

The Playing Field

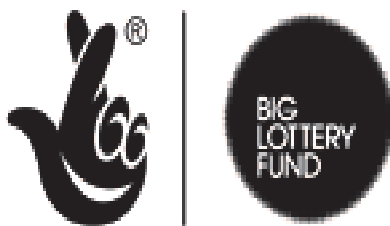
Humber Playing Fields Association Newsletter

Serving communities in the City of Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, North and North East Lincolnshire

HPFA awarded BIG Lottery Fund Grant

HPFA had a great start to the new year when it received an offer of a grant from the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Programme.

The grant, of £341K payable over 5 years, will enable HPFA to employ additional staff to be deployed assisting rural organisations in the Humber area to improve their recreation facilities and to organise activities at those facilities.



LOTTERY FUNDED

Playing fields, play areas and community buildings will all be included in the project which has been given the snappy title Humberactive.

Many organisations in the area have contributed to demonstrating the demand and need for such a project through their responses to surveys and information in *The Playing Field* and Village hall Newsletter. HPFA would like to thank all those concerned for their involvement.

Dave Craker, Chair of HPFA said “ The HPFA have been established and operating in the area since 1975, and I have been the Chair for the last twelve or thirteen years. I therefore know from personal experience that HPFA provide a valuable resource for, and service to the Humber communities, and I am really pleased that this grant will enable it to carry on this good work for the next five years.”

Further details of Humberactive may be found on the inside back cover, including project timetable and information on how to access it's resources. The objectives of the programme are -

- Improving access to training and development to improve individuals life skills.
- Creating stronger communities, with more active citizens working together.
- Improving rural or urban environments accessible to communities.
- Developing healthier and more active people and communities.

HPFA WEB SITE
www.hwrcc.website.co.uk
and follow link to
HUMBER PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

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Miracle Design & Play
Sports Equipment Co
Children's Play Company



The Playing Field
is published quarterly by the
Oxfordshire Playing Fields Assoc.
for the
Humber Playing Fields Assoc.
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**HPFA is an
independent
registered charity
No. 505466**

Established in 1975 to advise and assist in the provision of playing fields and playgrounds in the Humber area.

HPFA is funded by members subscriptions, Sir James Reckitt Charity, Big Lottery Fund and the Lloyds TSB Foundation and is kindly supported by the Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council.

The Playing Field is provided free of charge and the HPFA thanks the Oxfordshire Playing Field Association for its contribution to this publication.

Serving the communities in the City of Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire.

Acknowledgements

The HPFA is pleased to acknowledge the invaluable assistance provided by the following organisations in the production and origination of material for this issue of

The Playing Field:

OPFA, FIT, RoSPA, IOG, API, SAPCA, PSLG & ISPAL

The views expressed in *The Playing Field* are not necessarily the views of the HPFA

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Whilst every care is taken with the content, no responsibility can be accepted for errors or omissions made in good faith.

Office Gossip

I am not normally a gambler, other than the occasional flutter on the National Lottery and seasonal visits to the Beverley Races, but that doesn't count because it is a sporting activity. Anyway, I feel that losing a few quid on the lottery, even taking into account the £10 I won in 1999, is entirely justified by the support the various lottery funds provide to the "good causes". I am of course referring partly to the grant for Humberactive from the Big Lottery Fund, but also to the overall impact the lottery has had in supporting community activity in various guises. Casting my mind back to when the Lottery started, I can remember a number of apocalyptic conversations with people who thought that it would spark a recession in the retail trade because of the cash spent on tickets or that millions of people would become hopeless gambling addicts. Many years later, and with billions invested in the good causes, the lottery has, in my opinion, turned out to be a force for good and a very acceptable alternative to taxation.

Having said that I am not a gambler, there is something I may have to take a punt on. At the date of writing, it is season ticket renewal time at Hull City. If they play in the Championship next year, I do not want a season ticket, not because I won't want to watch them, but because match day tickets will probably be available for most games. If however they remain in the Premier League, a season ticket will be essential. By the time you read this their fate will have been more or less settled, but at the moment, I really do not know. Do I or do I not risk half a thousand pounds, which when you think about it, is ten years worth of weekly lottery tickets?

In common with many people living in villages or market towns, I have recently had a wood burning stove installed. Ostensibly, I have done this because providing the fuel comes from a sustainable source, it is a carbon neutral form of heating. The real reason is, of course, to try and reduce extortionate gas bills. Does not the privatisation of the public energy providers appear to have been an almighty cock up? I just hope that the industry is used as a case study in schools and colleges and for politicians as an example of when a market is imperfect, supply and demand interactions are quite complicated and the costs of competition are more than significant.

Talking of supply and demand, the wood fuel suppliers appear to have been taken by surprise by the increase in demand for their product, which has led to some having sold out and some having to resort to harvesting and selling green wood. No doubt, this is a result in the increase in the number of people using stoves and of the cold winter. Much of our woodland is not managed and is capable of sustainably yielding many tons of timber. The Forestry Commission are trying to redress this by establishing supply chains between woodland owners and customers via forestry contractors and wood merchants. Our ancestors, from post Roman times to the Industrial Revolution would think that we are quite mad, as they easily managed this.

More, much more, in the summer edition of *The Playing Field* on managing small woodlands for wood fuel production and on living with a wood burning stove.

Martin Bell County Secretary

Membership of the HPFA

By subscription of £10 for clubs, charities and voluntary groups and £15 or £20 for parish councils +/- 1500 population.

DIFFICULT TIMES AHEAD for the future of children's play, for the funding of community led projects and possibly for hundreds of volunteers

The New Year began with some of the worst weather on record which was only to be expected knowing the deadline for completing phase two of the government's Playbuilder funding programme. It was bound to be a bad winter and play contractors have performed major miracles and endured conditions more akin to the Battlefields of the Somme and Ypres than the playing fields of England. Hats off to those that managed to complete on time—hopefully no corners were cut and the quality of the installations did not suffer in the race against the weather and the deadline. Only time will tell but all the more reason to have an independent appropriately qualified play inspector to carry out a post installation inspection before accepting the new playground.

Last phase of Playbuilder

Very soon most of the successful applicants to the final phase of the Playbuilder programme will have been announced and everyone should be working towards achieving their projects long before the deadline of March 2011. No-one wants to go through another winter like the last one but where will the funding for future play projects come from? Indeed where will the money be to support hundreds of different community – led projects as we enter a period of cutbacks and austerity by national and local governments?

Funding opportunities

On the following pages Liz Behnke from Syzygy Leisure looks at the future for play and sports development projects in particular and offers a number of good tips and suggestions. There is no doubt only the best and most thoroughly researched and carefully prepared applications will have any chance of funding success as the effects of the recession begin to be felt. We are entering a period of make do and mend as traditional sources of funding are reduced or possibly diverted to ensure the 2012 Olympic Games are a success. If they are not a success it won't just be Londoners who will be counting the cost of staging the Biggest Show on Earth!

Vetting & Barring System

The Independent Safeguarding Agency has attracted some adverse publicity recently but how many people actually realise the scope of the Vetting and Barring System for volunteers? The ISA, and subsequent VBS process, follow an inquiry into the killing of two young schoolgirls in Soham, Cambridgeshire when the existing system failed badly. Not everyone welcomes the new system and there are concerns that it is unsafe and too unwieldy given the poor history of national government data bases.

**More information on the
Vetting & Barring System is at
www.direct.gov.uk/vetting .**

A MANIFESTO FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY

What do you remember best about growing up? Your favourite games? Your friends? The sense of freedom and adventure you got from playing in the outdoor world?

CHILDREN TODAY MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES

**If you believe Play is fundamental to children then take a few minutes to go online to www.playengland.org.uk and sign up in support of the Manifesto for Children's Play with three simple pledges for all political parties to take onboard and make
PLAY A PRIORITY FOR CHILDREN**

The Playing Field

The Playing Field newsletter is published four times a year by the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association on behalf of, and together with, sixteen other County Playing Fields Associations or Rural Community Councils around the country.

Each January, April, July and October some 14,000 copies of *The Playing Field* are distributed free of charge to town and parish councils, to members and officers of local authorities such as District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitary Authorities. It is also sent to sports clubs, voluntary organisations and individuals in the following 17 counties:

Buckinghamshire
Cambridgeshire
Cheshire
Derbyshire
Devon
Essex
Gloucestershire
Hampshire
Humberside
Leicestershire & Rutland
Norfolk
Nottinghamshire
Oxfordshire
Shropshire
Somerset
Surrey
York & North Yorkshire

See all 17 versions online at www.cpfas.org.uk

Each county has a unique cover (pages 1, 2, 23 & 24) reflecting news, stories and advertisements of local interest whilst the remaining pages (3 - 22) are common to all editions with news, articles and advertising with a wider, more national, appeal.

For this reason the views and opinions expressed in *The Playing Field* may not always reflect the views and opinions of individual County Playing Fields Associations or Rural Community Councils distributing the newsletter.

The Playing Field
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Online at: www.cpfas.org.uk

The Association of Play Industries (API) is delighted to announce that PlayFair will return to Stoneleigh Park in Coventry for its third year, on 22nd and 23rd June 2010. Organised by Brintex in partnership with the API, and with the backing of umbrella body FSPA (Federation of Sports and Play Associations), PlayFair is the only dedicated trade exhibition in the UK which attracts the majority of outdoor children's play and safety surfacing companies. PlayFair gives these companies the stage to showcase and demonstrate their products and services all in one place each year.

Uniquely for the play industry, PlayFair has groups of children from local schools visiting to try out the play equipment. Their laughter, fun, excitement and sheer enjoyment really bring an already friendly and informal trade show to life - and delight visitors and exhibitors.

API chairman, John Croasdale commented, *"We are delighted that PlayFair is such a huge success and that our members continue to support the event. In 2010, I know that our members will be displaying yet more exciting and innovative products which, along with the seminar programme, will attract many visitors."*

Companies which have already booked include - Kompan, Proludic, SMP, Eibe, Record RSS, Wicksteed, Husson, Sutcliffe's, Lappset, Play&Leisure, Park Leisure, UAC, Huck Nets, Matta Products, SSP, EJ Services, Playdale, Jupiter and Firesmart.



Alongside the exhibition will be a full two-day seminar programme. Produced by the API, the seminars will cover and debate all of the latest opportunities and issues within the play sector. In addition, an API *Design Group* will be delivering a feature area covering an outdoor space of over 1700sqm, where visitors and the local school children can try out and test the latest in play equipment in a natural environment.

Event manager, Ray Baxter commented, "We are delighted with the response from the industry to PlayFair. This event has really hit the spot for exhibitors and visitors."

For all the up to date information on PlayFair 2010, please see web site at www.playfairuk.com

For further details on PlayFair 2010, please call Ray Baxter on 020 7973 4695 and for the two-day seminar programme contact API association manager, Deborah Holt 02476 414999 www.api-play.org



The Politics of Play -The Importance of Play to Children and Wider Society

Two years ago the Government launched its £235 million innovative Playbuilder funding programme investing in building or redeveloping 3,500 public play areas in England by March 2011. The financial investment available through the Government's national Play Strategy is further concentrating attention.

The Play Strategy has a long term ten-year vision with actions to deliver overall improved play provision and play space opportunities for children in England. There has never been such a focus on the issues around children's play than now.

The Association of Play Industries (API) welcomes the Play Strategy and, in particular, the community involvement and consultation in the design of children's play areas. In addition, education through play is also progressing, with more teachers focussing on the importance of outdoor play to children and their healthy development. of both minds and bodies.

These important aspects of children's play are re-visited by the API in its new study and publication, *'The Politics of Play - the Importance of Play to Children and the Wider Society'*.

The document restates the benefits of play in the development of healthy, happy, balanced children who become healthy, happy, balanced adults and parents . become healthy. The API insists that 'play' means all types of play from natural to adventure and from indoor to outdoor.

Indeed through its experience of delivering play facilities as part of the national Play Strategy, the API has a number of holistic recommendations to make, to ensure all parties continue to deliver the best possible play facilities for all children.

The API recommendations are listed as an eight-point action plan. It covers funding, maintenance costs, community needs-based play, unbiased consultation and feedback, simple procurement processes, play that attracts and inspires children, putting play in the centre of communities and making 'going out to play' safer by tackling anti-social behaviour and traffic hazards. The action plan document will be most useful to those considering adopting a Local Play Policy. (*see page 5*)

The new 32-page 8,000-word study is available from the API by visiting 'Useful Publications' at www.api-play.org.

Why town and parish councils should have a Play Policy

In this article by Jeremy Spafford, a consultant working with the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust, we look at Play Policies and, in particular, the need for town and parish councils to seriously consider adopting its own Play Policy.

The words 'play' and 'policy' do not sit comfortably together as one is all about free expression and the other is about rules and procedures. But, sometimes, we need boundaries to be clarified to free us up to have fun and explore. The great health and safety debate rumbles on and is not helped by a lack of clarity about what is, and what is not allowed. Much of what we need to do is proscribed by law but much is also down to common sense and clarity about what we believe we are, and what we are not responsible for.

A recent survey of parish and town councils in Oxfordshire revealed that, of the 43 that responded, just 5 have adopted a play policy even though many of those responding are actively supporting play provision in their areas. Several respondents to the survey suggested that a play policy is unnecessary and too bureaucratic. This is understandable but it is important that they think again.

It is all too easy to imagine that as play providers we are responsible for ensuring that no child ever gets injured in a play space and that, if one does, we are going to be taken to court. In fact, very few children are injured in play spaces and very few cases ever go to court but our fear of litigation can mean we end up designing and managing play spaces based on fear of litigation rather than on what's best for children.

In 2008, Play England joined forces with DCSF and DCMS to publish *Managing Risk in Play Provision: an Implementation Guide* which was endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive, RoSPA and numerous other industry bodies. The guide takes you through the detail of balancing risk with benefit and emphasises the need for you to have a policy which clearly signals your attitude to risk.

If we give the impression that we are committed to ensuring that no child will come to any harm in our play spaces and that we will banish risk then it is reasonable for parents to regard us as responsible when their child bangs an elbow or trips and sprains an ankle. However risk, as we know, is a necessary ingredient of healthy play and minor injuries are a normal part of growing up. Adopting a play policy enables you to state formally and publicly what your position is with regard to risk and other issues so that, if a member of the public chooses to challenge your liability, you are able to point them to a well publicised statement describing your policy. Indeed having a policy which states that you aim to embrace risk rather than banish it helps provide you with protection against litigation.

Creating a play policy also gives you an opportunity to think again about other issues that have become normalised but are not necessarily desirable such as the segregation of space for different age groups.

The Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust brings together senior leaders from the County, City and District Councils, representatives of parish and town councils, the PCT, Police and the voluntary and community sector. In May 2009, the Trust adopted a policy which sets out an approach to play provision which, amongst other things, promotes

- the **value of play** as essential for physical, emotional and spiritual growth and for intellectual, educational and social development
- access** to play spaces for all children regardless of ability or background
- the importance of **acceptable levels of risk** in play and the responsibility to make sure children are not exposed to unacceptable risk of death or permanently disabling injury
- the opportunity for people of **all ages** to be able to share play spaces where possible
- the creation of **beautiful spaces** that inspire, engage, challenge and are well cared for
- the **involvement** of children, young people and other members of the local community in the design and management of play spaces.

The Trust also asked all its members to consider adoption of a similar policy.

Changing attitudes about Play

Improving play opportunities for our children is partly about improving the design of play spaces but it is also about changing attitudes to play so that we become less fearful as a society. The process of discussing, agreeing and publicising a play policy may look bureaucratic but, if approached meaningfully, can help change those attitudes.

'Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play providers aim to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of death or serious injury.'

(From Play Safety Forum Statement on Managing Risk in Play Provision)

Advice may be available from your County Playing Fields Association otherwise contact the Play Team at the local authority responsible for Children and Young People in your area.

More information about play, risk and play policies at www.playengland.org.uk and www.playlink.org.



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API Association of Play Industries
FSP Federation of Sport Professionals
SAFIA Society of Amusement & Leisure Industry Associations
LGN Leisure Group Network

THE ECONOMIC RECESSION BRINGS A FUNDING DROUGHT FOR COMMUNITY-LED PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

Liz Behnke of Syzygy Leisure looks at some the options and provides some sound advice for those in need of funding

For many years funding for sport was a problem and then the Lottery came along. A flood of new sports buildings came on stream and everyone thought that Christmas had come early. This funding was swiftly followed by a flood of money from the Football Foundation.

At the start of the funding flood it was easy to get financial support, but as time went on it became tougher. Now it seems like we have a drought. Lottery income has dropped, and the way funding is distributed now, is very different.

Is it worth the hassle?

Projects have to be justified in so many different ways, and when people feel like they have to jump through too many hoops, they start to question – Is it worth the hassle?

If you want an easy life, then the answer has to be NO!. If you have a firm belief that your project is essential then the answer has to be - YES!

There is funding still out there, but it is harder and harder to get. What I have seen recently seems to be that funders are looking for reasons to reject, rather than reasons to fund. As a sports development professional I find that principle hard to accept, but still hang on to the basic premise that if a project is right, it will happen with a lot of hard work.

Consider your project

The same basic fundamental principles still apply - you just have to apply them harder than ever. You may need to look very hard at your project and say “do we really need four changing rooms, can we make do with two and some lockers, or do we need a new building, can it be refurbished?

I guess that we have to go back to the old principle of “mend and make do”.

Consult wisely and widely

The other tough decision to make is do we have enough experience in house to do it ourselves. You may have, but the learning curve will be a very steep one, and are you able to tap into support networks to lessen that steep curve? Bringing in the professionals be they architects, surveyors, leisure consultants, sports development officers early on may save you a lot of heartache, time and money throughout the lifespan of the project.

The more you plan and double check the more likely you are to succeed, don't be proud – ask for advice!

What's Out There?

There are in fact a number of different sources available depending upon the scope of your project and its location. The list is large and includes:

- ◆ Trust and Charities
- ◆ The Lottery - Sport England
- ◆ Sport England Small Grant scheme
- ◆ Landfill Tax credit schemes
- ◆ Coalfield Regeneration Trusts
- ◆ Governing bodies of Sport
- ◆ Football Foundation
- ◆ Health Authorities
- ◆ Primary Care Trusts
- ◆ Play England
- ◆ Rugby Football Foundation
- ◆ TV fund raisers (Sport Relief etc)
- ◆ Sportsmatch
- ◆ National Sports Foundation
- ◆ Sponsorship
- ◆ Local authorities

Some but not all Governing Bodies of Sport now have their own capital and revenue grant schemes.

These all have their own criteria, but most will look to achieve Sport England's aim of getting one million people more active.

At a very local level, there are many more, but these can be very specific, you will need to use something like the “Directory of Grant Making Trusts” or “Funderfinder” to track these down. You could ask your County Playing Fields Association for advice and information on local funding opportunities

Planning Your Project

When planning your project, there are three key areas that you need to address:

- ◆ **Strategic Need**
- ◆ **Local Need**
- ◆ **Sports Development**

Let's take a quick look at these in turn.

Strategic Need

When you sit down and plan your project, you need to consider where it will fit into the ‘big picture’. In other words, will this be a key facility for your local area, for the county, for the region or is it just a very local scheme which will benefit a small group of people?

This is an important issue to consider as this will in some way determine where you will be seeking funding from. Funding bodies will expect you to have consulted with a range of organisations such as:

- Your sport's Governing Body
- Your local County Sports Partnership
- Your Local Authority
- Your Community Sports Network

You need to identify the local competition.

Your project is important to you, but is it to others?

If there are already other similar facilities in the area, then will the market be able to sustain another one?

(Continued on page 8)

Continuing guidance and advice on funding opportunities in times of financial hardship and cut-backs

(Continued from page 7)

Local Need

At a local level, it is important to identify who exactly uses your facilities and the converse, who doesn't use them? If people aren't using your facilities, then it's important to find out why. This can be done through a local survey. Finding out why will help to answer the question as to whether people are actually interested in your project.

Another area that you need to examine is whether you are able to meet unmet demand, both now and in the future? This will seriously impact on what facilities you need to provide.

Similarly to strategic need, you need to identify any local competition, is there a similar facility being planned locally that you weren't aware of or is there already something in the next village or town with underused capacity?

All of these and others will be critical when you are developing your business plan because if the figures don't stack up, potential funders will not be keen to invest in your project.

Sports Development

Think about it this way, would you be interested in investing in a project if you could see any improvement as a result of your investment. Sports development is one way of proving this. It is often ignored by people when planning a new facility.

It is critical to identify your potential new customers. Most funding bodies will want to see an increase in participation because of their investment and something that is a benefit to the local community. Quite simply funders want some payback for their investment.

It's no use seeking to improve your existing facilities if they will continue to only benefit a small group of people. County Sports Partnerships, local authorities and

Sport England to name a few, want to see an increase in participation and will only support projects which can demonstrate that.

Making your case

Two new tools available to you and which can help you make the case are Active People and Market Segmentation.

The **Active People Survey** is the largest survey of sport and active recreation to be taken in England and now has three years of data available. It creates a baseline against which active participation can be measured anywhere in the country. It is a valuable tool for anyone planning a new facility to use in identifying their local participation rates. Full details can be found on the Sport England website.

Market Segmentation is another tool which has evolved from the Active People Survey. It helps to understand what motivates people to play or not play sport. It is based around 19 common groups of people which can be explored at differing geographic levels. It is possible to find out what people's sporting habits are in a community, local authority or region.

Again detailed information on how to use this tool can be found on County Sports Partnership or the Sport England websites.

Linked to all of the above, you need to identify what is limiting your development. Is it poor changing facilities, bad drainage, lack of floodlit facilities, lack of indoor space or just the location which means you can't expand and therefore need to find another site?

What all of this will demonstrate to a potential funder is that you are planning ahead and thinking about how your club will grow and benefit the local community!

Having a vision

Sports Development Planning is about having a clear vision for the future and it can be summarised in 6 key words:

- **Aims** - What are you aiming to achieve?
- **How** - Are you going to do this?
- **Who** - Is going to do the work?
- **When** - What are the timescales involved?
- **What** - Is the project?
- **Review** - How will you know what has been achieved? You need to have a way of reviewing progress throughout the project.

The same process applies to almost any grass-roots, community-led project funding application and should be seriously considered by those seeking funding.

Your Project

In addition to all of the previous advice and suggestions there are a host of other things you will need to consider about your project.

These include:

- Marketing of the facility/project
- Access issues
- Charging policies
- Management of the facility
- Operational issues
- Programming
- Income and expenditure plans

All of these make up your project and if they can be presented in a clear and logical way, then your chance of securing funding increases.

The Funders

It is worth remembering also that "there is no such thing as a free lunch".

Any organisation prepared to fund projects will have its own agenda, whether that is increasing participation or a specific interest in your sport. The key message here is to get to know your funders – be clear about what their criteria are, are they seeking payback in any form, are they focusing on any specific

(Continued on page 9)

Funding in hard times concluded

(Continued from page 8)

target groups eg young people, people with a disability etc?

Above all else, make sure that you read their documentation carefully before you begin to complete it. If you are not sure about anything, then contact them to seek clarification. Many funders are happy to offer advice and would prefer people to come to them first to see whether their project is eligible before an applicant has spent a lot of time developing a project that isn't fundable.

There are three top tips that summarise the whole process:

- ◆ Know your project
- ◆ Know your funder
- ◆ And above all else, Keep it simple!

For more information contact Liz or Mike at Syzygy Leisure on 01604 670222 or syzygy@syzygyleisure.co.uk

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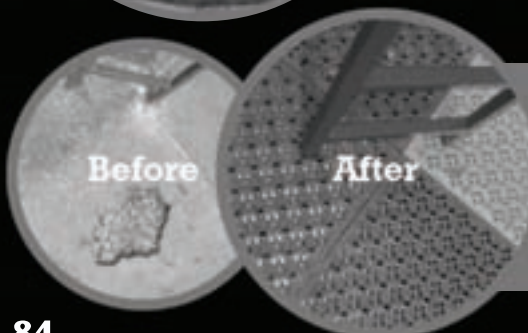
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Adult Outdoor Gyms and Fitness Trails

Carol White, a former fitness lecturer and now with Playground Facilities provides some good cautionary advice to those that may be thinking about installing outdoor fitness equipment for their local community.

Recently, I have begun to notice more of an interest in outdoor gyms and fitness trails with many more being installed in public parks. This is a very 'healthy' trend and I am pleased to see that more age groups are being considered within the 'playground' industry.

Traditionally, teenagers, adults and the 'more mature' adults are catered for within the 'indoor' fitness arena, of which there are many types of fitness classes on offer. For those who do not want to attend classes there is always the gym where you can use a variety of gym based equipment. In the class environment you are 'taught and closely monitored' and in the gym you are given an 'induction' and have the fitness staff at hand to ask questions and to keep an eye on you.

Understanding the fitness regime

Outdoor fitness areas are perfect for a fitness instructor to supervise a class in the fresh air. Individuals, unless they have a fitness instructor/personal trainer to take them around the equipment, are left to their own devices. This is not the safest method of using any fitness equipment unless you have a sound and knowledgeable fitness background. There may be signs telling the user how to make use of the equipment, but it is up to the individual's interpretation. If the equipment installed fulfils a purpose, is safe and has been structured to give the user a balanced work out, then at least the major safety precautions have been taken.

As an ex fitness lecturer it worries me that I am seeing some strange fitness equipment offered in the marketplace that at best is ineffective and at worst, down right dangerous. I have to consider what the item is actually supposed to do. Sometimes the corresponding text cannot even get the muscle group correct, let alone give a clear indication of what the item is supposed to achieve. One example of text I have seen is "Stretches muscles, tendons and ligaments". Ligaments attach joint to joint and are there to stabilise, we do not want to 'stretch' ligaments.

Education and knowledge required

If you teach within the fitness industry, you must be qualified and the fitness equipment will be proven to do the job and the instructor will be trained to use it. Is this the same in the 'play industry'?

(Continued on page 11)

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Getting it Right with Adult Outdoor Gyms and Fitness Trails

(Continued from page 10)

How many play industry companies selling fitness equipment are using trained fitness professionals to construct an outdoor fitness area for their clients?

Any adult fitness trail or outdoor gym should be structured for a balanced work out. Each piece of equipment should be analysed and any ineffective or possibly controversial equipment excluded. All levels of user competence should be considered and the equipment should be safe, effective and fulfil a purpose. This may be difficult to achieve if the lay out of the fitness area is designed by someone who does not have a fitness background.

Careful consideration on the type of fitness equipment chosen is needed

A parish council clerk was discussing an outdoor gym recently and mentioned a large wheel on a piece of equipment that when you used it you could really feel the stretch in your back. If analysed, this depends on where the stretch in the back is, how far into the exercise stations it was and what the benefit was. The back is a postural muscle, as well as being a very vulnerable part of the human body and must be worked and stretched with care.

Most people are hunched over a computer these days and end up with tightened pectoral muscles and overstretched upper back muscles. Do we want to use a piece of equipment that stretches the back still further? I have used this example as an illustration, but this principle can be used to rationalise all exercises and this is why it is vitally important that all fitness equipment that is put into a public area must be considered carefully and not installed just because it looks good.

Will the user have a safe and effective work out? Or could they be injured?

Equipment should comply with EN1176 and some dynamic equipment may comply with EN957, but is appropriate equipment being chosen, the layout overseen by fitness professionals and structured in a way to give the user a safe and effective work out?

Consideration should always be given to the following:

- What is the exercise for?
- What is the exercise trying to achieve?
- How does it work that particular muscle group?
- Are there any safer alternatives?



The photo above shows an Outdoor Fitness Zone designed, supplied and installed by Playground Facilities. The fitness zone was included in the Andrew Peach show on Radio Berkshire and Carol White was interviewed by Maggie Philbin on the subject of outdoor fitness.

I am certainly not saying that we should bring in even more legislation, but with the interest in adult outdoor fitness areas increasing, does some responsibility reside with the decision maker to choose equipment for their public area which is as safe and effective as possible?

If the decision maker is considering installing a fitness trail or outdoor gym in a public area do they have their own fitness expert to oversee the project? If they are relying on the supplier to recommend a selection of equipment, what is the supplier's rationale behind the choice of exercise equipment they are recommending? Do they have any fitness qualifications in order to make an educated judgement?

Also, it is not just the choice of exercise stations being recommended, but the order in which they are installed that is important.

Carol A White, B.A, Cert Ed, RSA.

www.playgroundfacilities.co.uk

Tel: 01494 562311



WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF ADULT OUTDOOR GYMS AND FITNESS TRAILS?
It would be useful to hear from readers of The Playing Field about their experiences of providing and maybe even using adult outdoor gym equipment and fitness trails. As Carol White suggests in her article there are a great many outdoor gyms being installed but are they the right ones and what advice, if any, does the end-user get?

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SAPCA Questions & Answers

Continuing the series of Question and Answer Information articles from the Sports and Play Contractors Association (SAPCA) we now look at Wet Pour Playground Surfacing.

When deciding on a new playground there are many considerations one has to make. Arguably the most important one of these is the playground surface. There are many different types and options available and it is very important that one is select which meets the requirements of the facility, its equipment and the users. Traditionally, little attention has been given to playground surfaces but demand for high durability, low running costs (maintenance) and better safety performance has changed this approach.

What are the surface options?

There are many different types of playground surfacing including wet-pour, pre-fabricated tiles, loose fill and synthetic turf. Each surface type and design will have different advantages and should be selected based on the requirements of the facility and on site equipment (swings, climbing frame, etc...). To satisfy safety and performance criteria playground surfaces are subjected to a range of tests. Over the past several years there has been a normalisation of British Standards to European Standards. It is essential that any playground surface meet the required standards for potential legal ramifications and more importantly the safety of the users.

Due to the above requirements there is a growing demand for shock absorbing playground surfaces. Most systems are designed with shock attenuating properties which can be tuned to provide the required safety and performance criteria. In the UK market wet-pour surfaces have become very popular and there are many different systems available.

Although there are differences between systems they all utilise the same basic material content of polyurethane resin binder and rubber granulate. Wet-pour systems are mixed and installed in-situ (on site), hence a high degree of skill and knowledge is required to construction them correctly to a high standard.

How are they constructed?

A good quality base is essential for a stable surface that will ensure you get the maximum useful life from the surface. This includes information on foundation layers, geo-textile layers, perimeter edging, the structural layers and final playing surface.

(Continued on page 13)

WET-POUR PLAYGROUND SURFACES



(Continued from page 12)

Are there construction requirements?

Recognising the difficulties associated with their construction and aftercare the Sport and Play Construction Association have developed a new code of practice for the 'Installation and Maintenance of Wet-pour Safer Surfacing for Playgrounds'.

This new publication, for the first time, outlines a detailed universally accepted approach for the installation of wet-pour surfaces for playgrounds. It has been produced with wide consultation from companies within the play sector. The code focuses on wet-pour surfaces only and is intended for installers, manufacturers, specifiers and clients.

What are the standards or specification you need to know?

The latest standard for play ground surfaces are the latest European and British Standards (BS EN 1176 and BS EN 1177). The SAPCA Code of Practice contains information on the test methods and requirements including slip resistance, critical fall height, extent of surfacing and many others.

What about maintenance?

There is no such thing as a maintenance free surface and all impacting absorbing surfaces will require some degree of routine maintenance throughout their life. This includes the removal of moss, algae, weeds, snow and ice. In addition keeping the surface clean is essential.

SAPCA's play surface division comprises many of the leading installers of wet-pour surfaces.

All SAPCA play surface division members are investigated and their work inspected. If any quality issues are identified they are not entitled to join the division until they can provide competency. These rigorous entry requirements ensure all SAPCA members are working to the very highest standards and consequently provides piece of mind to potential clients that their new playground facilities will meet and exceed expectations. The publication of the Code of Practice will further strength the SAPCA approach by providing a framework to which all members must adhere and furthermore empower clients and specifies with important information they need during all phases of installation.

SAPCA aims to continue improving the quality of sport and play infrastructure across the UK and have produced many technical publications and codes of practice. If you would like further information on this or other SAPCA publications please feel free to contact Dr Colin Young of SAPCA on colin@sapca.org.uk.

Further Reading:

The SAPCA Code of Practice for the installation and Maintenance of Wet-pour Safer Surfacing for Playgrounds (**available free at www.sapca.org.uk**)

BS EN 1176 (2008) Playground Equipment and Surfacing: Parts 1 to 11 (**available at www.bsi-global.com**)

BS EN 1177 (2008) Impact Attenuating Playground Surfacing: Determination of Critical Fall Height (**available at www.bsi-global.com**)

SAPCA Exhibition Dates for 2010

The Sports and Play Construction Association will present three of its popular "Sports Facility Construction" events in 2010. The one-day seminars, which are free to attend, provide expert guidance on a variety of key topics related to the funding, planning, design, construction and maintenance of sports facility projects, together with an exhibition of specialist companies.

The dates and venues are:

The Royal Armouries, Leeds: Tuesday 15 June

The King's Hall, Belfast: Tuesday 19 October

Twickenham Stadium, London: Tuesday 23 November

The events will be supported by County Playing Fields Associations, who will participate in the exhibitions in Leeds and London.

Full details of the events, including the seminar programmes and online registration, are available on the SAPCA website, www.sapca.org.uk.

New Standard for Natural Sports Turf

SAPCA's new Code of Practice for the Design, Construction and Improvement of Natural Sports Turf has been published, and is available to download, free-of-charge, from the Technical Guidance section of the SAPCA website, www.sapca.org.uk.

The Code of Practice provides much-needed guidelines for the provision of natural turf sports facilities, focussing on requirements for winter games pitches, fine-turf cricket facilities, and lawn tennis courts. Like SAPCA's other Codes of Practice, the publication represents a consensus view from across the industry, and is set to make a significant contribution to standards of both newly-built and upgraded facilities.

The Code of Practice emphasises the very specialist technical nature of sports turf, and the need to engage suitably qualified and experienced consultants and contractors

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Spring is a good time to ensure that systems are in place and correctly working to ensure that children's play spaces are maintained at the appropriate level. These systems include inspections, maintenance, the systematic documentation and recording of findings.

Regular Inspections are essential

It is very important that play spaces are inspected on a regular basis. Implementing a regime of inspections, as recommended within the British Standard EN1176, can help to ensure that play providers are fulfilling their duty of care to the users. It will also ensure that children's play spaces are maintained properly for longer. The Standards define a hierarchy of inspections: Routine, Operational and Annual.

1. Routine Inspection

The Routine inspections looks as day to day issues and problems that may arise from normal use, wear and tear and vandalism, misuse and the effects of the weather. The findings can be recorded on a simple sheet of paper or a book. The frequency of these routine inspections will vary depending upon the local site factors. For example, a site that suffers from vandalism or misuse is likely to require more frequent checks than one that is not so abused. Sites that have very few visitors will not need to be checked as frequently as very busy sites. When establishing the frequency of inspections it is wise to see routine inspections as a minimum requirement.

2. Operational Inspection

The next tier in the hierarchy is Operational inspections. These look at the same areas and issues as the Routine inspection, but also consider the correct operation of components, such as wear in swing chains, roundabout bearings and other parts that are liable to wear and tear.

Operational inspections are usually carried out on a quarterly basis, but the frequency may vary depending upon levels of use.

In both of these cases training of staff and volunteers is essential to ensure that sufficient levels of competence are in place. One and two-day courses are available from RoSPA that provide training to either routine or operational level respectively. For more details go to www.rospa.com/playsafety

3. Annual Inspection

The Annual inspection should only be carried out by a suitably qualified and competent person. The Register of Play Inspectors (RPII) provides a register of qualified inspectors from which RoSPA draws its inspectorate. These inspections look at the safety of the site as a whole, including vandalism, wear and tear, misuse, structural integrity, design, long-term levels of safety, compliance with standards and risk assessment. It can also consider areas such as play value, life expectancy and accessibility. The annual inspection provides a sound base from which the routine and operational inspections can take their lead.

Documentation

What happens next with the papers, checklists or books that contain the records of inspection? How long are they kept? To answer these questions we need to determine the reasons why we keep them in the first place. The checklists or forms contain a record of the condition of the play areas at the time of the inspection. This can be a valuable tool not only to ensure that appropriate levels of maintenance are undertaken, but also to provide evidence of satisfactory condition in the event of a legal claim for damages. If a claim for personal injury lands on your doormat it will be up to you to show that you were

not negligent; records showing that the playground was in a suitable condition can provide such evidence and then shift the burden of proof onto the claimant. A systematic approach to inspecting, maintaining and recording will prove very valuable here.

Keeping the information

But for how long should you keep such records? The Limitation Act 1980 specifies ordinary time limits for different classes of actions in the courts. Normally the time limit for personal injury claims is three years from the date of injury (or knowledge of the injury, whichever is the latter). In the case of children this 'three years' starts at the age of eighteen. Therefore records should be maintained for 21 years to ensure that the valuable evidence of the condition of the playground is maintained for long enough.

With the inevitable build up of paper records over time it is no wonder that many play providers are increasingly seeking to save their records electronically. If electronic systems are used it is essential to maintain the records, or to entrust them to an organisation that you know will still be able to produce them in many years to come. Will the data still be readable 21 years down the line? Will the company who are looking after them still be in existence? Use an organisation that has a proven track record.

Take action

And finally, all the inspections in the world are no good if the maintenance recommendations that they contain are not followed. The spring weather not only provides more opportunity for children to play, but perhaps also provides a more pleasant backdrop to essential maintenance activities.

*David Yearley,
Head of RoSPA Playsafety*

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF PLAY Adventurous Play Construction Project

'Risky play' and 'natural play' have taken on a new importance within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBDD) since the securing of over half a million pounds from the BIG Lottery Fund and over £1 million to deliver 22 Playbuilder sites.

The Council's insurers were one of the consultants to DCSF and the HSE in the drafting of the current Government guidance on risky play and the borough has adopted the principles of trying to integrate natural play into the fabric of the parks and housing areas. In support of these initiatives a Play Projects Board and a Play Partnership was set up to oversee and steer play delivery.

BIG Lottery Fund award

LBBDD was awarded £570k through the BIG Lottery Fund to develop play within the borough in response to its draft play strategy entitles Planning for the Future of Play. The portfolio is being delivered in partnership with Youth League UK and the Council has provided match funding and staff time in support of the project. The project commenced in October 2008 and will end at the end of September 2012. The principle of the project is that all sessions are to be 'free of charge, free to chose and free to come and go'.

Portfolio Key Elements

- Play sessions delivered where young people congregate throughout the borough, mainly in and around housing areas. This element of the project is being delivered by Youth League UK.
- Play sessions delivered in 6 parks. This element of the scheme is being delivered by the Council's Community Rangers supported by Play Workers provided by Youth League UK.



- The creation of 6 Adventurous Play facilities at the rate of 2 per year. This is the **Adventurous Play Construction Project** that we have delivered at Eastbrookend Country Park and Mayesbrook Park at the end of September 2009.

Adventurous Play Construction Project:

LBBDD commissioned an arts organisation, **TARU (Transforming Arts, Regenerating Understanding)** to run 2 week-long workshops in two parks. In these two parks children and young people would, with the help of LBBDD's 3 new BIG-Funded Community Rangers, and with support from qualified Play Workers provided by YLUK (Youth League UK), be able to experiment with a range of materials. There would be sand, timber, rope, tarpaulin, scrap materials etc and those attending the Workshops would be encouraged to use tools such as hammers, nails, saws, draw-saws, spades, ropes, knots, wires and pulleys etc) to create play structures such as steps up trees (using safety harnesses etc), rope-swings and platforms in trees, zip-wires down into sand and bark chippings etc.

Let the children decide

The outcome of the project was led by children and young people.

In putting together the draft Play Strategy, consultation with children and young people had shown that they wanted to 'climb high, get muddy, go on a zip wire, play in sand, build a den' etc. As such, we didn't know at the outset of the project whether or not the structures that they built would be permanent or temporary, and in our risk assessments we suggested that the decision would rest upon whether RoSPA would be prepared to sign off the structures and whether or not the maintenance teams would be prepared to carry out the necessary additional tasks. We also wanted the design and build process to capture the children's ideas so that they could act as evidence in support of Playbuilder programme.

Outcomes:

- Consultation, engagement with children & young people (300 children and young people aged 7-16 years in all, i.e. over the whole 3 year programme)
- Skills and confidence development and risk taking for children and young people (numbers)
- Temporary or permanent play structures
- Evidence for BIG and Playbuilder in support of programmes plus consultation for Playbuilder

Attracting the audience

The responsibility for encouraging children and young people to attend the sessions rested with LBBDD. Flyers were sent out to 525 children and young people within the borough between the ages of 7 and 16 from the Summer's Sorted database, plus the LBBDD Community Rangers attended school assemblies to promote the sessions and the ongoing programme.

(Continued on page 17)

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF PLAY Adventurous Play Construction Project

(Continued from page 16)

Workshops were based on promoting hands on activities, building opportunities to experience risk and challenge and cooperative play. By getting participants involved on making and creating the play area we aimed to create a sense of ownership, enjoyment and friendship.

Children learned how to tie knots such as the fisherman, the double-fisherman, a spliced clove hitch etc. Using pencils and paper the children created designs for play equipment.

Developing new skills

They then used these knots they had learned to build models of the play equipment using twine and bamboo. Ultimately the children helped build the full sized play equipment and tied the knots necessary to make rope ladders and a rope bridge.

At the same time temporary structures were built in the trees in the country park. Ropes were tied around trees to create a 'bucking bronco' and a 'tree surfer'. Other activities involved children using draw-saws to carve planks to make into go-carts and then race down mounds and along mown tracks through long grasslands.



Daily workshop activities

Each day started with a circle where facilitators would present the activities which will be available on that day.

Warm ups, ice-breakers, songs and games were introduced before starting the activities.

Workshops were run on rotation basis – three different activities running at the same time with groups of participants. Each day ended with a circle where participants would share with the group their experience - also through games.

Workshop achievements :

- Participants would also build throughout the week play structures on which they could physically exercise and play with friends developing their social and cooperation skills.
- Other skills developed: Team work, working to a deadline, reflection to improve their own and the team's performance, respect for others.
- A variety of team games involving physical and mental challenges combined with shelter building and/or orienteering.
- Biga (a two horse chariot) race: Working in small teams and using wood/bamboo and light rope, participants will build their Biga and race against the other teams.
- Car race: Again working in teams participants will learn how to make their car (go-cart) and will also build the circuit with obstacles and take part in a race. This type of car has to be pushed by someone and driven by another.
- Stilts: Using cans and ropes first to work their balance and then move to the wooden stilts (which can be higher) so they can start practicing moving on higher levels before moving to the tree climbing.
- Tree climbing: Make ladders and climbing aids using ropes, wood and old car-tyres.
- Shelter: Exploring Materials and Shelter Building Examine various animal and human shelters, discuss materials used, and in

teams build shelters out of available materials. Study buildings and materials found and used around the site, identify materials

TARU's 'golden rules':

- o **Participation** - children and young people must try and experiment as much as possible, encouraging everyone on site to become engaged in all sort of activities delivered throughout each day.
- o **Cooperation** – working together in a friendly way, helping each other and the groups.
- o **Respect** (others and environment).
- o **Sense of adventure.**
- o **Enjoy and have fun**
- o **Children and young people's ideas will be at the heart of the project.**

To help the project go as smoothly as possible, we also employed Youth League UK and 3 Community Rangers to provide diversionary play activities throughout the project and in support of the project.

The Council provided steel containers at each site to store the materials and employed a security firm to protect the emerging play structures at night. Completed structures were fenced off until RoSPA Playsafety would approve the structures. We also provided a St. John's Ambulance representative at each session in case of injury.

For more information about this outstanding project email David Theakston, Group Manager, Parks, Leisure & Arts at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham using david.theakston@lbbd.gov.uk www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk

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LET'S GO FLY.... introducing a new sport that is really taking off around the country!

When Rob Pullen contacted the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (OPFA) asking if the OPFA knew of a field he could use to practice his favourite sport it came as a great surprise to learn his sport involved large powerful kites and outsize skateboards! Intrigued Roger Davis, OPFA's Community Development Officer, asked for more details and invited Rob to describe his favourite sport in the following article.

I'm writing this article to spread the word of a sport that is relatively new. The people who are involved in the sport are addicted by the exhilaration, speed, rewards of landing new tricks, the competitions and just the thrill of taking part. Whether a beginner or a seasoned professional, people are hooked by it.

What am I rambling on about.....? It's the awesome world of Kite boarding.

Kite boarding, kite surfing, power kiting, kite buggying, snow kiting among others are all forms of this fast growing sport that was invented many years ago but for very different reasons. A long time ago some Eastern countries used kites that were connected to boats and canoes as a means of transportation. Later on the kite was developed to be bigger and was used as a sail to move carts on land and again boats on the water.

Today there are many manufacturers who produce kites for land and water. The participants use a bar or handles to steer the kite. You can kite surf on water with a specifically designed board, or you can kite with a land board in a field.

Whichever one it is, this sport has become one of the fastest growing extreme sports over the last twenty years.

Today there are magazines, competitions and organisations dedicated to this industry.

Get Involved

Getting started is easy. There are many schools around the country that cater for everyone. If you are lucky enough to live near the coast there is a good chance of a Kite surf shop near you. They will deal in lessons, courses, all the kit and will be able to guide you from your first flight to your first jump. As I mentioned the kites are a little bit different from the ones you used to fly.

Trying to get the kite to rise above your head while you run around the field isn't the way forward for these kites. They are extremely powerful and will drag you around by your face if you don't have the right tuition! Fear not though, as after your first lesson you will be addicted, and your behaviour will change from waking up in the morning and having breakfast to waking up and checking what the wind is doing. Analysing how much the branches or bushes are moving is inevitable.

Kitelandboarding

Kitelandboarding is probably not quite as popular as kite surfing but this is mainly due to the restrictions of the environment. Many people have been trying to find the right locations in this country for a long time, including myself.

I live in Oxfordshire, which is like one big field, but finding the right place where there are few trees, no overhead cables, flat grass and that isn't farmed is proving to be very difficult. I find it amazing there are very few places to go in this country, which is why I got in contact with the Oxfordshire Playing Field Association. They allowed me the privilege to write this piece and I'm very grateful.

An Oxfordshire base?

Last year a Kite Park was due to open in Wallingford. It would have



been a huge breakthrough in this sport. A place where the grass was cut, the field was big, and the buzz from the kiting community in this area was hard to ignore. However, it was decided by Health and Safety for the park not to open for various reasons. Although many people were very disappointed, the well being and the safety of all participants is a priority. So the search for a suitable place around these parts goes on. And probably in your county as well for the sport is really taking off- everywhere!

Why not have a go?

If you're the type of person who would like to fly static (without a board) and think they would like to try it then this sport is very accessible. All you need is a kite and a small field. Even this is a very addictive activity and a great workout! Anyway.....I could go on and on but space is limited...So what are you waiting for. Anyone can do it. So if your aged from 8 to 108, get out there and once you taste this world of kiting, you will be unstoppable.

*All the best and stay safe
Rob Pullen*

If you know of anywhere that would be suitable or for more information contact Rob at robpullen1@hotmail.co.uk

The British Power Kitesports Association at www.bpka.co.uk

British Kite Surfing Association at www.britishkitesurfingassociation.co.uk

When a Play Inspector calls to inspect your playground make sure they are fully RPII certificated

We all know play areas and play equipment in public places should have an annual safety inspection. Such an annual inspection should include outdoor play, indoor play, wheeled play and inflatable play.

However this raises a question:

Who can complete these inspections and reports?

The Answer is: Only an RPII Annual Inspector.

Which raises another question:

So who or what is the RPII?

The RPII – and its background

To assist all play providers with annual safety inspections and manufactures needing post-installation inspections, the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) was set up in 1999 by the Association of Play Industries (API), Chartered Institute of Sport (ISPAL, originally ILAM), Fields in Trust (FIT, originally NPFA) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). The RPII still works closely with each organisation and with the British Standards Institute (BSI).

RPII provides the syllabus and methodology for the assessment, examination and certification of competence to ensure candidates who wish to be included in the Register at whatever level have the opportunity to demonstrate their skill, knowledge and competence to the necessary standards.

Peace of mind for play providers

The benefits of using an RPII Inspector are many. Most importantly RPII inspectors are assessed on European and British standards and guidelines on which they are rigorously examined and periodically re-examined. RPII certificated inspectors keep up-to-date with any changes in guidelines and standards. Insurers and risk managers prefer inspectors who are professionally trained, certificated and audited to provide comprehensive valid reports that give best value.

Level of inspectors

There are three levels of RPII outdoor play inspectors - Routine, Operational and Annual.

Only Annual Inspectors are examined and certificated to the level required to complete valid annual play safety inspections or post-installation inspections. On this point the RPII is very clear and offers the following advice.

Inspect your Inspector

At a time when local authorities and schools are striving to save money and achieve better value, it is believed so-called 'Annual Inspectors' are producing low cost but possibly worthless playground safety reports. They may be wrongly stating they are RPII certificated and competent Annual Inspectors. They are not. In fairness, it is an understandable mistake to make.



The different levels of inspection

Operational and Routine Inspectors are examined to an appropriately lower level of competence required by their lower level of responsibility. Genuine mistakes may be made by them or a local authority client using them for annual safety reports as Annual Inspectors - which they are not.

Their inspection report, for health and safety and legal reasons may be invalid and may not be worth the paper it is written on – making the seeming 'low cost' wasted money, the report unusable and the client vulnerable.

This is because, in the event of legal action under the Health & Safety at Work Act, the annual safety inspection report and competence of the playground inspector will be questioned and brought in to doubt. This is because the Act requires an inspection to be carried out by a 'competent person'. The RPII examines and certificates only Annual Inspectors as competent to undertake annual safety inspection and post-installation work.

No other level of RPII inspector should be undertaking annual inspection work. Employing the wrong inspector, no matter how cheap, may turn out to be a really expensive mistake!

Simple solution!

Playground providers including town and parish councils along with schools and commercial premises together with public houses, leisure and sports centres can make thorough checks. It's easy and it's free. There is easy Internet access to the RPII's website listing all the current Annual Inspectors, Operational and Routine inspectors.

Only those on the RPII Annual Inspectors list should undertake annual safety or post-installation inspections of children's play areas.

(Continued on page 21)

RPII Play Safety Inspectors are Certificated Competent to carry out different types of inspections			
Inspection Frequency	Daily / Weekly	Monthly / Quarterly	Annual Inspection or Post-Installation Inspection* <i>(*highly recommended for a new site and new equipment)</i>
Inspection Level	Routine Inspection	Operational Inspection	
Annual Inspector	YES	YES	YES
Operational Inspector	YES	YES	X Not Certificated to undertake such inspections
Routine Inspector	YES	X	X Not Certificated to undertake such inspections

One simple way to make sure your play inspector is suitably qualified to carry out your play inspection is to ask to see their RPII identity badge which details their level of competence.

Changes to Indoor Play Safety Standards

For indoor play providers and operators the RPII advises; ‘newly updated play safety standards and guidelines now apply’. For those planning new indoor play facilities or refurbishing existing ones, newly in force from the start of 2010 is BS EN 1176 Part 10. The RPII recommends play providers and operators ensure designers, manufacturers and installers work to this. The RPII confirms that the structure of the play frame should be risk assessed but emphasised that no changes are needed to existing facilities unless an Annual Inspector’s risk assessment says otherwise.

For more information about making sure you employ the right play inspector go to www.playinspectors.com

www.playinspectors.com

Register of Play Inspectors International

Check your RPII Annual Inspector is Certificated Competent







OUTDOOR
INFLATABLE
INDOOR

Only Annual Inspectors can do Annual or Post-Installation Safety Inspections in their Specialist area, ‘Routine’ or ‘Operational’ Inspectors won’t do.

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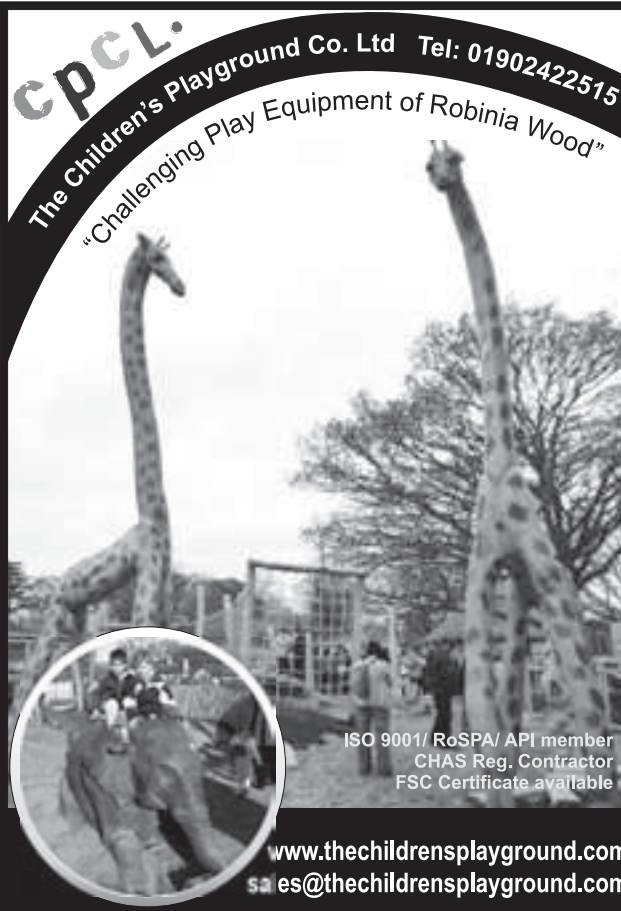
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Humberactive

The Big Lottery Fund is grant funding Humberactive through its Reaching Communities Programme. The objectives of the programme are -

- Improving access to training and development to improve individuals life skills.
- Creating stronger communities, with more active citizens working together.
- Improving rural or urban environments accessible to communities.
- Developing healthier and more active people and communities.

HPFA was able to demonstrate demand for services which would meet these objectives in the rural areas of the Humber through surveys and questionnaires, the parish plans and requests made for assistance either directly to HPFA or via the village halls advisory service. Consequently, the Humberactive project was devised with the objectives of providing an advisory service for rural organisations to assist them to improve and develop recreational facilities and to establish active recreational activities in those facilities.

The advisory role is the traditional role for HPFA and has been since 1975. Developing activities is a new role which will involve consulting local communities, organising activities and leading them, and recruiting and training volunteers to take on the delivery of the activities on a sustainable basis. This will be supported by small budgets for equipment and paying for training. The type of activities will depend on the response to consultations, but are expected to be wide ranging and to include play, sports, exercise programmes and so on.

- The outcomes which HPFA will be required to achieve over the five years duration of the project are-
- 60 rural community owned/managed facilities improved.

- 100 volunteers trained and accredited to deliver recreational activities.
- 3000 additional people from rural areas regularly taking part in active recreational activities.
- 100 rural organisations assisted through advice, guidance, training and support so that they are better able to deal with their communities recreational needs.

Humberactive will be managed by the County Secretary, and staffed with a Development Officer who will deal with improving recreational facilities and two Recreation Organisers who will organise and lead activities, supported by a small budget for employing sessional staff to lead activities for which the Recreation Organisers do not have the appropriate skills or experience. All staff will be part time, an employment option which will provide greater flexibility for working during evenings and weekends.

Humberactive is funded for five years, and is expected to commence in May once staff have been recruited. This is a relatively long duration which will provide the stability for HPFA to be involved in community projects over a longer term, particularly useful for those projects which require several years to reach completion.

HPFA have on file a number of requests for assistance with community projects but would welcome additional requests or enquiries at any time. It is anticipated that Humberactive will work closely with the Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council's Village Hall and Parish Plans Advisory Services, both of which regularly come across recreational issues.

HPFA may, of course, be contacted in the usual ways so please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any ideas, comments or requests.

Distribution of *The Playing Field*

In the winter 2010 edition of *The Playing Field*, it was reported that HPFA were considering reducing the distribution costs of the newsletter by partly distributing it electronically. Postage and labour costs for stuffing envelopes amounts to over £2,000 per year. Printing costs are dealt with separately and efficiently through a consortium of County Playing Fields Associations.

The HPFA Trustees, most of whom are representatives of community organisations, have considered this matter and have decided that it is important to continue with the paper distribution of the newsletter because of the way it is passed from hand to hand between committee or club

members. They have no confidence that this would be the case with electronic copies.

As a result, the Trustees have decided to introduce a small annual membership fee which will cover these, and perhaps some other core costs of running the Charity. As some 700 copies of *The Playing Field* are distributed quarterly, the annual cost per recipient is quite low, and will necessitate only a small membership fee.

Invoices will be inserted with *The Playing Field* to save on postage costs!



2010 WREN AWARDS

Waste Recycling Environmental (WREN)

WREN is a 'not for profit' environmental body set up in 1997 to distribute the Landfill Tax Credits of the Waste Recycling Group (WRG) – one of the largest waste management and landfill site operators in the UK today.

Sadly, HPFA will not be offering WREN small grants during 2010 as the current low bank interest rates have led to a reduction in available funding. Not all news is bad however, as WREN themselves will continue to operate their two grant schemes in the Humber area during the year.

The two schemes are small grants, from £2,000 to £15,000, and the main grants, from £15,001 to £50,000.

The criteria for eligibility for each of the schemes have much in common.

Grants will only be made for projects within ten miles of a currently operational Waste Recycling Group landfill site. Those in the Humber area are at Gallymoor near Market Weighton, and at Winterton and Immingham. In addition, the Bootham Lane site near Hatfield covers part of the Isle of Axholme.

Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately from the residents point of view, the sites at Bridlington and Hessle have now closed. As a consequence, most of Hull and much of the East Riding east of Beverley is now ineligible, although parts of south Holderness are within ten miles of the Immingham site.

Grants may be awarded for the protection of the environment and the provision, maintenance or improvement of a public park, green, recreation ground and so on or amenity such as a village hall, play area, community hall and so on.

Neither grant may be used for land purchase, vehicle purchase, work on allotments, anything which would be considered as a local authority role for example council managed libraries, sports centres and footpaths, anything at schools, community art, community cafes, car parks, hospitals, theatres/cinemas, single sports facilities,

anything without wider community access, administration posts and offices other than as part of a community facility.

A new restriction is that grants may not be used for construction costs of a new building or extension but they may be used for internal finishes such as toilets, heating systems, showers, windows and doors, insulation and renewable energy technology. This new rule emphasises the role of WREN grants as contributors to funding packages.

The list of projects that the grants may fund is even longer, and includes just about anything within the definition "provision, maintenance or improvement of a public etc"

Maximum project costs under the small grant scheme are £50,000. There is no minimum cost, although this is more or less defined by the minimum grant and the expectation that applicants will generally secure some additional funding from elsewhere.

Maximum project cost under the main grant scheme is £250,000 towards which, WREN may contribute no less than 20% of the total project cost and no more than 85% with the £50,000 upper limit.

Application forms and further details are available on the WREN website or by telephoning 01953 717165

The application forms are reasonably easy to complete. Applicants should pay particular attention to consulting their community and discussing their needs so as to demonstrate that there is a genuine community need and potential for community benefit, and to securing or contributing additional funding so as to demonstrate value for money from WREN's perspective.

HUMBER PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

*Serving communities in the City of Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire,
North and North East Lincolnshire.*

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