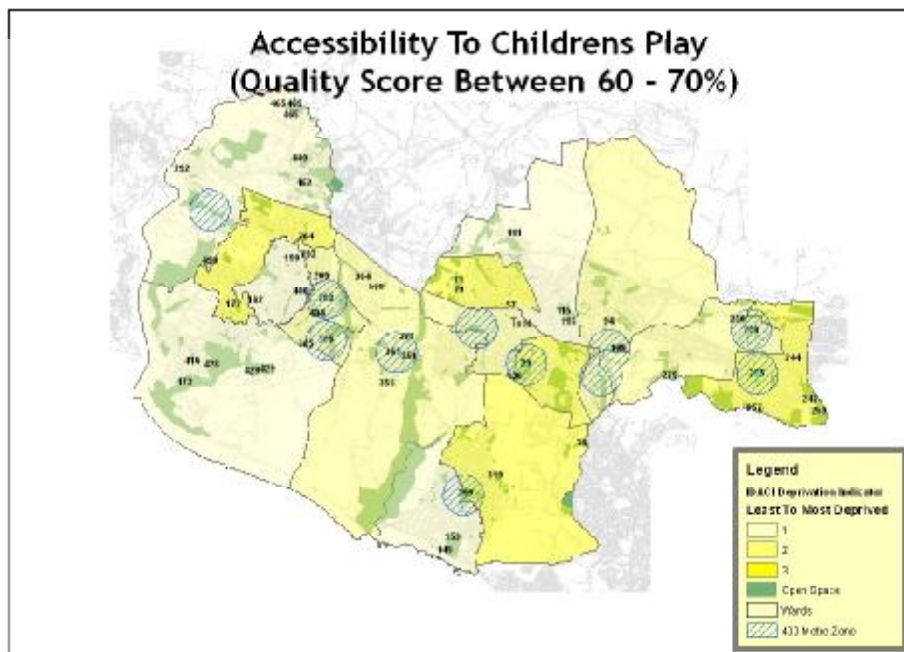
Both of the facilities are of good quality and are well used in the area.



The following map shows access to children’s play facilities that have a score between 60% and 70 %.

The sites identified are:

387	Kites Croft Play Area	61.9
329	Stubbington Recreation Ground	66.1
100	Bath Lane Recreation Ground	66.7
21	Crossfell Walk Play Area	63.2
384	Course Park	63.3
291	Sarisbury Green Recreation Ground	64.7
4	Blackbrook Park Children's Play Area	65.3
241	Portchester Park	65.8
366	Barrys Meadow	67.3
32	Eastern Parade	68.2
99	West Street, Fareham	69.6
220	Dore Avenue Open Space	69.7

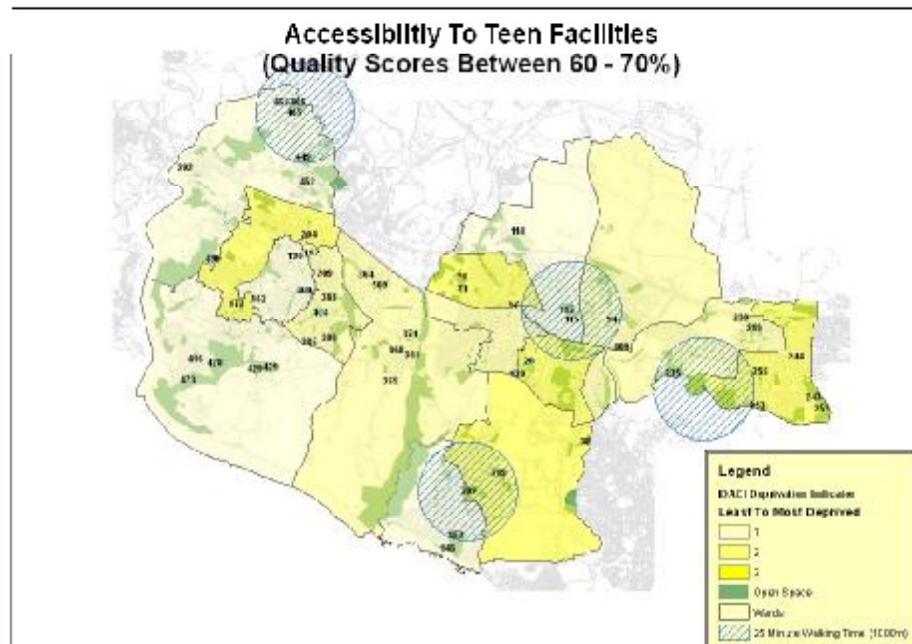


The following map shows access to teen facilities that have a score between 60% and 70 %.

The identified sites are:

442	Burridge	60.0
253	Wicor Recreation Ground	64.5
469	Stubbington Recreation Ground Young Peoples Facility	65
470	Park Lane Young Peoples Facility	66

The identified sites above are of reasonable quality, management and maintenance could be improved but in general they are decent facilities.



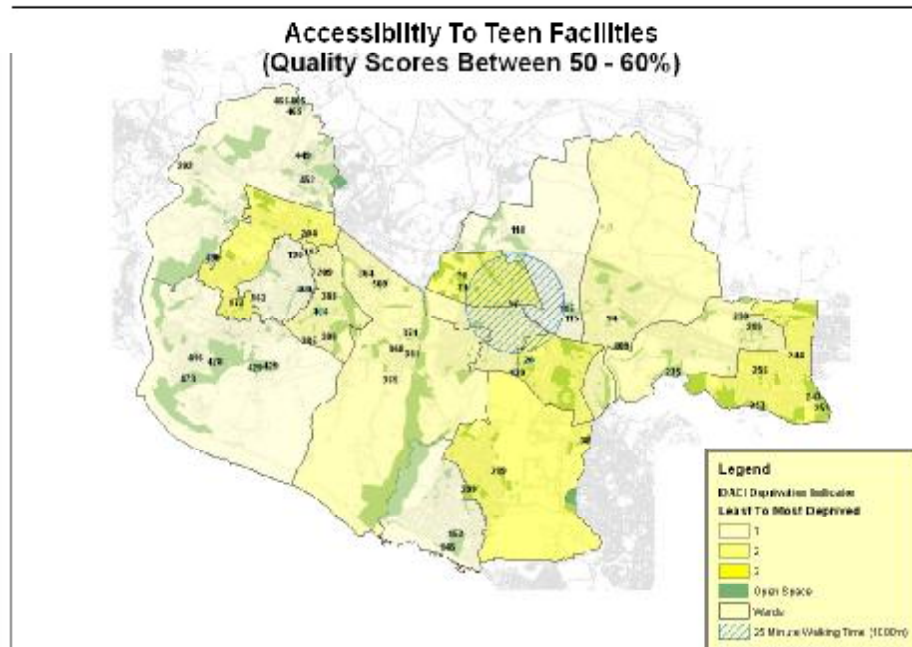


The following map shows access to teen facilities that have a score between 50% and 60 %.

The identified is;

62      Hammond Road Play Area                      54.6

The Hammond Road site is in a good location and is well used but it requires better maintenance and the facilities need attention. As one of a limited number of teen facilities in Fareham the site should be a priority.



The following map shows access to children’s play sites that have a score below 50%.

The sites identified are:

423	Howerts Close Play Area	16.9
362	Bellfield Open Space	28.6
386	Oriel Drive Open Space	35.9
9	Meadow Walk Open Space	36.8
511	Purslane Gardens	39.2
163	St Michaels Road Open Space	44.2
72	Fareham Park	49.4

The above sites, particularly Howerts Close and Bellfield , are not fit for purpose and attention should be given to rectify the problems immediately.

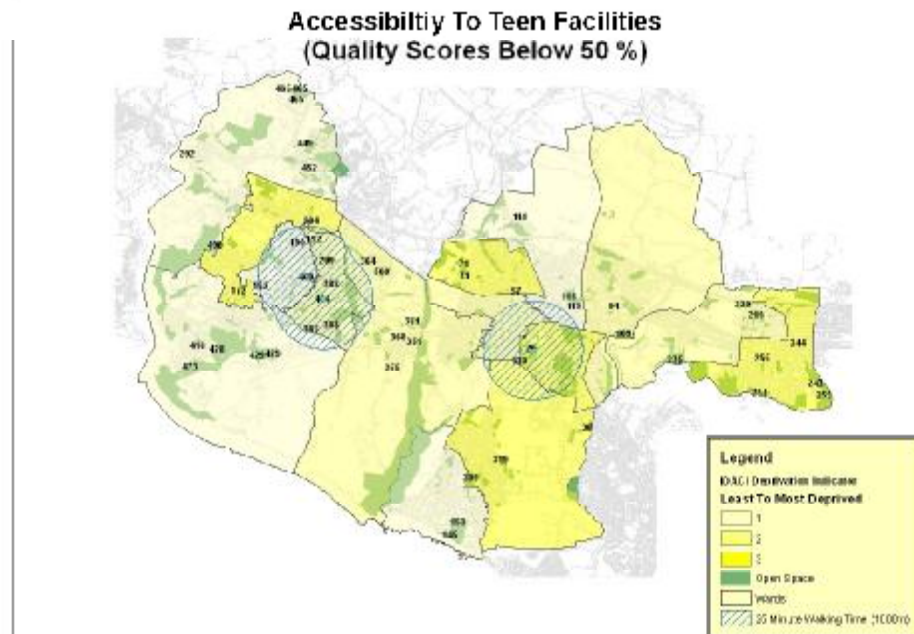


The following map shows access to teenage facilities that have a score below 50%.

The sites identified are:

393	Abshot Park	40.1
19	Crossfell Walk (The Cage)	43.4
398	Locks Heath House Park	46.1

All the above sites require attention, given their specific use the sites are in reasonable condition although they score fairly low on the site quality assessment.



Only 16 sites have a quality score above 70%, with Castle Street being the best quality site at 79.2%. There is a lack of good quality play provision across the Borough and access to sites is poor in some areas. Locks Heath and Titchfield have the best 'coverage', but in terms of quality they have the poorest sites. Facilities at Howerts Close Play Area, Bellfield Open Space, Oriel Drive Open Space and Meadow Walk Open Space require urgent attention.

The teenage facilities are in reasonably good condition and well distributed, but there are not enough. Abshot Park and Crossfell Walk require attention, but all facilities are well used. The research and consultation has indicated the need for more and better provision. The above analyses, suggest that new facilities should be placed strategically to ease access, particularly in Warsash and North Fareham.

### 7.3.8 Other Issues

- **Cost as a barrier – Play services**

The consultation process revealed that for a significant minority of children cost was a barrier to attendance to playschemes, out-of-school clubs and activity programmes. Given that low-income families may have children who can benefit most from such provision this is an important issue to tackle. The findings reinforce the importance of free play being available in areas of most need.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Play Partnership will, wherever possible, identify schemes whereby organisers and managers of playschemes and out-of-school clubs can offer free places to children in need.</li></ul> |
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- **Play in the outlying areas**

The play sites and services are located in the most populated parts of the Borough. There are 'outlying' parts of the Borough that are therefore not well served. Consideration should be given to how access to opportunities can be improved in these areas.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Play Partnership should consider how best to meet the needs of children and young people living in outlying parts of the Borough that are remote by foot from existing opportunities.</li></ul> |
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- **Special provision**

Consultation also highlighted the need and indeed preference in some circumstances for special provision for children with disabilities and other special needs. The Play Partnership should therefore support the development of more extensive special needs provision such as specialised playschemes for children with disabilities, programmes to provide play opportunities in hospitals, and peripatetic play visits to children with long-term illnesses, those in recovery etc.

- **Play and Community Cohesion**

Consultation has raised the potential role of play and young peoples' activity in promoting community cohesion by providing opportunities for children and young people from different backgrounds to mix and gain understanding of each other through shared play and leisure activity. Equally note has been made of the need to be culturally aware of forms of play and leisure activity relating to children and young people from different backgrounds.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Play partnership will support suitable projects in the future that maximise play's contribution to this important agenda.</li></ul> |
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- **Safe routes to Play**

Consultation has indicated that for children, it is having a safe walking or cycling route to the play opportunity, rather than distance/time *per se* which influences whether a site is actually used and therefore genuinely "accessible".

- **“Wild” Play - Play on natural green spaces**

The consultation with children and their parents showed a high degree of interest in using “wild” unequipped green spaces more for play. There is potential to develop this with local environmental groups, the local Wildlife Trust, and the Forestry Commission.

#### **7.4 Prioritisation for future Play Space Provision**

The achievement of an optimum play and young peoples’ provision across the Borough is a long term goal. In the shorter term there will be a need to determine which of the play areas and facilities for young people should be brought “up to standard” and where new provision should be. That is, what are the priorities for new or improved play areas and young people’s facilities?

‘Planning for Play’ suggests that this question should be answered by prioritising provision in those areas where it is most needed.

The Strategy has therefore adopted an assessment tool, which can be used in conjunction with the Green Spaces Study to review all play spaces, and prioritise work on refurbishments and new facilities as part of improvement programmes.

##### ***Priority Assessment Tool***

The tool has two parts:

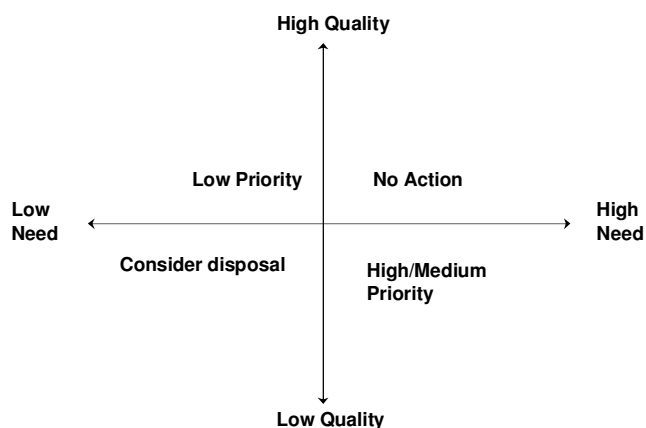
- 1) A review against the 6 key factors below, coupled with;
- 2) A quality assessment principal to use when reviewing existing sites as part of the above.

- 1) The Six Prioritisation Factors

- Where there are gaps in provision
- The location of the site in terms of safety and access and its suitability to meet the requirements of the new standards
- Provision in the most deprived wards
- Provision in outlying areas
- Benefit to areas of high child population where there is a poor provision per head of population or where there is a paucity of any kind of public open space (e.g. due to high density housing)
- Potential for external funding and/or a high degree of active community support for the project.

How these factors are used to establish priorities is detailed in Section 7.4.3 below.

2) The Quality Assessment principle – in reviewing existing sites the following diagram illustrates how decision processes can be structured in relation to prioritisations for refurbishments.



For example, a site will be high or medium priority (using the Prioritisation criteria) if the criteria indicate a high need and the site is currently low quality, whereas if a site is low quality but in an area of low need it may be considered for disposal (if there is over-provision in that area).

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Priority Assessment Tool will be used by members of the Play Partnership to help guide decision making regarding provision of play spaces. Where it is difficult to choose between projects (as the projects appear to meet the criteria equally well) the poorest quality site should take precedence for refurbishment.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refurbishments and Improvements</b> - The Borough Council will undertake a review of its provision on the basis of the new Priority Assessment Tool. In very broad terms, analysis of the audit undertaken for the Strategy and deprivation and child population factors suggest some initial areas that should be included in the first stages of the Play Area Improvement Programme's site review. (Refer to Section 7.3 onwards).</li> <li>• <b>New Facilities</b> - In broad terms, audit and mapping undertaken for the Strategy indicated several parts of the Borough lacking easy access to play areas when assessed against the walk times/distances identified through the consultation as appropriate. (Refer to Section 7.3 onwards). The Borough Council will also investigate potential sites for new provision in these areas when conducting their initial review.</li> </ul> |

### 7.4.3 Playspace Projects Prioritisation Criteria

The 6 factors noted above that provide the basis upon which priorities will be established are used in accordance with the table below to aid investment decisions that need to be made between competing projects.

Priority Rating	Definition
<b>High Priority</b>	<p>Projects which:</p> <p>Provide new or enhanced existing play/youth facilities in an area currently lacking good quality facilities of the kind to be provided (fills a gap).</p> <p>AND where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The site is well positioned in relation to “Secured by Design” principles</li> <li>2) The site is easily accessible by foot to the community it serves taking into account access restrictions such as main roads, railways and other barriers</li> <li>3) The site is large enough to fully accommodate the play space standards as recommended (including buffer zones).</li> </ol> <p>AND where at least two of the following conditions is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project benefits a priority ward</li> <li>• Benefits an area of high child population where there is poor provision per head of child population and/or provides in an area which has very little public open space of any kind (eg high density housing area)</li> <li>• The project is likely to attract significant external/partnership funding and/or the project can demonstrate active community support and involvement, for example, partnership with residents/community association, youth group etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium Priority</b>	<p>Projects which:</p> <p>Provide new or enhance existing play/youth facilities in an area currently lacking good quality facilities of the kind to be provided (fills a gap)</p> <p>AND where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The site is well positioned in relation to “Secured by Design” principles</li> <li>2) The site is easily accessible by foot to the community it serves taking into account access restrictions such as main roads, railways and other barriers</li> <li>3) The site is large enough to fully accommodate the play space standards as recommended (including buffer zones) or it is the most appropriate site locally available.</li> </ol> <p>AND where at least one of the following conditions is met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project benefits a priority ward</li> <li>• Benefits an area of high child population where there is poor provision per head of child population and/or provides in an area which has very little public open space of any kind</li> <li>• The project is likely to attract significant external/partnership funding and/or the project can demonstrate active community support and involvement, for example, partnership with residents/community association, local school, youth group etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Low Priority</b>	<p>Projects which:</p> <p>Address deficiencies in the Borough’s Play/Youth Facilities infrastructure but which do not fulfil the conditions for High or Medium priority.</p>
<b>Non Priority</b>	<p>Projects that duplicate existing provision and which might create a surplus of supply and result in under-use of existing facilities.</p>

#### **7.4.4 Additional qualitative considerations**

The quality of play areas and youth facilities is very varied across the Borough. The Council has however invested significantly to refurbish and improve many sites. However, there are still some poor quality sites, as identified earlier. A number of sites that are currently rated as not good have good potential for improvement and so should be considered for upgrading. (Refer to Section 7.3 onwards).

Many play areas could also be improved by more imaginative design, landscaping, use of natural environment, interactive water features etc.

Such additional features should also be considered when assessing future investments in play areas.

## **8 Management and Professional Development**

### **8.1 Play Services**

#### **8.1.1 Integrated delivery of Services for Children**

Statutory services for children and young people are the County Council's responsibility, with others being provided by a range of voluntary groups. Play related services have been identified through the consultation as valued by users and parents; and activities for young people are much appreciated. The Local Play Partnership should seek to support, protect and strengthen these services; perhaps especially in relation to opportunities for young people.

- The Local Play Partnership has the potential to help both the County Council and local groups focus, coordinate, and protect services of particular relevance to play.

#### **8.1.2 Training and Professional Development**

The protection and improvement of local play and youth services will require staff and play workers to continue to receive appropriate training and professional development. The Local Play Partnership can, again, help to support, focus and coordinate efforts in this regard.

- The Local Play Partnership has the potential to help focus, coordinate, and protect local play training and professional development programmes.

### **8.2 Play Spaces and Facilities for Young People**

#### **8.2.1 Managing Risk in Play Provision**

*The provision should balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm. The provision should extend the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction they gain from it'. Best Play 2000*

There is growing concern about how safety is being addressed in children's play provision. Fear of litigation is leading many play providers to focus on minimising the risk of injury at the expense of other more fundamental objectives. The effect is to stop children from enjoying a healthy range of play opportunities, limiting their enjoyment and causing potentially damaging consequences for their development.

This approach ignores clear evidence that use of play provision is a comparatively low risk activity for children. Of the two million or so childhood accident cases treated by hospitals each year, fewer than two per cent involve playground equipment. Participation in sports like soccer, widely acknowledged as 'good' for a child's development, involve a greater risk of

injury than visiting a playground. Fatalities on playgrounds are very rare – about one per three or four years on average. This compares with, for instance, more than 100 child pedestrian fatalities a year and more than 500 child fatalities from accidents overall.

The Play Safety Forum, a national body with government funding, was set up to consider this issue, and the Local Play Partnership has adopted the Forum's summary Position Statement *Managing Risk in Play Provision* as a statement of its own position in relation to risk management.

#### **Fareham Play Partnership**

##### **Managing Risk in Play Provision – Position statement**

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<sup>8</sup>.

### **8.3 Other Issues**

The strategy has also established a number of other general policy positions in relation to good practice. In particular, positive engagement of children and young people in planning their own play opportunities will be encouraged wherever possible.

- It is agreed that Play Partnership members will sign up to the Hear by Rights Framework<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> From *Managing Risk in Play Provision*, Play Safety Forum, 2002

<sup>9</sup> Nationally recognised good practice guide for consulting and engaging with children, young people and their families.

## **9 Standards for Play**

### **9.1 Quality Standards and Good Practice – Play Services**

#### **9.1.1 Childcare**

It is a fundamental belief of the Play Partnership that achieving and maintaining high quality standards has never been more important and that it is not an optional extra for any organisation. Many organisations abiding by the quality management principles continually improve performance over the long term by focusing on customers, while addressing the needs of all other stakeholders.

By the nature of the childcare sector, quality assurance is essential. Parents and children need to know that they are using high quality childcare and providers need to know and to demonstrate that they are offering a quality service. It has been shown that settings holding a robust portfolio as part of their quality assurance scheme have had good Ofsted Inspection reports.

The quality assurance schemes are effective in ensuring that customers' requirements are met. They set out clear standards of quality for all aspects of a setting, including staffing, premises, health and safety, and especially relationships with children, parents and the wider community. The schemes provide a framework of quality indicators, giving settings goals to aspire to that helps the setting continually improve its practice. No scheme runs indefinitely and has to be revisited and renewed at least every three years.

There are government standards relating to childcare suppliers. The national standards represent a baseline of quality below which no provider may fall. However, they are also intended to underpin a continuous improvement in quality in all settings.

There are 14 national standards. Each standard describes a particular quality outcome, and is accompanied by a set of supporting criteria giving information about how that outcome is to be achieved. Regulations under the Children Act require providers (technically the registered person in each setting) to meet the 14 standards and to have regard to the supporting criteria. The law also requires Ofsted to have regard to both the standards and criteria.

The national standards do not override the need for providers to comply with other legislation such as that covering health and safety, food hygiene, fire or planning requirements.

The criteria differ between each of the five categories of day care and childminding provision:

- full day care
- sessional day care
- crèches
- out of school care
- childminding

Hampshire County Council Children's Services take responsibility for ensuring such provision is registered as required and that the quality standards are met.

### **9.1.2 Other Play Service Quality Schemes**

There are no similar requirements that other play settings must adhere to quality standards. However a number of schemes are being developed to encourage good practice in providing quality play opportunities. For example, London Play has developed *Quality in Play* which is a quality assurance scheme based around assessing a wide range of areas such as:

#### ***i) The play environment – meeting the play needs of children***

- Physical & personal health & safety
- Opening times and days
- A warm and welcoming environment
- Choice and range of activities
- Children's involvement
- Play environment audit
- Equalities and inclusion
- Information, notices and displays
- Behavioural boundaries

#### ***ii) Management***

- Clear aims, objectives and values
- The management committee
- Project management
- Financial management
- Staff and volunteers
- Qualifications and training
- Families and the community
- Peer observation

These schemes tend to be best suited to ongoing supervised play provision such as staffed Adventure Playgrounds and open access staffed Play Centres. In addition such schemes may be of value to childcare settings who wish to further develop the quality of their provision and obtain independent assessment of their work.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All staff and volunteers working with children will be CRB screened in relation to recruitment and ongoing checks.</li></ul> |
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### **9.1.3 Developing Good Practice - Inclusion for Children with Disabilities**

Improving access to play opportunities for children with disabilities has been identified as a high priority through local consultation.

KIDS, the service delivery charity for disabled children and their families has developed a number of initiatives to improve the inclusion of disabled youngsters in play and childcare, for example:

- 1) *Paths to Inclusion* – a publication comprised of two parts:

- All Of Us - Inclusion Checklist For Settings - outlines good practice for playworkers, childminders and other childcare staff in including disabled children, and
- All Of Us - Inclusion Framework For Local Authorities - offers ways for local authorities to move policy into practice in including disabled children.

Both are intended to support the inclusion of disabled children in mainstream services for children aged five to 16 years, but are also relevant to settings for younger children. They are the result of a UK-wide consultation process by KIDSactive, a division of KIDS, and produced under the Playwork Inclusion Project contract with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

## 2) *Pick & Mix*

This publication provides a selection of inclusive games and activities. It contains many practical ideas, games and activities for all children to enjoy, while helping to promote the inclusion of disabled children in any play or early years setting.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Play Partnership will utilise such models of good practice and promotes their availability through all providers.</li> </ul> |
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### 9.1.4 Quality Mark for services for young people

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) stated its intention to 'explore with The National Youth Agency and the Local Government Association how it can best support local authorities in developing their quality assurance systems' in its *Transforming Youth Work* document. In his speech to the Association of Principal Youth and Community Officers (APYCO) in March 2003, the then Minister Ivan Lewis, further explained the commitment to a 'kite mark for quality in youth provision'.

The *YSQM Quality Mark for Services for Young People* has been designed as a management tool to support an organisation's development and improvement of its quality management systems. It tests the processes and structures, which are the building blocks of an organisation. By using the self-assessment framework, organisations will be able to check monitoring and reviewing procedures and how management information is used to improve the quality and outcomes of an organisation.

The YSQM enables organisations to look across all their functions. It can usefully assist them in addressing questions set out in Ofsted's self-assessment. As is the case with other systems, the YSQM is an indicator to external bodies, including Ofsted, of the rigour which has been brought to performance management. Commissioning bodies wishing to satisfy themselves of the quality and solidity of an organisation they may wish to engage as a service provider could also use it.

This is a bespoke Quality Mark which focuses on work with young people and the building blocks to sound quality youth work organisations. Its greatest

strength is that it has been commissioned and funded by the DfES, overseen by the NYA's Quality Action Group (made up from representatives from Ofsted, Government Office, Voluntary Sector, DfES, The NYA and the Statutory Sector) and designed with the participative input of fifteen youth work organisations.

- The youth service and the voluntary sector play partners will promote the take up of YSQM Quality Mark for Services for Young People (or a similar well-recognised and appropriate Quality Assurance scheme) by relevant organisations.

## 9.2 Quality Standards and Good Practice – Play Facilities

### 9.2.1 Design Principles, Risk, and Challenge

Any Play Space should be designed to encourage as wide a variety of play activities as possible. In relation to the various types of play highlighted in *Best Play* the following general observations can be made on potential implications for the design of play space.

Type of Play	Design implications/ideas
<b>Symbolic Play</b> - play which allows control, gradual exploration and increased understanding, without the risk of being out of one's depth.	Using pieces of timber to symbolise a person; interactive and tactile equipment, bark, sand, water, planting, and materials with different smells, surfaces and colours. Ground modelling would provide different contours and imaginative ways of getting around the equipment.
<b>Rough and Tumble Play</b> - close encounter play to do with touching, tickling, gauging relative strength, and discovering physical flexibility and the exhilaration of display.	This requires open spaces of different sizes with strong barriers of differing character between them. It will involve climbing using ropes, nets, different heights and demarcation of posts etc to encourage king of the castle type games. The equipment must be appealing to all age groups, so different levels are to be encouraged offering greater challenge.
<b>Socio-dramatic Play</b> - the enactment of real and potential experiences of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature. For example, playing at house, going to the shops, being mothers and fathers, organising a meal or even having a row.	This requires symbolic places to be created with platforms, seat and table like structures, possibly murals depicting people as they open up discussions between children and young people. The opportunity to control their own play space by enabling children and young people to den build or make changes to their play environment.
<b>Social Play</b> - play during which the rules and criteria for social engagement and interaction can be revealed, explored and amended. For example, 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.	Seats and seat like structures on which to perch and interact. These need to be at different scales to cater for all age groups including teenagers. It could include woven natural materials such as willow, changing the flow of sand or water, together with plaques to explain the problem.
<b>Creative Play</b> - play which allows a new response, the transformation of information, awareness of new connections, with an element of surprise. For example, enjoying	Play that stimulates the senses; equipment that provides tactile materials, makes different sounds, uses colours and shades, is at different levels and uses different shapes and contours. An opportunity

creation with a range of materials involving loose or moveable materials.	to take part in transforming the environment.
<b>Dramatic Play</b> - play which dramatises 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.	Enclosed spaces are needed where children feel safe to explore their drama. This could be in an amphitheatre shape with raised banks trees and natural screening, with moveable equipment and 'hidden areas'.
<b>Deep Play</b> - play which allows the child to encounter risky or even potentially life threatening experiences, to develop survival skills and conquer fear. Often involving high level work involving climbing, swinging, sliding and balancing	Leaping onto an aerial runway, balancing on a high beam, trim trails, rope work, climbing apparatus, fast spinning equipment and adventure trails, skate ramps, boulders that can be jumped across
<b>Exploratory play</b> - play to access factual information consisting of manipulative behaviours such as handling, banging or objects. For example, engaging with an object or area and, either by manipulation or movement, assessing its properties, possibilities and content.	Creative use of the environment is essential in providing exploratory play, loose materials such as sand, bark and water help to facilitate this style of play.
<b>Fantasy play and Imaginative play</b> - play which rearranges the world in the child's way; a way, which is unlikely to occur or where the conventional rules, which govern the physical world, do not apply. For example, playing at being a pilot flying around the world.	Imaginative structures are helpful, different colours, shapes and surfaces
<b>Locomotor play</b> - movement in any and every direction for its own sake. For example, sliding, balancing, rocking, swinging, climbing, hide and seek.	A variety of spaces and structures are required but could include handicaps to an activity in the form of mobility or visual impediments eg pulling the body through cylinders and the creative use of mirrors.
<b>Mastery play</b> - control of the physical and affective ingredients of the environments.	Areas where digging holes, changing the course of streams, constructing shelters, building fires are allowed. Strength challenges where logs could be rolled over different terrain, to encourage the competitive spirit and so challenging the individual to better their own performance.

A play area developed to accommodate various types of play should be rich and varied and is likely to include some or all of the following elements:

- safe overlooked spaces using trees, hedges, fences, wooden walls etc,
- significant changes of level creating mounds, elevated places and also places where water collects temporarily
- many structures - posts, balance beams and some formal play equipment
- natural materials and surfaces planting grass stones, boulders, gravel, sand etc

- Patterns incorporated into the design and places for messages
- At a practical level the play area will also take into account the requirements of those with disabilities and provide appropriate impact absorbing surfaces. All play equipment will conform to appropriate European standards and a risk assessment will be carried out on all natural features. Fencing (metal) will be needed where dog exclusion is essential, where sand and water is included and where there are hazards nearby.

### **9.2.2 Play in the wider public environment**

- In relation to future housing developments, full account will be taken of elements of residential design and the design of public open space early in the planning cycle to specifically recognise the needs of children and young people as key users of public open space and the outdoor environment. This will involve considerations such as Secured by Design principles, homezones, seating and meeting places within the development, as well as provision of specific play and youth facilities.
- Secured by Design principles will be adopted in relation to all new play provision and refurbishments

### **9.2.3 Developing Good Practice - Inclusion for Children with Disabilities**

All children do not need to access play spaces in the same way but they are all fundamentally entitled to go out to play. Good design of public play spaces is needed in order to make this possible. Each child is different – not every piece of equipment in a play space needs to be accessible to every child but access to the social experience of play is key.

In 2003 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published *Developing Accessible Play Space - A Good Practice Guide*. The key recommendation of the guide is that providers “should concentrate on making the environment fit the child” and the guide notes that “there is no need to focus on impairment specific issues – rather identify the obstacles to play for any child who might wish to access the play space and think about ways to circumvent them”.

The good practice guide provides examples of how careful attention to design can help to ensure that play spaces are inclusive, comfortable and appealing to disabled children and their families.

- The Play Partnership will promote *Developing Accessible Play Space - A Good Practice Guide* and all members will apply the guidance in relation to refurbishments and new play provision.

## **9.3 Towards Local Standards (to be included in the Local Development Framework) – Play Facilities**

### **9.3.1 Developing Local Standards**

Fareham Borough Council has developed local standards for children's play within the Greenspace Study. This study was produced by the council's planning policy and leisure strategy groups in consultation with the local community. The recommendations of this Greenspace Study include quantity, quality and access standards for both children's play and youth facilities.

The detailed rationale for the proposed local standards is contained in the Greenspace Study, but a brief summary is as follows.

	Quantity	Accessibility	Quality
Children's Play Equipment	14 pieces of equipment per 1000 1-12 year olds	Within 400m walking distance	Quality score of at least 70%
Youth Facilities	1 youth facility/MUGA per settlement area	Within 1000m walking distance	Quality score of at least 70%

In addition the Greenspace Study promotes standards for parks / amenity open space and for accessible natural greenspace, both of which will also offer opportunities for children's play. The standards are as follows;

	Quantity	Accessibility	Quality
Parks & Amenity Open Spaces	1.5 ha per 1000 pop	Within 570m walking distance	Quality score of at least 70%
Accessible Natural Greenspace	3 ha per 1000 pop	Within 300m walking distance	Quality score of at least 70%

## 10 Evaluation

### 10.1 Monitoring and review

In order to monitor the implementation of the strategy and to review its progress, there will be regular reports, as relevant, to Borough Council committees and local forums and organisations. Overall performance will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed regularly by the Play Partnership.

### 10.2 Performance Indicators

The Action Plan provides performance measures to aid monitoring and evaluation. In addition a number of general performance indicators for play have been drawn up based upon recent research undertaken by the Children's Play Council (**Appendix 2**).

- The Play Partnership considers the possible adoption of the local performance indicators detailed in Appendix 2 (which will be reviewed annually).

## 11 The Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a framework for implementing the recommendations of the Play Strategy over a 5 year period highlighting actions over that period with a short, medium or long-term timeframe.

The plan is structured within the framework of the Children and Young People's Plan and its five main outcomes. The plan highlights specific tasks relating to each individual Policy Statement in the Play strategy. For each Action Point a lead role is assigned thereby identifying responsibility for delivery.

The Action Plan provides a list of outline projects and outputs linked to a set timetable. The Plan also identifies key partners and indications of the level of funding required to implement the actions.

The Action Plan is produced as a separate document and will be reviewed on an annual basis. It is included here as **Appendix 5** of the Strategy.