

BCP Green Spaces Play and Wheeled Strategy

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

11th October 2023

Martin Whitchurch, Strategic Lead Greenspace and Conservation

Rebecca Whelan-Edmonds, Project Manager

Agenda

- Summary of provision
- Historic investment and budget position
- Typical investment costs
- Developing a play strategy
 - Work so far
 - Work to deliver
- Timeline and resourcing

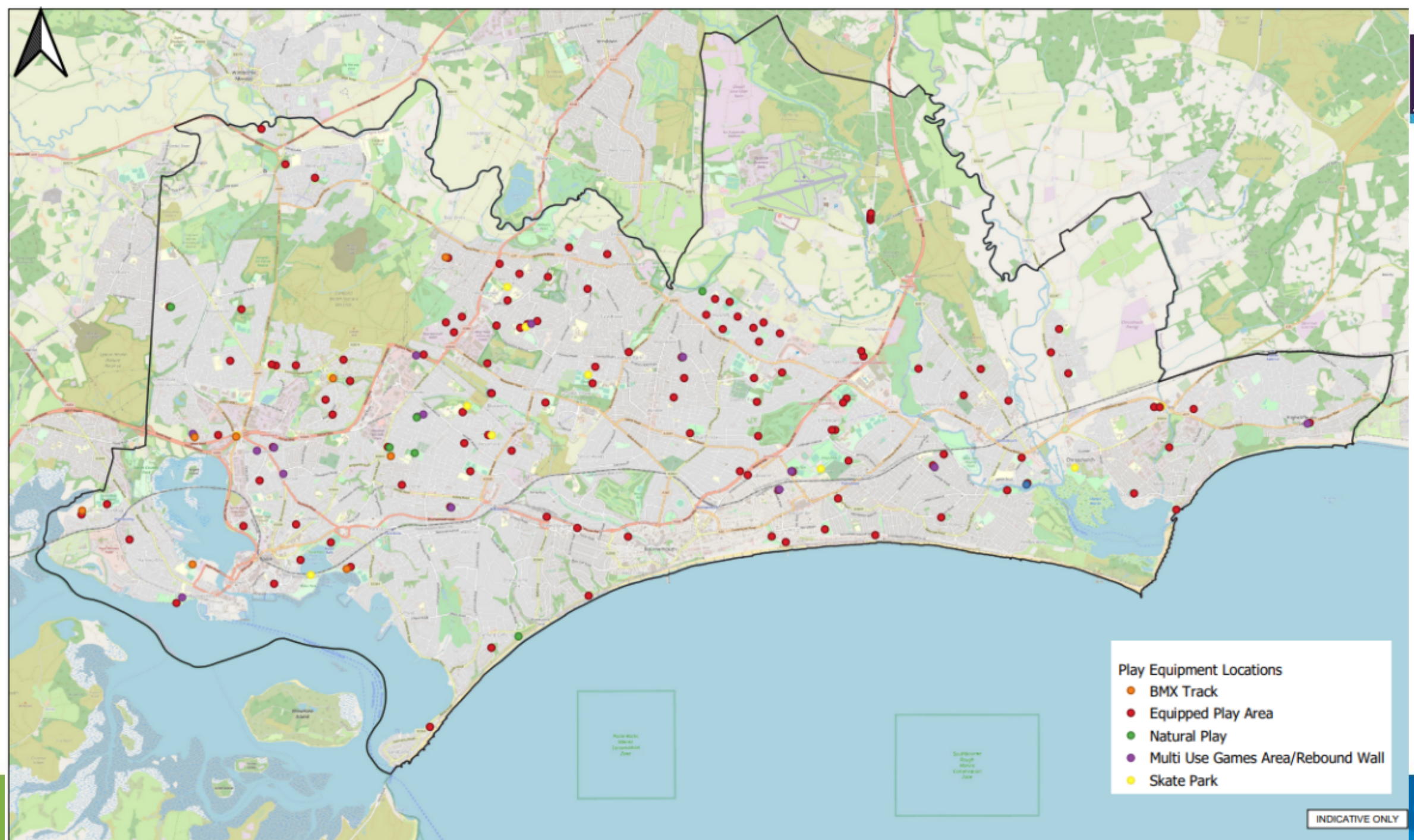


Play Provision in BCP

- 60 play areas in Bournemouth
- 15 play areas in Christchurch
- 44 play areas in Poole
- 11 wheeled play plus natural play and fitness trails/outdoor gyms, BMX etc

Inspection & Compliance

- every play area receives an annual, independent inspection by the Play Inspection Company
- play facilities are on varying schedules for visual and moving-parts maintenance inspection.
- BCP has 13 employees trained to undertake routine play inspections, managed by the Grounds Maintenance service.
- BCP Inspectors undertake basic repairs, inspect and keep clean the play areas.
- play areas are governed by BS1176 and BS1177 relating to fall zones and heights, entrapment, safety surfacing; providing robust standards for design, installation and inspection.

**Play Equipment Locations**

- BMX Track
- Equipped Play Area
- Natural Play
- Multi Use Games Area/Rebound Wall
- Skate Park

INDICATIVE ONLY

Historical Play Investment

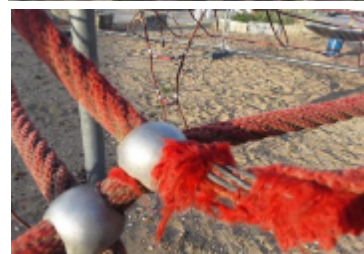
- In 2009/10 every authority in England received Central Government funding for investment in Play. The PlayBuilder scheme brought in new design thinking, based on Play England advice
- The legacy of that project was to create fantastic new play spaces set in park landscapes, however the timber used has not stood the test of time and is largely now being removed across Local Authorities.
- Lessons have been learnt, the play industry has responded with better grades of timber, use of steel feet and other means of reducing the liability from these materials.
- Each playground has a limited useful lifespan, requiring replacement and rejuvenation every 15 years
- No additional central Government funding for Play has emerged since PlayBuilder.
- Capital spend post-2011: Poole c £1.6m; Bournemouth c. £0.9m;
- Christchurch c. £1m in 2019/20 project
- In 2019/20 Christchurch play areas received c. £1m of investment to remove some small and under-used spaces and development of more valued local, community spaces.

Revenue Budget position

- 2022/23 £151,000 budget for play area maintenance, funding consumable parts, replacement of failed or worn parts & general maintenance of wider play area assets e.g. fences, surfacing, landscaping.
- Annual independent inspections cost circa £7,000 pa
- Inspection management software £9,500 pa

Live service risks

- Increasing levels of anti-social behaviour and damage to equipment
- In recent safety inspections, over 50% of our current facilities have medium to high risk faults on equipment. Typical revenue funding is c £2,000 per site.
- Legacy timber structures are deteriorating faster than expected. Increasing levels of failure placing pressure on maintenance budgets, resulting in removal in some cases.
- International shortages and supply-chain issues of specific parts. Some items are specialist equipment from Europe, e.g. rope and equipment for Sandbanks Space-net structure.





Kingston Road



Cunningham Crescent



Paddington Grove



Moore Avenue



Campbell Road

Play Investment Costs

- The typical cost of a play area replacement includes the following works, shown as indicative costs that are site specific:

	Small Play area	Large Play Area	Destination Play Area
Disposal of existing equipment and surfacing	£10k	£20k	£30k
New equipment	£30k	£80k	£130k
Safety surfacing	£30k	£60k	£100k
Total	£70k*	£160k*	£260k*

*plus staff resourcing costs

- typical staff resource includes Project Officer and a Landscape Architect, additional costs can include consultation, surveys, ground investigation, planning permission.
- initial project scoping, securing of finance before public consultation on style and type of play required, leads to procurement and supplier selection and detailed design work.

Small: Princess Gardens & Shelley park. c.£70k



Large: Branksome Recreation Ground & Alum Chine c. £160k



Destination:
Poole Park, Jungle
Adventure
&
Central gardens,
Bournemouth.
c. £260k



Developing a BCP Play Strategy:

Strategy purpose:

- short, flexible and easy to understand strategy to provide a clear focus on the development of play.
- It includes a vision on the same timeline and feeds into forthcoming Local Plan policy wording.
- The overall purpose of the Play & Wheeled Sport Strategy is to bring together all agencies in BCP who have an interest and involvement in children's play, which collectively will improve play opportunities for children in the area. The intention is that this process will create a long-term action plan arising from the Play Strategy.
- Without a strategy the Council are unable to prioritise improvements and understand the spatial requirements for play and wheeled facilities.
- With current limitations on resources this highlights the importance for a strategy and action plan.
- Based on robust and detailed evidence base:
 - Annual site inspections
 - 187 site audits Summer 2023

UN CRC Article 31 : Children's right to play

BCP Corporate Strategy

BCP Local Plan policy

Developing a BCP Play Strategy:

Public Consultation 2022:

- The Play Survey was designed to seek views to help develop a draft vision for play in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.
- We wanted to hear about the play spaces people use and their opinions of them
- 506 respondents completed an online or paper form during the consultation period
- Overall, 92% agree with the draft vision (59% strongly agree and 33% agree), with 7% disagreeing
- Collected information on levels of use, by whom, how they access them and other background data.
- Brought forward the following vision for Play:

To provide high quality, accessible, safe and inclusive play spaces, where everyone of all abilities, across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, can learn, have fun and be active through play. All ages and abilities should feel safe, confident and excited to use our play spaces as part of leading fulfilled lives with brighter futures.

Developing a BCP Play Strategy:

Draft Aims

To achieve this vision, the following aims have been identified:



AIM 1
Improve the public realm as a child-friendly environment which offers stimulating and challenging play opportunities suitable for everyone



AIM 2
Ensure our play spaces are clean, safe and non-threatening



AIM 3
Work with partners to identify opportunities for improving places for children and young people to play



AIM 4
Encourage local people to use our play spaces to benefit their health and wellbeing



AIM 5
Work to reduce the barriers that prevent children from accessing and playing in the general public domain



AIM 6
Encourage children and young people to encounter the natural environment



AIM 7
Deliver excellent value and high performance while keeping our residents at the heart of what we do

These aims are described in more detail below and will be achieved through the delivery of the Action Plan:

Developing a BCP Play Strategy:

1. Strategy – vision, national and local context, current provision and aims
2. Design Guide – standards and requirements for the quality of play and wheeled facilities, future maintenance and robustness of provision.
3. Summary of Evidence base
 - Matrix for priority investment
 - Annual inspection reports
 - 2023 site Audits
4. Action plan – using the evidence base to inform actions
5. Appendices
 - 2022/23 consultation report
 - EIA and sustainability reports
 - Spatial mapping
 - Financial summary of revenue costs
 - Funding opportunities
 - Strategic and neighbourhood CIL
 - External funding

Developing a BCP Play Strategy:

Current resources

- 0.25 FTE Project manager
- 0.2 FTE landscape Architect
- Input from relevant colleagues as required across Strategic Greenspace and Parks Operations (community engagement, supervisors, inspectors etc)
- Childrens Services, Finance, Communities and other services input as required

Timeline

- October: Final site audits
- October – December: Collating and summarising the evidence base
- January – March: Drafting Strategy document, design guide, financial review, appraisal of capital funding
- April onwards: public consultation on draft strategy, leading to Cabinet adoption.

The National Context

Article 31
Children's right to play

Public Health
Rapid increase in the rate of obesity and overweight

Unprecedented cuts in public sector spending

The Local Context

BCP Public Engagement 2022

BCP Council's Corporate Vision

BCP Council's Local Plan Priorities

Current Provision

Review of Play Development to date
- Bournemouth
- Christchurch
- Poole

BCP Infrastructure Condition Survey

BCP Play Value/Quality Survey

A Vision for Play



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