



OUT TO PLAY

in Mid & East Antrim

A strategy to shape the future of children and
young people's play throughout Mid and East
Antrim Borough up to 2022

(This DRAFT Play Strategy was agreed to progress to consultation at the Council's
Operations Committee on 19th June and ratified at the Council 3rd July 2018)

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1.0 Introduction

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is committed to enhancing opportunities for play for all of its children and young people, regardless of their perceived abilities or their location within the Borough. This **‘Out to Play’ strategy provides** a strategic framework for the development of all types of play across the Borough for the next five years.

An effective play strategy identifies the real needs and wishes of the community and relates them to the existing provision and resources available. This document therefore identifies key themes based on the current provision and feedback from children, parents and key community partners.

This document also gives an overview of the current fixed play provision in Mid and East Antrim Borough and highlights gaps. However, play is about so much more than fixed play and this ‘Out to Play’ strategy sets out how non-fixed play can improve the play experience in this area going forward.



In developing this strategy we held a Play Development Workshops to engage elected members, Council officials and other key stakeholders. At the workshop participants contributed to the development of this ‘Out to Play’ strategy by discussing the importance of play, the benefits of unstructured Play and by sharing their own play memories.

This strategy also identifies key national and local strategies, policies and practices that influence and have an impact on the development of play across Mid and East Antrim Borough. Key findings have been examined and explored with key community stakeholders, these include:

- Mapping the existing play provision to determine whether gaps in the provision exist.
- Audit of play provision to determine the play value of existing provision.

- Looking at the play opportunities available for children and young people in the borough and identifying barriers they face in accessing opportunities for play.
- **Results of the ‘Out to Play’ survey completed by young people in the Borough.**

1.1 Our Strategic Themes

Based on the needs identified from all the evidence gathered we have established a series of strategic themes and objectives listed below. These key themes in this strategy will enable the Council to plan play services and the future development of fixed and no fixed play, whilst taking into consideration limited resources available to us to tackle the highlighted needs.

OUR STRATEGIC THEMES			
PLAY SPACE FOR ALL	PLAY IN THE COMMUNITY	PLAY PROGRAMMES	AWARENESS AND OUTREACH
OUR OBJECTIVES			
Audit of Play facilities and potential Play spaces	Recognising the role of play in contributing to stable and sustainable community relations	To increase use of play facilities and participation in play and recreation	Establish, support and promote work of the ‘Play Partnership’
To raise awareness of play facilities across the Borough - Fixed and Non Fixed	Ensure that vulnerable and young people are supported in their play	Increase Physical Activity among children and young people	Promote play, benefits of play and practical opportunities
To provide a range of high quality accessible play spaces and facilities across the Borough	Increase participation in Play and use of Play resources in areas with low community infrastructure via non fixed play opportunities	Development of Family Based/Inter-generational activities at Play Areas	Ensure a co-ordinated and strategic approach to play at Borough level
To maximise use of the Borough’s Fixed and Non Fixed Play facilities	Ensure that all children and young people across the Borough have opportunity to access and benefit	Encourage use of shared space by older children and young people	Promote the Council’s ‘Out to Play’ Pledge

	from shared play and leisure opportunities		
Support efforts to enhance Open spaces to promote quality play opportunities	Support Inter-generational working	Work with local residents/communities to enhance green spaces to promote opportunity for quality play	

1.2 The Play Pledge

Having listened to the views of our children and young people and other key community stakeholders we launched the ‘Out to Play Pledge’ in time for 2017 National Children’s Day. This ‘Out to Play’ Pledge sets out our Council’s commitment to the children and young people of the Borough.



Mid & East Antrim Borough Council will...

- listen to your thoughts and ideas when planning our work;
- provide clean, safe and welcoming play spaces for you, your family and friends;
- provide different types of play equipment for you to enjoy;
- assist your parents, carers and others to provide play opportunities for you;
- celebrate and embrace our difference;
- get everyone healthier by offering different play activities;
- provide indoor and outdoor space for your enjoyment;
- make sure that our play spaces offer something for all ages and abilities;
- provide a range of play activity programmes for everyone;
- speak up for you if you feel your right to play is being taken away.

We will achieve this by...

- talking to you, your parents and your friends and neighbours;
- working with playgroups, schools and youth clubs to provide activities;
- always checking to make sure we are doing it right.

We recognise that...

- play is important for making friends, learning and staying healthy;
- play can happen anywhere;
- playing safely should be available to all;
- play doesn't always need to have special equipment;
- some kids like organised play activity programmes;
- play doesn't have to cost money;
- grown-ups can be kids too and keeps them healthier and young;
- our play spaces are for everyone.

2.0 The Delivery of Play in Mid and East Antrim

The Borough of Mid and East Antrim has a population of around 137,000, which is 7% of the Northern Ireland total population. Of this population 26,224 (19%) are aged between 0 and 15 years of age. The Borough covers a vast area stretching from Garron Point in the north of the Borough to Greenisland in the south and all the way across to Portglenone in the west.

Within the Borough the Council manages and maintains 68 play parks, 39 parks, 18 Multi-Use Games Areas, 14 outdoor gyms, 3 seaside award-winning beaches, 5 bowling greens, 4 tennis court sites, 2 nine-hole golf courses and 28 outdoor sports pitches, 3 nature reserves, 1 skate park and lots and lots of wonderful varied outdoor spaces.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council delivers play development through the Parks and Open Spaces Service. The Council benefits from one dedicated Play Development Officer who oversees the traditional fixed play facilities within the Borough as well as developing and delivering an extensive programme of play events and activities across the Borough which cater for a range of ages and abilities.

The Mid and East Antrim Corporate Plan 2015 - 2019 describes Council's aims and ambitions and how to achieve the **vision of "Working together to create a better future for all."** The five strategic priorities used to deliver the vision are: 1) Growing the Community; 2) Developing our Tourism Potential; 3) Building Stronger, Safe and Healthy Communities; 4) Delivering Excellent Service; & 5) Developing a High Performing Council. This Play Strategy will **support council's Corporate Plan, notably priority three and four building stronger, safe and healthy communities and delivering excellent services.**

The Mid and East Antrim Community Plan is a long-term plan for improving the wellbeing of the area and its citizens. It covers the period 2017 to 2032. The Council set up the Community Planning Partnership to bring together the public, voluntary and private sectors to work alongside the community to develop a plan to improve all aspects of life in Mid and East Antrim.

The Community Planning Partnership's vision is that: "Mid and East Antrim will be a strong vibrant, safe and inclusive community, where people work together to improve the quality of life for all."

The five strategic key themes are: Sustainable Jobs and Tourism, Good Health and Wellbeing, Progress in Education, Community Safety & Cohesion and Our Environment.

The 'Out to Play' strategy will also contribute to key themes and outcomes from the Community Plan including outcomes under the themes of Progress in Education, Our Environment, Good Health and Wellbeing and Community Safety and Cohesion.



In the Community Plan, the importance of having safe community spaces and providing recreational activities for children and young people is recognised. As is, the role of formal and informal play in building the fabric of communities and **increasing young people's skills**, confidence and self-esteem.

2.1 Why do we need a Play Strategy?

It is because of the importance of play and the threat to play that Council has developed the 'Out to Play' strategy for the Borough.

With over 26,000 children and young people spread over a wide geographic area, the development of the 'Out to Play' strategy is important not only for enhancing access and addressing barriers to Play but also to ensure that finite Council resources are invested in a manner that best meets the play needs of local children.

The strategy sets a framework for the Council to advocate for **children's right to play** and identifies priorities for play development in this area. It looks at the play opportunities currently available to children and young people in the Borough, identify barriers they face in accessing opportunities for play, and outline how Council will work towards innovative new play opportunities.

2.2 A Definition of Play

For the purposes of the 'Out to Play' strategy the following definition of Play has been adopted. It was set by the Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group in 2005:

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

3.0 What is play?

- Play is an important part of making friends, learning new things, staying healthy and sharing.
- Play can take place in many different places; from designated play areas to green open spaces, woods, beaches, the streets where children live and on the way to places where children can go.
- Play allows children to gain control of their thoughts, feelings and actions and helps them achieve self-confidence.
- Play does not always have to cost money. It does not always need to have special equipment, in fact, some of the best games are made up.
- Getting grown-ups involved in play is important for active, healthier lifestyles and staying young.
- Play is the direct opposite of work.

Play can include, but is not limited to:

Creative Play: Children can produce/change an idea or product in a way that is different and artistic by using their imagination and materials they find around them.

Risky Play: Exciting activity that involves some sort of risk of injury.

Deep Play: Children engage in play that makes them judge and assess their own risk e.g. fire play and climbing trees.

Locomotor Play: This type of play is to do with movement e.g. jumping, running and climbing

Communication Play: Interaction between children/adults/animals, this can be using writing, verbal or body language.

Rough and Tumble Play: Close encounter play which is less to do with fighting and more to do with children understanding their own personal strengths and weaknesses.

Social Play: Children learn about the consequences of different social interactions, e.g. sharing information, telling jokes.

Object Play: Using a wide variety of objects to create a play experience.

Role Play: Is simply a type of pretend play where you get into character and act out a role.

Imaginative Play: Play where the conventional rules, which govern the physical world, do not apply e.g. pretending to be a dog.

Fixed and Non-Fixed Play

“Play needs should be met through both fixed and non-fixed play”.

3.1 Fixed Play

This is associated with traditional fixed play structures. Typical fixed play structures are clustered to suit children of certain ages and abilities. Popular fixed play structures include slides, climbing frames, roundabouts, swings and rockers. Play structures for older children tend to incorporate a degree of risk, for example, zip lines. The structures tend to be located in play parks which serve a specific geographical area.



Defining the scope and reach Council play parks have across the Borough it is important to understand the context within which play areas provide opportunities for local communities to explore parks and open spaces further. The Council's play parks are defined by the following two categories.

Destination Play Parks

Destination Play Parks are visited not only by the local community but by park users from outside the Borough. They provide a much wider range of play activities to engage in, are located in heavily used open spaces and act as a brand for the Council. Park users identify with these areas for a family day out and are supported by other facilities such as car parking, toilets, café/food facilities and good walking routes. These parks also feature strong events calendars and volunteering. Destination parks in the Borough include Marine Gardens in Carrickfergus & Carnfunnock in Larne. Peoples Park had been for many years a Destination Play Park but this is no longer the case and it now acts as a Neighbourhood Play Park.



Neighbourhood Play Parks

Neighbourhood Play Parks are equipped play spaces used by the immediate local community. A merging of the Fields in Trust definition of **‘LEAP’s’ (Locally Equipped Area of Play)** and **‘NEAP’s’ (Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play)** will feature a limited range of dynamic play equipment such as slides, swings and climbing frames. The open space acts as a green lung within the urban landscape allowing local families an area to partake in leisure and play activities, especially in high population density areas.

Benefits

There are a number of benefits to fixed play provision including:

Physical Health: Play Park equipment gets children moving. Slides provide climbing exercise for the legs, bars exercise arms and shoulders and all the equipment together encourages children to run from one piece to another, giving them a healthy dose of cardiovascular exercise.

Social Aspect: Part of the appeal of play parks and their equipment is that children get to be around one another. Group interaction and social development take place on play equipment in a number of ways, for example, children learn how to take turns and exercise self-control waiting for a piece of equipment to become free, they can observe each other on all the equipment and they can strike up conversations with peers on the platforms of fixed play structures.

3.2 Non-Fixed Play

Increasingly, there has been more emphasis placed on encouraging children to engage in non-fixed play. Non-fixed play is not constrained by location or purpose. Non-fixed play (**sometimes referred to as ‘free play’ or ‘loose parts’** play) refers to the wider use of available space within communities for the purpose of play.

Non-fixed play enables children to make use of the wider environment (natural or synthetic) and loose parts (cardboard boxes, balls, skipping ropes, art and craft materials etc.) in order to create their own play experience. This form of play offers countless opportunities for children to play in a way that meets their play need.

In supporting this type of play the role of the adult if present (be they playworker, community volunteer, parent or carer) is to help to create the play space and assist as requested whilst not leading the play activity.

There are many benefits to engaging in loose parts play which include:

- Improved levels of creativity and imaginative play;
- Better co-operation and enhanced social skills;
- Improved physical activity levels;
- Enhanced communication and negotiation skills.

Natural Play: makes use of natural landscaping and natural materials in order to create a play environment which stimulates children and young people. Woodland environments lend themselves to tree climbing, den building whilst open green spaces are great for chasing games and ball games.

It is increasingly common for natural play constructions to be incorporated into fixed play areas where natural materials such as wood, boulders and logs enhance the play value of the play facility.



Street Play: is a form of play that takes place close to the home and is for many children the first real opportunity to explore the community in which they live through play. Opportunities for street-based play have reduced in recent years due to increased levels of traffic and parental safety concerns. However, efforts are being made across many local authorities which aim to bring street play back into the lives of children.



Public Realm Play: is often discouraged, children, particularly older children, do like to play in their town centres and shopping centres. It is important to recognise that for children play is not something that takes place only in a designated play area - they will naturally seek out opportunities to play no matter where they are.



4.0 Why is Play so important?

Health

Active Play is the most common type of physical activity that children take part in. Unstructured play may be one of the best forms of physical activity for children (British Heart Foundation, 2009)

The early years is an important time in the establishment of physical activity and sedentary behaviours. Being physically active helps with the development of:

- Motor skill e.g. balance, coordination
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Strong bones, muscle and heart
- Social skills i.e. how to interact, take turns and caring about others



There is evidence that children spending a large amount of time being sedentary is associated with being overweight and obesity as well as lower cognitive development. In addition, patterns of sedentary behaviour, especially TV viewing, established in the early years are more likely to be continued through to adulthood.

Play is crucial to children’s healthy development and happiness, evidence demonstrates that one of the best ways for children to stay both physically and mentally healthy is through access to a variety of unstructured play experiences.

Recent research reports have highlighted the importance of physically active play in contributing to **children’s exercise levels**. **Research by University College London** found that outdoor and unstructured play is one of the best forms of exercise for children.

Statistics by the **British Heart Foundation** report that ‘Almost one in five children are overweight in Northern Ireland by the time they start Primary **School**’. Local figures obtained from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust for 2014/15 show the following figures for Mid and East Antrim for primary one aged children in Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne:

	Overweight	Obese
Ballymena	17.0%	4.4%
Carrickfergus	15.5%	8.1%
Larne	16.4%	4.7%

Good play experiences can also enhance children and young people’s mental health. This is particularly important given the current rise in rates of mental health problems among young people. **Refine NI** report that more than 20% of young people are suffering “significantly from mental health issues” in Northern Ireland.

4.1 Staying Safe and Learning to Manage Risk

Good play provision protects children through reducing unacceptable levels of danger, while allowing them the opportunity to challenge their own boundaries, learn new skills and use their initiative in a constructive way. At the same time, play enables children to take risks, to think through decisions, manage risk and gain increased self-confidence and greater resilience. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recognises the importance of play in children's lives and for their opportunities to learn about risk. HSE commends the Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation Guide and its sensible approach to the health and safety management of play provision through the application of risk-benefit assessment.



Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

If we want young children to flourish and to divert them from antisocial behaviour, thinking about what teenagers want and what the community can provide is important. As well as play provision that offers challenge, provision should include youth activities, and safe spaces to hang out. Research commissioned by CABA Space shows that **“place-making”**, improving the design, maintenance and supervision of parks and other public space is a more effective solution to **“antisocial behaviour”** than simple increasing security measures.

Inclusivity

Council is committed to working towards the inclusion of all children within their local communities; regardless of perceived ability.



Children with a disability need and want to play as much as, and alongside, others. Social and environmental barriers should not deny any child this essential part of growing up.

The right to play is a fundamental human right. Children of all ages and abilities should have opportunities to play freely and confidently, with equal access to equipment and services.

Smoke Free Play Parks

The negative health effects associated with smoking cigarettes are well known.

The Council believe that children and park users have the right to access environments that are smoke free.

Evidence suggests that by reducing children's exposure to smoking and making it less socially acceptable, children are less likely to take up the habit themselves.



All play parks in Mid and East Antrim are smoke-free and visitors are reminded of this through signage at the entrance to each play park.

Sun Safety

Council recognises the importance of promoting sun safety in all our parks and play areas across the Borough. Working in partnership with the Public Health Authority and Cancer Focus (Northern Ireland) we hope to reduce the incidences of skin cancer and promote sun safety with all park visitors.

4.2 The Importance of Play for All Ages

The importance of play cannot be overstated. This is true for everybody, not just children.

Adolescents

Teenagers may not call it play, but the time that they spend with their friends or on their own, without being told what to do, is their version of play. Teenage play is predominantly social and they have the freedom to decide for themselves or as a group how to have fun. Analysis of teenage behaviour during play shows that their behaviour mimics and practices being an adult, which is a positive for their development. It is important to provide safe spaces and opportunities for this.



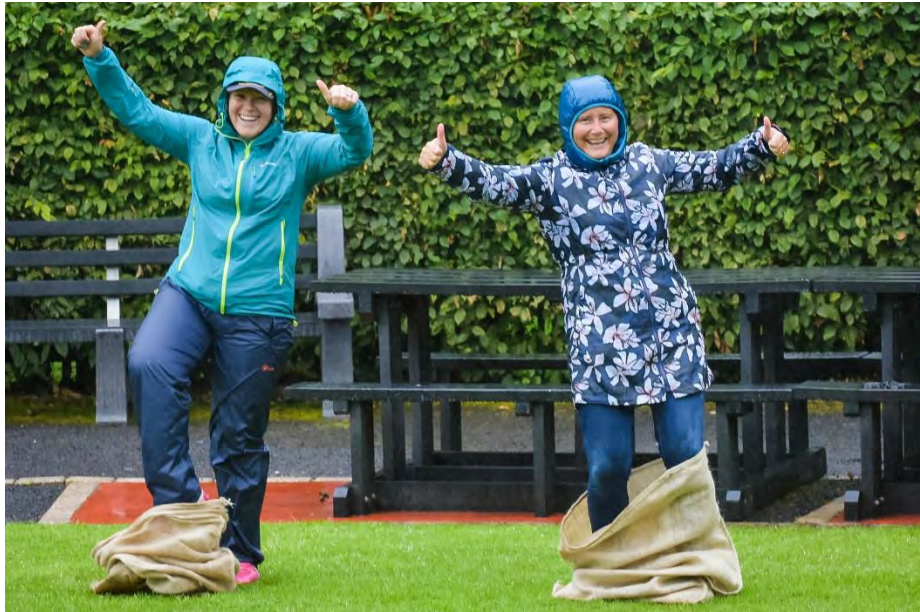
Adults

The importance of play for children is well documented. Increasingly researchers are turning their attention to play benefits for adults. Play can be a very important means of reducing stress and contributing to overall well-being. Play is a basic human need as essential to our well-being as sleep, so when we are low on play, our minds and bodies notice. Over time play deprivation can reveal itself in certain patterns of behaviour - feeling tense, stuck in a rut or victimised by life. To benefit most from the rejuvenating benefits of play, adults need to incorporate it into their everyday lives.

Play opportunities for adults can include, but are not limited to:

- Walking the dog
- Sporting activities
- Collecting stamps
- Playing a musical instrument
- Allotment gardening
- Joining a volunteer group

Adults are advised to think back to the play they enjoyed as a child and try to connect that to their life now.



Elderly

After all, in our later years, many of us become more prone to issues that can affect our health and happiness. So any activities that can help us restore or prolong our vitality are essential. Having fun is a lot more powerful than we may have previously understood. Scientific studies continue to show that play and fun activities can have several major benefits for the elderly including:

- Improve mental sharpness, memory and the ability to learn new things
- Enable seniors to make new friends or improve existing relationships and decrease the amount of seniors who feel lonely
- Improve your mental and emotional well-being, reduce your stress and prevent depression
- Improve physical vitality, boost the immune system, reduce risk of illness, and minimize perception of any existing pain

Play opportunities for the elderly can include, but are not limited to:

- Gardening
- Bird watching
- Walking groups
- Arts and crafts
- Flower arranging
- Bowling
- Dancing
- Singing



5.0 What are the Barriers to Play?

Play should be made as easy as possible for our children, however, situations exist which prevent them from taking part in this essential childhood activity. Some of the barriers to play include:

1. Lack of Awareness of the Importance of Play

With so much pressure on children and young people to do well in school children often go without play time in order to concentrate on homework or revision and other formal extra-curricular activities.

2. Traffic

A survey commissioned in 2013 by Playboard Northern Ireland along with Play England, Play Wales & Play Scotland, found that over 53% of parents had concerns about traffic, which consistently appears high on the list of factors restricting outdoor play. The growing dominance of cars in residential streets, along with concerns about road safety, restricts the space and opportunity for children and young people to engage in active outdoor play.

3. Negative Attitudes

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



4. Reduction in Free Time

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

5. Parental Anxiety

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

6. Screen Time

The lure of technology is strong and screens are everywhere, in the car, at school and in the home. These devices can contribute to obesity and replace such activities as free play and physical activity. With the decline in play opportunities affecting children generally, the impact is disproportionately greater on disabled children and children living with other forms of social or economic disadvantage, for whom access to free and enjoyable play spaces is especially important.

7. Lack of Access to Nature

Children learn to appreciate and care for the natural world by playing in it. Play in the natural environment helps children develop agility, balance, creativity and concentration. Some children have less access to parks, forests, beaches and other natural areas. Many children living in large urban settings often have limited access to green space.

8. Barriers Specific to Children with Disabilities and their Carers include:

Access - physical access can present barriers for wheelchair users or children with mobility difficulties.

Communication - communication and language barriers prevent many disabled children from joining in.

Information - a lack of information on suitability means parents are often unaware of what is available.

Negative attitudes - negative attitudes are ingrained from an early age and by providing opportunities for children of all abilities to come together within the same space we can help build positive attitudes.

6.0 Play Management and Maintenance

There is a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that our play facilities for children and young people are safe and fit for purpose. The ability to defend litigation claims will very often depend upon the quality of inspections carried out, standard of maintenance and reporting documentation. In accordance with the Health & Safety legislation a minimum three-tier approach to play area inspection and maintenance will be followed. All inspections are recorded in writing.

Information gleaned from inspections can help inform future improvements particularly in regard to equipment use and its suitability. Ensuring that the right play equipment is located at the right site will enable efficient use of resources and help reduce maintenance costs. Council currently employs a dedicated full trained Inspection Team to ensure it meets its strict standards for the maintenance of facilities.

6.1 Routine Visual Inspection

This inspection looks at the equipment's basic condition, any faults from vandalism, breakages and cleanliness of the play area. Frequency will depend on usage, with a risk assessment determining the exact inspection rate on each site. Most facilities are inspected daily to three times per week, a weekly inspection is seen as a minimum standard.

6.2 Operational Inspection

This inspection looks at the condition of the equipment in more detail, identifying wear and tear and represents a more rigorous inspection providing a quality control **check. These inspections are carried out by the Council's** RPII Operational Play Area Inspector, once a month.

6.3 Annual Inspection

This inspection is carried out by an independent external specialist. Essentially this inspection is to check wear and tear, long term structural problems, and compliance with approved standards. The site should also be risk assessed and appropriate measures taken to remedy high risk defects. Other criteria such as DDA compliance

and Play Value assessments are also included in this inspection. This report covers the overall safety of the play area and full documentation is received from the external inspector.

7.0 Play Value & Quality Assessment

Not all play spaces are equal. As well as carrying out routine safety inspections at all of the Council owned play parks an independent assessor also undertakes a Play Value Assessment at each site. This assessment enables us, as **play park manager's**, to create the best possible conditions for children to play. The aim of this quality assessment is to assess **the quality of children's** play spaces. In this assessment we focus on three major **aspects to children's outdoor play provision: the location** of play areas, the play value and the care and maintenance of play parks.



7.1 Design of a New Fixed Play Park

When designing a new fixed play park the Play Value Assessment tool will be used to ensure the play provision meets the needs of the local population. A successful play space is a place in its own right, specially designed for its location, in such a way as to provide as much play value as possible. In addition to the Play Value Assessment tool, the ten principles for designing successful play spaces are:

- are **'bespoke'** - designed to enhance their setting;
- are well located - in the best possible place for children;
- make use of natural elements - close to nature;
- provide a wide range of play experiences - where children can play in different ways;
- are accessible to all abilities - so all children can play together;
- meet community needs and are loved by the community;
- allow children and young people of different ages to play together;
- build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge - where children can stretch and challenge themselves in every way;
- are sustainable and appropriately maintained - maintained for play value and environmental sustainability;
- allow for change and evolution - evolving as the children grow.

Council requires residential developments of 100 units or more, or on sites of five **hectares or more to provide an equipped children's play area, unless otherwise** specified through key site requirements. New housing developments of an appropriate scale provide an important opportunity to deliver new equipped **children's play areas**.

7.2 The Importance of Play Value

The assessment deliberately focuses on the different, innovative and challenging ways in which children can have a wide variety of play experiences and sensations such as rocking, swinging and sliding - this is particularly important for some children with disabilities whose impairments mean they cannot for example, sit on traditional swings.

The natural environment offers many opportunities for this and consideration should be given to the varied and interesting ways in which children can play in these environments. Quiet, contemplative play is as important as boisterous and physical play and although children will play in their own way in any given area, their play can be enriched through creating appropriate and stimulating play environments.

Children need to take risks to learn about and understand their own capabilities. Risk does not mean creating hazardous environments, but it does mean ensuring opportunities for challenging play are available through design.

8.0 Policy Context

Play is essential to children's happiness, health and development. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 gives all children the right "to rest and leisure; to engage in age-appropriate play and recreational activities." There is increasing evidence, however, that children's play opportunities are under threat. Many children and young people do not have the degree of freedom or access to the spaces and environments that they need in order to play. The consequences both for their immediate quality of life and for their long-term health and development are significant.



There are a number of important strategic documents at local, regional and international level which impact on how we deliver our play functions within Mid and East Antrim as well as several partnerships and organisations which help support us to provide high value play experiences and opportunities for our children and young people.

8.1 International

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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

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

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

Recognises 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 arts.

Respects and promotes the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

It also recognises that the lack of play opportunities can also bring about the loss in self-confidence, self-identify, concentration and independence in children. In addition, opportunities for social interaction at both family and wider community cohesion, with reduced opportunity for meeting new people and forming relationships. Play provides opportunities for children to develop their sense of self-identity and self-esteem, to empathise with others and increase awareness of the consequences of their actions. This in turn can contribute to reducing incidences of anti-social behaviour in later years, play creating an appealing diversion to such behaviours from an early age.

The Mid and East Antrim Play Strategy can seek to address this through provision of play opportunities which can create an environment to nurture and develop children to the benefit of themselves, their family, carers and wider community. It will clearly contribute to building positive relationships at the local level and forge more cohesive communities through increased opportunities for interaction and use of shared space by children, families and their wider communities.

8.2 National

Open Spaces, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

Fields and Trust, previously known as the National Playing Fields Association, is a British charity that has been protecting and promoting open spaces for sport and recreation since 1925. The Six Acre Standard aims to help land use planners ensure a sufficient level of Open Space to enable residents of all ages to participate in sports and games with an emphasis on access for children to play grounds and other play space. The standard suggests that for each 1000 residents there should be a total of 6 acres (2.43ha) of recreational land, of which 4 acres (1.6 ha) should be for outdoor sport and recreation space (including parks) and 2 acres (0.81 ha) **for children's play, with some of this being equipped play parks.**

8.3 Regional

NI Programme for Government

Still in draft form, the NI Programme for Government acknowledges and recognises play as an important aspect of childhood noting its importance in terms of development, well-being and enjoyment of childhood.

NI Executive Play and Leisure Policy and Implementation Plan

The NI Executive published its Play and Leisure Policy Statement in 2009 and in it highlighted its commitment to delivering against the play and leisure needs of **children and young people. This was followed in March 2011 by the Executive's endorsement of the 'Play and Leisure Policy'** and an associated implementation plan.

At the heart of the policy is a recognition that play is not only critical to the individual child in terms of their health and wellbeing; but also that play has a key role in creating cohesive communities and tackling a range of issues including anti-social behaviour, inter-generational issues and the legacy of community division left over by the troubles. The policy recognises and highlights the importance of risk in play to allow children to explore boundaries and test abilities in such cases where it can be shown that the benefits to the child outweigh the potential risks

NI Children and Young People's Strategy

'Our Children and Young People - Our Pledge' is the title of the most recent **children and young people's** strategy (2006 - 2016). It is based around six key outcome areas which, if achieved, will ensure that children and young people thrive and look forward with confidence to the future:

- Healthy
- Enjoying, learning and achieving
- Living in safety and with stability
- Experiencing economic and environmental well-being
- Contributing positively to community and society

- Living in a society which respects their rights.

The strategy recognises the importance of play and adequate provision for play as a means of supporting healthy growth and development highlighting a range of benefits including improved physical health and mental wellbeing; enhanced emotional resilience; improved educational capacity; and the wider community benefits which come from children and young people being visible and active through outdoor play.

The NI Executive are currently in the process of developing a further 10 year strategy to run from 2016 to 2026 which will place play as one of its seven key outcome areas.

DHSSPS Fitter Future for All Framework (2012 - 2022)

This framework addresses the need to preventing and address overweight and obesity in Northern Ireland and recognises that there are a number of factors in relation to tackling obesity and improving health outcomes.

Those with lower socio-economic status may tend to have lower participation in formal physical activity; notably combined with poor urban environments, limited safe play facilities and a lack of community safety which prevents them from making healthier lifestyles choices.

Physical activity through the presence of green space not only reduces the risk of heart disease (by up to 50%) but also has a positive impact on stress, obesity and a general sense of wellbeing. It also cuts the risk of premature death (by 20-30%) according to the Department according to statistics from the Department of Health.

Green space links directly to levels of physical activity. Children with more green space are less likely to be overweight. Research has shown that children in greener neighbourhoods have lower Body Mass Indexes (BMIs).

The framework identifies a series of outcomes that Mid and East Antrim Play Strategy should be cognisant of:

- **All “Early Years” settings deliver evidence based initiatives and programmes** in respect of nutrition, physical activity and play.
- Increased opportunities for play, particularly in areas of deprivation so that children and families have access to safe facilities for play and physical activity in their locality, particularly in areas of deprivation.
- A greater proportion of children and young people are achieving recommended levels of physical activity.
- Children and young people can access opportunities and facilities for physical activity and play within their local community.
- Children and young people have greater knowledge about recommended levels of physical activity and have more opportunities to participate.

The framework highlights the importance for play places and spaces to be available for children and young people across the Borough and associated annual programme of activities to increase physical activity levels, to lead to healthier outcomes.

Making Life Better (2013 - 2023)

‘Making Life Better’ outlines the NI Executives objective of creating the conditions for individuals, families and communities to take greater control over their lives, enabling and supporting them to lead healthy lives.

The focus of ‘Making Life Better’ is on collaborative working between individuals, communities and partner organisations to address the range of factors that impact on health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland. Underpinning ‘Making Life Better’ are 6 key themes:

- Giving Every Child the Best Start
- Equipped Throughout Life
- Empowering Healthy Living
- Creating the Conditions
- Empowering Communities
- Developing Collaboration

The importance of play is outlined under outcome 2 of thematic area 1 entitled **‘Healthy and confident children and young people’ which gives a commitment to “Promote the benefits of play and leisure and increase opportunities for children and young people to enjoy it” on a cross-government basis** including key Executive departments and Local Government.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement

The planning system has recently been reformed with Councils now having responsibility for the implementation of key planning functions.

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) was published on the 28th September 2015 and reduces twenty separate planning policy statements to one, setting out objectives for open space, recreation and leisure. The SPPS also sets out how the Local Development Plan plays a role in terms of open space i.e. adequate provision for green and blue infrastructure, identify and designate areas of open space etc. Under the SPSS the policy provision of PPS 7 (Quality Residential Environments) and PPS 8 (Open Space and Outdoor recreation) are retained until council adopts its Plan Strategy for the Local Development Plan (LDP)

PPS 7 (Quality Residential Environments)

PPS 7 highlights the need for developers to consider the play needs of future residents within development plans outlining that:

- a) Play facilities should be seen as part of local neighbourhood facilities and (where required) should be incorporated into design and layout, designed to high standard and located to provide focal points and landmark features;

- b) It is considered reasonable to expect developers to contribute to the cost of provision and/or to set land aside for use by local community;
- c) Regard should be given to integrating pleasant, attractive and landscaped **areas of open space, including children's play-spaces**, as an intrinsic element of any new residential development.

PPS 8, (Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation)

PPS 8 develops on the strategic guidelines included in PPS 7 and states:

“For residential development of 100 units or more, or for development sites of 5 hectares or more, an equipped children's play area will be required as an integral part of the development. The Department will consider an exception to this requirement where an equipped children's play area exists within reasonable walking distance (generally around 400 metres) of the majority of the units within the development scheme.”

Paragraph 5.14 emphasises the importance of providing for children's play stressing the need for play areas to be located within a reasonable walking distance of where they live whilst not being located so close to dwellings that that they are likely to cause nuisance for residents.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council recently undertook an extensive consultation exercise in order to produce a Preferred Options Paper (POP) which will inform the **new Local Development Plan (LDP). Within Council's recent Preferred Options Paper** for the new LDP, our preferred option for play park provision was to:

“Set out strategic policy requiring residential developments of 100 units or more, or on sites of five hectares or more to provide an equipped children's play area, unless otherwise specified through key site requirements.”

New housing developments of an appropriate scale provide an important opportunity **to deliver new equipped children's play areas. The zoning of housing land and the** use of key site requirements for specific sites will not be carried out until the second stage of the LDP, the Local Policies Plan. Once we reach that stage, key site requirements can be applied to zoned housing sites setting out if an equipped play area should be provided on site, if developer contributions are required or alternatively if a play area is not required due to existing adequate provision. **This option will allow children's equipped play provision to be assessed on a site by site** basis taking into account our Play Strategy. This option however, will also retain the existing policy approach as set out in Policy OS 2 of PPS 8 to ensure that there will be no policy gap between the adoption of the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan. This will safeguard against the loss of opportunities for the provision **of children's play areas.**

Policy Implications

This preferred option will require an amendment to Policy OS 2 of PPS 8 to allow for **variations in the provision of equipped children's play areas within identified housing** zonings. Play parks outside housing zonings in appropriate locations will also be supported. MEA Planning Department is currently reviewing the responses to the

Preferred Options Paper. A number of responses were received from the public and statutory consultees in relation to play provision within residential developments. All responses will be considered and where appropriate reflected in the emerging Local Development Plan.

Child Poverty Strategy 2014 - 2017

The government remains firmly committed to the goal of ending child poverty in the UK by 2020. This strategy sets out the actions they will take to tackle child poverty through:

- a) Supporting families into work and increasing their earnings
- b) Improving living standards and
- c) Preventing poor children becoming poor adults through raising their educational attainment.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council aims to contribute to the strategy by;

- Promoting affordable, accessible play and leisure provision for all children and young people
- Providing different learning environments which complement formal learning and are focused on the personal and social development of children and young people
- Improving opportunities for low income families to participate in arts, cultural, sporting and leisure activities.

Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

Commencing no later than 1st June 2018 the Act places a duty on local authorities to have due regard to rural needs when—

- (a) developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans, and
- (b) designing and delivering public services.

This will apply to the development and delivery of a Play Strategy. The Act also places a duty on local authorities to report to the Department on how it is meeting the duty as set out in the Act.

With its broad geographical area and considerable rural population, special consideration will need to be given to ensure that the play needs of rural children are considered.

Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland

Outdoor Recreation NI are a not for profit organisation whose role is to develop, manage and promote outdoor education across Northern Ireland. This is achieved by working in partnership with a wide range of organisations that have an interest in, or involvement with Outdoor Recreation.

They have six key priorities that they would like to deliver to make Northern Ireland's outdoors great;

- Championing the Outdoors
- Developing partnerships and delivering best practice
- **Improving the nation's health and wellbeing**
- Empowering volunteers
- Delivering and managing Quality Outdoor Recreation
- Increase awareness of Outdoor Recreation opportunities

Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP)

Locality Planning Groups have **been set up under the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnerships**. The CYPSP aims to plan and provide services to children and young people more efficiently by making joint decisions about the services needed, and funding these services together.

Locality Planning Groups exist for Carrickfergus, Ballymena and Larne. They seek to improve outcomes for the children and young people in the local area. The partnership of front-line staff from organisations across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors in the local area work together to raise and support the social, health and educational development of children and young people in the area and develop annual action plans to deliver same.

Everybody Active 2020

Everybody Active 2020 is a regional sport and physical activity programme that is being delivered across the Borough in partnership with Sport NI. The programme received over £6m funding from National Lottery for Northern Ireland and its aim is **to "getting more people, more active, more often."**

It recognises **that regular physical activity and exercise is important to everyone's** daily lives, irrespective of age, gender and ability. The programme targets groups that are harder to reach, women and children, those in high social need and people with disabilities.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council develops and delivers an annual action plan to ensure that the key aims of the programme are met in this area.

There are four main outcomes to the Action Plan;

- To increase opportunities for regular participation in sport and physical activity within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.
- To increase social and health benefits delivered by sport and physical activity within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.
- To improve equality of access to sport and physical activity for the least active residents within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

- To increase opportunities for children and young people to participate and have access to sustained participation in sport and physical activity in school and community settings within Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

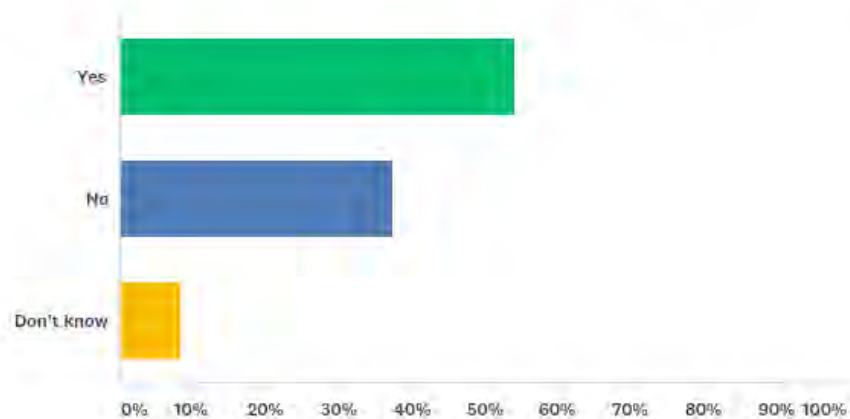
The EBA2020 Action Plan shares some of the same goals as this Play Strategy, in particular to health and well-being, accessibility and supporting communities. It also recognises the importance and value of partnership working, and seeks to coordinate a joint approach to help with the sport and physical activity plan. Central to this, our play strategy wants to reach into communities to maximise participation and that is why Council will deliver an annual programme of activities throughout our parks and green space to increase physical activity levels and improve health and wellbeing to all.

9.0 Our Survey Results

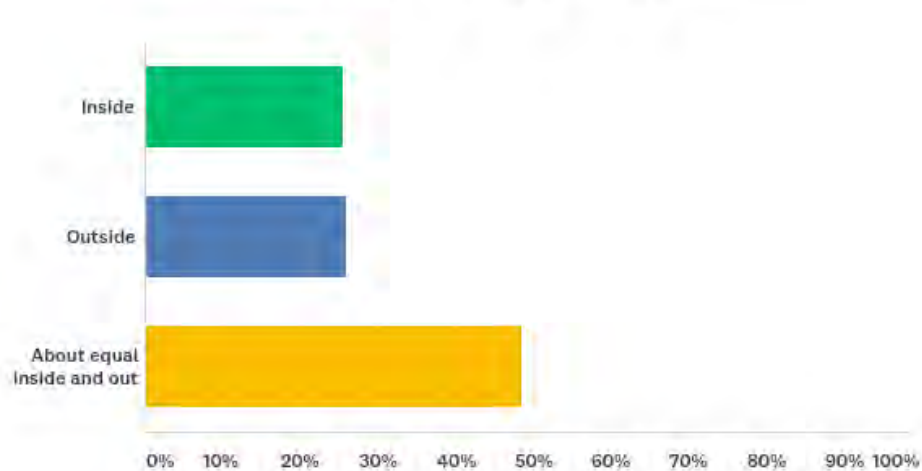
9.1 The ‘Out to Play’ Survey Results

Children and young people across the Borough were **asked to ‘have their say on play’** and complete a survey. The aim being to hear directly from our younger residents on how play provision should be developed in the Borough. The questions and results are detailed below:

Q1 Where you live are there many places to play outside safely?



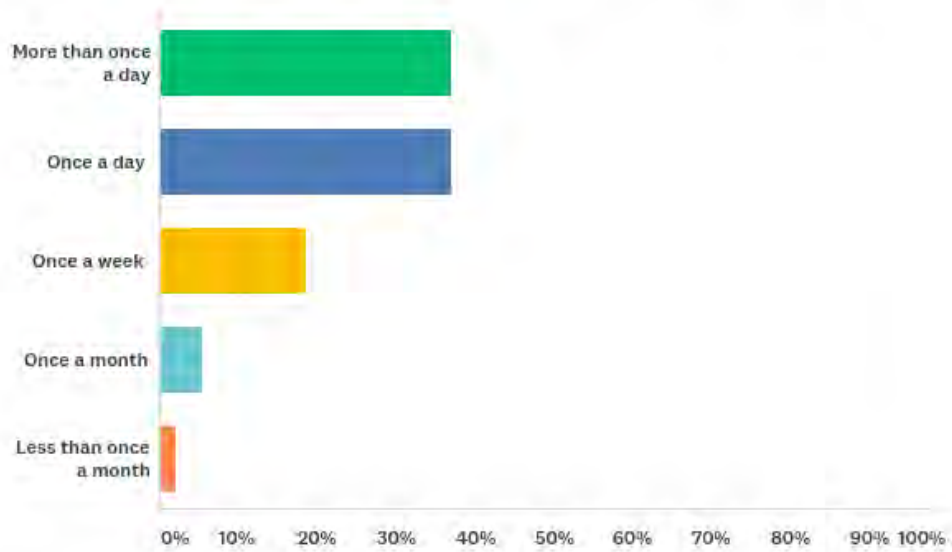
Q2 Do you play mostly...?



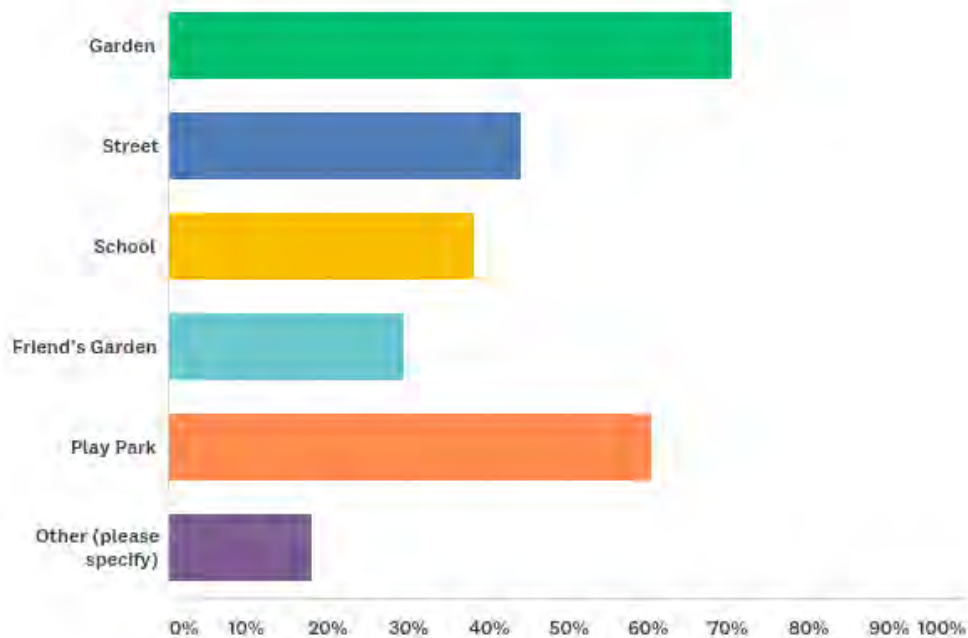
Over 50% of respondents feel safe playing outside but nearly 40% stated that there are not many places to play outside safely in their area.

Half of the respondents play inside and outside equally, with one quarter mainly inside and another quarter mainly outside.

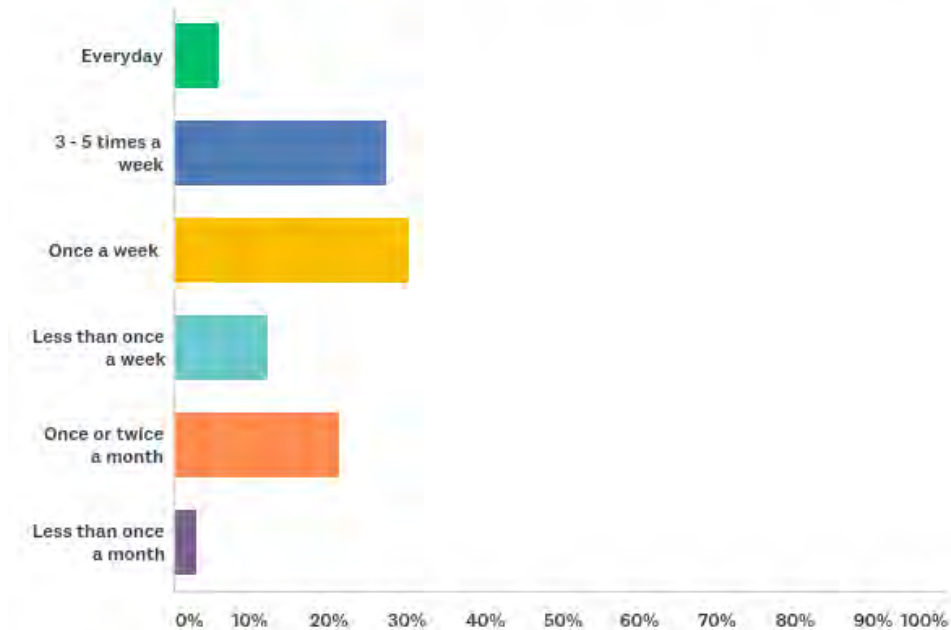
Q3 How often do you go to outdoor play areas?



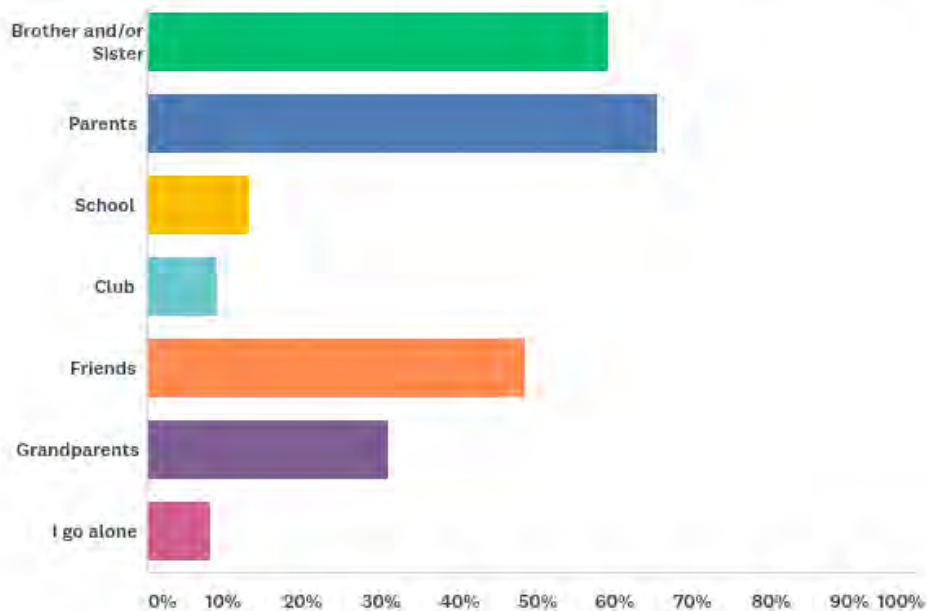
Q4 Where do you play outside?



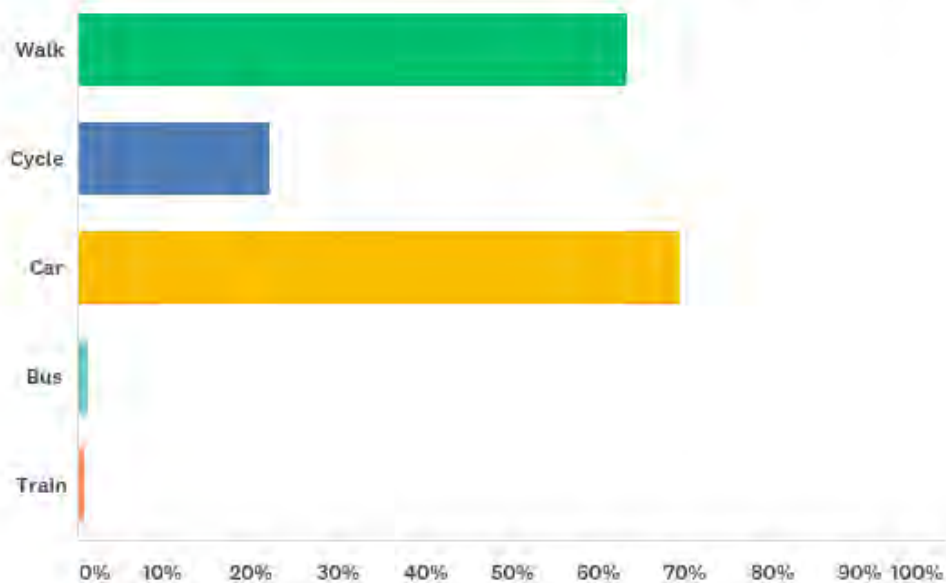
Q5 How often do you visit a play park?



Q6 Who do you go to play areas with? Pick all that apply.

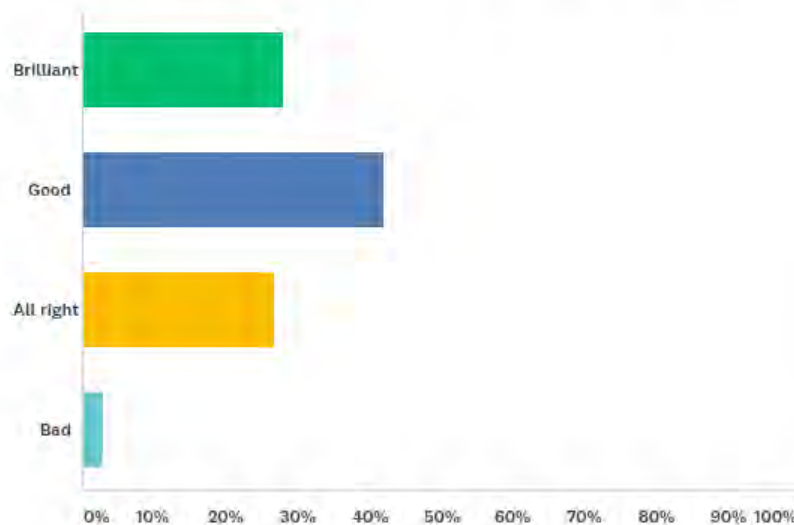


Q7 How do you travel to play areas? Pick all that apply

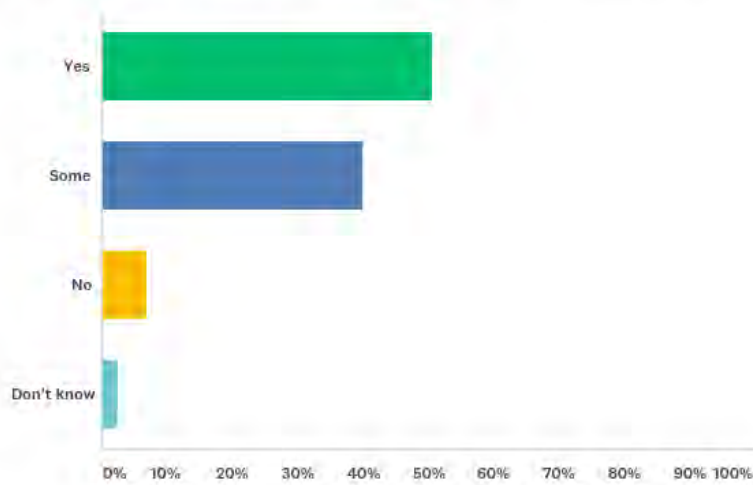


Just under 40% of respondents play once a day with 36% playing more than once a day. The garden is the most popular choice for playing outdoors, followed by a local play park. 30% of the children visit a play park at least once a week, with 6% visiting every day. Respondents mainly visit the play park with family members, with over 60% visiting the area with their parents. Respondents mainly travel to the park by car (69%), closely followed by walking (63%).

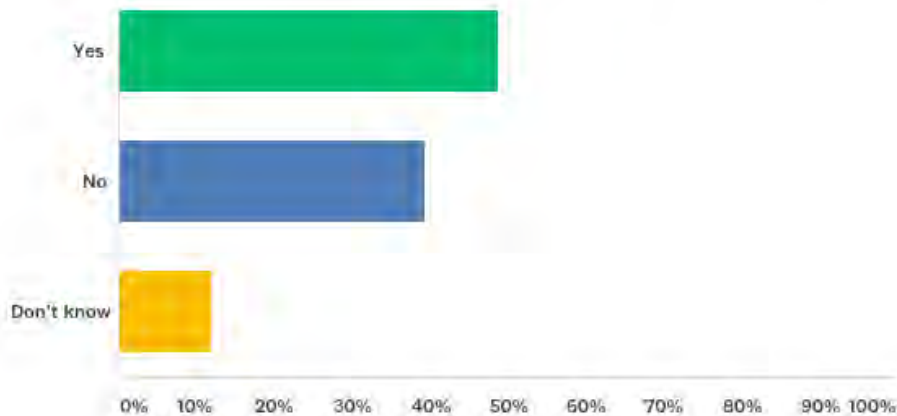
Q8 How good do you think play areas are?



Q9 Do all the play things work properly in your local play park?



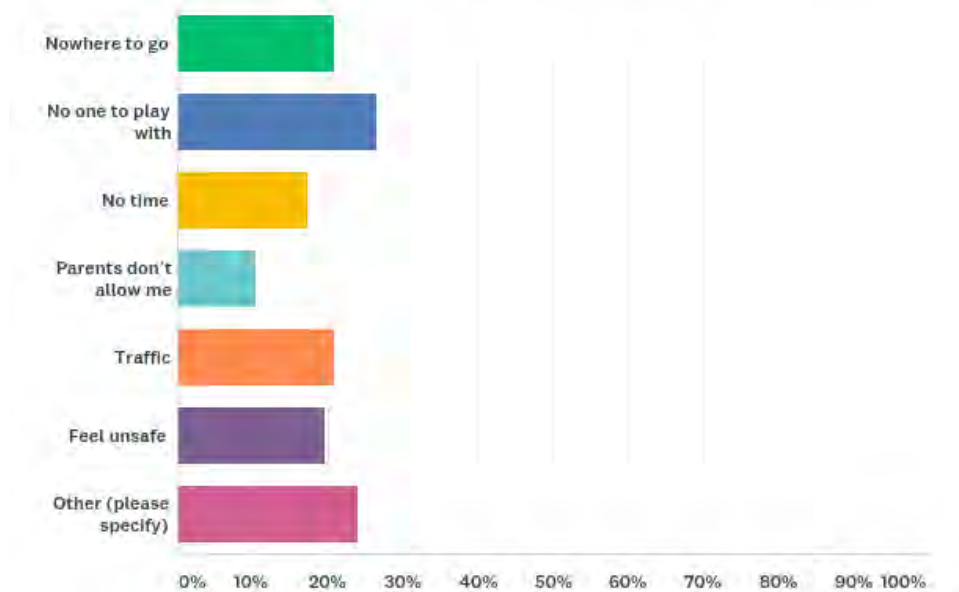
Q10 Are the play areas clean with no graffiti, litter or mess?



A positive level of support was recorded for play parks, with 28% stating that the **areas were 'brilliant'** and over 40% stating that the play areas where they live are **'good'**. 90% of respondents agreed all or most of the play equipment worked in their local park and 48% agreed play areas were clean with no graffiti, litter or mess.

Council will explore ways to make sure that we keep a healthy percentage of play equipment in working order, with less graffiti, litter and mess.

Q11 What things stop you from playing outside?



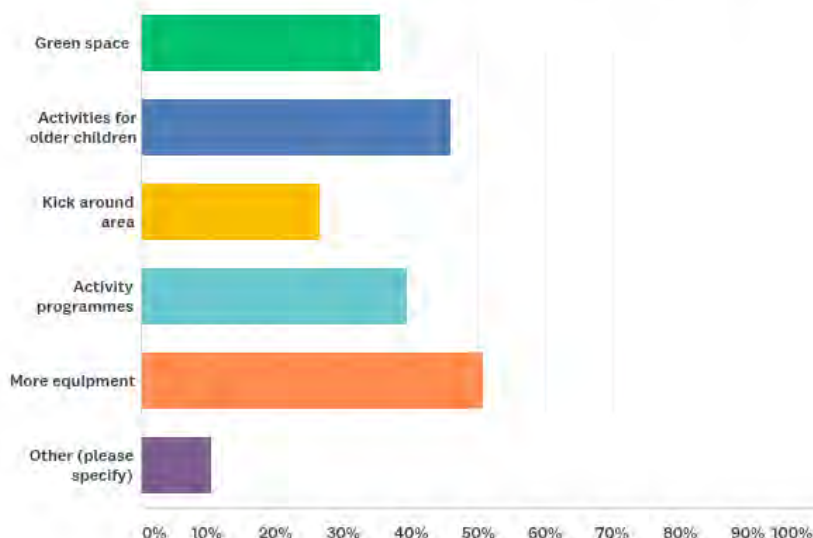
Over 45% of respondents said they had 'no one to play with', 'no time' or 'parents don't allow me'. This highlights the need to actively promote the importance of making time for play and engaging the whole family in play.

21% of respondents said they had 'nowhere to go'. This presents an opportunity for Council and the community to unlisted underused green spaces and develop a programme of non-fixed play provision which could include natural play, street play and public realm play.

19% of respondents felt unsafe. Tackling the problem of 'feeling unsafe' Council will explore the opportunity of training volunteer Play Rangers at sites across the Borough.

Other reasons included not enough time as too much homework, older children bullying and the weather.

Q12 What type of play activities would you like to see in your area?



Most respondents (50%) would like to see more equipment closely followed by **‘activities for older children’ (45%)**. **40% would like to see activity programmes** and more green space (35%). Other responses included skate boarding facilities, zip wire and climbing walls for the older children and more equipment for the under 4s.

Summary

These findings have been used to develop a set of strategic themes and associated actions which will direct Council and the Play Partnership over the next five years. This approach will ensure an evidence based model, tailored to the needs of the Borough and its citizens. Based on these findings, Council aim to work with children, parents and the local community to ensure that play spaces and activities within the Borough are planned in a way that ensures children, of all ages and abilities, can participate, learn and build new friendships in a positive and supportive way.

9.2 The Play Value Scoring Matrix results

Play areas across the Borough are gauged using the Play Value Scoring Matrix which critically assesses the quality, accessibility and use of each area. The Play Values Scoring Matrix assessment criteria highlights twenty different categories under three headings: **Location**, **Play Value** and **Care and Maintenance**. Each of these categories are scored out of five, giving a final total out of 100. The different categories of the assessment criteria used to assess play value in Mid and East Antrim are set out below.

Informal oversight	Meets different age needs
Well used by children	Movement
Getting there	Imaginative play
Personal safety	Access to natural environment

Accessibility	Seating for children
Meeting other children	Well maintained
Designed for the site	Seating for Adults
Meet minimum size standards	Litter bins
Enticing Children to play	Dog free zone
Play opportunities for children with disabilities	Smoke free zone

Mid and East Antrim's Council Play value results are completed during the annual inspection in Spring and provide an overall picture of quality of play areas across the Borough. The latest results show that the average Play Value total score was 66/100.

We then band the play park scores into three broad categories i.e. Gold, Silver & Bronze. The **'Gold'** play value score of 70 or more, indicated an excellent play value score, and includes some of the **Borough's** top play parks. A **'Silver'** play value score of 60 to 69, indicates an average play value score. A **'Bronze'** play value score of 50 to 59, indicates that the play parks needs some improved. A score under 50, indicates that the play park needs to be reviewed with a view to either enhancing, replacing or removing the facility. In areas where there are multiple play parks of low play value within the same area, we would be keen to reduce these numbers and have one quality play park to serve the whole community, an example would be consolidating the three play parks in Ballykeen to create one large, central play area.

Some of the highest scoring play areas are:

- Marine Gardens, Marine Highway, Carrickfergus.
- Gobbins Play Park, Middle Road, Islandmagee.
- Drumtara Play Park, Drumtara, Ballymena.

Results showed that most play parks across the Borough are well used, have a good informal oversight, provide good personal safety and are in a good location for getting there. Results showed there are opportunities to improve on play value for children with disabilities, to improve access to the natural environment and enhance imaginative play opportunities.

9.3 Mapping of Deprivation

Deprivation is linked to poor outcomes for children and young people. Children who grow up in poverty lack many of the experiences and opportunities that others take for granted. Growing up in poverty can damage physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.

15% of the areas making up Mid and East Antrim are classed as being in the top most deprived areas in Northern Ireland and just over a quarter of areas (17) are among the least deprived.

In terms of health, Northland, Ballee, Ballyloran and Sunnylands are the four most deprived areas in Mid and East Antrim. Notably, enhanced play provision can help to

improve each ward's living environment, potentially benefitting the most deprived areas. Galgorm, Bluefield, Ballyloughan and Knockagh are the four least deprived areas in Mid and East Antrim.

Increasing access to a range of play opportunities for children living in the areas of greatest need will be implemented via the Action Plan.

The childhood obesity rate of P1 pupils in Mid and East Antrim has fallen from 5.1% in 2008/09 to 4.9% in 2012/13. It is below the 5.2% Northern Ireland average and the third lowest across all the Councils areas.

However, in the most deprived areas in Mid and East Antrim, the childhood obesity rate has increased from 6.4% to 7.4%.

Sport Northern Ireland have produced a report, 'Encouragement & Inspiration' which details the key findings for the experiences of sport and physical activity for children and young people across the 11 district council areas in 2015.

In terms of the percentage of young people in Mid and East Antrim who are physically active at the recommended level or above (60 minutes a day, 7 days a week):

- For P7 pupils this is 35%, the highest rate in Northern Ireland (The national average being 32%, with the lowest percentage of 28% occurring in Fermanagh & Omagh).
- For 16 year olds, this proportion falls to 8% and is ranked fifth out of all eleven Council areas (this is just below the 9% figure for Northern Ireland, with a range from 5% in Derry & Strabane, to 20% in Ards & North Down)

Where Mid and East Antrim does appear to fall behind, is the proportion of young people who participate in organised sports activities or gym outside school:

- For P7 pupils this is 74%, which ranks seventh out of all Council areas. For Northern Ireland, the average is 74% and ranges from 14% in Mid Ulster, to 80% in Lisburn City & Castlereagh.
- For 16 year olds in Mid and East Antrim the figure is 45%, which ranks tenth out of eleven Council areas. For Northern Ireland, the average is 52% and the range is from 44% in Newry City, Mourne & Down to 66% in Causeway Coast & Glens.

9.4 Mapping of Play Provision

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have undertaken a robust mapping exercise, identifying the scale of and need for play infrastructure across the Borough. Part of this mapping exercise required us to set a local standard. It is proposed that the local standard is: 'That the majority of households will be within a maximum of 500 metres (a ten minute walk) radius of a fixed play area. However, consideration must be given to rural and urban areas, as it is not always possible to have fixed play in small settlements as defined by the Planning Service.

[illegible]

Eden has been identified as an area with a high population of children, with no existing fixed play provision. Although the Education Authority does provide fixed play at the local school, it is not available to use for either those not attending the school or when the school is closed at evenings, weekends and during holiday breaks.

The top ten areas with the highest average of children per household are:

- Ahoghill is a rural village, which has the highest average of children per house. The majority of these houses fall into the radius of 500 metres away from a Council owned play park. It is well equipped with three existing play parks, two of which scored above the average in 'Play Value' results. The new community park being developed by council on the three hectares of land near the community centre, will

also provide the community with a wide range of play opportunities. The whole site will lend itself to imaginative natural play with meadows, woodland and walk ways providing multi-dimensional seasonal changes with which young people can interact. Plenty of green space on offer accommodates non-fixed **play opportunities like “Pop Up Play” “Family Fun Days” “Intergenerational Environmental Activities such as horticulture and tree planting” “Biodiversity events” and “The forest School Programme.”**

- | | | | |
|----|------------|---------------------|------|
| 2. | The Grange | Moorlands Play Park | 0.66 |
|----|------------|---------------------|------|

Moorlands is a small settlement. The play park has a seesaw, slide and two swings and falls below the average regarding **‘Play Value’**. Within a 500m radius of the play park there are 236 houses.

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|-----------------------|------|
| 3. | Glenravel Area | Clough Play Park | 0.65 |
| | | Martinstown Play Park | |
| | | Cargan Play Park | |

The ward of Glenravel is densely rural with three of the main villages each having fixed play provision, and a smaller settlement called Newtowncromelin. Cargan has the highest amount of children compared to the other two villages. The Play Park does fall below the average regarding **‘Play Value’** and has the lowest score regarding play compared to the other fixed play provision in the ward, so this is something we will need to monitor over time and consider upgrading. Newtowncromelin has a small green space that lends itself to play opportunities **such as “Pop up Play”**

- | | | | |
|----|------------|-------------------|------|
| 4. | Fair Green | Dunclug Play Park | 0.62 |
|----|------------|-------------------|------|

This is a densely populated town area with 1219 houses within 500m radius of the play park. The play provision has scored well regarding the **‘Play Value’** results and **the area is within walking distance to one of our premier parks The People’s Park.**

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|--------------------|------|
| 5. | Killycrot | Marine Gardens | 0.58 |
| | | Windmill Play Park | |
| | | Legg Park | |

Another densely populated town area that includes the highest ranking play park, Marine Gardens when it comes to **‘Play Value’**. Windmill and Legg Park fall below average in play value.

- | | | | |
|----|-------------|---------------------|------|
| 6. | Kilwaughter | Millbrook Play Park | 0.58 |
|----|-------------|---------------------|------|

A small village, with 336 households within 500m of the play provision, situated beside the community centre, and access to some open green space. This play park scored above average in the recent **‘Play Value’** assessments.

- | | | | |
|----|------------|----------------------|------|
| 7. | Glenwhirry | Moorfields Play Park | 0.54 |
|----|------------|----------------------|------|

A small settlement with 108 households within 500m of the play park and lots of green open space available for non-fixed play opportunities. The play park has an average **‘Play Value’** score.

- | | | | |
|----|------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 8. | Dunminning | Glarryford Play Park
(Glenvale) | 0.54 |
|----|------------|------------------------------------|------|

Glenvale is a densely rural area with only 37 houses in a 500m radius to the play park. The play park is very small with only a slide, four swings and a rocker adding very little play value but is surrounded by lots of green open space, which could provide lots of non-fixed play opportunities.

- | | | | |
|----|--------------|--------------------|------|
| 9. | Clipperstown | Woodburn Play Park | 0.53 |
|----|--------------|--------------------|------|

Woodburn is a large residential area with 1755 houses within a 500m radius to the play park with a MUGA which is situated beside it, regarding **‘Play Value’** it falls under the average. It is very close to Sunnylands, these two areas in the Borough are the most deprived in terms of health.

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------|---|------|
| 10. | Craigywarren | Ballywatermoy Play Park
Craigywarren Play Park | 0.52 |
|-----|--------------|---|------|

Ballywatermoy is situated in a densely rural area with only 40 houses in a 500m radius to the existing play park. The play park consists of a slide, one rocker and one swing adding very little **‘Play Value’**.

Craigywarren Play area is very similar to Ballywatermoy and Glenvale with the same amount of equipment providing play opportunities to a few more households than the other two play parks at 71 houses.

This information is subject to change with new planning applications for housing developments also with the gathering of new census information. This process is reviewed annually.

10.0 How Council will use the results

Investment in play space will be evidence led.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will assess the need for Fixed Play and Non-Fixed Play provision in each instance by carefully considering the following:

- Planning policy, including settlement hierarchy
- Deprivation figures for the area in question (deprivation figures are often associated with high incidences of childhood obesity)
- Play Value results
- Mapping results
- Opportunities to consolidate play provision, e.g. where multiple fixed play provision exists within a settlement
- **The ‘Out to Play’ survey results**

- Consultation with the community
- Provision of non-fixed play opportunities, for example, Pop Up Play events.

Taking all of the above of into consideration, listed below are a few sites that need work to increase their opportunities for play:

EDEN - Has a high population of children and no existing play provision, Council is in the process of developing a partnership with Eden Primary School regarding their play provision to be open after school hours for community access.

GLENRAVEL AREA - CARGAN - Evidence shows a high percentage of children in the area, compared to Martinstown and Clough, with the existing play park in Cargan having the lowest '**Play Value**' results.

WOODBURN AND SUNNYLANDS- From the mapping results Woodburn has been identified as one of the areas with a large percentage of children and it has a below average '**Play Value**' score. Sunnylands existing play park which is close by, has one of the lowest '**Play Value**' scores in the Borough.



11.0 Implementing the Out to Play Strategy

Whilst the strategy identifies the actions which Mid and East Antrim Borough Council will undertake in order to achieve its goals, it is also concerned that it should clearly establish how its strategic themes would be translated into real actions on the ground. Implementation of this Play Strategy will require the following process.

An Officer sub-group will be formed to monitor progress against priorities. These Quarterly meetings will take place to evaluate and monitor progress against the project plan. Quarterly reporting will be submitted to the Council's **Operations Committee**.

Using the settlement hierarchy, our vision would be to have three top destination play parks in our three main towns of Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne. In our small towns, we would like quality play provision that includes more than 15 pieces of equipment that is inclusive to everybody and has a good risk benefit approach. Ideally, the play area should be around 1400m² in size with a minimum 600sqm soft-play surface activity zone.

Combining LEAPs and NEAPs on the same site offers a number of advantages including: The ability to provide for a greater age range of children and thereby increasing the opportunity for family involvement. Combined sites also mean reduced land usage in the locality due to the sharing of a common buffer zone.

SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY DIAGRAM TO BE ADDED ONCE APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMITTEE

The strategy reflects local need and community involvement, but further consultation throughout the life span of the strategy will be required to keep the **document relevant and “live”**.

Council will revise the action plan as required to take into account changes to local need, partners and financial implications.

The Action Plan will be developed in line **with available resources from the Council’s** Play Development budget and external funding sourced. In future years, the level of impact will be dependent on available funding, therefore the Action Plan will be subject to an annual review.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council would **like to promote children’s right to play** through increasing the understanding of the importance of play and embedding **children’s play needs into local communities**. We would like to increase confidence in participation of a wide range of safe and physically active play opportunities, whilst ensuring that our own provision is accessible and inspiring to all children by **removing the barriers that restrict children’s access to play**.



12.0 Action Plan

THEME 1: Play Space for All

Play spaces will be available for children and young people across the Borough, in line with the outcomes of the community plan.

Investment in play space will be evidence led

Key decision makers will be aware of the benefits of investing in play and its potential to contribute to their aims and objectives

	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT	DATES
1.1	Audit of play facilities and potential play spaces	Play Audit completed including Mapping of play facilities against demographics	Play Development	2017
		Investing in new or refurbished play space in areas with deficiencies	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Identification of unused/vacant space Consider how best such space could be utilised including legal and financial implications and community engagement	Planning Services	2018 - 2021
		Ongoing 'Out to Play' consultation. Develop and establish a means of involving children and young people in the design and development of play spaces.	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Create play facilities and play spaces that balance the need to offer risk in order to maintain interest with the need to keep children safe from harm	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021

		To ensure that each major site has inclusive equipment and can be used by all abilities	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Explore funding opportunities for any identified gaps in the provision	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Non-Fixed play opportunities developed for areas where gaps in the provision are identified	Play Development	2018 - 2021
1.2	To raise awareness of play facilities across the Borough, both Fixed and Non-Fixed	Database of play provision shared with key stakeholders	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Online presence- Council website, social media	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Open/ family fun days at the play areas. Also annual programme of events	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Pop Up Play events in smaller open spaces and village greens.	Play Development	2018 - 2021
1.3	To provide a range of high quality accessible play space and facilities across the Borough	Provision of high quality, accessible space and facilities to meet the needs of all ages and abilities	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Liaise with MEA Planning Department to ensure adherence to PPS 8 or the new LDP policies when adopted	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Liaise with landowner/developers in relation to securing open spaces in advance of any future residential developments	Planning Services & Parks & Open Spaces	2018 - 2021

		Regular maintenance of play facilities and review inspection procedures to ensure regime is appropriate	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Monitor changes and developments to play spaces	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		To engage with schools to explore extended community use of their facilities	Play Development	2018 - 2021
1.4	To maximise use of the Borough's play facilities - Fixed and Non-Fixed Play	Develop age appropriate activities and events to encourage participation of children and young people	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Engage with the local community on their needs	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Annual programme of events	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Engage schools, youth clubs and other community groups	Play Development	2018 - 2021
1.5	Support efforts to enhance Open Spaces to promote quality play opportunities	Support the Field's and Trust initiative to protect open spaces from development	Parks and Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Activity based Pop Up Play Events; explore the idea of community Play Pods and training volunteers as Play Rangers.	Play Development	2018 - 2019
		Engage with children, young people and their families seeking and valuing their views and opinions about play opportunities and their needs in their areas	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Intergenerational Environmental Activities - such as horticulture and tree planting	Parks and Open Spaces Team	2018 - 2021

		Biodiversity events - learning about biodiversity and enjoying nature first hand via an annual programme of events	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 -2021
		Support allotment development across the Borough via play activities	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Biodiversity Summer Scheme - a free outdoor events programme, which gives families the opportunity to take part in biodiversity projects.	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Love Parks Week - encourages people to come together and enjoy a week of fun activities in our parks and green spaces.	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		'Friends of' volunteer groups meeting in Parks and Open spaces to complete a wide range tasks.	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Support the Green Flag Award Scheme across the Borough	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Support Forest Schools Programme	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Develop a Schools Growing Clubs Programme	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021

THEME 2: Play in the Community

Play space will be neutral and will provide a safe and shared environment for cross community contact.

Play space and programmes will act as a tool for inclusion for children and families coping with physical and emotional health and wellbeing challenges

	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT	DATES
2.1	Recognising the role of play in contributing to stable and sustainable community relations	Developing cross community and community cohesion programmes to establish play areas as shared spaces across the Borough	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
2.2	Ensure that vulnerable and young people are supported in their play	Provision of accessible play facilities and programmes which reach those at most risk, including children with disabilities	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Increase access to a range of play opportunities for children living in areas of greatest need.	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Work to support providers to ensure that the principals of inclusive play are built into the core of all our fixed play and other play opportunities	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Identify key issues reducing accessibility play	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Provide training on inclusive play for key stakeholders	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2019
2.3	Increase participation in play and use of play resources in areas with low community infrastructure via non-fixed play opportunities.	Engage with local communities to identify play needs	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Develop a tailored programme of activity to increase participation	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021

		Explore the idea of community Play Pods and training volunteers as Play Rangers	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018
2.4	Ensure that all children and young people across the Borough have opportunity to access and benefit from shared play and leisure opportunities	Engage with schools to develop partnership programmes where children come together to use play areas as shared space	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
2.5	Support inter-generational working	Ensure partners are committed to inter-generational working	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Inter-generational play activities such as gardening and biodiversity projects	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Develop a single cross agency approach to dealing with queries from members of the community in relation to children's play and leisure	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021

THEME 3: Play Programmes

Increase use of play facilities

Improved health and wellbeing of children and young people

Increased physical activity

Development of inter-generational activities that encourage and sustain family use

	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT	DATES
3.1	To increase use of play facilities and participation in play and recreation	Work with key stakeholders to develop programmes using shared spaces - schools, youth clubs, Sure Start etc.	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
3.2	Increase physical activity among children and young people	Develop an annual event programme, promote, and deliver activities across the Borough	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Work in partnership with Sports Development and Council's Everybody Active Coaches to deliver physical activity sessions to our children and young people	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
3.3	Development of family based/ inter-generational activities at play areas	Develop and support existing age appropriate programmes that encourage use of outdoor play areas and establish them as family friendly environments. e.g. Pop Up Play Day Family Scavenger Hunt Walking Programmes Garden Boules 'Friends of' groups In Bloom activities Allotment Gardens	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
3.4	Encourage use of shared space by older children and young people	Engage with teenagers and offer events and activities to suit their needs.	Play Development	2018 - 2021

		<p>Promote the importance of play for adults</p> <p>Explore play spaces for elderly and engage the elderly in play activities</p> <p>Development of activities including: Pop Up Play Events Family Games Sessions Physical Activity Sessions</p> <p>Ongoing consultation with children and young people to identify and address their needs via surveys, youth forums and focus groups</p>		
3.5	Work with local residents/communities to enhance green spaces to promote opportunity for quality play	Promote inter-generational working and natural play space and developments	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021

THEME 4: Awareness and Outreach

Play will be led and developed across the Borough in a strategic co-ordinated manner

Play benefits will be promoted and play will be the key development of the health and wellbeing agenda

Play will contribute to a better life style and health and wellbeing choices

	OUTCOMES	ACTIONS		
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4.1	Establish, support and promote work of the Play Partnership	Regular meetings of Play Partnership and membership reviews	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Work in partnership with the Children's Locality Group under CYPSP	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Identify training opportunities where possible	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Play strategy developed and launched	Play Development	2018
4.2	Promote play, benefits of play and practical opportunities	Play conferences and workshops; information and guidance on play benefits	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Work in partnership with community groups and local press to promote play and leisure in a positive light	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Continue to identify and resolve barriers to play	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Support Play Day event annually	Play Development	2018 - 2021
		Promote the role of volunteers/play rangers	Play Development	2018 - 2021
4.3	Ensure a co-ordinated and strategic approach to play at Borough level	Work with internal departments/services to advise and direct on play policy and provision as appropriate	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Consider how the Out to Play Strategy can impact on other plans e.g. The Community Plan being part of the thematic working groups particularly in relation to Health and	Play Development	2018 - 2021

		Wellbeing and the Environment. EBA2020 and PCSP etc.		
		Work closely with Planning Service	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Ensure play is covered in any emerging Masterplans for the Borough	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Develop working relationships with partner Councils and work towards setting up a Forum for Play	Play Development	2018 - 2021
4.4	Promote Council's Out to Play Pledge throughout all Council services	Develop Council's commitment to the children and young people of all ages and abilities in Mid and East Antrim	Parks & Open Spaces Development Team	2018 - 2021
		Actively communicate the 'Out to Play' Pledge internally and externally.	Play Development	2018 - 2021

13.0 Play Park Score Values

REF	PLAY PARK	D.E.A.	DATE BUILT	AREA (SQM)	NO. EQUIPMENT	% CHILDREN	LOCATION SCORE	PLAY VALUE SCORE	CARE AND MAINTENCE SCORE	TOTAL	PLAY AREA BAND
1	Ashvale Play Park, (Islandmagee)	Larne Lough	2002	360 Sqm	M.P.U. 6	0.39	31	19	21	71	Gold
2	Ballycarry Play Park	Larne Lough	2008	1030 Sqm	M.P.U x 3 18	0.39	32	17	19	68	Silver
3	Ballygally Play Park	Coast Road	2004	600 Sqm	M.P.U. 7	0.50	32	20	22	74	Gold
4	Bardic Drive, Craigyhill	Larne Lough	2006	690 Sqm	M.P.U x 2 7	0.37	34	20	21	75	Gold
5	Beachlands Play Park (Carnlough)	Coast Road	2005	1325 Sqm	M.P.U x 2 14	0.49	40	23	21	84	Gold
6	Carnlough Natural Play Park	Coast Road	2017	2500 Sqm		0.49					Gold
7	Carnfunnock Country Play Park	Coast Road	2010	1400 Sqm	M.P.U. x 4 19	0.49	27	24	20	71	Gold
8	Curran Play Park	Larne Lough	2008	1050 Sqm	M.P.U. x 3 18	0.33	30	24	18	72	Gold
9	Dixon Play Park, Larne	Larne Lough	2010	500 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 9	0.33	30	16	18	64	Silver
10	Drainsbay Play Park	Coast Road	2004	460 Sqm	M.P.U. 7	0.49	31	18	25	74	Gold
11	Ferris Park	Larne Lough	2002	350 Sqm	M.P.U. 5	0.33	32	18	17	67	Silver
12	Glenarm Play Park	Coast Road	2004	1000 Sqm	M.P.U. 8	0.48	34	22	23	79	Gold
13	Gobbins Play Park, Islandmagee	Larne Lough	2016	400 Sqm	M.P.U. 2	0.39	37	25	21	83	Gold
14	Jubilee Play Park (Glynn)	Larne Lough	2008	550 Sqm	MPU 10	0.44	27	17	19	63	Silver

15	Linn Road Play Park, Larne	Larne Lough	2008	2075 Sqm	M.P.U. x 3 16	0.37	40	19	23	82	Gold
16	Magheramorne Play Park	Larne Lough	2011	250 Sqm	4	0.50	21	12	13	46	Review
17	Millbrook Play Park	Larne Lough	2008	185 Sqm	M.P.U. 6	0.58	34	17	19	70	Gold
18	Seacourt Play Park	Larne Lough	2005	1240 Sqm	12	0.43	37	17	17	71	Gold
19	South Bay Play Park, Carnlough	Coast Road	2004	330 Sqm	M.P.U. 8	0.49	28	22	25	75	Gold
20	Town Play Park, Larne	Larne Lough	2010	1400 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 19	0.33	32	23	21	76	Gold
21	Tullygarley Play Park, Larne	Larne Lough	2007	690 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 7	0.21	30	16	21	67	Silver
22	Amphitheatre Play Park, Carrickfergus	Carrick Castle	2007	188 Sqm	M.P.U. 1	0.39	21	13	13	47	Review
23	Castlemara Play Park, Carrickfergus	Carrick Castle	1998	225 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 2	0.39	27	20	12	49	Review
24	Greenisland Play Park	Knockagh	2015	505 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 12	0.58	30	19	21	70	Gold
25	Legg Park, Carrickfergus	Carrick Castle	1994	112 Sqm	M.P.U x 3 2	0.58	23	21	15	59	Bronze
26	Marine Gardens	Carrick Castle	2010	2250 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 32	0.58	38	25	22	85	Gold
27	Oakfield Play Park, Carrickfergus	Carrick Castle	1999	350 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 2	0.42	27	12	10	49	Review
28	Ransevyn Play Park, Whitehead	Larne Lough	2005	490 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 4	0.40	30	16	17	63	Silver
29	Sunnylands Play Park, Carrickfergus	Carrick Castle	1998	1180 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 3	0.32	25	12	7	44	Review
30	Whitehead Play Area	Larne Lough	2003	725 Sqm	M.P.U. 12	0.40	33	23	20	76	Gold
31	Windmill Play Park, Carrickfergus	Carrick Castle	93/99	1090 Sqm	M.P.U. 12	0.58	27	20	17	64	Silver

32	Windsor Play Park, Whitehead	Larne lough	1998	1000 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 3	0.40	28	24	20	72	Gold
33	Woodburn Play Park, Carrickfergus	Knockagh	1993	1200 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 4	0.53	27	16	11	54	Bronze
34	Ahoghill Play Park, Ballymena Road	Bannside	2002	376 Sqm	6	0.66	29	19	20	68	Silver
35	Brookfield Play Park, Ahoghill	Bannside	2000	200 Sqm	4	0.66	34	18	18	70	Gold
36	Ahoghill Community Play Park	Bannside	2003	900 Sqm	M.P.U. x 1 2	0.66	25	19	17	61	Silver
37	Ballee Play Park, Ballymena	Ballymena	1997	770 Sqm	7	0.47	34	23	19	76	Gold
38	Ballykeel 1 Barra Drive	Ballymena	1998	500 Sqm	6	0.50	27	20	19	66	Silver
39	Ballykeel community Centre	Ballymena	1999	525 Sqm	M.P.U. 5	0.50	23	20	20	63	Silver
40	Ballywatermoy Play Park, Glarryford	Braid	2002	130 Sqm	3	0.52	25	16	18	59	Bronze
41	Cargan Play Park	Braid	1998	270 Sqm	6	0.65	19	21	16	56	Bronze
42	Clough Play Park	Braid	2002	280 Sqm	M.P.U. 4	0.65	27	18	17	62	Silver
43	Colonsay Play Park Ballykeel	Ballymena	1998	210 Sqm	M.P.U. 5	0.50	31	21	20	72	Gold
44	Connor Play Park	Ballymena	1999	150 Sqm	4	0.46	25	15	17	57	Bronze
45	Craigwarren Play Park (Hazelwood Crescent)	Braid	1999	212 Sqm	2	0.52	27	20	17	64	Silver
46	Cullybackey Play Park	Bannside	2001	450 Sqm	M.P.U. 5	0.37	34	18	21	73	Gold
47	Drumtara Play Park	Ballymena	2016	700 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 7	0.47	31	25	21	78	Gold

48	Dunclug Play Park Dunclug	Ballymena	2002	1310 Sqm	M.P.U. 9	0.62	28	24	20	72	Gold
49	ECOS Centre Play Park	Ballymena	2000	900 Sqm	1	0.51	23	14	8	45	Review
50	Galgorm Play Park	Bannside	1998	400 Sqm	6	0.50	29	19	21	69	Silver
51	Glarryford Play Park Duneaney	Bannside	2002	260 Sqm	4	0.54	23	18	17	58	Bronze
52	Gortgole Road Play Park, Portglenone	Bannside	2014	1500 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 10	0.51	32	25	19	76	Gold
53	Harryville Play Park Wilson Crescent	Braid	2002	395 Sqm	5	0.34	26	20	18	64	Silver
54	Glenann Play Park Kells	Braid	2000	350 Sqm	6	0.46	26	19	17	62	Silver
55	Maybin Play Park Kells	Braid	1999	120 Sqm	3	0.46	26	16	11	53	Bronze
56	King George V Play Park Harryville	Braid	1999	650 Sqm	M.P.U. 8	0.34	27	21	20	68	Silver
57	Knockan Road Broughshane	Braid	2000	530 Sqm	M.P.U. 5	0.43	22	18	21	61	Silver
58	Lamont Play Park	Ballymena	1998	500 Sqm	6	0.62	21	20	21	62	Silver
59	Maine Play Park Galgorm	Bannside	2002	165 Sqm	4	0.47	28	19	17	64	Silver
60	Martinstown Play Park	Braid	2004	470 Sqm	M.P.U. x 2 4	0.65	28	21	19	68	Silver
61	Moat Play Park	Ballymena	1998	500 Sqm	7	0.34	25	20	18	63	Silver
62	Moorfields Play Park	Braid	1997	885 Sqm	M.P.U. 3	0.54	27	20	18	65	Silver
63	The People's Park	Ballymena	1996	2700 Sqm	M.P.U x 2 18	0.62	30	21	20	71	Gold

64	Slaght Play Park	Bannside	2002	210 Sqm	4	0.46	24	16	17	57	Bronze
65	Smyth Play Park, Portglenone	Bannside	1996	166 Sqm	M.P.U. 1	0.51	25	20	17	62	Silver
66	The Commons Play Park, Broughshane	Braid	1999	425 Sqm	5	0.43	30	16	21	70	Gold
67	Toomebridge Play Park Moorlands	Bannside	1997	207 Sqm	3	0.66	24	16	17	57	Bronze
68	Tullygarley Play Park	Ballymena	2018	1400 Sqm	M.P.U. 19	0.50					Gold
69	Whinsmoor Play Park Broughshane	Braid	1999	470 Sqm	5	0.43	27	18	21	66	Silver

Column 1 - Play Park REFERENCE number

Column 2 - Play Park NAME and location

Column 3 - D.E.A. area that the Play Park is located

Column 4 - The YEAR in which the Play Park was installed

Column 5 - The SIZE of the Play Park in Square Meters

Column 6 - The equipment installed which includes the number of M.P.U. (Multi Play Units offering numerous of play activities including gangways, nets, slides and fireman poles) and the number of other pieces of play equipment.

Column 7 - AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER HOUSEHOLD, this information was gathered from the mapping process. This is calculated by dividing the total number of households in the ward by the number of children.

Column 8 - PLAY VALUE RESULTS - LOCATION - In the best possible location for children, scored out of 40

Column 9- PLAY VALUE RESULTS - PLAY VALUE - Enticing to children to play, opportunities for disabled children and different age ranges, scored out of 35

Column 10 - PLAY VALUE RESULTS - CARE AND MAINTENCE - A well-maintained play area, scored out 25.

Column 11 - PLAY VALUE TOTAL - The scores of the three categories in the Play Value Results added together to give a final Play Value score out of 100. The average play value score for the play parks across the Borough was 66.

Column 12 - PLAY VALUE SCORE BAND -

GOLD - play value score of 70 +, this is an excellent play value score, and includes some of the top play parks.

SILVER - play value score of 60 - 69, this is an average play value score

BRONZE - play value score of 50 - 59, in this band the play parks needs some improved

A score under 50, these play park needs to be reviewed

14.0 References

Playboard NI - Lead organisation for the development and promotion of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

Mid and East Antrim Council's Corporate Plan

https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/downloads/Mid_and_East_Antrim_Borough_Council_Corporate_Plan.pdf

Mid and East Antrim Council's Community Plan

https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/downloads/Putting_People_First_-_The_Mid_and_East_Antrim_Community_Plan.pdf

Playwork Principals Scrutiny Group 2005

SITED: <http://playwales.org.uk/eng/playworkprinciples>

THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-uncrc-how-legislation-underpins-implementation-in-england>

NATIONAL PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

www.fieldsintrust.org

N.I. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGY

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/children-and-young-people>

DHSSPS FITTER FUTURE FOR ALL FRAMEWORK (2012 - 2022)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/obesity-prevention...>

MAKING LIFE BETTER

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/making-life-better...>

PLAY ENGLANDS QUALITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

SITED: www.playengland.org.uk/media/211694/quality-assessment-tool.pdf