

Kirklees Council
Playable Spaces Strategy
and
Playable Spaces 3 Year Operational Plan 2019 – 2022
Appendices

Key Reference Documents

- *Kirklees Open Space Study* (2015, revised 2016) and *Kirklees Open Space Demand Assessment* (2015)
- *Design for Play: A guide to creating successful play spaces* (Play England, 2008)
- *Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool* (Play England, 2009)
- *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard, England* (Fields in Trust, 2015),
- *Inclusion by Design - a guide to creating accessible play and childcare environments* (KIDS National Development Department, 2008)

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Appendix A

Evidence base

1. Current Kirklees play provision

Kirklees Council currently operates 314 equipped play areas plus 22 additional sites with one or more alternative play facility such as a multi-use games area (MUGA), a skate/wheel park, a basketball hoop/goal end, a teen shelter, or a trim trail/outdoor gym (figures correct at time of publication). All of these sites are considered as part of this Strategy. This total includes Parks and Greenspace Service sites, Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing sites, and sites on private housing developments which have come to the Council through the planning process. The Strategy acknowledges but is unable to include privately owned play areas and school sites as these are outside of the control of the Parks and Greenspace Service. This Strategy does not include consideration of sport pitch provision, as these are considered separately in the Playing Pitch Strategy (currently under revision), it is acknowledged that many of our play areas are located within recreation grounds with sports pitches and that this enhances the play value of the wider site.

The current distribution and profile of equipped play areas across the district is largely incidental rather than strategic, resulting in a network which does not offer all citizens access to a variety of play types. The quality of our existing stock of equipped play areas is also declining owing to the high number of sites and restricted resource availability. Almost one third of our play areas are now over their anticipated lifespan of 15 years and many have limited play value and/or are rarely used owing either to poor location or their existing condition. Factors contributing to limited play value include:

- equipment offering only singular/basic sensations e.g. a single springy that offers a rocking experience only;
- lack of equipment that encourages physical movement and challenge;
- visually unattractive, dilapidated sites which don't attract people to play there;
- no opportunities to use the environment in different ways, e.g. lacking in design features to provoke imagination or make use of the natural environment; and
- damaged, missing or very old equipment or surfacing.

It is important to acknowledge that the presence of equipment does not always equate with higher play value – some sites with fixed equipment may have much more limited play value, owing to the above factors, than sites with no fixed equipment but with a well-designed natural environment with, for example, planting, logs and contouring. A selection of images of our existing play areas to illustrate the current situation is presented in Appendix A with examples of play equipment and features which provide high play value presented in Appendix D.

The cost of maintaining these old facilities is unsustainable with minor repairs – 'patching up' - increasingly difficult whilst doing little to reverse the decline in play value. Historically play areas have also been designed in isolation, separated from their surroundings by fencing and gates, which also need to be maintained; these sites have much greater potential play value when the surrounding natural environment is incorporated.

2. Benefits of play

Extensive academic research has been undertaken on the benefits of outdoor play for children, families and the wider community. Physically active play can make unique contributions to children's health, wellbeing and holistic development, which cannot be obtained from more structured forms of

physical activity or formal sport. Recent research suggests that children's access to good play provision can also:

- increase their self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-respect;
- give them the opportunity to mix with other children;
- allow them to increase their confidence through developing new skills;
- promote their imagination, independence and creativity;
- offer opportunities for children of all abilities and backgrounds to play together;
- provide opportunities for developing social skills and learning;
- build resilience through risk taking and challenge, problem solving, and dealing with new and novel situations;
- provide opportunities to learn about their environment and the wider community.

The benefits to physical and mental health and well-being provided by outdoor play provisions are not limited to children but extend also to parents, carers and all users of parks. In many countries across Europe and Asia these wider benefits are reinforced by providing Senior Playgrounds and cross-generational play spaces which include equipment for people of all ages such as low impact exercise equipment. In addition to encouraging exercise in older generations, these multi-generational playgrounds bring varying ages together for socialising, exercise, and fun. Through the enjoyment of play and exercise the children and seniors mix together, forming social bonds that have been proven to reduce stress, anxiety and loneliness.

The importance of play to health and well-being

12.5 million (1 in 4) people in England are physically inactive, defined as participation in less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week. (UKActive)

National guidance recommends that children over 5 years old should engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity every day and children under 5 that are able to walk unaided should be physically active for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day. Across England, only 24% of girls and 32% of boys aged between 2 years old and 15 years old are meeting these recommendations. (UKActive)

Children who participated in outdoor play spent 25% more of their time in moderate to vigorous physical activity. (Play England, *Street Play Evaluation Report 2016*)

Active play is the most common type of physical activity that children take part in outside school and outdoors. Unstructured play may be one of the best forms of physical activity for children. (British Heart Foundation 2009, *Couch Kids: The Nation's Future*)

Physical inactivity results in **£1.2billion annual direct costs** to UK healthcare Services, and an additional wider impact on the UK economy of as much as **£1.5billion**. (British Heart Foundation, *Physical Inactivity and Sedentary Behaviour Report 2017*)

Regular moderate physical activity, including walking and active play, can help prevent and reduce the risk of a number of chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions.

Easy access to nature and to natural play areas in particular has been proven to enhanced peace, self-control and self-discipline in children as well as reducing stress among highly stressed children. Contact with nature has also been shown to significantly reduce symptoms of ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) in

Evidence is also available that outlines wider benefits of play provision for families and communities, suggesting that:

- parents can feel more secure knowing that their children are happy, safe and enjoying themselves;
- families benefit from healthier, happier children;
- buildings and facilities used by play Services are frequently seen as a focal point for communities;
- it offers opportunities for social interaction for the wider community and supports the development of a greater sense of community spirit, promoting social cohesion;
- public outside spaces have an important role in the everyday lives of children and young people, especially as a place for meeting friends;
- parks and other green spaces are popular with adults taking young children out to play and for older children and young people to spend time together.

There is also evidence that the more children are encouraged to use outdoor spaces, the more likely they are to continue to use them as adults.

Key Kirklees statistics

Kirklees ...

- ...has a population of 437,000, ranking 11th out of 348 districts in England and Wales; the population is projected to grow by 27,000 by 2026. Currently 20% of the population is aged 0-16.
- ...is the third largest Metropolitan District in area, covering 157 square miles or 40,860 hectares. Population density varies from 2.7-47.2 persons per hectare. The south of the district is predominantly rural and the north predominantly urban, focused around the large towns of Huddersfield and Dewsbury. 11.2% of the district is in the Peak District National Park.
- Mean gross household income is lower for Kirklees than for Great Britain as a whole (£36,010 compared to £38,858 for Great Britain. 19.9% of pupils up to age 16 are eligible for free school meals. 55.3% of families are in receipt of Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit or are out of work.

Out of 150 local authorities, Kirklees ranks 114th for inactivity levels (where 150 is most inactive and 1 is least inactive).

1 in 5 Reception age children are overweight or obese in Kirklees. (UKActive, 2014)

1 in 3 Year 6 children are overweight or obese in Kirklees. (UKActive, 2014)

£20,750,766 cost of inactivity to Kirklees. (UKActive, 2014)

3. Barriers to play

Academic research has also identified a number of common barriers to outdoor play. These include:

- Traffic – the growing dominance of cars in residential streets restricts the space and opportunity for children and young people to engage in active outdoor play close to home, and present obstacles in terms of children and young people accessing play spaces independently;
- Negative attitudes towards children and young people playing in public spaces, with other members of the community finding this threatening or equating it with antisocial behaviour;
- Outcomes focused play provision - the replacement of free, self-directed play, with an increase in prescribed educational activities or childcare;

- Reduction in free time - for both children and parents, impacting on how and whether children are transported to outdoor play spaces (with sedentary activities at home more convenient);
- Parental anxiety - perceived dangers and parental fear and lack of confidence can reduce the amount of time children spend in outdoor open space.

4. Kirklees policy context

The Kirklees Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2014-2020)

The shared aim of this strategy is to combine great quality of life and a strong and sustainable economy – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality and where people enjoy better health throughout their lives. Open spaces that encourage physical activity and support positive emotional wellbeing are a key factor in delivering this aim in Kirklees.

One of the outcomes identified in the strategy is that by 2020 Kirklees citizens and their communities should take up opportunities that have a positive impact on their health and well-being, including through:

- access to green and open spaces and leisure services; and
- spatial planning supporting a place-based approach to improving health and well-being encouraging health promoting environments.

Kirklees Local Plan

The Kirklees Local Plan (2013-2031) sets out how much new development there should be in the district, where it will go and the policies necessary to achieve the plan's vision and objectives. Valuable open spaces, including play areas, are protected through policies in the plan and allocation as urban green space. These are underpinned by evidence from the Council's *Open Space Study* and *Open Space Demand Assessment*.

Open Space Type	Quantity Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)	Amount per Dwelling (square metres)	Accessibility Standard (walk time or distance for residents)
Equipped/designated play areas	0.25	6.1	15 minutes/720 metres
Young people provision (MUGAs and skateparks)	0.3	7.3	2 km

Excerpt from Kirklees Local Plan

The Kirklees Open Space Study 2015 (revised 2016)

This study was undertaken by the Council to update quantity and quality information on the supply of open spaces and recreation facilities across the district. It was carried out to inform the preparation of the Kirklees Local Plan and to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework that local plans should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of local needs for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

The study includes assessment of parks and recreation grounds which evaluates the physical, social, environmental and visual qualities of the green space to produce a 'quality score' which represents their value to the community. The study, however, did not assess sites under 0.2ha in area, only assessed play for 0-16 year olds, and did not fully assess the overall play value offered. The *Open Space Study* recommended that it would be "more meaningful to set a standard concerned with the availability of play activities for different age ranges" that would guide play development on a district-wide basis.

Kirklees Open Space Demand Assessment (2015)

The *Open Space Demand Assessment* (Knight Kavanagh & Page, 2015) focused primarily on public usage and perceptions of availability and quality, concluding that in general the level of public satisfaction with parks and play areas was good.

Kirklees Open Space Demand Assessment: Key findings

Parks are the most frequently visited type of open space within Kirklees, with 61% of respondents visiting parks once a week or more.

79% of people thought that green spaces helped them keep fit and healthy.

60% said more green spaces would help improve their physical health.

Common reasons preventing visits to open space provisions are lack of public facilities (e.g. toilets, cafe), people being too busy, fear of crime/personal safety and car parking problems.

Information from these studies has been used to develop local standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of different types of open space across Kirklees, including standards for children and young people's play space. These are used as a minimum benchmark against which to assess existing open space provision across the district and to guide the amount and type of new public open space that housing developments will be required to provide.

5. National policy and guidance

Fields in Trust's *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play* (2015) provides a framework for the planning and design of play spaces, taking into account the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The guidelines include benchmarks for quantity, accessibility and quality in terms of planning for play. In terms of quality key recommendations relevant to this Strategy are that play areas should be:

- located where they are of most value to the community to be served;
- sufficiently diverse to enable recreational use by the whole community;
- appropriately landscaped;
- maintained safely and to the highest possible condition with available finance;
- positively managed taking account of the need for repair and replacement over time;
- complimented by provision of appropriate ancillary facilities, equipment and footpaths; and
- designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime.

Play England's guidance document *Design for Play* (2008) concludes that best practice should strive for accessible through-age provisions, meaning children of all ages could enjoy the same quality of play. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Equality Act (2010) also require inclusivity in the design and provision of play equipment meaning that, where possible, play areas should cater for all ages and all abilities. Play England's *Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool* (2009) and the KIDS resource *Inclusion by Design* (2008) also emphasise the importance of providing different, innovative and challenging ways in which the site user can have a wide variety of play experiences and sensations such as rocking, swinging and sliding. The variety of experiences is particularly important for disabled users whose impairments may mean they may not be able to, for example, sit on traditional swings. The Quality Assessment Tool also stresses that when assessing a site for its play value the many play opportunities presented by the surrounding natural environment should be considered.

Design for Play (Play England, 2008)

The golden rule:

A successful play space is a place in its own right, specially designed for its location. Designers should take a holistic perspective on designing for play. Play opportunities should be embedded in the site as a whole.

10 key principles

Successful play spaces are:

- Bespoke , designed to enhance their setting
- Well located, in the best possible place for children and other users
- Make use of natural elements, providing opportunities to interact with nature
- Provide a wide range of play experiences, where users can play in different ways
- Are accessible to all users, where users of differing abilities can play together
- Meet community needs and are loved by the community
- Allow children and users of all ages to play together
- Include opportunities to experience risk and challenge, where users can stretch and challenge themselves in every way
- Sustainable and appropriately maintained – maintained for play value as well as quality and environmental sustainability
- Allow for change and evolution, to ensure longevity and continued appeal to users of all ages.

Research has also pointed to the fact that play comes in many forms, all of which should be considered in designing play provisions with the highest possible play value. Bob Hughes' *A Playworker's Taxonomy of Play Types* (1996) set out 16 different categories of play which provide useful reference material.

A Playworker's Taxonomy of Play Types (Hughes, 1996)

Communication Play – play using words, nuances or gestures for example, mime, jokes, play acting, mickey taking, singing, debate, poetry.

Creative Play – play which allows a new response, the transformation of information, awareness of new connections, with an element of surprise.

Deep Play – play which allows the child to encounter risky or even potentially life threatening experiences, to develop survival skills and conquer fear.

Dramatic Play – play which dramatizes events in which the child is not a direct participator.

Exploratory Play – play to access factual information consisting of manipulative behaviours such as handling, throwing, banging or mouthing objects.

Fantasy Play – play which rearranges the world in the child's way, a way which is unlikely to occur.

Imaginative Play – play where the conventional rules, which govern the physical world, do not apply.

Locomotor Play – movement in any or every direction for its own sake.

Mastery Play – control of the physical and affective ingredients of the environments.

Object Play – play which uses infinite and interesting sequences of hand-eye manipulations and movements.

Recapitulative Play – play that allows the child to explore ancestry, history, rituals, stories, rhymes, fire and darkness. Enables children to access play of earlier human evolutionary stages.

Role Play – play exploring ways of being, although not normally of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature.

Rough and Tumble Play – close encounter play which is less to do with fighting and more to do with touching, tickling, gauging relative strength. Discovering physical flexibility and the exhilaration of display.

Social Play – play during which the rules and criteria for social engagement and interaction can be revealed, explored and amended.

Socio-dramatic Play – the enactment of real and potential experiences of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature.

Symbolic Play – play which allows control, gradual exploration and increased understanding without the risk of being out of one's depth.

Appendix B - Examples of Kirklees Sites with Limited Play Value

Damaged, missing or very old equipment or surfacing



Visually unattractive and dilapidated



Reliance on non-play equipment



Equipment offering singular / basic sensations



Lack of equipment that encourages physical movement and challenge



No opportunities to use the environment in different ways

Appendix C

Engagement Report

1. Methodology

Councillor Briefing Sessions

Prior to the public engagement sessions a series of elected member briefing sessions were held. 15 drop-in sessions were held in total over a 4-day period in various venues across the district. It was an open invitation to all elected members to attend and to discuss both the theme of the proposed strategy, their opinions on the current and potential play offer within their wards and to gather details of any key stakeholders that may wish to be involved in the upcoming discussions. Electronic copies of the draft Strategy Outline report were issued to all elected members along with a briefing pack and large scale maps were available to view during the sessions. Following the drop-in sessions, any elected members that had not attended any of the drop-in sessions or made alternative arrangements were sent a hard copy of the Briefing Pack in the post.

Free Access to the Draft Strategy Outline Report and Briefing Packs

As part of the engagement process a draft Strategy Outline report was published alongside a Briefing pack. Draft copies of these documents were made available online and hardcopies were available at the public engagement sessions.

Public Engagement Sessions

A series of open public engagement sessions were held and citizens were invited to attend. These were publicised primarily via social media with support from the Kirklees Council communications team, elected members and other teams' social media; additionally posters about the events were put up at the venues to encourage attendance and potentially interested groups were contacted directly. These informal meetings were held at community-based venues such as schools, libraries and townhalls throughout the district. The aim was to encourage free and open discussions and to explore contemporary views on the existing play provisions both locally and across the wider Kirklees district. In addition to local residents, elected members, members of local police forces, forest school practitioners, landscape architects, urban designers, local community groups, children and other stakeholders were also invited to join in the conversations and to discuss the future potential of play. Examples of different types of playable equipment, different playable spaces and large-scale maps of Kirklees were also used as discussion tools. Through these sessions themes were identified such as where young people most enjoy playing and how children and young people like to play.

Questionnaires

Alongside the public engagement sessions, questionnaires were used to access information and tap into local knowledge. The questionnaires were published online and also as hardcopies to expand the reach and attract as many responses as possible. A number of methods were used to publish and promote the questionnaires such as QR codes, social media platforms and email links. Hard copies were available in libraries and children's centres. Council Community Engagement Officers carried hard copies of the questionnaires, using them as tools for discussions within their communities. Local Police forces were sent the questionnaires to complete and to distribute. The questionnaires were also distributed throughout the SACHs (Schools as Community Hubs) network in the hope of accessing school faculty and parents/carers and pupils alike. The volume of responses received was high for such a specific engagement topic and

highlighted the willingness of local residents to engage. In total 294 hard copies were returned with a further 646 online responses.

Creative Engagement Events

Initially aimed at primary-aged children, a number of focus group activities were set up within community events that would encourage an open dialogue with children and younger people, while also trying to provoke discussions about play within the wider family unit. The aim was to create a dynamic and fun way to engage with a younger audience in the spaces and places where children and families feel comfortable discussing the topic of play. Children were provided with balloons and asked to create and name a character using stickers, pens, googly eyes and an assortment of other materials. The balloon characters were then used as a proxy to engage the children in conversation about how and where they liked to play. While the children were creating the balloon characters, discussions between the children and siblings/parents/carers/grandparents were encouraged to discuss how each like or liked to play. The hope was to highlight both the differences and the similarities in how we all like to play. Following these informal sessions the parents were asked to fill in questionnaires or take away to be completed and returned at their convenience.

Spenborough Trust Youth Parliament

During the engagement period, there was the opportunity to attend a meeting of Spenborough Youth Parliament. Supported by the Community Co-ordinators, members of the Parks and Green spaces team presented the discussion of play to them for debate. Following a brief introduction into the proposed themes of a more diverse, adventurous and inclusive play opportunities, the pupils were split into two groups for self-led discussions. Maps of the local area showing the location of the existing play areas were provided to help prompt conversations on the local play offering. Question cards were also provided to help initiate discussions on the topic of play, questions such as 'How do you like to play?' 'Who do you like to play with?' and 'which areas do you prefer to play in and why?'. The second half of the session used pictures of play areas and different play equipment, ranging from more traditional manufactured play equipment to natural playable features. In smaller groups, the students discussed what they liked about the different pictures, what they didn't like and recorded their thoughts on post-it notes.

Lunchtime Sticker Surveys

160 schools throughout Kirklees asked to participate in a Sticker Survey. Each school was issued with a poster containing 7 images of different types of play equipment, ranging from traditional fixed equipment such as conventional slides and swing sets, to more natural play provisions such as land forms and willow structures. Alongside the posters, packs of stickers were also provided. The children were asked to indicate which types of play provisions they would like to see more of within Kirklees by placing the stickers on the corresponding pictures. Out of the 160 schools that were asked to participate, 75 schools responded with information.

2. Initial Conclusions

Engagement Sessions

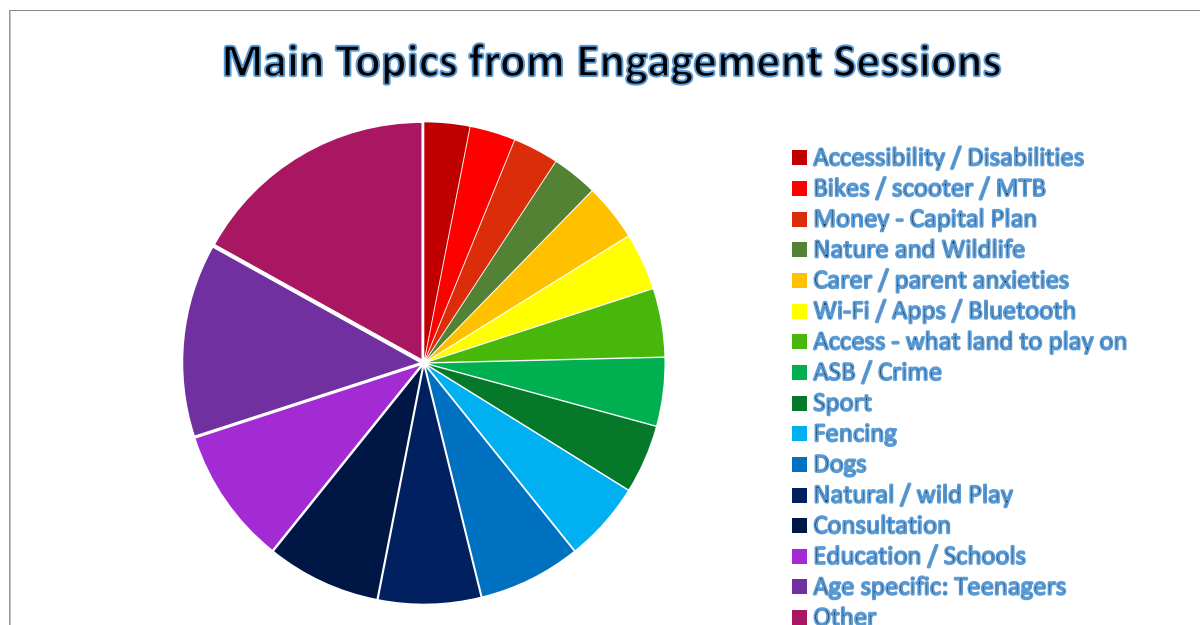
From younger children:

- Favourite activities are Hide and Seek and going on adventures to find Fairies!
- Protection of wildlife was also a concern.

From teens:

- Existing play areas are aimed at younger children; there are not many spaces available to them.

- The main desire is for open space where they can meet and sit with friends and feel safe (preferably with WiFi).
- Other suggestions included, climbing activities (walls, boulders, rope pyramids, tunnels and caves), zip wires, roundabouts and graffiti walls.



From all:

Main themes discussed (in order of importance):

- **Teenage provisions** – the need for sheltered areas and a need for age-specific kit was the most frequently occurring discussion point raised during the public engagement sessions, on only a couple of occasions were concerns for the risk of ASB (Anti-Social behaviour) raised.
- **Education** – the need for clarity and guidance on how and where people can play was the next most frequently discussed topic, within these discussions there was often a desire to link playable spaces with schools and forest schools to enhance the offer further.
- **Engagement** – the most frequently raised concern was whether there would be engagement with children and young people regarding what they wanted from playable spaces.
- **Natural/Wild play** – the theme of wild play and natural play was often discussed and was widely accepted as a valuable and important type of play. That there is a desire for this type of play was also widely accepted.
- **Dogs** – concerns regarding dog fouling was often raised and on a few occasions the perceived increase in dangers posed by dogs if fencing was removed was also discussed.
- **Fencing** – the need for isolation fencing (fencing to the immediate play area) was discussed in context to keeping small children contained and keeping dogs out of the play areas This had a mixed response with some people feeling that the majority of fencing was unnecessary and limited the play value of the site as a whole; others expressed the opinion that isolation fencing was needed for safety reasons. It was agreed however that this should be assessed on a site-by-site basis.
- **ASB/Crime** – It was often the teenagers themselves that expressed concerns that they would experience ASB while using some sites. Further discussion revealed that better design to increase visibility of the site and lighting may help alleviate this risk.

Case study - Shelley Engagement

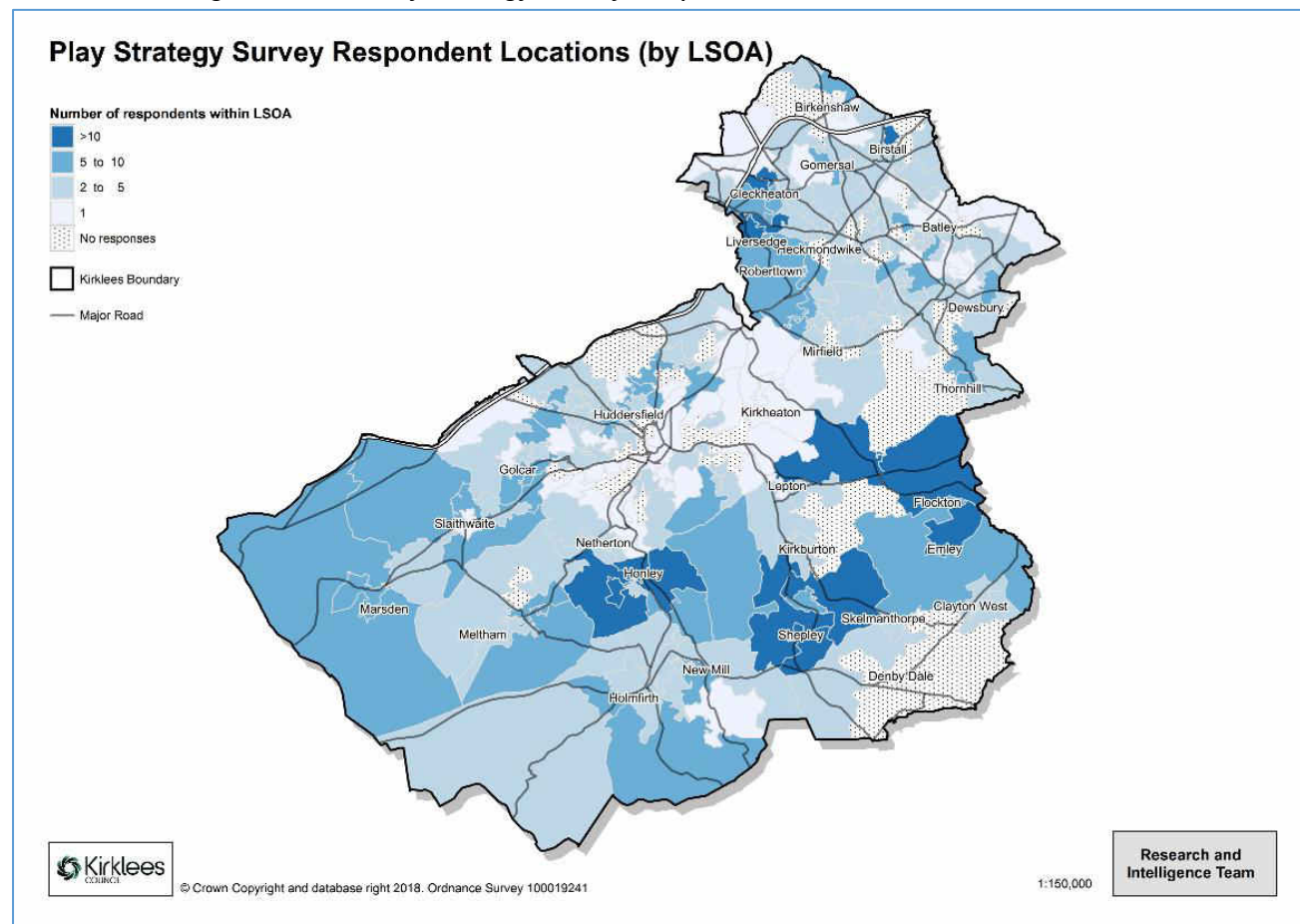


Questionnaires

Main trends:

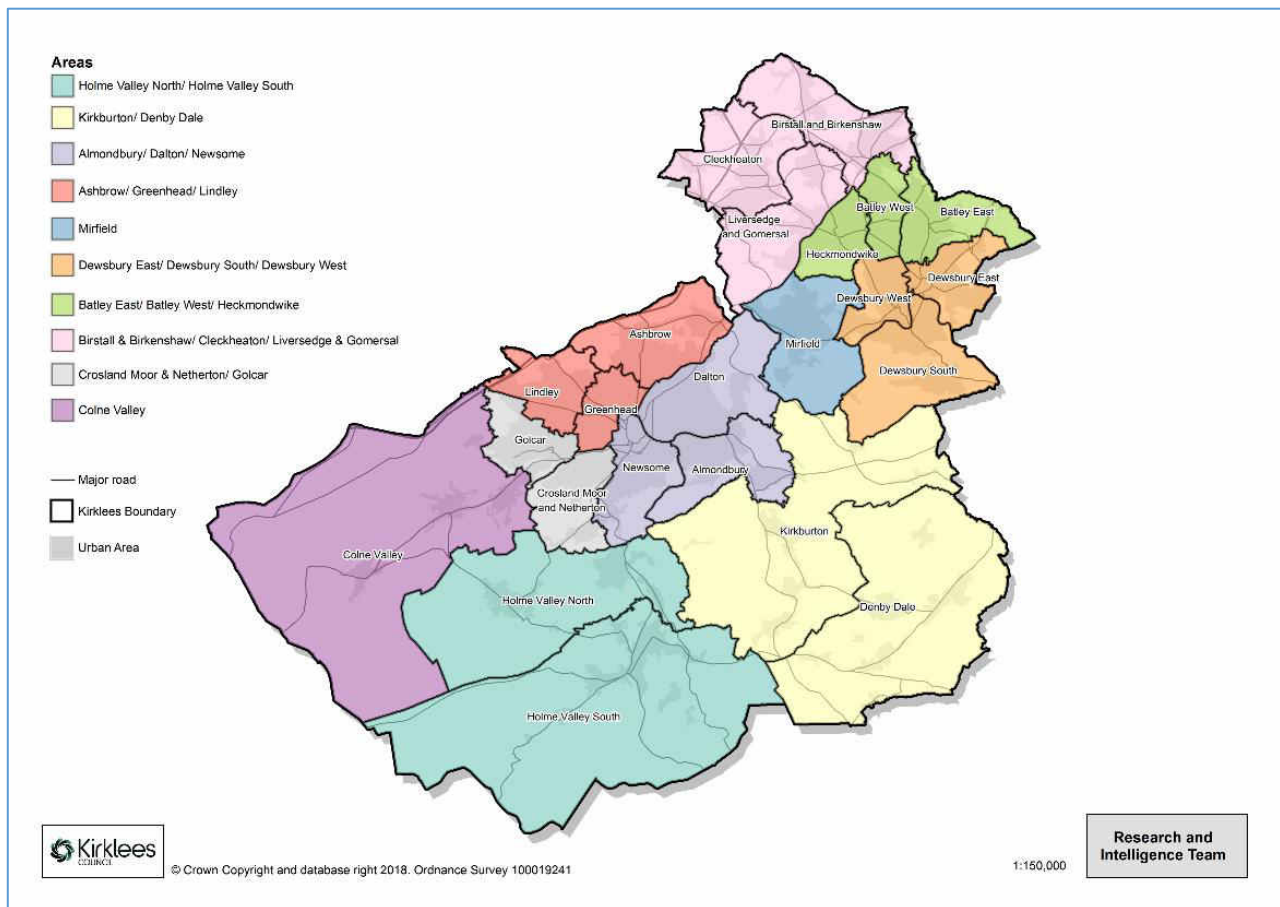
- Respondents to the questionnaires agreed that the current play offer is limited in terms of opportunity for varied types of play. Only 25% believed that there were enough opportunities for different types of play.)
- 60% of respondents expressed a desire to see more natural play equipment such as mounds, boulders, logs, tunnels etc. within the district along with and more places that would facilitate imaginative and wild play including opportunities for den building, exploring, make-believe and adventure play.
- While there was strong support for a more diverse play offer that encouraged more types of play, it was recognised that there is still a desire for equipped play areas within the district. 50% of respondents wanted to see more manufactured equipment.

Questionnaire Fig 1 – Overall Play Strategy Survey Respondents Locations –



Note: Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a set of geographical areas developed following the 2001 census, initially to facilitate the calculation of the Indices of Deprivation 2004 and subsequently for a range of additional Neighbourhood Statistics (NeSS). The aim was to produce a set of areas of consistent size, whose boundaries would not change (unlike electoral wards), suitable for the publication of data such as the Indices of Deprivation. They are an aggregation of adjacent Output Areas with similar social characteristics. Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) typically contain 4 to 6 OAs with a population of around 1500.

Questionnaire Fig 2 - How we split the wards into areas –



Questionnaire Fig 3- All of the research team summary –

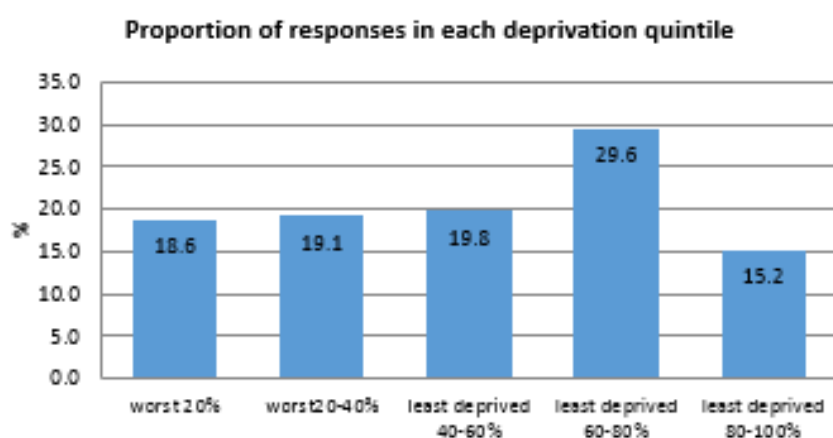
Produced by the Kirklees Intelligence Hub 26/01/2018

How do you use Parks and Greenspaces?

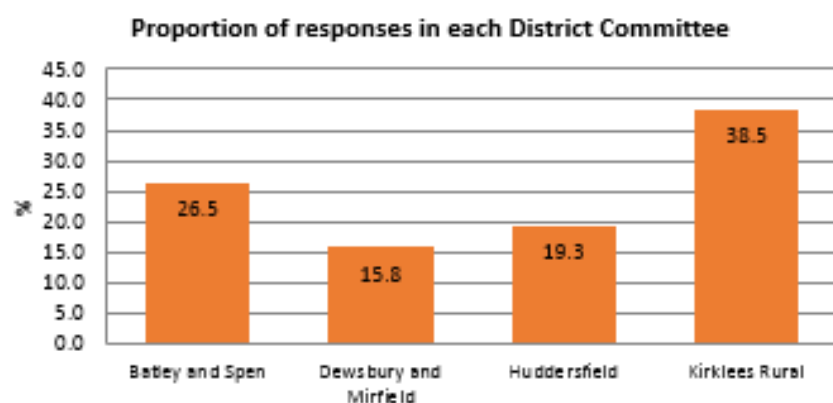
The charts below show the combined online and paper copy responses from the Play Strategy Survey where a valid postcode was recorded.

Total Responses	939
Responses with valid postcode	805
% with valid postcode	85.7

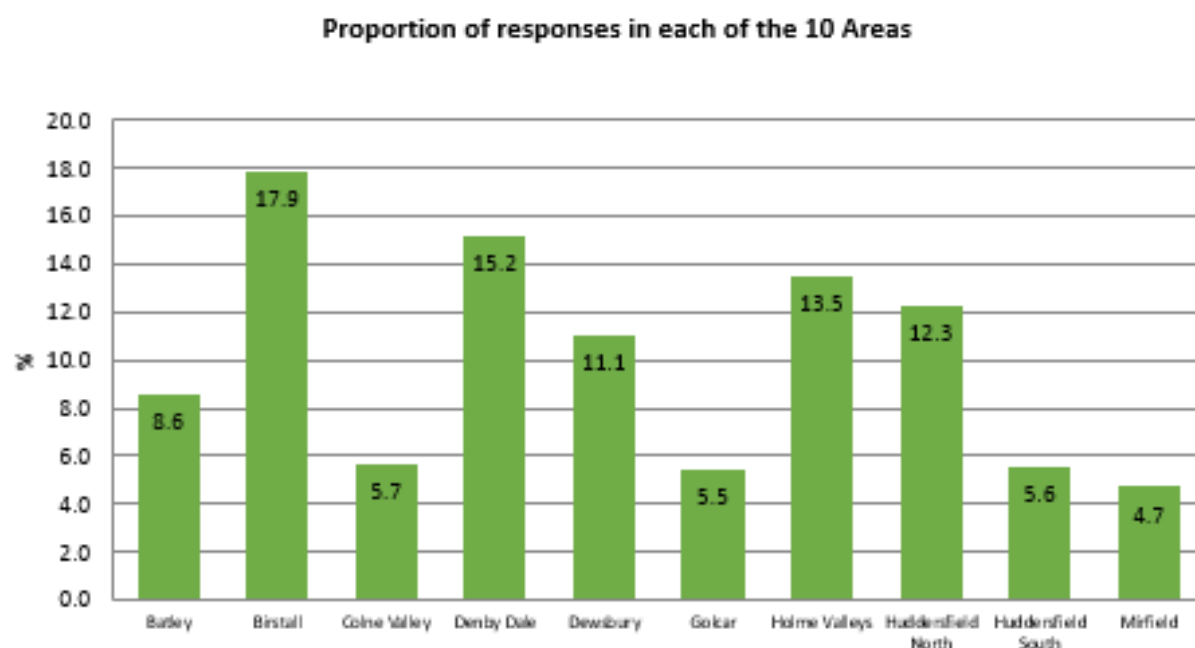
Responses by deprivation quintile



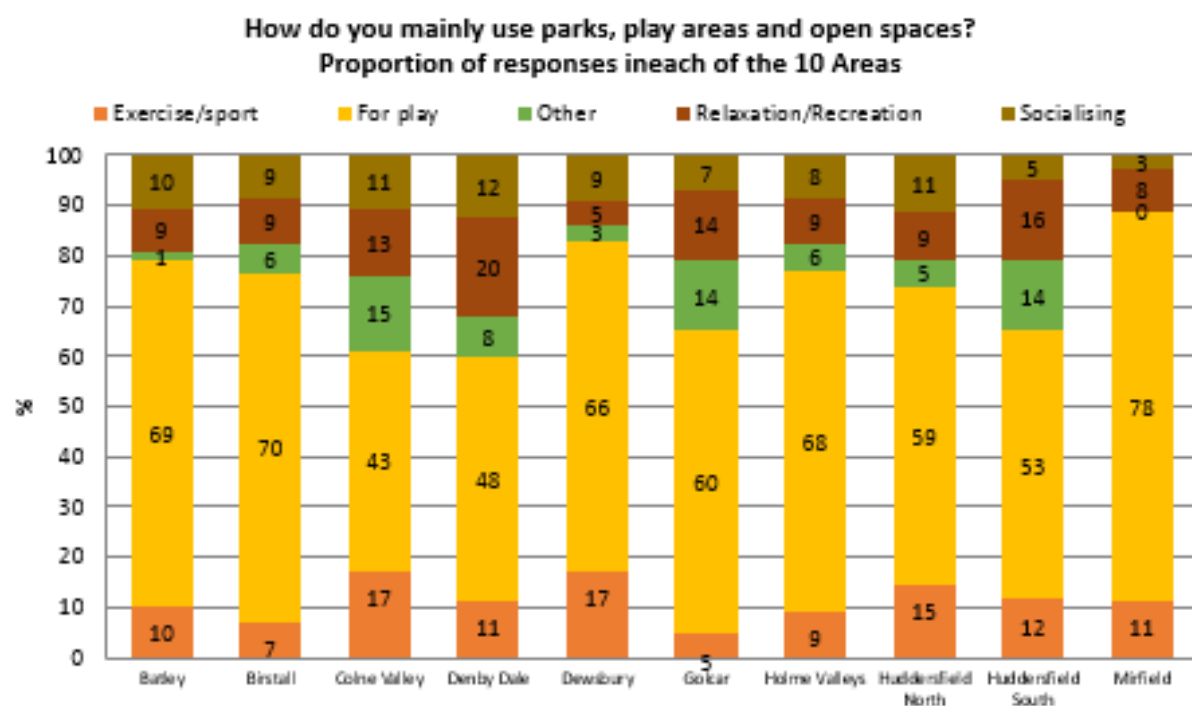
Responses by District Committee



Responses by 10 Areas



How do you mainly use parks, play areas and open spaces?



Where do you like to enjoy the outdoors?

Multiple options could have been selected for this question. The table below shows the proportion of responses for this question within each of the 10 areas (rows total 100%). Colours have been used to highlight high (dark green) and low (white/light green) values.

	Back Garden	Near to your house	Recreation ground/Grassed area	Formal Urban Parks	Local equipped play area	Other play area	Woodland	Moorland
Batley	17	15	13	14	18	6	12	4
Birstall	19	15	12	10	16	8	15	4
Colne Valley	16	14	11	10	11	6	17	13
Denby Dale	18	13	14	9	15	6	18	7
Dewsbury	17	15	15	11	15	6	15	7
Golcar	16	13	15	12	15	7	15	8
Holme Valleys	17	11	13	9	17	7	17	8
Huddersfield North	20	14	12	14	15	6	14	6
Huddersfield South	19	15	12	14	11	5	17	7
Mirfield	20	13	13	10	17	8	15	5

What type of playable spaces would you like to see more of near to where you live?

The table below shows the proportion of responses for this question within each of the 10 areas (rows total 100%). Colours have been used to highlight high (dark green) and low (white/light green) values.

	More places to run	More places for traditional games	More manufactured equipment	More places to cycle, roller blade, scooter	More sensory elements	More natural play equipment	More places for imaginative/wild play	Outdoor exercise equipment	Senior play equipment
Batley	10	13	12	14	10	12	15	10	4
Birstall	6	11	17	14	8	15	15	9	4
Colne Valley	3	11	10	17	8	17	19	13	3
Denby Dale	6	10	16	16	6	15	15	10	5
Dewsbury	10	15	10	11	9	14	18	9	4
Golcar	7	9	9	11	11	19	16	12	6
Holme Valleys	5	10	16	15	8	16	16	10	3
Huddersfield North	9	12	11	11	9	14	17	9	7
Huddersfield South	8	9	10	12	11	17	20	8	6
Mirfield	8	12	10	11	11	17	17	7	6

Do you have access to a park, play area or greenspace (e.g Field, woodland, communal grassed area) within a mile of your home?

The table below shows the proportion of responses for this question within each of the 10 areas (rows total 100%).

	No	Yes
Batley	4.3	95.7
Birstall	4.2	95.8
Colne Valley	6.5	93.5
Denby Dale	2.5	97.5
Dewsbury	3.4	96.6
Golcar	7.0	93.0
Holme Valleys	0.0	100.0
Huddersfield North	6.2	93.8
Huddersfield South	0.0	100.0
Mirfield	5.3	94.7

Roughly how often do you visit your local play area or park?

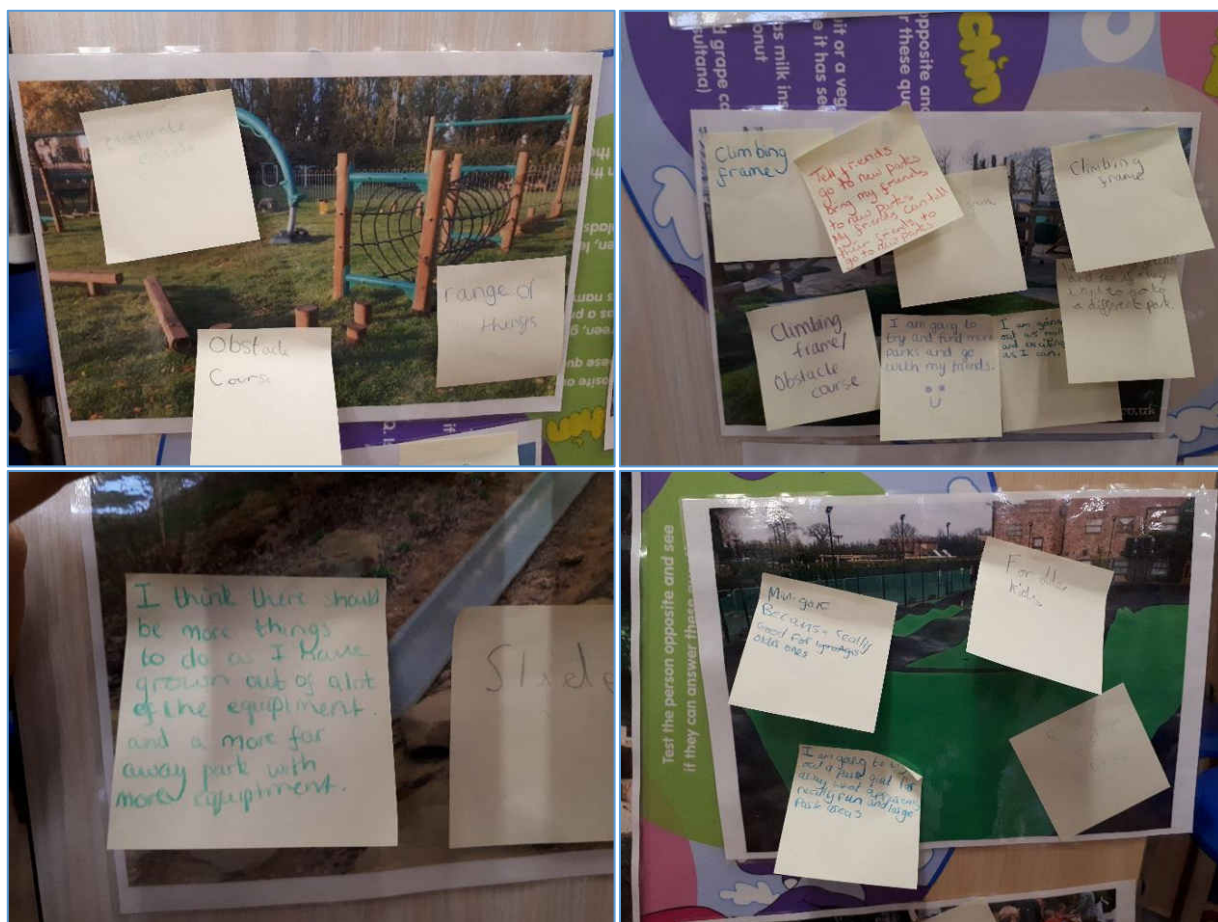
The table below shows the proportion of responses for this question within each of the 10 areas (rows total 100%).

	High Frequency ----- Low Frequency				
	Every day	Two or more times a week	About once a week	Less than once a week but more than once a month	Less often
Batley	7	13	34	22	24
Birstall	14	30	23	16	17
Colne Valley	15	28	20	15	22
Denby Dale	11	27	17	21	23
Dewsbury	6	39	25	17	13
Golcar	19	23	26	21	12
Holme Valleys	12	39	29	11	8
Huddersfield North	4	34	29	20	13
Huddersfield South	0	33	24	9	33
Mirfield	8	24	13	34	21

Spenborough Trust Youth Parliament

- It was unanimously agreed that the play areas that they played in were too small with 7 of the 8 members believed them to be too basic in equipment. All 8 members wanted to see better equipment within playable spaces, but discussions and the post-it note exercise revealed that this does not necessarily mean manufactured equipment
- 75% of the members expressed an interest in the wildlife found in the parks and a desire for learning and discovery opportunities. Linked to this was den making where members wanted more opportunities for this which was also a popular request
- The general consensus was that the majority of current play areas are designed for younger children which was assumed to be infant school age children and younger
- Older children which were juniors and older want somewhere safe to sit and talk.
- Suggestions of more space so they can do more things, this shows a desire for variety, diversity and choice between equipped play, free playable space and sports spaces
- Suggestion of signage from the streets to local playable spaces so children can navigate to and around their neighbourhood facilities easily and safely.

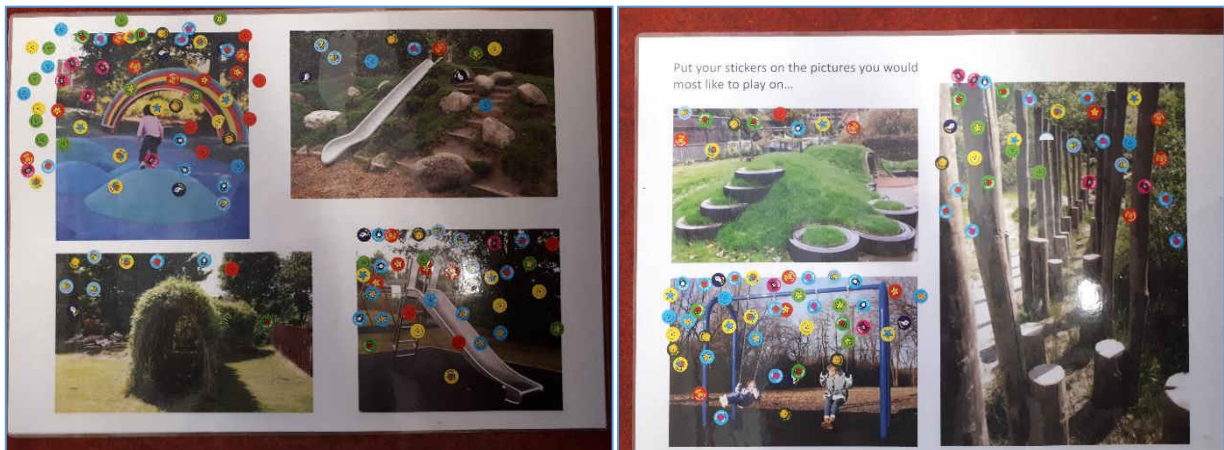
Example of youth parliament attendee comments



Lunchtime Sticker Survey

- The voting suggested that most popular play features were not the manufactured pieces of play equipment; in fact the pictures illustrating a traditional metal framed swing set only received 6% of the votes.
- The highest scoring play feature was a cluster of tall upstanding tree trunks, scoring 22%.
- The second highest scoring picture was a sand carpeted landform suggesting that although natural playable features are desired, the main desire is for diversity and choice in our playable spaces.
- The results shown below which have an even share of votes show that diversity of play equipment and is supported
 - Willow structures received 12% of the votes
 - Traditional Swing set received 13%
 - A large grassy mound incorporating boulders and a slide also received 13%
 - A grass covered mound with imbedded tyres for climbing received 14%.

Example of a returned lunchtime sticker survey:



Appendix D

Desktop Studies Methodologies

1. Data Analysis

Data was compiled for all play areas known to Kirklees, including both those owned and managed by us and others owned/operated by 3rd parties. The list of 3rd party sites is not exhaustive.

The available datasets were categorised and then processed to produce a series of indicators for each site, as set out below. Data processing for each dataset is described below; after processing, all datasets were equally weighted then added together to produce the overall indicator.

1. Condition survey score: *high score = in worst condition*.
All sites were assessed in a January 2018 condition survey, with each feature assessed on a Red/Amber/Green (R/A/G) rating scale. The total number of features marked Red and Amber were summed to produce this score (max. 12).
2. Current play value: *high score = greater current play value*.
 - Years since last refurbishment. 3=sites refurbished within the last 9 years, 2=10-15 years, 1=16+ years, 0=removed. Note that the available data does not discriminate between partial and full refurbishments. Scores then normalised to scale 0-1 by division by the highest score.
 - Open Land Survey 2015 score. Sites were scored High/Medium/Low (H/M/L) for quality; this gives a sense of the quality assessment of the parent site as a whole. Sites under 0.2ha were not assessed. H=3, M=2, L=1, not assessed=0. Scores then normalised to scale 0-1 by division by the highest score.
 - Age provision of play equipment. Equipment was scored according to manufacturer's instruction for intended age range in the following categories: age 0-3 years, 3-6 years, 7-11 years, 12-16 years, seniors. The total categories catered for were summed to give a total count (max. 5). Scores then normalised to scale 0-1 by division by the highest score.
3. Site potential: *high score = high potential*.
 - Potential for expansion. All sites were graded H/M/L according to the usable space for expansion. These were then scored: H=1, M=0.5, L=0.
 - Potential as sports hub. A score of 1 was given to sites which will potentially be developed in future as sports hubs. All other sites scored 0.
4. Social value/need: *high score = high socio-economic need*.
 - Areas with >20% children. Sites within an area where children make up >20% of the population scored 1, all others 0.
 - Housing density. Houses per km² for the 2011 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in which each site is located. Scores then normalised to scale 0-1 by division by the highest score.
 - Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015. Sites scored according to the 2015 KMD data for the 2011 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in which they are located; IMD decile score of 1-10 given where 1=most deprived 0-10%, 10=least deprived 90-100%. These were then inverted so that the most deprived areas received the highest score owing to greatest socio-economic need. Scores then normalised to scale 0-1 by division by the highest score.

5. Risk factors. Each site was rated Red/Amber/Green according to the degree to which Kirklees Council Parks and Green Spaces is able to influence decisions about the site.
 - Red: Sites own by 3rd parties or community asset transfers (KC Parks has little or no influence over changes to these sites)
 - Amber: Kirklees Council sites within Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing areas, KC sites on land leased from 3rd parties, or sites vested with other Kirklees services (KC Parks may be able to make changes in negotiation with KNH/relevant 3rd party/KC service)
 - Green: Sites owned and operated by Kirklees Parks – full control.

2. Desktop Mapping Exercise

The desk-based mapping exercise considered play provision on a ward by ward basis and was conducted by an expert panel comprising of Kirklees Officers taking into account resident and elected member feedback from the previous engagement work and the dataset-based indicators.

Each play area was considered for its current **location, play value, care and maintenance needs** and **future potential** and the network was also considered as a whole.

Location: The location of a play area is a hugely important factor in how and when people play and how they use spaces. By assessing the existing location we can gain a better understanding of the suitability of the existing location of the play areas and spaces where and when people may play. When assessing the location and extent of a play area the following criteria were considered:

- Informal oversight – or is it easily viewed?
- Well used
- Easily accessible in the immediate context
- Personal safety, lighting and security features
- Accessibility within the larger context (720m catchment)
- Meeting other children (socialisation/demand)
- Does the design respond to the site?
- Is there fencing, gates, chicanes etc.
- Potential to expand into wider context – does it still within a larger site, are there marked pitches etc.
- Other provisions located within the catchment.

Play value: Based on Play England's Quality Assessment Tool, the following criteria were considered to assess an area's play value:

- Enticing to children
- DDA/inclusion of specific accessible equipment
- Through-age
- Movement – does it encourage physical movement?
- Imaginative play
- Ball games
- Loose parts – twigs, leaves, stones, small stumps etc.
- Access to the natural environment
- Places to sit - informal and formal
- Any added play value
- Location and accessibility

Care and Maintenance: The current condition and ease of maintenance of each site was assessed considering the following criteria:

- Well maintained appearance?
- Condition of non-play infrastructure e.g. gates, benches, fencing
- Condition of equipment
- Condition of safety surfacing
- Vandalism and ASB
- Expected wear and tear
- Accessibility for maintenance operations
- Appropriateness e.g bark vs rubber crumb vs grass matting

Sites were then assessed within their context to give a better understanding of the current play network on offer and how it could be better spread out both strategically and geographically. When assessing the future potential of play areas the following was considered:

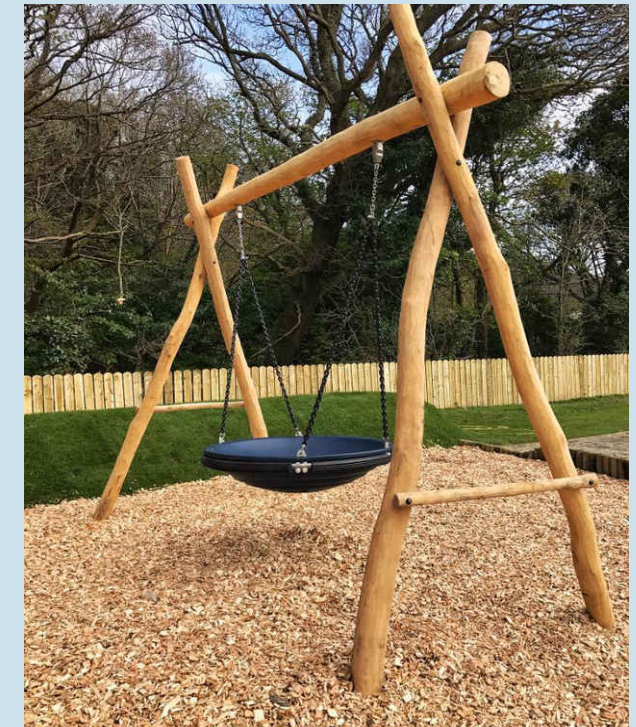
- Immediate context (within natural boundaries of the site, not limited to existing fences)
- Immediate typology such as on a very steep hill people were unlikely to walk up (within 720m catchment)
- Road traffic incidents
- Housing density and profile within the catchment 720m
- Indexes of Multiple Deprivation within the catchment 720m
- Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the area, how close they were and if they linked to the sites
- Greenway routes in proximity to the site
- Woodlands and other potential amenity spaces in proximity to the site
- Existing Planning Applications and the potential for new housing within the catchment 720m
- Local Plan options and the potential for new housing within the catchment 720m
- Flood risk information
- Conservation areas
- Nature Reserves
- SSI's, SSSI's and areas of wildlife significance
- Transport infrastructure and accessibility/connectivity opportunities
- Location of schools and other amenities and accessibility/connectivity opportunities
- Location and situation within the community/geography/proximity

Themes identified

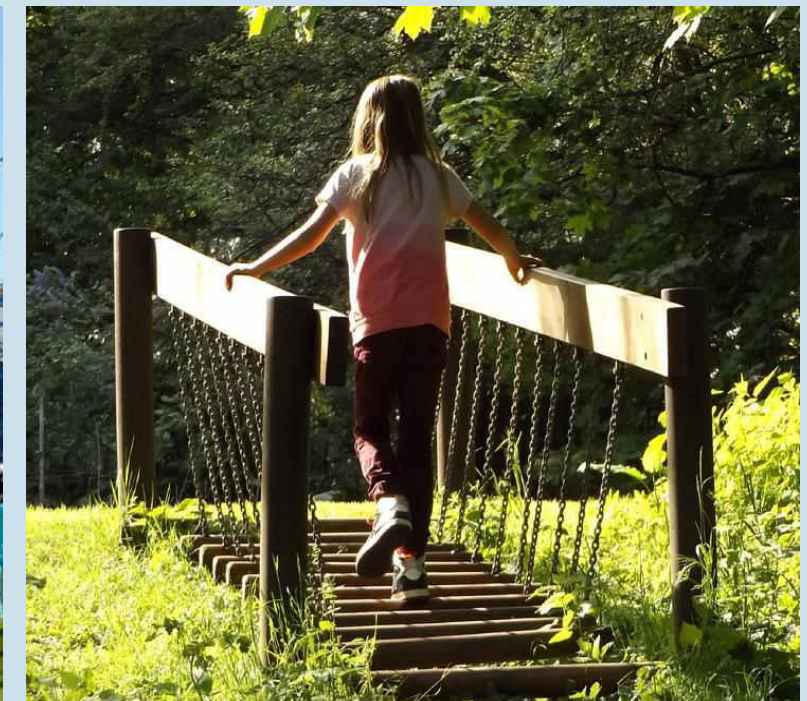
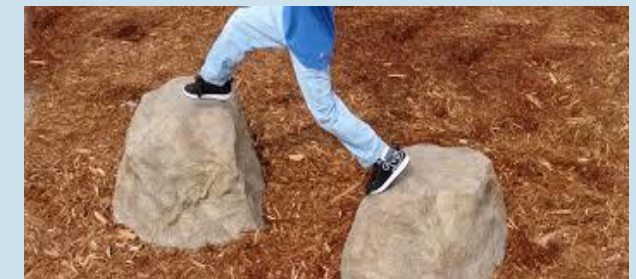
Several themes emerged from the mapping exercise as follows:

- Many play areas currently have limited play value.
- There is striking lack of diversity in the play offer throughout the district.
- The play offer is limited in terms of opportunity for through-age play.
- Many of the play areas are in a poor condition.
- There are many sites throughout the district which would be better suited to being playable spaces.
- There are multiple examples of 'clusters' of small equipped play areas that provide a similar and limited play experience.

The mapping exercise identified the need for a new classification of play sites which could be used to create a strategic network and to guide future development on a site by site basis.

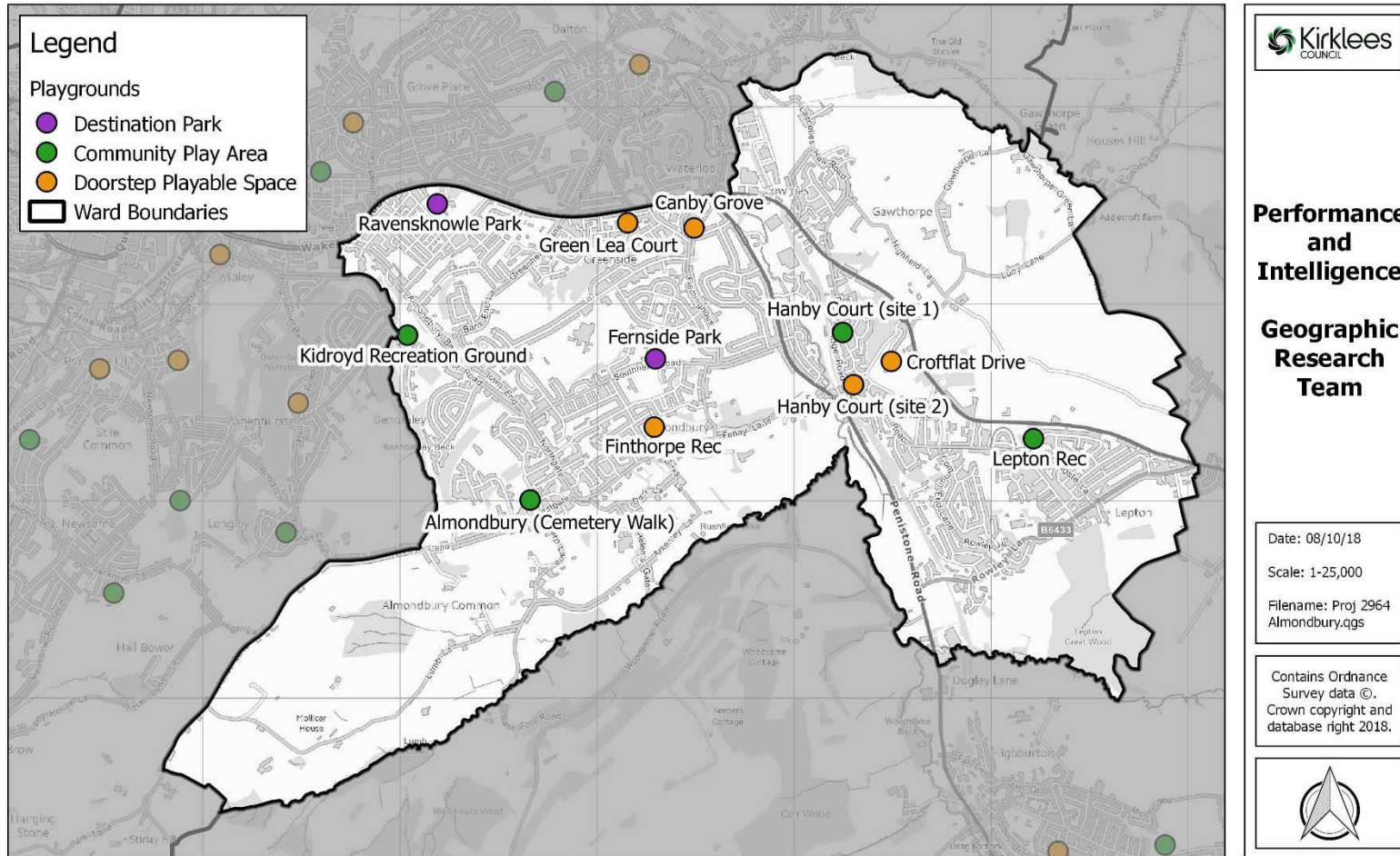


High Play Value Examples



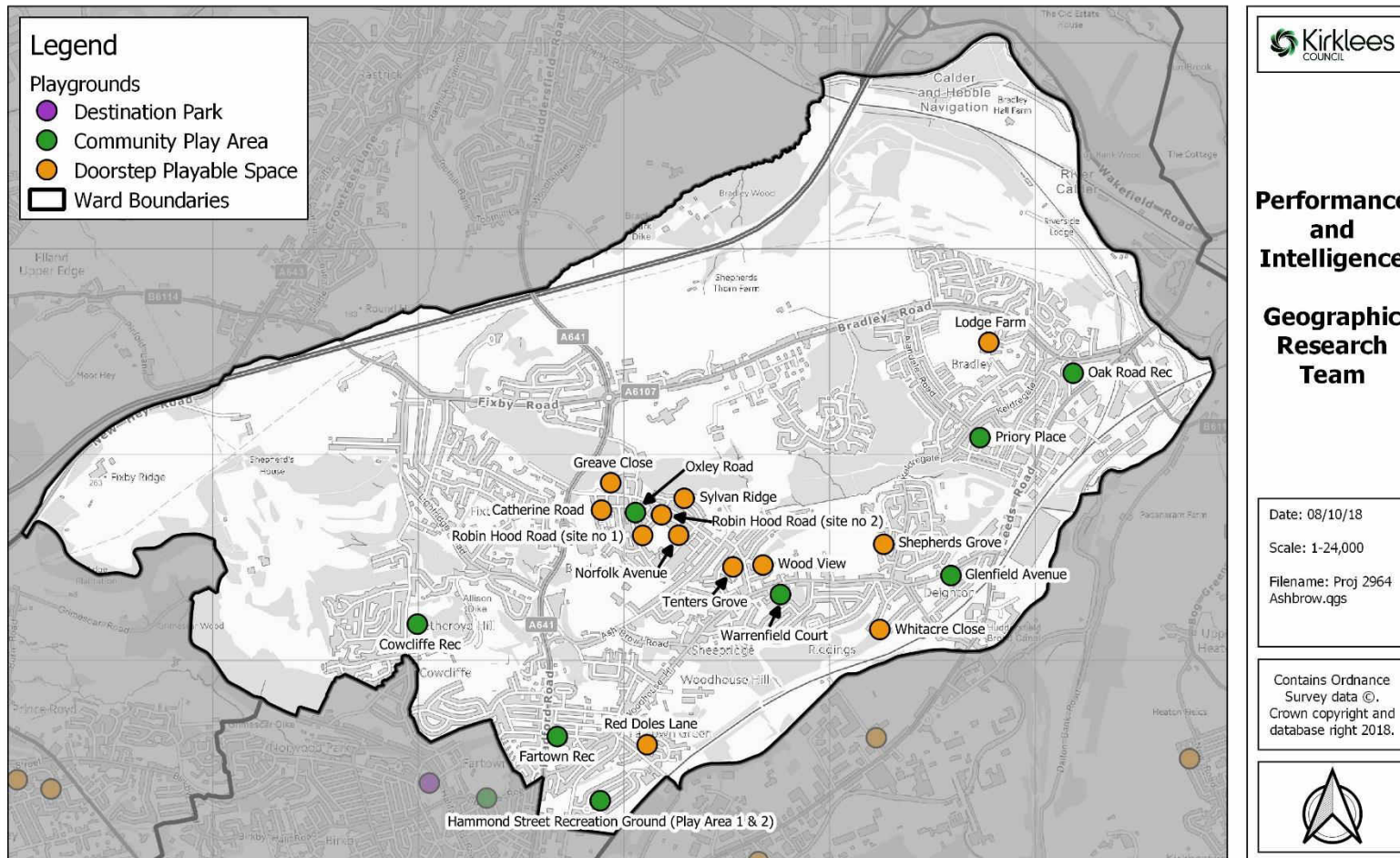
Almondbury Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Almondbury Ward



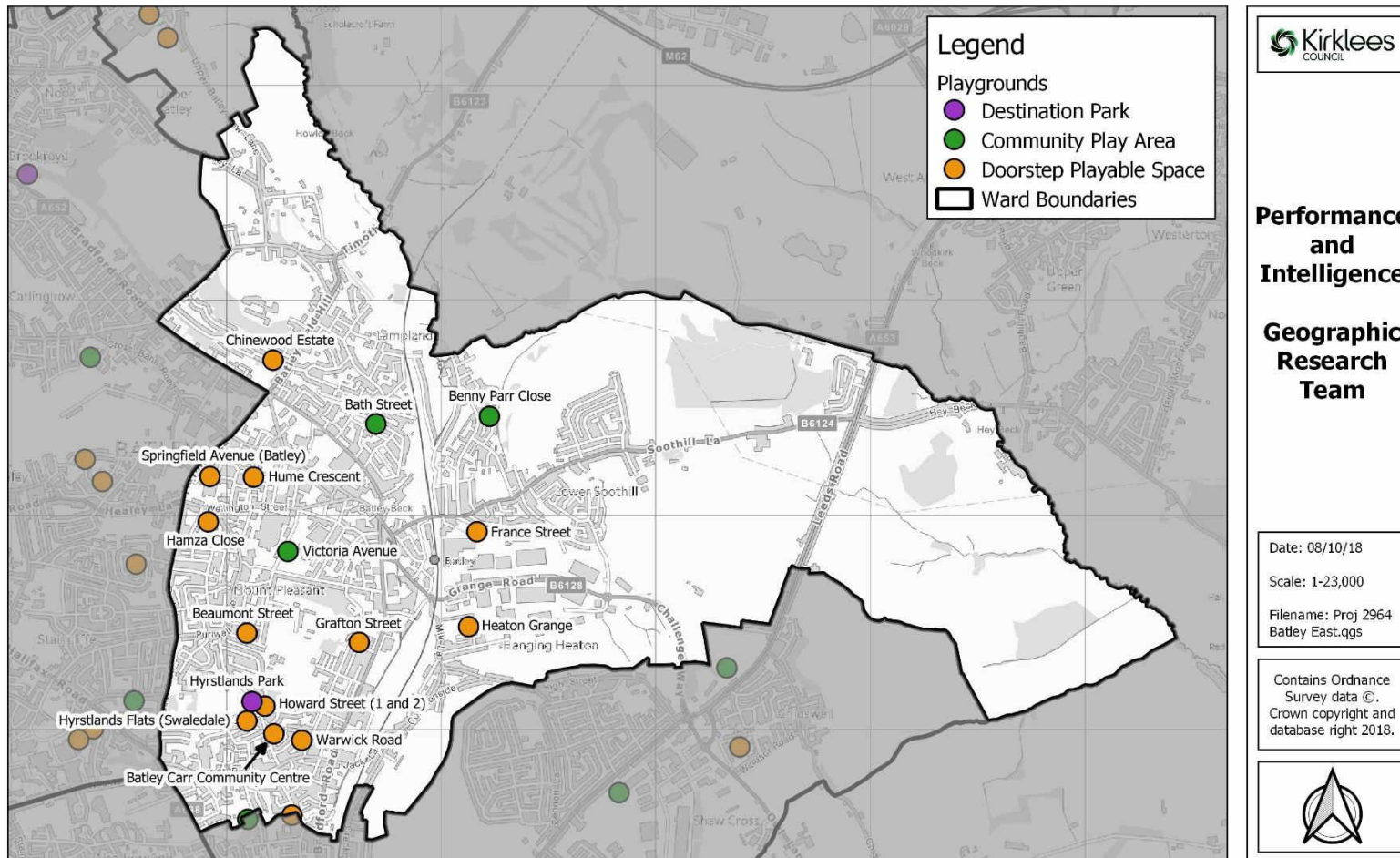
Ashbrow Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Ashbrow Ward

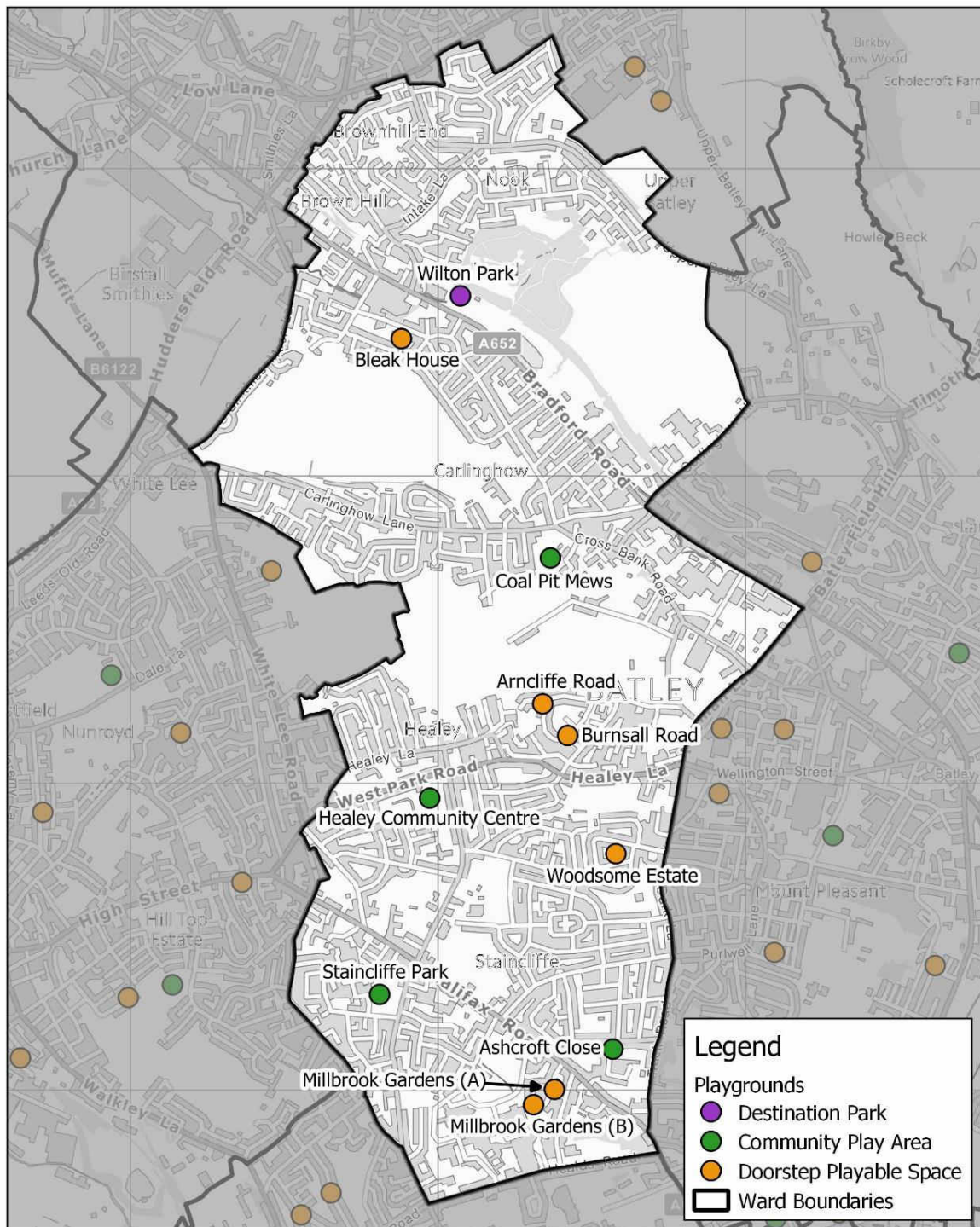


Batley East Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Batley East Ward



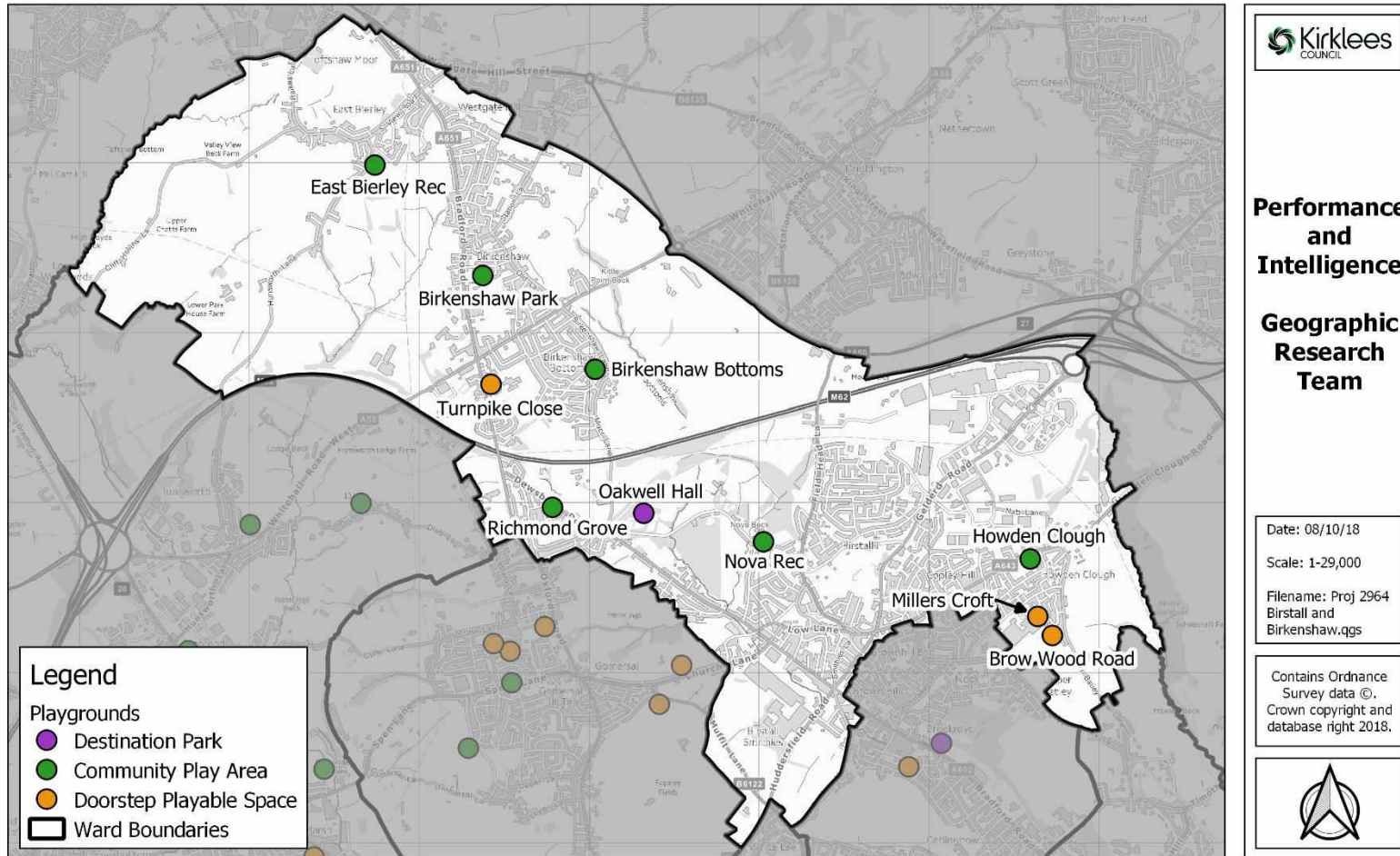
Batley West Ward



 <p>Kirklees COUNCIL</p>	<p>Performance and Intelligence</p> <p>Geographic Research Team</p>	<p>Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Batley West Ward</p> <p>Date: 08/10/18</p> <p>Scale: 1-16,000</p> <p>Filename: Proj 2964 Batley West.qgs</p>		
		<p>Contains Ordnance Survey data ©. Crown copyright and database right 2018.</p>		

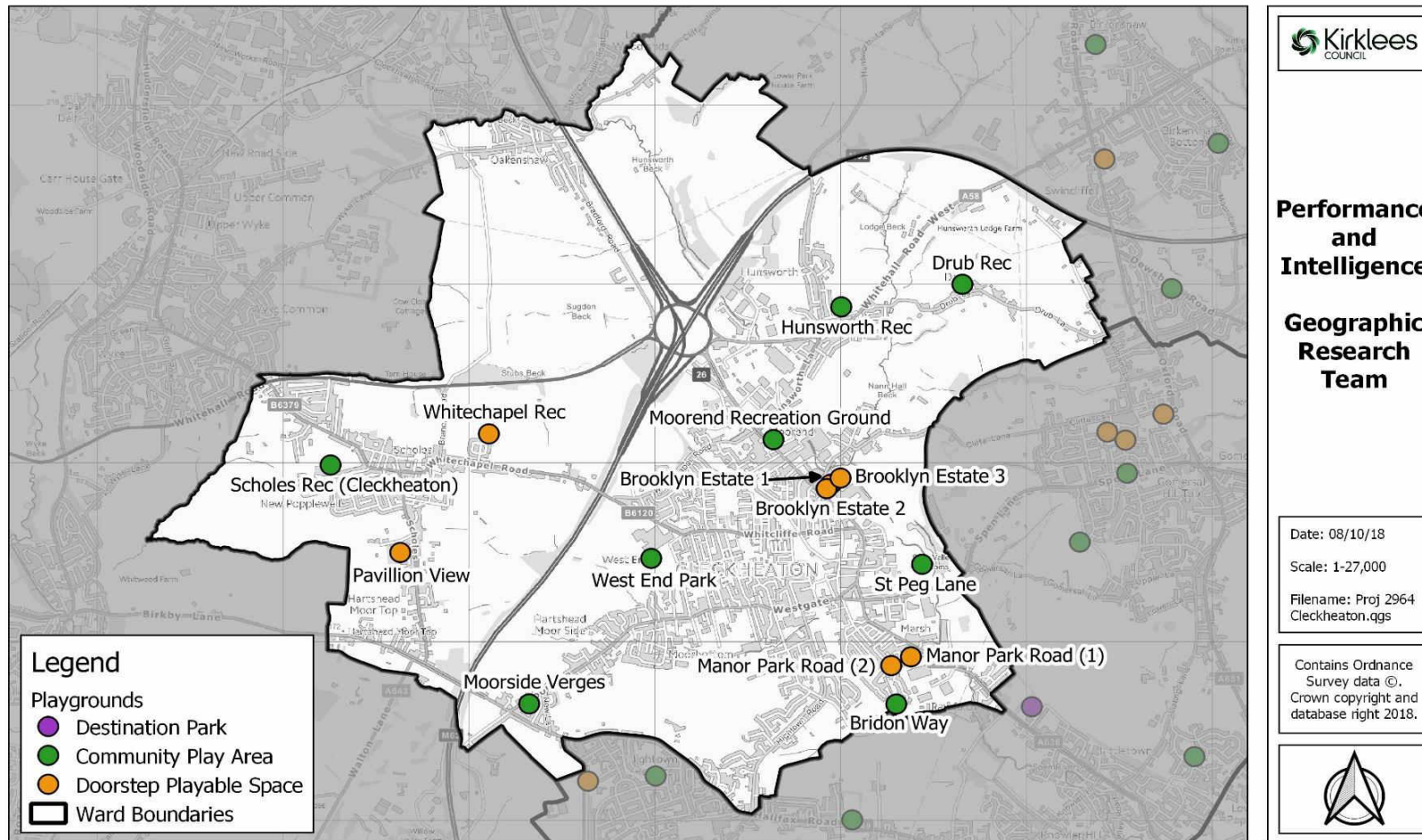
Birstall and Birkenshaw Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Birstall & Birkenshaw Ward



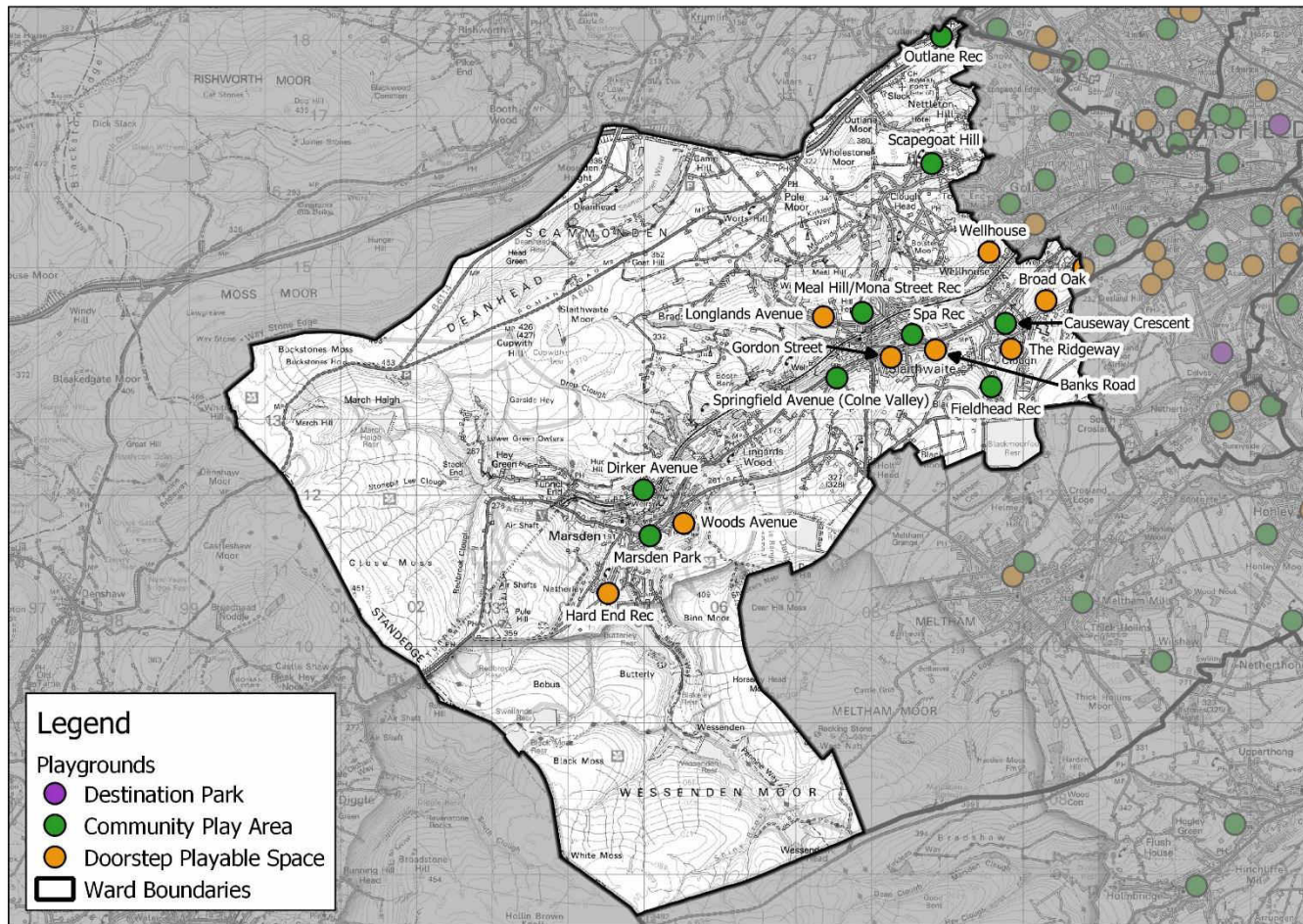
Cleckheaton Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Cleckheaton Ward



Colne Valley Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Colne Valley Ward



**Performance
and
Intelligence**

**Geographic
Research
Team**

Date: 08/10/18

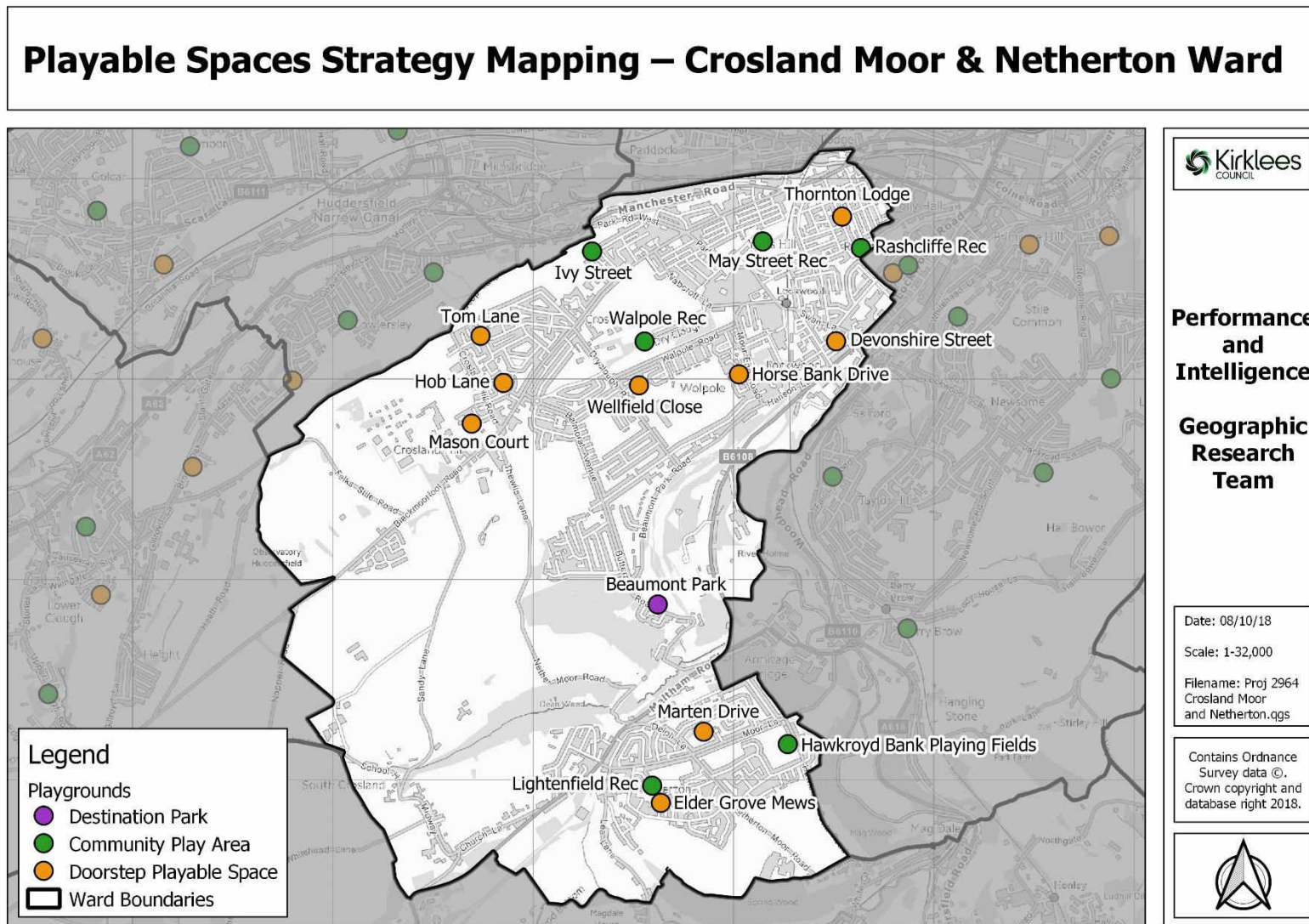
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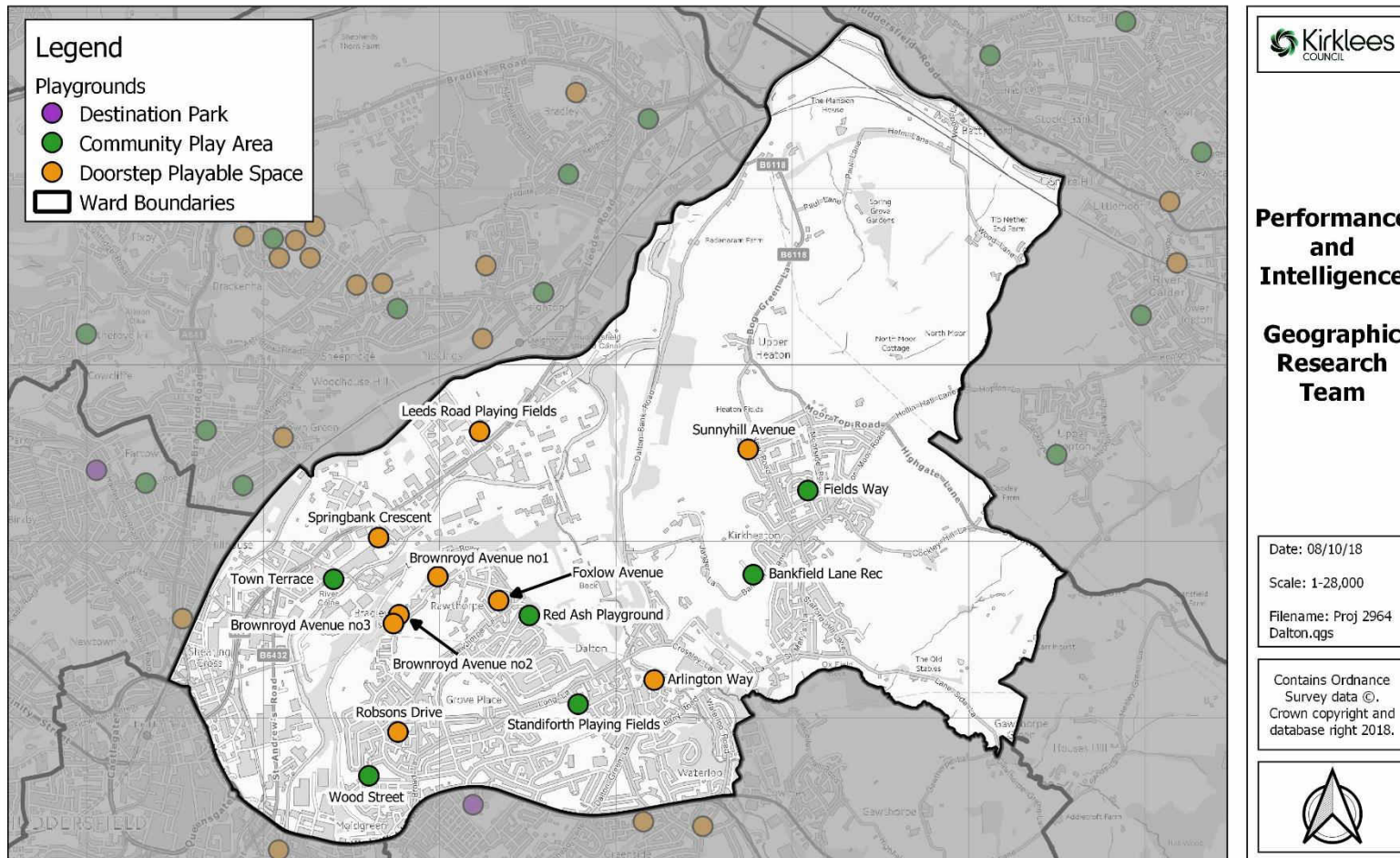


Crossland Moor and Netherton Ward

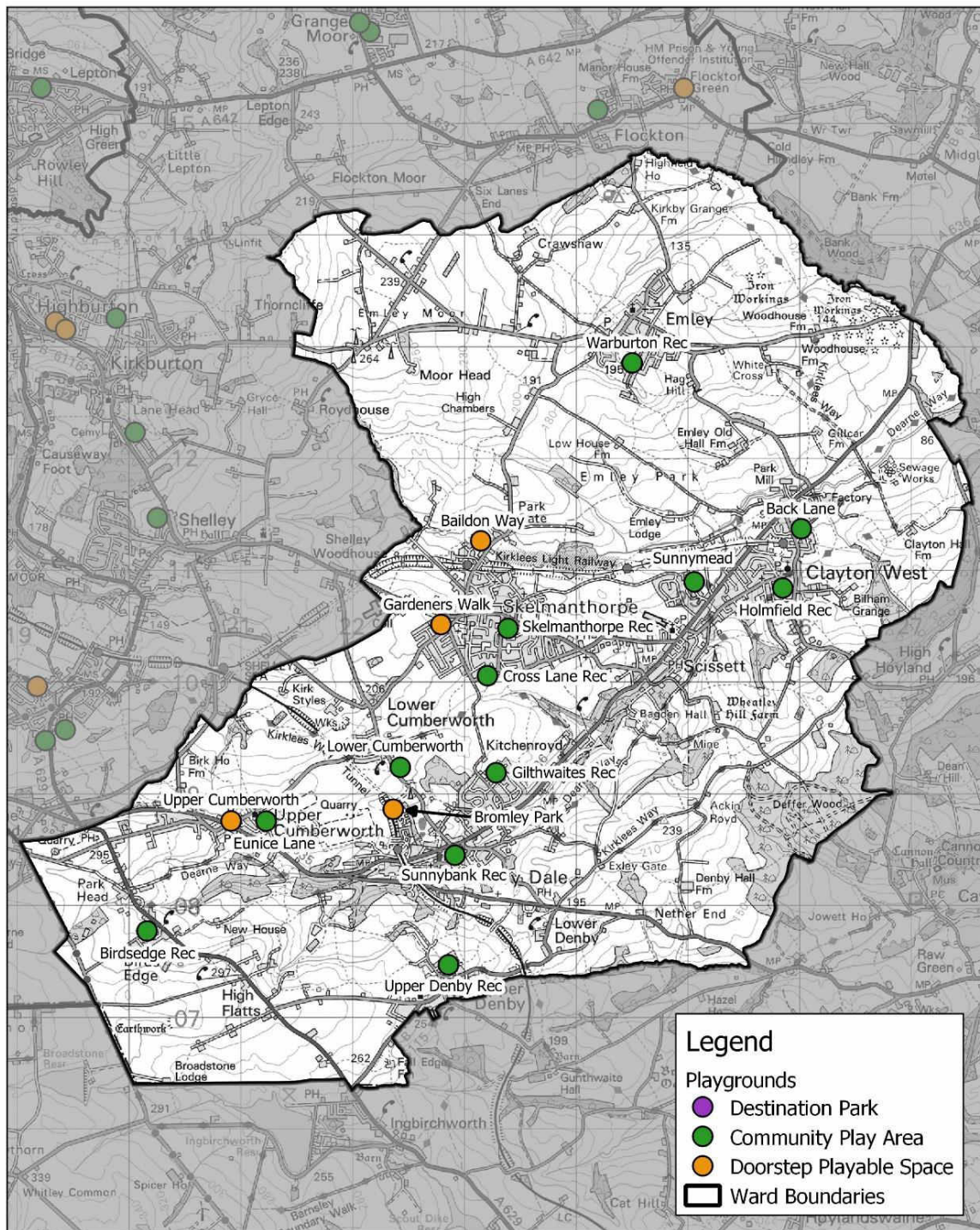


Dalton Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Dalton Ward



Denby Dale Ward



Performance and Intelligence

Geographic Research Team

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Denby Dale Ward

Date: 08/10/18

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Filename: Proj 2964 Denby Dale.qgs



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Legend

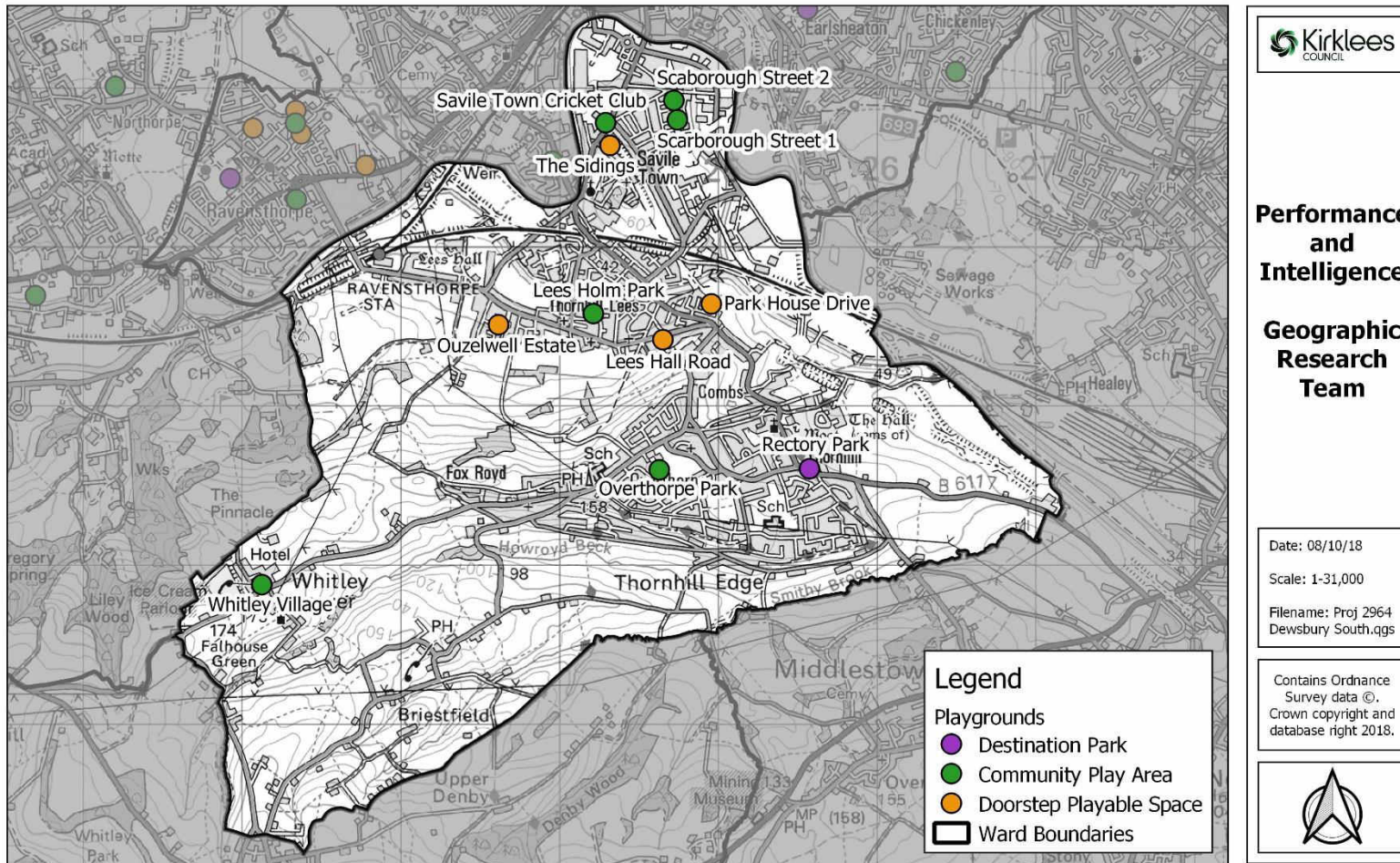
- Destination Park
- Community Play Area
- Doorstep Playable Space
- Ward Boundaries

Map labels include: Grange Road Park, Smallwood Road, Rock House Park, Carr House Park, Bywell Play Area, Naylor Court, Battye Street, Milton Walk, Eightlands Play Area, Wakefield Road, Earlsheaton Park, Hazel Crescent, Walnut Avenue, Staircliffe, Mount Pleasant, Hanging Heaton, Grange Road, High Street, Carr House, Upper Roads, Crackenedge, Boothroyd, Draw Green, Wakefield Road, Earlsheaton, Hazel Crescent, Walnut Avenue, Ossett, and Dewsbury.

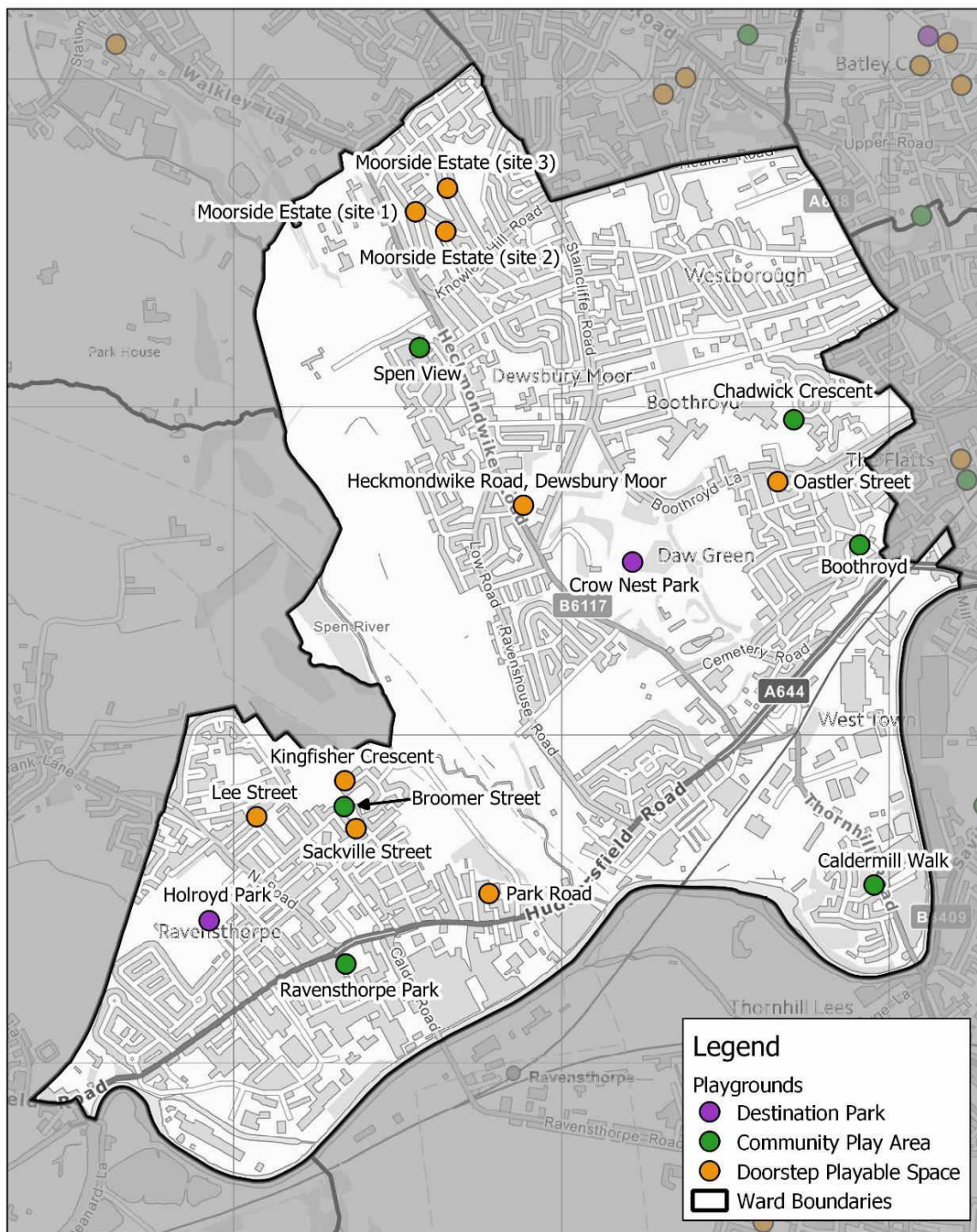


Dewsbury South Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Dewsbury South Ward



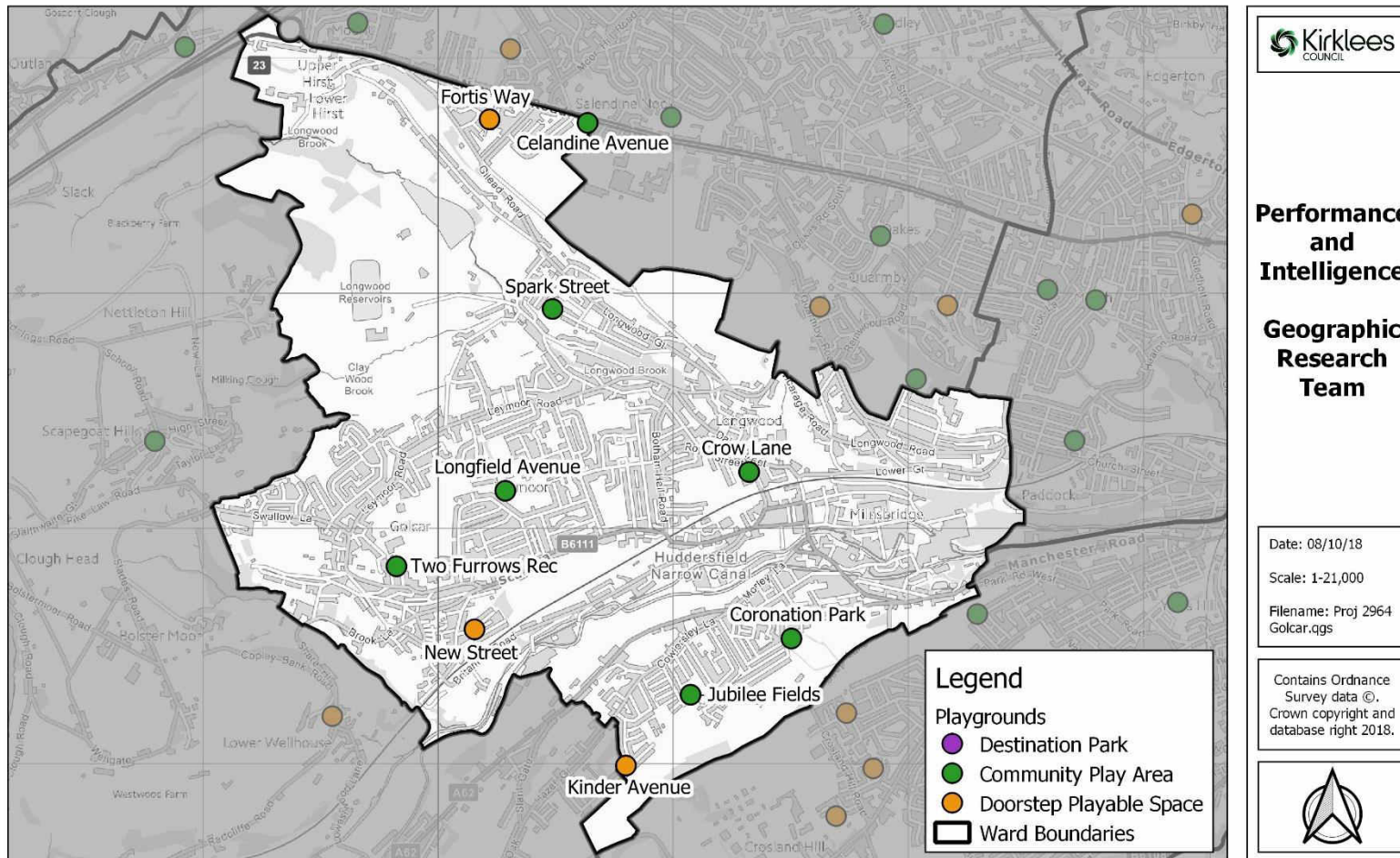
Dewsbury West Ward



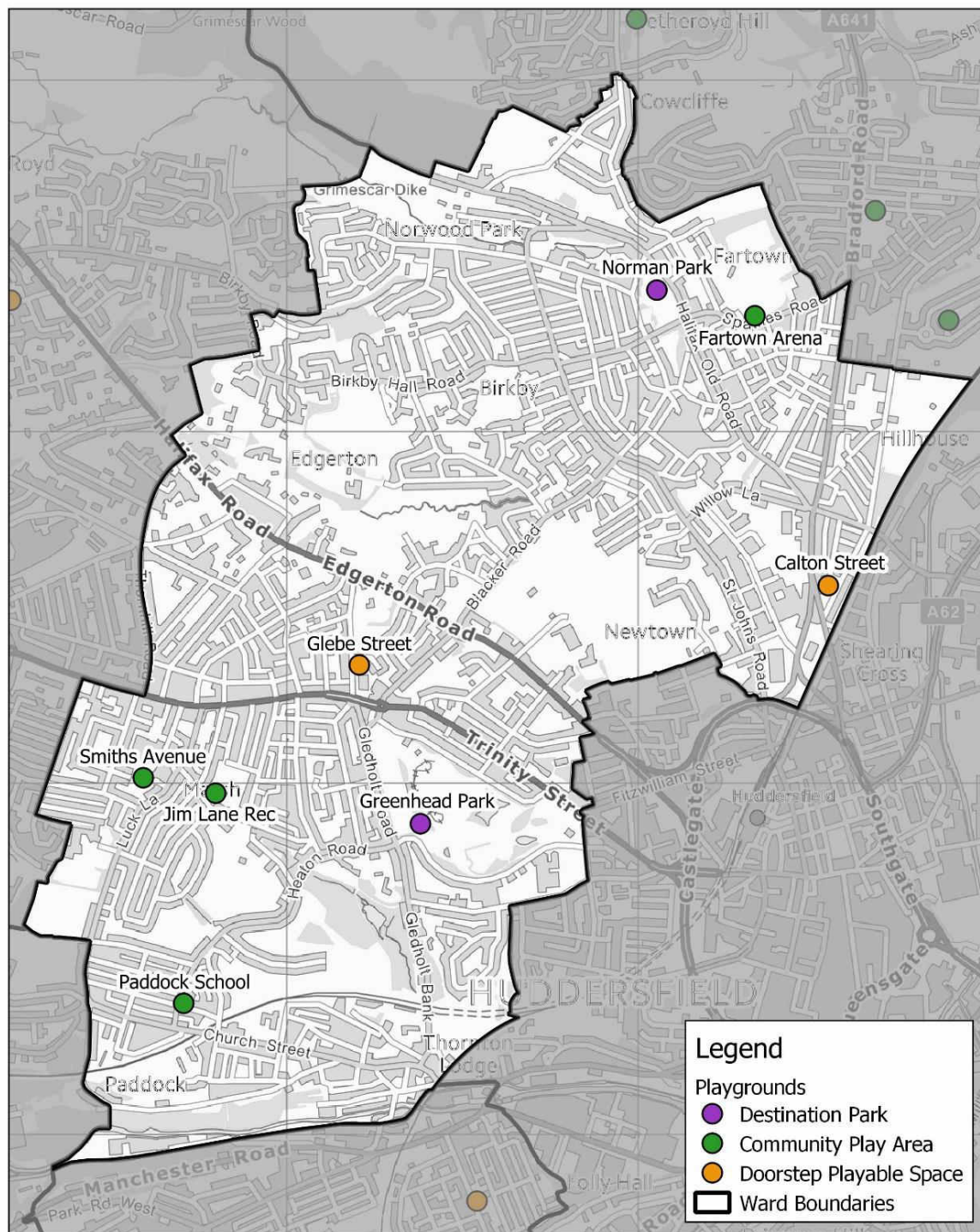
<p>Kirklees COUNCIL</p>	<p>Performance and Intelligence</p> <p>Geographic Research Team</p>	<p>Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Dewsbury West Ward</p> <p>Date: 08/10/18</p> <p>Scale: 1:15,000</p> <p>Filename: Proj 2964 Dewsbury West.qgs</p>		
		<p>Contains Ordnance Survey data ©. Crown copyright and database right 2018.</p>		

Golcar Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Golcar Ward

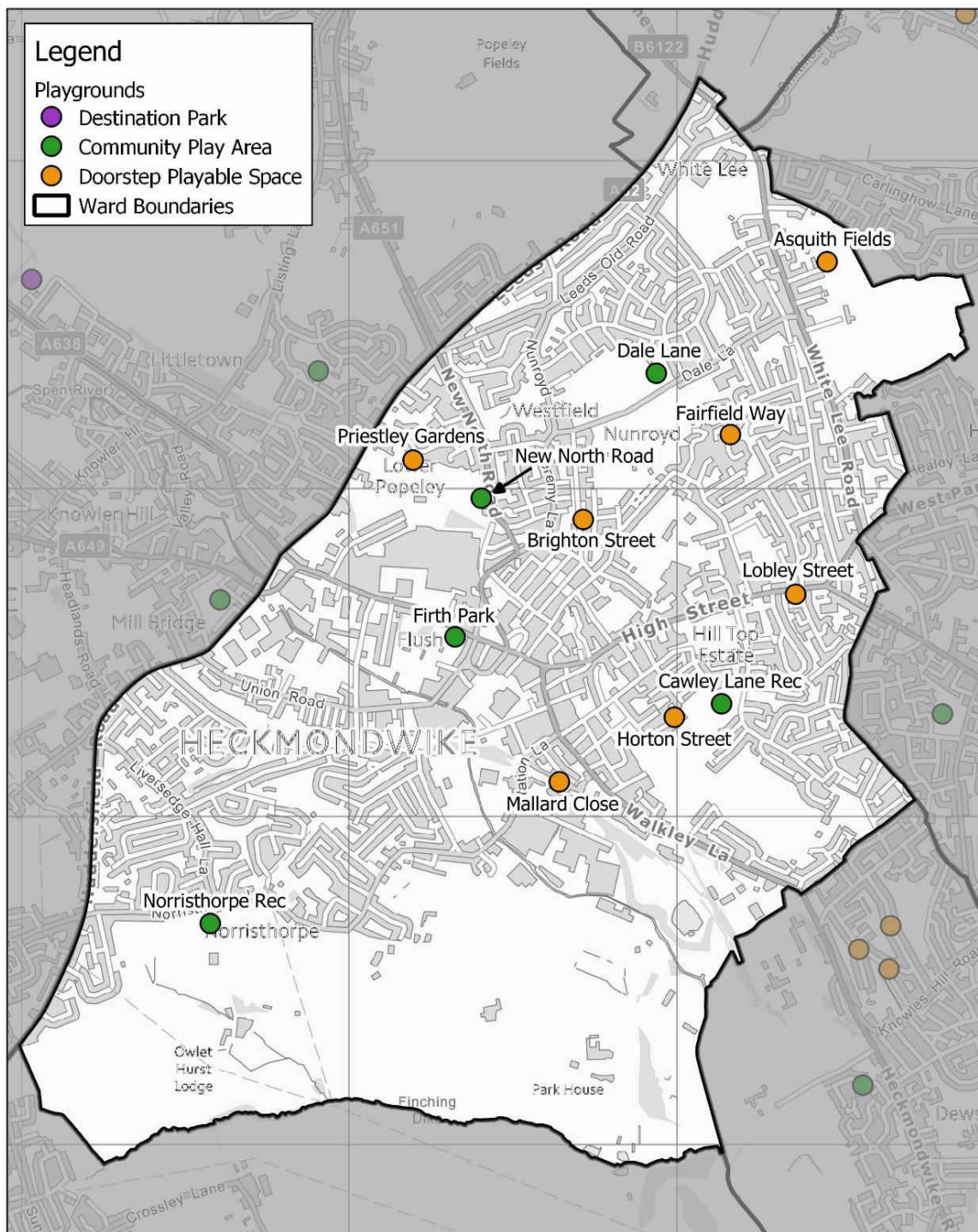


Greenhead Ward



 Kirklees Council	Performance and Intelligence	Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Greenhead Ward	
	Geographic Research Team	Date: 08/10/18 Scale: 1:14,000 Filename: Proj 2964 Greenhead.qgs	
	Contains Ordnance Survey data ©. Crown copyright and database right 2018.		

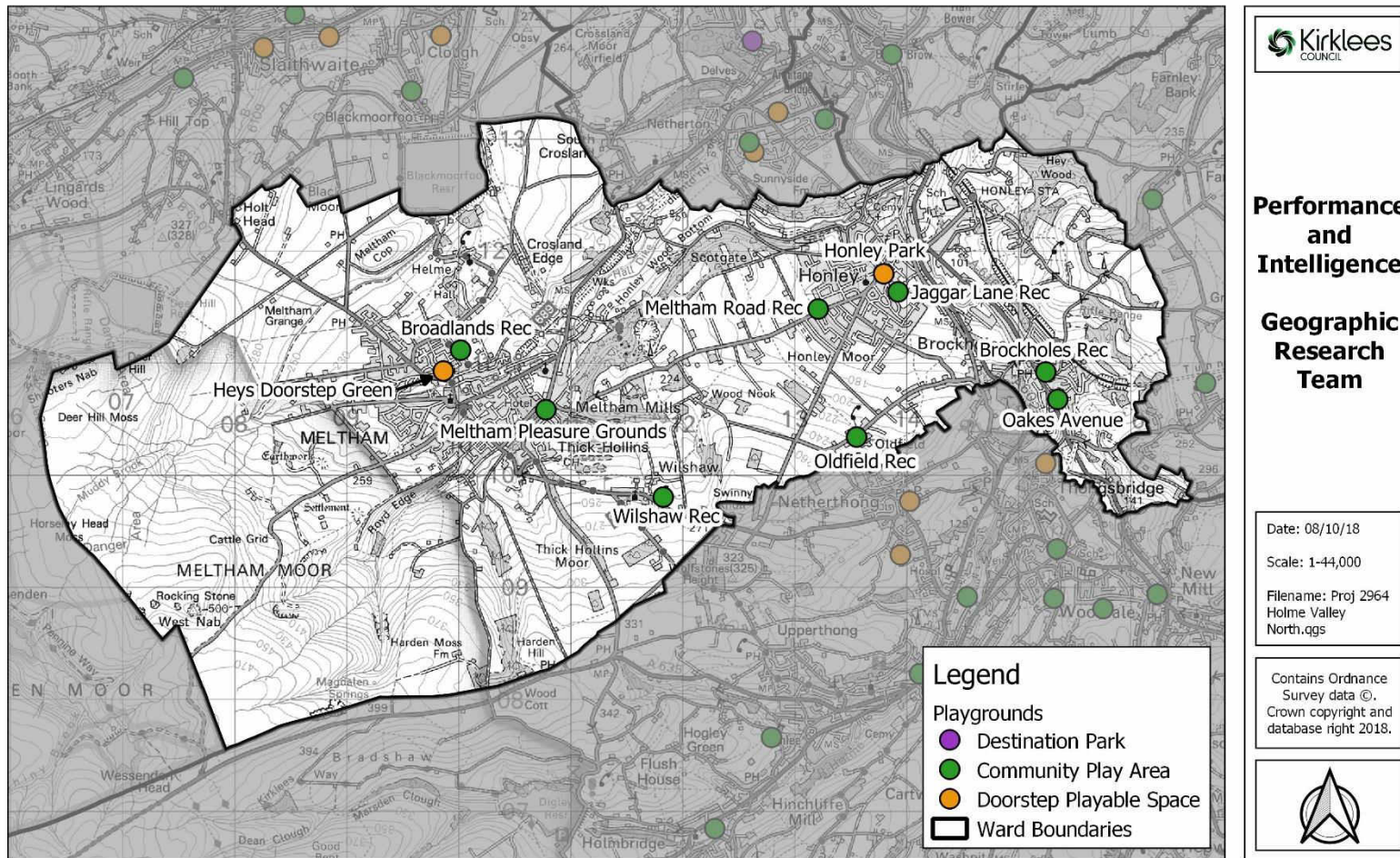
Heckmondwike Ward



<p>Kirklees COUNCIL</p>	<p>Performance and Intelligence</p> <p>Geographic Research Team</p>	<p>Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Heckmondwike Ward</p> <p>Date: 08/10/18</p> <p>Scale: 1:15,000</p> <p>Filename: Proj 2964 Heckmondwike.qgs</p>	
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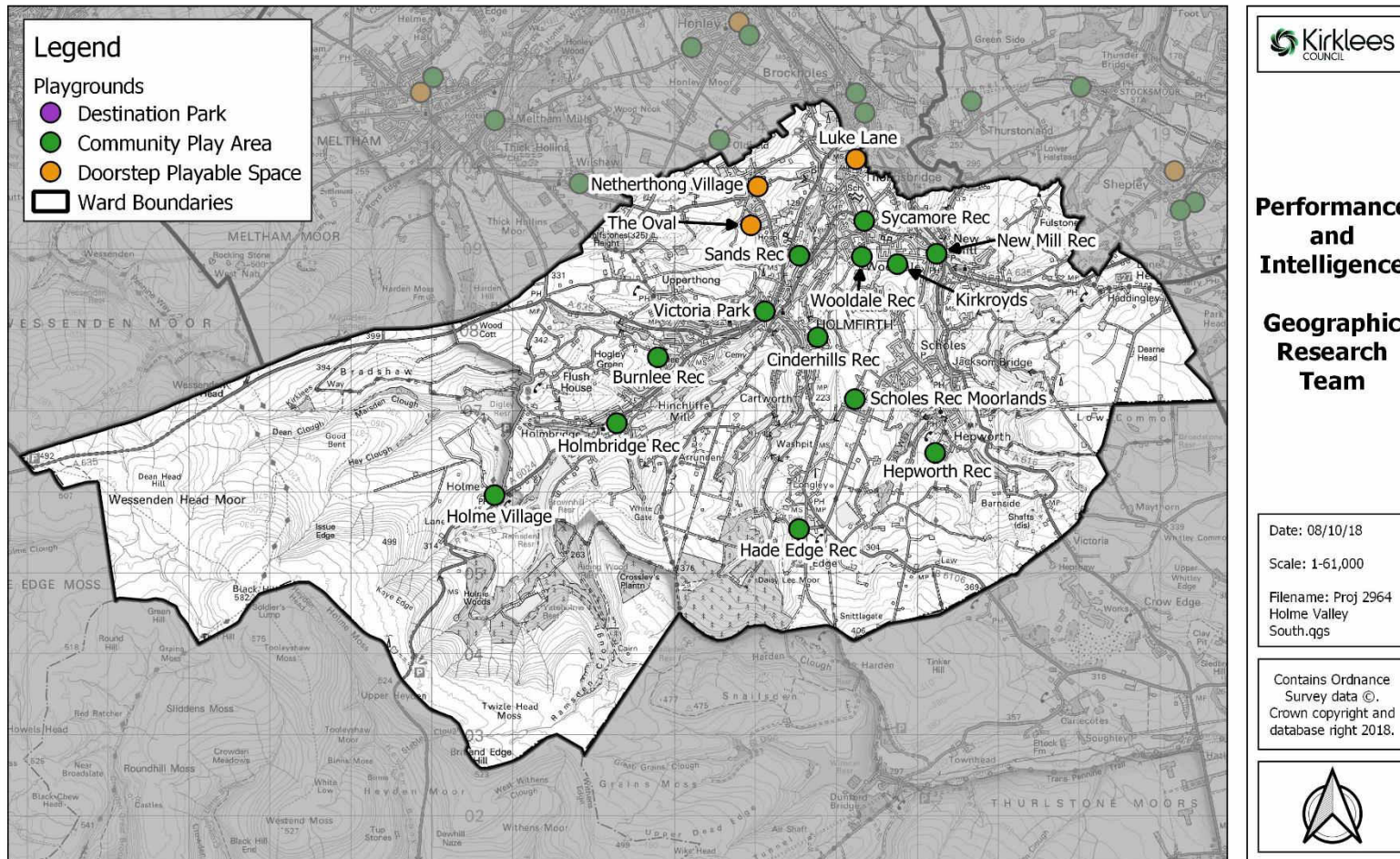
Holme Valley North Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Holme Valley North Ward



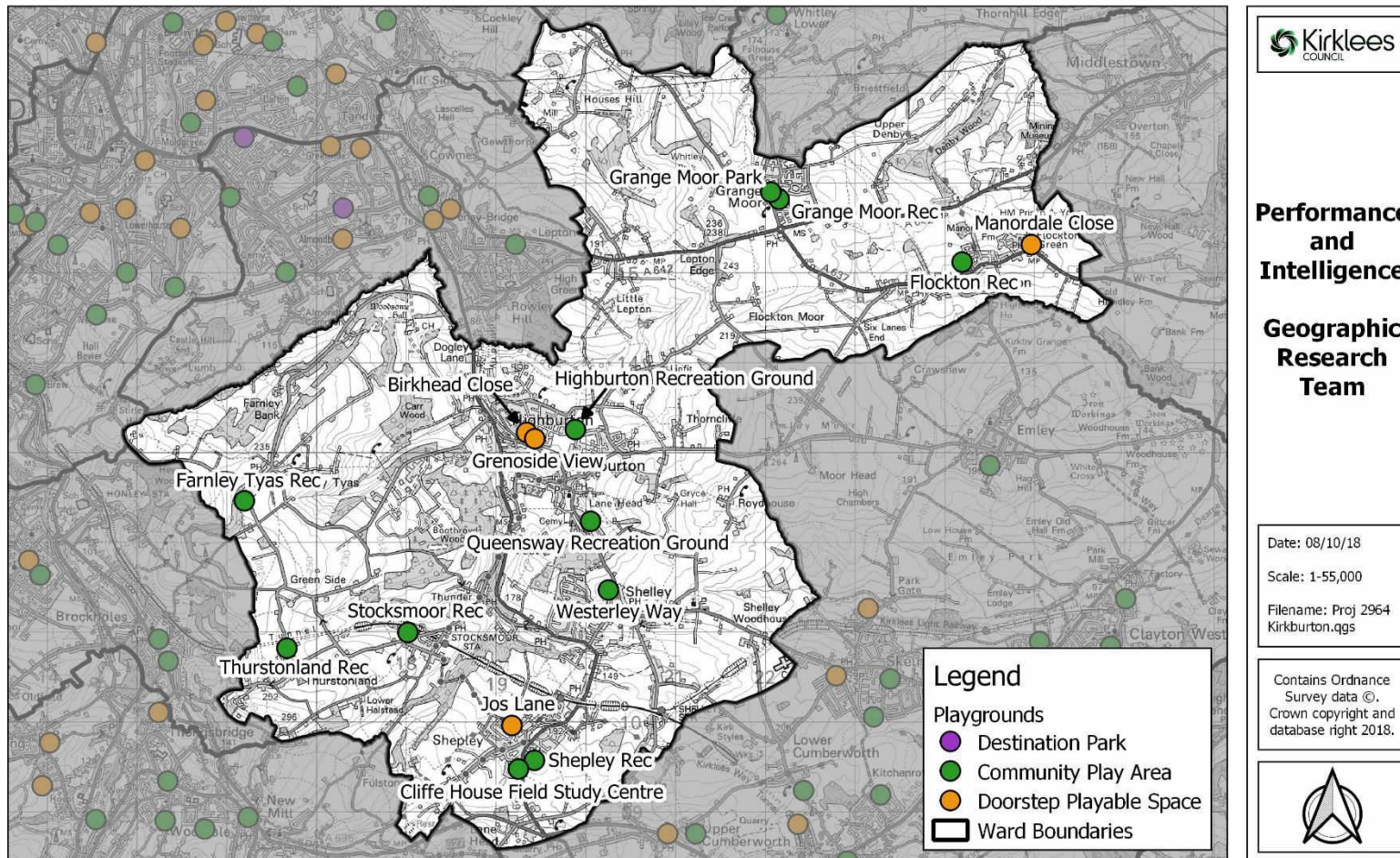
Holme Valley South Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Holme Valley South Ward



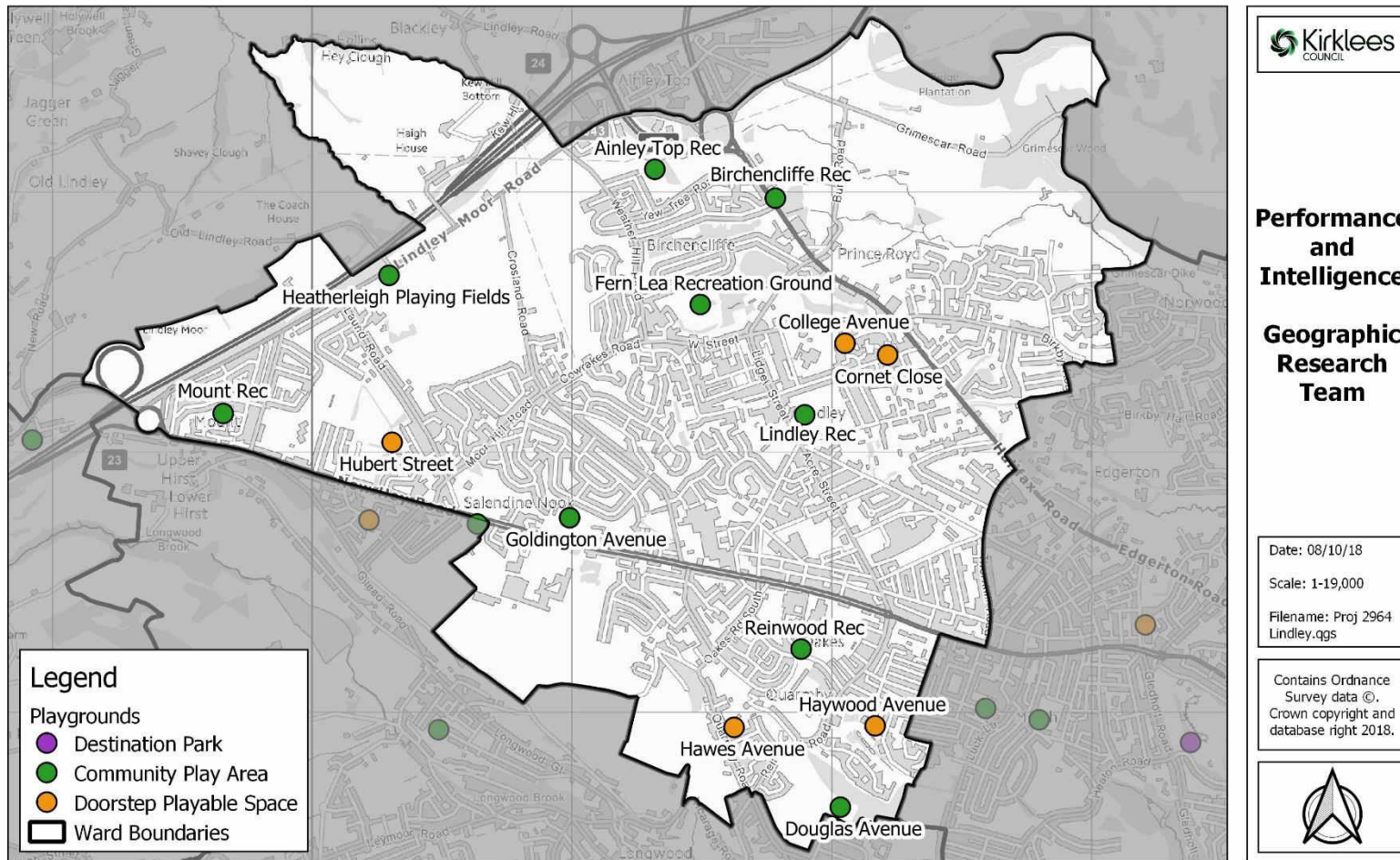
Kirkburton Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Kirkburton Ward

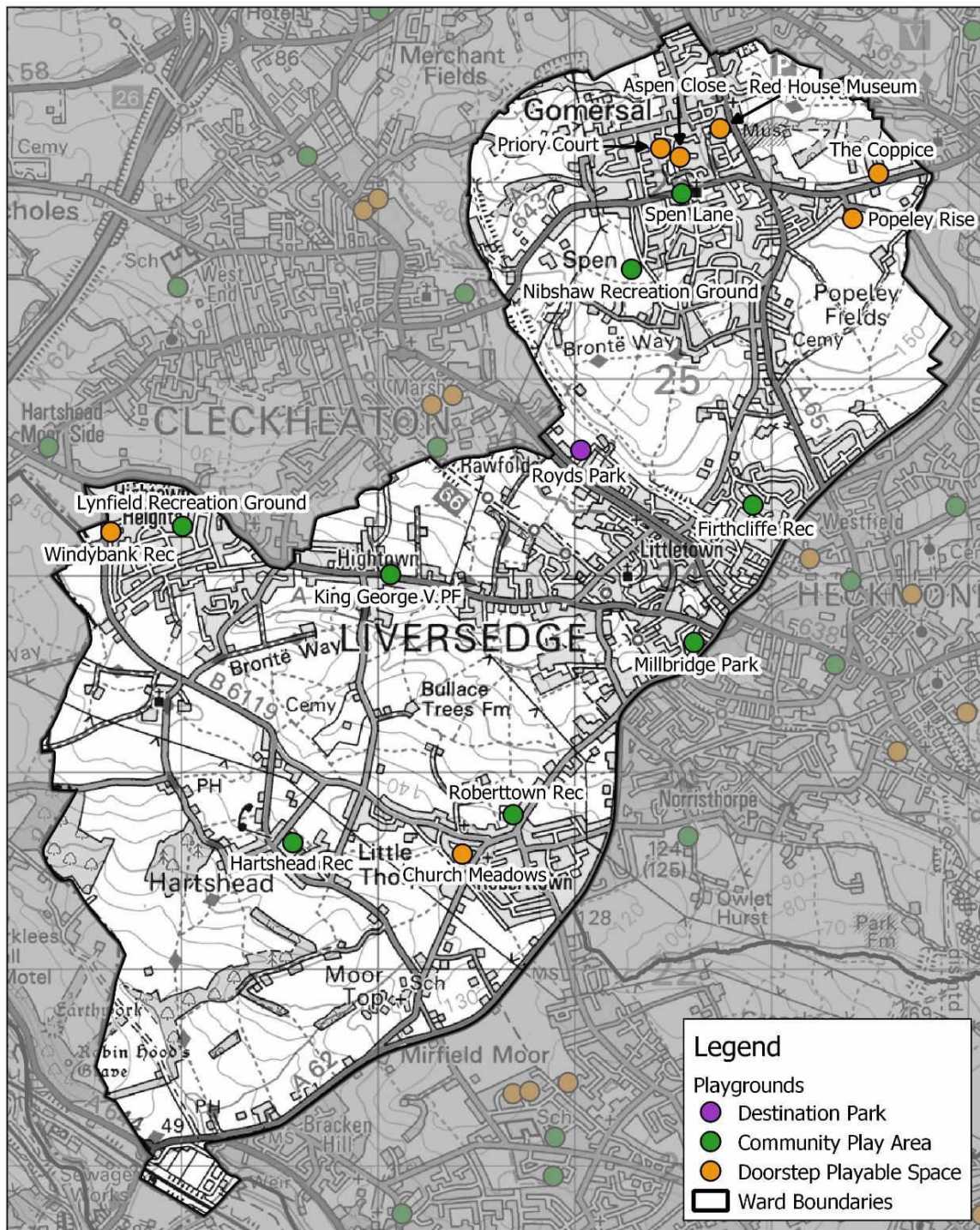


Lindley Ward

Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Lindley Ward

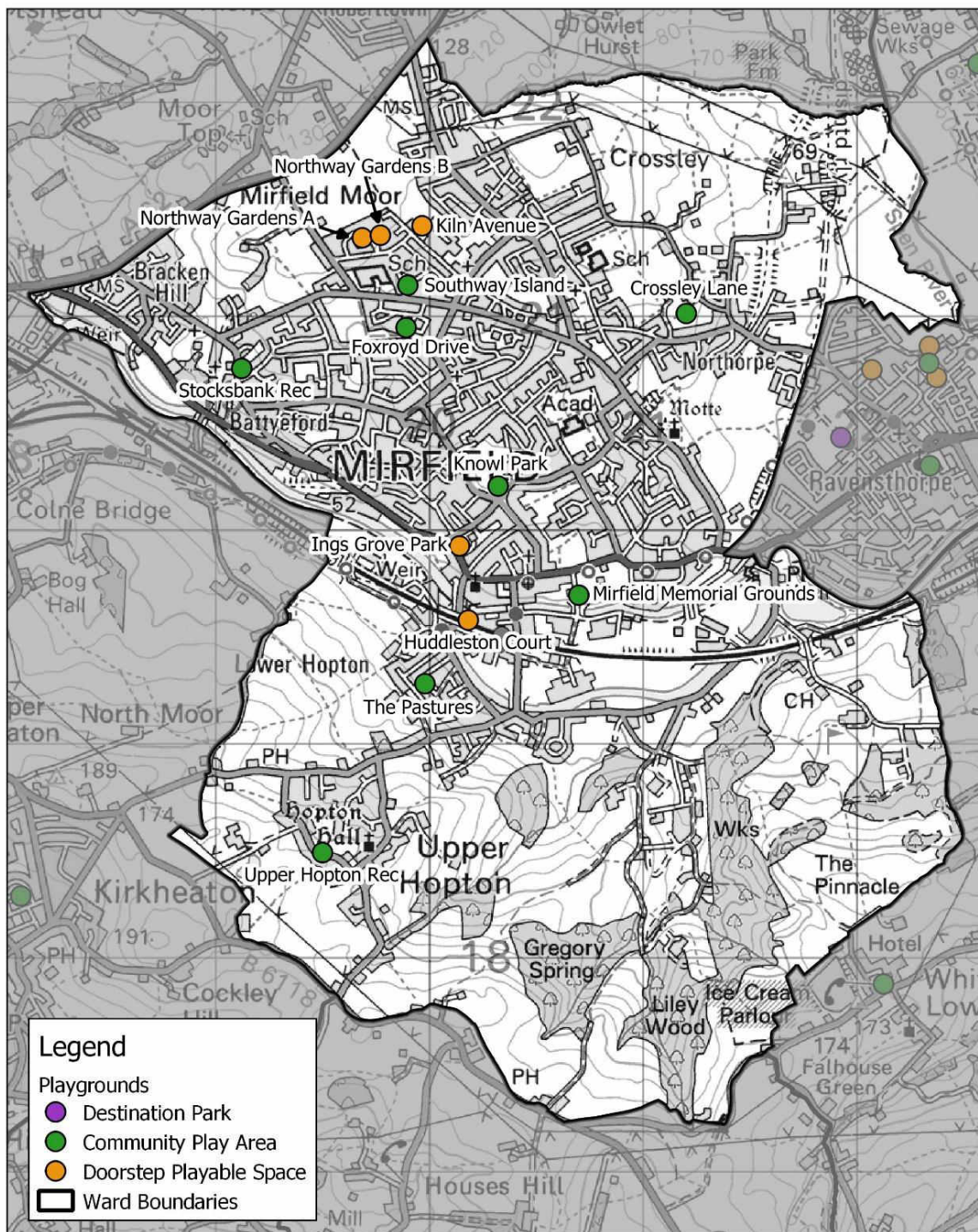


Liversedge and Gomersal Ward



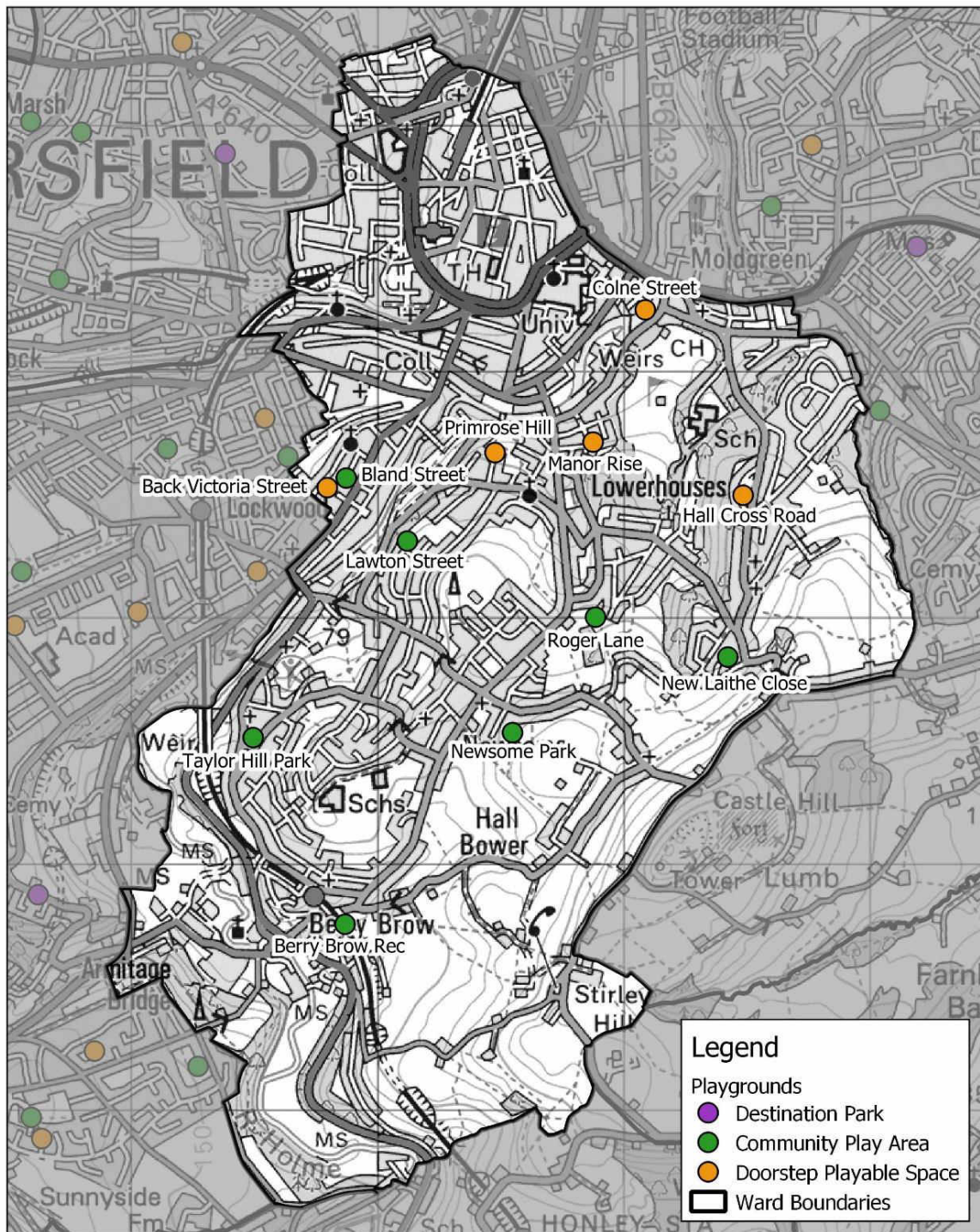
<p>Kirklees COUNCIL</p>	<p>Performance and Intelligence</p> <p>Geographic Research Team</p>	<p>Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Liversedge and Gomersal Ward</p> <p>Date: 08/10/18</p> <p>Scale: 1-25,000</p> <p>Filename: Proj 2964 Liversedge and Gomersal.qgs</p>		
		<p>Contains Ordnance Survey data ©. Crown copyright and database right 2018.</p>		

Mirfield Ward



<p>Kirklees COUNCIL</p>	<p>Performance and Intelligence</p> <p>Geographic Research Team</p>	<p>Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Mirfield Ward</p> <p>Date: 08/10/18</p> <p>Scale: 1:23,000</p> <p>Filename: Proj 2964 Mirfield.qgs</p>	
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Newsome Ward



 <p>Kirklees COUNCIL</p>	<p>Performance and Intelligence</p> <p>Geographic Research Team</p>	<p>Playable Spaces Strategy Mapping – Newsome Ward</p> <p>Date: 08/10/18</p> <p>Scale: 1:20,000</p> <p>Filename: Proj 2964 Newsome.qgs</p>	
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Appendix G

Sites with no play area but containing alternative play provision (multi-use games area (MUGA), teen shelter, skate/wheel park, basketball hoop/goal end, or trim trail/outdoor gym)

Site Name	Site Name Alias (AKA)	Ward	Parent Site Address	Site Type
Crawshaw Street		Dewsbury West	Crawshaw Street Playing fields	MUGA
Northway Gardens		Mirfield	Northway Gardens, Mirfield	MUGA
Ouzelwell Lane		Dewsbury South	Ouzelwell Lane, Dewsbury, WF12 9ES	BBALL
Ouzelwell Lane		Dewsbury South	Ouzelwell Lane, Dewsbury, WF12 9ES	GOAL END
Rock House Drive	by bowling green	Dewsbury East	Lidgate Lane/Rockhouse Drive, Dewsbury	MUGA
Bradford Road/Batley Field Hill	Batley Field Hill	Batley East	Bradford Road Open Space	GOAL END
Broomsdale Road		Batley East	Broomsdale Road Public Open Space	MUGA
Firthcliffe Rec		Liversedge and Gomersal	Firthcliffe Road Recreation Ground, Firthcliffe Road, Littletown, Liversedge	BBALL
Heritage Road	Mount Pleasant	Batley East	Heritage Road	MUGA
Mayman Lane		Batley East	Mayman Lane Public Open Space, Mayman Lane, Batley	BBALL
Mayman Lane		Batley East	Mayman Lane Public Open Space, Mayman Lane, Batley	GOAL END
Mayman Lane		Batley East	Mayman Lane Public Open Space, Mayman Lane, Batley	TEEN
Second Avenue	Windybank/former Grylls School	Liversedge and Gomersal	Second Avenue	MUGA
Spenborough Baths	Littletown skate park	Liversedge and Gomersal	Spenborough Swimming Pool and Sports Complex	TEEN
Spenborough Baths	Littletown skate park	Liversedge and Gomersal	Spenborough Swimming Pool and Sports	WHEEL

Appendix G – Sites with no play area but containing alternative play provision

			Complex	
Vernon Road		Heckmondwike	Vernon Road, Heckmondwike, WF16 9LU	BBALL
Prospect Road		Heckmondwike	Prospect Road, Heckmondwike	BBALL
Church View House	Brow Road	Greenhead	Open Space, Church Street, Paddock HD1 4TR	BBALL
Heaton Gardens		Greenhead	Heaton Gardens	MUGA
Jack Hill		Greenhead	Jack Hill Open Space	MUGA
Marsden Goods Yard		Colne Valley	The Old Goods Yard, Station Road	TEEN
Marsden Goods Yard		Colne Valley	The Old Goods Yard, Station Road	MUGA
Riddings		Ashbrow	Riddings Road	MUGA
Sycamore Avenue Golcar		Golcar	Sycamore Avenue, Golcar, HD3 4RY	TEEN
Holme Park Court flats		Newsome	Woodhead Road, Berry Brow	MUGA
New Laithe Hill	Fanny Moor Lane	Newsome	Fanny Moor Lane Open Space	BBALL
New Laithe Hill	Fanny Moor Lane	Newsome	Fanny Moor Lane Open Space	GOAL END
Ridgeway Recreation Ground		Dalton	Ridgeway Recreation Ground	MUGA

Appendix H

Kirklees Play Standard

1. Intro

The Kirklees Play Standard aims to provide clear guidelines for developing new and existing play areas within the Kirklees district. It is to be used alongside the Kirklees Playable Spaces Strategy 2019-2026.

2. Location of Play Spaces

The Kirklees Playable Spaces Strategy has classified all Kirklees play areas into different categories to meet the needs of the authority and the growing population. The categories of play areas are **Destination Parks**, **Community Play Areas** and **Doorstep Playable Spaces**. It is envisaged that the majority of residents within the Kirklees district will live no further than 720m (15min walk) from their nearest equipped play facility which is either a **Destination Park** or **Community Play Area**.

When new play facilities are being proposed the wider context should be taken into consideration such as distance to existing play facilities; where an existing **Destination Park** or **Community Play Area** exists within the 720m radius then this site should be upgraded rather than new facilities added.

Kirklees uses the Fields in Trust Guidance document *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard England* to help guide future development of both housing and outdoor public open space.

Open Space Type	Quantity Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)	Amount per Dwelling (square metres)	Accessibility Standard (walk time or distance for residents)
Equipped/designated play areas	0.25	6.1	15 minutes/720 metres
Young people provision (MUGAs and skateparks)	0.3	7.3	2 km

Kirklees Local Plan play facility guidance for new developments

Play facilities should not be tucked into corners of housing developments or recreational space. Instead they should be prominent and integral to a wider public open space which offers many opportunities for a range of playable activity. Sites with no play equipment should be designed in such a way to allow for playable activity to take place with minimal risk and should be located accordingly – for example not on a highway verge. Trees should not be overhanging onto equipped play areas and equipment should not be positioned within or too close to a wooded area. Natural materials can be used in these circumstances as an alternative to provide playable elements.

When developing new or refurbishing existing play facilities the *Guidance document for the provision of new Public Open Space and Play Provision* (see Figure 1) should be used which sets out size and proximities to neighbouring properties but each scheme should be bespoke to the setting/need/geography/topography and strategic requirement of the setting as per the Golden Rule below.

3. Key design Principles

3.1 Play England

The Kirklees Playable Spaces Strategy adopts the Play England publication *Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces* as the core guiding principles of good practice in play space design. The guide suggests that creating successful play spaces requires a fresh design-led approach to commissioning, based on ten principles, encapsulated in one golden rule.

The golden rule: A successful play space is a place in its own right, specially designed for its location, in such a way as to provide as much play value as possible.

The 10 Principles for designing successful play spaces:

Successful Play Spaces...

- are 'bespoke'
- are well located
- make use of natural elements
- provide a wide range of play experiences
- are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children
- meet community needs
- allow children of different ages to play together
- build in opportunities to experience risk and challenge
- are sustainable and appropriately maintained
- allow for change and evolution.

3.2 Kirklees Council

In addition to the Play England guidelines Kirklees is committed to providing playable spaces which are:

- Designed for all ages (not just for children) and user groups
- Designed within the context of their environment
- Connected to the wider community
- Encouraged to be smoke free
- Designed to complement other local play spaces, such as to offer a diverse range of play opportunities across the whole of the district

Individual classifications of playable space will seek to offer:

Destination Parks (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play – NEAPs (as per FIT guidelines))

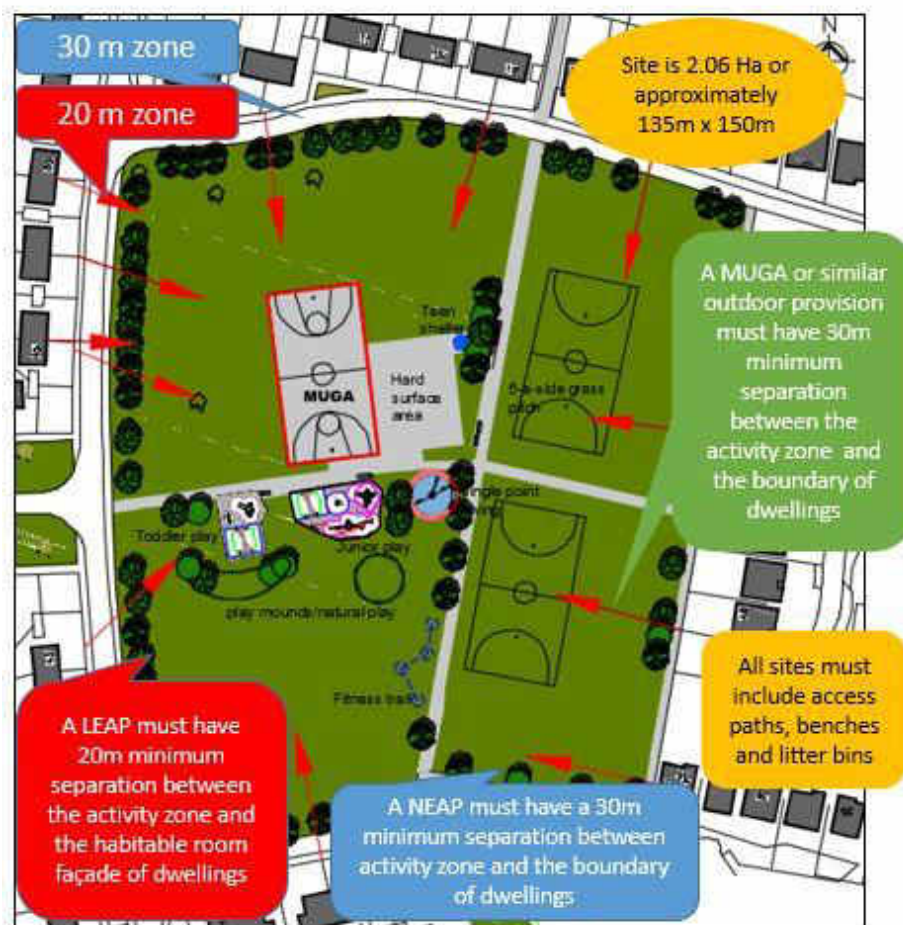
Characteristically large playable spaces. They offer a high play value through diverse and through-age play opportunities, include a wide variety of both manufactured and natural play features, and may also include additional facilities such as formally planted areas, skate parks/wheelparks, bandstands, toilets, cafes or picnic areas.

Community Play Areas (Local Equipped Areas of Play – LEAPs (as per FIT guidelines))

Offer a high play value with through-age and inclusive play equipment, whilst also maximising use of the whole site and aiming to encourage and facilitate wild and imaginative play for all ages and abilities by incorporating a range of natural features and materials.

Doorstep Playable Spaces (Local Areas of Play - LAPs (as per FIT guidelines))

Pleasant smaller spaces that are designed to be flexible and adaptable, generally located within close proximity to residential properties to encourage independent travel. These sites will encourage and facilitate informal play in the context of their surroundings.



Guidance Document for Creating New Public Open Space or Play Provision

It is recommended that equipped/designated play spaces be promoted in the form of:

Doorstep Playable Spaces (Local Areas of Play - LAPs (as per FIT guidelines))	0.01ha	10 x 10 metres (minimum activity zone of 100sq m)	5m minimum separation between activity zone and the boundary of dwellings.
Community Play Area (Local Equipped Areas of Play - LEAPs (as per FIT guidelines))	0.04 ha	20 x 20 metres (minimum activity zone of 400sq m)	20m minimum separation between activity zone and the habitable room façade of dwellings.
Destination Park (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play - NEAPs (as per FIT guidelines))	0.1ha	31.6 x 31.6 metres (minimum activity zone of 1,000sq m comprising an area for play equipment and structures & hard surfacing area of at least 465sq m, the minimum required for 5-a-side football)	30m minimum separation between activity zone and the boundary of dwellings
MUGA	0.1ha	40 x 20 metres	30m minimum separation between activity zone and the boundary of dwellings.

Figure 1. Guidance document for the provision of new Public Open Space and Play Provision

3.3 Other design considerations

When designing new play spaces consideration should also be given to the following:

Risk

Consideration needs to be made with regard to balancing the benefits of challenging play against the risks associated with play. The Health and Safety Executive fully recognises that the opportunity for play develops a child's risk awareness and prepares them for their future lives. Striking the right balance between protecting children from the most serious risks and allowing them to reap the benefits of learning risks through play is not always easy. Sensible adult judgements are all that is generally required to deliver the greatest benefit to children whilst ensuring that they are not exposed to unnecessary risk. In judging the balance of risk against potential benefit in designing play spaces, industry standards such as BS/EN1176 will be referred to.

Boundaries

The decision about whether or not to put a fence or boundary around a playable space will depend on many factors specific to the location and potential use of each site; such as whether it is in a safe/fenced park or recreation ground. It is Kirklees' intention to no longer fence off play spaces unless there is a serious risk associated such as a road in close proximity. In some circumstances it may be that other boundary treatments can be incorporated such as land forms, planting or positioning of equipment to act as an informal barrier to prevent smaller children from easily exiting the space.

Equipment

The type and style of equipment to be used on sites needs to be considered within the context of the environment and the site's usage. Play equipment should be chosen to incorporate as many different play types as possible (please refer to the Playable Spaces Strategy for the *Taxonomy of Play*). Some or all of the equipment on a play site should seek to provide play opportunities for all age ranges including adults and all abilities. Inclusive swings, wide slides, other equipment and natural playable elements should be considered at all sites.

Natural features

Not all designated playable spaces need traditional fixed play equipment. When thinking of site specific design the use of the space needs to be well thought out; landscaping and the inclusion of natural elements such as boulders, stepping logs and mounds can enhance play spaces. Natural play design can fit well within the wider open space and increase the scope for creative play and imaginative games. Natural play design can be suitable for both urban and rural settings but careful consideration needs to be given to sustainability and maintenance.

Inclusion

The Kirklees Playable Spaces Strategy adopts the guidance provided in *Inclusion by Design - a guide to creating accessible play and childcare environments* published by KIDS - the disabled children and young people's charity. All equipped play sites are DDA compliant where practicable to facilitate use by a wide range of ages and abilities and this needs to be considered at all stages of development of new play spaces.

Playable routes

When designing a new playable space consideration needs to be made as to how it connects into the existing community. This may require work to footpaths and entrances to sites to open them up and make the whole site more appealing and accessible. Where possible these access paths and points should be made into playable routes which encourages play throughout a community and not just limited to the area within the playable space/park/recreation ground/site.

Appendix I

Kirklees Council Playground Inspection Policy

1. Background

Kirklees Council is responsible for 336 play sites (correct at July 2018). These include equipped play areas on a range of scales (neighbourhood equipped areas of play (NEAPs), local equipped areas of play (LEAPs) and local areas of play (LAPs)) in addition to multiuse games areas (MUGAs), skate parks, youth shelters, trim trails and outdoor gyms. For the purposes of this policy the term “play areas” refers only to spaces with recognised play equipment, not natural green spaces which may or may not currently be considered “playable spaces” by the citizens/users.

Responsibility for playground inspection and maintenance sits with the play team within the Parks and Greenspaces department; they currently only inspect facilities with fixed manufactured equipment which also includes MUGAs, basketball courts and goal mouths. The team currently comprises five play inspectors qualified to RPII (Register of Play Inspectors International) Level 2 who attend refresher courses every 3 years to ensure compliance with current best practice and legislation (correct at July 2018).

Play areas, by their nature, should provide a degree of risk and challenge to users. The Council, however, recognises that it has a duty of care over users of play facilities, and an obligation to appropriately manage the risks associated with such facilities, in line with the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Occupiers’ Liability Act 1957, 1984

Kirklees Council’s play inspection policy has been developed with reference to best practice set out in RoSPA’s *Inspecting Children’s Play Areas* (2014) and the European Standard *BS/EN 1176 Playground Equipment*, in particular *Part 7: Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation* (2008).

2. Methodology

2.1 Visual Inspections

Routine visual inspections will include the identification of obvious hazards resulting from use, weather and vandalism, such as litter, broken glass, and graffiti. All facilities will be visually inspected as a minimum on a weekly basis. These visual inspections will be undertaken by grounds maintenance staff or play inspectors as appropriate.

Problems will be rectified immediately where possible. Where this is not possible issues will be dealt with by the play team inspectors as soon as possible. All problems will be recorded and reported to the play team supervisor.

The public will also be encouraged to report obvious problems through clear signage at each site with contact details provided.

2.2 Operational Inspections

Operational inspections will provide a more detailed inspection to check operational stability of all equipment and services. These inspections will cover such things as:

- Structural integrity (e.g. rot and rust)
- Moving parts (e.g. bearings, shackles)
- Missing or loose parts
- Sharp edges
- Exposed foundations
- Safety surfacing levels and condition
- Removal of rubbish and hazards
- Removal of offensive graffiti

EN 1176:7 specifies that operational inspections should take place every 1-3 months, or as indicated by the manufacturer's instructions. Kirklees Council will adhere to this guidance but will further differentiate between sites according to an assessment of risk for each site considering the following factors:

- location
- usage
- age of equipment
- equipment and surfacing type
- reported damage/anti-social behaviour
- time of year

Unless otherwise specified by equipment manufacturers, the classification in Figure 1 will be utilised.

CATEGORY	SITE TYPE	TIME OF YEAR	FREQUENCY
CATEGORY A	High risk play areas	Winter NOV - MAR Summer APR - OCT	Winter - Fortnightly Summer - Weekly
CATEGORY B	Medium risk play areas Skate parks	JAN - DEC	Monthly
CATEGORY C	Low risk play areas MUGAs / Basketball Pods / Goal Ends Teen Shelters Trim Trails	JAN - DEC	Quarterly

Figure 1: site risk classification for inspections

All findings will be recorded, with data entered into a spreadsheet of sites. Issues arising will be corrected immediately where possible or alternatively equipment will be immobilised/removed pending repair. Inspection findings will be analysed and reviewed and inspection frequencies may be altered accordingly, or in response to a change in local conditions. Inspection records will be retained for 21 years according to RoSPA guidelines.

2.3 Annual Independent Inspection

An annual inspection of all play areas will take place approximately every 12 months. This will be carried out by an independent inspector with appropriate qualifications and insurance. Issues identified will be addressed with reference to the flow chart above in Figure 1.

2.4 Post-installation Inspection

All new play facilities/extensions/improvements/changes will be inspected by our in-house play inspectors prior to first public use, whereupon they will be added to our standard inspection schedule as detailed above.

2.5 Routine Maintenance

A schedule of routine maintenance will run alongside the inspection and corrective maintenance programme, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions for each piece of equipment.