

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – ‘NEW FOREST @ PLAY’

### Summary of Purpose and Recommendations:








To present the revised Children’s Play policy and strategy document for adoption by Cabinet.

The Strategy is important because it provides a sets of values, objectives and actions which have been the subject of extensive development by stakeholders and is supported by them. This includes an action plan which highlights priorities for support and development and which will be evaluated and updated annually.

**Cost to Council:** £ No direct cost

**Within existing budget?** Yes

### Contribution to Corporate Plan (Minor/Moderate/Major/Neutral):

	+		-		+		-
	Moderate			<b>Priorities</b>			
	Major			Clean Streets and Public Space	Moderate		
	Minor			Crime and Disorder	Moderate		
	Major			Housing	Minor		
	Moderate			Managing our Finances		Neutral	

### Comments on Impacts on Corporate Objectives and Priorities:

The impact of effective play provision children on young people is profound. There are many aims where there is a positive impact on the quality of life in the District. The extensive support amongst partners for the strategy is very welcome and should help ensure that this work will have real and lasting impact.



Organisation of excellence



Working with public and partners



Economic well being



Social well being



Environmental well being

**CABINET: 4 AUGUST 2004**

## **‘NEW FOREST @ PLAY’ : PLAY POLICY AND STRATEGY 2004-7**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Children’s Play in our District benefits from the active involvement of many partner organisations, community groups and all levels of local government.
- 1.2 The ‘New Forest @ Play Strategy ‘ provides set of clear values, objectives and actions which have been developed and agreed by a wide range of stakeholders.
- 1.3 It will be used to:-
  - Bring together co-ordinated action across Council portfolios
  - Provide a framework for prioritising and targeting multi agency resources
  - Contribute to the Council’s agenda for young people
  - Help inform the everyday planning and practice of the Council and other organisations
  - Continue an ongoing dialogue with children, young people and the community regarding play needs
  - This report aims to seek the approval of and adoption by Cabinet of the play strategy.

### **2. THE STRATEGY DOCUMENT**

- # 2.1 The Document is attached as Appendix 1 and contains:-
- A definition of play
  - Values and principals
  - Aims and objectives
  - A section on the consultation and audit process
  - Foundations - which look at underpinning basics like quality, training and partnership working.
  - Neighbourhood Play – which goes in to the current picture of play in the District and outlines new developments.
- 2.2 Each section of the strategy contains a prioritised action plan.

### **3. LINKS TO HEART OF THE FOREST AND THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 3.1 ‘New Forest @ Play’ is aligned to the Council’s vision of: “ working closely with the community and in partnership with others to enhance the quality of lives of present and future generations”.

3.2 It particularly contributes in the areas of

An organisation of excellence

Promoting equal opportunities in service delivery by prioritizing 7 areas for “Access to Play “ programmes and training for play providers (1.5 Equal Opportunities)

3.3 Working with Public and Partners

The strategy has been the subject of extensive development by stake holders and is supported by them (2.1 Consultation Strategy)

There is significant linking and joint working with partners to deliver the children and young peoples section of the community strategy. (2.2 community strategy)

3.4 Social Well – Being

Contributing to reducing vandalism and anti –social behavior by providing well planned community play facilities and diversionary activities (4.1 Community Safety Strategy )

Play is vital to the healthy development of children. New Forest @ Play seeks to improve access to services, targeting those most in need, in line with the Health Strategy (4.2 Health Strategy)

The impact of effective play provision on children is profound. Working for young people is a cross cutting issue. The play strategy makes a major contribution to the way the Council is listening to the views of children and young people and delivering services (4.3 Children and Young People )

It is accepted that play is a crucial part of children’s free –time activities and that it has a major role in cultural activity in the District.( 4.7 Cultural Strategy )

3.5 The Strategy is also linked into the County’s children and young people’s strategic partnership, demonstrating extensive co-ordinated partnership working.

#### **4. LINKS TO THE WORK OF OTHER PORTFOLIOS**

4.1 The Strategy links with the work of other portfolios in particular Community Safety, Housing, Health and Social Inclusion.

#### **5. HOW THE STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED – INCLUDING CONSULTATION**

5.1 The Strategy has been developed through a process of audit and consultation with key partners and organisations and children and young people.

- 5.2 The audit involved looking at current provision and building up a needs assessment to inform future work
- 5.3 The consultation with children and young people is part of an ongoing dialogue through the 'Voice of the Child Project'.
- 5.4 Key partners and organisations and were consulted through three area workshops involving 80 participants in total. Those attending included parents, play and youth organisations, Town and Parish Councils, schools, faith groups, health visitors, District and County Council members and officers, Hampshire Children and Families Forum.

## **6. PRINCIPAL FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The principal findings of the consultation are
  - The need to reflect good practice across provision
  - The intention to prioritise 7 areas for "Access to play programmes"
  - The commitment to delivering programmes through strong multi agency working
  - The desire for Partners to sign up to the principals and actions of the strategy

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no particular implications arising directly from this report. Recommendations for the future expenditure on play initiatives will need to be evaluated and prioritised against the Strategy and how they contribute to the agreed actions.
- 7.2 A significant amount of third party funding and resources have been allocated toward the delivery of the strategy. These resources come from linking into a range of current external initiatives and effective partnership working.

## **1 8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no immediate environmental issues, although when developing and extending play areas there may be an impact. When appropriate these will be subject to the routine planning process.

## **2 9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The provision and development of children's play contributes significantly to the prevention of crime and disorder. There is evidence that community play facilities can reduce crime and vandalism.

- 9.2 On occasions the provision of facilities may become a focal point of conflict within the community. Effective pre planning of such facilities will undertaken to minimise this risk.
- 9.3 Workers involved in play, are recruited and trained through a clear process. Criminal Records Bureau checks are completed to help ensure that they are suitable and appropriate people to work with children.

## **10. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS**

- 10.1 The Portfolio Holder supports the content of the report providing services within existing budget.

## **3 11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 Children and young people are entitled to special consideration in strategic planning because they rely on adults in the social, economic and political spheres, to ensure that their view are heard and taken into account. This strategy will shows how children's play needs and wishes are to be interpreted and met within the District.

## **4 12. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 12.1 That Cabinet approves and adopts the" Play Strategy - New Forest @ Play."

### **For Further Information Contact:**

Dye Lockyer  
Play Development Officer  
Tel: (023) 8028 5277  
E-mail: dye.lockyer@nfdc.gov.uk

### **Background Papers:**

New Forest @ Play Strategy  
document

j:m:d:playstrategy04-07:2004:cabinetreport

# **New Forest @ Play**

**Play Strategy and Action Plan for the New Forest**

# Content

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>What is Play?</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Values and Principles</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Aims and Objectives of The Strategy</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Establishing What Needs to be Done</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Audit Consultation Carrying Forward the Actions	
<b>The Foundations</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Working in Partnership and Making Links With Other Strategies Quality Access and Inclusion Training Involving Children and Young People in Consultation	
<b>Neighbourhood Play</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Holiday Playschemes Out of School Childcare (After School and Holiday) Pre-Schools and Parent and Toddler Groups Play Areas and Open Space	
“Access to Play Projects” -Blackfield and New Milton -Pennington -Hythe -Ringwood South -Villages in the North West Forest -Forest South, Ashurst, Copythorne and Bramshaw -Recreation Roadshow	
<b>Appendix 1</b> Partners in More Detail.....	<b>37</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b> Links with Other Strategies in More Detail .....	<b>40</b>

## **Foreward**

Play is not only a right for all children but also an essential aspect of their development, culture and quality of life and their initiation into wider cultural and leisure experiences.

Leisure pursuits and play, whether undertaken by adults or children, share the common characteristics of being undertaken voluntarily, requiring no necessary outcome. These activities are intrinsically worthwhile, and are distinct from those driven by necessity. In creating space and opportunities for children's play adults affirm the value of children in our society.

Children are entitled to special consideration in strategic planning because they rely on adults in the social, economic and political spheres, to ensure that their views are heard and taken into account. This strategy will show how children's play needs and wishes are to be interpreted and met within the District.

The Leisure Service of the District Council has co-ordinated the development of this strategy, but is only one amongst many organisations supporting and delivering play opportunities. The aims and objectives could not be achieved without the active involvement of all key partners

The strategy has been developed to inform and guide partner organisations and others involved in delivering and improving play in the District. It includes specific action on agreed partnership priorities for Play for 2004 – 2007.

### **Partners that have endorsed the Strategy:**

Forest Bus

New Forest Association of Local Councils

Pre School Learning Alliance

Totton College

Hampshire County Council

Hampshire Children & Families Forum

- Early Education & Childcare Unit

- Youth Service

The Handy Trust

- Children's Fund Programme & the Local Partnership Board

New Forest District Council



## **What is Play ?**

### **Play is what Children and Young People choose to do in their Own Time**

Play is a freely chosen and personally directed behavior which is motivated from within each child. It is a behavior that happens and flourishes naturally given the right conditions and it has its own intrinsic value for children.

“Play is an essential part of every child’s life and vital to their development. It is the way children explore the world around them and develop and practice skills. It is essential for physical, emotional and spiritual growth, for intellectual and educational development, and for acquiring social and behavioral skills. Play is a generic term applied to a wide range of activities and behaviors that are satisfying to the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child. Children’s play may or may not involve equipment or have an end product. Children play on their own and with others. Their play may be boisterous and energetic or quiet and contemplative, light hearted or very serious.”

(Definition - from the Charter for Children’s Play)

### **Children and Young People Enjoy and Benefit from Play**

The main benefits to individual children from being able to play freely is in how satisfying it is and how much it meets the needs of the child at the time. Play and free time activities are important to children; they are seen as different from school and other organised activities and serve a different purpose. Children who feel secure in their play can spend many hours occupied in investigating and learning about themselves and the world around them. This has associated advantages to the children. These are seen to be the development of:

- social skills and the expressing and understanding of emotions
- confidence and self esteem
- physical skills and well being
- problem solving skills
- creative skills, interests and abilities
- language and literacy skills.
- motivation and therefore participation in society

### **The wider Community Benefit from Play**

Providing good local play opportunities helps to reduce the involvement of children and young people in anti-social behavior; supports families and communities, by providing a focus for informal networks of family support. Play makes an important contribution in parallel with education, in developing adults who are creative and effective in the social and economic sphere.

## **Children want and need a good range of places to play**

Children's play is rarely confined to one place; children play in their homes, at school, in supervised provision, in parks and recreation grounds and in the streets and neighbourhoods close to their homes, in fact anywhere they are at the time. This needs to be recognised in the design and provision of all elements of the public and domestic environment from street design to housing provision.

For children and young people to make use of the best possible play and free-time opportunities, they need to have places near their homes and schools where they can:

- Enjoy themselves and play with or without supervision from adults
- Chose and take control of their own play activities
- Play by themselves or with others
- Experience varied and interesting environments
- Challenge and extend the limits of their physical, mental, emotional or creative abilities
- Feel safe from environmental and human dangers.

These places can be indoors or outside, may or may not be specifically designed for children's play and may be staffed or un-staffed. The essential elements are that there are a number of such places in any locality, that they are accessible to and available to all children who might want to use them and there is sufficient variety to ensure plenty of opportunity to satisfy the play and free-time needs of children of different ages, abilities, cultures and interests and with different home and family backgrounds.

Even where there are good play opportunities, children and young people can only enjoy them if their parents and carers allow them the freedom to play away from their homes and the community allow them to equally share in and use all kinds of public spaces.

## **Values and Policy Principles for Children's Play**

These are the values and principles that inform and underpin the development and improvement of children's play in the District. They are based on the Charter for Children's Play and the National occupational Standards for Playwork.

- All children and young people have need and right to play. Children of all ages should be able to play freely and confidently on their own and with other children.
- Children's views must be sought and taken into account.
- There should be strong partnership working between agencies, networks and the community to provide a co-ordinated and strategic approach to development of play opportunities.
- Children and Young people should have access to a range of play provision within walking distance of their home. Safe routes to play spaces should be considered as part of planning the play environment.
- Play opportunities and play provision should be equally accessible to all children.
- Play opportunities should be of good quality. This includes recognition that the child's control of their own play is a crucial factor in enriching their experience.
- A variety of play experiences should be offered within play provision, recognising that children and young people have the need for different kinds of play.
- An appropriate level of risk is fundamental to play. Risk need to be managed in an appropriate and balanced way so that children have access to stimulating environments.
- Playwork Training is a key to the development of quality play and should be accessible, adaptable and reflect good playwork practice. It should involve a significant fieldwork component

## **Aims and Objectives of the Strategy**

This Play strategy is a working tool that turns values into actions.

### **The Aim**

The aim of the Strategy is to assist the development and sustainability of a wide range of quality play opportunities that are inclusive and accessible to all children.

### **The Objectives**

The Objectives for Improving and Developing Play Opportunities are to:

1. Continue a strong commitment to multi agency and partnership working
2. Create relevant links and identify joint actions between community and voluntary sector organisations and different levels and departments of local government that can have an impact on children's play
3. Improve quality inclusion and access
  - a. through training and supporting providers with accreditation and Ofsted registration ( where appropriate )
  - b. incorporating quality standards and good practice guidelines in grant conditions and agreements
  - c. Supporting providers to meet 'Best Play' objectives and other good practice guidance
4. Ensure that children's views about their play needs are given appropriate consideration in new and existing provision
5. Collate and share information on funding opportunities
6. Base priorities on need assessment and consultation

## Establishing What Needs to be Done

Improving and successfully developing local play opportunities depends in part on:

- knowing about local children and their met and unmet play needs
- what play opportunities exist for them now
- what support currently exists for play development
- what potential exists for developing better play opportunities
- what parents' needs are in relation to their children's free time activities.

In order to find out some of these things, an audit and consultation was carried out. This took place towards the end of 2003 and the beginning of 2004 and involved representation from a range of key partners involved in supporting play, multi agency groups, play providers, other district council services, the county council, town and parish councils, parents, children and young people and elected members.

### The Audit

The play audit has been carried out in cluster areas and takes into account parish and ward information for population, supervised and unsupervised play provision and also social, economic and environmental information.

5 clusters in the north west	5 clusters in the South West	6 clusters in the Waterside and South Forest
Downland and Forest	Lymington Town Ward	Lyndhurst Ward
Fordingbridge Ward	The 5 New Milton Wards	Marchwood Ward
The Ringwood Wards and Sopley Ward	Boldre and Sway Ward	The 5 Totton Wards
Forest North West	Brockenhurst and Forest South Ward	The 3 Hythe Wards
Bransgore and Burley	Hordle Ward	Fawley, Blackfield & Langley; Furzedown & Hardley ;Holbury & North Blackfield
		Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh; Bramshaw, Copythorne North & Minstead

Use has also been made of information from other relevant audits, consultation and research produced for other initiatives plans and strategies e.g.

- The Children's Fund Implementation Plan – Hampshire Children and Families Forum consultation
- Hampshire Early Years Development and Childcare Plan and SW Local Strategic Plan
- Participatory Needs Assessment for Pennington; Calshot; Ashley and Waterside
- New Milton Market Town Initiative
- Summary of the indices of deprivation 2000 for the New Forest
- Improving Health in the Forest – New Forest Health Strategy
- Hythe and Dibden Play Areas Working Group
- New Forest Transport Strategy
- The work of the open spaces working Group

## The Consultation

### *Consultation with Children and Young People*

Children and Young People are being consulted through the 'Voice of the Child Project' on an ongoing basis. Information was also used from citizen panel consultations, which took place as part of the leisure services recreation development team best value survey and the new forest youth survey.

The 'Voice of the Child Project' is funded and supported by the Children's Fund and encourages the active participation of children and young people in shaping services. The strategy has linked to consultation work that has been carried out. Views are and continue to be captured in a mixture of formats including:

- video
- photographs and with written comments by children
- model making 'Planning for Real' workshops
- survey questionnaires

A number of examples are

- At children's play and arts festival days at Blackfield and New Milton during 2003, organised by the Forest Bus and produced a big brother diary video
- In Ringwood South, Fordingbridge and some surrounding villages carried out during summer fun events as a partnership between Hampshire Children and Families Forum and Forest Bus
- With young people in a range of settings and situations in Hythe organised in partnership with the Handy Trust.
- Young Peoples questionnaire undertaken by Pennington PNA Working Group
- The 'Planning for Real' process with children at New Milton and Ashley Junior Schools as part of the New Milton Market Town Planning, involving model making and workshops.

The issues discussed by the children and young people ranged from global and national concerns through to comments and ideas about the Towns, villages and streets where they live. This consultation is seen as an important on going process and dialogue within the strategy and will be key in the development of the " Access To Play " Projects. This is described further in the Neighbourhood Play Section of the Strategy.

## ***Consultation with Key People Involved in Supporting Play***

Several methods were used for this part of the consultation

- 3 area meetings / workshop events were held. There were 80 participants in total across all the sessions. The events were open invitation and brought together key partners involved in supporting play. This included representation from play and youth work organisations / providers, the county council, town and parish councils, parents, faith groups, schools, health visitors, local children and families forums and elected district council members. Because of the local nature of the events, representatives were able to identify and discuss grass roots issues relating to play in local communities.
- Letters inviting open comments were sent to all Town and Parish Councils and New Forest District Council Members. This brought some in-depth and valuable feedback, but was limited to only 4 responses
- Led interviews using prompt questions were held with other services within NFDC. Feedback was gained from Community Safety, Housing, Planning Policy, Open Spaces working Group, transport and Health Policy Development.

### ***The consultations looked at three subject areas:***

- The importance of play to children and the community
- Identifying present good practice and provision
- Actions for the future

### ***The key issues from the Adult Consultation are:***

- Endorsement for supporting the improvement and development of children's play opportunities
- An understanding and appreciation by the community of play as a freely chosen activity, valuable in its own right, and that it is central to the lives of children and young people
- Promoting play – keeping the issues in the front of the minds of the whole community
- Involving children and young people in identifying needs and decision making about their play environments is important
- The importance of working together with other agencies and the community to improve play opportunities and to influence a wide range of services at lots of levels
- We should be sharing facilities and buildings more
- There is a need to improve access for children who are disabled
- More information is needed on where to get funding for play
- The development of more supervised open access and affordable provision
- Improving the relationship between children and young people and older people in the District.

## **Carrying this Work Forward into Actions**

The Issues from the consultation have been reflected in the objectives and in the priority actions of the strategy. Detailed discussion also took place about the play needs of specific neighbourhoods and communities. The feedback from this work has been used to contribute to the picture built up by the audit. The audit and consultation have drawn out the needs and issues and established what could be improved and developed. Together they make the basis for deciding on priorities for funding and support.

The next sections 'Foundations' and 'Neighbourhood Play' describe how improvements and developments are to be achieved.

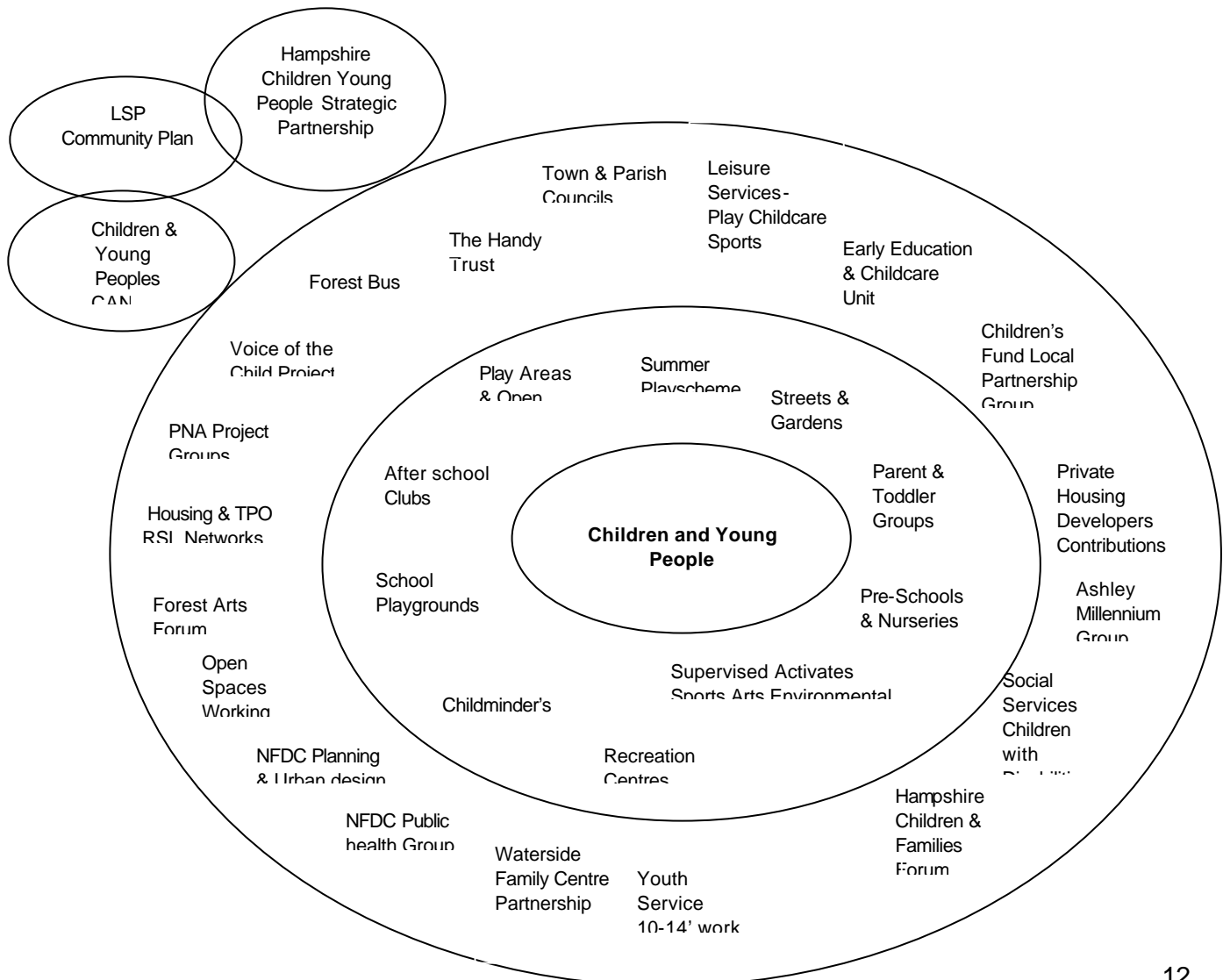


# The Foundations

## Working in Partnership and Making Links With Other Strategies

Children's play in the New Forest benefits from the active involvement of community and voluntary sector organisations and different levels and departments of local government. There are strong links between organisations and this has resulted in joint working and actions. This is vital for achieving the aims of the strategy. It is important to encourage and support representation of children's play issues in strategic planning groups, operational/ implementation groups, local and district forums. The range of links and influences can be seen in the diagram. The benefits are:

- Awareness, understanding and support for play issues gained at lots of levels
- A co-ordinated approach to play across agencies and identify gaps in services
- A comprehensive overview held by the Play development officer - helps in joining up things, finding and focusing relevant support and avoiding duplication.
- Developments based on sound local knowledge and community links, this helps make provision relevant and builds in sustainability
- Linking in funding from other strategies and programmes
- Provides opportunities to influence a variety of policy and plans that affect children's play
- Direct provision of play areas and playable environments through planning



Play is represented on the following locality based and strategic working groups in the District

### **Locality Based Groups**

- The 3 area based Hampshire Children and Family Forums,
- Waterside Neighbourhood Centre Partnership,
- Ashley Children's Centre Trust and the New Milton Market Town Action Group
- Area Prime – youth meetings at Blackfield and Netley View
- Fordingbridge community workers forum

These forums use a community development approach by engaging with local people to:

- Identify local issues
- Access support and training
- Come up with local solutions to local problems
- Involve local people
- Develop stronger, more sustainable community projects

### **Strategic Working Groups and Operational Groups**

- Children and Young People's community Action Network (CAN)
- (this group feeds into the New Forest Local strategic Partnership and Hampshire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership)
- Early Education and Childcare - Local Development Team (South West)
- New Forest Children's Fund Partnership
- Sure Start Blackfield
- Housing -Tenants Participation Officer's Liaison Group
- Forest Bus Advisory Group

### **Involvement and Links with Other Strategies and Plans**

- New Forest Community Strategy
- Hampshire County Council Preventative Strategy
- The New Forest Health Strategy "Improving Life in the Forest"
- The Hampshire Children's Fund Programme
- Hampshire Early Years Development and Childcare Plan
- New Forest Transport Strategy
- The New Forest Local Plan
- New Forest Housing Strategy
- New Forest Community Safety Strategy

Two themes from the consultation which this style of working are helping to address are

- ***The need to promote play – keeping the need to play in the front of the minds of the whole community***
- ***The importance of influencing a wide range of services at lots of levels***

For more about the partner organisations and the established and potential links between strategies- please see appendix 1 and 2.

### **Partnership Funding for Key Voluntary and Community Play Organisations**

Play provision is currently funded from many different sources and this is likely to continue. One of the difficulties that arise for voluntary play organisations in particular, is the piecemeal fashion in which core running costs are funded. Commitment from statutory organisations for this helps with long term planning leveraging in funding from elsewhere.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
<p><b>Contribute to core running costs of</b></p> <p>Forest Bus</p> <p>The Three Branches of Pre-School Learning Alliance in the District (for work of the core organisation, other than that commissioned in the Early Years Plan)</p> <p>Pre- School Learning Alliance Development Workers in the District</p> <p>The Handy Trust</p>	<p>District Council- Leisure, HCC Early Years, Health Joint Finance</p> <p>District Council- Leisure</p> <p>Hampshire HCC Early years</p> <p>District Council – Community Safety</p>	<p>All Current Ongoing subject to budget review</p>
<p>Consider the case for core funding in the future for Hampshire Children And Families Forum</p>	<p>District Council - Leisure</p>	<p>By March 05</p>

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1-Commitement to Partnership
<b>Links to Other Strategies and Plans</b>	NFDC Leisure Services Plan and Community Safety Strategy Hampshire Early Years Development and Childcare Plan
<b>Identified Funding and Partnership</b>	The Pre School Learning Alliance and Forest Bus receive funding through NFDC Leisure Service and Hampshire County Council. Handy Trust receive a contribution from Community Safety (all are subject to annual budget review process)

### Active Involvement in Locality and Strategic Working Groups

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
<p>Contribute to relevant joint actions relating to play in the Children and Young People's section of the New Forest Community Strategy and Hampshire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership / Preventative Strategy</p>	<p>NFDC - Play</p>	<p>Current - Ongoing</p>
<p>Link the relevant Play issues from the locality and strategic working groups into the children and Young People's Community Action Network (CAN)</p>	<p>NFDC - Play</p>	<p>Current - Ongoing</p>
<b>Objectives Met</b>	1-Commitement to Partnership	
<b>Links to Other Strategies and Plans</b>	New Forest Community Strategy and The Hampshire Preventative Strategy	

## Quality

### Adopting the 'Best Play' Objectives

The play sector nationally, has developed 7 objectives that offer criteria for measuring –'What Play Provision Should do for Children'. They specifically focus attention on the quality of the play experiences offered. This strategy recommends that they are adopted and used as a tool improve and develop children's play opportunities. They can be applied to any provision i.e. supervised groups, unsupervised play areas and public open space.

They can be used across services, agencies and organisations to access and improve play value for example when:

- Planning and designing new play areas
- Developing a new skate park
- Reviewing and improving existing play areas
- Designing roads and open spaces and housing schemes
- Funding or providing supervised activities for children and young people

The 7 objectives are that the provision:

**Objective1:** Extends the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction that they enjoy from it.

**Objective2:** Recognises the child's need to test boundaries and respond positively to that need.

**Objective3:** Manages the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe.

**Objective 4:** Maximises the range of play opportunities.

**Objective 5:** Fosters independence and self esteem.

**Objective 6:** Fosters children's respect for others and offers opportunities for social interaction.

**Objective 7:** Fosters the child's well-being, health growth and development, knowledge and understanding, creativity and capacity to learn.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
Formally adopt these objectives as part of the Strategy	All Key Partners	By March 05
Incorporate as a grant condition for funding of Playschemes and Partnership Funding of Key Voluntary Organisations	NFDC play Development	By March 05

<b>Objectives Met</b>	3 b and 3c Improving Quality
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	Leisure Plan; Community Safety Strategy; Planning & Development Control; Housing Strategy

## Adopting other Relevant Good Practice Guidelines and Quality Standards

In addition to 'Best Play ' this strategy recommend the adoption and use of a range of other good practice guidance and standards

For supervised provision

- National Standard for Day Care and Child minding relevant to childcare provision and supervised activity schemes
- Quality Assurance Schemes – There are a range relevant schemes for Out of School, Early Years, Playschemes etc that are endorsed by lic.
- Hampshire County Council 'Open Country Pursuits' – policy and good practice relevant to Out of School provision and Playschemes taking children off site.

For Play Areas and Open Space

- ' More than Swings and Roundabouts ' Planning for Outdoor Play relevant for all those involved in designing, developing, improving or maintaining open space in residential areas, in both urban and rural situations.
- Developing Accessible Play Space – A Good Practice Guide relating the development and improvement of play areas to the Disability Discrimination Act. Relevant to all services, agencies and organisations involved in developing and improving play areas.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
Offer ongoing support and mentoring to ensure all relevant schemes register with Ofsted.(Target - 90% of schemes reaching satisfactory or better.)	NFDC Play and Childcare Development +Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – March 06
Formally Adopt Principles and good practice in 'More of than Swings and Roundabouts' and ' Developing Accessible Play Space' as part of this Strategy	NFDC – Planning and Town and Parish Councils	By March 05
Increase the number of providers working towards accreditation to 40%	NFDC Childcare and Play Development + Early Years Unit	By March 06

<b>Objectives Met</b>	3c. Improve Quality, Access and Inclusion
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	Early Years and Childcare Plan for Supervised Provision. Planning / Open Spaces Strategy for play areas and open space.
<b>Funding</b>	Open space-possible developers contributions for improvements / flexibility in areas that have reached capacity of recommended informal space + NFDC play development time. Town and Parish Council precept.

## Access and Inclusion

Fundamentally all children are entitled to go out to play and feel included. Work is taking place in the District to improve access to play and provide inclusive play environments. However there are a range of factors that sometimes prevent equal outcomes, these include:

- A shortage of play facilities, especially in some of the more rural parts of the District.
- The cost and affordability and relevance of supervised activities including childcare and recreation centres, highlighting the need for more low cost open access provision
- Housing- Children living without immediate access to appropriate outside play space e.g. First and second floor flats and children living in cramped temporary accommodation
- Fear of crime, including bullying
- Environmental barriers that exclude children from play areas such as uneven surfaces, busy roads, pavement parking, narrow gates
- Social barriers such as fear, embarrassment or discriminatory attitudes that can be experienced by disabled children or children from minority ethnic backgrounds

There was a specific feedback from the consultation that ***There is a need to improve access for children who are disabled.*** There were a mixture of issues relating to this including- lack of supervised provision with adequate awareness and training, need for respite often seems to outweigh the need for play, lack of information for parents on the range and whereabouts of supervised play.

The consultation also highlighted ***the need to develop more supervised open access and affordable provision.***

The essential ingredient for making play more accessible is a willingness from agencies and organisations to overcome some of these barriers. On the following page are some of the actions included in the strategy targeted at trying to do this.

<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>
Developing better liaison with other council plans and strategies to influence access to play.	All Partners	Current-ongoing
Developing and funding open access/ affordable supervised activities.(x ref Access to Play )	NFDC and Forest Bus	Current – March 06
Adopting ‘ Developing Accessible Play Spaces ‘ – good practice guidance in the protocol and policy for the design of children’s outside public play space in the District (x ref Quality)	NFDC and Town and Parish Councils	By March 05
Support development of inclusive childcare in identified areas (x ref Out of School and Childcare)	NFDC – SSChildren With Disabilities Team	Current – March 06
Developing and promoting training that raises awareness of inclusion and access issues e.g. ‘Everyone Can Play ‘ one course per year (x ref Training )	NFDC /Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – ongoing

<b>Objectives Met</b>	3 b and 3c. Quality access and Inclusion
-----------------------	--

All of these actions appear else where in the strategy, please see for details of funding and links to other strategies

## Training for play and play work

Playwork training remains the cornerstone of developing good quality, accessible provision whether it is for staff or volunteers in childcare or supervised activities. All clubs, communities, playschemes, play organisations and recreation centres are encouraged to take up training for their staff and volunteers. Play work education and training in the District, continues to be aided by the Local Training Forum, which is made up of representatives from the voluntary and community sector, statutory and private providers of play, early year's education, childcare, colleges and other training providers. This is still producing a co ordinate approach. The forum is chaired by the Hampshire Early Years and Childcare Unit.

The training available in the District continues to expand and is outlined in The Hampshire Early Education and Childcare Unit, training and continuing professional development programme. This covers training for early years and projects for older children. The training route actions outlined below are the ones linked to play projects for school age children. There is a similar route and training for early years education and nurseries workers. This can be found as another part of the Hampshire County Early Years Development and Childcare Plan.

There is also a regular up date of courses published by Hampshire Early Education and Childcare Unit in the termly Horizons Magazine, which is automatically sent to every registered childcare provider. Representatives from the District are also involved in the South Hants Satellite Centre of Playwork South East. This group supports the overall development of playwork training in our area.

### Training and Professional Development for Playworkers Working in Play Projects with School Aged Children

Hampshire Basic Playwork Certificate	Intermediate Certificate in Developing Skills Working With Children and Young People
--------------------------------------	--

Certificate in Playwork Level 2  
or  
NVQ Playwork Level2

Diploma in Playwork Level 3  
or  
NVQ Playwork level3

Early Years Care and Education  
Level 4

Professional Development Workshops

- First Aid
- Basic Child Protection
- Advanced Child Protection
- Behavior Management
- Every One Can Play
- Health and Safety
- Food Hygiene



<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>
Deliver 'Everyone Can Play' one per year	NFDC Childcare Development / Hampshire Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – ongoing
Deliver Basic Playwork Course twice per year	NFDC childcare development / Hampshire Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current-ongoing
Actively link play workers into relevant training	NFDC Childcare Development	Current-ongoing
Provide Playwork Vocational Courses	Totton and Brockenhurst College Bursaries Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current-ongoing
Provide specific training session for summer playschemes re 'making registration work'	NFDC	By July 04-ongoing
Participate in Local Training Group	Early Education and Childcare Unit Lead Participation from Colleges and Early Years/Childcare Organisations, NFDC	Current – ongoing
Participate in South Hampshire Playwork Training and Information Satellite Centre to develop web site and future training	Lead Southampton City Play Unit- participation from NFDC; Colleges; Hampshire Early Education and Childcare Portsmouth City.	Current-ongoing
<b>Objectives Met</b>	3. Improve quality, inclusion and access	
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	Early Years Development And Childcare Plan, Leisure Services Plan	
<b>Funding</b>	Early Education and Childcare Unit	

## **Actively Involving Children and Young People in Consultation and Decision Making**

This strategy recommends the adoption of shared values for the future active involvement of children and young people in the planning and development of their own play spaces and play activities. If carried out in an appropriate way this can bring many benefits:

### ***Benefits for organisations/agencies when they are developing and supporting play***

- Information can be gained from children and young people as citizens and customers about their changing attitudes and needs, their views as to what constitutes quality in service provision and barriers to accessing services
- Children and young people can bring a fresh perspectives and new ideas about services, policies and democratic processes, helping tackle key objectives and promoting social inclusion.
- Services and policies can be designed, delivered and evaluated based on actual rather than presumed need. This saves money.

### ***Benefits for children and young people***

- Children and young people can build on existing skills and develop new ones, increasing confidence and self esteem.
- Children and young people may better understand organisations and how to influence them.
- Children and young people benefit from new and better services that are more responsive to their needs.

### ***Benefits for the wider Community***

- There is a more vibrant local democracy through the active involvement of children and young people.
- Community cohesion is fostered through the inclusion of children and young people in local decision making
- There is an empowering environment that raises aspirations among children and young people and the wider community

The shared values outlined on the next page form part of 'Hear by Right' – standards for the active involvement of children and young people. The standards have been developed by The National Youth Agency in partnership with the local Government Association.

## Shared Values for Involving Children and Young People in Consultation

- Children and Young People's participation is a visible commitment that is properly resourced.
  - There is visible commitment to the principals and practice from senior managers, elected members or trustees.
  - Participation is built into the organisation and is reflected in its strategic planning, services, resources and communication
  - Relevant staff, elected members or trustees have the opportunity to develop the attitudes and skills to work effectively with children and young people.
  
- Children and Young People's involvement is valued
  - Children and young people are treated honestly and their contributions are taken seriously
  - Feedback to children and young people about the effects of their involvement is prompt and clear
  - Children and young people's participation is celebrated
  
- Children and young people have an equal opportunity to participate
  - All children and young people have a right to participate in the decisions that affect them
  - Children and young people feel welcome and valued and are not discriminated against or prevented from participating on grounds of ethnic origin, language, religion, culture, disability, age, gender, sexuality or location
  - Care and time is taken to go the extra mile to ensure children and young people facing greatest barriers to getting involved are aware of and can take up opportunities to have their say
  - Information is available to children and young people in good time and is accessible, jargon free and culturally appropriate
  
- Policies and standards for the participation of children and young people are in place, evaluated and improved
  - What the organisation is trying to achieve and the intended benefits are clear from the start
  - Children and young people evaluate the process and changes that result from their points of view and help apply lessons learned
  - There are agreed quality standards and codes of conduct for working with children and young people to ensure their participation is safe and sound

<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>
Adopt and put into practice the Shared Values of 'Hear By Right' as part of this strategy	All Partners	By March 05

<b>Objectives Met</b>	4. Ensure that Children's Views are considered
<b>Identified Funding</b>	Children's Fund – Voice of the Child

## Neighbourhood Play

### Holiday Playschemes

There is a long tradition of successful and popular community summer playschemes in the District. Most schemes are organised by volunteers or Town and Parish Councils. They are committed to their priority of encouraging low cost, quality, safe and stimulating play for school age children in the long summer holidays. Averages of 15 schemes run for 1 or two weeks during each summer.

These Schemes are a vital resource in the front line of providing local supervised play in the holidays. The level of bureaucracy involved in current Ofsted Registration is causing difficulties for many of the schemes who often only run for 2 weeks a year. This barrier has the potential to seriously decrease the number of schemes that operate. We are wishing in the next few years to support quality but at the same time try and make registration work for schemes by offering pre registration advice and training, tailored specifically for the summer playschemes.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Timescale
Operate grant aid scheme to support communities to run their own playschemes	NFDC	Current-ongoing
Provide specific pre summer training on summer playscheme registration	NFDC	By July 04-ongoing
Develop and deliver training around consultation and evaluation for playscheme settings X ref consulting children;	NFDC	By March 06
Include ' Best Play' quality standards in Playscheme Grant Aid Conditions and monitor x ref quality	NFDC	By March 05
Build links between Playschemes and Social Services Children with Disabilities Team X ref access and inclusion	NFDC with SS and Playschemes	Current – ongoing
Increase awareness of inclusion issues by delivering training course 'Every One Can Play' (One per year) x ref training and access and inclusion	NFDC	Current - ongoing
Review the grant aid funding received by specialist provision	NFDC with SS	By March 2006
Provide ongoing advice and support for existing schemes on an individual basis when necessary	NFDC	Current-ongoing

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1.Commitment to Partnership 2.Making Links 4.Quality, Access, Inclusion 4.Children's Views Considered 6. Based on Needs Assessment
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	Leisure Service Plan; Community Safety Strategy; Health Strategy; Housing Strategy (RSL'S- Sustainable Communities) Also has links with access to play project in this section
<b>Identified Funding</b>	Town and Parish Grant Aid, NFDC Leisure Grant Aid, Children's Fund, Play Development Budget

## Out of School Childcare ( After School and Holiday )

Hampshire County Council Early Education and Childcare Unit are responsible for leading and facilitating the Early Education Development and Childcare Plan for our area. The aim of the plan is to ensure accessible, affordable and good quality childcare is available for all parents and children that want it. This includes After School and Holiday Play care for children 5-14

Partnership agreements with the County Council jointly fund some of the District Council Childcare development work

There are 15 play care clubs in the District providing childcare for school age children. The provision is managed by a mixture of voluntary / community sector and private providers. Most provision caters for primary school children. The cost of attending the sessions reflects the fact that the provision runs primarily as childcare and that this element of the provision is expensive to organise. This is due to required staffing ratios and the fact that the cost of transport from school to club is often included in the charges made.

After school Clubs for older children has been identified as a gap in services and new club has recently been opened by the County Youth Service for 10 – 14's at a school based youth centre. This provision is open five nights a week straight after school and is open until 6pm .It runs as a drop in for young people who wish to stay after school and socialise, access the clubs IT or arts/crafts recourses. It is hoped that this may act as a successful pilot to develop other similar provision.

Key Issues identified in the Early Development and Childcare Strategic Plan for the South West which covers the New Forest are

- Rural isolation and rural poverty
- Poor and expensive public transport
- Lack of access to local services
- Pockets of disadvantage that are hidden within a largely affluent area
- Isolated and hard to reach families
- Difficulties with planning permission leading to lack of childcare services for children and families.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Timescale
Maintain agreement with Hampshire County Council Early Years Unit and engage in the work of the Local Development Team	NDFC/ Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – ongoing 2006
Target wards in rural areas with more than 15 children for every place ie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ringwood and East Sopley</li> <li>• Boldre and Sway</li> <li>• Bramshaw and Copythorne North</li> <li>• Downlands and New Forest</li> </ul>	NDFC/ Early Years Unit	Current – ongoing 2006

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest North West</li> <li>• Ashurst and Copythorne South</li> </ul> <p>Survey the need for Out of School Provision in Rural Schools with role of over 160 – Sway, Western Downland, Bransgore, Ashurst</p>		
<p>Target wards in more built up areas with less than 15 places per child for expansion of existing/development of new clubs ie</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milton</li> <li>• Barton</li> <li>• Bashley</li> <li>• Fernhill</li> <li>• Butts Ash and Dibden Purlieu</li> <li>• Hythe West and Langdown</li> <li>• Furzedown and Hardley</li> <li>• Pennington</li> </ul>	NDFC/ Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – ongoing 2006
<p>Increase number of providers working towards KCN accreditation 20% of provision to be working towards accreditation x ref quality</p>	NDFC/ Early Education and childcare Unit- providers	By March 2006
<p>Provide ongoing support for providers to help them maintain quality provision 90% of settings inspected by Ofsted reaching satisfactory or better</p>	NDFC/ Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – ongoing 2006
<p>Action plans drawn up with groups who are causing concern, reviewed half termly 5% reduction in the number of Out of School places lost</p>	NDFC/ Early Education and Childcare Unit	Current – ongoing 2006
<p>Work with Social Services Children with Disabilities Team to increase number of children who are disabled attending out of school provision.</p>	NDFC/ Early Education and Childcare Unit with SS Children with Disabilities Team	Current – ongoing 2006

<p>Deliver Everyone Can Play Course (one per year) x ref training and quality, access and inclusion</p>	NDFC/ Early Education and Child Unit	Current – ongoing 2006
---	--	------------------------

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1. Commitment to Partnership 2. Making Links 4. Quality, Access, Inclusion 4. Children's Views Considered 5. Information on Funding 6. Based on Needs Assessment
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	This work forms part of the HCC Early Education Development and Childcare Plan and Strategic Plan for South West
<b>Identified Funding</b>	£15,000 per year to NDFC from HCC Early Education and Childcare Unit- part funds Childcare Development Worker for the District. Funding can also be accessed via the Unit, by providers

for first year and start up costs.
------------------------------------

## Pre Schools and Parent and Toddler Groups

Pre-Schools in the District provide quality play and learning opportunities for children aged between 3 years and 5 years old. All groups are registered with Ofsted and most are EYE providers which means that they claim nursery education funding to provide free places for all their 3 and 4 year olds.

The majority of pre- Schools are managed by voluntary committees of parents involving them in organisation, employment, planning and provision of services for their children. This process develops community involvement of parents at an early stage and is effective in developing skills, ability and confidence for parents too.

Parent and Toddler groups are also supported by the Pre- School Learning Alliance. Groups provide additional opportunities for play, often not available in the home. They provide opportunities for parents to build friendships combating possible feelings of isolation and enable the development of parenting skills through mutual support networks which, in today's changing society, can be vital for many.

The work to support Pre Schools is focused in the Hampshire Early Education Development and Childcare Plan and is supported and delivered by The Pre School Learning Alliance. However the some elements not included in the Early Years and Childcare Plan e.g. core funding for the 3 local Branches and are funded by the District Council (X ref funding for key partners)

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
To provide practical support and Training for parents and carers to develop, sustain and manage good quality learning through play opportunities	The Pre – School Learning Alliance	Current-ongoing March 2006

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1.Commitment to Partnership 2.Making Links 3. Quality, Access, Inclusion 5. Information on Funding 6. Based on Needs Assessment
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	The majority of the work forms part of the HCC Early Years Development and Childcare Plan and Strategic Plan for South West There are also links with the Leisure Services Plan.
<b>Identified Funding and Partnership</b>	HCC Early Years and Childcare Unit fund Pre School Development Work for the District, in addition there is contribution to the Branches from NFDC Leisure. Funding can also be accessed via the Unit, by providers for start up costs



## Play Areas and Open Space

Children and young people have always spent much of their time out of doors in parks, playgrounds and other open spaces. Few people would disagree with the view that this is health and right for them, their families and the wider community. In spite of growing restrictions on their mobility, large numbers of children and young people are still choosing to spend time outdoors.

This strategy acknowledges that children and young people are legitimate users of the whole public outdoor environment. By working towards making sure children can access good outdoor space, where they are welcomed and encouraged users, we are

- Supporting their healthy all round physical and emotional development
- Contributing to a reduction in their feelings of exclusion and stress
- Providing an important and much needed chance to socialise and meet friends
- Contributing to the promotion of safer, more harmonious communities.

Within New Forest District, Town and Parish Councils manage most play areas and public outside space close to houses, for the benefit of the residents of the area. There are 303.89ha of designated informal open space and 257.22ha formal open space. There are 63 designated fixed equipment children's play areas in the District.

As a part of Government Guidance PPG17 local authorities are asked to

*assess existing and future needs, establish the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing open spaces and recreation facilities, and establish standards of provision. The needs of those living and visiting rural areas are also to be met.*

To achieve this, members of The Policy Design and Information Team will be co-ordinating the development of an Open Spaces Strategy. The Strategy will draw on work done in the play sector by adopting and using 'Developing Accessible Play Space' Best Play' objectives and 'More Than Swings and Roundabouts' (see Foundations Adopting Good Practice) These recently published good practice guidelines argue for a new approach to creating and improving outdoor play space.

To aid the development and sustainability of open space and play areas the District has an established Open Spaces Working Group.

This group includes representation across NFDC services and is the Councils main way of bringing together those services that have a role in helping to secure recreational open space within communities. This extends from the first ideas of land allocation, through negotiations with developers to commenting on design and implementation. The group tries to improve the quality and timeliness of provision and to ensure that its future management is secured.

In addition to the working group, there is a liaison meeting with representatives of the principal Town and Parish Councils that are utilising developer's contributions. This helps monitor levels of provision and progress with the site transfer.

The New Forest District Local Plan sets out standard for play provision in terms of open space and equipped playgrounds. On specific schemes that are generated by housing development, a Section 106 agreement will secure funding and provision. A member of the landscape team in the Policy Design and Information Team in Planning Services will assess any designs that arise from the planning process and will be responsible for finally signing them off, before handover to the Town or Parish Council. There is a protocol in place to Guide this process.

<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Time Scale</b>
Adopt 'Best Play' principles in the specification for the design of play areas. X ref with Foundations Best Play and Objectives	NFDC/Town and Parish Councils	By March 05
Formally adopt principles and good practice in more and swings and roundabout and developing accessible play space as part of this strategy X ref good practice guidelines	NFDC Town and Parish Councils	By March 05
Develop, agree and implement a briefing process to use with developers and development control for achieving play provision through developers contributions	NFDC	By March 05
Provide information and support with DDA (Developing Accessible )Play Space 'Best Play' and 'More than Swings and Roundabouts'	NFDC	Current- ongoing
Develop, agree a methodology and for carrying out an audit of play areas for play value and DDA compliance as part of developing the Open Spaces Strategy  - Implement	NFDC /Town and Parish Councils/ SCARF	By March 05  By March 06
Prioritise with Town and Parish, Play Area developments resulting from developers contributions according to agreed protocol and schedules	NFDC Parish Councils	Current- ongoing
Partner with Forest Bus; New Milton TC and Ashley Junior School on the development of a fixed equipment play area at the Rugby Sports Field Ashley X ref Access to play	Forest Bus New Milton TC- Ashley Junior Sch NFDC	Current – Sept 05
Actively involve children and young people in the redesign and re-construction of outside space around Blackfield Neighborhood Centre and adjoining green space Xref Access to play	Forest Bus	By March 05
Testwood Home Farm Hazel Farm		
Hanger Farm		
Offer support with any consultation re the idea of potential play area in Efford Way, and also possible identified gap in the north east section of the Town	NFDC Lymington TC	By March 06

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1 Commitment to Partnership 2 Create links between Services 3. Access and inclusion 4. Consulting children and young people
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	Leisure Services Plan Local Plan and Open Spaces Strategy Community Safety Strategy.
<b>Funding</b>	Developers Contributions for some Schemes.



## **“Access to Play” Projects**

A number of partner agencies have identified that children living in some areas of the District may be disadvantaged by lack of access to appropriate services. The reasons vary. Some live in very small rural settlements where opportunities to socialise, other than at school, may be limited. Relying on parents/carers for transport can lead to lost opportunities for spontaneity and independence. Often in very small communities there is not the focus of a play area to bring children and young people together for play.

In other parts of the District the age profile of the population can lead to differing needs. This sometimes causes tensions that are difficult to manage.

There are also pockets of disadvantage resulting from child poverty.

Sometimes it is combination of these factors.

As a result of needs assessment through the consultation and audit there will be agreed joint partnership working to improve access to play in

- Blackfield
- New Milton
- Pennington
- Hythe
- Ringwood
- Villages in the North West Forest
- The Forest South Ward and Ashurst, Copythorne and Bramshaw

The projects will be encouraging access across a wide range of opportunities and facilities, linking into what already exists and supporting developments of new provision. The affordability of using Recreation Centres was flagged up as an issue for families during the consultation. Working with facilities to improve access for families on low income will be a small part of this work.

There is a possibility also of linking into the work of the Transport Strategy on identified issues/targets to- Increase levels of walking/cycling; improve access in areas of high social exclusion; reduce road child road casualties.

All of the neighbourhoods (with the exception of the last) have well developed links with the broader community and the possibility of adopting a broader community development approach. This has the potential of making long term gains more possible and sustainable.

### **Access to Play in Blackfield and New Milton**

Blackfield and New Milton both have evidence suggesting high levels of child poverty and social exclusion . Both Blackfield and Milton wards are among the top 10% of most deprived wards in Hampshire. Evidence from Waterside needs assessment and New Milton Town plan identify of lack of play opportunities. Both areas identified by acorn research for the children’s fund as striving areas and are priority for funding. Black field is in a designated PRIME partnership areas which means it is a priority for support with community safety issues

‘Access to Play ‘ in these areas is being lead and co ordinated by the Forest Bus. The Project employs a play development worker to focus on developing and supporting access to play for children 5-13 in both of the areas. The work will begin with carrying out extensive consultation with children and young people in each area.

<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Time scale</b>
<b>Blackfield</b> Actively involve children and young people in the redesign and re -construction of out side space around BNC and Sure Start building and adjoining green space	PRIME/ Forest Bus	Current – March 06
Improve access between Heather Rd and facilities at Gang Warily	NFDC Fawley PC/ BNC	March 07
Support existing children’s and young peoples projects/ activities at the BNC	Forest Bus	Current – March 06
<b>New Milton</b> Support existing play projects ie weekly play club at the youth Centre and Ashley Playscheme.	Forest Bus	Current – March 06
Develop open access playscheme provision in or close to Milton ward.	Forest Bus NFDC	Current – March 06
Partner with Forest Bus; New Milton Town Council and Ashley Junior School on the development of a fixed equipment play area at the Rugby Sports Field X ref open spaces	New Milton TC- /NFDC/Forest Bus	Current – Sept 05
<b>In Both Areas</b> Deploy Forest Bus play Development worker 18 ½ hrs per week in both areas	Forest Bus	Current-March 06
Carry out in-depth consultation and needs assessment about play opportunities with children and young people	Forest Bus	Current- March 06
Make a plan with the communities based on the consultation and engage other agencies in delivery	Forest Bus	Current- March 06

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1. Commitment to Partnership 2.Links with other council services3. Access and Inclusion 4.consulting children & young people 5. Share info on funding 6.based on needs assessment.
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	‘ Improving Health in the Forest’ (children and Young People and Health Inequalities); Community Safety; New Forest Transport Strategy; New Forests Housing Strategy – (Sustainable Development) New Milton Market Town Initiative and Plan
<b>Identified Funding</b>	Children’s Fund; Community Safety; Town and Parish Councils; Leisure Grant Aid; Play Development Budget; RSL’s community budgets.

## Access to Play in Pennington

High in the table of indices of multiple deprivation Pennington has been the subject of an in depth participatory needs analysis. The need for increased play opportunities has been highlighted through this work and through the play consultation

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
Work with Pennington Action Group to develop affordable in formal supervised activities	Pennington Action Group-NFDC Forest Bus	Current – March 06
Explore with the Town Council the further development of Pennington common for play	Lymington TC – Pennington AG -NFDC	-March 05 - 06
Explore with Housing and the community the play needs of children living in first and second floor flats at Pennington	NFDC Pennington AG	Current – March 05
To offer support with any consultation re the idea of potential play areas in Efford Way; and possible gap in provision in the north east section of the town	NFDC Play Development	March 05-06

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1. Commitment to Partnership 2.Links with other council services 3. Access and Inclusion 4.consulting children & young people 5. Share info on funding 6.based on needs assessment.
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	‘ Improving Health in the Forest’ (children and Young People and Health Inequalities); Community Safety; New Forest Transport Strategy; New Forests Housing Strategy Pennington Action Plan
<b>Identified Funding</b>	Town and Parish Councils; Leisure Grant Aid; Play Development Budget; Health Partnership Funding

## Access to Play in Hythe

The old ward of Hythe South is high in the table of multiple indices of deprivation. Lack of affordable play opportunities identified by Waterside needs assessment and the Waterside Neighbourhood Centre Partnership. This part of Hythe is also designated as a PRIME partnership area.

During the summer The Handy Trust organise 'Summer Play and Sport in the Park' in parks and recreation grounds in both Hythe and Marchwood. They offer open access supervised games, sport and craft activities that are free at the point of delivery. The project provides the added benefit of low intervention, appropriate and friendly supervision of the park whilst the scheme is running. It is hoped that this might encourage more children to play out in the parks.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
Partnership with Handy Trust; Hythe Parish Council, Marchwood Parish Council and Hythe URC to deliver and support Summer Play and Sports in the Park X ref playschemes	Handy Trust	Current- March 06
Participate in the Hythe and Dibden Parish Council Play Areas Working Party.	Hythe and Dibden PC	Current- ongoing
Contribute financially to community development work at Netley View in Partnership with The Waterside Neighborhood centre Partnership	WFNCP	Current – March 06
Link into the Voice of the child consultation and Prime Partnership work to identify future work xref Consulting children and young people	Handy Trust	Current -ongoing

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1. Commitment to Partnership 2.Links with other council services3. Access and Inclusion 4.consulting children & young people 5. Share info on funding 6.based on needs assessment.
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	' Improving Health in the Forest' (children and Young People and Health Inequalities); Community Safety Strategy, Leisure Services Plan
<b>Identified Funding</b>	Community Safety to Handy Trust, Leisure Partnership Funding to WNCP and NFDC play scheme grant aid

## Access to Play Ringwood South

Ringwood South again is identified as being amongst one of the Districts most disadvantaged wards and is identified by the children's fund as a priority for funding. Hampshire Children and Families Forum (North West Forest) and Forest Bus have been piloting a new project in this area called 'Turn up the Fun' delivering and encouraging the development of supervised play in Ringwood South.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
Work in Partnership with HCFF and Forest Bus and RSL's to deliver Turn up the Fun Sessions in identified places.	HCFF Forest Bus	Current- March 06

<b>Objectives Met</b>	1. Commitment to Partnership 2. Links with other council services 3. Access and Inclusion 4. consulting children & young people 5. Share info on funding 6. based on needs assessment.
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	'Improving Health in the Forest' (children and Young People and Health Inequalities); Community Safety; New Forests Housing Strategy – (Sustainable Development)
<b>Identified Funding</b>	Leisure Services – Playscheme Funding, Children's Fund and RSL'S

## Access to Play in the Villages in the North West Forest and areas in the Forest South ward, Ashurst, Copythorne and Bramshaw Areas

Nationally the new Forest is significant by having wards in the worst 20% for employment health and access and this is mirrored in lack of opportunities for play. In particular Villages in the North West Forest and areas in the Forest South ward, Ashurst, Copythorne and Bramshaw areas. Downlands, Forest North and Forest South fall within the worst 10% wards nationally for access.

Out all the areas in the District Forest South and the Copythorne Bramshaw areas have the least recorded information about the play needs of children.

The play activities organised through the NFDC Branch out Programme in the North West of the Forest have become relatively expensive and exclusive and would benefit from development and review .



Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
<b>Villages in the North West Forest</b> Review existing activities	NFDC With HCFF Blashford Lakes Study Centre and Local communities PC'c	March 05-06
<b>Brockenhurst and Forest South; Ashurst and Copythorne South; Bramshaw and Copythorne North</b> Research and consult on play needs with Parish Councils and Children and Young People and Parents	HCFF Local communities PC'c	March 05-06

<b>Objectives Met</b>	3. Improving Access 4 Consulting children and young people 6.Needs Assessment
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	' Improving Health in the Forest' (children and Young people and Health Inequalities Leisure Plan
<b>Identified Funding</b>	NFDC Play Development

#### Access to Play -Recreation Road Show

During the summer holidays the District Council organise an outreach recreational activities programme called The Recreation Road Show. The scheme visits a wide range of venues each year and is arranged in co operation with Town and Parish Council, using recreation and playing fields. The programme has been running for many years and has developed an excellent reputation for quality and organisation. Priority is given to those areas that are otherwise under resourced in supervised play provision.

Priority Actions	Lead Agency	Time Scale
Operate the Recreation Road Show programme for school age children during the summer 75% targeted at rural wards and the ' Access to Play ' areas	NFDC/ with  Town and Parish Councils	Current - ongoing

<b>Objectives Met</b>	3.Access to Play
<b>Links with Other Strategies And Plans</b>	Leisure Plan -Health
<b>Identified Funding</b>	NFDC Leisure

## Appendix 1

### **More About Key Partner Organisations**

#### **Forest Bus**

The Forest Bus is a mobile project organised by New Forest and Romsey Mobile Community Project.

The project employs play and youth workers to develop community provision where there is an identified need. Sessions are delivered from a vehicle specially converted for play and community work. The staff work alongside volunteers in the community to help develop groups that continue to be of benefit long after the Bus has moved on.

In response to local needs the bus provides family groups for parents and children and supervised open access holiday and after school sessions for school age children. The sessions are free at the point of delivery. The mobile nature of the project means that valuable community development, play and health promotion resources can travel to communities that might otherwise miss out.

#### **The Hampshire Early Education Development and Childcare Partnership and Unit**

Hampshire County Council Early Education Development and Childcare Unit is responsible for leading and facilitating the Early Education Development and Childcare Plan for our area. The aim of the plan is to ensure accessible, affordable and good quality childcare is available for all parents and children that want it. This provision includes Pre Schools, Nurseries Childminders and Out of School Childcare for children 5-13.

Partnership agreements with the County Council jointly fund some of the work of the District Council Childcare Development, Pre – School Learning Alliance and National Child minding Association in the District.

#### **Town and Parish Councils**

There are 37 Town or Parish Councils in the District. They are some of the Key supporters of neighbourhood play. Support comes in the form of management of play areas, skate parks and open space; small grants to play projects and invaluable grass roots knowledge of communities. Some directly organise and support summer playschemes.

#### **Totton and Brockenhurst Colleges**

Totton and Brockenhurst College both deliver the vocational playwork courses described in the training section. Many of the courses are funded by bursaries routed through the Hampshire Early Years Unit. These courses are a cornerstone for developing quality in supervised settings.

## **The Pre School Learning Alliance**

The work of the Pre – School Learning Alliance is key to the development and sustainability of play and early learning opportunities for pre-school children. They offer a high quality support network providing advice, guidance to good practice and training. There are 3 Branches of the Pre-School Learning Alliance in the District, who between them support approximately 180 pre school groups in the District, including pre school playgroups, parent and toddler groups, drop – ins, full day care groups and extended day pre-schools.

In addition to the work in supporting existing groups, the Pre School Learning Alliance work with the community to identify areas where needs are not met and ensure that community based services are developed appropriately.

## **Hampshire County Youth Service**

Hampshire County Youth Service aim to promote and deliver opportunities which are challenging, supportive, exciting and fun for young people, enabling them to learn, develop and respond to change. Opportunities are offered through a voluntary association and open access basis and predominantly within young people's free time. Effective services for young people are delivered through Youth Service projects and in partnership with other organisations and agencies.

The service is committed to increasing its work with young people aged 10-14 years and acknowledges the importance and value of enabling young people to access and engage in play opportunities.

## **Hampshire Children and Families Forum**

Hampshire Children and Families forum are a voluntary organisation. There are 3 locality based Branches within the District. Local Parents are encouraged to have a say about services for children and families in their area. The Forums also provide information to Parents and each branch produces a directory of local services.

## **District Council**

There are many services based at the District Council that support the development of play. The resource of Play Development Officer and Childcare Development Worker and colleagues based in Community Services enable dedicated time to be spent on supporting a co ordinated and joined up approach to play development across the District.

## **The Handy Trust**

The Handy Trust is a voluntary organisation. The trust employ outreach staff who support youth and community work in Hythe and latterly in Marchwood.

## **Hampshire Children's Fund Programme**

The Hampshire Children's Fund has become important in supporting a variety of preventative work with children 5-13. The current programme (2003 –6) is managed locally by the county with the assistance of a strong New Forest Local Partnership Group. The work of the programme is focuses recourses on children, young people and families who may be facing disadvantage and social exclusion. Within the District it is funding 3 projects 'Kids Link', 'Voice of the Child' and The 'Access to Play Project'

## Appendix 2

### **More About Links to other Strategies and Plans**

#### ***Play and the New Forest Community Strategy - Children and Young People's Section***

The Children and Young People's Community Action Network (CAN) is committed to achieving the best opportunities and highest quality services for every child and young person whatever his/her background or ability. This means every child and young person having the opportunity to:

- Develop a healthy life style, emotional well-being and confidence
- To enjoy their childhood
- Achieve personal goals and ambitions
- Develop skills and self confidence to make fully informed choices for themselves
- Develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and members of the community
- Live in a safe and secure environment

The Key Actions for this section of the community Strategy has been formed against a background of the 'Changing Lives' consultation and proposed Government reforms outlined in 'Every Child Matters' and the 'National service Framework for health. The proposals and reforms are poised to change the way services for Children and Young People are developed and delivered locally.

Within Hampshire consultation is taking place based around these reforms. The Proposals include strengthening communication and information sharing across all key agencies, taking an overview of Children and Young Peoples Services in the context of multi partnership working and local delivery and ensuring participation in the development of services by Children, Young People, families and carers.

The Children and Young Peoples Community Action Network is well placed to take the lead at District level, working within the structure of the emerging County plans.

Our actions include the formation of a New Forest Children and Young People's Partnership, bringing together different parts of the local system, including statutory, voluntary and community sectors. The Partnership will seek to improve information sharing, add value to development and delivery of services and give a cohesive, co-ordinated and creative local response to achieving the best opportunities and services for Children, Young People Families and Carers in the District. It will be a tool to address the Key Issues brought forward through the changing lives consultation.

The Children and Young Peoples Community Action Network will establish appropriate links with other CAN's to ensure the needs of Children and Young People are considered in the widest context of community planning

#### ***Play and the Children's Fund programme***

The Children's Fund has become important in supporting a variety of preventative work with children 5-13. The current programme (2003-6) is managed locally by the county with the assistance of a strong New Forest Local Partnership Group.

It is funding 3 projects that were designed within the District - 'Kids Link', 'Voice of the Child' and The 'Access to Play Project'

### ***Play and The New Forest Health Strategy “ Improving Life In the Forest “***

Physical activity is widely recognised as important for health in childhood, proving benefits for both physical and psychological well-being. Physical benefits include positive effects for blood pressure and on preventing obesity, which is rapidly becoming a major public health issue for children

Psychological effects include enhanced psychological well-being; reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety; increased self-esteem and may be a protective factor against stress, depression and risk taking behaviours such as drug use.

There is a prevailing view that play can enhance the mental health of children and young people. This is particularly important given current concerns about increased rates of mental health problems amongst young people. It is suggested that it is essential for children to have the opportunity to practice making and consolidating friendships and to deal with conflict. These are the basic skills in order to become 'emotionally literate', which increases their resilience to mental health problems.

Play development and the play sector in the District have links into the Health Strategy and they have a contribution to make to the identified local targets and priorities for the health inequalities and Children and Young People sections of 'Improving Life in the New Forest' the New Forest Health Strategy.

### ***Play and the New Forest Community Safety Strategy***

There is a strong case for funding play as part of the delivery of the community safety strategy.

There is evidence that community play facilities can reduce crime and vandalism and often differences can be seen following the installation of play facilities and youth shelters. The usual argument for this is that play provides diversion for children and young people. The truth is likely to be more complex. Play can provide developmental opportunities for addressing the underlying emotional and psychological causes of certain behaviour. Low self esteem, lack of concern for the consequences of one's actions and poor empathic abilities are all associated with crime or anti social behaviour.

As already stated, play provides opportunities for children and young people to develop their self esteem, to empathise with the situations of others and grow more aware of the consequences of their actions. Happier, more fulfilled, less frustrated children are the direct and immediate benefit for the community.

### ***Play and The Hampshire Early Education Development and Childcare plan***

Now called ( Sure Strat Strategic Plan)

Hampshire County Council is responsible for leading and facilitating this plan for our area. The aim of the plan is to ensure accessible, affordable and good quality childcare is available for all parents and children that want it. This provision includes pre Schools, nurseries childminders and Out of school childcare for children 5-13.

The District Council, the Preschool Learning Alliance, the National Child minding Association are all key partners with the county council in delivering the strategy locally and there is a joint action plan in place for the District for 2004 -6.

A partnership agreement with the County Council jointly funds the work of the District Council Childcare Development Worker. This post specifically supports the development of after school and holiday play care and breakfast clubs.

It is important to remember that out of school provision operates in children's leisure time and it is vital that they provide top quality play environments.

### ***Play and New Forest's Housing Strategy***

Opportunities for children to play are significantly influenced by where they live and how they are housed.

Sustainable development lies at the heart of New Forest's Housing Strategy and is recognised as a fundamental aspect of reducing social exclusion. The District Council and its partner Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) are committed to ensuring affordable housing is sustainable in social, economic and environmental terms. For children, access to play is an important part of this commitment.

During the past year there has been a closer liaison between the District council landlord services, RSL's and the play sector. Again this has brought practical support to develop play and provide play opportunities e.g.; summer playschemes in Fordingbridge and Ringwood, support for children's activities at The Blackfield Neighbourhood centre and quality input from RSL's on each of the Hampshire Children and Families Forums in the District.

### ***Play and the New Forest Transport Strategy***

It is intended that the play will make effective links with the transport Strategy to help improved physical access to play provision, helping to help combat social exclusion and isolation for many children and Young People. In particular encouraging:

- The design of better local streets for play
- Better links and crossings to get to play space
- Traffic calming

### ***Play and The New Forest Local Plan***

Children and Young People have always played out of doors - in parks, playgrounds, streets and open spaces. Few people would disagree with the view that this is healthy and right - for them, their families and the wider community. In spite of growing restrictions on their mobility, large numbers of children and young people are still spending time outside and many more would like to do so. A generation ago little public attention was given to children's use of the outdoors. Today their needs, wishes, their activities and presence out of doors is the source of concern and debate.

Central Government determines the frame work for local planning. Key planning guidance affecting children's play outdoor play space includes planning and policy Guidance Notes PPG3, relating to Housing developments and; and PPG17, relating to outdoor space for play recreation and sport. The New Forest Local Plan- (First Alteration - Revised Deposit) reflects the new guidance. This is found in section C1 Design, layout and landscape and in C10 Recreation.

## **Reference Grid of Links Between Strategies/ Plans and Actions in Neighbourhood Play**

	Leisure Plan	Health	Community Safety	Early Years	Housing	Transport	Planning	Children Fund	Community Strategy	The Local Plan
<b>Out of school childcare</b>	v			v					v	
<b>Play-schemes</b>	v							v	v	
<b>Access to Play project</b>	v	v	v		v	v		v	v	
<b>Pre-school Nurseries</b>	v			v			v		v	
<b>Play Areas And open Space Streets</b>	v	v	v		v	v	v	v	v	v
<b>Supervised Sports, Arts Environmental Sessions</b>	v	v	v					v	v	