

# **DRAFT**

## **Everything to Play 4**

**A Play Strategy for Salisbury  
District Council**

**2007-2012**

*"Play is what I do when everyone else has stopped  
telling me what to do."*

**DRAFT 1**

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## OUR VISION FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY IN SOUTH WILTSHIRE

### VISION STATEMENT

South Wiltshire should be a place where all children and young people are able to play freely and safely, making their own choices about where and when to play.

### FOREWORD

This is the first every **Play** Strategy for Salisbury District Council and has been developed in partnership with Wiltshire County Council, the three other Wiltshire district councils and other play providers who have contributed their experience, knowledge and information and helped guide the development of this strategy.

This strategy contains the key policy statements concerning play which set out the values, principles, objectives, and criteria that will underpin and inform our action.

The strategy sets out the priorities and actions identified and required to fulfil the strategy and the policy statements

The action plan is at the heart of this document and spells out what our commitments are to children and young people and the communities where they live and play. This strategy, combined with our Children and Young People Strategy produced in 2005, gives additional strength and purpose to our commitment to recognising the importance of children and young people in our community.

This strategy, when talking about play, focuses particularly on the three 'Free's'

- Free of charge
- Freely Chosen
- Freely Accessible

Through play children and young people explore the physical and social environment, ideas and concepts, and learn how to deal with what life puts in their path. In this they learn what cannot be explicitly taught.

Play and free time activity should be fun for children and young people; research has told us that it is fundamental to their health and wellbeing, their relationships, their development and their learning.

This Play Strategy has been formulated to work to the best advantage for the children and young people of Salisbury District in this and future generations. We believe that all children and young people in Salisbury District **have** a need, and a right, to play.

Salisbury District Council will now continue to work with the Wiltshire Play Partnership in formulating plans for the future and seek partners' support in both

promoting the principles and values of play and where possible in the implementation of this strategy.

“All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities.”

(From Playwork Principles, developed by the UK play profession and endorsed by the Skills Sector Council in May 2005)

Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 recognises:

‘The right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, to participate fully in cultural life and the arts’ (Ratified by the UK Government 1991)

### **Why do we feel play is so important?**

Play is the primary way in which children learn before formal education. At all ages it helps develop skills in communication, problem solving, negotiating, creativity, imagination, listening, team-working and analysing the pros and cons of opportunities. It helps develop physical ability and stamina, allows them to test the boundaries and learn how to take risks. Play assists young people and children in deepening their understanding of themselves, their emotions and the world around them, and is vital in developing them into young people and adults who can successfully engage and interact in their communities and social groups.

There is already a tremendous amount of activity in Salisbury District being undertaken by a huge range of agencies both private, statutory and particularly voluntary/community organisations for the benefit of children and young people. We recognise as a local authority the need to work more closely in the future with these organisations drawing on their knowledge and experience and ensuring that whatever we do supports the overall policy statements.

**Children and Young People Champion for Salisbury District Council**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ... to be completed after consultation**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Play Strategy has been researched and produced by Salisbury District Council, Wiltshire County Council, and the three other district councils in Wiltshire – North Wiltshire, West Wiltshire, and Kennet and has been widely consulted on county-wide through various forums, including the full partnership meeting of the Wiltshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, where the Wiltshire Play Partnership was launched. The Play Partnership consists of senior managers in a variety of organisations throughout Wiltshire who have an interest in or direct involvement in play opportunities through their own work and Play Champions (Elected members from each local authority) and Council Officers from the four District Councils and County Council. The Play Partnership and the Early Years Partners have had the opportunity to analyse the document and comment upon it, add in suggestions and direct the Strategy through this consultation.

The catalyst for this Strategy has been the availability of ring-fenced funding for provision of play opportunities for District Councils through the Big Lottery Fund. Whilst this was the starting point for the Strategy, through the process of writing it the District and County Councils have begun to embed the principles within other areas of their councils, seeing play as a truly cross-cutting theme. Commitments have been made to continue to embed play and to further raise the profile of play throughout the District and County Council and with organisations in their geographical areas. The collaborative partnership working involved in this process has produced strong links, which will further raise the profile of play within individual councils.

This is a 'living document' and will be updated as the situation surrounding play in the district and county areas alters and as action points are achieved and further actions are brought to the fore. The Play Partnership will be involved in the monitoring of progress against the actions set out and will strategically lead developments in play over the period of this strategy. The actions in this strategy will be constantly reviewed by Salisbury District Council and countywide actions by the Play Partnership

## 1. DEFINITION OF PLAY

The term 'play' has traditionally been used in relation to young children and playing with toys or on playground equipment. However, throughout this document we use the term 'play' to mean anything, which children and young people choose to do in their spare time. For children aged 0-5, this may mean sand and water play, swings, trikes and bikes and dressing up; to teenagers this may encompass more 'hanging out' with friends in youth shelters, using BMX and skate parks or playing football on the local rec. All of these are examples of play as we interpret it, because:

- Activities are **freely** chosen,
- **Free** of charge, and
- The children and young people are **free** to come and go.

For the purposes of this Strategy, the definitions of play, which we feel are most apt for our perceptions of play, are:

"Play is an essential part of every child's life and vital to their development. It is the way children explore the world around them and develop and practice skills. It is essential for:

- Physical, emotional, and spiritual growth
- Intellectual and educational development
- Acquiring social and behavioural skills

Play is a generic term for a variety of activities, which are satisfying to the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child. Children's play may or may not involve equipment or have an end product. Children play on their own or with others. Their play may be boisterous and energetic or quiet and contemplative, light hearted or very serious."

(Children's Play Council – The New Charter for Children's Play, 1998)

"Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child. Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationship with them, elaborating all the while a flexible range of responses to the challenges which they encounter."

(Best Play – NPFA / PLAYLINK / Children's Play Council, 2001)

We are also aware that, whilst these definitions have been written by professionals within the field of play, with a vast amount of knowledge about the concept of play, play is actually best understood by children, and we bear in mind this definition provided by a child:

"Play is what I do when everyone else has stopped telling me what to do."

## 2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This Strategy seeks to inform all the agencies working with children and young people about our commitments in the arena of play in Salisbury District and encourage collaborative partnership working to improve the quantity and quality of play provision in our area. It has been written by both Salisbury District Council and all the other Wiltshire Councils, and has drawn heavily upon information from play providers and agencies in Wiltshire.

Primarily this Strategy aims to meet the Best Play 7 key objectives from 'what play provision should do for children' (NPFA/Playlink/Children's Play Council, 2001):

1. Extend the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction they gain from it;
2. Recognise the child's need to test boundaries and respond positively to that need;
3. Manage the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm;
4. Maximise the range of play opportunities;
5. Foster independence and self-esteem;
6. Foster children's respect for others and offer opportunities for social interaction;
7. Foster the child's well-being, healthy growth and development, knowledge and understanding, creativity and capacity to learn.

Through these aims it is possible to identify a number of key issues, which need to be addressed through the spectrum of strategies and policies of partner organisations and help the objectives in this strategy be achieved.

This Strategy recognises that play is an end unto itself there is no need to achieve a desired outcome, the play process itself is the achievement. This Strategy recognises that people of all ages like to play, but for the purposes of this strategy, it focuses on ages 0-19 and those with additional needs up to 25.

This Strategy aims to:

- Increase understanding of the need for and importance of play to children and young people in their development and attainment of the key skills necessary for competent learning
- Ensure inclusive practice, both in terms of existing provision and in the planning of new play opportunities
- Ensure play opportunities are accessible to young people, overcoming issues of distance and safety as appropriate

- Encourage children and young people to exercise choice and control over their play
- Allow children and young people to contribute their opinions when analysing options for new play opportunities
- Manage the need to provide challenging play opportunities which allow children to take risks, whilst maintaining the need for them to be able to play safely
- Extend the area which children and young people have available to them for play, including utilising areas not traditionally associated with play
- Encourage active play to help improve physical and mental health
- Encourage partners to provide a stimulating, innovative and creative range of play activities across the district
- Help support children and young people become adept at interacting socially, improving their feelings of self-worth and respect for the views and opinions of other people
- Begin to dismantle barriers to play which have arisen over the last few decades (see section 7)
- Work in partnership to overcome popular misconceptions about youth and play

### **3. OUR KEY PLAY POLICY STATEMENTS**

This Strategy embraces the five overarching Every Child Matters outcomes and builds upon these to help fulfil the Council's statutory obligations under The Children's Act 2006 through play provision.

The Council will aim to achieve the following key outcomes and objectives:

#### **1. BEING HEALTHY**

- Provide active play provision for children and young people
- Promote health and physical activity

#### **2. STAYING SAFE**

- Provide challenging play environments that recognises a child's need to test boundaries, whilst keeping children safe from harm
- Providing play that contributes towards creating safer communities

#### **3. ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING**

- Providing fun play opportunities
- Creating challenging play opportunities

#### **4. MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION**

- Involve children, young people and families in the design and development of play in our area
- Promote equality and social inclusion for all children and young people in our community



## 5. ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

- Planning policy which allows for innovation
- Promote activities, which allow children and young people to develop key skills such as communication, problem solving and team building

These outcomes have been developed through consultation with people at all ages and levels in the community, and will pervade all action plans, which arise from this Strategy.

*'Play is the highest form of research' Einstein*

## 4. ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN DELIVERY

Salisbury District has always recognised the need for to work in partnership to understand needs, maximise resources, reduce duplication and make information services clear and accessible. Play is delivered in the district by a cross cutting range of voluntary, private and public organisations many of whom have specific responsibilities embodied in their own strategic plans.

A number of those organisations are crucial to helping us deliver our action plan in this Strategy, we hope they will contribute, support and guide the Council in the achievement of wider strategic goals.

- Parents, families, carers
- Town and Parish Councils
- Salisbury District Council, in particular:
  - Sports development
  - Planning
  - Parks/ Open Spaces
  - Transport
  - Housing
  - Leisure Centres
  - Community Development (including community grants)
  - Arts Development
- Wiltshire County Council, especially:
  - Children's Services and Education
  - Youth Service
  - Planning
  - Transport
  - Schools
  - Social Services
  - Looked-After Children Services
  - Gypsy and Travellers Service
  - Library
  - Cared-for Children Service
  - Childcare / Early Years, including Wiltshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership

- Sure Start, including Children's Centres
- Health Services – PCT, Hospital and Hospice play services
- Partnerships
  - Wiltshire & Swindon Activity & Sports Partnership (WASP)
  - Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sport Partnership
  - Wiltshire Youth Arts partnership
  - South Wiltshire Diversity Partnership
  - Pathways Partnership
- Police, and Splash
- Voluntary and community sector – *this is not an exhaustive list:*
  - Pre-School Learning Alliance
  - ASK – Children's Information Service
  - Children's Fund
  - Youth Action Wiltshire
  - Wiltshire Scrapstore & Resource Centre
  - Bright Horizons Training & Recruitment
  - Extended schools
  - NCH (Play rangers)
  - Community First
- Private sector, e.g.
  - Trio childminding
- Potential funders
- Commercial providers

## 5. PLAY PROVISION IN SALISBURY DISTRICT AND WILTSHIRE

The abilities and needs of our children and young people are the same today as they were decades ago. Children and young people need to play to prepare themselves for the future, but play opportunities have been gradually eroded as communities focus on other priorities and play has been relegated on agendas.

However, whilst the needs of our young people are the same as they have always been, the concept of play has changed with the advent of new technologies, increased traffic, an emphasis on working parents and the increase in powerful, but directed, leisure attractions amongst others. Various barriers, discussed below, have reduced the opportunity to play although the needs of young people are as great as they have ever been.

This Play Strategy has been developed due to an increasing understanding of the need to take action to allow our children and young people to be afforded the opportunity to experience play in the way of previous generations. The appointment of a WCC Play Development Advisor to oversee and support each local authority in the completion of their strategies and to raise the profile of play across the county has help move things on substantially. All the local authorities in Wiltshire will be involved in the formation of a countywide Play Partnership comprising senior managers from partner organisations who have the ability to influence decision-making at the highest levels and embed play as an important area within their own organisations. The District Council and other local Wiltshire Councils have worked in partnership to agree both local and countywide priorities for play and action plans

for implementation at a local level. With the input of other key partner organisations the aim is to continue to improve the play provision for Wiltshire's children and young people.

Across the County as a whole, play and maintenance of play equipment has been carried out but in an ad-hoc and un-co-ordinated manner. Many local initiatives and development have been carried out in response to local identified need after consultation, but this has not usually been referred to as 'play' especially where youth have been concerned. However, this document aims to provide an agreed understanding of the wider concept of play and to begin to co-ordinate efforts to improve the play provision across the county.

## **5.1 Play Provision in South Wiltshire**

Play has not been a term familiar to the work we undertake as a local district council however we support it in many ways even if we have not necessarily been wholly conscious that we already make a valuable contribution.

Funding the Council's provision is done through existing revenue budgets, sourcing specific funding for specific projects or in partnership with others.

The Council also had traditionally offered grants and contributions, be it financial or officer resource, to community groups and local Councils so they can develop their own schemes, some of which target children and young people.

The District Council relationship with Play is mainly noted for being primarily providers, or facilitators of equipped play provision along with some outreach and development activities.

Section 106 (developers contributions) contributions are the main means of providing new equipped play opportunities and in some cases improving existing provisions.

The types of equipped play provision provided are based upon the NPFA 6-acre-standard, but the Council has already committed to developing a local standard for future provision.

Through our leisure centres we have provided holiday activity clubs, and through some of our other services provide arts and sports opportunities. Although these are not necessarily play specific, they do make a contribution to the range and opportunities provided that we now need to build on.

To date there has been little co-ordination between play providers in the District, and this Strategy is being used as the catalyst to set up a countywide play partnership to act as a key strategic influencing group.

**Play Rangers:**

The project benefits children and young people aged 5 - 13 from three areas of Salisbury: Bemerton Heath, The Friary and Partridge Way. Each area has its own problems and disadvantages but they all have a lack of provision for children. To combat this, Play Rangers are a presence outdoors so children can play safely where they choose to and not be constrained by their environment and surroundings.

The play rangers informally encourage children to engage in activities and learn different skills. They provide games, activities and act as positive role models. They offer a safe but challenging play environment for children. They help children and parents to reclaim their public space. They listen to what children say they need and work with local partner agencies to provide it.

**Consultation:** In the Autumn of 2006, SDC completely overhauled and re-furnished an existing, out of date, play area at one of our housing estates in the city. Seven designs were obtained from playground companies working to a fixed price of £38,000 and a guidance specification. It was agreed to display all seven designs in a nearby Neighborhood Centre and to promote and actively encourage children and young people who use the centre, along with classes from a nearby junior school to view them, leave their comments and vote on their preferred option. After a 2-week consultation period, all the votes and comments were collated and a decision made as to which company would be awarded the work. The design preferred by the youngsters who voted (over 200 votes were cast) was subsequently implemented and is now in full use and proving to be very popular.

**Youth Consultative Forum:**

The young people consultative forum was set as part of the children & young people strategy. It's one way for young people to have their say on the decisions that affect their lives in south Wiltshire. We advertise and recruit children and young people through our yeahbut website, events and activities that we run.

We have in place a consultation protocol for those wishing to seek young peoples views and this would be completed by the agency/organisation.

This protocol was put in place to ensure that the way in that young people are consulted was relevant and appropriate to young people. It has a checklist of questions for the consultant, it also provides a checklist that all practical issues for consulting have been considered, and that the consultant can commit to a set of standards.

If the young people become members in the first instance they will be sent electronically a very easy to follow form to enable them to decide whether they would like to be consulted on that particular subject.

If they choose to participate they are sent information about what will happen next.

They are able to choose not to respond, being a member does not require them to give views on everything that comes their way.

**THE HOMEWORK CLUB**

The Homework Club was started in June 2003. This completely new initiative was possible due to an agreed 5 year funding from The Wiltshire Children's Fund. Up to 40 young people in the age group 7 to 12 years attend for 2 afternoons per week in 2-hour sessions. Children are engaged in fun activities using computers with Internet access and arts and craft resources. Board and other games are also available. The activities take place in a safe, friendly and neutral environment where children are encouraged to be creative and have fun. The activities in which the children participate are freely chosen by themselves from a large selection of topics; a feature of the club being consultation with and participation from the children.

A similar club takes place one afternoon per week for the age group 13 to 16 years. The ethos of this club is determined by the young people due to the age group involved and very much based on what the young people want to do. The clubs frequently engages in outdoor play in the form of "potted sports" and games.

Membership of these popular clubs is entirely optional, freely accessible to all children and is a free provision at no cost to them.

**www.yeahbut.org.uk:**

Salisbury District councils Young Peoples website was set up in 2006 as a direct response to young people wanting to know what was going on in their area.

From start to finish young people were involved in the design and content of the website and approving the designs at each stage of development.

## **6. VALUE & SIGNIFICANCE OF PLAY FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**

There are significant benefits of play for a variety of groups.

### Children and Young People

The benefits of play to children and young people are:

- Improved health and fitness
- Social development
- Important educational tool pre-school, and helps to allow children to fully engage in the curriculum once at school
- Improved self-esteem and confidence
- Allows children to deal with increasing levels of freedom and develop independence in a safe environment
- Developing confidence
- Developing respect for peers (and possibly adults)
- Giving a sense of respect and belonging to communities and fosters respect for local citizens
- The ability to test boundaries and take risks in reasonably safe environments
- The development of understanding of their local community and the world in general
- Contributing to dealing with trauma through therapeutic play
- Opportunities to enjoy their free time and 'let off steam'

### Parents and Carers

The benefits to parents and carers are:

- A widening circle of friends for parents / carers where their children play together
- A better relationship between family members, especially where adults join in with children's play
- Children with improved health and fitness
- Children with better social skills
- Happier children

### Local Communities

The local community can benefit from the play children engage in by:

- Reducing boredom levels and providing alternatives to less desirable activities
- A reduction in local crime and anti-social behaviour by young people where they have constructive activities to participate in and facilities to use
- Producing a community where children contribute to a positive culture and where young people show concern for others and have good team-working and problem-solving skills

- Utilising youth facilities for other purposes to the benefit of other community groups

## INCLUSION

The District Council and all people and organisations involved in the development of this strategy recognise the importance of ensuring inclusion for **all** children and young people, regardless of their gender, race, ethnic background, physical and mental ability, affluence, geographical location or sexual orientation. A more detailed description of the demographics within Wiltshire can be found in following sections, but an issue which significantly affects the equality of opportunity within Wiltshire is the rural and widely spread population, leaving most areas outside of the towns with fewer opportunities than their urban and suburban counterparts. The organisations involved in this Strategy are well aware of the restrictions upon some children and young people because of this rurality and other previously mentioned situations which can affect access to play, and have begun to redress the balance. All action plans which result from this Strategy will have fully considered how to ensure inclusion and those undertaking action points will ensure that the relevant departments within their own council are consulted with regard to any plans to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act and act with due regard to all children in their area.

**‘All children have the right to access the same choices, opportunities and experiences’**

## 7. BARRIERS TO PLAY

Barriers to play are similar in many ways to those present in other counties, with the exception of a few areas, which are more specific to our locality. These have increased over the past decades and have affected the quality and quantity of play in Wiltshire.

Advent of technology, with children and young people spending time on games consoles, watching DVDs and videos and using MSN and text messaging.

- These activities are generally pursued alone, with children and young people lacking the development of social skills, personally directed play, use of imagination and creativity, development of communication skills etc. It has also made young people a consumer market in their own right, which can place financial pressure on parents/ carers.
- Increase in games and toys on the market, which limit the imagination and direct activities beyond true play.
- Increase in traffic on our streets has decreased the area available for children to play and provided further anxiety for parents in allowing children to travel to play facilities. The additional increase of vehicles has increased the loss too of front gardens due to off road parking. This has had the effect of almost completely eradicating street play.
- Increase in parental perceptions of the dangers present in modern society has reduced the opportunities to play. This is largely due to media coverage as, in general, the danger from serious crime against young people has not altered over the last few decades.

- Need for organisations to protect themselves from potential child protection issues has resulted in robust child protection policies, which can reduce the opportunities for play.
- Increase in building development in many areas has reduced the open space available for play.
- A change in community priorities has led to more space available for leisure pursuits such as golf courses and less devoted to play areas.
- Increasing pressure from Government initiatives has seen many parents return to work, utilising childcare rather than the children and young people being allowed to 'play out' after school etc. This has also seen an increase in the number of material 'play resources' as society has become more affluent and time has been replaced by money, resulting in more 'directed play' and less imaginative play.
- Increasing litigation has resulted in play providers (and noticeably, childcare providers) deciding not to offer play opportunities, which carry any risk of injury, thus making play rather tame, reducing challenge and stimulation. Similar attitudes towards risk amongst the public have further compounded this as our culture has changed to become more risk averse.
- Pressure on children and parents to 'perform' academically has resulted in more structured educational clubs and pursuits and has left less free time for children to play freely.
- Perception of groups of young people being anti-social and thus increasing fear amongst elderly people.
- In some areas there has been less opportunity for the involvement of people with backgrounds of:
  - Impaired physical ability
  - Impaired mental health
  - Financial difficulty
  - Problems with social interaction
  - Discrimination in grounds of ethnicity, race etc.
- Lack of understanding about the play needs of children and historic lack of investment by local and central government have led to lack of provision of the right opportunities and resources to facilitate children's play.
- Lack of premises, opportunities and trained play workers to encourage youth to 'play'
- Children can be afraid of other children due to actual or perceived bullying

### **BARRIERS MORE SPECIFIC TO WILTSHIRE**

- Being a very large, rural county, a barrier particular to Wiltshire and similar areas is the problem children have in travelling to play facilities and activities. Parents are busier and less able to spend time in transportation and accompanying children, and the cost and frequency of public transport can be prohibitive. Also, the rurality of the county leads to more cars and even fewer opportunities for street play.
- Access to Salisbury, from rural areas has resulted in activities being moved directly to the local community which then often leads to poor attendance, which makes sessions unviable
- Wiltshire is also home to a large military population, which brings with it a highly transient population and swiftly changing communities.



- There are also issues in engaging travellers in play opportunities and identifying their particular needs.
- Areas of the county have an increasing immigrant population, bringing with them language and cultural barriers to play.
- Any provisions/activities to be provided, as with any service, have a human and financial cost, often we rely heavily on sourcing funding externally which is extremely time consuming to meet our objectives which results in less time on actual delivery.
- With limited resources local priorities have to be assessed against the political/local priorities which means often, although valuable areas of work, other priorities have to take precedent

**‘There is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing’**

## **8. RISKS AND PLAY**

Both the District Council and the Play Partnership recognises that it is important for children and young people to be able to undertake play activities, which have an element of risk attached to them, in order that they are challenged and have the opportunity to develop their skills and abilities.

The Play Safety Forum and the Health and Safety Executive have both recognised that there is a need for more risky play, and that children need and want to take risks when they play. In order for play provision to be challenging, play providers need to be able to manage the elements of risk which are present in the activities to ensure that activities can be undertaken in a controlled manner.

In order to be able to offer these activities, a balance needs to be struck between the risks inherent in the play activity and the benefit to the child, which can be derived from participating in it. In order to achieve this cost-benefit analysis, it is important that play providers undertake full risk assessments to ensure that the risks are manageable and to put into place any measures which can enable them to manage the risk. However, it is impossible and indeed undesirable to eliminate all risks as this does not provide the children with the opportunity to develop, but obviously providers must not allow activities, which expose children to unacceptable levels of danger or extremes of physical injury. These issues are addressed in the action plan.

‘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 provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risk of death or serious injury.’

*From ‘Managing Risk in Play Provision, Play Safety Forum, 2002’*



'Play should be about children having fun and learning to manage risk through adventurous activity. This is an essential part of child development and important to the future health of the nation'

*RoSPA June 2005*

*'Playing it too safe can cause a lot of damage in the long run'*

## **9. Contribution Play Makes to Wider Agendas**

Play is a fundamental means of helping to achieve agendas beyond those which deal solely with play for its own sake. Wider agendas have been set by central government and adopted by Wiltshire County Council, with action plans developed in response to goals set. The county and district councils have developed these plans with a clear understanding of their communities and of the best ways to achieve these goals.

Central government has clearly set a number of wider agendas which play strategies can contribute towards. With this in mind, this Strategy shows a clear bias towards several of these agendas. As there is currently no on-going funding to create sustainable play opportunities, the ability to sustain programmes put in place by the Big Lottery Fund grants and other developments will currently have to be funded by linking the outcomes of this Play Strategy with current local government priorities, which are developed through central Government agendas. The key actions in this Strategy will therefore work towards achieving much more than just improved play opportunities for our county's children.

### **9.1 Linking to wider Strategic Documents**

This Strategy links with a variety of wider strategic documents formulated by National Government, external agencies and from within Salisbury District Council and Wiltshire County Council. Most of the organisations, which are represented on the Wiltshire Play Partnership, have strategy documents, which are also relevant to this Play Strategy. The following diagrams help to set out as simply as possible those links.

Further information about the strategy context can be found in Appendix A

### **9.2 The contribution Play makes towards National Agenda**

### **9.3 Links to other Local Strategic documents in Salisbury District Council**

### **9.4 Other Strategic Documents for Wiltshire**

## **10. PROFILE OF THE COUNCIL AREA**

### **10.1 THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE**

Wiltshire is a large, rural county comprising four districts – Salisbury, North Wiltshire, West Wiltshire and Kennet, each of which has its own District Council. The county has one city and a few major towns, but most of the county's population reside in rural villages and small towns. The county also has several armed forces bases and a large military population and therefore a highly transient population. Around 25% of Wiltshire's population are children aged 0-19 – this figure is around 99,000 currently. 94% of these children are classed or class themselves as 'white British' (national average 86%).

### **10.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF SALISBURY DISTRICT**

The district of Salisbury is the southernmost in Wiltshire, and lies around 90 miles from London and 30 from the south coast. Forming part of the border with the South East region, neighbouring authorities include districts in Hampshire as well as Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset. At some 388 square miles in area, it is amongst the largest in England.

The city of Salisbury is very much the focus of the district. Its population of the City was 44,175 at the 2001 Census - accounting for well over a third of the total population. It acts as an important hub for a large area extending well beyond the district itself: indeed under the emergent Regional Spatial Strategy it is classified as a strategically significant centre. The quality of the city's environment is high and it benefits from an outstanding downland setting in the valley of the river Avon where several tributaries converge.

Amesbury is the second largest settlement in the district, and had a population of 8,909 at the 2001 Census. It has a range of local services, and its size and economic importance are growing as housing and employment allocations from the Local Plan are developed. The majority of the district however is rural, served by a number of smaller settlements providing local services, most notably at Mere, Wilton, Tisbury, and Downton.

The district has a rich and diverse environment, which includes 62 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 69 Conservation Areas, and 17 Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Nearly half of the district is within the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the World Heritage Site around Stonehenge is in the north of the district.

The recently established New Forest National Park overlaps with a part of Salisbury district, and within this area various responsibilities - including planning - have now been transferred to the new National Park Authority.

- **Population**

The total population of Salisbury district at mid-2005 was 115,800. Growth in the district has seen some fluctuations, and the past two years have seen a slowdown. However over the last decade, the typically growth rate has been around 0.5% per

year, broadly in line with the national rate, though slightly below that of the county and the region.

Young People between the age of 0-19 represent 24% of the total population, 48% or 13,484 are girls/young women and 52% or 14061 are boys/young men.

- **Indices of Deprivation**

The Salisbury area fares much better than England and the South West for overall deprivation. The relative prosperity is largely due to the low crime and disorder levels and the good health of its residents, as well as the good income, employment, and education levels and the good living environment. However, this relative prosperity masks pockets of deprivation, which are more difficult to identify. Areas of high and low deprivation may also exist side by side.

- **Migration**

Figures from the 2001 Census show that there was a net inward migration into Salisbury of 322 residents from areas within the UK during that year. There is also a large inward migration from those who resided outside the UK (1,156) in the previous year. One reason why Salisbury might have high levels of migration is due to the large number of armed forces and their families who live in the district.

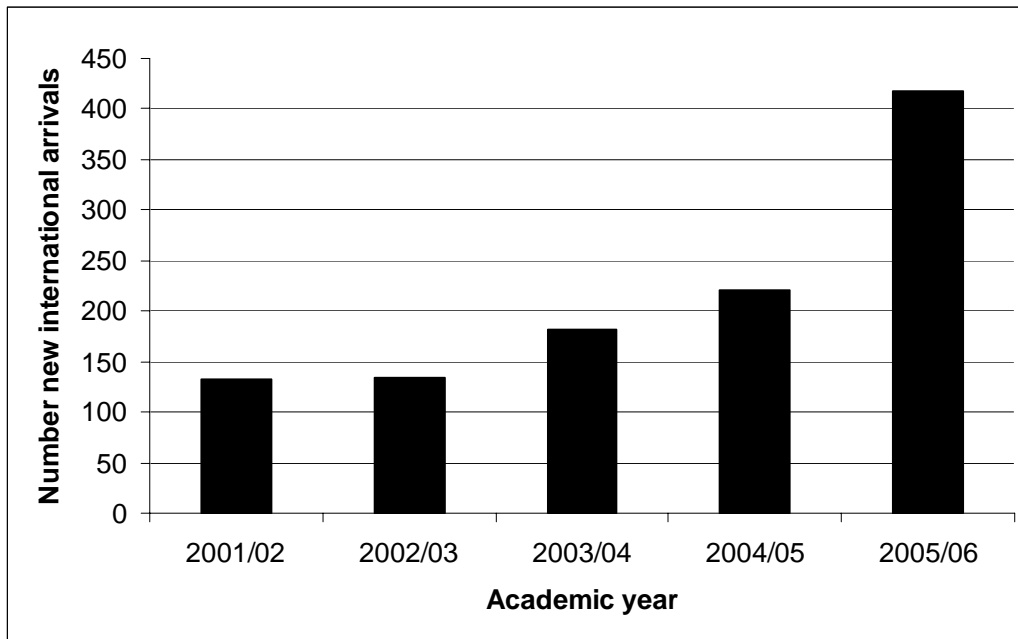
The migration patterns for each age group show a net loss for the 18-29 year old age group of 256 people in 2001. There is a significant net inflow of those aged between 30 and 59, and children aged 1 to 17.

This could be due to Salisbury being an attractive place to bring up a family, or better career opportunities offered locally for this age group.

The nationality of immigrants has also changed all over the UK, with the number of Polish entrants increasing exponentially since its inclusion in the EU in May 2004. This trend is likely to continue, with the inclusions of Bulgaria and Romania in the EU in 2007, and probably Turkey in 2012.

There are few good sources of statistics available for the numbers of migrant workers in the county, but the number of new international arrivals in Wiltshire schools is a good indication of the number of families arriving in the area from abroad. The diagram below shows that the number of arrivals the years between 2001/02 and 2005/06 and table shows the wide spread of languages spoken in Salisbury schools.

**Figure 2: Number of New International Arrivals to Wiltshire Schools  
2001 - 06**



Data Source: WCC, DCE, EMAS, 2006

**Table 5: Languages spoken by pupils in Salisbury, 2006**

First Language	Number of Pupils
Tagalog (Filipino)	54
Bengali	37
Polish	22
Chinese Cantonese	17
French	15
Chinese Mandarin	10
English Creole	9
German	8
Thai	8
Arabic	7
Fijian	7
Italian	7
Turkish	7
Dutch	6
Malayalam	6
Spanish	6
Chinese Han	5
Russian	5
Other	59

Data Source: WCC, DCE, EMAS, 2006

- **Environment**

Most of the district is essentially rural, with the city of Salisbury being the only major urban area. Even here the built-up area is relatively limited, and, as with many of the settlements in the district, the transition to countryside is sudden and dramatic. The landscape therefore dominates the district, and its quality is exceptionally high and varied, comprising a number of distinctive areas:

- extensive open downlands of Salisbury Plain and the West Wiltshire Downs;
- east-west chalk escarpments;
- Cranborne Chase;
- the Vale of Wardour;
- several distinctive and linked river valleys, and
- the New Forest.

- **Life expectancy and illness**

Statistics give a clear indication that the population of Salisbury district is generally healthy and long-living in comparison with the South West region and the country as a whole. Life expectancy in the district for both males and females exceeds both the country and the region, as does the proportion of people who rated their health as 'good' at the 2001 Census. The proportion of people with a limiting long-term illness at the 2001 Census, conversely, was lower in Salisbury district than the region and the country as a whole.

- **Crime**

The recorded crime in Salisbury district is low compared to other geographic levels. Indeed, Wiltshire is the second safest county in the UK, and a 'People's Voice' survey additionally showed that 92% of people within the Salisbury district felt 'safe' or 'very safe'.

- **Education**

Educational achievement figures within the district are high compared to those for Wiltshire and England. This is a trend that the council can assist in maintaining. Through planning gain the council has secured the provision of three new primary schools within the current plan period, and has additionally secured financial contributions for the Local Education Authority in order to ensure that growth of additional capacity and quality are maintained. Salisbury district has a lower than average percentage of people with no qualifications and a larger proportion with level 4 or 5 qualifications

- **Parks and open spaces**

Parks and open spaces have an important positive role in people's lives, providing opportunities for leisure, sport, recreation, visual amenity and education, as well as benefits to wildlife and biodiversity. Under the existing Local Plan there are 145 designated sites under four categories, shown in the table below.

## NUMBER, TYPE AND SIZE OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

Type	Number of sites	Total area (sq km)	Total area (ha)
Recreational Open Space	117	2.47	246.66
Important Open Space	23	0.25	24.57
Urban Park	4	0.20	20.19
Avon Valley Project	1	0.33	32.95

In addition to these, there are several hundred other spaces of various types within and around settlements, which contribute to overall quality of life. A district-wide PPG17 audit of such sites was commissioned by the council in 2006, carried out by external consultants. The study provided a detailed qualitative and quantitative understanding of open spaces, the results of which will act as evidence to underpin the LDF Core Strategy.

There are currently no open spaces within the district managed to the Green Flag award standard. However, the council is developing management plans for several important parks within Salisbury with the intention of applying for and attaining this standard over the next few years. The first park entered was the Queen Elizabeth gardens in early 2007. Others will follow this including Victoria Park, Winston Churchill gardens, Harnham recreational ground, and Hudson's field.

- **Transport**

Transport is recognised as one of the most important issues for the district, with the promotion of sustainable transportation being a key objective of the Local Plan. The most common mode of commuting in the district at the 2001 Census, at over 57%, was by car or van. This is slightly more than the national figure, and slightly lower than the county and regional figures. However, higher proportions of people in the district commute to work by bicycle or by foot than at the other three geographic levels.

The case in Wiltshire overall is relatively high in comparison with the regional and national figures. The reasons for this may be threefold. Firstly, Salisbury is well served by rail links to London, with many people choosing to commute by this means. Secondly, being a rural district with relatively few centres of employment it is accepted that there is a need to travel from the remote areas to these employment hubs. Thirdly, due to the high cost of housing in the district, many employees choose to live in neighbouring districts, where the cost of living is lower, and commute in.

## 11. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

Each tier of Local Government in the District undertakes a variety of consultation some of which is mandatory e.g. Local development framework and some of which is to gather evidence to help shape and inform local service provision and projects. There is an abundance of examples of this type of consultation, which include working with all ages and sectors within the community.

Crucial to this Strategy is consultation with children and young people, parents and the wider community. Salisbury District Council have initiated and facilitate the Youth Consultative Forum and have in place a consultation protocol for those who wish to consult with young people. We have encouraged their involvement in the development of the action points in the Strategy and will continue to consult them in the development of more detailed plans to achieve our objectives. The decisions we make regarding play influence our children and young people directly and we will continue to ensure that there is a platform for them to have their views and opinions heard and given due consideration.

There have been two approaches to community engagement and consultation, firstly the work already completed (drawing on existing consultation exercises) and secondly the research associated specifically with this strategy.

Consultation in South Wiltshire has always been considered intrinsic to the development of new strategies, policies and services and we are signatories to the Wiltshire Compact Code of Practice on Communication and Consultation.

### **11.1 Salisbury District Individual Projects Consultation:**

A number of consultation exercises have taken place in the last few years where children, young people, parents, carers and a range of voluntary and public organisations have been able to express their opinions, views and aspirations. Some of the consultation has been undertaken directly by SDC but we have looked also at consultation undertaken by other organisations and groups., The list below is by no means exhaustive however the findings have been taken into consideration within this strategy

- Children and Young Peoples consultation on the Children and Young People Strategy 2005
- Housing Support 16/17 yrs
- Salisbury City Parks Consultation 2006/7
- Play Area for Bemerton Heath Pinewood Way 2006
- Sports development Strategy: Survey to primary and secondary age children - took place in 2000 so that the sport and recreation strategy could be developed
- Be Active Stay Active - A sport, recreation and physical activity policy for Salisbury District Council - published 2006
- Arts Development Policy 2004-07
- Tomorrows Voice Survey's
- Open Space Audit '07
- Parish/Ward/Town Plans – Summary from completed plans and public mtgs. 06/07
- Salisbury High School Consultation – Bemerton Heath Ward Plan 2006.
- Community Area Plans consultation
- Community Strategy for South Wiltshire
- Safe and Sound in South Wiltshire – Black & Minority Ethnic Survey 2006
- Gypsy and Travellers Survey with young people – undertaken by Shine

- Children Centres – undertaken by the NCH in South Wiltshire
- Play Rangers consultation with young people – undertaken by NCH
- Childcare and Family Services Survey 2006

## 11.2 COUNTY-WIDE CONSULTATION

Below is a summary list of consultation under taken county wide. Further details relating to these consultations can be found in the Appendix B

- **Childcare audit**
- **Tomorrows Voice**
- **Peoples Voice**
- **Carer's Voice**
- **Wiltshire Alternative Sports**
- **DCLG Household Survey**
- **Cared for Children**
- **Children's Fund**
- **Gypsy's and Travellers**

## 11.3 Play Strategy Consultation

The research associated directly with this strategy involved:

- Consultation using the SDC website for parents/young people & children and carers – this was advertised through the Salisbury Journal
- Consultation on the draft plan with key stakeholders and service providers
- Pilot Consultation with young people from 3 schools in the City Area.
- Town and Parish councils
- Specific consultation on line with children and young people through the schools
- Consultation with key stakeholders at the Play Partnership launch in March 07
- Consultation Open Space Audit 06/07
- City Centre Park Consultations 06/07

This is the initial consultation undertaken in the formulation of this strategy. However further consultation and development will be undertaken to keep abreast of the changes in which our children and young people live and also as the Play Partnership evolves and develops, initiatives will emerge.

## 11.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

### Salisbury District Area

Over the last two years we have engaged with children and young people on a wide range of topics and using a broad range of tools and processes to ensure that we understand the needs and aspirations of children and young people in the district.

Below are just some examples of what we have learnt recently and over the years.



Key findings and recommendations from **Open Space Audit**  
www.salisbury.gov.uk/ourplace & **Parks Consultation** can be found:  
www.salisbury.gov.uk.

### **Gypsy and traveller Consultation - Undertaken by Shine**

At Oak Tree Field Gypsy and Traveller Site a Survey was held in March 2007, amongst the children, asking what they would like to have as Play Facilities.

#### **Summary of the main findings are:**

15 children took part in the Survey (ages 4 – 13)

- All the children felt they did not have a safe area to play in, and would like a designated safe area to play in.
- When asked where on Site they thought the Play Area should be, there were 2 main pieces of ground identified on Site, where a Play Area could be sited. Opinion was divided as to which was preferable, depending where on the site the children currently live.
- When asked how the Play Area could be kept safe and not damaged, the children responded with ideas of:
  - Fencing and a gate around a Play Park
  - Adult supervision at certain times (parents/older brothers and sisters)
  - Children to take responsibility for not vandalising the equipment
- When asked if the Play Area should be open/accessible at all times, opinion was divided, with most children saying yes, a minority saying it should only be open at certain times (after school, holidays etc. to limit any vandalism)
- When asked what they would like to be able to use the Play Park for the replies were:
  - Football
  - Swings/see-saw/Roundabout
  - Basketball/Netball/Hockey
  - Trampolining
  - Skipping
  - Running around games
  - Somewhere safe to ride a bike and 'just play'
- When asked how they would look after the Play Park, the replies were:
  - Keep it clean and tidy
  - Have litter bins
  - Be careful with the equipment and don't damage anything
  - Parents to take action against anyone causing any damage (ie ban from Park for a period of time)
  - Keep the gate shut to keep out dogs
  - Lock up footballs, trampolines etc. when not being used in a store
- When asked who should be responsible for the Play Park the replies were:
  - Parents/Grown Ups

- Older children
  - A committee
  - All children
- When asked how they thought they could get a Play Park at Oak Tree Field the replies were:
    - Ask the Government
    - Ask somebody in charge of the Site
    - Try and raise some funds

The children are all desperate to have somewhere safe to play as currently they have to play in the main road into the Site, which has traffic and many unsafe items lying around.

\*A Survey of Adults took place at the same time, and included in this Survey were questions about a Play Area for the children. All the respondents felt there should be a safe play area for the children and that the Adults on site should be involved in keeping it safe and tidy.

### **Parks Consultation:**

Salisbury District Council has undergone in the last 18 months a series of review the parks, major open spaces and parks services provided in Salisbury. They have been looking at what is currently provided for the community, whether it meets public expectations and how services can be improved and developed for the future. Public consultation played a major role in each review and will give park users and city residents the opportunity to say how Salisbury's parks are managed and enhanced for the future.

Feedback from the consultation, along with other information, has been used to draw up individual management plans for the city's parks and green spaces. As these are very large and detailed document the information contained within them can be accessed on the councils website. Actions relating to Play that have emerged as a result of the consultation exercise and has been selected in the Play Strategy Action Plan.

### **Consultation with three local schools March 07**

Three local schools participated in a consultation exercise to identify the priorities for actions for the Lottery bid and whether they agreed with the proposed aims and objectives for this strategy. The top three aims and objectives supported by young people aged between 12-16 were:

- Ensure public open spaces and play areas are safe for play – 54% Strongly agreed/ 41% Agree with a total 95% supporting this
- Create more free play activities for children and young people – 66% strongly/ agree and 29% agreeing with a total 95% supporting this.
- Improve the involvement of children and young people in helping us plan our services – 48% strongly agree with 40% agreeing total 88% support

The top three actions identified as high priority for us to bid for funding were:

- Free week long festival for children and young people in the summer holidays 68%

- Develop opportunities for young people to undertake alternative sports + Music workshops to create and perform music - joint second with 65%
- Offer Theatre workshops 59%

### **Consultation for the Children and Young People Strategy 2005**

The strategy found Children and Young people living in the district potentially face:

- Boredom and isolation as a result of difficulties in accessing services and facilities through the cost of services and poor transport
- Negative reactions from an aging population (35% of the population are over 50)
- A fear of crime and being victim of crime 69% of respondents to a Tomorrows Voice Survey stated that they felt safe when outside during the day, however this fell to only 25% when outside after dark with 41% stating that they felt unsafe or very unsafe.

Young people who were consulted on the children and young people strategy told us a range of things they wanted. Here are some examples:

- Places for young people to go in the evenings and weekends
- Bus fares reduced for young people
- More police on the street to deal with anti-social behaviour
- Youth café open until late
- More things to do after school
- More cycle routes.

### **Tomorrows Voice (TV) Survey**

The last survey was completed in June 2006. It covered a range of issues including cultural diversity and the perceptions of young people, amongst others.

There were no specific references to play, however three quarters of the respondents felt that young people are not viewed fairly by people in the wider community, with particular reference to how adults may agree with more negative statements about the young rather than positive ones.

### **TV: Autumn/Winter 2005 Cultural and recreational Activities**

Over half of respondents use 'parks and open spaces' once a week or more (outside school hours), and nearly half say they use 'leisure centres, swimming pools or other local sports clubs' once a week or more. Usage of theatres and concert halls is far less regular, although the majority of respondents do make at least occasional use of such facilities.

The majority of respondents are at least 'Fairly Satisfied' with the local provision of 'parks and open spaces', and 'leisure centres, swimming pools or other local sports clubs'.

### **Using the Internet**

Half of respondents say that they use the Internet at home every day, while around three quarters use it at least 3 times per week. Only 8% of respondents say that they do not have Internet access at home.

The most common uses of the Internet are 'Email/MSN Messenger' and 'Help with

homework'. Usage of different types varies between ages and genders. There are varying levels of interest among respondents in the idea of a website providing information on sports activities in their area. While 72% say they would be at least 'Quite interested', only 14% say they would be 'Very interested'. Just over a fifth of respondents have looked for information on the Wiltshire County Council website, with between 10% and 23% having looked for information on their local District Council website. The most common reasons for having visited local Council websites are 'Research for a school project' and 'Leisure information'. Just over two thirds of respondents say that they would access local authority services like leisure centres over the Internet if they were available.

### Parish Plans 2006/07

Parish plans that are being undertaken in the district provide evidence of consultation with their children and young people through a range of different tools and techniques. Below is a list of needs and aspirations that have been identified and are linked /relevant to children and young people.

### Published plans

Pitton and Farley	Improve play areas for young people
	Investigate costs for additional equipment for play areas
	Investigate costs for additional seating and picnic tables
	Carry out additional consultation, investigation of costs and options for football posts and skateboard areas, plus numerous individual small scale improvements suggested
Durrington	Conduct further research to consider the potential for developing youth facilities including a youth shelter, adventure and/or assault course and mini football pitches
	Develop recreational facilities on the Land identified in the Local Plan between the Pinkneys Estate and A345
	Investigate the opportunities for enhancing the library service to include the potential of a coffee shop
	Conduct further research to identify the community's priorities for sports and recreational facilities. Identify costs, potential partners and sources of funding for the development of a bowling green, squash courts and flood lighting for the football pitch
Dinton	Obtain funding and build all weather court for tennis, netball and basketball
	Refurbish football goal and erect another
	Create meeting place for teenagers
	Provide swings for older children and improve playground facilities
	Investigate feasibility of creating bike track with jumps
	Investigate public use of school swimming pool during holiday
	Form clubs/activities for children and teenagers, including establishing an internet café
	Investigate setting up Tumble Tots in Village Hall
	Investigate opening access to riverbanks
	More picnic tables near Park and on recreation ground

Amesbury	Promote and develop more activities specifically for young people and disabled people
Alderbury	Explore the possibility of providing a more permanent library or book sharing facility
	Consult with community with regard to how the Old Canal Site should be developed
	Explore through funding possibilities for development for old canal site Parish Council

### Results of consultation at Parish Plan Public Meetings

Berwick St John	No Playing field
	Bike Track
	Shed for older children
	Tidy up messy rights of way
	Good sports facilities required
Landford	Keep common land as common land
	Youth Club/shelter
	Good access to the countryside for all
	Sports area for recreation ground
Bemerton	Community Centre/Youth Club
	More sports facilities
	Extend skateboard park
	New football/training area
	Mini moto/quad bikes area
	Family friendly café/restaurant with Internet access
	Graffiti wall
	Library
	Supervised BMX/Bicycle track

### CHILDRENS CENTRES

Extensive Consultation has been carried out by the NCH who have been the lead organisation on Children's Centres in South Wiltshire. Although the consultation was comprehensive it was not play specific however a great deal of information gathered referenced play as areas of development within the centres and outreach provision being developed. The areas where consultation took place were particular to the areas where Children's centres will be provided either as a physical building or outreach services. Areas: Mere and area, Nadder Valley, Downton, Wilton, and Amesbury.

- Promoting physical activities, outdoor play facilities
- Play opportunities for all children
- Toy libraries for childcare providers
- Individual plans for development and play
- Exercise/play/sport/leisure opportunities for families
- Play bags for children
- Support with play for parents
- Facilities/resources that enable safe access to local environment and community provisions
- Access to safe play space and opportunities
- Tumble tots at local leisure centres
- After school provision

- Parenting classes that promote playing and talking with children
- Summer filled events with play rangers
- Breakfast and after school clubs

### Information from Community Plans

<b>Salisbury City Community Area</b>	Provide Community Centres in specified wards as a focus for all age groups, particularly young people, including breakfast club, after school club, coffee afternoons, health clinics and drop-in centre.
	More cycle lanes.
	Clean up local open spaces and play areas and stop public drinking in them particularly Queen Elizabeth Gardens), involve local businesses and restaurants where litter a nuisance
	Promote healthy living.
Bemerton	<b>Culture/Leisure</b> – 14%; skate/bike park (37 suggestions), youth club (15 suggestions), playground facilities (15 suggestions). Bemerton Heath Family Centre employs two Play Rangers to work with parents and volunteers to develop activities for children and young people. A skate park has been approved and a half pipe will be installed on the play area near Bemerton Heath
Fisherton & Bemerton Village	<b>Culture</b> – Outdoor facilities needed for young people in the area around Wilton Road.
Harnham	<b>Culture</b> – East Harnham has received developer contributions for a new community centre and a group has been set up to oversee this. The project will take time to progress.  Salisbury District Council will continue to work with the East Harnham Residents Association Ltd to continue working on the development and building of the East Harnham Community.  <b>Crime &amp; Community Protection</b> – Wiltshire County Council, Youth & Community Services should continue to support the Youth Club.
St Marks & Stratford	<b>Culture/Crime &amp; Community Protection</b> – Stratford Social Club is looking into building a new community centre as there are no facilities in the surrounding area and the existing club is in poor condition. Volunteers run a weekly youth club to provide activities and outings to young people in the area.
St Pauls	<b>Culture</b> – no meeting place for the community, lack of play facilities around the St Paul's roundabout area.

<b>Amesbury</b>	Local communities to monitor the condition of existing footpaths and cycle ways and keep Parish Councils informed of any problems.
	New play facilities to be put on sites visible to the public. Police Community Support Officers to patrol play areas reduce damage through vandalism.
	<b>Places to meet</b> As a result of concerns raised by the Amesbury Youth Forum, youth shelters will be erected on Holders Field and the Recreation Ground, and the latter will include a skate park, subject to planning permission.
	People in Shrewton have indicated the need for a new community centre.
	Promote the extension of library opening hours and facilities.
<b>Four Rivers</b>	Larger library to include: After school homework club, IT Suite for community, meeting room to run book club. Rhyme time for mothers and toddlers ad activities for young people during the holiday.
	Lack of facilities for young people
	Better play facilities needed in villages
	Skateboard park
	A place for young people run by young people
<b>Mere</b>	There are not enough facilities for young people.
	Sports facilities in the area are inadequate.
	Closure of the swimming pool in Gillingham would severely affect users.
<b>Nadder Valley</b>	Listen to the local community about their ideas for recreation, leisure, sports and the arts. What will be the future of Tisbury swimming pool and sports centre after Nadder Middle School closure?
	Research innovative projects to provide leisure and cultural activities for children and young people, such as music festivals.
	Future of Youth Club in Tisbury.
	In 2006, SDC will decide whether to transfer all of its sports and leisure facilities, including Tisbury, to a charitable trust. With the changes in local schools provision, SDC will again review the level of sports provision and consult with local users on any proposed changes. Community ownership in some form may be a long-term possibility.
	WCC is looking at options for re-location of the Youth Centre, including the potential of the old Court Room as a youth venue.

		Support and develop youth activities. (Crime and Community Safety)
<b>Southern Area</b>  Uncertainty of use of playing fields and sports grounds in the long term.	Laverstock, Alderbury, Odstock	Local Development Framework to secure land for public use. Downton School to open its playing fields for community use.
	Laverstock	
	Downton	Create a multi-sports club offering a wide range of sporting opportunities.
Establish or improve Children's Play Areas	Charlton, Downton, Laverstock, Odstock, Redlynch, Laverstock	Community planner to seek advice through Community First. Cooperation between parishes for best practice.
Ensuring leisure facilities are available and affordable	Downton	Continued support for the expansion of Downton leisure facility. Continued promotion and support for Wise Card.
Delivery of Youth Services Programme	All	Involve 15% of 13 -19 year olds. Local schools and the Youth Service to improve youth provision within the area, and seek funding for a purpose built youth centre for 2006.  Use of Community buildings in Area with a network of trained volunteers Promote community project in rural areas through partnership working

## CONCLUSIONS FROM FINDINGS

There is such a huge range of information to draw upon from the extensive consultation carried out that the summary findings focuses on the 'golden threads' that underpins most of the findings. Clearly however the needs for children and young people in our rural communities is significantly different for the needs of young people that live within Salisbury City.

The following is a **brief** summary of the findings:

- Not enough places for young people to go
- Lack of open space/creative play facilities
- Not enough 'free' play
- Nowhere for children and young people to 'hang out'
- The negative perceptions of young people by older people



- Lack of facilities in general for young people in particular in the rural communities
- A need to improve existing play facilities – particularly in the rural settings
- Create more active play sites such as BMX, bike tracks, adventure/assault courses
- Transport costs too high for young people and families
- Poor transport results in difficulty accessing services currently provided
- Lack of publicity and co-ordination of events for children and young people
- Support parents to understand and play with their children

## 12. LOCAL PROVISION EXAMINED

### 12.1 AUDIT METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive audit of services and facilities available to children and young people has been carried out through a combination of desk-based results, consultation with key providers and physical audit. The opportunities have been categorised as those available in our specific district and subject to district boundaries, often but not always in the control of the District Council. Those available to children and young people across the county without district boundaries (often provided or commissioned by the County Council)

#### 12.1.2 DISTRICT AND COUNTY WIDE FINDINGS:

[A comprehensive list of the local district and county finding can be found in detail in Appendix C](#)

## 13. PROPOSED LOCAL STANDARDS

There are a number of quality standards that we currently have or are working towards. Not all are statutory obligations of a local district council but those of a County with a remit of Children and Young peoples however working towards these standards we see as good practice and as a local authority striving for excellence we will aspire to meet all relevant and appropriate standards.

There are clearly statutory requirements that we already adhere to, Equality Standards, Child Protection and health and safety legislation.

### Planning Policy PPG17.

Government policy on planning for open space sport and recreation states that local standards must be based upon an assessment of local provision and local needs, therefore the District Council is looking to move away from providing fixed play opportunities using the NPFA 6-acre-standard and will be developing its own standards.

### Quality Standards Fixed Play areas

Quality standards for the implementation of fixed public play areas are determined by BS-EN1176. This stipulates a European standard for the design, manufacture and installation of play areas with an emphasis on design and safety.

## **Positive Activities for Young People National Standards**

Local Authorities are now required to provide positive activities for young people under section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The age range qualifying is for 13-19yrs and up to 24yrs for young people with special educational needs.

With this comes a set of national standards and local authorities should determine how these standards would be translated into actual provisions.

- Access to two hours per week of sporting activity including formal and informal sports, outdoor and adventurous sports and other physical activities such as aerobics and dance – provided through the national curriculum and leisure time activities.
- Access to two hours per week of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes. This includes activities in which young people pursue their interests and hobbies; activities contributing to their personal, social and spiritual development; activities encouraging creativity, innovation and enterprise; study support and residential opportunities.
- Opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community through volunteering, including leading action, campaigning and fundraising.
- A wide range of other recreational, cultural, sporting and enriching experiences.
- A range of safe and enjoyable places in which to spend time. This could simply be somewhere to socialise with their friends.

## **14. ACTION PLAN**

The action plan for the Play strategy is set out in the following table. The action plan identifies a number of objectives aimed at addressing issues raised by children and young people either through recent or existing consultation. The actions are split into 'aspirational' and 'definite'.

Aspirational means to us that we have a desire to deliver these services/actions, however, limited financial resources or expertise in the field of play means we need to explore what external funding/resources is available to achieve this. The definite column identifies those services/actions that we have made a commitment to deliver over the next 5years.

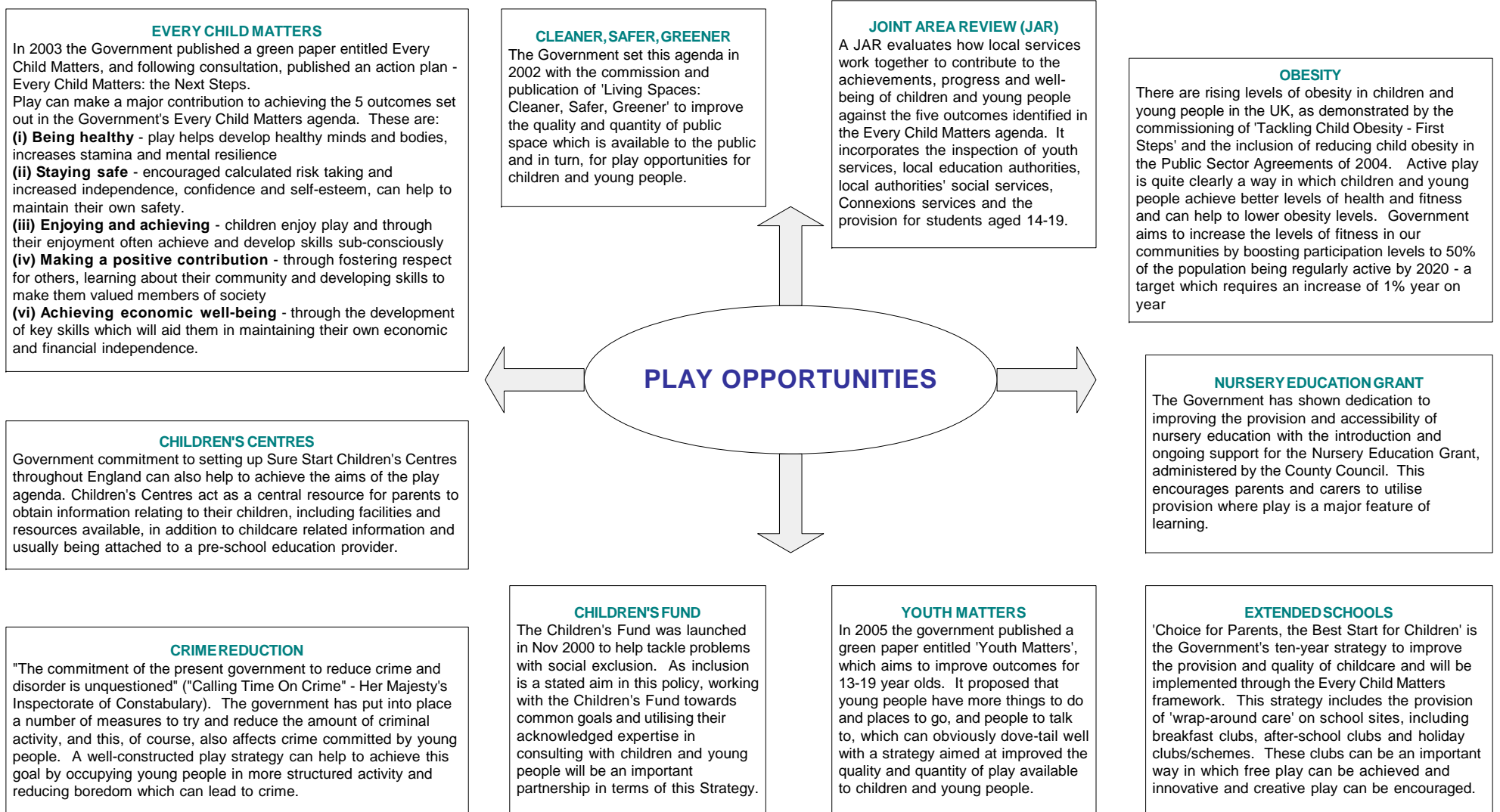
## **15. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy**

Salisbury District Council and countywide actions by the Play Partnership will constantly review the actions in this strategy.

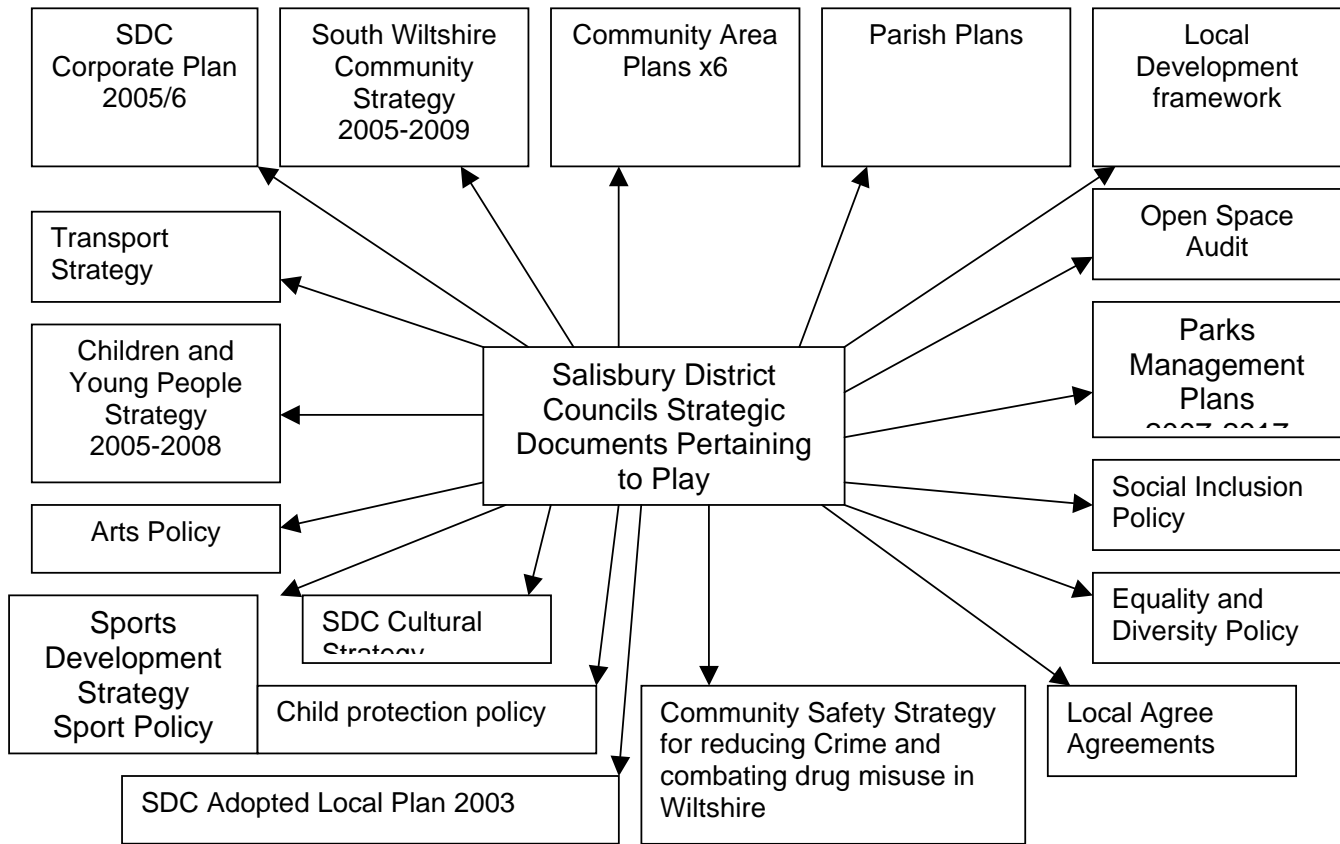
## **Appendixes:**

## 9.2 The Contribution Play Makes towards National Agendas

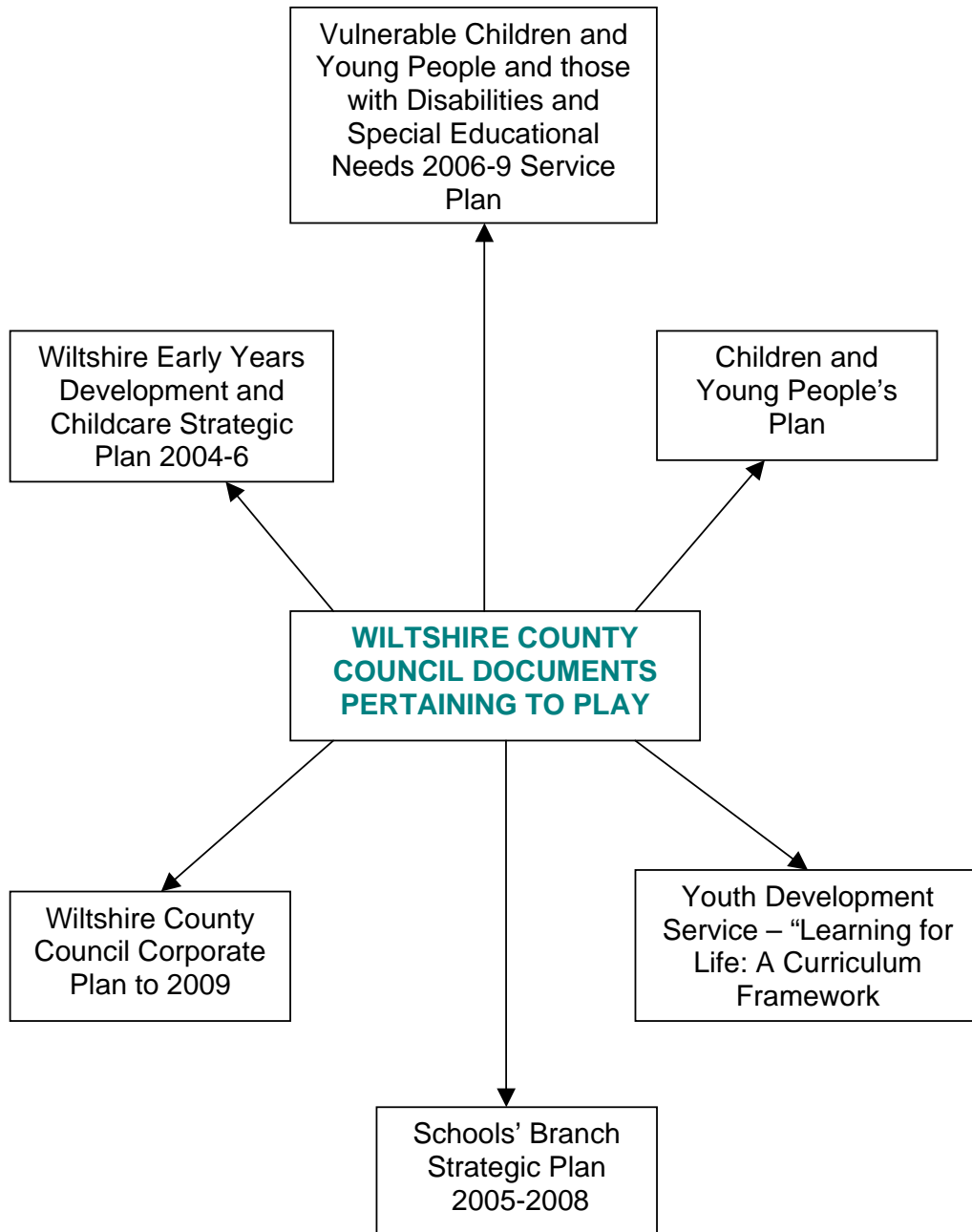
Central government has clearly set a number of wider agendas which play strategies can contribute towards. With this in mind, this Strategy shows a clear bias towards several of these agendas. As there is currently no on-going funding to create sustainable play opportunities, the ability to sustain programmes put in place by the Big Lottery Fund grants and other developments will currently have to be funded by linking the outcomes of this Play Strategy with current local government priorities, which are developed through central Government agendas. The key actions in this Strategy will therefore work towards achieving much more than just improved play opportunities for our district's children.



### 9.3 The contribution play makes towards local strategic documents.



## 9.4 Other Strategic Documents for Wiltshire



## Other Strategic Documents for Wiltshire

### WASP

WASP's initial three year strategy, First Active, states that their actions will result in:

- Quality physically active play for all children in registered playgroups and nurseries
- More physical activity and sport out of school hours
- More opportunities for young people to participate in sport and sports leadership training
- Fewer young people dropping out of sport

These aims clearly dovetail with those set out by the government regarding targets surrounding obesity levels, and in doing so, will encourage active play amongst our target age group.

The regional group aims to encourage active living, stating "activity must be regarded as an integral part of transport (walking and cycling), play (playgrounds and community spaces), sport (after school clubs and community clubs).....", clearly linking sport and activity to play.

Their key challenges include our target age groups and their strategic programmes include Splash, which also meets some of this Strategy's aims. They are committed to inclusion of physically disabled children and those with Special Educational Needs.

### Children's and Young Peoples Plan 2006-2009

This document has as its basis the 5 Every Child Matters Outcomes, in common with this strategy. In particular, it states that in order to achieve their vision of achieving these outcomes, they will 'give a voice and influence to children and young people'. In order to help achieve these outcomes, they aim to increase the range of activities available for young people out of school hours'. Increasing the opportunities for children to play will also help to address some areas specified in the Local Public Service Agreement such as improving health and well being in children and reducing anti-social behaviour.

### Wiltshire Early Years Development and Childcare Strategic Plan 2004-6

The Wiltshire Early Years Partnership exists to "enhance the care and play experience of children up to 14 years (16 in the case of young people with disabilities).

Within their strategic plan (in the process of being up-dated) they have several aims which are in line with those of this Strategy, as follows:

- "continue to support inclusive play practice" – to offer at least 4 training sessions per year on inclusive play
- "develop a Wiltshire Play Policy representative of all ages of children" and to "have an active play policy endorsed by the county council and the partnership" - a Play Development Officer with this brief was appointed in November 2006 and the result is this document
- "develop a multicultural toy and resource library"
- "playwork – to raise skills county-wide"

The aims clearly promote the development of good quality play opportunities within the county and reinforce the county's approach to raising the profile of play in Wiltshire.

### **Vulnerable Children and Young People and those with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs 2006-09 Service Plan**

Whilst this document deals with a particular group of children and young people, this a group which the County and District Councils and keen to see engaged with and included in play opportunities under the inclusion policy statement. The Service Plan states as part of it's purpose:

- “The services provided promote the educational and social inclusion of children and young people” and
- ‘help to prevent and reduce crime by identifying young people at high risk of offending and acting to reduce that risk”

### **Wiltshire County Council Corporate Plan to 2009**

The County Council has five broad strategic goals, including:

- “to provide supportive services in ways that increase people’s independence and choice while protecting vulnerable people” – this can include play as a means to increase independence and this Strategy gives particular emphasis to encouraging vulnerable people to experience play opportunities in a safe environment;
- “to enable Wiltshire people to live healthier and safer lives by working with health, police, District Councils and other partners” – this Strategy can lead to healthier and safer children through play and is achieving this partly through solid partnerships with relevant agencies and departments
- The County Council aim to “become the healthiest county in England in which to live by 2012” – active play clearly supports this aim
- County Priority Outcomes (within the five strategic goals) include
  - To increase civic participation among Wiltshire citizens, particularly young people” – and through active consultation with children and young people we are encouraging this
  - To promote independence through integrated provision and partnership working” – this can be done through play and encouraged through the Wiltshire Play Partnership
  - To improve services for young people” – including play provision
  - To improve community safety and reduce the fear of crime” – through encouraging young people to take part in constructive activities rather than resort to criminal activities through boredom

### **Schools’ Branch Strategic Plan 2005-2008**

“The Schools’ Branch overall aim is to contribute to raising standards, improving the well-being of all children and young people within the changing role for the Local Authority as a champion of parents and children and as strategic leaders of education in Wiltshire”

Whilst Schools’ Branch is concerned in the main with education, the Every Child Matters goals overlap between education and play and strategic play aims can be partly met through education and vice versa. The Plan states their aims will be achieved through:

- “sharing the vision for developing better outcomes for children and young people to enable them to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being” – aims shared with this Strategy

- “promoting personalisation and personalised learning and involving children, young people and their families in shaping and determining the services available” – achieved through consultation

In particular, the section of the Plan covering Extended Schools includes in its objectives:

- “to support the implementation of Every Child Matters and Change for Children”

### **Youth Development Service – ‘Learning for Life: A Curriculum Framework’**

By having a curriculum, the Youth Service demonstrates that their work is generally more structured than would be considered to fall within the definition of play being free to choose and free to come and go. However, as the curriculum generally defines outcomes, which are compatible with our strategy, and we consider these activities to be youth’s form of play we have included this curriculum document as being relevant to our strategic links.

### **Libraries and Heritage Service Plan 2006**

(This document is currently being updated.)

This document specifically links their programme of children’s activities to the Every Child Matters outcomes and links to the intended outcomes of the County Council’s Corporate Strategy and goals connected to children and young people. Although the document does not talk about ‘play’ specifically, as the library activities fit our free to choose, to come and go and free of charge criteria we therefore classify these activities as playful activities. This document therefore embeds play activities in their agenda and goals for the period of the plan.

The document also states “Specifically this requires Libraries, Heritage and Arts Services, as well as officers with cultural roles across the council, to listen first and foremost to local communities and:

- address lack of leisure and recreation activities
- improve play areas, open spaces, outdoor sports facilities, and visitor attractions
- develop places for young people, including informal meeting spaces
- encourage participation of young people within the community”



### **DCLG Household Survey**

In November 2006 Wiltshire County Council undertook a random survey of households across Wiltshire and received over 1,800 responses. The key indicators which have relevance to play and young people were:

- 46.3% saw teenagers hanging around on the streets as a major anti-social issue
- 42% thought that improvements in the provision for teenagers, young people, and children was necessary

### **CHILDCARE AUDIT**

In Autumn 2006, a comprehensive audit was undertaken by the Early Years Service at Wiltshire County Council regarding childcare provision and facilities in the county. This substantial survey of parents was undertaken by ASK, Wiltshire's Children's Information Service and administered through pre-schools, nurseries, schools and parent and toddler groups, etc.

The survey highlighted holiday activities (40%), craft and messy play 35% and outdoor play opportunities (33%) in South Wiltshire for 0 – 8 years olds as the top most popular requests from parents for their children.

### **TOMORROW'S VOICE**

Tomorrows Voice a panel of young people aged 11 - 18 using years' classes in Wiltshire secondary schools. Roughly half of the Schools take part each survey. There are two surveys a year with questions posed from the County, District, Health, Police and Fire Brigade. About 1,200 young people take part each time. The last survey was completed in June 2006. It covered a range of issues including cultural diversity and the perceptions of young people, amongst others. Three quarters of the respondents felt that young people are not viewed fairly by people in the wider community, with particular reference to how adults may agree with more negative statements about the young rather than position ones. The majority of young people would like to see more basketball or floodlit games courts, more places to hang out, and more skateparks & BMX tracks.

### **PEOPLE'S VOICE**

People's Voice a panel of around 3,500 Wiltshire adult residents chosen at random from the electoral register and organised into 20 mini panels to represent the 20 community areas in Wiltshire. The panel is consulted up to 4 times a year using postal questionnaires with questions issued by a partnership of the County, District councils, Health, Police and Fire Brigade.

### **CARERS VOICE**

Carer's Voice a panel of around 450 people who care for a relative or friend or neighbour and are therefore classed as carers by Social Services who have particular needs. These are surveyed with a postal questionnaire three times a year.

### **WAYS - Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports**

WAYS has worked with a variety of groups in the South Wiltshire. This has been mainly through informal consultation with groups of young people around the area that they live in and what they would like to see provided specifically for them.

The focus is always around open access provision that would be free to use at any time. WAYS is trying to help young people look at different sorts of provision including outdoor bouldering rocks, dedicated areas for power kite flying and mountain boarding, BMX / 4X tracks for bikes, skate parks, mountain bike trails, dedicated areas for Park our (free running) and orienteering courses.

### **Looked After Children**

Some efforts have been made in the recent past for the Looked After Children's Service to work with the District Councils to provide reduced cost leisure activities for Looked After Children, but this remains patchy across the county. How play is offered is for this group supports various Every Child Matters outcomes and so is an area considered in the Looked After Children review process.

### **Gypsies and Travellers**

The Traveller Education Service within Wiltshire County Council deals mainly with the educational needs of travellers, although there is a limited amount of work in the sphere of play. The Sure Start Grant funds a 0.2fte post within the traveller service to focus on play, including encouraging families to take up pre-school places, encouraging play by taking themed play bags and modelling these in front of the parents, who then keep the bags until the next visit and working with children from 0-19 by suggesting play activities and providing information. This work is also backed up by 2 teaching hours per week from a traveller teacher and 4.5 hours of teaching assistant time to facilitate more play, and who are also funded through the Sure Start Grant.

### **Children's Fund**

The Wiltshire Children's Fund works with children and young people aged between 5 and 13 and also with their families. They work in parts of Trowbridge, Chippenham, Salisbury and rural Wiltshire.

The Wiltshire Children's Fund works with and tries to help lots of different people in many ways. They give money and support to lots of services or projects so that they can help children, young people and families at school or where they live and play.

They visit lots of children and adults in schools, clubs and where they live to listen to their ideas about making things better. All of the work that we do is to help children and young people feel happy, healthy and safe and to give them a chance to learn, take part and share their ideas.

They are a team of 7 friendly staff who work in our office or out and about with children, young people and families. Blib and Blob are our alien mascots and you can find out about them on this website. The children's charity Barnardos and the Government help to run the Wiltshire Children's Fund.

## LOCALITY YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES GROUPS

### 12.1.2 District Findings

SDC contributes a range of funding to a spectrum of organisations. For example SDC contributes core costs to Salisbury Arts Centre, Salisbury Playhouse, Salisbury International Arts festival, Sarum Orchestra, Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum, Bournemouth Orchestra – all whom provide for children and young people either through children's events or participatory activities.

Within Salisbury District the fixed play areas are provided primarily by the city area committee funded via a city raised 'precept' City Area Committee agree and have responsibility for maintenance of the fixed play areas within Salisbury.

The following is provided within the city of Salisbury via the above-mentioned funding arrangements

- 29 play areas,
  - 3 skate parks,
  - 2 youth shelters
  - 7 muggas (multi use games areas)
- All the above are located in parks, open spaces or recreation grounds within the city
- There are currently three further play areas provided by Salisbury District Council outside of the City boundary
  - SDC own and manage 2 sites with nature reserve status
  - SDC own and manage 4 formal park areas - Victoria Park, Q E Gardens, Churchill Gardens and Bourne Hill,
  - There are also a number of open spaces varying sizes within the City boundary covering approx.230 acres / 95 hectares.
    - Salisbury has a series of sportswalls at a variety of convenient sites around the City - Wyndham Park Open Space, Bishopdown, Fisherton Recreation Ground, Harnham Recreation Ground, Meyrick Close and Pinewood Way, which provide safe, modern, attractive facilities for people of all ages to play basketball and football.
    - support the redevelopment of play areas, play equipment and safe places for our children to play through our SWAG grant scheme
    - Parish and Town Councils are the providers of public Play facilities outside of the Salisbury City boundary and raise funds through the locally set precept and external funding sources e.g. SWAG
    - Some of the provision is not strictly the three free's for Play however the following schemes/activities/information are provided and contribute to the overall picture.
    - Holiday schemes@ 5 Rivers Leisure centre:
      - **Kidz Kamp** is a holiday activity programme designed for children aged 5 - 14years, whilst the children attend Kidz Kamp they will take part in activities such as; trampolining, football, swimming, team games, quiet games, arts and crafts plus much more including outdoor activities. Outdoor activities: including messy activities trips to Victoria Park and nature walks.

- **Jolli Tots 0-5 years:** Jolli Tots provides daycare for babies from their 6 week check-up up to 5 years old. The aim is to provide a stimulating environment for children's personal, social and developmental needs. There is a qualified team on hand to ensure that the child's stay is made safe, secure and enjoyable as well as being an educational experience.
- **Juni Fun Parent and Toddler Classes: 12mths – 5years**  
The activities for kids aged 12 months-5 years are collectively known as Juni Fun classes. These sessions are designed to develop social skills and help prepare children for integration into play groups or pre-school activities.  
Parents or guardians and children can take part in group songs, arts and crafts, play dough and bouncy castle sessions. They also use bean bags, balls, hoops and larger jumping and balancing equipment. Part of the session includes following a fun circuit course, introducing balancing and jumping, and encouraging coordination and learning through physical activities.
- Homework Club at the Bemerton Heath Neighbourhood Centre (BHNC) twice a week for ages 7 to 12 years attend for 2 afternoons per week in 2-hour sessions & one afternoon per week for the age group 13 to 16 years
- Free 'Splash' Activities at the BHNC during the school holidays
- Gr8 Magazine - Salisbury and Stonehenge Tourism Partnership's guide to activities for the under 16's in Salisbury and south Wiltshire.
- Rural Arts - runs special projects aimed at schools otherwise there are children's/family performances
- PAWS (Participatory Art Workshops) - some PAWS projects are for holiday/play schemes or after schools sessions
- 'On Track' Guide which lists all local sports and activities
- Sports Activities – not free however free choice to participate
  - Sports stars under 16's course for archery and squash
  - Sports Stars: 10 - 12 week coaching programmes for 8 - 15 year olds - whole district - netball, squash, archery, tennis, cricket, basketball, volleyball
  - Holiday coaching programmes - athletics, netball, basketball, tennis, rugby, cricket
  - Festivals: range for festivals for 8 - 16 yrs - netball, football, hockey, rugby, cricket, basketball, tennis
  - PAYP programme - holiday activities for referred young people
  - Disability Clubs - for 16+ - weekly sports activities for people with learning/physical disabilities
  - Support the Get Kicking project through Youth Action Wiltshire - football linked to youth centres
  - Wiltshire Youth Games - county competition for 8 - 16 yrs - athletics, basketball, hockey, cricket, tag rugby, netball, football and athletics
- Salisbury Art Centre & Playhouse run holiday activities both for participants and audiences
- Play Rangers – part funded through community safety partnership
- WAYS Partnership – A range of alternative sports opportunities predominately within the Salisbury Plain area due to funding.

- WYAP –provides a range of art activities for 13-21 yr olds e.g. Music Express set up to give young people 13- 18 a chance to experience music technology first hand and learn how use music technology including DJ' ing – provided in Durrington and Salisbury
- Bridging Project – project for disabled young people to be in a range of activities including: arts, drama, sports, social trips etc.
- Gypsy and Travellers provisions provided by Shine
- Bass connections is a Wiltshire County Council youth arts project based in Salisbury which offers six fully equipped rehearsal rooms, DJ equipment, recording studio, graphic and media department, publicity and media department and an up to date resource centre for the music industry.
- Street based youth work by WCC Youth development Services in Harham and Bemerton Heath
- ASK Holiday play scheme brochure
- Commercial: these are only a few limited examples
  - 10 pin bowling
  - Clown about – soft play area
  - Larkhill pitch and putt
  - Wilton Road Pitch and Putt
  - Westwood sports centre - hall hire only
  - Bishop Wordsworth sports centre - hall hire only
  - Horse riding - Wilton, Whiteparish

### 12.1.3 COUNTY FINDINGS

- **Toy Libraries**

There are 9 toy libraries in Wiltshire, each offering loan of children's toys, and some offering 'stay and play' sessions and equipment loan. Most are open once a month and charge a nominal amount to parents and carers, including formal childcare providers, to enable children to access ever-changing play resources and continually extend their play opportunities. Most also offer short-term membership to support families who are only in the area on a short-term basis, which particularly supports traveller families and those attached to mobile employment, such as the military. Toy libraries are also linked with Children's Centre and provide outreach.

- **School Playgrounds**

Each school in Wiltshire has outdoor play areas which are utilised at playtimes and lunchtimes except in poor weather. The size and quality of play opportunities available vary from school to school depending upon the emphasis which the school places upon play, and in some schools there are trained playworkers and MDSAs have received specific training to enable and support play. In addition, there are play opportunities inside schools during poor weather. Although outside the remit of this Strategy, we also recognise that within the classroom play is often seen as the best way to encourage learning, especially at Foundation Stage.

- **Extended Services In and Around Schools and on School Sites**

Wiltshire has a network of Extended Schools Co-ordinators who cover their local geographical areas and co-ordinate the offer in LEA schools. Many of the County's schools now have out of school clubs as part of the provision of childcare, with

breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs being provided by mostly external providers. These clubs offer a variety of play opportunities, including outdoor play and sports, indoor games play, cookery, creative activities and organised team games. Although some of these activities are directed, activities are not usually compulsory but are on offer, and children are free to choose their activities and can drop in and out of different activities as they choose.

In addition to the childcare other activities are also available in line with the core offer, including homework clubs and study support through to music tuition and sport activities. Some offer family learning and open up facilities such as ICT suites for community use, or their buildings for holiday clubs and playschemes.

- **Contribution to Bristol Play Day**

A South-West Play Day is held annually in Bristol to train play workers, and is organised by a partnership of organisations led by Play work Partnerships. This day, at a nominal cost, encourages play workers and others interested in encouraging children to access good quality play opportunities to attend wide-ranging workshops and participate in practical activities, and with play provision for children in the form of crèches and activities, the day truly caters for all concerned with play. Although this is outside of our county-boundary, the day is partly funded by Wiltshire County Council and supported by County employees.

- **Pre-Schools and Nurseries**

As in all counties, Wiltshire has a good number of pre-schools and nursery schools offering pre-school education to children under 5. These settings offer opportunities for children in this age group to learn to play with other children and include a period of free play as well as directed activities working towards the achievement of Early Years Goals. There are currently 292 nurseries and pre-schools in the private, voluntary and independent sector in Wiltshire.

- **Parent and Toddler Groups**

In common with other areas, there are wide assortments of parent and toddler groups in all areas of the county, totalling 230 groups. These are supported by WCC's Service Level Agreement with ASK (Children's Information Service) to ensure quality.

- **Creches**

There are a few crèches in Wiltshire for less regular childcare, ranging from facilities in hotels to leisure centres. There is good provision in Kennet and Salisbury but fewer crèche facilities available in West and North Wiltshire; however the Childcare and Family Services Survey 2006 shows that there is no critical need for further crèche facilities in either of these two districts.

- **Wiltshire Play Resource Centre**

Wiltshire has an excellent Play Resource Centre which houses a vast variety of industrial waste materials which can be used by children in creative activities. Membership of the service is nominal and the price of purchasing scrap materials within the reach of most families and settings in Wiltshire. The centre has recently purchased a new outreach bus, taking their total to two. This allows them to take

their service from Melksham, near the centre of our large county, to outlying areas. In addition, the Wiltshire Play Resource Centre offers creative activities to children and young people from their central base, some on series basis. They also visit Children's Centres as part of their outreach.

- **Library Service**

The library service is run by the County Council, with branches throughout the county. There are a variety of activities run for children, with the quantity and provision depending upon the library and the population which it serves. The main activities are:

- Story Times for under 5s – some libraries
- Rhyme Times for babies & toddler – some libraries
- Summer Reading Challenge – incentives & activities to encourage children (4-12) to read throughout the summer) – in all libraries
- Family Learning activities – various – currently looking at our Learning “Offer”
- General activities throughout the year to promote a love of books and libraries – book related events, themes (eg Christmas, Chinese New Year), crafts, stories, games, competitions
- Loan of jigsaws – limited libraries
- Bookstart (national books for babies initiative) - promotional activities related to e.g. special rhyme times, Book Crawl (to be introduced this year)
- Pre-school activities in library – introduction to library/stories
- Reading groups – limited libraries – most linked to schools
- Homework “clubs” (9 year olds+)– Calne, Melksham & Salisbury
- Mini Street – evening for teenagers where they can engage with local businesses, leisure and recreational activity providers and musicians etc. - Salisbury

- **Museum Service**

The county Museum Service supports 19 museums organisations throughout Wiltshire, which offer a variety of activities and opportunities for children and young people. Over the last few months these have included Knights In Armour days, Victorian activity days, including dressing up, creative activities and junk workshops. Admission to many museums is free or nominal.

- **Bright Horizons**

Wiltshire County Council contracts Bright Horizons to co-ordinate childcare training courses for play workers in the county. They support play workers to achieve Level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications, in addition to administering the Early Years Professional Status applications for funding and organising one-off training events utilising outside agencies and in-house providers. They also provide a training course entitled ‘Everyone Can Play’ which concentrates on inclusion issues in relation to play opportunities.

- **Youth Service**

Although a lot of the activities undertaken by the Youth Service begin by being structured and youth worker led, as the young people develop and progress through the curriculum they are encouraged more and more to undertake their own projects, make their own decisions, work together as a team and attain independence in their activities, and therefore this is considered to be a more youth-orientated form of



'play' in a slightly different context. There is a thriving and very active youth service in Wiltshire with youth clubs and activities in many areas and by considering these activities to be part of the play provision in Wiltshire there is a significant offering to youth in terms of play.

- **Uniformed organisations**

There is good provision of uniformed organisations in Wiltshire, but as most activities are directed beyond being considered free play, this area will not be discussed in this Strategy.

- **Sure Start Children's Centres**

20 Children's Centres are being established in Wiltshire, each bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support for children under 5 and their families. As part of their remit is to improve health and emotional development for young children, which overlaps with the objectives of this Strategy, they are well positioned to work in partnership towards our joint goals. Although they will not provide play opportunities as part of their activities, except indirectly through childcare provision, they are well positioned to advise and promote play opportunities to parents and carers.

- **Splash**

Splash is linked to Wiltshire Police and runs programmes which promote inclusion and development of young people through a series of activity programmes which aim to involve young people at risk to improve their contribution to society. WASP take part in the development of the programmes, which take place all over the county for varying lengths of time. Activities are available for young people who fit the set criteria from ages 9 to 19 (different programmes having differing age groups) and are free of charge, and although some programmes are fairly structured, others are aimed more at improving personal skills through a fairly fluid structure and given the target age groups, can be considered as 'play'.

- **WASP**

The Wiltshire and Swindon Activity and Sports Partnership (WASP) is an alliance of organisations which work together to raise the level and standards of physical activity and sport. They are part of forty-five county partnerships, and one of seven which comprise the South West regional structure. By increasing the number of sport and activity participants and frequency of activity, they aim to improve the health and fitness of people in Wiltshire, including children and young people. They hold events which are aimed specifically at disabled people and those with special educational needs. Of the 12 key challenges they are addressing in Wiltshire, two are specifically aimed at our target age group – Early Years and Out of School Hours. In terms of early years, they work in partnership with the Children's Information Service, ASK, to help parents and toddlers become involved in active toddler groups, and aim to ensure more quality active play for children in playgroups and nurseries. They encourage active play in playgrounds and community spaces and sports in after-school clubs and community clubs, and hold a variety of youth activities, including 'Wake and Shake', encouraging young people to take a more active part in sports activities at schools in lunchtimes and after school.

- **'WAYS' (Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports)**



The Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports Partnership is a joint project funded by Sustain the Plain Leader +, a European Community initiative, managed by Defra in England and involves voluntary organisations, Wiltshire's District Councils, and the County Council.

WAYS promotes alternative sports in Wiltshire, including involving young people as volunteers to help raise awareness and using a mobile skate park which can be taken around the county to let people try their hand at a range of alternative sports. The scheme is run by Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports Partnership (WAYS) and aims to provide more alternative and challenging sports for young people in the region.

The impetus to develop WAYS came about as it became increasingly clear that local communities wanted to provide facilities such as skate parks but were unsure of how to deal with the red tape for issues such as health & safety and planning.

WAYS provide expertise to parish councils with no experience in providing facilities for alternative sports. They also plan to bring together groups with an interest in setting up activities with existing projects to share ideas and experience. A large part of their focus is on providing free opportunities for children and young people.

- **TRIO**

Trio is contracted to provide support and training to childminders in Wiltshire, from initial interest through registration to further training.

- **WILTSHIRE ASSEMBLY OF YOUTH**

WAY is an elected body of young people which represents the views of young people throughout the county.

They work closely with a lot of organisations and decision making bodies across Wiltshire and aim to ensure young people have the chance to democratically elect the people they want to represent them at a national level to ensure that the voices of young people in Wiltshire are heard.

- **WYAP**

This partnership between West Wiltshire, Kennet, Salisbury and North Wiltshire District Councils, Wiltshire County Council Youth Development Service, and Arts Council England South West, works with young people aged 13 to 21 to help them enjoy, take part in and gain skills from high quality arts activities.

Some of the youth arts projects to date have included the development of a network of dance groups, graffiti, video, animation and musical theatre projects. Professional touring dance and theatre companies have also worked and performed with local young people.

- **Youth Action Wiltshire**

Youth Action Wiltshire is a registered charity and voluntary youth organisation offering training and information for club leaders, together with advice, sporting and creative activities and events for young people aged between 8 and 25 years in youth projects and clubs.

- **Community First**

Community First is a charity that works at the forefront of community development to help improve the quality of life and economic well being of people and local communities throughout Wiltshire and Swindon.

They work in close partnership with local grass roots communities, voluntary organisations, statutory agencies and funders to help develop and deliver wide ranging community programmes that bring social, economic and environmental benefits to local people in Wiltshire and Swindon. The District Council has worked, and will continue to work with Community First on the development of play projects, with particular reference to facilitating public consultation.