







Make it Rain Panel

Ball bearings fall through this toy as the circle revolves. It is a soothing toy that captures many childrens' imaginations and can be used in any weather condition. We have noticed that this piece of equipment is popular with absolutely every age. It is one of the most used items.



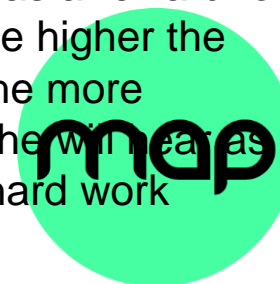
Spiral Musical Chime bars

Bang bing bong. Strike the bar with the beaters and you too can make music. The notes go up as the height increases. This equipment works best with more than one player. Co-operation is the name of the game.



Octavia

We have also installed a very clever gadget called Octavia which gives out pleasing sound effects as a reward for effort on the swing. The higher the child or adult swings, the more cheerful noises he or she will hear as an encouragement to hard work



Information Signs



There are information points around the park for non verbal visitors and those who like to use Braille. Parents and Carers can download the [Widgit Symbols](#) so that prior to a visit they can print off the symbols for use in the park.



What We Discovered

- Play is a central pillar in the development of every child.
- 16 million people in the UK had a registered disability in 2022. That is 24% of the UK population.
- 11% of all children are registered disabled in 2022. That is a rise from 5% in 2010.
- Mobility impairment is the largest % of registered disability but disability comes in many different forms; some visible and some not; this can include intellectual disability, visual or hearing disability, autism and ADHD.
- Disabled children are 4 times more likely to feel lonely and excluded than able-bodied.
- 90% of those with a disability who had accessed or tried to access a play park had experienced at least some difficulties.



The Legal Basis

UN Convention on the Rights of a Child

Article 23 (children with a disability) - A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.

UN Convention Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

The Equality Act 2010

Disability Act and Disability Strategy 2024



Play Sufficiency

Play Sufficiency legislation for England would establish statutory guidance for Local Authorities to make sure children have enough time, space and permission to play.

Play Sufficiency is about securing sufficient opportunities for children's play and that involves far more than simply looking at designated provisions. There are three central pillars in Play Sufficiency

- **Spaces and places**
- **Workforce**
- **Provision**

Play in England: a new 10-year strategy

Throughout 2024 Play England is undertaking a strategic re-Imagineering (imagination and engineering) of Play. At the core of the strategy will be a call on the new government to introduce Play Sufficiency legislation in England, alongside the central foundation of the UNCRC - particularly, Article 31 (leisure, play and culture); in that every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.



Is the Importance of Play Undervalued?

Should play be re-branded as Health – mental and physical health?

- Play improves the **cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being** of young people. Through play, young people learn about the world and themselves.
- **Learn skills needed for study, work and relationships** such as: Confidence; self-esteem; resilience; interaction; social skills; independence; curiosity; coping with challenging situations.
- **Develop physical health.** Physical play helps young people develop: good physical fitness; agility; stamina; co-ordination; balance.
- **Develop social skills.** Play helps young people develop their social skills by listening, paying attention and sharing experiences. They can explore their feelings; develop self-discipline and resilience; learn how to express themselves; and work out emotional aspects of life.

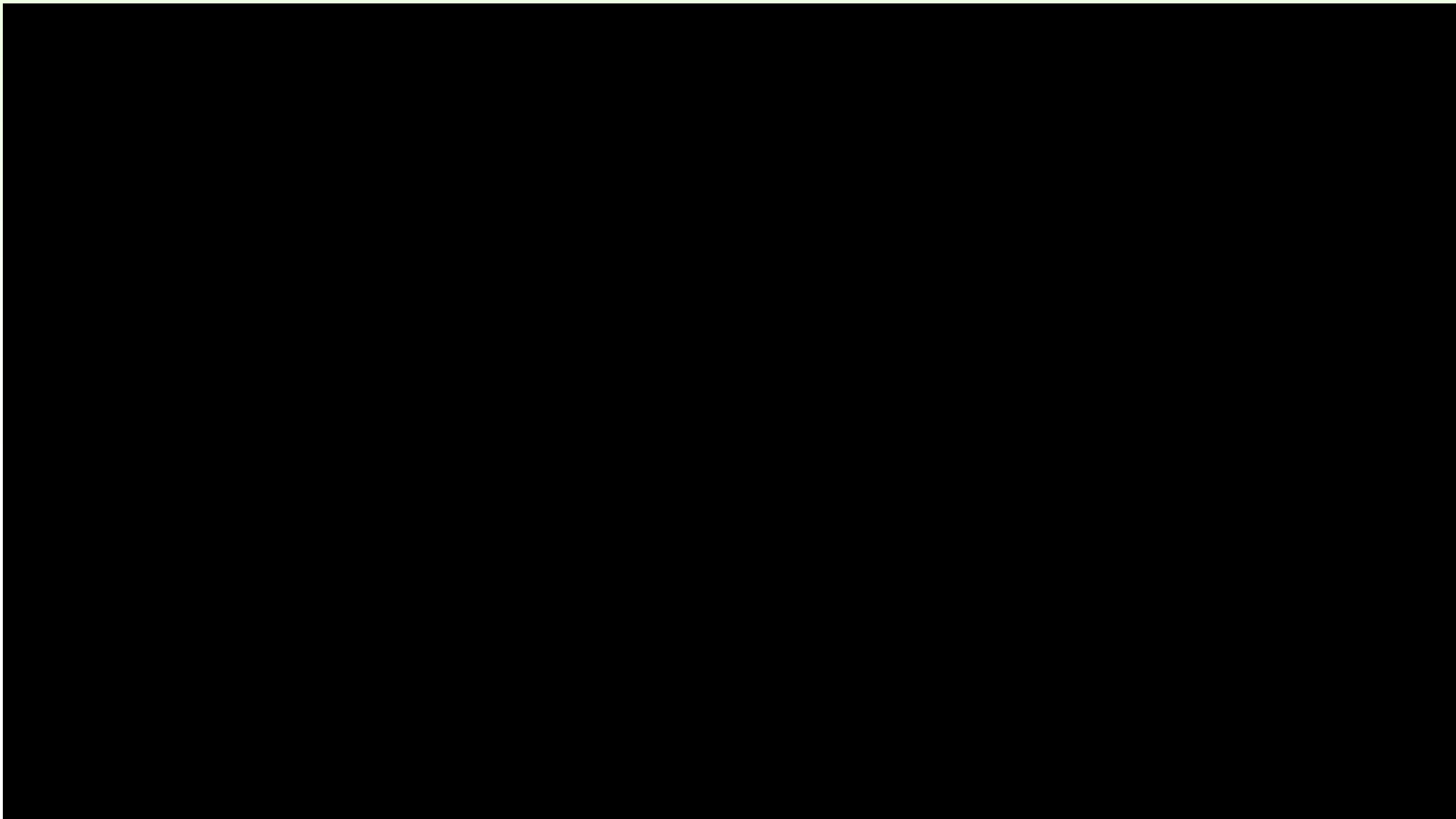


Stanway Leisure Centre Colchester



Filming and Research





Lovell Gardens - Watton



Does it Cost More?

To make a Play Area more accessible is expensive. Inclusive play equipment is more expensive

An accessible and inclusive playground does not necessarily cost more. The main cost is the surface, if this needs to be changed.

Some equipment is more expensive such as a wheelchair accessible swing.

The potential of a piece of equipment to be accessible for all will increase participation rather than reducing it. This can be more cost effective than not buying inclusive equipment.

We don't have the money for this in our council budget

Incrementally over a number of budget years introduce inclusive equipment. Even one will make a difference.

Decide what change can make a difference and have the greatest impact.

Ensure that all playparks have investment for accessibility first.

Draw up a play strategy and communicate with local community. Let people see the incremental approach.

Windfall funding can then accelerate this.

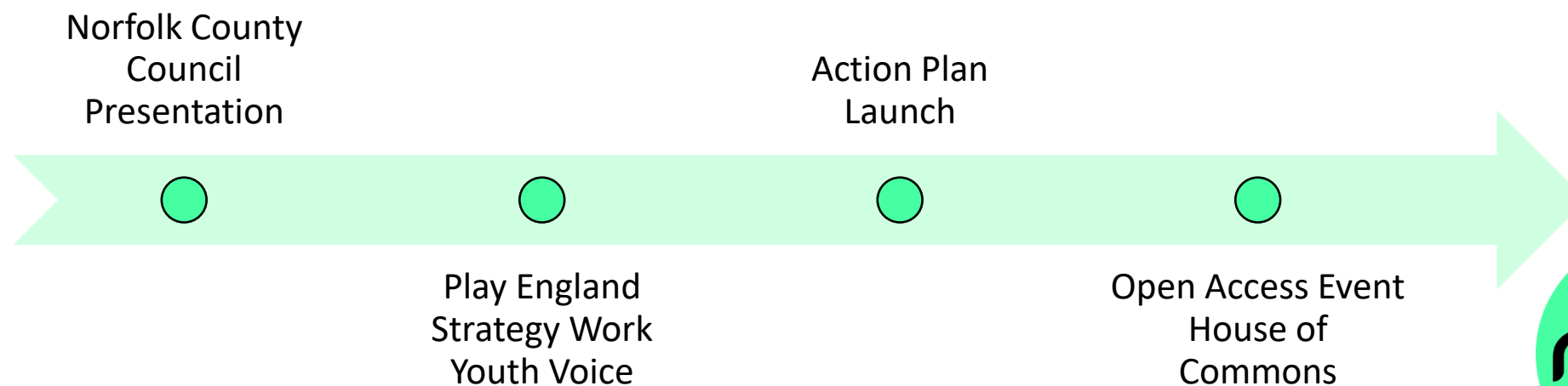
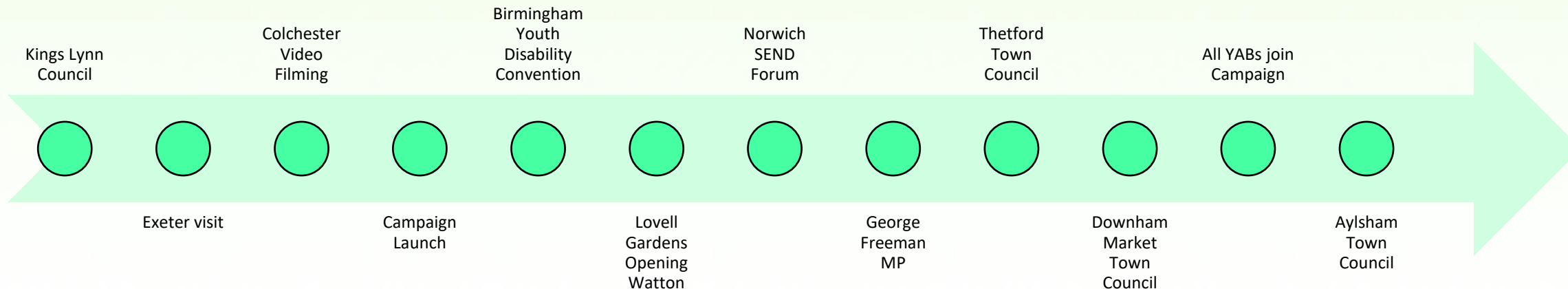
Support community funding raising projects.

Include inclusive equipment and accessibility work clearly in 106 and other funding bids.

Consider joint projects with Building Companies and local community groups.



Campaign Timeline



Play Park Survey

PLAYPARK SURVEY



NAME OF PARK:

DATE OF VISIT:

PLAYGROUND TOWN:

QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a fence around the whole playground? YES NO
2. Is there a gate into the playground wide enough for a wheelchair to fit through? YES NO
3. Are the paths and entrances to the playground flat and step-free? YES NO
4. Are the paths within the playground flat and step-free? YES NO
5. Are the paths wide enough for a wheelchair user? YES NO
6. Are there contrasting colours on the ground around equipment? Or other ways to make it clear where the equipment is to someone who might have trouble seeing it? YES NO
7. What type of flooring is around the playground equipment? Comment:
8. Are there any sensory features in or near the playground and what are they? YES NO Comment:
9. Do the benches have back and arm rests? YES NO
10. Does the playground have toilets, or a sign to say there are toilets nearby? YES NO
11. Inclusive play equipment YES NO
12. Can two people, such as a child and parent, sit next to each other to go down the slide together? YES NO
13. Do you have to use steps to reach the top of the slide? YES NO
14. Does the roundabout have seats? YES NO
15. Is there a smooth, wide ramp on to the play structure, or do you have to climb up? Comment:

PLAYPARK SURVEY



QUESTIONS:

16. Are there fun things on top of the play structure, like wheels to spin or puzzles to solve? YES NO
17. What types of seats are there on the swings? Comment:
18. Is there a wheelchair swing? YES NO
19. If the seesaw has seats, do the seats have a back? YES NO
20. If the seesaw doesn't have seats, does it have a flat surface that children can stand, lay, or sit in a wheelchair? YES NO
21. Can you get to all the equipment in the playground without using steps? YES NO
22. Thoughts on how easy or difficult it would be for disabled and non-disabled children to play together here... Comment:

Once complete, please return to your Youth Worker



Flourish Awards 2024



Action Plan 2025

Vision

Our Vision is for all Play Areas to be accessible and inclusive for all children and family members no matter their ability or disability. Children and young people are to be at the centre of the development of Play Areas. Play Areas should be a focal point and destination in the community as welcoming, safe and fun environments where families and friends can develop and thrive through play.



Play Area Principles

- All Play Areas are inclusive and accessible for all by design.
- All Play Areas are a destination; accessible and inclusive to all children and their families.
- Play Areas inspire imagination and creative play to make sense of life and to build self esteem and confidence.
- Play Areas are fun.
- Play Areas provide a safe environment to develop and grow.
- Play Areas provide opportunity for all levels of learning to develop skills for life.



Approach

- Think Child Think Family Think Accessible Think Inclusive.
- Put children and Young People at the centre.
- Be ambassadors for all children for accessible and inclusive play areas.
- Advocate for Play Sufficiency.
- Inspire all stakeholders to work towards accessible and inclusive play areas.
- Have the right conversation at the right place at the right time.
- Get everyone to think differently about the importance of Play.
- Promote appropriate accessible and inclusive spaces and places for all children.
- Be consistent, persistent and loud with the message 'Everyone has the Right to Play'.



National Outcomes

- Play Sufficiency Legislation for England.
- A revised, re-invigorated and re-launched 'National Charter for Children's Play'.
- Government to deliver Actions 16 and 17 (Play Areas) of the Disability Strategic Action Plan (Feb 24).
- Government to include requirement for inclusive and accessible play areas in the National Model Design Code. No Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) planning guidance addresses young people explicitly.
- UN International Right to Play Day (11 June) becomes a meaningful calendar event for 2025 promoting the value of Play for physical and mental health and development.
- Amend National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 23) to include guidance for Play and Recreation Opportunities for Children.



Local Outcomes

- Establish and adopt clear definitions and understanding of what inclusive and accessible play parks means in practical terms.
- Norfolk County Council to encourage all Councils to conduct a review of all play areas in Norfolk using the Let's Play Fair Question Set.
- County and District Councils to consider adopting a Play Sufficiency Action Plan similar to Leeds model.
- Councils to adopt the design pillars for accessible and inclusive play parks in their building design code.
- Local Strategic Play Forums to be established at County and District to work in partnership with key stakeholders such as Building Firms to consult with the community, particularly young people.
- All Councils to include an affirmative statement in their play area and community amenity policy that all play park projects and refurbishments to be accessible and inclusive by design.
- Councils to require Section 106 funding for new and refurbishment play area projects to be conditional on demonstrating inclusive design.
- Councils to make the UN International Right to Play Day (11 June) a meaningful calendar event for 2025 and beyond promoting the value of Play for physical and mental health and development.



What We Are Doing

- Changing the mindset and understanding of the importance of Play for all.
- Persuading institutions to have inclusive and accessible play areas at the heart of their play and planning.
- Conducting a survey of all Play Areas across Norfolk using the Let's Play Fair question set.
- Providing the Youth Voice on the Play England Strategy Work
- Advising councils on the importance of inclusivity and accessible play areas
- Lobbying politicians:
 - Deliver on Disability Action Plan
 - To amend NPPF guidance
- Asking Councils to sign our Pledge
- Seeking an Open Access discussion at House of Commons to make the case.
- Publishing a 2024/2025 Action Plan



Our Ten Wishes

Encourage all Councils to conduct a review of all play areas in Norfolk using the Play Park Survey.

Consider adopting a Play Sufficiency Action Plan similar to Leeds model. Be on the front foot for when Play Sufficiency becomes law.

Councils to adopt the design pillars for accessible and inclusive play parks in their building design code.

Local Strategic Play Forums to be established at County and District to work in partnership with key stakeholders such as Building Firms to consult with the community, particularly young people.

Youth to have a voice with Action 16 and 17 of the Disability Strategy Action Plan

All Councils to include an affirmative statement in their play area and community amenity policy that all play park projects and refurbishments to be accessible and inclusive by design.

Require Section 106 funding for new and refurbishment play area projects to be conditional on demonstrating accessible and inclusive design.

Councils to make the UN International Right to Play Day (11 June) a meaningful calendar event for 2025 and beyond.

Sign our pledge.

Be an ambassador for our campaign at County and National level.



The Pledge

- Value all children and young people's Right to Play
- Adopt a statement for Inclusive and Accessible Play Areas in Play Area policy.
- Adopt the three inclusive design pillars of Accessibility, Multi-Sensory and Supporting Infrastructure.
- Apply Accessible and Inclusive Principles to all Play Area refurbishment and new projects.
- Demonstrate in planning and grant application that Accessible and Inclusive Principles have been included in design.
- Consult with the community, particularly young people, to advocate inclusive design and refurbishment to make play areas accessible to all.
- Where necessary take an incremental approach matched to available resources.
- Make sure the 'coolest' play activity in the play area is accessible and usable by all. The inclusive activity that can be accessed by the majority of children is the one that creates the most excitement.





RIGHT TO PLAY PLEDGE

We pledge to make our all our play areas accessible, inclusive, and safe environments that challenge, excite, stimulate and promote the interaction of all young people of all abilities.

We pledge to:

- Value all children and young people's Right to Play
- Adopt a statement for Inclusive and Accessible Play Areas in Play Area policy.
- Adopt the three inclusive design pillars of Accessibility, Multi-Sensory and Supporting Infrastructure.
- Apply Inclusive Principles to all Play Area refurbishment and new projects.
- Demonstrate in planning and grant application that Inclusive Principles have been included in design.
- Consult with the community, particularly young people, to advocate inclusive design and refurbishment to make play areas accessible to all.

Signed:

Organisation:

Design pillars

Design - Accessibility

- The paths and routes to and from the play area need to be accessible for those who have mobility challenges or use a wheelchair or similar. Where possible have routes that are wide enough to allow wheelchair users, parents with strollers to pass,
- Consider access/pathway from parking spaces to play area.
- The entrances to the play areas need to be appropriate to allow access for those with mobility challenges or use a wheelchair or similar. If appropriate consider radar key technology.
- The play area should meet EN 1176 and EN 1177 standards to support play value, reduce severity of injury from falls and promote access for all.
- Create enough space around the play equipment. It may be the parent / guardian who is in a wheelchair and wants to be able to play with the child.
- Consider flush transition from one surfacing to another to allow people using mobility aids to move freely between different areas of the play space and surrounding areas.

Design - Supporting Infrastructure

- Use of Colour
 - A wide palette of colours that support a range of disabilities including poor vision.
 - Avoid over stimulation of colour which can cause confusion and distress.
 - Material finishes which are matt rather than gloss.
- Signage. Consider appropriate signage for a wide range of disabilities. This should include use by parents/guardians as well as children. Bright bold pictures with only essential words helps those with limited vision and those with poor literacy. Braille could be included or QR codes which link to explanatory video clips.
- Fencing. Play areas need to be safe and secure that allows children the freedom to roam in the play area safely. Balance is to be struck between low delineation fences and 'prison' high fences. Use the fences as part of the play experience which could include play panels or resting spaces.
- Seating. Seating has more value than that of only rest. It also allows a child to be involved as an onlooker. Seating can also provide respite and places of calm to take time out of play.

Design - Multi Sensory

Build towards play areas that include at least one piece of equipment that stimulates the following sensory systems:

- **Tactile:** The sense of touch lets young children receive feedback to learn about the world around them. For people with visual impairments, the sense of touch can take on heightened importance. Inclusive playgrounds should include a variety of textural experiences to engage users' sense of touch such as a sandbox children can play in, a rope they can grasp and climb on or water play areas where they can get wet.
- **Auditory:** Some people on the playground may have hearing impairments, but for children with auditory capabilities, the sense of sound can enhance their experience. For children with visual impairments, their auditory abilities become even more critical to understanding and enjoying their environment. Equipment with instrumental qualities can be especially fun for children to enjoy.
- **Visual:** For children with a sense of sight, the visual sensory process is key. Seeing something is often the first piece of information we get before using our other senses to learn more. You don't have to go far out of your way to make a playground visually engaging. Interesting colours and varied equipment can instantly engage children's eyes. You can go a step further, though, by including activities such as matching or memory games that can help children develop their visual abilities.
- **Smell and taste:** These senses are closely related since the sense of taste relies on a sense of smell to function properly. You may not think about these senses in the context of a playground, but inclusive playgrounds can engage users' senses of smell and taste in safe and fun ways. Consider planting a garden alongside the playground where children can smell flowers and herbs. Proper inclusive signage can highlight these areas and explain how to interact with them.
- **Sense of Balance (Vestibular):** The vestibular system involves a person's sense of balance. Many playground activities can engage this system. Spinning equipment can stimulate different parts of a child's brain simultaneously, helping them develop a more advanced sense of balance, muscle control and motor skills. Swinging, sliding, climbing and bouncing all have a similar effect. Inclusive playgrounds should make it possible for children with different abilities to engage their vestibular systems.
- **Movement (Proprioceptive):** A person's proprioceptive system is responsible for helping them sense the location and movement of their body parts. This information comes from the muscles and joints. Any equipment that encourages children to move and stretch their bodies can engage their proprioception sense.



What you may wish to Consider

Include an affirmative statement in your play area and community amenity policy that all play park projects and refurbishments to have inclusion and accessibility by design.

Use that policy as evidence in applications for grants and Section 106 funding. Consider applying Norfolk funders such as Alan Boswell or Geoffrey Watling.

Be explicit about your aspiration for an accessible and inclusive play parks across all media platforms – particularly if you are thinking of crowd funding.

Approach a play park company with track record in accessible and inclusive parks to advise planning such as Jupiter, Wicksteed or HAGS.

Ensure whoever you decide to undertake the refurbishment uses the design pillars as a foundation.

Consider a stepped approach over a period time. Have the plan ready and build when funds are available.

Start with accessibility.

Consider quick win options such as sensory planting, inclusive signage

Refurbishments to include a short term plan to make them made accessible to all and longer term plan to make the equipment inclusive.

Establish a Play Forum to work in partnership with key stakeholders. Include young people on the Forum. You would be amazed how often these are adult only.

Support our Campaign and Sign the Pledge to make play parks inclusive and accessible for all.



