



Children's Right to play: the international and national perspective

Marianne Mannello
Assistant Director: Policy, Support, Advocacy
Play Wales

***Play Wales is
the national
charity for
children's play***

- Provide advice, support and guidance
- We uphold children's right to play.
- All children are entitled to quality play provision within their communities

Our vision

- A future where play is respected for being critically important to childhood.

Our mission

- Campaigning for a play-friendly Wales and championing every child's right to play.

The right to play

- All children have the right to play as enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child
- *Every child has the right 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 the arts.*

- **BUT.....**



What stops you from playing out?

- **Busy roads/traffic**
- **Disapproving adults**
- **Structured lifestyle**
- **Parents fears**
- After School provision **not affordable**

(International Play Association, 2010)
(Children's Play Sufficiency Surveys, 2016, 2019; Little Voices Shouting Out, 2015; Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2016; 2018)



UNCRC General Comment no 17

- On 1 February 2013 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted a General Comment that clarifies for governments worldwide the meaning and importance of Article 31 of the Convention on the Right of the Child



'Play'

- the key characteristics of play are fun, uncertainty, challenge, flexibility and non-productivity
- is a fundamental and vital dimension of the pleasure of childhood
- an essential component of physical, social, cognitive, emotional and spiritual development



General comment no. 17 and local authority planning

To achieve the necessary child-friendly urban and rural environments, consideration should be given to the:

- Creation of a safe living environment for free play, including design of zones in which players, pedestrians and bikers have priority
- Provision of access to landscaped green areas, large open spaces and nature for play and recreation
- Road traffic measures, including speed limits, levels of pollution, school crossings, traffic calming measures to ensure the rights of children to play safely within their local communities. (UN Committee, 2013:10)

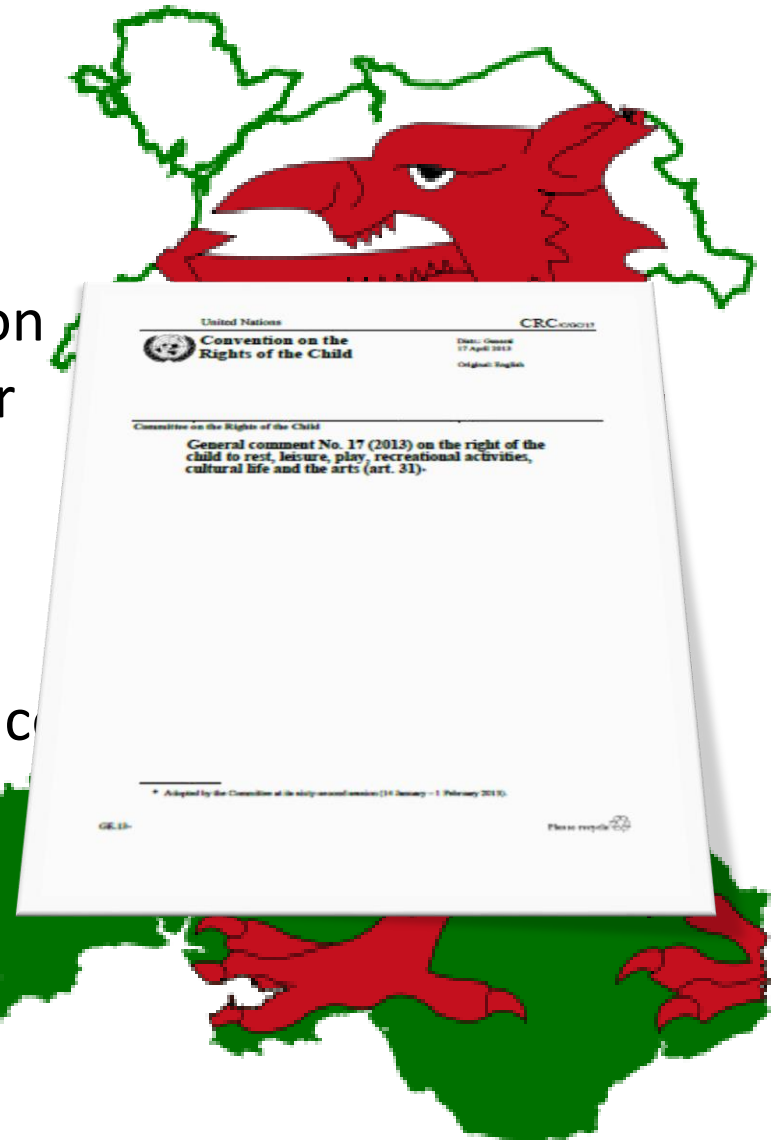


General Comment 17 & sufficiency

- (a) **Legislation and planning:**

The Committee strongly encourages States to consider introducing legislation to ensure the rights under article 31 for every child

Such legislation should address the principle of sufficiency – all children should be given sufficient time and space to exercise these rights.





Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010

2010 nawm 1

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PART 1

CHILD POVERTY, PLAY AND PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER 1

ERADICATING CHILD POVERTY

CHAPTER 2

PLAY AND PARTICIPATION

A bit of context ...



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

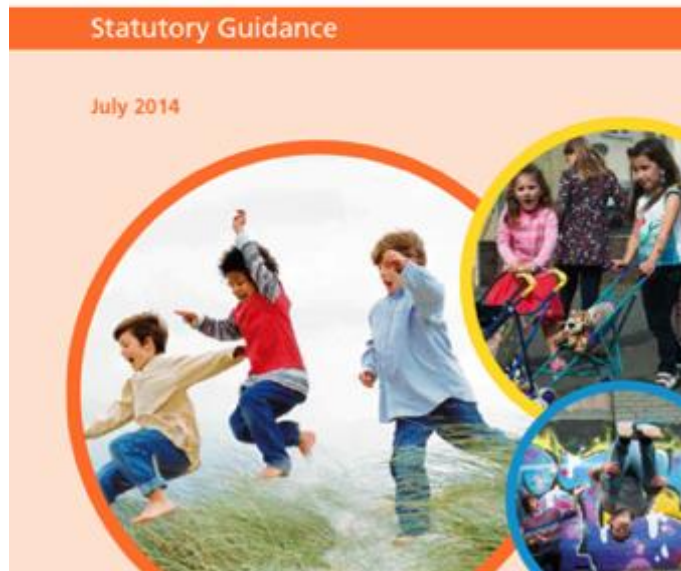
Wales – a Play Friendly Country

Statutory Guidance

July 2014



A play friendly Wales



‘We aim to make communities more play friendly by valuing and increasing quality opportunities for play throughout the community.

The intended outcome will be more children playing ... and so enjoying the health, social, cognitive and emotional benefits that play provides.’

(Welsh Government, 2014)

Town and Country Planning...

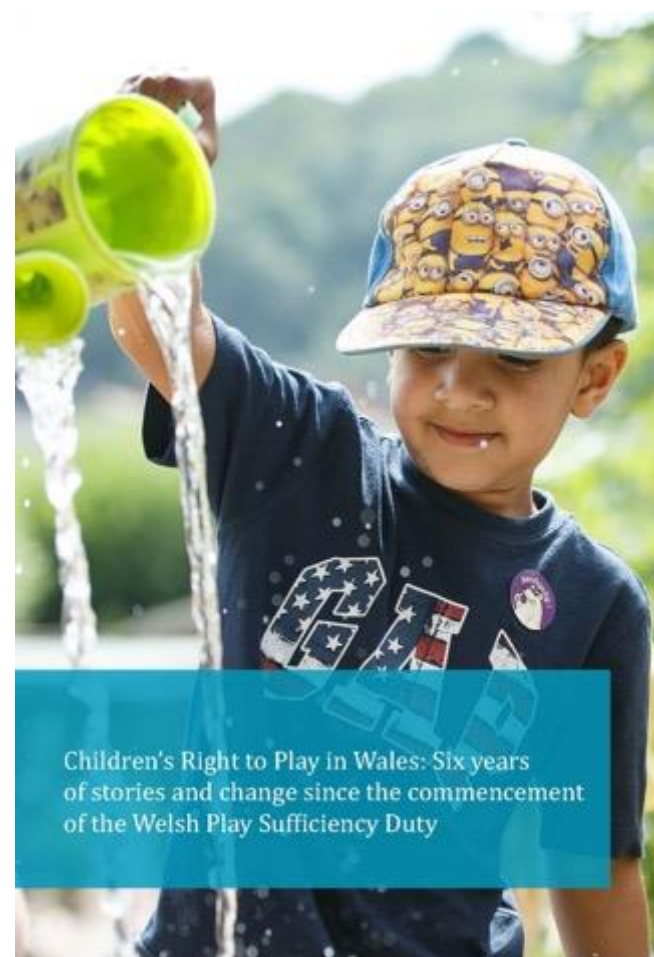
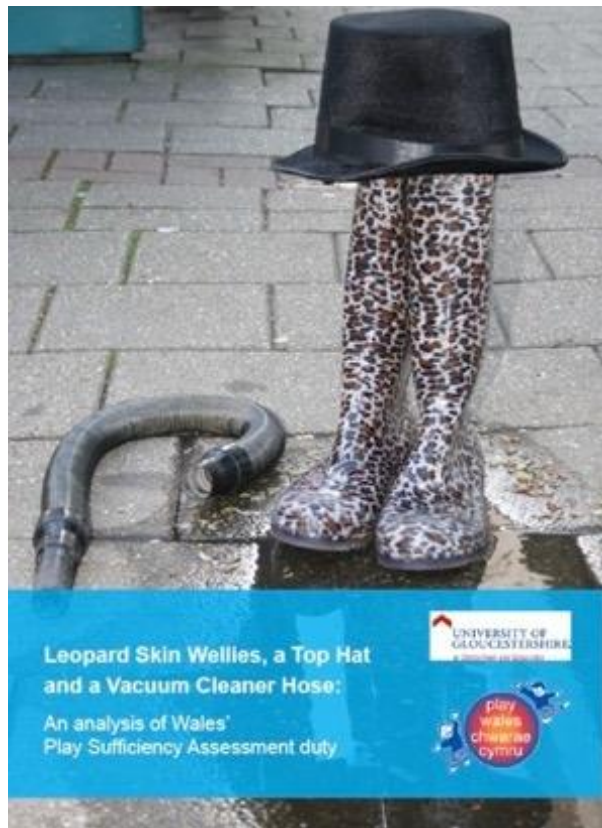


.....is an important factor in providing spaces where children can play.

The Welsh Government expects play sufficiency assessments to assess the extent to which:

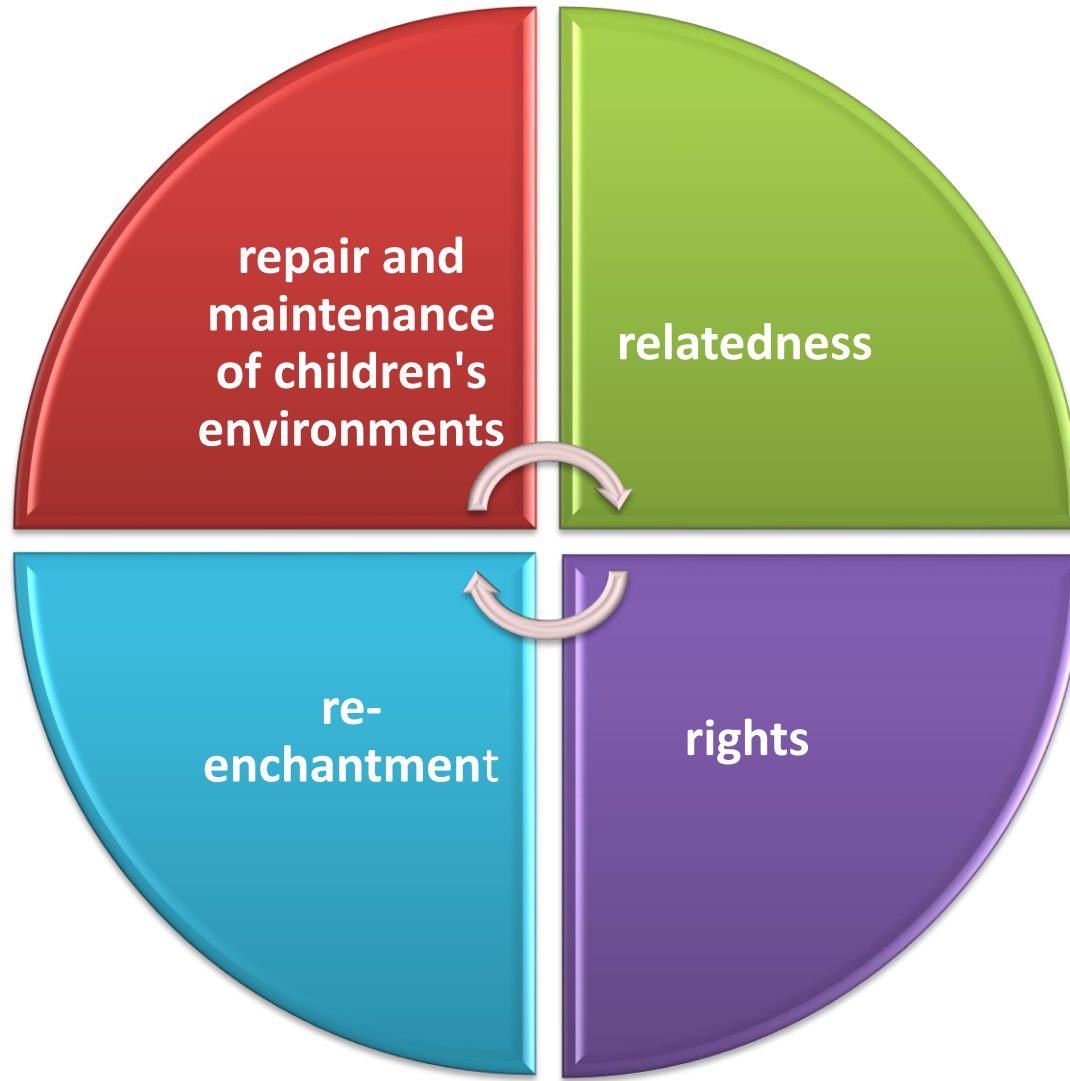
- Planning of the built environment, including housing and use of public and open spaces, provides for children's opportunities to play.
- The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children of various ages.

(Welsh Government, 2014)

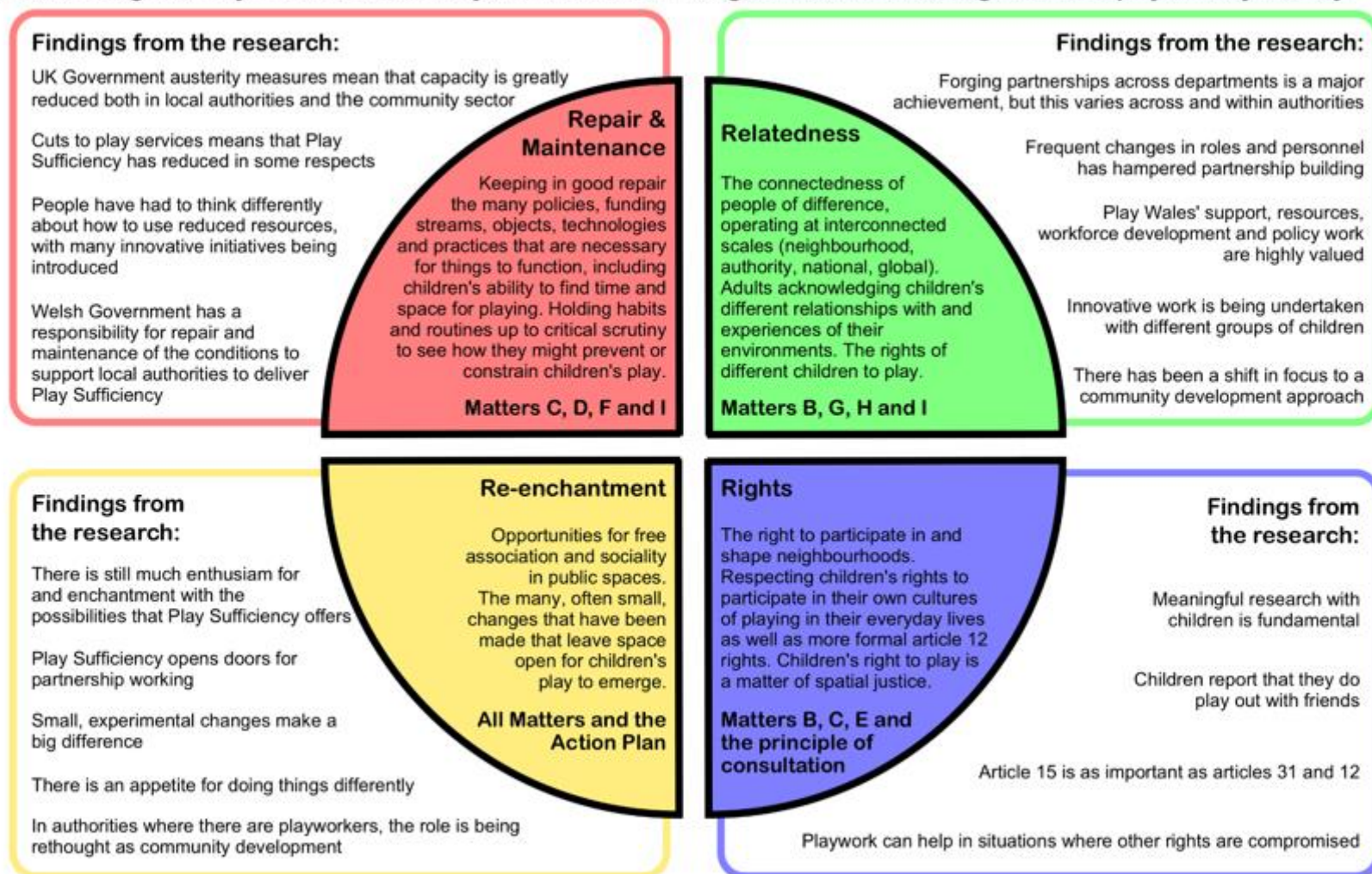


Researching Play Sufficiency...

Themes and Matters (Ash Amin)

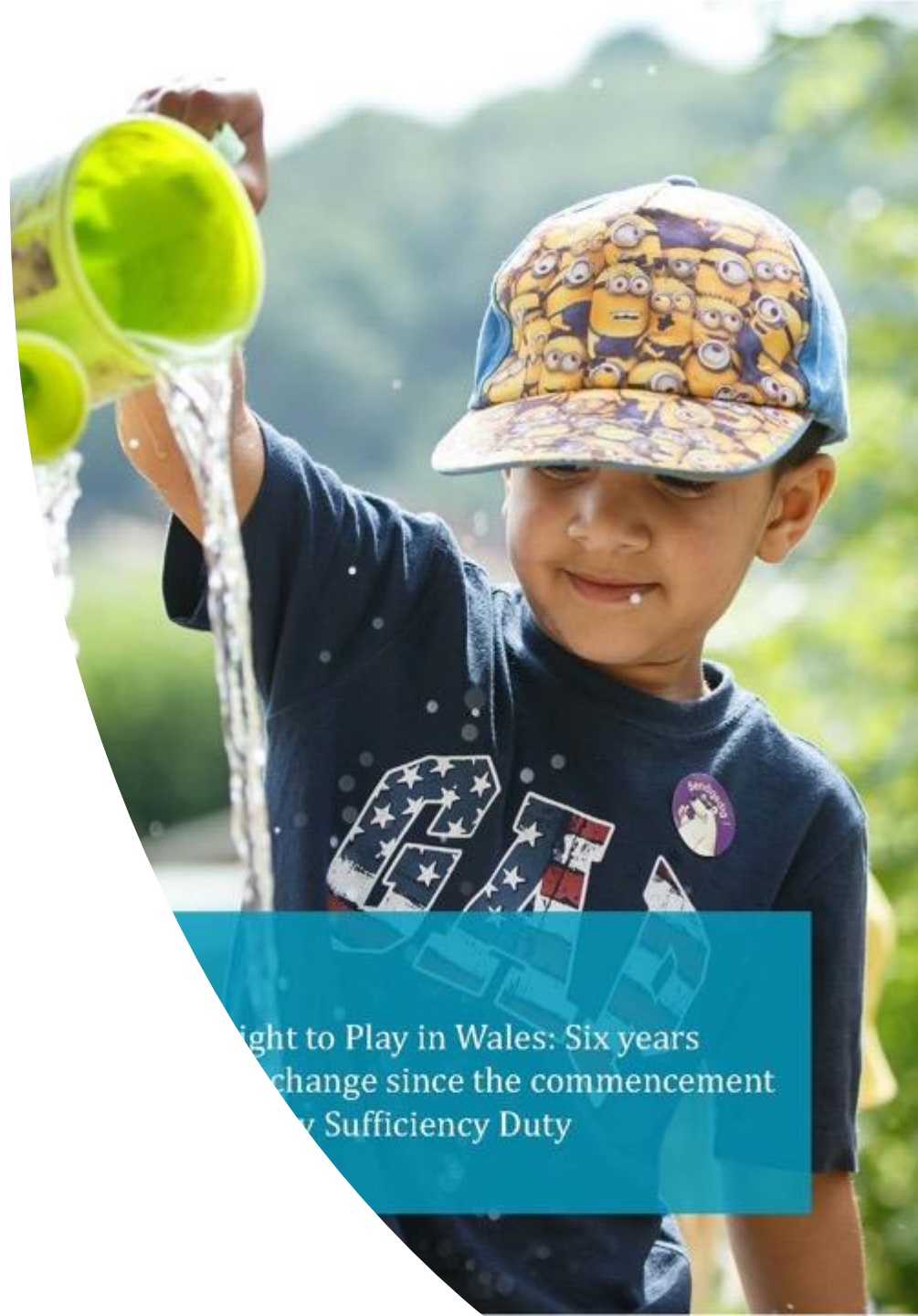


Children's Right to Play in Wales: a summary of the research findings linked to the four registers for a play-friendly country



Conclusions

- The concept of 'sufficiency' is **a process not a product**: there is no end state of 'sufficient', it involves ongoing collaborative engagement and experimentation at national and local levels.
- Play is valued for its role in **children's well-being in the here and now** as well as future- focused instrumental benefits.
- Children's right to play is a matter of **spatial justice**. Play Sufficiency is about holding **spatial habits and routines up to critical scrutiny** to see how they might include or exclude children's ability to find time and space to play.
- At national level, there is the opportunity to use Play Sufficiency Assessment information to support best practice across LAs and to inform cross- departmental work within so that children's right to play is **acknowledged and embedded in national policies, practices and funding streams**.
- At **local level** both assessing and securing sufficient play opportunities requires identifying, developing and maintaining **the conditions that support playing**. This involves paying attention, through creative research and dialogue, to how space works and therefore how open it can be for children's play.



Right to Play in Wales: Six years
change since the commencement
Sufficiency Duty

Unicef Child Friendly City programme

- Cardiff is the first Welsh Council to work towards international recognition as one of the UK's first Unicef Child Friendly Cities.
- *'Children, young people and their families have highlighted ... the need for more opportunities to play in their communities and for families to spend more time together. Children have also highlighted the need to reduce car use in the city to enhance the environment and make Cardiff a safer city to move around when walking, cycling or scooting.'*
- *'children told us that they wanted more opportunity to play and also to spend time with their families.'*

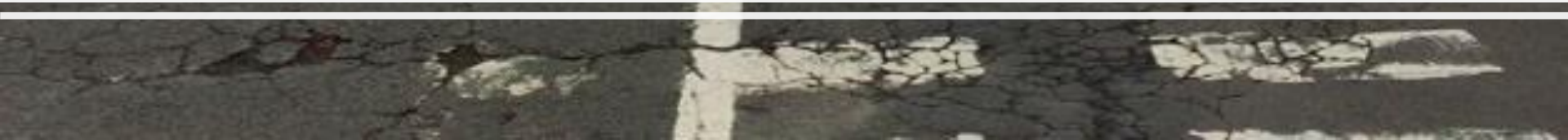


Child Friendly Cardiff Strategy 2018





Cardiff street play pilot





“I have played near the street before but there are never usually others out here so I don’t. I would usually play in the back garden. It’s nice to play with other kids on the street. I like drawing big pictures with chalk.”

“One resident, aged seventy, has been involved as a steward on the project. For this resident, being involved has provided a means of socialisation, positively benefiting a member of the community who one might not initially think could benefit from a project aimed at children”





Pop up park

'We understand how important play is and we wanted to encourage more children to play and spend time with their family and friends. Not everyone has green spaces in their community and some families cannot afford to go to an indoor play centre so the Pop Up Park was our solution.'

Advisory Board Chair, Rose Melhuish, aged 17



Playing and hanging out ▾



The right to play ▾



Playwork ▾



News ▾

- [Playworkers Forum - early bird ends soon](#) >
- [Research: Swansea University after-school clubs survey](#) >
- [What now for the Children's Commissioner?](#) >

Playwork principles ▾



Publications and library ▾



Events ▾



Sign up ▾



About Play Wales ▾



Play and risk ▾



Qualifications ▾



Jobs ▾



Play sufficiency ▾



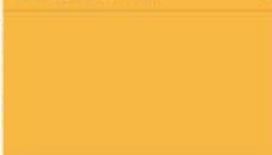
Funding ▾



Play spaces ▾



Staffed play provision ▾



Our work ▾



Schools ▾



Play policy ▾



Play services ▾

