

Bradford's All to Play for Programme



Final Report and Evaluation

October 2010



Supported by

The National Lottery[®]
through the Big Lottery Fund



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The following support documents are available on request

- Original bid document and project descriptions.
- End of year and final returns to BIG.
- Examples of publicity.
- Individual project self-evaluations.
- Exception report.
- Service level agreements.
- Bradford's Play Strategy.

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Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all those who funded this work, supported the production of this report and undertook the delivery of the programme.

Introduction

The aim of this report is to look at the work undertaken within the Play Programme, assess the strengths and weaknesses and draw conclusions as to the effectiveness of the work, making recommendations for the future based on the conclusions.

The report will be in four main sections

- The development and planning of the programme.
- The nature of the projects that make up the programme.
- The actual performance of the projects compared to projections.
- An assessment of the performance and recommendations for the future.

Methodology

This report is based on information that has been gathered in two ways:

Desk research – We have looked at the key documents related to the programme's planning and delivery, including programme development documentation, funding applications, publicity materials, correspondence, individual project self evaluations and monitoring returns. This has given us a comprehensive understanding of the proposals made and the results achieved by the work. This forms a core part of the assessment process, enabling us to compare the projected and actual results in key areas such as outputs, spend and results.

Stakeholder feedback – In order for us to make a valid assessment of the programme, we needed to speak to stakeholders who have been involved in the planning and implementation of the programme in order to get a complete picture. 20 people were approached, of which 11 responded. They were asked for their personal and professional experience of working with the programme by responding to a number of open-ended questions, giving them the opportunity to respond in a flexible way and identify issues that they considered important.

This information was brought together and used to assess the programme and draw conclusions, which are summarised in this report.

The Big Lottery Children's Play Initiative

Bradford's All to Play For Programme was funded by the Big Lottery Fund's (BIG) £123 million Children's Play initiative, which is based on the recommendations of the 2004 play review "Getting Serious About Play", which defines children's play as "what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons."

The Children's Play Initiative aims to:

- create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and opportunities throughout England, according to need.
- support innovation and new ways of providing for children's play.
- create a support and development infrastructure to ensure local agencies have the resources and skills to achieve the first two aims.
- promote the long-term strategic and sustainable provision for play as a free public service to children.
- ensure that local authorities work with other local stakeholders to develop children's play strategies and plans.
- ensure that good, inclusive and accessible children's play services and facilities are provided locally.

351 awards were made to Local Authorities with a total value of **£123,093,923**. The final round of awards were made in August 2008.

Interim Evaluation

An interim report on the national BIG Play Initiative completed by ECOTEC May 2009, highlighted challenges and early successes:

Successes

- 90% of Local Authorities reported that the programme had raised the profile of play.
- 48% of portfolios said BIG funding had helped them to secure extra funds.
- Unexpected outcomes were achieved including enhanced parental engagement and increased social and community cohesion.

Challenges

- 55% of Local Authorities felt the infrastructure for play in their area was sustainable.
- Many Local Authorities have had issues with staff recruitment and retention.
- Planning permission and legal issues have caused significant delays to a number of portfolios.
- Inadequate or ineffective delivery partners have led to a number of re-tenders.
- Poor weather led to delays with building contractors and delays in receiving match funding.

The Development of the Programme

In this section we will look at how the programme was initiated and developed and the support given for this process.

- BIG located funding within local authorities - the process was not competitive, although any proposal had to reach an acceptable standard in respect of issues such as being realistic and achievable, acceptable outputs and value for money. The amount allocated was determined through a formula. The Council had to show how the allocated resources would be used to meet BIG objectives, including the “3 frees” which are free of charge, freedom to come and go and freedom to determine content and intent of play.
- Bradford had a Play Strategy in place, which is overseen by the Play Partnership. This enabled them to respond quickly, yet in a planned and strategic way.
- Learning Services (Education Client Team) took a lead in responding to the Lottery’s proposal.
- There was a call for project proposals made through the Play Partnership and a sub group of the Play Partnership was formed to oversee the development of the proposal and the implementation of any successful bid. This group was given support through Council staff.
- Emphasis was put on the involvement of young people in the development of projects.
- The proposal were given an initial assessment and some rejected that did not meet the criteria or that were clearly not practical.
- The bids were assessed through a weighted scoring matrix developed specifically for the purpose.
- Some bids were merged and others rejected on the basis of low scoring results.
- In approving or rejecting projects the need to get an appropriate capital revenue balance was a factor, along with the strength of the forward strategies. A balance between traditional and adventure play was also important. Projects were not necessarily risk free, but could not be inherently dangerous - a balance that is difficult to achieve.
- This process gave a programme that:
 - Met the required objectives and priorities.
 - Required the level of funding that was on offer.
 - Was developed by those with appropriate knowledge and experience of play.
- The portfolio aimed to be balanced in respect of issues such as types of beneficiaries, geography, ethnicity, gaps in provision and innovation.

Once an initial portfolio for the bid was agreed, the following support was provided to organisations with approved projects.

- BIG allowed full cost recovery, enabling funding for a Monitoring Officer to be obtained, who provided ongoing support to projects in a number of areas.
- The “Check it out” evaluation toolkit was adapted for use with this programme. This formed the basis for individual self evaluations that each project undertook towards the end of the programme.
- 2 full days of training were provided for the projects covering issues such as; information on requirements of the programme, which included a CD containing relevant documentation, technical information, particularly for the capital projects and statistical maps.
- Individual support was provided for projects to complete their “Project Profile Document” which provided the information required for the bid and ensured that the key delivery issues had been addressed. Projects were individually visited as a part of this process.
- Ongoing informal help was offered outside the formally structured support that was available.
- A forum for deliverers was established so information and lessons learnt could be shared and discussed.

As a result of the processes above, the required information was available to complete the BIG application form. The Council, as the accountable body, could also have confidence in the projects because of the detailed planning work undertaken.

There was only one major issue in respect of the bid that needed to be resolved with the BIG. This was around the freedom to come and go. BIG required that the facilities provided through their capital funding should be open all the time. This presented some security problems for projects such as Children’s Centres and hospitals, which restrict access to their sites.

There were discussions on this issue and the Council prepared an Exception Report for the programme to justify the position and negotiate a mutually acceptable way forward. The issue was resolved through the projects signing a Service Level Agreement that maximised access but addressed the genuine security concerns of the organisations.

Projects in the Programme

In this section we will outline the 15 projects that the programme supported, based on the final proposals produced for the bid.

Project name	Play Provision for Disabled Children
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Parks & Landscape Service
Basic Project Information	<p>This project provided play equipment specifically designed for use by disabled children with various abilities. These were single items of play equipment to be installed in existing play areas across the district.</p> <p>BIG Play funding paid for the purchase and installation of 5 new items of play equipment, one in each constituency.</p>
Location	The project undertook work in all of the 5 constituencies in the Bradford district, Bradford North - Bowling Park, Bowling, Bradford South - Danehill Drive, Holmewood; Bradford West - West Park, Girlington; Shipley - Wrose Rec, Wrose; Keighley - Victoria Park.
Beneficiaries	<p>The 2001 Census figures were used to evaluate the highest concentration of disabled children of the population for wards within each constituency - Bradford North = Bowling 23.9%, Bradford South = Tong 24.2%, Bradford West = Toller 21.9%, Shipley = Wrose 25.5 and Keighley Central = 22.1% .</p> <p>Whilst the play equipment was specifically designed for disabled children, it also provides play opportunities for able bodied children too and therefore encourages inclusive play.</p> <p>Due to the open access nature of play areas in the Bradford district all users are able to take part in recreation activities using their own interpretation.</p>
Finances	£100,000 capital funding from BIG support



Project name	Bradford Holiday Play and Activity schemes
Organisation delivering project	Bradford Council's Community Play and Activities Development Unit
Basic Project Information	<p>The aim of this project was to commission and deliver play scheme provision through the Community Play & Activities Development Unit (CPADU). The role of CPADU has been to co-ordinate, resource and expand the delivery of district-wide 'Bradford Holiday Play & Activity Schemes' during school summer holidays, as well as half term holidays for the period 2007 –2009. The project aimed to provide a generic and inclusive, well-balanced programme for children and young people that is fun for the participants and supports the concepts of personal development, social cohesion and active citizenship.</p> <p>The CPADU Scheme sought to develop and provide a commissioning process to local community and voluntary sector organisations that offered support and training with accreditation qualifications for the delivery of local playschemes (please note: that all deliverers were volunteers) in partnership with Early Years & Childcare Service and other voluntary sector agencies.</p>
Location	This project was district wide
Beneficiaries	The majority of schemes will ran throughout the 6 weeks school summer holidays and a further 7 weeks during school half term periods (October, February and Spring Bank) and Easter. The schemes operated in the main on a session basis (full day or half day or a mixture of both) The project aimed to develop schemes lasting two and a half weeks on average. The average time for a half day session is 3 hours and 6 hours for a full session. The aim in 2007 was to provide a total of 80 schemes across the District, with overall attendances of 40,000 children and young people. It was anticipated that a minimum of 10,000 children and young people would benefit from these play schemes, with the majority attending more than once
Finances	£300,000 revenue funding from BIG support



Project name	St Ives Estate - Adventure Play Area
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Parks & Landscape Service
Basic Project Information	<p>This project aimed to install a children's adventure play area in a 500 acre wooded country park in Bingley, providing a challenging and exciting opportunity for a more adventurous play experience to compliment existing facilities. This would provide added value to visitors' experience of a typical country park, albeit in an urban district.</p> <p>The adventure play area was designed to be innovative and more creative than traditional play spaces, involving the use of natural materials and integrated into the natural environment.</p> <p>The final design was chosen in consultation with young people, users of the country park, residents of the home for people with special needs located at St Ives.</p>
Location	Adventure Play Area, St Ives Estate, Bingley
Beneficiaries	<p>The new facility was promoted to schools as an alternative venue to the Yorkshire Dales.</p> <p>The project has had the full support of the Friends of St Ives group with whom the Parks & Landscape Service have an established working relationship in jointly delivering projects on the estate.</p> <p>Children and young people, including disabled children based at a centre on the estate, took part in a consultation process, along with the Friends of St Ives community group and other stakeholders. Children & young people helped to choose specific equipment and the final design</p> <p>Visitor numbers have increased, with some travelling from across the district or further afield. The average attendance is approximately 227,382 per annum. A recent visitor questionnaire showed that 77% visited by car and that 47% of visitors were with their family.</p> <p>The project anticipated that a minimum of 4,486 children under the age of 16 years would benefit from the project.</p>
Finances	Total cost of £150,000 capital funding, with £90,000 coming from Big Lottery support



Project name	Play Local
Organisation delivering project	Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Youth Service
Basic Project Information	<p>The aim of this project was to enable young people, aged 13 - 16 and resident in particularly deprived areas of the district, to have the opportunity, and permission, to engage in free unstructured play in safe supervised indoor & outdoor environments.</p> <p>The project involved a team of play workers specialising in teenage play making contact with young people through existing organisations & project publicity.</p> <p>Young people were engaged in a flexible, free of charge menu of weekly, unstructured play sessions, evenings & weekends, with additional weekday possibilities during holiday periods where appropriate.</p> <p>Sessions enabled young people to have supervised access to urban & country parks, to enjoy unstructured play and create a healthy habit of using outdoor sites.</p> <p>Young people were recruited as volunteers to spread playful ideas to their peers and to a younger age range. This extended to indoor, street, park, countryside & multi use games areas.</p>
Location	The project covered all 5 Bradford constituency areas, concentrating on the most deprived areas & communities.
Beneficiaries	<p>Young people from a variety of Black Minority Ethnic, new migrant & white British communities, aged between 13-16 engaged in positive activities in safe spaces.</p> <p>It was anticipated that a minimum of 250 young people would be involved each week, with a total membership over the project lifespan of a minimum of 750 young people.</p>
Finances	£170,000 mainly revenue with some small capital purchases from BIG support



Project name	Play Provision for Children & Young People in Hospital
Organisation delivering project	Bradford Council Education Client Team
Basic Project Information	<p>The project allocated resources to the 3 main hospitals across the district (Airedale, St Luke's and Bradford Royal Infirmary) with a view of refurbishing and developing play provision for Children & Young People (CYP) staying overnight or as day-visitors and their siblings.</p> <p>The purpose was to provide opportunities for inclusive free play to children, either resident in hospital or outpatients plus their family and visiting friends. This included developing play rooms, providing equipment, particularly for boys, younger teenagers and those with special needs and some play worker time.</p>
Location	Airedale Hospital (50%) Bradford Royal Infirmary (40%) St Lukes Hospital (10%)
Beneficiaries	<p>Children and young people staying in hospital undoubtedly represent the whole population make up of the district. Thus saying, national data on out and in-patients also shows an over-representation of deprived populations (low income families and minority ethnic groups) and disabled groups, which are more inclined to require health services.</p> <p>The project anticipated reaching 25,000 beneficiaries.</p>
Finances	Total project costs were £30,000 of which £18,000 was allocated from the BIG support



Project name	Cullingworth Play Area
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Parks & Landscape Service
Basic Project Information	<p>The purpose of this project was to provide a new children's equipped play area on Cullingworth Recreation Ground. Previous provision was in a dilapidated state.</p> <p>The new play equipment was set in safer surfacing contained within a fenced and gated area with seating, litter bin and access path.</p>
Location	Cullingworth Recreation Ground
Beneficiaries	<p>Local children and young people have benefited from having new, challenging play equipment in a safe place to play. The site is directly adjacent to Cullingworth Primary school serving 235 pupils</p> <p>Students from the school were involved in the consultation process and agreed a design for the new play area</p> <p>Local children in the village (535 under 16 years) as well as the school children benefit from the new play area.</p>
Finances	<p>The total cost of the project is £60,000. The Parish Council are provided £10,000 towards the project and partnership funding of £25,000 for Wren landfill tax credits was secured. The remaining £25,000 was provided through Big Lottery support</p>



Project name	Eccleshill Adventure Playground
Organisation delivering project	Eccleshill Adventure Playground Ltd
Basic Project Information	<p>Eccleshill Adventure Playground attracts children from the ages of 5-16 yrs. It is the only open access, inclusive adventure playground in the district.</p> <p>The provision of a dedicated, suitably qualified workforce by the project has enabled play opportunities to be extended through the sensitive intervention of play work staff. This has enabled children to, not only direct their own play, but engage in play which offers opportunities for risk and challenge, developing positive relationships with other children, and child-led adventurous play experiences.</p>
Location	Eccleshill Adventure Playground
Beneficiaries	<p>This project aimed to enable the playground to open for a minimum 5 evening sessions per week and 2 sessions per day during the week in school holidays. Anticipated attendance levels were upwards of 40 children per session and links were established with other local play providers to encourage group attendance.</p> <p>It was expected that 574 beneficiaries would access the adventure playground over the 2-year period</p>
Finances	£140,000 revenue from BIG support



Project name	Mobile Skate Park
Organisation delivering project	The Play Network (Bradford)
Basic Project Information	<p>A mobile Skatepark is a unique play provision, which will enable children from the age of 5 yrs upwards the opportunity to try skateboarding under the supervision of qualified staff.</p> <p>It is a mobile resource and can be assembled in any free open space across the district wherever there is demand enabling more children to access good quality play. There is no set pattern for erecting the ramps they can be combined to make a variety of different challenges; higher or lower to suit different capabilities of children. This provision comes complete with accessories; helmet, elbow and knee protectors and skateboards with the possibility of adding other pieces of equipment to offer variety, bikes, A-line skates.</p> <p>Its flexibility is its key asset and this has provided practitioners with an ideal vehicle to bring young people together in a safe and secure environment to support the District's cohesion agenda.</p>
Location	District wide
Beneficiaries	<p>The delivery of outdoor events, with a unique piece of equipment, has challenged and excited participants.</p> <p>This piece of equipment is suitable for any child from 5 yrs upwards regardless of ability; children who are unable to skateboard can use the facility under supervision which will build confidence and self esteem, children with disabilities with support and children in wheelchairs.</p> <p>it is anticipated that over 2000 children and young people will benefit from the project.</p>
Finances	Total project costs of £25,000, with £6,500 revenue and £18,500 capital, all funded through the Big Lottery Fund support.



Project name	Skateparks						
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Parks & Landscape Service						
Basic Project Information	<p>The project aimed to provide new Skateparks/BMX/Rollerblade facilities in three locations across the Bradford district.</p> <p>These locations were identified as gaps in provision of this type of play opportunity for children and young people. In providing an appropriate place to skateboard, ride BMX and rollerblade, the children and young people do not aggravate local residents and the facilities help to reduce anti social behaviour</p>						
Location	Keighley - Oakbank School (45%) Bingley - Myrtle Park (45%) Wilsden - Royd House Recreation Ground (10%)						
Beneficiaries	<p>Local children and young people were encouraged to take part in the final design and layout of the skate equipment. .</p> <p>The skateparks were intended to be available to all, 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.</p> <p>Statistics from the 2001 Census show the number of children in each area under the age of 16:-</p> <table> <tr> <td>Keighley</td> <td>11,205 which represents 26.4% of the total population</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bingley</td> <td>6312 which represents 19.4% of the total population</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wilsden</td> <td>827 which represents 19.8% of the total population</td> </tr> </table> <p>It is realistic to say that not all these children will be involved in this particular activity and therefore one can only estimate the number of actual users in each area, but the potential users could be huge as children are known to travel to experience different skatepark designs.</p> <p>It is projected that beneficiary numbers will be 1,000 for Keighley and Bingley and 500 for Wilsden – 2,500 in total</p>	Keighley	11,205 which represents 26.4% of the total population	Bingley	6312 which represents 19.4% of the total population	Wilsden	827 which represents 19.8% of the total population
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Bingley	6312 which represents 19.4% of the total population						
Wilsden	827 which represents 19.8% of the total population						
Finances	The anticipated total project cost was £135,000, with £110,000 coming from Big Lottery Fund support.						



Project name	Play in Children's Centres
Organisation delivering project	Early Years and Childcare Service
Basic Project Information	<p>This project aimed to develop outdoor play provision at 4 of Bradford's children centres, which are located in the 30% most deprived areas across Bradford.</p> <p>Outdoor provision is not a statutory requirement of children centres however Bradford EYCS is committed to developing outdoor play space integral to children centres.</p> <p>Children (aged 0-5years) now have the opportunity to develop cognitive, motor and social skills within a natural environment through unstructured play where the "3 Frees" ethos is maintained.</p>
Location	Low Fold Children and Family Centre (25%) Parkland Primary and Children's Centre (25%) Lidget Green Primary and Children's Centre (25%) Farnham and Horton Grange Children's Centre (25%)
Beneficiaries	<p>Each centre has a specific reach target for children (0-5Years). This as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Low Fold (970) Parkland (952) Lidget Green (1106) Farnham and Horton Grange (743)</p> <p>The creation of these outdoor play areas has made it easier to attract a cohort of harder to reach children and families who otherwise would not benefit.</p> <p>On the basis that some children would access the proposed play facilities more than once, it was anticipated that 40% of the local 0-5 population would access the proposed play facilities, giving a total beneficiary number of 1,488</p>
Finances	The expected total project cost was £115,542 of which £75,542 was received from BIG support and £40,000 from other sources.



Project name	Mobile Climbing Wall
Organisation delivering project	Adventure Activities Development Unit - City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Basic Project Information	<p>The mobile climbing wall was used on a district-wide basis, bringing new adventure play opportunities into neighbourhoods. The management of the climbing wall has been the responsibility of the Community Adventure Team based at Baildon Recreation Centre.</p> <p>Climbing is an exciting medium with a proven history of engaging children and young people in broader agendas, particularly trust and confidence building. Children test their own personal boundaries by trying the different climbing routes available</p> <p>By offering this facility to other play partners, such as playschemes and play events across the district, it has widened children's opportunities in other activities that would otherwise be non-existent.</p>
Location	District wide
Beneficiaries	<p>Beneficiaries have been targeted through partnership working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play and holiday activity schemes. • Working in collaboration with Youth Service events during holidays, weekends and evening periods. • Parks events <p>It was intended that 100 funded day sessions would be provided with an average capacity of 20 children and young people per hour or 120 per day. It was anticipated that a minimum of 12,000 children would benefit with a targeted age range of 6 – 18yrs.</p>
Finances	Total funding - £43,000 from BIG.



Project name	Oxenhope Multi Activity Community Area (MACA)
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Parks & Landscape Service
Basic Project Information	The project aimed to provide a brand new Multi Activity Community Area (MACA) on an existing recreation ground in Oxenhope, offering open access and the opportunity for local children and young people to play football, cricket, basketball on an all-weather surface in an enclosed, secure and appropriate space.
Location	Oxenhope Recreation Ground
Beneficiaries	Local children and young people have benefited from the provision of the new MACA in Oxenhope by having an appropriate secure place to play numerous sports and activities on an all weather surface where all can come in and play ball games at any time of the day. The site is directly adjacent to the village primary school and community centre and as such is a 'hub' for recreational activity within the village. The 2001 Census shows that children in the Oxenhope Parish number 345 under 15 years old which represents 14.2% of its total population. Projected beneficiaries were 200 children under 15 years old
Finances	Total project costs - £49,990 capital funding from BIG.



Project name	Schools Playground Development Project
Organisation delivering project	Education Client Team - City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Basic Project Information	<p>The aim of this project was to install fixed play equipment on 5 primary school sites across Bradford District, for the benefit of both the school and local communities.</p> <p>This was intended to not only benefit children and young people throughout school hours, but also after-school, where all sites have an open gate policy for all local people to access.</p> <p>Those schools were selected because they already allow local children to access their sites outside school hours and because their ethos is already community-focused.</p> <p>Selected schools are all located in deprived neighbourhoods of Bradford District and all lacked local play facilities.</p>
Location	Parkwood Primary School (20%) Windhill CE Primary School (20%) Peel Park Primary School (20%) Ley Top Primary School (20%) Southmere Primary School (20%)
Beneficiaries	<p>The main beneficiaries are children aged 3 to 12, living in the vicinity of the selected schools.</p> <p>Two primary schools are located in inner city neighbourhoods with large minority ethnic population - over 50% (Southmere and Parkwood Primary Schools). Two other primary schools are located either on the verge of or within large housing estate made up in majority of white working class families (Ley Top and Windhill CE Primary schools). The fifth school is located in neighbourhood where the nearest public space was more than a mile away (Peel Park Primary School) and where, previously, the only public spaces available to children were either the local cemetery or the land attached to the school.</p> <p>It was assumed that 50% of all local children would access the new facilities as follows:</p> <p>Windhill 160 children, Parkwood 100 children, Ley Top 240 children, Peel Park 200 children, Southmere 290 children Total 990 children</p>
Finances	Total project costs - £79,990 capital funding from BIG.



Project name	Deficient Play Spaces - Holmewood
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council Parks & Landscape Service
Basic Project Information	<p>The project aimed to provide much-needed play facilities in 1 of 3 areas in Bradford which have been identified as having gaps in provision as reported in the Open Space Strategy 2006</p> <p>There is little play provision in Holmewood due to previous play areas being subjected to damage and vandalism.</p> <p>The project has sought to provide a new innovative approach to children's play through the use of natural features in a designed landscape to provide a stimulating and challenging play environment, working with principles successfully implemented in mainland Europe.</p> <p>Children and young people worked alongside the Council's technical staff and community artists to create an inspiring, natural designed play environment with the typical features of sliding, swinging, balancing and climbing.</p>
Location	Pit Hill Park, Holmewood
Beneficiaries	<p>Local children and young people have benefited from having a new challenging play environment in an appropriate and safe place to play that is more resistant to damage and vandalism.</p> <p>The 2001 Census for Holmewood shows that 28.3% of the total population are under the age of 16, which represents 2,370 children who have access to the new facility. The estimated usage was 1,000 beneficiaries</p>
Finances	Total project costs - £114,990 capital (£64,990 from BIG support and £50,000 from other sources)



Project name	Scholemoor Open Space
Organisation delivering project	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - Parks & Landscape Service
Basic Project Information	<p>The project aimed to develop part of “The Ashy” site at Scholemoor as an adventure play space, to allow free access by children and young people on an unsupervised basis, but which also provides an exciting location for supervised outdoor play activities. The site already included grass, shrubs, mature trees and earth banks, providing a potentially challenging and stimulating environment for physical and imaginative play with natural elements. The project extended the natural features to increase the play value of the area by adding tunnels, climbing boulders and other adventurous structures. The site also accommodates mobile play structures.</p> <p>The opportunities available at the Playspace are varied and will feature play, which had not been available within the majority of children's direct experiences.</p> <p>For many children who access the play area this facilitates development of greater levels of self esteem, and through engaging in the range of outdoor free-play opportunities develops enhanced well being and contribute towards the Health Agenda.</p>
Location	Scholemoor 'Ashy'
Beneficiaries	<p>The focus of the project has been the Scholemoor / Lidget Green neighbourhood. Great Horton Ward, where Scholemoor is located, scores at 2.96 on the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The Scholemoor / Lidget Green area was recognised as significantly deprived and lacking in play and leisure facilities for children and young people.</p> <p>The project anticipated usage of at least 100 visits per week during fine weather and that the facility would have 1,000 beneficiaries during the lifetime of the project.</p>
Finances	Total project costs - £64,990 capital funding from BIG.



Performance Assessment

Performance against programme outcomes

National BIG Play Initiative outcomes are:

1. More children will take part in a wider range of good, inclusive and accessible play experiences.
2. Children will have more choice and control over their play.
3. Children will develop greater well-being through play (including healthy growth, knowledge and understanding, creativity and capacity to learn).
4. Children will achieve greater independence and self-esteem through play.
5. Children will acquire greater social skills and respect for others through play.
6. Children will be able to test boundaries, be challenged and take risks through play, while kept safe from harm.
7. More children experiencing barriers to free play will be included in mainstream play provision (for example, girls, children and young people from ethnic or religious minorities, children in care, children of refugees and homeless families and those living in rural areas).
8. Local communities, especially children, will have greater involvement in designing, planning and running play projects.

These are the general outcomes of the national programme, and as such do not represent the specific requirements of Bradford All to Play For Programme. However, looking at the broad range of projects delivered, the inclusive way they were delivered and the broad range of benefits, it is clear that Bradford's programme makes a real contribution to achieving these goals.

It is also clear that the programme has contributed to a range of other programme objectives, such as Every Child Matters and the Bradford Play Strategy.

Specific Programme Outcomes

Five specific programme outcomes were agreed with the Big Lottery against which the performance of the programme was primarily measured. In this section we will look at what these were, and the actual performance against what was projected in the bid.

Outcome 1

- **55,000 children and young people to benefit from improved play provision across the district by the end of the portfolio.**

Overall monitoring returns show that 100,782 "hits" from children and young people have been recorded, indicating a benefit from improved play provision funded by the programme.

In the following table we have broken this down by project, showing the projected number of beneficiary contacts, the actual number achieved, the variance between these and the percentage achievement this represents

Project	Projected	Actual	Variance	% Achievement
Play provision for disabled children	2,000	811	-1,189	41
Bradford holiday & play schemes	10,000	21,011	11,011	210
Play Local	750	5,506	4,756	734
St Ives Estate	4,486	5,783	1,297	129
Play provision in hospital	16,500	35,124	18,624	213
Cullingworth play area	535	2,771	2,236	518
Eccleshill adventure playground	574	9,992	9,418	1,741
Mobile skatepark	2,000	1,715	-285	86
Skateparks	2,500	205	-2,295	8
Children Centres facilities	1,488	503	-985	34
Mobile Climbing Wall	12,000	10,187	-1,813	85
Oxenhope MACA	200	2,646	2,446	1,323
School Playground Development	990	702	-288	71
Deficient play spaces	500	976	476	195
Scholemoor Open Space	500	2,850	2,350	570
Total	55,023	100,782	45,759	183

Overall we can see that the programme more than achieved this outcome, having reached 183% of what was expected, which represents 45,759 additional beneficiary contacts.

However it is clear that there was significant variation in performance between projects.

We have looked in more detail at those who achieved less than 50% and have drawn the following conclusions.

Play provision for disabled children – although this project reported less beneficiary involvement than projected, the overall performance of the project in involving disabled was more than 5 times that projected. (See outcome 3)

Skate Parks and Children Centres Facilities – These projects are capital developments that were not completed until near the end of the programme, due to delays. There were also some issues around data collection. Given the open access required as a condition of the grant, it was not possible to continuously monitor usage. A formula to calculate this type of usage was agreed with the Big Lottery to compensate for this type of situation. This was not applied to these projects, which would have boosted numbers. However, as these are capital projects, beneficiary numbers will be accrued with time and the benefits will continue after the programme.

Overall the programme significantly overachieved in this area and the projects that reported significantly less than projected had valid reasons for doing so.

Outcome 2

- **Better play provision for 10,000 children in rural parts of the district by the end of the portfolio.**

Returns from projects indicated 40,564 children were impacted in the rural areas of the Bradford district, which represents over 400% achievement against this outcome.

Outcome 3

- **Better play provision for disabled children by encouraging 500 disabled and more able children to play together by the end of the portfolio.**

Returns provided by the projects indicated the programme provided play opportunities for 2,635 disabled children.

This represents an actual achievement of over 500% of that projected and compensates for the lower than expected achievement of the Play Provision for Disabled Children Project. It also indicates a more integrated approach to delivering services for this client group.

Outcome 4

- **Increased involvement of 300 children and young people in the development of local play provision through their engagement in all related decision making processes throughout the implementation phase of the portfolio and its projects.**

The projects recorded a number of 1,800 children involved in consultation throughout the portfolio, representing 6 times that projected. This number may be conservative, given the projects' ethos of engaging children and young people in terms of play preferences and activity selection, which was not all recorded.

All capital schemes involved children and young people in the design process and tender selection. These included engagement activities, preferences, voting exercises, and designing opportunities. The evaluation reports provided by the capital developments show the increased level of responsibility put on children and young people throughout this stage of the project. The positive feedback received and levels of recorded use are indicative that the consultation was valuable and integral to the success of the capital projects.

Outcome 5

- **More to do and more to play with throughout the district by the end of the portfolio through the provision of a minimum of 15 new fixed play areas and 40 other mobile play spaces.**

Monitoring returns show that capital developments were completed in 17 sites and revenue projects provided opportunities on over 150 locations across the district. This represents another significant overachievement compared to that projected.

Capital Projects

The capital projects were completed before the end of the programme, although some suffered delays. This is not unexpected as this is often the case with capital projects and was an issue identified in the evaluation of the national programme. Issues included site location, weather and planning issues.

However overall the capital projects provide the biggest legacy for the programme, with many of the projects providing benefits well beyond the lifetime of the programme.

Unplanned outcomes

As well as the five planned outcomes, the following were reported in the monitoring process

- Big City Play Day has proved very successful; an event of this nature was unprecedented in the city centre. The event provided a wide selection of play opportunities from many partner organisations, which was exemplified by the “big screen” gaming opportunities provided in partnership with the BBC.
- The programme has had a positive impact on the development of staff and enhancement of their skills. Staff involved in the programme have gained invaluable experience around the importance of children’s play. Some of these staff have retained roles post programme completion and continue to add benefit to children’s play in the district.
- The programme has seen a huge amount of press and publicity coverage through both local and national press, as well as interactive media. The programme has recorded over 150 articles from a wide selection of general and specialist publications. These articles have highlighted the importance and impact of play, as well as clearly acknowledging the Big Lottery as the funding agency.
- The mobile skate park and mobile climbing wall will prove to be long-term assets for the district. They will provide opportunities for continued targeted activity. They are resources, which can be used to encourage partnership working, engage communities and cement existing relationships in the play sector.

Expenditure

This table shows the reported expenditure of individual projects within the programme, the capital revenue split and the match received.

Project		BIG	Match	Total
Play Provision for Disabled Children	Capital	83,163		83,163
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	83,163	0	83,163
 				
Bradford Holiday Play and Activity Schemes	Capital	8,000		8,000
	Revenue	315,473		315,473
	Total Project	323,473	0	323,473
 				
Play Local	Capital			0
	Revenue	170,000		170,000
	Total Project	170,000	0	170,000
 				
St Ives Estate - Adventure Play Area	Capital	90,000	60,000	150,000
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	90,000	60,000	150,000
 				
Play Provision for Children and Young People in Hospital	Capital	18,000		18,000
	Revenue	12,000		12,000
	Total Project	30,000	0	30,000
 				
Cullingworth Play Area	Capital	25,000	35,000	60,000
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	25,000	35,000	60,000
 				
Eccleshill Adventure Play Area	Capital	0		0
	Revenue	154,000		154,000
	Total Project	154,000	0	154,000
 				
Mobile Skate Park	Capital	18,500		18,500
	Revenue	19,500		19,500
	Total Project	38,000	0	38,000
 				
Skate Parks	Capital	99,000	25,000	124,000
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	99,000	25,000	124,000
 				
Play in Children's Centres	Capital	56,657	30,000	86,657
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	56,657	30,000	86,657

Project		BIG	Match	Total
Mobile Climbing Wall	Capital	25,500		25,500
	Revenue	30,500		30,500
	Total Project	56,000	0	56,000
 				
Oxenhope Multi Activity Community Area (MACA)	Capital	49,990		49,990
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	49,990	0	49,990
 				
Schools Playground Development	Capital	31,996		31,996
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	31,996	0	31,996
 				
Deficient Play Spaces - Holmewood	Capital	64,990	50,000	114,990
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	64,990	50,000	114,990
 				
Scholemoor Open Space	Capital	70,990	30,000	100,990
	Revenue			0
	Total Project	70,990	30,000	100,990

	Total requested	Total spent
Project costs		
Capital	£634,000	£643,785
Revenue	£734,502	£701,473
Total	£1,368,502	£1,345,258
Management costs		
Revenue	£70,040	£84,284
Capital	£0	£0
Total	£70,040	£84,284
Grand Total	£1,438,542	£1,429,542

During the duration of the programme a number of adjustments were agreed with BIG, which explain the apparent overspends in the table above. This included an increase for the management costs to £84,248, which is a very acceptable 5.9% of the total project costs.

The final expenditure was 99.4% of the allocated funds, with £9,000 underspend being returned to BIG. This figure represents an average project underspend of £600. Given the complexity of the programme, its size and the number of projects involved, a small underspend would be expected.

£210,010 of capital match was projected in the bid compared to the £230,000 that was actually achieved.

Timescales

Although there were minor delays with some of the capital projects (which is to be expected), overall the programme was delivered within the timeframe agreed with the funders.

Marketing and publicity

Whilst undertaking the desk research, I found many examples of publicity to promote the programme and individual projects. Generally the materials were compliant with the need to acknowledge the BIG support. The publicity was generally locally focused to raise the profiles of projects within the community, gain support, increase local involvement and to recruit beneficiaries. The programme launch gained substantial interest, including an article in a national regeneration magazine.

All this had the effect of improving the profile of the Council and delivery organisations on a local level, and Bradford on a regional/national level.

Stakeholder Feedback

20 stakeholders were approached to give them the chance to feedback on their experience of working in the programme. They were given different ways they could respond, such as e-mail, questionnaire or face-to-face discussions. 11 responded, some with a brief e-mail, others had lengthy interviews.

This is a brief outline of the key points made

- Having an already established Play Partnership was a substantial benefit.
- The projects provided a wide range of new opportunities for young people and a broad range of benefits; substantially increasing numbers of young people benefiting from play provision.
- The work undertaken had unplanned results to give additional benefits on top of those expected (for example, the Skate competition).
- The work raised the profile of play in the area substantially.
- The capacity to deliver projects was improved within some organisations.
- It was a shame that the funding was not for longer or indeed ongoing, given the benefits it has and the raised expectations the work created for the future.
- The level of innovation within projects was something to be recognised and applauded.
- The level of support offered to projects was good and helped make delivery smooth.
- The programme provided opportunities to bring people and organisations together.
- Sometimes mixed messages came from regional and national sources and “goalposts” changed, creating some confusion.
- Perhaps more emphasis was needed on the legacy issue during the planning phase.
- The level of paperwork was high, but stakeholders accepted this was the norm for most current funding regimes and a necessary part of getting resources to implement projects.
- The programme was comprised of projects, many of which were locally generated and had local ownership.
- The long-term benefits of the capital investments will be substantial.
- The programme facilitated further resources to be obtained.
- Lessons were learnt about what worked with young people.
- More lead in time for the project would have helped, but timescales were defined by BIG, not locally.
- The detailed planning undertaken with support from Learning Services helped projects structure their work in an appropriate way for the BIG Initiative.

Generally the feedback from stakeholders was overwhelmingly positive. They were very pleased with the benefits that a substantial increase in play opportunities and facilities had given people in the district. The few negative points made were generally accepted as “the way things are” such as short term funding, short lead in times and strict monitoring requirements.

Conclusions

Taking all the information obtained from the different sources, I have drawn the following conclusions

- Having a Play Partnership and Play Strategy in place prior to the BIG initiative was launched had major benefits and allowed a more considered and informed approach to be taken on a relatively short timescale, allowing a high quality bid to be drafted. The continued commitment of the Play Partnership to support the programme was very beneficial.
- The initial needs analysis work undertaken was a good guide to what was required in the programme and supported the bid development and decision making processes.
- The intensive support given in the process of developing the projects by the Council's professional and experienced Play Programme team had major benefits in respect of the relatively smooth delivery and monitoring of work undertaken.
- Having the Play Programme Monitoring Officer in post was a substantial benefit and a factor in the programme's overall success and supported quality detailed monitoring.
- The introduction of an evaluation toolkit at an early stage had significant benefits when monitoring and evaluating the projects.
- The programme developed was varied and well balanced between innovation and traditional approaches and also the capital and revenue balance.
- The programme delivery was largely very smooth and delivered projects as per the application, with any variation being agreed with BIG.
- The performance in respect of reaching output targets was good, with all five specific programme outcomes being exceeded, some by a very significant margin.
- The programme achieved a spend of 99.4% of the funding allocated, with the overall project value being higher than expected due to additional match being obtained.
- The value of the overall programme was greater than that declared in returns, as some in kind match was not apparent. For example, some projects were capital only and clearly would need staff time to be implemented. This omission is not significant as in kind match was not a performance indicator.
- The legacy left, especially in respect of facilities and organisational capacity, is significant.
- Stakeholders had a very positive view of the programme and its achievements.
- Some minor issues were encountered in delivering the capital projects, such as moving the site for the Holmewood project. This is to be expected with capital projects and was not a major factor.
- Some disruption was caused by changing staff and management structures, but not enough to significantly affect delivery.
- Although some project suffered minor delays, overall the programme was delivered within the agreed timeframe.

- The programme was well administered, with good record keeping and information storage.
- Secondary benefits from the programme were considerable, such as improved social interaction between young people, family cohesion and diversionary benefits.

It is rare that any evaluation comes out as positively as this one. Those people and organisations involved in the planning and implementation of the programme should be proud of their achievements and their part in making the programme such a success.

Recommendations

Given the overwhelmingly positive nature of this evaluation, my key recommendation is that this approach in the development of a programme of work should be used as a model of good practice.

The key factors that vary from some other approaches are:

- The high level of support given by the programme management team to organisations during the planning process.
- The emphasis on detailed project planning prior to implementation.
- The amount of thought and consideration given to issues, ensuring that strategies are in place before opportunities arise, so that the response is not purely reactive. Developing strategic partnerships around key social and economic issues is central to being prepared in this way.

I appreciate that these recommendations may have resource implications and may not always be possible, particularly in the current hard-pressed financial climate. In this case, however, I have no doubt that the benefits of this approach with the Play Programme far outweigh the costs.