

South Hams Play Strategy 2006 - 2011

October 2006

**South Hams District Council in conjunction with
South Hams at Play in Environmental Spaces (SHAPES)**



THE SOUTH HAMS PLAY STRATEGY 2006-2011

CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Section 1. Introduction

- 1.1. What is the purpose and Scope of the South Hams Play Strategy?
- 1.2. Definitions of Play, Young People and Children

Section 2. The Case for Play

- 2.1. What is the value of play?
- 2.2. Contribution play makes to wider agendas

Section 3. Setting the Context

- 3.1. Play in National, Regional and Local context
- 3.2. South Hams Demographic Population
- 3.3. How Play fits within National and Regional initiatives
- 3.4. How Play fits within Local initiatives

Section 4. Review of community engagement

- 4.1. Approach
- 4.2. Findings and Conclusions

Section 5. Activities and Facilities for Children and Young People in South Hams

- 5.1. Play areas Audit findings and methodology
- 5.2. Other Play Provision in the South Hams
- 5.3. Setting Local standards for Play Provision
- 5.4. Management of Play Initiatives

Section 6. Delivering the Strategy; Key Themes

- 6.1. To increase the recognition of the importance of children's play
- 6.2. Focusing on children's needs and voices
- 6.3. To ensure high quality and wide range of play experiences
- 6.4. Challenging and exciting play free from unacceptable risk
- 6.5. Working together to deliver play

Section 7. Evaluation Plan

- 7.1. Project Review
- 7.2. Performance Indicators
- 7.3. Strategy review

Section 8. Action plan

APPENDICES

- Appendix A** Geographical Representation of Broad Age Bands and Index of Deprivation 2004. DCC
- Appendix B** Play Policy Consultation Report – Devon Play Network
- Appendix C** Play Strategy Children’s Questionnaire Report – SHAPES/ SHDC
- Appendix D** Something for the Weekend Consultation Report - Devon Youth Service
- Appendix E** Audit of Existing Services for Children & Young People in Totnes – Devon Childrens Trust
- Appendix F** DPFA/Devonplay–Survey of Outdoor Sport and Play Provision within Devon – http://www.devonrcc.org.uk/page/devon_playing_field_association_research.php
- Appendix G** Every Child Matters – Outcomes Framework - www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications/
- Appendix H** Play Policy – SHAPES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years there has been a growing recognition of the importance of play and informal recreation, as an essential component of every child's life and vital to their development. It is crucial for emotional, physical and spiritual growth, for intellectual and educational development and for acquiring social and behavioural skills. A Play Strategy is needed to set out how play opportunities are available for all children. The Strategy is borne out of a commitment to improve strategic planning and so increase access to, and participation in, play opportunities for all children, supporting the valuable role play has at an individual, family and community level.

In response to the Governments Play Review 2003, "Getting Serious About Play", which followed the announcement of the allocation of Big Lottery Funding to support play projects and initiatives, South Hams at Play in Environmental Settings (SHAPES - the South Hams Play Forum), in conjunction with South Hams District Council, has developed a Play Policy and Strategy to inform future development and delivery of play services throughout the South Hams. We are committed to offering children the enjoyment and fulfilment that positive play opportunities can provide. The Children's Play initiative will create, improve and develop inclusive play provision across the South Hams that responds to the needs of the community and reflects the interests and wishes of the children and young people who will use it.

The Big Lottery Fund has allocated £155 million to improving play provision throughout England, allocating funds to each local authority and creating a fund of £16 million to support innovative play projects, both these funding streams will be available to agencies that have an overall play policy with clear play strategies leading from it. £200,000 has been allocated directly to South Hams.

This strategy looks at current provision within the South Hams for both structured and informal play activities which are available for the children and young people aged 0-19. The South Hams Public Space Strategy is in development and to inform this document the Council is undertaking a quantitative and qualitative audit of equipped play park provision and open spaces. The review of the current provision shows opportunities to rationalise the more formal play areas now located in inappropriate spaces or with outdated equipment, and also identifies new natural environment informal spaces close to populated areas. Much of the South Hams is recognised as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has a wealth of natural environment spaces, providing opportunities to develop new innovative play spaces.

Since 2004 the Devon Play Network, South Hams District Council and SHAPES have carried out consultations with adults, children and young people asking for their views on the services they receive, the facilities they have and the opportunities for play they would like in the future. These consultations have informed the content of this strategy and the key action points.

As well as looking at the provision of play activity the strategy includes the Play Policy for the South Hams which sets a standard to which all practitioners and agencies can sign up to. The development of a Play Policy is now a requirement of the government under their Best Value Performance Indicators

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. What is the Purpose and Scope of The South Hams Play Strategy?

The Play Strategy for the South Hams will provide a forward vision for play in the district. It will look specifically at play provision and opportunities promoting best practice using the framework of Best Play: The Seven Objectives 2000.

The provision:

- extends the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction they gain from it
- recognises the child's needs to test boundaries and responds positively to that need
- manages the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm
- maximises the range of play opportunities
- fosters independence and self-esteem
- fosters children's respect for others and offers opportunities for social interaction
- fosters the child's well-being, healthy growth and development, knowledge and understanding, creativity and capacity to learn.

The scope of the play strategy encompasses not only the play provision and facilities provided for children but also focuses on the participation of children and young people, and those who support them as workers, teachers, volunteers, parents or carers, in freely chosen activities.

This framework and the Devon Play Policy (Appendix H) allow strategic partnerships to plan and implement a range of play opportunities at both local and district levels. The key actions, time-scales, management and evaluation of the Action Plan contained within this Strategy will provide an agreed framework of priorities and actions for developing play opportunities across the South Hams for the next five years.

This strategy supports themes within the South Hams Community Strategy, and the emerging Public Space Strategy. This presents an exciting opportunity for delivering cohesive, cross cutting actions.

This strategy and key action points will enable the next stage in the development of play by the partners within the district and will provide opportunities for joint working with neighbouring authorities.

The Strategy is also brought forward in order to support a funding bid to the Big Lottery fund and will be used to underpin a detailed application for funding. It has to be accepted at the outset that the Action Plan attached to this Strategy has been drawn up on the assumption that Big Lottery funding, and partner resources, can be drawn in to support the Actions as presented. If this proves not to be the case then the vision set out in the Strategy will remain unaffected but the Action Plan will need to be reviewed and reduced to reflect resources available. The key role of Big Lottery funding in delivering the Action Plan is reflected in the number of actions where the "Children and Young People's Officer" is identified as the lead for delivery. The partners are committed to the Strategy and Action Plan but will only deliver with adequate resources in place.

1.2. Definitions of Play, Young People and Children

The definition of play widely shared by national play organisations including the Children's Play Council and the National Playing Fields Association is:

- Play is freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child.
- Play is the way children explore the world around them and develop and practise skills
- Play is not the destination but the journey
- Play is one of the fundamental processes which enhances life and is a right.
- Play can be fun or serious. Through play children explore social, material and imaginary worlds and their relationship with them.

In response to government's recent review (The Audit Commission) acknowledged the importance of Play. Their definition of a 'quality' Play experience is based on the 'degree to which children are provided with opportunities to experience directly:

- The natural elements
- Fabricated and natural materials and tools
- Challenge
- Free movement
- Emotions
- Variety
- Play with identity
- Varied social interaction

The following two definitions are also important:

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - Article 31

Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and arts.

Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural artistic, recreational and leisure activities.

Children's Play Council - Planning For Play March 2004

The term play refers to the free time activities of children and young people of all ages when they are choosing what to do, usually with their friends and without direction from adults.

South Hams District Council believes that play should be accessible to all. Article 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises; "that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community". This requirement, which extends to the provision of recreation opportunities that are designed to ensure access for children with disabilities, is in addition to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

For the purpose of this document and in line with the age definition adopted by the UN convention on the Rights of the Child, and the remit of Every Child Matters: Change for Children agenda, this guidance applies to Planning services and environments for children under the age of 18 (19 for special needs). Unless a particular age group is specified, all references to children and young people should be taken to include this full age range. Children and young people of all ages play. As they get older the words they use to describe their activities may change. For the purposes of this strategy the term “play” is used to describe the free-time activities of children and young people aged 0-18.

2 THE CASE FOR PLAY

2.1 What is the value of play?

Play provides children and young people with an important opportunity to develop their values, beliefs and traditions and understand how they impact on their environment. Play is crucially important in enabling children to engage with the complexities of the world around them in a way they choose. Through play children learn what cannot be taught; self value, self confidence, self esteem and self respect.

The Every Child Matters Framework specifies five outcomes which are universal ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances, The Every Child Matters green paper identified the five outcomes that are most important to children and young people:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The outcomes are mutually reinforcing. For example, children and young people learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged and the evidence shows clearly that educational achievement is the most effective route out of poverty.

2.2 Contribution play makes to wider agendas

“Planning for Play”– Guidance on the development and implementation of a local play strategy – Children’s Play Council 2006, clearly sets out a wide range of ways that play can contribute to wider agendas. Their examples include:

- Physical health and fitness
- Mental Health
- Play and the environment
- Inequality and exclusion
- Anti social behaviour

This strategy contributes to these agendas. Making appropriate play opportunities available to children and young people can benefit them in many areas of their lives and the community at large.

3 SETTING THE CONTEXT

3.1 Play in National, Regional and Local Context

3.1.1 The national context for play includes a range of government initiatives where play and the way it is developed within the local strategy have a role

- Every Child Matters - www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications/
- Children's Act 2004 - <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040031.htm>
- Youth matters - www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth/docs/youthmatters.pdf
- Children's Fund programmes - www.devonchildrensfund.org.uk/
- Housing and regeneration initiatives
- Providing play opportunities in rural areas
- Hear by Right - www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright/
- Convention on the Rights of the Child - www.unicef.org/crc/
- Disability Discrimination Act - www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm

3.1.2 The regional and county context includes

- Children's Trust Local Forums
- Early Years and Childcare Services of the Children's Trust, Zero14plus plan
- Devon Extended Schools Initiative
- Devon County Council Local Area Agreements
- Devon Youth Service plans
- Bigger Voices, Better World – DCC Youth Empowerment Strategy
<http://www.ukypdevon.co.uk/downloads/BiggerVoices.pdf>
- Devon Children and Young People Plan
- Social inclusion, anti-racism, anti-bullying, domestic violence agendas
- Cultural strategies including arts, sport, leisure and heritage
- Play Safety Forum
- DCC rural strategy
- Transport strategies

3.1.3 The district and local context

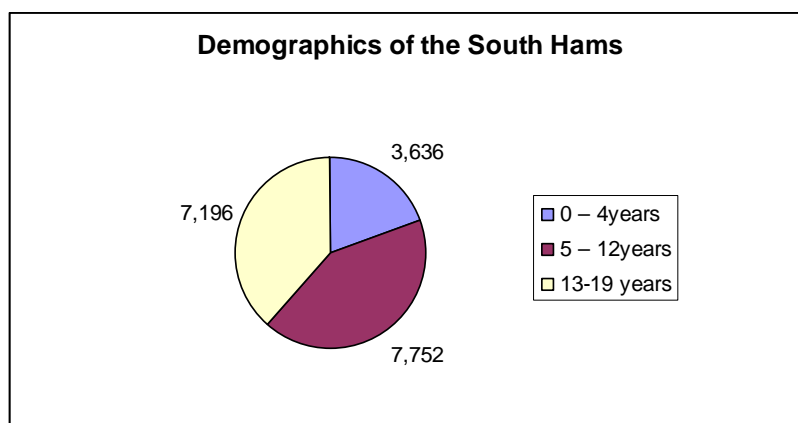
- South Hams Community Strategy
- South Hams Social Inclusion Policy
- South Hams Local Development Framework for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Safer South Hams Community Safety Strategy
- Parish Plans
- South Hams Public Space Strategy
- Child Protection Policy
- Youth Offending Team Strategy
- Housing Development policies – affordable housing
- Play Policy

3.2 South Hams Demographic Population

3.2.1 There are 18,584 young people aged 0 – 19 years in the South Hams Area which represents 21.8% of the population.

This figure is made up of:

- 3,636 (19.6%) – 0 – 4years;
- 7,752 (41%) 5 – 12years:
- 7196 (38.7%) 13-19 years.



The highest concentrations of children and young people are centred around Ivybridge and Dartmouth Townstal. The lowest concentration is around the south coastal wards.

3.2.2. Totnes Town & Bridgetown along with Ivybridge Filham have the highest number of lone parent families with dependent children. Other wards which have high proportions of lone parent families but lower actual numbers include Salcombe & Marlborough, Westville & Alvington, Avon & Harbourne and Dartington.

3.2.3 Ivybridge Woodlands, despite having a low proportion of lone parent families, has a comparatively high actual number of them. Although Ivybridge Filham has a high number of dependent children households it represents a comparatively low percentage of total households with dependent children.

Totnes Town has the highest actual number households of with no working adult closely followed by Ivybridge Filham, Totnes Bridgetown and Dartmouth Townstal.

Totnes Bridgetown and Dartmouth Townstal have comparatively high numbers of no working adult households which in addition make up a comparatively large proportion of total households with dependent children. Other wards with high proportions though lower numbers of dependent children households include Ivybridge Central, Charterlands and Newton & Noss.

3.2.4 These figures help to inform the deprivation indices and highlight areas where there may be problems experienced by children due to deprivation and poverty of opportunity. When considering the South Hams as a part of the England rankings, its minimum and maximum ranks are 8517 and 30,876.

Analysis shows that the average rank of a South Hams SOA (within England) is 19710 This figure lies within the third quartile indicating that on average the South Hams is better off than two out of every four SOAs in England. None of the South Hams SOAs fall into the most deprived 25%. However 26% fall into the second lower quartile i.e. the most deprived

50% of SOAs. These areas include parts of Bickleigh & Shaugh, Eastmoor, Cornwood and Sparkwell, Ivybridge, Erme valley, Charterlands, Westville & Alvington, Saltstone, Kingsbridge and Dartmouth and Totnes.

3.2.5 Within Devon and the South Hams there is a Traveller Community. On March 1st 2006 there were 52 Traveller children in school in the South Hams. Additionally it is estimated that 20% of 600 Traveller children in the county cannot access any schools, this, proportionally for the South Hams would be 13 children which gives an estimated total of around 65 school age children. The preschool figures are much harder to come by. There are many issues faced by these children, however, from engagement it appears their “play experience” is varied, challenging and more freely chosen than their non-traveller contemporaries. Information gathered from Travellers Education Services – Devon County Council.

3.2.6 Within the South Hams the overall proportion of the population from black and minority ethnic communities is very low – just 0.93%. Amongst children and young people (aged 0-19 inclusive) the proportion is slightly higher – at 1.61%. Across the South Hams this represents in the order of 300 children and young people, of whom the large majority (just over 230) are of mixed origin.

3.2.7 It is important to take all these issues into consideration when preparing a policy and strategy to ensure that we maintain the council’s priorities of access for all and value for money.

All population age range data was taken from September 2003 FHSA (comparatives 2002) at ward level.

Detailed information was taken from Census 2001 and other sources as detailed. Quantitative information can be sourced at:

[www.southhams.gov.uk/prosperity_strategy2006to2011\(consultation_draft\).pdf](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/prosperity_strategy2006to2011(consultation_draft).pdf)
http://www.devon.gov.uk/dris/commstat/csta_mnu.html

3.3 How play fits within National and Regional Initiatives

Getting Serious About Play

The Dobson Review 'Getting Serious About Play [2003]' was a Government document specifically advocating and raising the profile of play across Government departments. The allocation for play in England and Wales of £155m, from the Big Lottery Fund, arose from the review.

Every Child Matters

In 2003, the Government published the green paper Every Child Matters. This was published alongside the formal response to the report into the death of Victoria Climbié, the young girl who was horrifically abused and tortured, and killed by her great aunt and the man with whom they lived. The green paper built on existing plans to strengthen preventative services by focusing on four key themes:

- Increasing the focus on supporting families and carers - the most critical influence on children's lives.
- Ensuring necessary intervention takes place before children reach crisis point and protecting children from falling through the net.
- Addressing the underlying problems identified in the report into the death of Victoria Climbié - weak accountability and poor integration.
- Ensuring that the people working with children are valued, rewarded and trained

The green paper prompted an unprecedented debate about services for children, young people and families. There was a wide consultation with people working in children's services and with parents, children and young people.

Following the consultation, the Government published Every Child Matters: the Next Steps, and passed the Children Act 2004, providing the legislative spine for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and families.

Every Child Matters- Change for Children

Every Child Matters: Change for Children is a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to meet the five outcomes detailed already at paragraph 2.1.

This means that the organisations involved with providing services to children - from hospitals and schools, to police and voluntary groups - will be teaming up in new ways, sharing information and working together, to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life. Children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively.

Over the next few years, every local authority will be working with its partners, through children's trusts. Devon is a pilot county for a Children's Trust Pathfinder to find out what

works best for children and young people in its area and act on it. They will need to involve children and young people in this process, and when inspectors assess how local areas are doing, they will listen especially to the views of children and young people themselves.

In March 2005 the first Children's Commissioner for England was appointed to give children and young people a voice in government and in public life. The Commissioner will pay particular attention to gathering and putting forward the views of the most vulnerable children and young people in society, and will promote their involvement in the work of organisations whose decisions and actions affect them.

The Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework outlines the aims and targets of the Change for Children and how the inspectorate will judge the improving outcomes

Local Area Agreement

The Devon Local Area Agreement will run as a pilot project for three years from April 2005. Its proposals are firmly based on the Devon Community Strategy, adopted in 2004. Some detailed actions have already been agreed. Others are under discussion as part of a process which will continue throughout the pilot project. The LAA should be viewed as a dynamic process of negotiation between local partners and central government rather than as a 'once and for all' agreement about a limited set of actions. Feedback from experiences in the early stages of the LAA will improve and change later activities and outcomes.

The Government has identified four "blocks" of work for LAA action:

- Children and young people
- Safer and stronger communities
- Healthier communities and older people
- Economy and enterprise.

However, the outcomes that the Devon LAA partners wish to achieve within this framework do not always fall simply into these four categories. Much of the most interesting and fruitful work will actually overlap or run through all of them. For example, a strategy concerned with play issues may affect, among other things, children and young people impacting on anti-social behaviour, health of the community and older people and community safety.

In Devon, the partners have agreed that the LAA should be based on three interlocking core principles. The LAA should:

- Focus on prevention
- Promote actions to support those people most in need of help in those locations where support will be most effective and which contribute to a reduction in inequalities
- Support activities that need the agreement of at least three agencies pursuing a common goal.

Devon's initial LAA submission was forwarded to the Government Office for the South West on 7th January 2005 in accordance with government advice. It summarised the partners' proposals and identified sixty-four outcomes grouped under seven LAA themes. These themes were:

- Promoting healthier lifestyles
- Helping people to feel and be safe
- Enabling people to enjoy life and achieve their potential
- Empowering people to make a positive contribution to their community
- Achieving economic wellbeing
- Homes for all
- A county for everyone

The national context for this block is firmly based around Every Child Matters: Change for Children (ECM:CfC) which is a shared programme of change to improve outcomes for all children and young people. It takes forward the Government's vision of radical reform of the services provided for children, young people and families. Our LAA seeks to deliver improvements on the five outcomes.

Devon is developing a Children's Trust Pathfinder as part of its ECM:CfC implementation. These LAA strands reflect four key priorities for the Children's Trust where the complexity of cross agency initiatives, funding requirements or targets threatens to dilute the impact of integrated planning or delay delivery and where robust partnership working can deliver significantly improved preventive services and outcomes for children, young people and families.

The Devon Strategic Partnership (DSP) oversees the Devon LAA and has established a Project Board to develop the work. The Project Board members include lead officers responsible for developing the "blocks", representatives of the district councils, Primary Care Trusts, voluntary and community sector, police and officers from the Government Office South West (GOSW).

Additional information is available through www.childrensplaydevon.org.uk

Play England

Play England is a five-year project to promote strategies for free play and to create a lasting support structure for play providers in England. It is a key element of the Children's Play Initiative of the Big Lottery Fund.

Play England's aim is for all children and young people in England to have regular access and opportunity for free, inclusive, local play provision and play space. Their objectives are to promote local play strategies, build partnerships for play, research and demonstrate the benefits of play, promote equality and diversity in play provision and to raise awareness and promote standards.

Play England offers expert advice and support to all those involved in the strategic development of children's play. Services include resources and information, training, conferences and seminars, networking and referrals and advocacy and campaigning support

Play England is a project of the Children's Play Council, part of the National Children's Bureau, and is supported by the Big Lottery Fund.

Devon Children and Young People's Plan

Following extensive consultation with over 1,000 children, young people, parents, volunteer workers and professionals the Devon Children and Young People's Plan was published April 2006. It contains a three year vision for all Devon's children and young people. The Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework, see Appendix F, underpins the Plan. It describes a series of challenges that must be met, identifying partners that can help in this process in order that collectively, the improved outcomes that Devon's children and young people deserve can be delivered. Facilities and activities provided by the District Council, voluntary play networks and providers and statutory, voluntary and community youth services, have been recognised as vital partners to deliver many of the challenges identified, including:

- Provide a range of services to promote children and young people's physical health.
- Reduce alcohol consumption and smoking among young people.
- Encourage communities to create a supportive and stimulating environment in which children and young people can play safely while developing protective skills.
- Improve access to enjoyable, challenging and enriching opportunities for children and young people with particular focus on those with special and additional needs and those in disadvantaged and isolated communities.
- Provide young people with access to a range of safe spaces and facilities in which they can meet and engage in positive activities

3.3 How Play fits within Local initiatives

South Hams Community Strategy

The draft 2006 South Hams Community Strategy identifies two linked themes, Vibrant Communities - healthy lifestyles and Quality Public Spaces. This Play Strategy and its Action Plan supports these themes.

South Hams Local development Framework

South Hams District Council adopted the Local Development Framework Open Space, Sport and Recreation, supplementary planning document in June 2006. This document sets out the Council's approach to the requirements for the provision of appropriate open space, sport and recreation in conjunction with new development.

South Hams Public Space Strategy

This strategy links directly to the South Hams Public Space Strategy which recognises children and young people need space in which to explore with their imaginations and develop their social skills. The strategy also acknowledges they deserve facilities every bit as good as a Sports facility for an adult age group and deserve the opportunity to be involved in the design and management of it.

The Public Space Strategy also states that in work on its own land, and with partners, the Council will:-

- i. Look to provide challenging and exciting play opportunities free from unacceptable risk, which make full use of the site and the materials available locally – not just traditional fenced play areas.

- ii. Fully integrate provision for children and young people into Public Space, wherever practicable, and avoid isolated facilities.
- iii. Increase the recognition of the importance of both high quality and range of play experiences.
- iv. Invite young people to be involved in the design and management of play and youth facilities, to ensure a focus upon children's needs.
- v. Seek partnerships with Devon County Council, and others, over the long term provision and management of play and youth facilities.
- vi. Support structured activities for Children and Young People which encourage their appropriate enjoyment of Public Space

South Hams Play Policy

In 2004 a regional group from Devon, comprising of representatives from voluntary organisations, local authorities, zero14plus, Education and the Inclusive Play Co-ordinator for Devon, was formed to develop a Play Policy for Devon which could then be adopted by other authorities in Devon. This policy has been informed by consultation with Devon children and adults in 2004. It has arisen from a realisation that Devon needs a cohesive countywide approach ensuring a commitment to improving play opportunities across all agencies involved in children's services and provisions. This policy was adopted for the South Hams by the South Hams Play Forum in March 20th 2006 and underpins this strategy. See Appendix H

4. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Recently the Government has reported that children and young people should have the opportunity to take an active role in writing of policies that will affect them and the provisions and services that they access. South Hams District Council is committed to consulting with young people over services provided to them. During summer playschemes children were asked to evaluate the scheme and also for their wishes for future engagement and activity; this process informed future provision. Young people are also consulted over improvements to play facilities.

4.1 Approach

This section gives details on the results of three detailed community consultations that have been undertaken recently in relation to Play and Young People. The first summarises the consultation which informed the Devon wide Play Policy – the second and third detail surveys specifically undertaken to inform the South Hams Strategy

Devon Play Policy consultation

In order to inform the Play Policy various different types of consultation with children and young people were completed across Devon including:

- Questionnaires
- Graffiti Walls
- Group Discussions

In addition reference was made to consultation and research carried out nationally and regionally.

Consultations were also carried out in the street, by email and letter and comments and suggestions used to inform the final document. The consultations in the street were not particularly directed at children or people with children. The children, their parents and carers are easy to locate for consultation purposes through schools and groups. It was felt important to ask other community residents their views on children and play.

A report on the questionnaires completed is to be found in Appendix B - Play Policy Consultation Report – Devon Play Network

The questionnaire asked the following questions:

- Do you have day-to-day contact with children?
- Do you live in a village, town, or remote rural area?
- 1) Are you happy for children to play outside?
- 2) Do you feel there is adequate play provision in your area?
- 3) What needs to be done to make it easier for children and young people to play?

Question 1 looking at whether the respondents were happy for the children to play outside had a predominantly “yes” answer. However, comments that were made on the questionnaires showed that people were concerned about whether they should allow children to play outside, especially alone, for example:

“Depends if close to my home or in the park with other children” –

Parent.

“Fear of abduction/abuse” – parent.

“Providing its safe” – parent.

“Only if supervised, cars are too fast, not enough local play specified areas” – parent.

However a child’s answer was “because it’s fun!”

This shows that the adults have many fears such as abduction which children may not be aware of and see this as adults trying to ruin their fun whilst playing.

Question 2 addressed the value of the play provision in their area. 57% of people answered that their play area and equipment was inadequate for their children, only 26% felt that it was satisfactory and 14% were unsure of the play provision. This poses the question - do they access local play/community areas and if not, why not?

Comments included:

“Evenings need a play space under shelter from rain for children to meet up – better park facilities” – parent.

“Lots of play parks – not enough opportunities for children to play outside in the countryside – parents limit this!” – grandparent.

“Not enough outdoor play areas for children to hang out” – playworker.

“Not that is well maintained and clean and that hasn’t been vandalised” – parent.

“There’s very little, especially for teenagers” – parent.

Question 3 asked what needs to be done to make it easier for children and young people to play. The questionnaire gave several options for people to choose including more open spaces, skate parks and more holiday play opportunities. The results show that people felt the most important element of children’s play is designated play and meeting spaces, closely followed by safer routes to play areas and better designed and eco friendly play areas.

Comments that were made included:

“children need more of everything – but especially more unstructured play opportunities away from TVs and computers” – grandparent.

“our play area is ripped apart by older children in the evenings” – parent.

“I really miss safe cycle paths” – parent.

“places for teenagers to hang out are needed” – parent.

“take inspiration from Holland” – parent.

“more play, more happy. No problems, happy society” – no contact.

“always room for improvement” – parent.

It seems that people who answered the questionnaire do not want brand new play parks with coloured metal equipment, but play parks which have been updated by consulting with children to ask them what they would like and perhaps making them safer and more fun by providing Play Rangers to supervise them whilst they are playing.

To inform the strategy additional consultations have been carried out with the parents/carers of younger children. This took the form of a very extensive questionnaire looking into the broader question of children’s centres and the facilities they should be providing.

South Hams Play Strategy Children's Questionnaire

This consultation was carried out with children in the 4-13 age range during 2006. The questionnaire was designed to provide information on the culture of play within the South Hams, to ascertain where children like to play, what they like to do and to identify the barriers they experience to play and gaps in the provision of activities and facilities.

358 children responded to the survey, 59% aged 9+ and 41% in the younger age range. 9 and 11 were the most represented ages. The majority of children, 56% come from the market towns, 21% from villages and 23% rural areas. Almost all the children questioned liked to play outside, the garden was the place they played most, with playparks and the beach in 2nd and 3rd place. When asked where they would like to play the beach was the most popular and playparks in 2nd place. However these surveys were carried out during a heat wave which may have influenced their choices.

The main reasons for not being able to play where they would like were: transport, 46%; parents will not let me, 32%; the play park is boring 15% with bullying as a barrier indicated by 7%. The 4-8 range in both boys and girls indicated exactly the same number for transport and parents won't let me, whereas the older group indicated transport as significantly more of a problem than the parent restrictions. Comments included;-

- Because if I am a long time there and don't come back they get worried
- Difficulty in socialising with others
- No one to play with
- Haven't got a garden or a car
- Not allowed to go on my own
- Nearest too far away. Local one usually locked and need to cross busy road without pedestrian crossing.
- Totnes Park (Pavilions) is not exciting - bigger and better needed
- Totnes Park (Pavilions) should be better and plus facilities needed near top of town
- Need mummy and daddy to take me
- Not safe, glass, yobbish older children

When asked "What they would like to do in their freetime?" "meeting with friends was the most popular answer with 31%, BMX/Blading, 25% followed by sport at 23% and den building 21%. The preferences remained almost the same within the gender and age split although the younger group were keener on sport and the older girls selected meeting with friends as their preferred activity. When asked whether they would like the support of a play ranger in the park 88% answered yes. A Play Ranger brings play equipment and materials to the park facilitating different activities, like den building, mask making and parachute games. They do not supervise, they are just there to encourage play activities.

The most popular suggestions for improving play opportunities were better equipment 43% and more stuff like willow dens and trees 41%.

Other comments included:

- We don't have a playing field - the playpark is tiny
- Watch wildlife, build a raft/canoe
- Paddling pool like at Decoy
- Would like climbing frame, monkey bars and adventure playgrounds
- More space
- Lower speed limits
- Somewhere nice to hang out

When asked “What makes a playspace better?” Waterplay was the most popular answer closely followed by assault course, swings, climbing frame and tyre on a rope.

Other comments included:

- Bigger Playparks needed in Totnes
- More trees for shade
- Something that challenges you
- No rubbish and spaces for wildlife
- Something that really tests your ability
- Water park a must - like Decoy Park, Newton Abbot
- Den Area

The final question was to find out what would make it easier for children and young people to get about. Cycle paths was the most popular answer 47% with better pavements 30% and local bus 23%. This pattern was the same in all four gender and age groups.

The consultation report is attached as Appendix C Play Strategy Children’s Questionnaire Report 2006 – SHAPES/ SHDC.

“Something for the weekend” questionnaire

The 13+ age group of young people have been consulted through the youth service on issues around their freetime activities, wish list, their engagement with the wider community and their social behaviour. The questionnaire was available to young people from May 2006. It was targeted to the groups from Totnes, Kingsbridge, Ivybridge and Yealmpton, young people in Dartmouth had been consulted previously and as a result new services have been introduced through the Leisure Centre.

A total of 306 questionnaires were returned. 174 questionnaires were completed by ‘males’ with 132 questionnaires returned by ‘females’. The 306 people that completed the questionnaire were aged from 10-22, the majority of ages fell between 12 – 17 and the highest number in one category was 15 year olds at a total of 64. Broad open questions were asked to inform future services and gaps in current provision.

60% of respondents go out into a town on some weekends in the year. The majority (85%, of those that go out) go out in their local market town. Over 50% of respondents that go in to a town on some weekends go out both Friday and Saturday evening. Of the respondents that only go out one evening, Friday evening is the more popular at 7% more popular than Saturday evening. This trend was bucked in Ivybridge where if only in town one evening of a weekend the Saturday evening was more popular. When asked how they get home the most popular response in all towns was to walk (55%).

What young people do whilst in Town Centres?

Respondents were asked what they do whilst in the town centre. The same pattern emerged for each town. In descending order the most popular activities listed were; socialise (37%), walk around (23%) drink alcohol (19%), go to the leisure centre (11%), play sport (10%).

Young persons Leisure Night

Young people were asked whether they would be interested in going to a ‘young persons’ leisure night at their local leisure centre: 60% of young people gave a positive response,

Friday or Saturday night proving most popular. Friday night was the marginally more popular evening.

Types of activities

Young people were asked for their views on the types of activities they would like participate in. The most popular responses were live music, D.J and disco, sport activities, dance, roller skating and drumming workshops.

Opinion statements

Young people were asked for their views on a range of pre-set statements;

- Over two-thirds of young people stated they feel safer when 'in a group' in Town
- Two thirds of young people stated they know where to get help and advice
- Half of young people were less certain about whether they would ask for help if they had a drugs or alcohol problem
- Less than half of young people feel safe walking around the Town after dark
- One fifth of young people admitted to getting drunk or smashed frequently
- One half of young people asked would like to see more organised activities and clubs with a larger number of young people wishing to see more music related activities.

Opinion statements – gender variations

When the above questions were analysed by gender the following variations were observed:

- Over 80% of females stated they felt safe in a group when going out as opposed to 65% of males
- There was little difference in data provided by females and males in relation to them admitting to getting drunk or smashed
- A higher proportion of females thought all young people get blamed when only a small group are not behaving
- More females stated they felt less safe walking around towns after dark, than males
- A significantly higher number of females than males stated they would like to take part in organised activities / clubs. Again more females than males stated they would like to see more music events in the Towns.

Improving relationships between young people and adult residents

Young people were asked about how relationships with older people could be improved. A range of responses were listed; some examples are listed below. For full details refer to the appendix;

- More young people and adult activities / interaction with age groups
- Stop prejudice
- Separate areas for adults and 18 to prevent possible intimidation.
- Good humour and respect both ways.

Full results are attached at Appendix D: Something for the Weekend Consultation Report 2006 - Devon Youth Service.

Within the "Audit of Existing Services for Children and Young People in Totnes" of the 14 Identified Needs for the Market Town the third was "Lack of activities and facilities for young people, especially on Friday and Saturday nights" (see Appendix E: Audit of Existing Services for Children & Young People in Totnes – Devon Children's Trust)

In addition to the consultation specific to the development of the strategy, a number of other items of research have been used to underpin this document. These are:

- Devon Playing Fields Association/Devonplay – Survey of outdoor sport and play provision within Devon
- Public consultation in relation to the South Hams Community Strategy
- Consultation supporting the emerging South Hams Public Space Strategy

The DPFA research across Devon Key finding 5: showed that of the *573 rural play areas 91% have no areas specifically set aside for teenagers*. The research also highlighted the issue of transport and access in Key Finding 4. *Rural transport presents many challenges, particularly for young people, children and people with mobility problems.*

See Appendix F : DPFA/ Devonplay–Survey of Play Provision within Devon – http://www.devonrcc.org.uk/page/devon_playing_field_association_research.php

4.2. Findings and Conclusions

In developing this strategy extensive analysis of the consultation with children and young people has taken place. It will be important to continue this engagement – in the ongoing planning and delivery of play in the South Hams - and perhaps to consider how this might be applied more widely in the South Hams, through existing structures (for example in the development of Youth Democracy).

These findings have informed the Action Plan within this strategy.

5. ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTH HAMS

5.1. Play areas Audit findings and methodology

- 5.1.1.** In line with Planning Policy Guidance 17, and to inform the Public Space Strategy, South Hams District Council has undertaken an audit and mapping exercise to review the formal play areas and open spaces within its boundaries (including GIS mapping system). This process also involves a qualitative element to assess the play areas to ensure they meet the required standard and to identify gaps in provision. This also looks at trends in use of current facilities and makes future recommendations for developing and improving play provision in the South Hams.
- 5.1.2.** South Hams District Council owns 63 equipped Play Parks and Skateparks and maintains a further 40 which have been adopted by Parishes or Recreation Associations.
- 5.1.3.** There are a range of informal recreation facilities which include basket ball, tennis and multi hard court facilities and a wide range of informal countryside and beach sites. All public space is detailed in the South Hams Public Space Strategy.
- 5.1.4.** There are limited facilities provided for young people in the older age ranges. Although in the recent years the Council has, through partnership working with Safer Communities and other funders, provided a number of youth shelters within the district.
- 5.1.5.** There are four leisure centres provided by the council and their partners; Quayside Leisure Centre, Totnes Pavilion, South Dartmoor Leisure Centre and Dartmouth Leisure Centre, one in each of the Market Towns. In addition there are football pitches/rugby pitches and tennis courts which are available throughout the South Hams
- 5.1.6.** The recent Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requires providers to include people with a disability and, from October 2004 requires providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to the physical features of their premises to overcome barriers to access. In 2003 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published guidance focusing on 'the need to not focus on impairment-specific issues – rather than identify obstacles to play for any child who might wish to access the play space and think about ways to circumvent them'. In response to the new DDA regulations South Hams District Council are committed to an ongoing process of reasonable improvements to access.
- 5.1.7.** Some of the barriers to accessing and improving play areas may be:
- The play areas may not be in easily accessible places for children, children may need to cross busy roads to reach them
 - Some playgrounds maybe out of sight of housing/businesses which can make children vulnerable without casual supervision
 - Some playgrounds provide interesting and challenging equipment, however many may have equipment which is old and with low play value
 - Transport to the play areas may be limited

- Insufficient consideration may have given to providing for a wide age range in the play areas
- Limited funding may have allowed some play areas to fall into disrepair and in some cases equipment may have to be removed
- Some play facilities are not sited close to areas of housing where children are located
- Limited use of dedicated funding provision through planning contributions may have resulted in lost opportunities for developing play facilities for children and young people.
- children and young people who are tourists may not have easy access to free play facilities

5.1.9 From the wide range of research and consultation the key opportunities and challenges have been identified as follows:

- Local people have expectations from South Hams public parks and open spaces. They want public parks to be easily accessible, to offer a safe and clean environment for their children and young people to play, with high quality and challenging play opportunity and equipment. They also want open spaces to be available for walking their dogs, community activities and informal games.
- Whilst there has been a historical commitment to providing play facilities for children, this has usually been done when the opportunity and finances have arisen, rather than through a coherent strategy.
- The key challenges for provision for Children and Young People is to improve the quality and accessibility of facilities rather than increasing the overall quantity.

5.2 Other Play Provision In the South Hams

5.2.1. Private Sector

There is a range of facilities provided by the private sector which charge for entry/participation. These include:

- Woodlands Leisure Park – Adventure park at Blackawton
- Water Sport Activities – Blackpool Sands, Bigbury and South Sands
- Young Dartington – Summer School for Children
- Canoe Adventures – River Dart

5.2.2 Voluntary and Charitable Sector

The South Hams Coast and Countryside Events provide family play activities. Slapton Ley Field Centre provide day activities and some residential courses. SHAPES, the South Hams Play Forum, in partnership with South Hams District Council has previously provided play schemes in the more isolated rural communities enabling those on low incomes to access a wide range of diverse play opportunities and provided arts kits and sport equipment to support summer play activities.

Sharpham Trust provides opportunities for children, especially those in need to explore environmental play in their countryside estate guided by their Education Ranger.

SPARC, South Hams Recycling Scrapstore provides a wide range of play opportunities and workshops for children and families. They reach the whole community with their recycling workshops which combine creativity and environmental education.

Devonplay is a county wide organisation that develops and promotes good practice in play.

5.2.3 Formal Childcare

There is a range of Ofsted childcare available to parents throughout the South Hams area, for children ages 0-16 years. The range of childcare available includes:

- Crèche
- Childminders/Nannies
- Relatives/friends etc
- Play groups
- Private and public Nursery schools
- Day Nurseries
- After and before school care/ clubs
- Humpty Dumpty Childcare and Training
- Holiday care and activity programmes
- Independent schools

Additional information available on www.devon.gov.uk/disc

Within the South Hams the available places in Childcare (including Child Minders, private Nurseries)/Holiday Playschemes and Before/After School Clubs are limited. The figures breakdown as follows:

- Under 3 years : Population: 1,973; available childcare places: 353 ; % pro rata :17.9%
- 3 - 4.5 years (term time) : Population: 1086; available childcare places: 627; %pro rata: 57.7%
- 3 – 4.5 years (school holidays) : Population: 1086: available childcare places : 260; %pro rata: 23.9%
- 3 – 4.5 years (early education places) : Population: 1086: available places : 1200; %pro rata: 159%

Figures as of August 2005; source child health database.

5.2.4 Youth Services

Voluntary youth service organisations, including the Devon Youth Association (DYA) and many others working under the banner of Youth Service Devon, provide an extensive range of leisure activities and youth facilities.

Devon Youth Service has developed extensive play and youth facilities. They also provide a programme of challenging activities for older children across the district and have out reach youth workers who work outside of the market town hub.

South Hams District Council provides four leisure centres based in the main market towns with facilities suitable for young people, with programmed activities and opportunities for using the facilities. Community Colleges run a range of out of school activities.

5.3. Setting Local Standards for Play Provision

Government policy advocates the production of local standards for the provision of public space based on an assessment of local need and provision. Without local standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of public space, including play provision, the Council is in a vulnerable position when seeking contributions from developers and when seeking external grant aid.

Local standards for South Hams are currently being considered and the information gathered in the audit and mapping exercise undertaken to inform the Public Space Strategy will be key in the development of local standards for play space. Setting robust local standards based on assessments of need and audits of existing facilities will form the basis for redressing qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. The adoption of the local standards through the South Hams Public Space Strategy will indicate priorities.

Local standards will be developed with partners and SHAPES.

5.4. Management of Play Initiatives

Currently the staffing resource within the SHAPES partnership, including South Hams District Council, does not have the capacity to deliver the scope of work generated through this strategy and supported by the Big Lottery Funding for Play. The funding from the Big Lottery provides a catalyst to increase the capacity within South Hams, improving play opportunities for children and young people initially for three years.

To enable the SHAPES partnership and the District Council to deliver the Action Plan there will be a need to increase staff capacity. The Action Plan includes a proposal to extend the existing role of the Children and Young People's Officer to co-ordinate the identified projects, manage them and to explore other aspects of Play Development work and cross cutting/partnership working, as part of the Big Lottery Funding application. This additional work will need to be undertaken utilising part of the Big Lottery funding

As already noted the Action Plan attached to this Strategy has been drawn up on the assumption that Big Lottery funding, and partner resources, can be drawn in to support the Actions as presented. If this proves not to be the case then the vision set out in this Strategy will remain unaffected but the Action Plan will need to be reviewed to reflect resources available. The key role of Big Lottery funding in delivering the Action Plan is reflected in the number of actions where the "Children and Young People's Officer" is identified as the lead for delivery.

6. DELIVERING THE STRATEGY: KEY THEMES

Based on the range of research, consultation and analysis that has informed this strategy the following five key themes for activity are identified. This section sets out these themes with a brief commentary. The Action Plan at the end of this document sets actions against these themes. It must be reiterated that delivery of the Action Plan is reliant on Big Lottery Funding and strong collaborative sharing of resources at a local level.

6.1. To increase the recognition of the importance of children's play

- Raising profile

The creative and social skills that children develop through play help them to develop necessary lateral thinking and emotional intelligence. Good play provision, which offers genuine challenge and excitement, can help prevent bored children and young people behaving in ways that are socially unacceptable. Development of outside play and recreation spaces has been shown to have a measurable impact on local interaction, new friendships, community cohesion and community safety.

Good play provision enables parents to work or train and allows them to feel their children are happy, safe and enjoying themselves. Offering parents the opportunity to have time away from their children can also be an important benefit of play provision. Play provision often acts as a focal point for parents and carers to meet, giving them an opportunity to socialise with other adults.

Good play provision promotes community well-being and security. It brings economic benefits through jobs and training, and parents can feel confident their children are occupied and enjoying themselves.

- Changing perceptions

Many children and young people feel that they do not have access to public space because of restrictions imposed by adults, either as a reaction to a perceived danger or because they feel that children and young people pose a threat or nuisance when they are gathered together. Young people often choose to "hang out" together simply enjoying the social aspects of being with a group of friends. This strategy addresses issues arising from misunderstanding and misperception.

6.2. Focusing on children's needs and voices

South Hams District Council and local community groups are increasingly involving children and young people in consultation exercises and encourage participation and discussions about their needs when delivering services that impact on their lives. This results in more appropriate provision tailored to the needs of the whole community and helps children and young people develop their skills and understanding. When they are aware that their views are important and considered, they feel they are engaged with the wider community and valued. Respecting and incorporating children and young people's views into plans and provision is vital to the health of the community.

6.3. To ensure high quality and wide range of play experiences

Play is about having fun; however the additional benefits are much broader. Children develop skills through free play that help them define themselves and their passions and interests. Play enables them to try out new roles and experiences; play is vital to the development of the imagination and enables children to explore new boundaries. It allows children to develop social skills and express their emotions. Through play children experience self achievement. By offering them a wide range of high quality play experiences children have the opportunity to choose what they want to explore and control what they do.

6.4. Challenging and exciting play free from unacceptable risk

One of the main reasons children give for not playing outdoors is the fear for their safety or their parents' fears. Good play facilities and activities offer the opportunity for children to challenge themselves and use their initiative whilst protecting them from unacceptable risk. Play should enable children to stretch their boundaries, to think through decisions and gain increased self-esteem.

The physical activity involved in energetic play provides children and young people with a significant amount of their regular exercise. Research shows that school-aged children and young people get more exercise in free play than from most structured activities.

6.5. Working together to deliver play

South Hams District Council will continue to work with other partners and to develop collaborative working with neighbouring authorities on play initiatives to ensure best value and shared good practice. The council will continue to work with SHAPES and other voluntary sector partners to strengthen capacity across the play sector and thus ensure a strong and inclusive 'play partnership' that can continue to guide the planning and delivery of play in the South Hams. This will include:

- Identifying areas that could be developed for joint working initiatives
- Investigating working with the County Council and other partners in extending services for children and young people within the South Hams.

7. EVALUATION PLAN

7.1. Project Review

The outcomes of the play strategy will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure targets and delivery are met. The Play Partnership and South Hams District Council Landscape and Recreation team will oversee this work.

7.2 Performance Indicators

South Hams District Council will consider adopting appropriate performance indicators in line with the Audit Commission Library of Local Performance Indicators. The local PI relating to the status of the local authority's policy and strategy for play is LIB 115. This indicator identifies:

- The extent to which the authority has developed and adopted a comprehensive play policy.
- The extent to which the play policy can act as a practical working tool to influence and guide any decisions made across all relevant departments, which affect or relate to children's play opportunities.
- The indicator should be supplemented by further information relating to quality and cost effectiveness determined according to local priorities.
- The extent to which the development, adoption and implementation of a corporate play policy has involved users and providers, is responsive to local and diverse needs and demonstrates an understanding of the importance of play and the child's right to play.

7.3 Strategy review

The strategy will be reviewed annually by SHAPES in conjunction with South Hams District Council with future targets and outcomes set at each review.

Key Action 1 – to increase the recognition of the importance of children’s play

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
To develop and agree a 5 year strategy to improve play opportunities within South Hams District	South Hams District Council	SHAPES Devon Play Early Year and Childcare Services, Zero 14 + Family Play bus	<p>Agree Strategy and Key Actions</p> <p>Identify projects for the Big Lottery Funding which fit within the identified areas of need</p> <p>Identify Budget requirements</p> <p>Agree Service delivery plan, monitor and evaluate biannually</p>	<p>Review Strategy and Actions</p> <p>Manage and lead on project portfolio for the Big Lottery Funding</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Service delivery plan, monitor and evaluate biannually</p>	<p>Review Strategy and Actions</p> <p>Evaluate and consult on projects to inform future delivery</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Service delivery plan, monitor and evaluate biannually</p>
Raise the profile of play and increase recognition of its value	SHAPES South Hams District Council	Police Safer Communities Youth Services Devonplay and other partners across Devon.	Encourage relevant organisations to identify lead person with focus on play	Ongoing	Ongoing

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Raise the profile of play and increase recognition of its value		Early Year and Childcare Services, Zero 14+ Children Trust Local Forums SPARC Voluntary Sector Parishes Family Playbus	<p>Encourage relevant organisations to identify lead person with focus on play</p> <p>Work with other departments within the local authority and partners to ensure play has a place within their wider work programmes and projects</p> <p>Encourage other organisations whose work impacts on the lives of children to agree the Play Policy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Change perception of Play and Children's right to participate in freely chosen activity	Torbay Borough Council	Teignbridge District Council South Hams District Council Safer Communities GOSW Vol Sector, In particular SHAPES, TEEPEE, Torbay Play Forum and Devonplay Schools PCT Youth Offending Team Playbus	Identify project and funding stream Prepare detailed project plan Develop and strengthen SHAPES and the Play Partnership for cross boundary working	Deliver project Evaluate impact	Respond to impact Continue to promote children and young peoples right to play and clarify play as an activity not to be viewed as antisocial behaviour

Key Action 2 – focussing on children’s needs and voices

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
<p>Improve Youth Engagement, through existing structures, to consult on development, facilities and activities within their community which impact on their lives.</p> <p>Encourage children to be involved with consultation through playful participation, creating a culture of meaningful engagement.</p>	<p>South Hams District Council</p>	<p>SHAPES Devon Youth Association Community Colleges Primary Schools</p>	<p>Engage with partners.</p> <p>Identify funding.</p> <p>Consult with other authorities with Youth Councils and /or other youth engagement measures in place to share good practice</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Monitor and Review</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Monitor and Review</p>
<p>To ensure organisations, parishes, individuals and local groups also engage with children within their area and respond to their needs</p>	<p>SHAPES South Hams District Council</p>	<p>Devonplay through use of Playing for Real</p>	<p>Develop monitoring plan and engage with district and local communities</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Review and Respond</p>

Key Action 3 – to ensure high quality and wide range of play experiences

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
<p>Target facilities and activities at groups of identified need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated rural • People with disability • Multiple deprivation wards • Teenagers 	<p>South Hams District Council</p> <p>Family Playbus</p>	<p>SHAPES Devon Youth Association Early Year and Childcare Services, Zero 14 + SPARC Voluntary Sector Devonplay</p>	<p>Engage with partners. Identify gaps in provision</p> <p>Develop and initiate service plan</p>	<p>Monitor and Review</p>	<p>Monitor and Review</p>
<p>Focus on Play spaces' not 'play areas', making use of natural environment, open spaces and other public realm</p>	<p>South Hams District Council</p>	<p>DCC Devon Play Sharpham Trust Parish and Town Councils.</p>	<p>Develop monitoring plan and engage with local communities</p> <p>Investigate Home Zone projects identify areas which would be home zone friendly work with partners to develop future plans</p> <p>Work with projects to enable children and young people to safely use streets for play</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Review and Respond</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Ensure accessible opportunities for play	South Hams District Council	Parishes Voluntary Sector SPARC Devon Play Safer Communities Family Playbus Devon Play – Playing for Real SHAPES DCC	<p>Establish links with groups, individuals and organisations whose interest is with inclusive play issues and access</p> <p>Ongoing review of access issues relating to play areas and open spaces within South Hams undertaking reasonable access improvements within resource constraints</p> <p>Complete audit and of all play areas and open space Assist with the development and adoption of local standards, developed through collaborative working with SHAPES.</p> <p>Applying local standard and Local Development Framework policies in line with Planning Policy Guidance 17</p>	<p>Maintain and develop links</p> <p>Review development plan and monitor</p> <p>Monitor and Review</p> <p>Monitor and Review</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Monitor and Review</p> <p>Monitor and Review</p>

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Prioritise and Rationalise existing council play facilities and spaces	South Hams District Council	SHAPES	Establish those areas where play provision is no longer required or where new facilities or investment is required. This may include disposal, de commissioning and re designing in order to maximise benefit for the wider community	Ongoing	Ongoing
Ensuring quality play provision is supported by trained professional staff	South Hams District Council Zero 14 + Humpty Dumpty Childcare and Training	Tepee Shapes Totnes Training services Individuals providing specialised training for Special needs, Makaton	Work in collaboration with Zero 14+ Development Worker and local providers to ensure training is available Promote the concept of Play Rangers in South Hams, work in partnership and pilot project in response to local need.	Ongoing Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing
Promote the use of Local Development Framework policies and planning agreement funding to support play facilities and opportunities	South Hams District Council		Work in consultation with local groups and Parish/ Town Councils.	Ongoing	Ongoing

Key Action 4– challenging and exciting play free from unacceptable risk

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Promote and develop the availability of challenging and stimulating play activities and environments that encourage children to push the boundaries, explore and develop their experiences	South Hams District Council SHAPES	Devon Youth Association Early Year and Childcare Services, Zero 14 + SPARC Voluntary Sector Devonplay Family Playbus Parishes Town Council DCC Countryside Agency Forestry Commission Big Lottery Green Exercise programme	Engage with partners. Identify outdoor areas that could be developed as venues for challenging play Promote the concept of challenging activity to children and young people encouraging them to participate in unfamiliar activity, including sports, culture art and play	Ongoing Monitor and Review	Ongoing Monitor and Review
Develop Play Ranger Pilot project and encourage informal supervision by adults in open space and play areas	South Hams District Council Devon Play	SHAPES /SPARC Tepee / Voluntary Sector Forestry Commission Marine Conservation Officer	Work with partners to develop pilot project encouraging environmental play in parks, beaches and open spaces	Monitor and Review	Monitor and Review

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Develop an understanding of the benefits of challenging and environmental play and agreeing the need for a balanced approach to risk	South Hams District Council	Devon Play Sharpham Trust Play Safety Forum Family Playbus Town and Parish Councils	Using the Safety Play Forums “Managing risk in play provision” document and the play audit Work with partners to identify areas that offer opportunities for adventure and environmental play	Ongoing	Ongoing

Key Action 5– working together to deliver play

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Engage with neighbouring authorities and investigate ways of joint working and resourcing	South Hams District Council	<p>SHAPES Torbay Council Teignbridge District Council Plymouth City Council Dartmoor National Park Authority Family Playbus Devon Youth Association Early Years and Childcare Services SPARC Voluntary Sector Devonplay</p> <p>Children’s Trust Local Forum Early Years and Childcare, Zero 14+</p>	<p>Engage with partners. Identify areas that could be developed for joint working initiatives. I.e. Audit, Maintenance, Management, Procurement</p> <p>Work collaboratively with County Council and other partners in the delivery of Extended Schools agenda, Children’s Centres, Child Concern Pathway Home Zones Teenage Provision Use of School transport to address rural transport issues.</p>	Ongoing, Monitor and Review	Ongoing, Monitor and Review

Objectives	Lead Agency	Partners	Actions Year 1	Actions Year 2	Actions Year 3 and beyond
Engage with Devon Youth Service to provide Friday Night Youth Nights at the 4 Market Town Leisure Centres	Devon Youth Service Leisure Partner	South Hams District Council Safer Communities Police	In response to the “Something for the Weekend” consultation support the Friday Night Youth Nights Project	Evaluate and Monitor Working with the police ascertain the benefits of the Youth Project in controlling binge drinking, antisocial behaviour and in keeping our young people and the wider community	Monitor and Review Identify future funding and review need for similar provision on Saturday Nights
Support SHAPES, SPARC, Family Playbus and the Voluntary Sector	South Hams District Council	Devonplay as umbrella for organisations across Devon?	Work with Shapes, Sparc, Family Playbus to increase capacity and encourage joint working including procurement, insurance, website and IT services	Ongoing	Ongoing
Develop Natural and Environment Play Spaces and Activities	South Hams District Council	AONB ,Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission, Devon Wildlife Trust, Groundwork Devonplay / Playwork Partnership Marine Conservation Officer	Using the results from the audit of Play Parks and Open Spaces identify areas for joint working	Monitor and Review	Monitor and Review