



Making it possible to do Play Sufficiency:
Exploring the conditions that support local
authorities to secure sufficient opportunities
for children in Wales to play

Summary report

'It's about incorporating play at every opportunity. You can have two upstand kerbs, if they're five and a half metres apart, you've got a call for kerby, haven't you? You can plant two trees regulation goal post distance and you've got Wembley Stadium.'



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Play Wales is the national organisation for children's play, an independent charity supported by the Welsh Government to uphold children's right to play and to provide advice and guidance on play-related matters.

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This report is a brief summary of a more detailed report that is available from Play Wales.

We recommend reading the full report to gain a more in-depth view of the conceptual approach, issues and findings from the research, as well as more detail on recommendations and their implementation.

The full report is available on request from info@playwales.org.uk

Introduction to the research

This research study builds on three previous studies¹ (summaries of which are available on the Play Wales website: www.playwales.org.uk/eng/sufficiency) that saw the Play Sufficiency Duty as a matter of paying attention to the conditions that support children's ability to find time and space to play. The current study took this principle back a level, focusing on the **conditions that support local authorities to take actions in support of children's opportunities to play**. These conditions are affected by a whole range of factors and circumstances that make it possible for people to enact Play Sufficiency (including people, personalities, knowledge, experience, relationships, policies and their interpretations, funding, organisational culture, national and international trends, research, physical landscapes and so on).

This report highlights the connections and opportunities within these factors and circumstances, and provides examples and recommendations for Welsh Government, Play Wales, local authorities and the children's workforce.

Research aims

Given this focus, the research aims were to:

- identify existing or potential examples of practice in securing play sufficiency;
- focus on the conditions that are likely to have maximum impact, regardless of the capacity and resource of local authorities;

- explore ways that the findings can be developed into practical, simple and sustainable models, tools or training;
- make recommendations for a range of resources and actions to help create local conditions that can support authorities to secure sufficiency.

Three strands to the research

The research had three strands:

- desk-based research to identify international examples of actions taken at policy and practice levels in support of children's play;
- focus groups and some interviews with three local authorities² to explore examples of actions taken, the conditions that supported these actions, issues faced by those who want to make a difference, and possible solutions and recommendations;
- working with a panel of 'expert witnesses', across professional domains, to advise on research outputs and recommendations.³

Focus groups

The focus groups included people working at strategic and frontline delivery levels across three interrelated professional domains. These domains form the structure for the report:

- Policy, strategic partnerships and advocacy (including research and knowledge exchange)
- The built and natural environment
- Children's and community services.

Report cards

From the work with the case study authorities and the desk-based research, we have compiled 26 'report cards' of examples of actions taken to support children's play. We stress these are not offered as best practice – nor have they been selected from an exhaustive trawl. Each example aims to show the unique contexts, processes and people involved, but may offer adaptable ideas for those working to support children's play. These report cards are referenced in the relevant sections throughout the report and are available at the end of the report.

Research approach

The first three research studies introduced and developed a number of 'conceptual tools' that have also informed this study. These are very briefly introduced here:

- **Collective wisdom:** acknowledging and working with many different ways of knowing and working, both across professional domains and in terms of children's different ways of knowing about their everyday lives and spaces.
- **Account-ability and response-ability:** the intertwined processes of *accounting* for children's ability to find time and space for playing, both in public space generally and in the institutions of childhood, and *responsiveness* in terms of rethinking habits and routines so that children can play, particularly in their neighbourhoods. Because of the way public space is organised, children are often excluded from playing out – this makes their right to play a matter of *spatial justice*.
- **Amin's four registers⁴:** adapting Ash Amin's four registers for a 'good city' as a framework for the research design and analysis. These registers are: **repair and maintenance** (keeping systems and infrastructure in good repair and ensuring they do not unnecessarily exclude children); **relatedness** (partnership working, connectedness and appreciating difference, particularly children's different relationships to space and time);

rights (as held in common rather than individually; children's right to participate in and shape neighbourhoods and to participate in cultures of childhood); and **re-enchantment** (paying attention to the things that make life worth living: for children this largely means playing).

- **An assets-based approach:** moving away from a deficits-based view of children towards celebrating their skills and competence as players as well as their rich situated knowledge of their relationships with local spaces.

Key messages from the research

Our findings encouragingly point to five headline conditions that can support local authorities to secure sufficient play opportunities for children:

- **policy** alignment with, and promotion nationally and locally of, the Play Sufficiency Duty;
- the right **people** in the right place at the right time with sufficient authority, capacity, capability and consistency;
- a consistent and dedicated source of **funding** for Play Sufficiency;
- existing and new **information**, including research and ways to share information;
- **openness to possibilities** (organisational cultures that allow for being able to respond to opportunities that arise).

These headline conditions underpin 13 recommendations given at the end of the report. The full report considers these recommendations in much more detail.

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

At **national** level, there is a need to align policies through explicit acknowledgement of the Play Sufficiency Duty in other Acts, Measures and statutory instruments. Given the strength of evidence of play's contribution to physical and mental health and well-being,⁵ the Play Sufficiency Duty's capacity to contribute to these agendas should be acknowledged, and the Duty incorporated into policy implementation by those leading on these agendas.

There is also a need to promote the Play Sufficiency Duty itself at national and local levels. The current Play Wales *Playful Childhoods* campaign⁶ is to be commended in promoting the importance of play to families; what we are suggesting here is that the Play Sufficiency Duty itself also needs to be promoted, both to professionals and to communities.

Developing specific **local** policies can help practitioners to work in ways that support children's play, including risk management policies that support staff to adopt a risk-benefit approach. Where such policies have been introduced, key to their development were people who appreciated and could do something about the need for such policies.

See Report Cards 1 and 2

The statutory requirement to work in **partnership across professional domains** is a powerful enabler. The research found that successful examples involved committed individuals who had the motivation, passion, experience, knowledge and authority to instigate, inspire and maintain partnership working. This suggests that effective investment in Play Sufficiency means giving Play Sufficiency Leads the *time* (both the hours allocated in job roles and the length of time for development work to show results), *space* (one's place in the organisation

confers the remit, authority and ability to make decisions and influence decision makers) and *permission* (an organisational culture of being open to experimentation) to do this, mirroring the key principle of the Play Sufficiency Duty itself in terms of children's time, space and permission to play.

See Report Cards 3, 4 and 5

The research highlights the importance of the work of national and local third sector **advocacy and infrastructure organisations**. The pivotal role of Play Wales in helping to create and maintain conditions for local authorities to deliver Play Sufficiency cannot be stressed enough. This is embodied in the experience, expertise and commitment of their staff and the willingness of Welsh Government to work with them.

See Report Cards 6, 7 and 8

In each of our three case study authorities, **research** with children was a starting point for actions to support children's play. Such research included creative ways of doing research with children on their relationship with their everyday spaces, often involving direct engagement with relevant spaces, for example, map-making, photographing significant spaces and walkabouts. Such research focuses on the micro-detail of very specific neighbourhoods. There is ample evidence of the generic issues that support or constrain children's play – these methods help adults to pay attention to the specifics of *this* space at *this* time for *these* children, enabling specific responses.

See Report Cards 9 and 10

Opportunities for training, qualifications and other forms of knowledge exchange across the many professional areas that affect Play Sufficiency have been significant enablers of effective partnership work leading to actions to support children's play.

See Report Card 11

The built and natural environment

Children's ability to play out is a matter of spatial justice: a just organisation of public space acknowledges children's right to play out and makes that possible.

Housing design has a significant influence on children's ability to play out. There is a clear relationship between physical qualities of housing schemes (access to safe, nearby shared space; connecting networks and street characteristics) and the length of time and numbers of children playing out.⁷ Equally important is research with children at the design stage and post occupancy.

See Report Cards 12 and 13

The **street** has always been a contested space for children's play, particularly for working class children. Today, a complex mix of contemporary factors mean that playing out is not as common as it once was, although children do still play out where conditions support it. There is a strong argument to suggest that traffic, both moving and parked, is a major contributor to the decline of conditions that support playing out – this leads to a withdrawal of people from the street more generally, opening up space for other fears to emerge (for example fear of attacks and stranger danger).

See Report Card 14 (and also Report Cards 4 and 6)

Research on children's **freedom to roam** paints a picture of decline over decades. Nevertheless, if the conditions are right, children's preference is still for playing out. Many initiatives that support children's freedom of movement are closely linked to actions to support active travel.

See Report Card 15

Although we stress the importance of children having the freedom to roam and play out in their neighbourhoods, **designated playgrounds and parks** are a significant part of children's play lives. We found several examples of

more creative approaches to designing for children's play, supported by a growing number of resources, including Play Wales' community toolkit on designing and managing play spaces,⁸ aimed at supporting community groups, play associations or town and community councils.

See Report Cards 16 and 17

On average, roughly a third of the Welsh population live in **rural areas** (settlements with a population under 10,000), with that figure much higher in some areas. There is less attention paid to rural childhoods than to urban ones. Rural children often have less freedom of movement than urban children,⁹ and although the myth of the rural idyll may suggest they have more green and open space for playing, in reality, this may be difficult to access, mostly because it is often private farmland.

See Report Card 18

Children's and community services

The influence of **playwork** and the contribution of playworkers to the development and enactment of the Play Sufficiency Duty nationally and locally cannot be overstated. Guided by a formal set of principles,¹⁰ playwork's core purpose is the creation of spaces that support children's open-ended and intrinsically motivated play, together with advocacy for children's self-organised play. This advocacy work forms the basis of Play Wales' work with Welsh Government to build an agenda for play in Wales and to create conditions for local authorities to enact the Play Sufficiency Duty.

Similar advocacy has also played a fundamental and leading role in working towards Play Sufficiency at local level. The direct (with children) and indirect (with other adults, advocating and planning for play) contributions made by playworkers across most of the examples included in this report are considerable. Those with at least a playwork background if not



a playwork remit have repeatedly been the instigators or enablers for actions, pulling people together, developing collective wisdom, facilitating and developing responses to research with children, promoting the value of Play Sufficiency to relevant departments and organisations at national and local level.

See Report Cards 19, 20 and 21

Health and well-being in **schools** is at the forefront of Welsh Government policy for schools, as seen both in Estyn's 2019 thematic review of pupils' health and well-being¹¹ and the Welsh Government's new Curriculum for Wales 2022.¹² From the research on the links between playing and health and well-being,¹³ there are clear synergies with the Play Sufficiency Duty that could and should be made more explicit.

A joint statement from Public Health Wales and Play Wales¹⁴ identifies key messages for schools:

- Schools should be encouraged to make grounds available for free play out of school hours;
- Time for free play during and after the school day is essential to children's well-being;

- New schools should be designed to support children's outdoor play.

See Report Cards 22 and 23

There is great potential for **youth workers** to contribute to securing sufficient opportunities for older children to 'play', even though the young people themselves may not call it that and despite the overall aim of youth work being informal education. One specific area is the intention in the Youth Work Strategy for Wales to map youth work provision, including transitional provision (pre-11 years old), creating clear links with Play Sufficiency Assessments.

See Report Card 24

Finally, there is a growing interest within the **cultural sector** to understand and support children's play within museum and gallery institutions and in heritage sites. Developing additional partnerships to extend and advocate for Play Sufficiency could be positively explored.

See Report Cards 25 and 26

Recommendations

The report makes 13 recommendations for actions that can support local authorities to deliver on the Play Sufficiency Duty. Many of these will feed into the work of the current Ministerial Play Review. Headline recommendations are given here – the full report expands on these to acknowledge work already being undertaken, give a rationale and context and make suggestions for implementation.

Recommendation 1: At national level, we recommend that Welsh Government continues the work being done to undertake and report on a mapping process to show the current and potential relationships between the Play Sufficiency Duty and other key legislation, policies and initiatives. The report should make recommendations for strengthening the links, particularly where explicit reference to the Play Sufficiency Duty would help create conditions for local authorities to deliver on the Duty.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the Ministerial Play Review consider a protocol for Child Rights Impact Assessments in ways that can ensure the Play Sufficiency Duty is taken into consideration.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that local authorities work towards a more explicit and high-level alignment of the Play Sufficiency Duty to other policies, protocols and initiatives.

Recommendation 4: We recommend that a funded strategy to promote the Play Sufficiency Duty be developed by Welsh Government in partnership with Play Wales.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that Welsh Government seeks ways to provide a more consistent funding stream to support the statutory Play Sufficiency Duty.

Recommendation 6: We recommend that where resources are available at local authority level, they should consider being used in the first place to fund a permanent senior-level Play Sufficiency post whose role is to work strategically on Play Sufficiency.

Recommendation 7: We recommend that Welsh Government commissions Play Wales to work with them to continue current work to review, refresh and relaunch the full Play Sufficiency Toolkit in the light of both this research and *Children's Right to Play in Wales*, and also any changes that may arise from the Ministerial Play Review.

Recommendation 8: We recommend that local authorities find ways to embed partnership working on Play Sufficiency in their systems.

Recommendation 9: We recommend that Welsh Government, Play Wales and local authorities work to build on current efforts to bring cross-disciplinary professionals together, both to promote the Play Sufficiency Duty and to share research, experiences and ideas, for example through training, professional development programmes or multi-agency conferences.

Recommendation 10: We recommend that Welsh Government works with Play Wales to explore ways to support further research to inform delivering on the Play Sufficiency Duty.

Recommendation 11: We recommend that local authorities consider investing time and resources in ongoing ethical research with children using observations, mapping and other creative methods at micro-neighbourhood level, enabling a more in depth understanding of children's play habits and preferences to develop, and sharing those findings with other adults to enhance collective wisdom.

Recommendation 12: We recommend that Welsh Government and Play Wales review current information resources produced by Play Wales, including the *Focus on play* series and general collection, identifying areas for new or refreshed resources, and linking these directly to the new Play Sufficiency toolkit.

Recommendation 13: We recommend that an assets-based approach to Play Sufficiency is adopted at national and local level in ways that support a re-enchantment with children's play.

References

¹ Lester, S. and Russell, W. (2013) *Leopard Skin Wellies, a Top Hat and a Vacuum Cleaner Hose: An analysis of Wales' Play Sufficiency Assessment duty*. Cardiff: Play Wales.

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Russell, W., Barclay, M., Tawil, B. and Derry, C. (2019) *Children's Right to Play in Wales: Six years of stories and change since the commencement of the Welsh Play Sufficiency Duty*. Cardiff: Play Wales.

² These were: Cardiff, Conwy and Monmouthshire.

³ These were Tim Gill (independent researcher and advocate for children, Rethinking Childhood), Dinah Bornat (architect, Mayor's Design Advocate for the Mayor of London, ZCD Architects) and Keith Towler (former Children's Commissioner for Wales 2008-2015, Chair of the Interim Youth Work Board for Wales).

⁴ Amin, A. (2006) The Good City, *Urban Studies*, 43(5/6), p.1010.

⁵ For example, Lester, S. and Russell, W. (2008) *Play for a Change – Play, Policy and Practice: A review of contemporary perspectives*. London: National Children's Bureau; Whitebread, D., Basilio, M., Kuvalja, M and Verma, M. (2012) *The Importance of Play*, Toy Industries Europe.

⁶ www.playfulchildhoods.wales

⁷ ZCD Architects and NHBC Foundation (2017) *Making spaces for play on new suburban and town developments*. London: ZCD Architects.

⁸ Play Wales (2016) *Developing and managing play spaces*. Cardiff: Play Wales.

⁹ For example, Carver, A., Timperio, A. F. and Crawford, D. A. (2012) Young and Free? A study of independent mobility among urban and rural dwelling Australian children, *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, 15(6):505-510; Kyttä, M., Hirvonena, J., Rudner, J., Pirjolaa, I and Laatikainen, T. (2015) The Last Free Range Children? Children's independent mobility in Finland in the 1990s and 2010s, *Journal of Transport Geography*, 47:1-12.

¹⁰ www.playwales.org.uk/eng/playworkprinciples

¹¹ Estyn (2019) *Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupils' health and wellbeing*. Cardiff: Estyn.

¹² Welsh Government (2019) *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum Proposals for a new legislative framework*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

¹³ For example, Lester, S. and Russell, W. (2008) *Play for a Change – Play, Policy and Practice: A review of contemporary perspectives*. London: National Children's Bureau; Whitebread, D., Basilio, M., Kuvalja, M. and Verma, M. (2012) *The Importance of Play*, Toy Industries Europe.

¹⁴ *Play for Wales* magazine, Spring 2019.

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As before, deep thanks also go to Stuart Lester, who wisely and mischievously disrupted our habitual ways of thinking about play and space, and whose influence on this research study is considerable. We miss you, but your work carries on. We hope we have done it justice.





Report cards

1 Development of a risk management policy in Wrexham

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Development of a policy framework enabling practitioners to adopt a balanced approach to risk management in their work with or on behalf of playing children

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Recommendations from local authority Play Sufficiency Assessments
- All Wales Play Opportunity Grant funding used to develop guidance around particular concerns

People instigators and drivers

- Play Wales officers
- Local authority Play Development Team
- Experienced playworkers from adventure playgrounds
- Advocates working nationally to promote a risk-benefit approach
- Sympathetic health and safety officers

Resources/enablers

- Play and playwork theory and practice
- Publication of *Play for a Change...* and *Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation guide*
- Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) endorsement of a balanced approach to risk management

Process

- Writing the original policy and design of the risk management framework
- Developing dynamic risk-benefit assessment guidance for staff
- Delivering risk management training to staff based on the policy
- Producing detailed risk-benefit assessments to clarify local authority position on a range of specific issues and situations

Challenges

- Gaining endorsement from the local authority executive board – made possible by the statutory duty

Outputs/outcomes

- The policy has enabled local authority Play Development Team to address a range of situations where people have raised concerns regarding provision for children's play
- Elements of the policy/framework have been used in a range of different settings where children play
- The policy was used in the Welsh Government *Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit* for local authorities

2 Service-specific play implementation plan (Social Services)

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Co-production of a service-specific play policy implementation plan and play and risk management guidance for Social Services' Looked After Children Team and foster carers

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- County Play Policy Implementation Plan
- Wrexham and Conwy Play and Risk Management policy
- Play Wales' capacity to support through their Workforce Development Officer

People instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Lead (funded by Families First and employed by County Voluntary Council) capitalising on chance meetings to improve opportunities for play
- Looked After Children Team staff advocating to senior management for improved approach to children's play
- Willingness of senior management to engage with change

Chance

- Feedback from children and foster carers on playschemes saying they couldn't usually engage in 'this sort of play'
- Play-aware social worker at the same playscheme echoing similar concerns
- During delivery of an introductory playwork training to foster carers, realising that policy and guidance for Social Services and foster carers needed to be addressed

Process

- Play Policy Implementation Plan and risk management guidance developed in partnership with Social Services senior management and foster carer advisory group
- Submitted to Scrutiny Committee for approval and Insurance Department to test fitness for purpose
- Training provided for management and departmental staff
- Annual delivery of combined training to both foster carers and Looked After Children staff, ensuring shared knowledge and understanding and reducing barriers

Challenges

- Supporting Looked After Children Team to embed the policy and guidance in their practice
- Ongoing mapping with other departmental plans to avoid conflicting messages
- The process of development must include all key players and as such is slow

Outcomes

- Improved understanding of play by foster carers, Social Services/Looked After Children Team
- Much less uncertainty about what playing children can do
- An excellent example of how service-specific play implementation plans and guidance can be developed and improve children's opportunities for play

Next steps

- Review and refresh, learn from experiences and improve

3 Playing Out (Conwy summer holiday playschemes)

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Partnership model for open access outdoor playschemes between Town and Community Councils, County Borough Council and Community and Voluntary Council (CVC)

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty and findings from local authority Play Sufficiency Assessments
- Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015
- Families First allocation of funding for 'Playing Out' coordinator
- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant used to develop grant scheme

People instigators and drivers

- Cross-departmental Play Sufficiency Task and Finish Group's appreciation play's value
- Education Department lead person for the council working with the uncertainties of 'Playing Out' project
- Play Sufficiency Lead (funded by County Borough Council's Families First and employed by CVC) and 'Playing Out' Coordinator
- Town and Community Councils (often clerks)

Process

- Play Sufficiency Lead and Coordinator present to Town and Community Councils and request expression of interest to contract Playing Out
- Play Sufficiency Lead and Coordinator assess level of commitment and liaise with CBC departmental lead to commence administrative and recruitment processes
- Town and Community Councils confirm funding/contracting commitment
- County Borough Council department lead organises Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, mandatory training, payroll, insurance and vehicles

Challenges

- Workload of negotiating agreements annually with 15-20 Town and Community Councils
- Working with uncertainty: recruitment processes need to begin prior to finalising funding agreements
- Funding for coordinator is agreed annually making longer term planning difficult

Outputs/outcomes

- Approximately 2000 children and similar numbers of parents/carers engaged
- One-to-one inclusion worker integrating children with additional requirements into 'mainstream' provision
- Running playschemes near Family Centres provides opportunities for engagement, information share and early intervention
- Improved uptake of Holiday Hunger programme
- Families follow playschemes around the borough, building friendship networks
- Parents become more relaxed and take a different approach to their children's play

Next steps

- Develop longer term Service Level Agreements with Town and Community Councils for funding

4 Partnership working on a Play Streets project in Cardiff

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

An illustration of the range of players and connections involved in initiating and developing a play streets project

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative and Cardiff's Child Friendly City Strategy, particularly the Safer Streets theme

People instigators and drivers

- Local parents
- Children (through previous Child Friendly Cities and Play Sufficiency research)
- Play Development Team, who had done some play streets work
- Play Wales
- Team Leader for Transport Policy, Cardiff Council
- Very supportive Councillor and Portfolio Holder for Transport Policy (and Board Member for Street Games)
- Child Friendly Cities Officer with understanding of play and cross-council connections

Process

- Local parents contacted Playing Out (Bristol) wanting to start a street play initiative
- Play Wales hosted a meeting with local advocates, the authority's Play Development Support Worker, and representatives from Public Health Wales
- A pilot was set up, evaluated by Play Wales and two students from Cardiff University
- The Child Friendly Cities Officer was able to help set up and chair a task group with relevant officers to establish application procedures for street closures
- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding to purchase road closure kits

Challenges

- Local objections can prevent activists from continuing
- Balance of time and capacity for the Play Development Team to initially support residents through the application process

Outputs/outcomes

- Street Play embedded and process and protocol established within council
- Child Friendly Cities street play objectives ongoing

5 Establishing strategic groups with responsibility for play sufficiency

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Where examples exist, these multi-disciplinary strategic groups are developing into 'thinking groups' where challenges in respect of play sufficiency can be picked up and discussed strategically

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Other local policy duties and initiatives

People instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency leads located in various departments across different local authorities
- Officers in policy and partnership development roles
- Policy leads from other departments and partner organisations
- Elected members with responsibility for play sufficiency

Chance

- Strategic groups evolving into 'thinking groups' rather than just monitoring progress against action plans

Process

- Establishing, maintaining and facilitating the group
- Engaging representatives from diverse policy areas

Challenges

- Ensuring play sufficiency doesn't get lost amongst other agendas
- Identifying preferred reporting mechanisms / strategic position of the group
- Clarifying the function of the group, making it worthwhile for people to be involved
- Pressure on time for all involved
- Changes in personnel

Outputs/outcomes

- Improved partnership working in support of play
- Greater recognition of responsibilities across policy areas
- Increased capacity to respond to the Play Sufficiency Duty
- Opportunities to discuss challenges in respect of play sufficiency

6 Playing Out Community Interest Company (CIC) in Bristol

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

'Parent and resident led movement restoring children's freedom to play out in the streets and spaces where they live' (www.playingout.net)

Instigators and drivers

- Initially two local mothers wanting their children to be able to play out on the street
- Experience of closing streets for street party gave the idea for play street closures
- Support from other residents on the street and local council
- The success of early experiments led to developing a replicable model

Development of the broader model

- Local pilots
- Support from Bristol Council, who established Temporary Street Play Orders
- Interest from others led to developing the Playing Out model and making it available through a website
- Playing Out CIC formed 2011
- Network of play streets growing across the UK

Strategies

- Development of a simple and replicable model, networks, resources and advice
- Use of social and mainstream media encourages parents to contact their own councils and play associations
- Commissioning research showing evidence of value in terms of children's health and well-being, stronger communities, active citizenship and wider culture change
- Lobbying

Challenges

- Opposition to the idea from a minority of people (streets are for cars, cars may be damaged, children may get run over)
- It is important to challenge these with evidence

Outputs/outcomes

- As at July 2019, 63 UK councils have a street play policy – almost 1000 communities have played out, involving 3000 children
- In June 2019 the UK Government published official guidance to English local councils on street closures to support children playing out
- International interest and adaptation of the model

Reference: Ferguson, A. (2019) Playing out: a grassroots street play revolution, *Cities & Health*, 3(1-2): 20-28.

7 Playday

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Playday is the UK national day for play, traditionally held on the first Wednesday in August (www.playday.org.uk)

Instigators and drivers

- Started in 1986 in London as a response to impending cuts to play services
- The initial aims were to raise the profile of play and alert people to possible cuts to services

People instigators and drivers

- The originators were Mick Conway, Paul Bonel and Kim Holdaway
- Today, Playday is supported by Play England, Play Wales, PlayBoard Northern Ireland and Play Scotland

Development

- Playday grew across London and in 1991 went national
- Some years, Playday has had resources to commission research and a media campaign

How it works

- Anyone can run a Playday event in their community
- Resources are on the website to help with planning, campaigning and using the media
- Those running events are asked to register them on the website to track the reach and to inform the public about events in their area

Outputs/outcomes

- Playday events can help to promote the value of play as well as play services and, in Wales, the Play Sufficiency Duty
- It is a high-profile opportunity to bring people together, including council members and officers
- In Wales, it has often led to other initiatives and actions to support play sufficiency

8 Fields in Trust – Deeds of Dedication

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Landowners can apply for a Deed of Dedication that will protect open spaces from development in perpetuity

Instigators and drivers

- Fields in Trust's aim is to protect green and open spaces against threat from financial and development pressures

How it works

- Outdoor recreational space that has public access can be protected through a binding legal agreement called a Deed of Dedication
- The application for a Deed of Dedication must be made by the landowner
- Guidance and the application form are available on the website: www.fieldsintrust.org/protect

How it can support play sufficiency

- Local communities would need to work with local landlords
- Fields in Trust Cymru may be able to give advice and support

9 Developing a research project with children in Monmouthshire

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Pilot project involving children as research designers and participants developed in response to adult residents' concerns about play

Instigators

- Community walk with local councillor and local authority officer, where a common theme of play emerged through conversations with local residents
- Need to involve children identified through partnership meeting set up in response to residents' concerns
- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding to support the research project

Drivers and enablers

- Local authority officer from Communities and Partnerships Development Team with passion for children's rights and listening to children
- Local authority officer from Countryside Section with extensive knowledge about play provision in the local area
- Strong cluster working between schools with one head as single point of contact

Chance

- Headteachers' willingness to be involved was increased due to a parent at a school also asking for support to improve opportunities for play

Process

- Bringing partners together to focus on a particular neighbourhood
- Working with a cluster of schools in the community
- Facilitating sessions with children to design research
- Producing questionnaires, data gathering and analysing responses
- Feeding back results to children and supporting them to develop recommendations

Outputs/outcomes

- Children presented findings to Town Council who promised to act on all recommendations
- Section 106 money was allocated to the community as a consequence of the research
- A toolkit has been developed aimed at enabling other schools to facilitate similar processes as part of the new curriculum

10 Research with schools in Cardiff

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

A small research project into children's play which came about through two council initiatives recognising shared objectives and working together

Policy instigators and drivers

- Child Friendly Cities Cardiff had a target of three consultations with children for the first year of the project
- Play Sufficiency Assessment includes requirement for research with children
- Rights Respecting Schools initiative motivates headteachers

People instigators and drivers

- Play Development Support Worker
- Senior Youth Worker, Child Friendly Cities Initiative

Process

- Email invitations to schools and administration of responses by Child Friendly Cities Lead
- Development of one day playful and engaging consultation event in schools
- Play Development Team planning for consultative conversation with teachers
- Production and dissemination of report

Drivers and enablers

- Child Friendly Cities Lead who understands play and can connect varied departmental objectives
- Money and time in place for research with children through Child Friendly Cities plan, can be designated to Play Development Team
- Schools and headteachers willing participants: take up for participation in research exceeded capacity of research event

Outputs/outcomes

- Play Development Team has designed playful research tools for children and teachers
- Research report produced by Play Development team, a key part of 2019 Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Novel contacts between schools and headteachers made by Play Development Team (previously a challenge to make contact with schools)
- Child Friendly Cities strategy objectives for consulting with children and communities in the first year of the project met

Next steps

- Intention to repeat process for next Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Growing confidence of Play Development Team to design and manage future research

11 Life conferences in north Wales

Domain

Policy, advocacy, knowledge exchange

Description

Series of themed conferences with the core aim of advocating for play and engaging more people cross-professionally in paying greater attention to the Play Sufficiency Duty

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Local authority Play Sufficiency Assessments identified a common theme of needing to engage a much broader range of professionals across multiple policy areas
- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding used to run conferences

People instigators and drivers

- Play Officers North Wales Group with a history of working together
- Same individuals leading on local authority Play Sufficiency Assessments
- Play Wales supporting collaborative working
- Expert and engaging speakers in play and playwork

Process

- Design, publicity and facilitation of five themed 'life conferences', each targeting a particular policy area and range of professionals: home, school, park, street and health

Challenges

- Loss of play officers in some local authorities
- Limited capacity of play officers across the region

Outputs/outcomes

- Hundreds of practitioners working across diverse policy areas actively engaged in thinking about play
- Many initial introductions made between play officers and those working in other policy areas
- Over time some of these have led to established working relationships and 'spin off' projects
- Conference model repeated in other areas across Wales

12 Housing design in Vauban, Freiburg, Germany

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

A housing settlement co-designed according to environmental and child-friendly principles

Policy instigators and drivers

- Municipality's sustainability standards for development of the settlement
- Citizen participation model

People instigators and drivers

- Two very motivated individuals
- A group of ecologically and socially minded local activists
- Vauban Forum co-ordinating several co-housing groups
- Council officers

Process

- Co-housing groups worked with council to design neighbourhoods according to environmental, social, economic and cultural standards

Chance

- A key study into children's use of space and playground design, commissioned and accepted by the municipality, influenced design of public space

Challenges

- Several conflicts and compromises during the process, including accommodating a group of squatters

Outputs/outcomes

Child-friendly design through:

- Good transport links, cycle and pedestrian pathways
- Car parking set away from housing
- Neighbourhoods are designed in U-shaped blocks, creating play streets/home zones that cannot be used for traffic or parking
- Deliberate high-density design means more green space
- The seven neighbourhoods are separated and joined by five resident designed parks with play features in line with report

References: Coates, G. J. (2013) The Sustainable Urban District of Vauban in Freiburg, Germany, *International Journal of Design & Nature and Ecodynamics*, 8(4), 265–286.

Blinkert, B. (2004) Quality of the city for children: chaos and order, *Children, Youth & Environments*, 14(2): 99-112.

13 Play in housing developments

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

Partnership working between the Play Sufficiency Lead and Cartrefi Conwy's (social landlord) Environmental Development Officer

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Historic and ongoing importance of housing standards guidance and ministerial statements on environmental improvement

People instigators and enablers

- Cartrefi Conwy Environmental Development Officer, with a background in landscape architecture, was powerfully affected by a play memories activity as part of a 'Park Life' conference; has a personal interest in making the public realm more playable
- Play Sufficiency Lead with knowledge of children's play, the ability to conduct small scale research into play with children, and the leadership skills and motivation to maintain contacts between developments
- Cartrefi Conwy has a progressive organisational culture embracing social responsibility/social justice, risk-taking, innovation and creativity

Process

- Environmental Development Officer contacts Play Sufficiency Lead during early planning stages of new developments
- Play Sufficiency Lead carries out small scale research with children exploring their current use of space and play preferences
- Findings from research are developed into a design brief
- Environmental Development Officer interprets the brief, creating design for designated play spaces and playful interventions/affordances across the public realm

Challenges

- Working with planners and insurers to move away from the perceived constraints of European safety standards

Outputs/outcomes

- Research with children is used to inform landscape design
- Children's contribution to collective wisdom helps challenge communities' ideas on play spaces (adults tend to want traditional playgrounds, but research with children shows otherwise)

Next steps

- Adaptations and amendments to job descriptions that capture the emergent collective wisdom

14 Hackney Play Streets in London

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

Residents close off their streets to through traffic for a few hours weekly or monthly, so that children can play out more safely and neighbours come together

Instigators, drivers and enablers

- Hackney Play Association wanted to support play streets, but did not want to impose top down
- Phone call from a local resident wanting to set up a play street provided the launchpad
- Strong networks and council support

Process

- Strong networks, good partnerships and a high level of support from Hackney Council led to an initial pilot year of agreeing street closures
- Following this, funding from Hackney Council's Get Hackney Healthy Board supported further development of play streets, through the employment of a play streets co-ordinator since 2013 (the first resident to contact Hackney Play Association)
- Hackney Council now has a clear procedure for approving street closures and provides street signs

Models

- A residential streets model (similar to the Playing Out model)
- A school model (Hackney Play Association offers a guide specifically for schools)
- An estates model

Challenges

- Criticism that the play streets model particularly benefits middle class professional neighbourhoods
- Hackney Play Association offered two responses to this:
 1. Having middle class professionals involved has had spin-offs in terms of influential networks with policy makers and also their own professional practice support for children's play beyond play streets (for example architecture and nursery provision)
 2. Further research was commissioned into street play on housing estates to understand better the issues; funding means they can offer close support, provide resources such as street signs and a start-up pack of play resources that can be topped up

Outputs/outcomes

- The establishment of over 60 play streets
- Resources to support play streets across the three models

References: Interview with the Director of HPA and Councillor Chris Kennedy.

Gill, T. (2015) *Hackney Play Streets Evaluation Report*. London: Hackney Play Association and Hackney Council. www.hackneyplay.org/playstreets

15 Antwerp Speelweefselplan ('playspaceweb')

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

A rolling programme of developing networks of car-free cycling and walking routes connecting neighbourhood play spaces, schools and youth centres, supplemented with 'play offers' along the way

Instigators and drivers

- The enthusiasm of the council officer responsible for play spaces
- The city's policy objective of encouraging families to move to or stay in the city
- A neighbourhood approach to planning

How it works

- Key is a large-scale data gathering through a vast, user-friendly open databank which children are actively encouraged to use and a skilled data analysis team (the officer describes this as a 'gamechanger')
- The data are used to develop a picture of key sites and the routes between them
- Proposals are developed and refined with further participation

Challenges

- Lack of space in a densely populated city
- Political opposition to measures that restrict car use
- Dependence on one individual with commitment to the project

Outcomes

- Access to play space has improved

References: www.antwerpen.be/nl/info/57e3c42e15fb6d2b200ec37f/antwerpse-speelweefselplannen
Gill, T. (2018) Antwerp's Play Space Web: smart, child-friendly neighbourhood planning in action, Rethinking Childhood blog

16 Rethinking play provision for disabled children in Cardiff

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

Issues concerning disabled children's play generated a new approach to park and playground design through a one-off project to develop a new natural community space

Policy instigators and drivers

- Landscape development plan
- Open space policy and planning
- Play Sufficiency Duty and assessment

People instigators and drivers

- Principal Landscape Officer
- Disabled Children's Play Co-ordinator
- Parents with concerns about inclusive play in parks and playground equipment
- Play Sufficiency Working Group

Enablers

- Vocal parents highlight issues around inclusive fixed equipment
- Lack of resources to maintain and install high quality disability play equipment
- Gap in inclusive provision in parks identified through Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Work with parents on the design and maintenance of designated play areas led to conversations with Landscape Officer
- Willingness of Play Sufficiency Working Group to problem-solve the issue with Disability Children's Play Co-ordinator and Principal Landscape Officer

Process

- Heritage Lottery Fund-funded landscape project provides new opportunity for re-thinking provision for inclusion
- Play Sufficiency Working Group problem-solved Heritage Lottery Fund project in light of constraints around disability play provision in parks

Challenges

- Managing public expectations alongside reduced budgets
- Parks felt under huge pressure from parents – vandalism results in further complaints
- Parks officers not keen to make very specific specialist provision, want to try to provide something that works for most people

Outputs/outcomes

- Consultation with parents
- Natural outside space developed incorporating accessible pathways, sensory discovery trail and disabled toilet facilities, including hoist
- Project kick-starts re-thinking by Landscape Team and Parks to incorporate more natural and sensory environments to cater for children with reduced mobility and to cater for most people, including siblings (and not just specialist provision)

17 Green infrastructure and planning policy in Monmouthshire

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

Developing philosophy around placemaking and the value of multi-functional green infrastructure with the potential to support play sufficiency

Policy instigators and drivers

- Green Infrastructure policy within local planning strategy supported by supplementary planning guidance
- Local planning protocol for larger developments requiring cross-departmental responses to applications
- Welsh Government's Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Natural Resources Policy (2017), Prosperity For All (2017) and Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015
- Active travel agenda

People instigators and drivers

- Strategic landscape architecture lead and proactive individuals employed at a strategic planning/policy level within Green Infrastructure and Countryside Team
- Lead Officer responsible for play sufficiency also sits with that department

Process

- Developers and planners analysing Green Infrastructure assets and opportunities and how these can be protected, managed and enhanced
- Departments/officers with different responsibilities collectively assessing and making recommendations on planning applications

Challenges

- Traditional prescriptive standards do not reflect children's use of space for play
- Tensions between competing agendas within some developments
- Adapting policy approach used in urban environments for more rural areas
- Enabling and defining approaches to new natural and wild play opportunities

Outputs/outcomes

- Standards being applied pragmatically and creatively on a case by case basis
- Better-quality developments that meet strategic and operational aims across the local authority
- Looking beyond destination places for play to consider play as a function of all public space

Next steps

- A forthcoming Green Infrastructure Strategy, supported by the existing planning policy, develops the planned approach towards play development across the county

18 Leasing of a woodland space in Wrexham

Domain

The built and natural environment

Description

Supporting the process of leasing a piece of woodland for children to play

How it came about

- Following research for the first Play Sufficiency Assessment, some Lottery funded playwork sessions were moved from urban to more rural areas
- Towards the end of Lottery funding, staffed sessions were replaced by community development support from an individual worker
- The owner of the local industrial estate offering to lease a piece of woodland (on a 'peppercorn' rent) to the local Community Council so that they could open it up to children for playing

Process

- The council's Play Development Team helped develop a risk-benefit assessment for the site, which included gaining advice from the authority's Planning and Health and Safety departments who both visited the site
- No changes were made other than building a fence between it and the adjacent industrial estate
- The Community Council then agreed a lease with the landowner and arranged for their insurance to cover public use of the land
- Some staffed play sessions were initially facilitated, to encourage people to use it but since then the space has just been left open for the children to play

Spinoff

- Play Development staff use this as an example when talking to community stakeholders about what might be possible

19 New playwork delivery model in Cardiff

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

Re-structuring of a playwork service that improved the local authority's response-ability to the Play Sufficiency Duty

Policy instigators and drivers

- Austerity agenda resulted in closure of dedicated centres for provision
- Criteria within and findings from Play Sufficiency Assessment
- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding used to pilot new playwork projects

People instigators and drivers

- Senior staff in the Playwork Team shaping the structure of the service
- Experienced playworkers with in-depth knowledge of local communities
- Close working relationships between playworkers and other practitioners developed over long periods of time

Key processes involved

- Adopting a more peripatetic approach by reducing reliance on dedicated centres for delivery of playwork provision
- Local area play development teams carrying out local audits of organisations and playwork provision
- Identifying opportunities to work differently through connections with other professionals
- Using Play Sufficiency Assessment information as a steer for developing the service

Challenges

- Staff and families feeling the loss of dedicated centres and the relationships associated with them
- Proving more difficult to include disabled children in playwork provision where dedicated centres are no longer available
- It takes time for projects to develop and become embedded in communities

Outputs/outcomes

- Playwork Team has a better understanding of play sufficiency
- Playwork is increasingly seen as community work
- Reputation and profile of the Playwork Team is improving
- Service is more proactive in addressing societal barriers to play and identifying groups of children who would benefit most from playwork provision

20 Playwork as community work in Plas Madoc in Wrexham

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

Recognition and enactment of playwork as a form of play-centred community development

Policy instigators and drivers

- Welsh Government's anti-poverty programmes
- Invest Local programme (funded by Big Lottery)
- Play Sufficiency Duty and findings from local authority Play Sufficiency Assessments

People instigators and drivers

- Third sector playwork provider
- Highly experienced and dedicated playworkers with rich situated knowledge
- Continuous Professional Development opportunities including playwork degree at local university
- Local authority Play Development Team supporting service provider
- Local research exploring the role of playwork in the context of play sufficiency
- History of playwork provision in the area

Process

- Playwork provision started as seasonal community playschemes
- Year-round provision developed to include an adventure playground, community playschemes and street play
- Playworkers became increasingly involved in other types of community work (for example events, family support, holiday hunger programmes)
- Community decided to fund team to provide both playwork and other community development support

Challenges

- Sustainability of funding and lack of dedicated funding for playwork
- Lack of understanding around the role of the playwork profession

Outputs/outcomes

- Children and parents report high satisfaction with opportunities to play
- Community places a high value on the work of the team
- Team actively involved in many aspects of community life

21 PLAY KX in London

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

Playwork sessions using loose parts in the 67 acre regenerated Kings Cross, London development

People instigators and drivers

- Kings Cross Centre Limited Partnership
- Assemble (a collective working across architecture, design and art)
- A team of playworkers who are also artists, musicians, dancers/choreographers, circus performers

Development of the project

- The management company wanted to build a children's playground
- They contacted Assemble, a Turner-prize winning collective with experience in children's play
- Assemble responded by saying that open space should be left open and not filled up with equipment, suggesting instead they spend the money employing playworkers to run daily sessions using loose parts – the management company agreed

Strategies

- The sessions are run using a playwork ethos
- Parents are required to stay – they are welcomed and invited to sit and watch their children play with the loose parts
- Everything is documented – an Instagram account quickly gained 1500 followers
- Moving indoors in the winter allowed a partnership to be built with the Central St Martin's Art School: students watched the children play and asked for help on play-based projects – permission was given to skip dive
- Management concerns that the sessions were 'messy' were allayed through creating a boundary with red carpet (rather than the railings they had provided)

Challenges

- Although sessions were very popular, and parents lingered (and spent more in the high class retail outlets and artisan cafes) – the playing was seen as messy and restrictions began to be imposed
- It is unclear how long the funding will last

Outputs/outcomes

- Sessions are successful with a diverse group of children and parents
- Loose parts, self-organised play and playwork are being showcased in a high-end development

Reference: notes from a presentation by playworker Penny Wilson at the Art of Playwork conference at Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham (October 2019)

22 Rich Play Awards in Conwy

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

A project working with early years childcare and school settings to improve opportunities for children's play through implementation of loose parts play and playwork training

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty: findings from Play Sufficiency Assessments identified a need to improve quality of existing opportunities for play in early years childcare and school settings
- Programme developed from Big Lottery funded Play Rangers – Dewis Chwarae project
- Council's Education Department funded development of an early years childcare and child minders version
- Delivery of the Rich Play Award funded by Families First

People instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Lead with knowledge and ability to deliver both the training and the awards scheme
- Support from cross-departmental Play Sufficiency Task and Finish Group
- Heads of schools and childcare settings' willingness to adopt the scheme and change existing practices
- Early adopters used as advocates for the awards scheme ensuring a constant flow of new, willing settings

Process

- Settings engage in a professional development opportunity to better appreciate the place of play in the setting's offer
- Children develop the play policy and carry out workshops on children's rights
- Management and staff are supported to develop risk assessment practices
- Changes in practice are supported through delivery of loose parts play provision, modelling practice, training and peer support

Challenges

- Working in a timely enough way for settings to engage through their existing plans and timetables
- Revisiting institutions to provide continued support in response to staff turnover and other issues

Outputs/outcomes

- Improved quality of playtimes
- Improvements in children's behaviour or perceptions of their behaviour
- Broader changes in practice following reflection on the value of play and children's ability to make use of opportunities for play
- Very positive feedback from inspectors at both early years childcare settings and schools

Next steps

- Establish a robust evaluation to persuade more settings to come on board
- Develop a regional approach to work with schools in line with GwE (north Wales school improvement programme)

23 Schoolyard Oasis Project in Paris

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

This project aims to 'green' Paris schoolyards through replacing asphalt surfaces with green planting and opening the spaces for public use out of school hours

Instigators and drivers

- Part of Paris' resilience strategy
- Environmental rather than play drivers: the 2003 heatwaves killed 700 people in Paris and the density of buildings in the city causes an 'Urban Heat Island' – climate change increases the risk of flooding from the river Seine
- Greening school yards therefore provides a low-cost solution that can help with cooling and rainwater runoff, with the added benefit of providing additional community and play space out of hours

Project aims

The project is still in the planning stage and its aims are:

- Adapt the schoolyards by replacing asphalt with porous material, enhancing revegetation, modernising water management
- Reinforce social cohesion by co-designing the schoolyards together with each local community with the aim of opening them up for community use
- Protect the health of the most vulnerable by adapting the infrastructure children use as well as through the opening of these spaces to elderly people

Lessons

- Shows potential synergies between environmental issues, green infrastructure and children's play

24 Development of an inclusive youth club in Merthyr Tydfil

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

A youth club with an inclusive ethos that emerged through staff gaining first-hand experience of working with children who require higher levels of support

People

- A child who needed additional support
- Long serving youth workers (who have also accessed playwork training)
- Consistency and sufficient capacity within the staff team
- Teamwork and a 'can do' attitude

Resources/enablers

- Staff attended the Amber Green Inclusion Scheme, an organisational development programme
- Large dedicated youth club facility
- Access to transport

Chance

- Staff describe their progressive attitude to inclusion as a 'happy accident'
- Inclusive practice emerged through sheer will, determination and good fortune

Challenge

- Prescribed performance measures do not account for real value of the service

Outputs/outcomes

- High percentage of children accessing the setting who have some form of impairment
- Children who require higher levels of support bring additional staff with them
- Inclusive ethos so embedded that young people often support each other without adult intervention
- Increased parental confidence resulting in high level of enquiries from other families

25 More Playful Museum Project at Manchester Museum

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

A project to help develop museum staff to take responsibility to account for children to find time and space to play

Policy instigators and drivers

- Happy Museum Principles around well-being and sustainability
- Playwork Principles and academic research into children's right to play
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded Happy Museum cultural experimentation
- Access and engagement strategy, Manchester Museum

People instigators and drivers

- Head of Engagement, Manchester Museum committed to developing greater opportunities for child-led play in the museum
- Play and playwork trainers interested in developing and challenging museum culture and encouraging child and play friendly spaces
- Director of Happy Museum supported experimental ideas from other sectors

Process

- Staff training, mentoring, experimental gallery interventions, co-creation of a practice guide and the development of play champions to embed playful practice

Enablers

- Existing relationship between trainers and Museum Officer from previous playful exhibition projects (including play training) at Salford Museum Service
- Two successful funding bids awarded by the Happy Museum
- Visitor Assistants fully on-board with training and embedding new ways of working
- Managers support continuation of approach and advocate for it more widely
- Happy Museum provide on-going guidance, practical and financial support

Challenges

- Staff changes slow down the embedding of play champions
- Competing demands on museum staff time sometimes inhibits development
- Ongoing communication of playful approach constantly required for new staff and visitors

Outputs/outcomes

- Play champions established with regular playful days and ongoing volunteer training
- Project written up and disseminated at museum conferences
- Training developed for other cultural settings including heritage sites and a zoo, assisted by play champions
- The study – a playful exploratory space for adults developed in response to thinking more deeply about what play meant for the museum

Next steps

- Establishing support organisation to evolve playful museums, including training

26 Play-Work Exhibition at Tŷ Pawb in Wrexham

Domain

Children's and community services

Description

An exhibition celebrating playwork, the creative space they seek to facilitate, and the artistic endeavour of artists. The exhibition included the transformation of the main gallery into a staffed adventure playground

Policy instigators and drivers

- Play Sufficiency Duty
- Public engagement in the arts
- Arts Council and All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding

People instigators and drivers

- Creative Director at Tŷ Pawb's long standing relationships with Play Sufficiency Lead
- Long standing history of playwork in Wrexham
- Local authority Play Development Team
- Playworkers from local adventure playgrounds
- Artists and gallery technicians
- Original idea emerged from a professional development programme delivered in partnership with University of Gloucestershire

Process

- All Wales Play Opportunities Grant funding used to recruit consultants to help curate the exhibition
- Design and delivery consultation with all partners
- Development of operational plan and risk-benefit assessments and guidance
- Sourcing of staff and materials for the exhibition from local adventure playgrounds
- Promotion and delivery over a ten-week period
- Conference to close the exhibition bringing together artists and playworkers

Challenges

- Lack of capacity to build and staff the exhibition as effectively as was hoped
- Existing operational commitments prevented playworkers contributing as much as they would have liked

Outputs/outcomes

- Engaging over 10,000 visitors
- Reputational benefit for all involved
- Unique opportunity to advocate for play, playwork and play sufficiency
- Interdisciplinary exchanges and the generation of collective wisdom
- Sparked potential for other opportunities to arise



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