



Frodsham Town Council is committed to providing outdoor play and recreation opportunities for the town's children and young people. This Strategy includes an independent review of existing assets, a fresh consultation with all local people with an interest in play and a modern approach to play provision. Outline designs and estimates, funding research and recommendations are set out, so that the Town Council can consider its options. The first phase of the play improvement programme – a major new play re-development on a priority site – is planned to be delivered by October 2013, followed by a second in 2014.

A Play Strategy for Frodsham

Groundwork Cheshire
for Frodsham Town Council

2012



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A Play Strategy for Frodsham

Executive Summary

Frodsham Town Council's play areas are recognised as being poor, from the findings of consultants and from the views of householders and play users. This has been the situation for a number of years and their modernisation is well overdue. (The Borough Council's recent play and recreation provisions at Castle Park and Saltworks Farm has superseded and rescued the town for play to an extent. They should not continue to mask the deficiencies on the Town Council's sites.

However, on the positive side, the play and recreation sites owned or managed by the Town Council are of a good size and some are in good locations, complementing the CWaC sites. So even if it were possible to acquire new sites for conversion to play, this should not be necessary. It is possible to transform the Town's offer by working with the land already held.

The aim should be to re-develop the selected sites for play over a phased programme that is short enough for progress to be seen and for the end to be in sight, ie up to 5 years.

The bigger picture of play in Frodsham has been viewed, ie including the CWaC sites named above, plus the grounds of the Leisure Centre. This is so that all the sites complement each other and the new re-developed Town sites encourage more and repeated use by having lasting appeal – being exciting and challenging – and offering a choice of activity, capacity to cater for numbers. Alongside the physical renewal of selected play sites (which must include improvements to access and provision for inclusive play) other aspects of outdoor play and recreation must be tackled.

These include working hard to consider and satisfy the reasonable demands of the 13 year and over age group. Often their needs are around outdoor social interaction rather than physical activity. So as well as providing physical challenges, we should be providing well-designed meeting places around the locations this age group already or are likely to use. We need to consider groups that are less obvious to cater for in the town's open spaces, such as teenage girls, or the value of 'niche' activities such as wheeled sports, that allow teenagers to be part of their own 'scene'. It can be easy for their views – even if expressed clearly at the beginning - to get lost in the process. Young people need to be involved in all stages of the projects that are aimed at them.

Out of the consultation process that is a part of this strategy, people will put themselves forward to be more involved in the play programme. It might be useful to set up a play forum (possibly in combination with other initiatives in the town aimed at engaging the local community and its young people) to keep in touch with opinion from all quarters, including residents who live near the play sites.

Both the re-developed play sites (and the existing ones that have some life still in them and have an interim role) need to be well looked after, so as to ensure the safety and convenience of all people using the sites. We look at the whole sites and consider the interests of all users and those who live

Executive Summary (continued)

nearby. Therefore the proposed projects at Churchfields and Townfield Lane will address ground conditions, access, furniture, signage and boundaries as well as play equipment. The aim is to make the sites more usable all year round and for the improved facilities to sit well within their surroundings.

Ideas for Fluin Lane/London Road Fields (and for the grounds of the Leisure Centre) are still the subject of discussion and it is too early to place them in the programme. Other sites held by the Town Council could be put to alternative use, as they no longer fulfil an appropriate role for play. The Town Council should seek independent advice on its options over land that may be deemed to be surplus to play.

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The aims of the Play Strategy:

1. To transform Frodsham's play opportunities within 5 years:

- To develop exciting and challenging play opportunities that appeal to the expectations and demands of users from a broad range of age and mobility, now and in the foreseeable future.
- To complete the first major play re-development in Frodsham by October 2013 and a second by one year later.
- To increase the numbers of satisfied play and other users visiting the sites and to encourage repeat visits, adding capacity where appropriate.
- To put in place arrangements which keep the new and existing play facilities and sites in good order and manage user behaviour through effective links with local community safety agencies.
- To raise and sustain local community buy-in to the play site portfolio.

2. To provide guidance for the Town Council in making investment and other key decisions about its play portfolio during the improvement programme:

- To propose provisional allocations for play site re-development, aimed at satisfying current demands that are reasonable.
- To propose levels of investment appropriate and realistic for each preferred site, with due regard to the prevailing financial environment.
- To prepare a project funding road map that aims to bring together packages of funding from various sources that will enable successive phases of construction to take place, according to priorities set.
- To produce and review a timeline for implementing all the proposals included in the Action Plan. This will be subject to securing the necessary funds from a variety of sources. Phasing of projects may be necessary for this reason.

COMMENTARY

*In preparing sketch designs for the re-development or enhancement of play spaces, Groundwork Cheshire takes into account the principles, guidance and best practice advocated by **Play England**. This emphasises more play in contact with natural elements, designing in sympathy with the surroundings and non-prescriptive play. 'Inclusive' play should be so fully integrated into the overall design as to be virtually non-apparent.*

Groundwork uses its experience in developing play and recreation projects with local communities, partners and funders to arrive at a design solution that accords with consultation findings and a completed project that meets the expectations of the client. (This includes consideration of future maintenance.)

The finished product is then much more likely to be fully used and looked after as intended. Layouts may allow future additions to a facility if required.

What the Strategy sets out to do:

1. Assess the existing 'offer' for outdoor play and recreation in Frodsham as a baseline

- Summarise a site-by-site analysis, with reference to objective evaluations recently carried out on all play sites and open spaces in Frodsham. Sites have been scored on their quality, accessibility and risk factors.
- Evaluate present arrangements for the inspection, repair and maintenance of outdoor play and recreation facilities in the town.
- Distil the results of previous consultations with local people on play.

2. Analyse the present day population characteristics of the town, to predict where present and future demand for play is likely to lie. Gain an understanding of local people's expectations of a play service for Frodsham, eg play value and convenience

- Look at the broad distribution of household types in the town and see how well or otherwise this pattern fits the geographical spread of the existing play sites and highlight any significant gaps or anomalies.
- Refer to local standards for play spaces, established by Cheshire West and Chester Council in accordance with government guidelines.
- Map the present and likely future demand for play in Frodsham, to inform planning and future investment.
- Report the findings of a fresh public consultation by Groundwork Cheshire, designed to gain a better understanding of local people's attitudes, actual use patterns and levels of satisfaction with respect to play and recreation. This will aim to ensure that all voices are heard, including those of 11 to 16 year olds and residents whose properties border play sites, and will provide evidence of local support for outline proposals.

COMMENTARY

*A **broad definition of 'play'** is adopted for the Strategy: active and passive play; informal and more structured games; equipment-based play and physical activity are all included.*

As well as the Town Council's own sites, other opportunities for outdoor play in and around the town are considered, so as to provide a strategic overview. Castle Park and Saltworks Farm recreation area, which are owned and managed by CWaC, are notable examples.

*The **whole** of each green space is appraised for its play value. Other aspects such as landscape value, sense of place, privacy and feelings of personal security are also assessed.*

*The interests of **all site users** (including adults and older people) and those who live nearby are considered.*

In assessing the accessibility and convenience of each site, the Strategy assumes that car travel is to be discouraged as a means of travel to play opportunities, for health and environmental reasons.

What the Strategy sets out to do (continued):

3. Make recommendations to achieve a ‘best fit’ for this ideal model in Frodsham

- Take account of local people’s reasonable demands and expectations for play.

4. Set out priorities and preferred sites for re-development or enhancement

- Preferences will be derived from a number of sources: public consultation, professional advice and client views.
- Include interim measures to sustain existing facilities for a period where practical, and reduce liabilities.
- Recommend short term measures to improve inspection, repair and maintenance regimes.

5. Present equivalent case studies (two recent Groundwork play & community space projects and one recent Groundwork wheeled sports project) relevant to the preferred sites.

- Case studies include a breakdown of actual costs, to inform the funding strategy.
- (Subject to the agreement of the Town Council, outline sketch designs for these sites could be developed by Groundwork in a following stage and tested against local public opinion. Amendments would be made as necessary to each sketch scheme following secondary consultation and these would be reflected in subsequent Action Plan updates.

6. Compile a funding strategy for the early preferred play development schemes

- Research potential sources of project funding, both capital and revenue, eg national and local grant programmes with appropriate criteria, Section 106 contributions from existing and new development, Community Infrastructure Levy if applicable, local sponsorship and new funding initiatives that emerge during the programme.

COMMENTARY

*Adopting Cheshire West’s consultants’ **local standards** for play – even if not all their recommendations are taken up - is likely to reinforce the Strategy and Action Plan, and help to maintain collaboration between the Town and Borough Councils.*

*Addressing **occupier’s liability** for the Town Council may involve selected repairs or replacements of play equipment or safer surfacing (both major and minor), as well as decommissioning of equipment or even site closure.*

*Reference is made to Cheshire West and Chester Council’s play area **inspection and maintenance** arrangements. There may be a case for a service level agreement.*

*It is useful to think of creating a **hierarchy** of play sites within the town, eg classified as doorstep, neighbourhood and destination. The portfolio of sites should also **complement** each other. This helps to manage user expectation and satisfaction.*

What the Strategy sets out to do (continued):

Compile a funding strategy for the early schemes (continued):

- Utilise Town and Borough Council capital as seed money to apply for and accrue additional match funding that is needed to deliver the more ambitious type of play project that is desired.
- Regularly review fund accrued, new funding opportunities and amend tactical approach accordingly. Incorporate the latest position into Action Plan reviews.
- Research ways that optimum value for money may be derived from the available secured funds, eg design & build contracts, competitive tendering of combined projects, contributions in kind and income generation from disposal of assets.
- Consider a consolidation strategy for the Town Council, whereby its land assets and play sites are rationalised, possibly towards fewer but higher quality play facilities. These should be at least close to meeting the recognised local quality and accessibility standards.
- Facilitate professional advice for the Town Council from Cheshire West and Chester Council: on land valuation, planning designations and development control.

7. Prepare a First Year and Five-Year Action Plan for play improvements in Frodsham

- Include a number of statements of intent derived from the strategy recommendations; propose funding combinations, a timeline for delivery of projects 1 and 2, and interim actions on other sites.

8. Facilitate formal adoption the Play Strategy by Frodsham Town Council

- Leading to a fund raising, design development and implementation stage by Groundwork

COMMENTARY

*Project **phasing** may be introduced to spread the benefits of the play improvement programme across the town.*

The inclusion of some play and green spaces in the Play Strategy may help protect them from competing interests.

1. What does Frodsham offer for play?

The town generally

Although Frodsham has been assessed by a recent survey and consultation as having too few public open spaces, those that it does possess are of a good size and are reasonably well distributed within the town's compact layout. These sites contain Frodsham's equipped play and recreation facilities.

This means that most local people can already get to a play space within 10 minutes' walk of their home (at the pace of a young child), or 15 minutes' walk if they are a teenager or adult. This is the level of convenience that local people generally expect (as confirmed by consultation) and matches the local standard set borough-wide. The four primary schools in the town are also reasonably well distributed: the proximity of schools to play facilities can be a significant convenience factor due to linked use.

Nevertheless, closeness to home is given by householders and play users as a primary reason in deciding whether to use a play site or not. The generous extents of the existing open spaces offers potential for adding value and diversifying activities and the landscape within the existing site boundaries.

Frodsham's hillside position means that open and expansive views from many of the existing open spaces add to the quality of experience and help avoid the feeling of being hemmed in by the built environment.

There is an extensive network of public footpaths in Frodsham (Figure 3 - Definitive public footpaths in Frodsham on page 13). These are augmented by other non-designated pathways and a designated national cycle route. These are valued by local

COMMENTARY

Unequipped play and recreation spaces are also valued by young people, according to surveys. They can be a venue for informal play, ball games or meeting up. Semi-natural open spaces - with public access – border the town. For example, Frodsham Hill Woods, Frodsham Marshes and the countryside around Bradley and the River Weaver. Not only are these spaces relatively easy to get to for many, they also compensate for any deficiency of open space within the town. It makes sense to consider all such potential play spaces in any strategic review.

The sites to which the public have full access are generally managed by either Frodsham Town Council (FTC) or CWaC. There are also a number of school and private sports grounds in the town which contain play and recreation facilities, but the public does not generally have free access to use these.

people as traffic-free routes across town to a variety of destinations. There is an issue over parking capacity in parts of the town and the impact of any radically improved play facilities upon the immediate surrounding residential areas (in terms of parking) needs to be carefully considered.

Analysis of Frodsham's play sites

Each of Frodsham Town Council's eight play sites is listed below. Their locations are shown on the street plan on page 11 and site photographs starting on page 10 (Figure 4). The play site profiles that follow in

	75 – 100%
	50 – 74%
	25 – 49%

Table 2 – Site Profiles on page 20 are based upon information from the Town Council's own report of July 2011, information prepared by Strutt & Parker, estate agents in August 2000 and Groundwork's observations in 2012. The sites are all owned by the Town Council, except where shown otherwise:

1. Churchfields (below St Laurence Church)
2. Fluin Lane / London Road Fields (adjoining the Community Centre)
3. Fountain Lane play area (near the Leisure Centre)
4. Ship Street play area (closed)
5. Top Road play area
6. Townfield Lane play area (site leased from local trust)
7. Hawthorne Road (closed)
8. Francis Road (closed)

COMMENTARY

Steps and gradients affect the accessibility of the path network in places. There are also a limited number of points at which to pass over or under the town's railway line. There are also a number of locations in the town where vehicle traffic levels make road crossing difficult and hazardous.

The following sites are owned, managed and maintained by Cheshire West and Chester Council and located, illustrated and profiled in the same way: 1. Castle Park, 2. Saltworks Farm, 3. Frodsham Leisure Centre

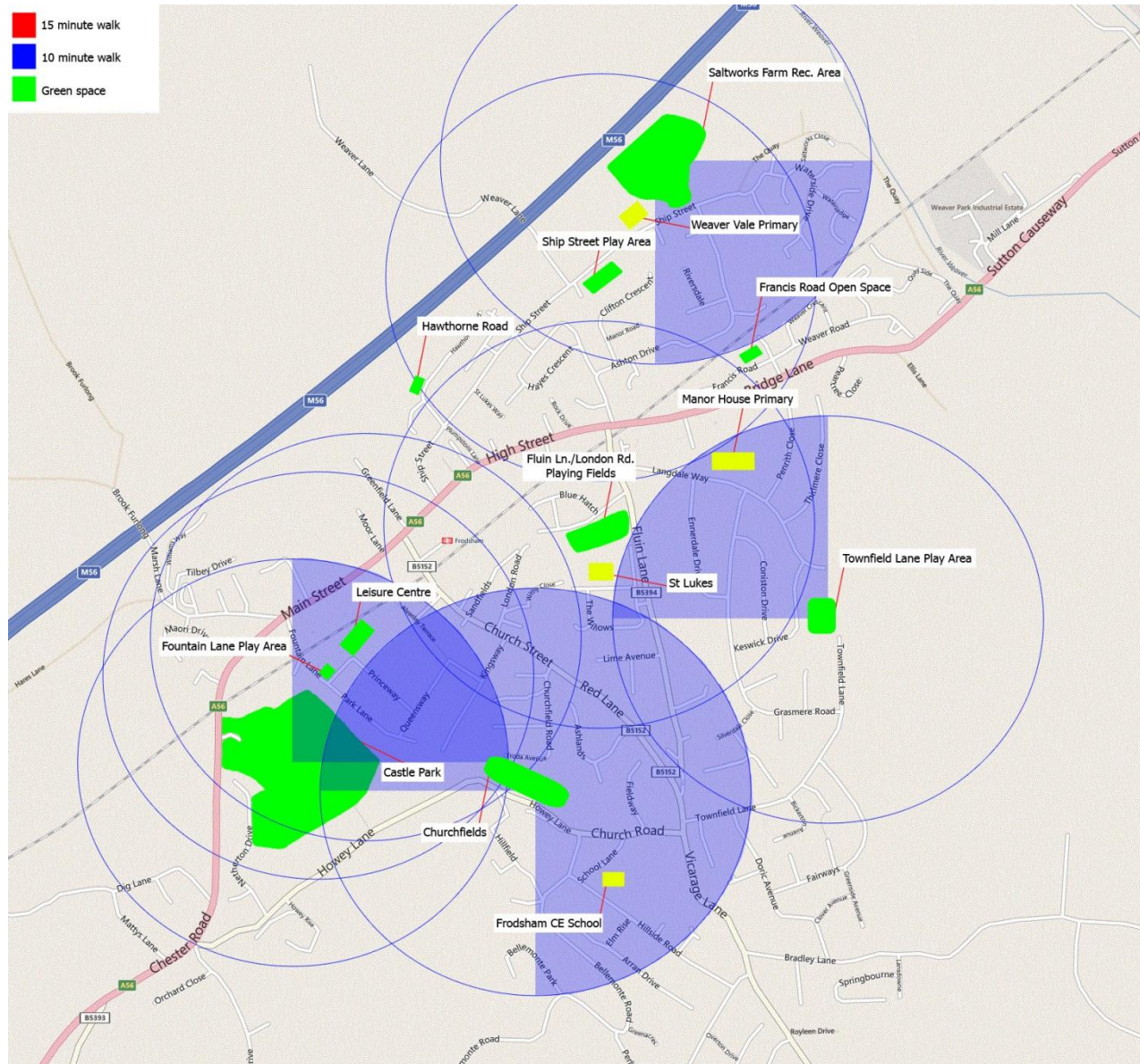


Figure 1

Locations of Frodsham's play sites for children aged 12 years and under

Blue circles centred on selected sites represent the 10-minute walking distance from or to that site. Hence this represents the 'catchment' of each site, as this is the recognised local standard of convenience expected by users.

This time assumes the pace of an adult accompanying a 4 year old child and is the equivalent of 480m in distance covered as the crow flies. Actual times will be influenced by road crossings, circuitous routes and gradients which are all relevant in Frodsham.

The blue-shaded sectors of each catchment indicate where households with resident children of 12 years and under are located.

Note the locations of Primary schools, for their common link to play on public outdoor sites.

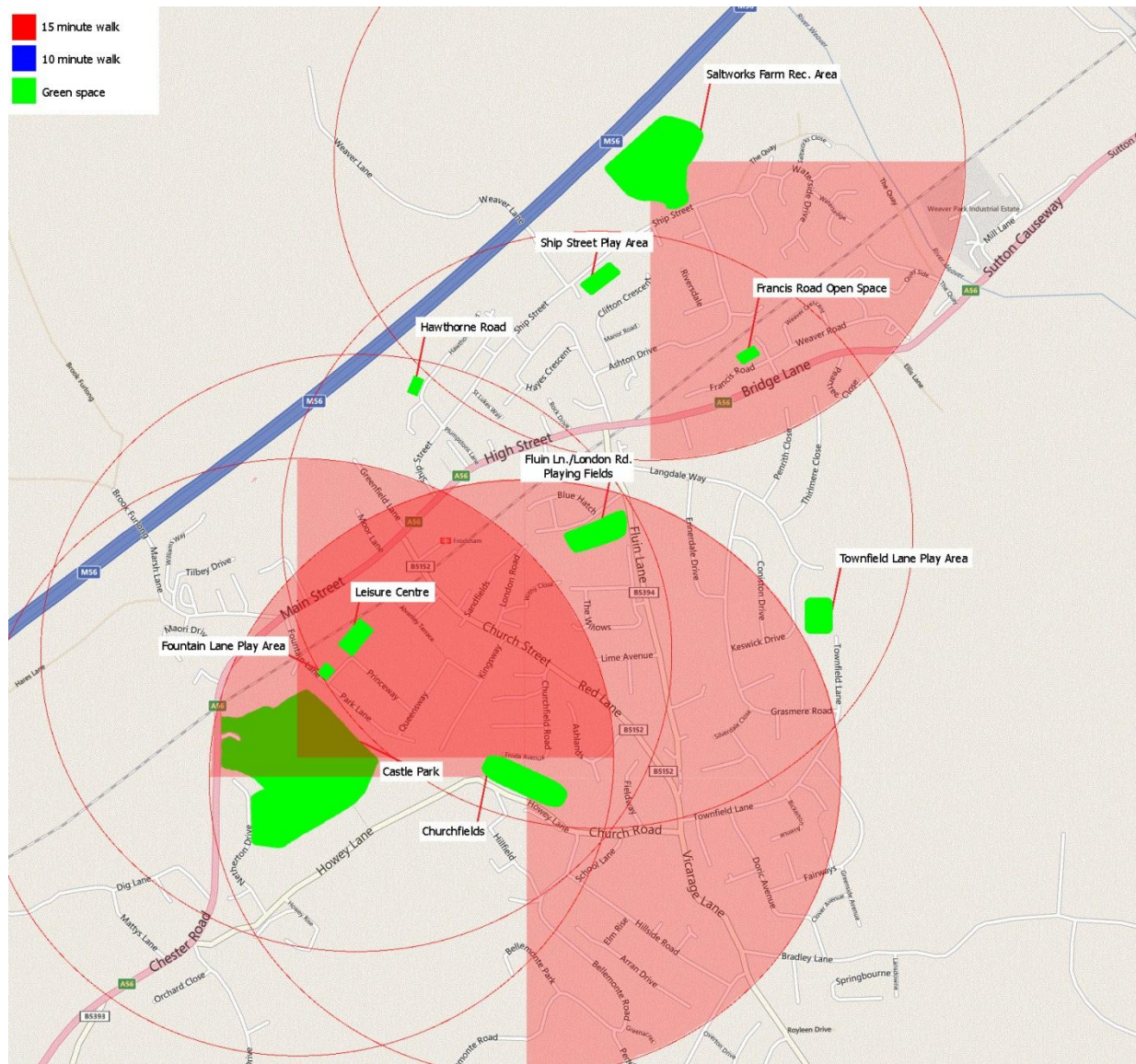


Figure 2

Locations of Frodsham's sites for young people (aged 13 years and over)

Red circles centred on selected sites represent the 15-minute walking distance from or to that site. Hence this represents the 'catchment' of each site, as this is the recognised local standard of convenience expected by users.

This time assumes the pace of a 13 to 18 year old and is the equivalent of 720m in distance covered as the crow flies.

The red-shaded sectors of each catchment indicate where households with resident young people of 13 years and over are located.

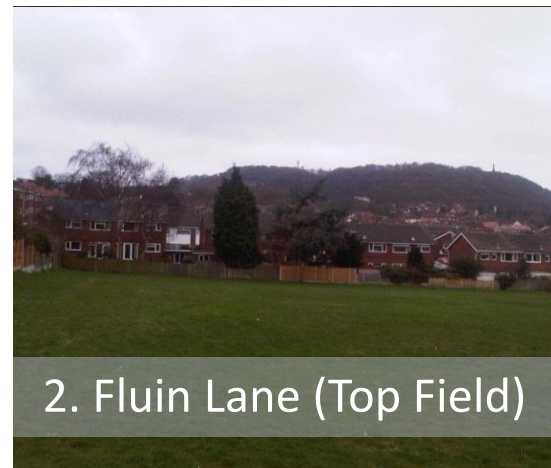
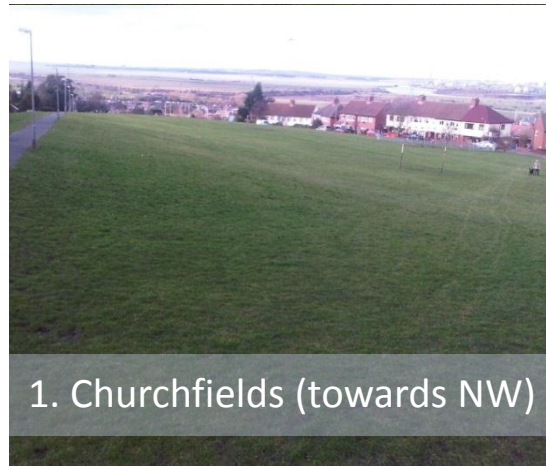


Figure 4 - The Town Council's play sites: site photographs (see Appendix 1 for schedule of equipment & furniture)

Figure 4 - The Town Council's play sites: site photographs (continued)



Figure 4 - The Town Council's play sites: site photographs (continued)



Figure 4 - Cheshire West and Chester Council's play sites

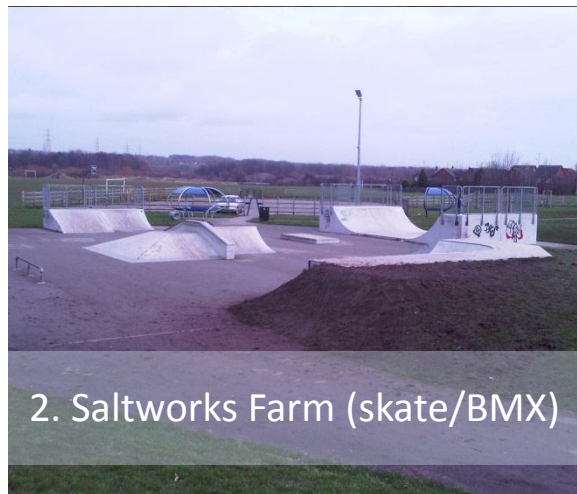
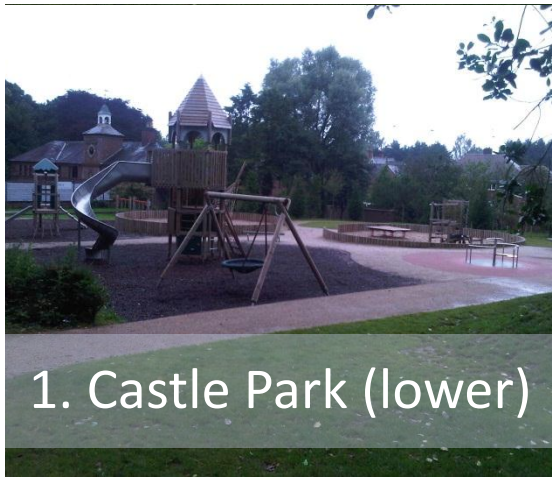


Figure 4 - Cheshire West and Chester Council's play sites (continued)



Analysis of Frodsham's play sites (continued)

In January 2011, consultants working for Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) produced an audit of all Frodsham's play and recreation provision for children and young people (the latter defined as being 13 years of age and over). Other types of open space were included. All sites were scored by the consultants, according to quality and accessibility.

Site Quality

Table 1 - Frodsham's Play and Open Space Sites on page 20 gives the quality assessment results for each site, ranked by percentage score. A site should achieve a 75% score for quality to be acceptable. Scores that meet this threshold are highlighted in green. It is notable that none of Frodsham Town Council's play areas qualify. Townfield Lane and Ship Street play areas are the highest scoring – both at 51% - and the latter is currently closed due to elements that do not meet safety standards. Top Road play area is the lowest scoring at 40%. In contrast, CWaC's Castle Park lower play area scores 80%. Frodsham & Helsby Ward was noted by the consultants as being lower scoring for the quality of its play areas for children under 12 years (and for young people aged 13 years and over), when compared borough-wide.

Site Accessibility

The maps on page 11 and 12 (Figures 1 and 2) show how Frodsham's sites relate to the accessibility standards of 10 minutes' (equivalent to 480m distance) and 15 minutes' (equivalent to 720m distance) walk time as described above, by an as-the-crow-flies radius from each site.

COMMENTARY

***Quality** for children's play areas and young people's facilities was scored on the following essential and desirable criteria, based on local consultation, national guidance and best practice:*

Essential: a variety of challenging and exciting play facilities for a range of ages and mobility; clean/litter-free; well-kept grass and safer surfacing; appropriate boundaries; litter bins; conforms to national guidance (including size, taking account of buffer zones, access and location)

Desirable: dog-free area; seating; community involvement; appropriate location, including natural surveillance

***Accessibility** is based upon local residents' expected time and mode of travel to a facility.*

CWaC Council's improvements to their sites at Castle Park and Saltworks Farm in the past two to three years may be said to have overtaken and eclipsed the Town Council's.

Table 1 - Frodsham's Play and Open Space Sites**Quality Assessment by Consultants 2011**

Site Name	Type of Facility	Quality Score (%)	Managed by
Castle Park	Parks & Gardens	87	CWaC
"	Play area	80	CWaC
"	Multi-use games	77	CWaC
"	Young people's activity	66	CWaC
"	Football pitch	63	CWaC
Saltworks Farm	Play area	Pre-dates audit	CWaC
"	Skate/BMX park	67	CWaC
"	Football pitches	50	CWaC
Saltworks Close	Semi-natural open space	40	CWaC
Fluin Lane Lower Field	Football pitches	47	FTC
Fluin Lane Upper Field	Green space	51	FTC
Townfield Lane	Play area	51	FTC
Townfield Lane	Green space	40	FTC
Leisure Centre	Synthetic pitch	65	CWaC
Fountain La/Park La	Play area	46	FTC
Churchfields	Green space	61	FTC
"	Play area	49	FTC
Top Road	Play area	40	FTC
Ship Street	Play area	51	FTC (closed)
Frodsham Marshes	Semi-natural open space	46	Private (PRoW)
Frodsham Hill Wood	Semi-natural open space	60	Woodland Trust
Waterside Dr open sp.	Green space	61	CWaC

	75 – 100%
	50 – 74%
	25 – 49%

Table 2 – Site Profiles**COMMENTARY**

*In Table 1, scores of **75% and over** are considered by the consultants' study to be acceptable in terms of meeting the quality standard. These are highlighted in green.*

*Scores of **less than 75%** are considered below the recognised quality standard and are highlighted in light brown (intermediate scoring) and light purple (lowest scoring).*

FRODSHAM TOWN COUNCIL-OWNED OR MANAGED PLAY & RECREATION SITES						
	Site name	Description	Good points	Disadvantages	Planning status	Legal status
1	CHURCHFIELDS Quality scores: Play area 49% Green space 61%	Small equipped/fenced play area and kickabout on N edge of large green space on higher ground in S central part of town. Existing pathways border site give access to and from town centre and across town. Site area 1.76 ha.	High landscape quality & historic context; expansive views NW over marshes and Mersey Estuary; existing traffic-free pathways with street lighting; good sight lines within site; catchment potential for upper town; could accommodate casual ball games; generous buffer distances. Parking potential (subject to Church approval).	Pathway access points off Red Lane, Park Lane & Pinmill Brow all restricted by steps or ramp. Adequate sight lines from Froda Av only.	Within Frodsham (Overton, St Laurence's) Conservation Area; Frodsham Landscape Character Area 5.02 and Green Infrastructure; St Laurence Church Grade II Listed Building; Frodsham FP28 and FP61; TDS Townscape Area 10 Overton; LPP: BE1; RT4. Howey Lane rock exposures SSSI on SW boundary. Mature trees and hedges on Pinmill Brow and Church Road augment green infrastructure and biodiversity.	Land owned by FTC (not registered).
2	TOWNFIELD LANE Quality scores: Play area 51% Green space 40%	Modest play provision set within green space on rising land on E edge of town. Residential surround on 3 sides, public right of way and allotment site on E side. Site area xx ha.	Good-sized green space with mounding, accommodating ball games. Quiet, rural feel with open countryside to E and enclosure by established boundaries. Open public access along E boundary. Proximity to Manor House Primary School.	Peripheral location in town, with obscure location. Poor sight lines, with vehicle approach access from Langdale Way only. Limited highway parking only. FP1 access narrow and obscure.	Inside Frodsham Policy Boundary that borders. Frodsham Landscape Character Area 5.02 and Green Infrastructure; Frodsham Restricted Byway RB72 adjacent to E and FP1 leads off site to SW.	Land leased from Church; equipment owned by FTC.

	Site name	Description	Good points	Disadvantages	Planning status	Legal status
3	FLUIN LA / LONDON RD Quality scores: Top Field 51% Bottom Field 47%	Large green space (upper) and playing field (lower) on levelled, partly elevated land adjacent to Frodsham Community Centre (a substantial building with parking, off Fluin Lane, that includes Youth Association). Surrounded closely by residential areas around all other boundaries. Central location in town, SE of railway. No equipped play or furniture. Site area 2.05 ha.	Large space with potential to diversify activities and landscape and still offer good buffer distances. Proximity to active Community Centre and St Luke's Primary School. Parking for site visitors and users (subject to FCA agreement) and access off highway for event transport. Good sight lines within site and from Fluin Lane. Expansive views out SW to Frodsham Hill Woods. High level of natural surveillance through proximity of Centre and surrounding residential properties. Pedestrian accesses also off Blue Hatch, London Road and Red Lane.	Top field presently too uneven and sloping for formal sports pitches. Vehicle access on the the Top Field will have effect on surface quality. Fluin Lane (B5439) is a busy traffic route and crossing this road can be difficult near its junction with Langdale Way, near the Community Centre.	Frodsham FP61 passes between Top and Bottom Fields, giving N-S access between town centre (over the railway) and Overton. This connects with E-W paths on either side, giving access across town.	Land owned by FTC and leased to Frodsham Community Association. Most of land not registered. Bottom Field let to St Luke's Primary School at peppercorn rent. Top Field let by FTC for car boot sales. Community Centre and Youth Centre run by FCA and FYA.
4	SHIP STREET Quality scores: Play Area 51%	Equipped playspace and kickabout pitch set within medium-large, gently sloping/level green space with perimeter railing on 3 sides (residential boundaries on SE boundary). Site area 0.44 ha.	Good size of site that is viable for recreational purposes and offers adequate buffer distances to the highway and surrounding houses. Proximity to Weaver Vale Primary School. On public transport route (bus) and national cycle route. Public footpath alongside SW boundary connects to town centre. Good natural surveillance from the highway and surrounding houses. Open aspect to the NW.	Low landscape value. Proximity to higher quality Saltworks Farm recreation area (see below) means that use levels are likely to fall. Perimeter railings may need refurbishment. Older people's residences to NE of site. Recent site issue of dog fouling complaints.	National Cycle Route xx follows Ship Street. Frodsham FP81 borders site. Frodsham Landscape Character Area 5.01. Green infrastructure.	Land owned by FTC and registered. Site currently closed.

	Site name	Description	Good points	Disadvantages	Planning status	Legal status
5	FOUNTAIN LANE Quality scores: Play Area 46% x cradle swing; small multi; see-saw	2 Small equipped play facility within level corner plot at junction with Princeway. Site area 0.08 ha.	Central location SW of town centre, close to railway underpass to Main Street. View out towards Frodsham Hill. Proximity to Castle Park (also a disadvantage), Leisure Centre and Medical Centre. Parking available at Leisure Centre (subject to agreement). Traffic-free footpaths give access to site: FP33 alongside railway gives alternative links to town centre and FP28 connects with Park Lane and then to Churchfields (see above) and Frodsham Hill.	Proximity to Castle Park play facilities is very likely to affect use levels.	Part of Frodsham Conservation Area (key view to War Memorial on Frodsham Hill recognised) and area with archaeological potential. Landscape Character Area 5.01.	Land owned by FTC (not registered).
6	TOP ROAD Quality score: Play Area 40%	Small, equipped play area enclosed by railings within a stock field. Located in Fivecrosses area of Frodsham, on the S extremity of the town. Access from Top Road only, approx. 60m distant. Site area 0.14 ha (land owned); 0.01 (enclosed play area).	Difficult to state any advantages.	Difficult, non-inclusive access. Peripheral location to town. Low numbers in catchment.	Lies in North Cheshire Green Belt, just outside Frodsham Policy Boundary and outside Frodsham (Overton Fivecrosses) Conservation Area. Frodsham FP19 passes either side of the play area.	Land owned by FTC (not registered).
7	FRANCIS ROAD	Former equipped play area within small public open space crossed by footpath leading to railway underpass.	Difficult to state any advantages.	Site area insufficient to offer adequate buffer zones to surrounding houses and public thoroughfare.	Landscape Character Area 5.01. Frodsham FPxx alongside.	Land ownership to be confirmed.
8	HAWTHORNE RD	Vacant plot of land on NW boundary of town, bordering reclaimed marshland. Former facilities not known.	Difficult to state any advantages.	Site area insufficient to offer adequate buffer zones to surrounding houses and public thoroughfare.	Landscape Character Area 5.01. Frodsham FP82 passes alongside.	Land ownership to be confirmed.

Table 2 – Site Profiles (continued)

CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL-OWNED OR MANAGED PLAY & RECREATION SITES						
	Site name	Description	Good points	Disadvantages	Planning status	Legal status
9	CASTLE PARK Quality scores: Play Area 80% (1) MUGA 77% Young People's Activity 66% (2) Football Pitch 63%	Located at W edge of town, off A56 Helsby Road, the park facilities were upgraded and modernised in 2010 as part of a heritage project. N part of park on level ground, S part on rising ground, part mature woodland, part open. District-sized play facility: 2 - 11's play area on lower ground; doorstep-sized young people's activity on higher ground: play equipment, MUGA and football.	Diverse combination of formal gardens, play & recreation and informal woodland that appeals to visitors. Site-based park management and ranger service. Pavilion/café/toilet building. Parking facility. Accessible from town centre. Creative and social play, choice of play, siting of play area. Views from higher ground.	The park's popularity at times means that the play area lacks some capacity and queuing results. At times, this can act as a disincentive to visit. Lacks provision for toddlers. Grass-only access to young people's facility and lack of a fully accessible route from the car park.	Registered Historic Park and Garden; Castle Park Locality Conservation Area; Green Infrastructure; split N-S between Landscape Character Areas 5.01 and 5.02. Area of archaeological potential. A number of footpaths give access to the park: eg FP33 from town centre, FP28 and BR38 from Overton.	Land owned by CWaC
10	SALTWORKS FARM Quality scores: Skate/BMX 67% Football 50%	Recreation area on low-lying, level site off Ship Street in NE extremity of town (Frodsham Bridge area). Playspace (constructed in 2011), floodlit Skate/BMX park (constructed 2007), basketball, four football pitches with changing accommodation and parking.	Combination of play and recreation with added value of parking, floodlighting and accommodation building. Good access and sight lines off highway. Proximity to Weaver Vale Primary School and Children's Centre. On public transport route (bus) and National Cycle Route. Cycle and pedestrian access to marshes, riverside and town centre.	Open aspect to NW means exposure to prevailing wind and motorway noise. Play space lacks toddler features and general capacity at popular times. Skate/BMX lacks features for full range of abilities. Transition plates and tarmac skate surface slows speeds, making some routes unusable as designed. Site popular for dog exercising, which needs managing with play and recreation.	Site outside boundary of Frodsham Town Policy, but within Landscape Character Area 2.02. Frodsham FP93 & FP81 cross the M56 to the NW either side of the site.	Land owned by CWaC

	Site name	Description	Good points	Disadvantages	Planning status	Legal status
11	FRODSHAM LEISURE CENTRE Quality score: Synthetic Pitch 65%	Located in town centre, SW of railway and adjacent to Princeway Medical Centre. Floodlit synthetic grass pitch, sports hall and indoor skate room. Parking to front and side/rear.	Central location in town and proximity to Castle Park. Synthetic pitch and floodlights, indoor skate and sports hall for year round physical activity. Buffer distances to nearest houses. Parking facility within a secure site; pedestrian access in a number of directions. Close to public transport (bus and train).	Any additional or alternative uses of the grounds of the Leisure Centre will be subject to agreements with Brio Leisure and CWaC, eg over location, any additional running costs, times of use and site security.	Frodsham FP56 and FP33 give access to the town centre, Castle Park and FP28 to Overton. Outside Conservation Areas. Within Landscape Character Area 5.01.	Land owned by CWaC (Centre operated by Brio Leisure).
Notes: (1) Rated by play consultant as good at 70.5% for play value in June 2011; (2) Rated by same consultant as basic at 35.5% for play value.						



Junction of A56 Bridge Lane and Fluin Lane (to left)



Frodsham Footpath 59 (Fountain La - Church St / Main St) alongside railway



Frodsham Footpath 56 (Martin Rd - Main St) railway underpass

Figure 5 – Key locations for access to play

The main points arising from the analysis of Frodsham's play sites

- **Few of the Town Council's play sites attract many visitors.** For example, extrapolating responses to the 2011 Town Council survey, Townfield Lane (as the most visited) only receives two people a day on average (one under-7 user with an accompanying adult). The remainder attract about half this number. The reasons for this could be a combination of the following factors.
 - Much of the play equipment provided on FTC sites is up to 30 years old. Frodsham's play areas score low in terms of quality: three sites score 51%, the rest 40 – 50% when 75% is the acceptable standard.
 - The sites all lack play appeal and there is an absence of age-appropriate play and recreation provision for over-8s.
 - Such sites will tend to raise failure notifications under qualified inspections against the latest safety standards. This is often due to safer surfacing limitations, or for design or fabrication details on older equipment that are now recognised as finger traps, for example.
 - Inclusive play opportunities are very limited, both in terms of play equipment and means of access.
 - Refurbishment of the play areas in the past 8 years has been limited to selective renewal of limited, damaged elements with few substantial enhancements that might raise their appeal. Consultants working for the former Vale Royal Borough Council reported in 2005 that Frodsham was “deficient in terms of equipped play provision”. The overall position has changed little since then, in respect to the FTC offer.
 - In the past two years, the CWaC offer has eclipsed that of the Town Council and draws some of the potential audience from nearby sites, eg Ship Street and Fountain Lane are overshadowed by Saltworks Farm and Castle Park respectively.
 - Some of the sites are in peripheral locations in the town, eg Townfield Lane and Top Road, which diminishes their catchment audiences compared to more central sites.
 - The centrally-located sites such as Fluin Lane/London Rd and Fountain Lane have limited or no play equipment.
 - The age profile of traditional play catchment areas is likely to have changed over this 30-year period, so that sites acquired for play by the Council in past decades are no longer well placed to meet new demands.
 - The expectations of children and young people have risen and changed, so that traditional play in outdoor public space is challenged in meeting this demand.

The main points arising from the analysis of Frodsham's play sites (continued)

- **Some of the Town Council's play sites have potential to be re-developed for play and recreation.** (See Groundwork's recommendations on page 61.) The sites are mostly of a generous size, which allows adequate buffer distances to surrounding houses or highways, or for diversification of landscape and activities. There is scope for developing some sites that are nearby other facilities, so that **linked use** might be possible. For example the following combinations:
 - Fluin Lane/London Rd – Community Centre/Youth Club – St Luke's Primary School
 - Churchfields – Frodsham CE Primary School
 - Townfield Lane – Frodsham Manor House Primary School
 - Frodsham Leisure Centre – Fountain Lane – Castle Park
 - Weaver Vale Primary School and Children's Centre and Saltworks Farm recreation area
- **There are some conditions that apply to certain sites that may prove to be restrictive upon re-development for play:**
 - For example, Churchfields has several protective planning designations applying to the land. This will mean that in order to meet the conditions of any planning consents, sympathetic and appropriate design solutions will need to be developed in discussion with the planning authority and thorough consultation with local residents conducted. These designations are listed in the site profiles commencing on page 20.
 - Several of the sites are closely surrounded by residential areas, eg Fluin Lane/London Road Fields. Any plans for these sites will need full consultation with residents to establish all their views. Careful and considerate design solutions will have to be worked up and amended as appropriate, over at least two rounds of consultation.
 - Land that is subject to lease, both to and by the Town Council, may not present a full range of options for the Council. Examples include Townfield Lane and Fluin Lane/London Road. The exact terms of these leases and the nature of any past agreements need examination and review, to determine the effect of the terms on aspirations for future use and potential to secure external funding. The terms of new agreements may need to be negotiated. Independent advice may be needed on these matters.
- **There are land management issues that ought to be addressed in future.** These include:
 - Registration of the land owned by the Town Council with the Land Registry. This helps to protect the land from encroachment, the creation of unauthorised access points and other misuses of Council land.

The main points arising from the analysis of Frodsham's play sites (continued)

- **Frodsham's footpath network** serves the town well, by providing traffic-free routes that can be linked up and used to access play and recreation and discourage car travel (see the plan in Figure 3 - Definitive public footpaths in Frodsham on page 13). However some points in the network have steep steps or limited width that do not allow access for all and some improvements or reasonable alternatives are needed.
- **The potential for further development of the CWaC sites at Castle Park and Saltworks Farm.** These are accorded the status of destination/strategic play and recreation sites by the consultants' 2011 report. They are recognised for possessing a wider catchment area and a broader audience. However, they also serve a local catchment (see plans on pages 11 and 12).
 - There are issues at both sites with capacity and for catering for the full age range and for 'niche' interests. There are also some current sensitivities with residents whose properties adjoin parts of the park and with park security arrangements.
 - Additions to these sites could be part of an overall investment in Frodsham's play offer for a relatively modest outlay, given the infrastructure already in place. This could also apply to the Leisure Centre.
 - The floodlights already in place at the Leisure Centre and at Saltworks Farm allow for the development of activities and social interaction in the early evenings during the October to February period.
- **The present lack of convenience for play site users and adults accompanying younger children.** Seating provision on play and recreation sites is important for developing the social potential of the sites and for improving convenience and appeal for accompanying adults and young people. This can be achieved in straightforward ways, but also in less obvious, creative ways. The general level of provision on the Town Council's sites tends to be at a minimum.
- **Crime levels:** the number of incidents of all types of reported crime in Frodsham are significantly lower than the borough average. For example for the year of 2010, reported incidents of anti-social behaviour in Frodsham occurred at a rate of 38.0 cases per 1,000 population, compared to 49.6 for the borough. These also represent very low figures for crime compared to national statistics.
- **Anti-social behaviour (ASB):** around half of all reported crime in Frodsham is anti-social behaviour. Taking March 2012 as an example, there were 29 ASB cases in the town, from a total of 60 crime records. When analysing the map of these 29 cases, only one – at Froda Avenue – might in any way be related to any of the town's play and recreation sites. There may be a slightly different pattern emerge in

late Spring/early Summer, but it is possible to address any such issues by working closely with the police's neighbourhood beat team and crime records officer.

- There is an apparent gap between these statistics of actual reported ASB cases and the perceptions held by different groups of local people (including young people who are wary of who they may encounter while walking to and from, and using open spaces at certain times, and residents who live close to play sites and experience occasional nuisance).

Present arrangements for the inspection, repair and maintenance of outdoor play and recreation facilities

The Town Council's Amenities Committee meets on a monthly basis to make decisions over issues raised through the reporting mechanism. The General Assistant employed by the Town Council visits and inspects the Town Council's play sites on a weekly basis and reports back any issues to the Office Manager. Equipment is cleaned as required during these visits. A qualified contractor is employed by the Town Council to carry out a quarterly inspection of all the sites and report any issues.

The equipment that remains on the Town Council's play sites consists mainly of swings, springers and static climbers or multi-play units. See Table 9 - Schedule of play equipment & site furniture (July 2012) on page 92 for a full listing of current equipment and the latest report on its condition. A number of equipment removals were carried out following inspection in June 2012. Issues over the safety and condition of the equipment and safer surfacing are likely to arise from predictable wear and tear, trends of wilful damage and littering, or notifications reported against modern safety standards, such as finger traps or the extent of safer surfacing. The quarterly inspection should pick up any issues over structural integrity, such as corrosion. Assessment for possible internal corrosion of tubular components needs to be covered periodically (annually is recommended). Overloading or other mis-use of equipment can also be the cause of its adverse condition.

The Town Council's portfolio of equipment and safer surfacing is therefore not complex. However the ageing equipment is a concern, in that some sites will be needed to perform an interim role during an improvement programme, while other higher priority sites are selected for complete redevelopment for play.

For Groundwork's recommendations on inspection, repair and maintenance, see page 61.

What have local people said about the existing play facilities in Frodsham?

Consultation undertaken in Frodsham by consultants working for Cheshire West and Chester Council in March 2010

As a prelude to the open space audit of 2011, consultants working for Cheshire West and Chester Council consulted local people on open space, play and recreation in Frodsham in March 2010 using a variety of methods. The salient points of the survey findings in relation to play in Frodsham were as follows:

- 44.7 % of respondents in Frodsham & Helsby rated the quality of facilities for young people (aged 13 years and over) as poor or very poor. Young people themselves felt that improving the quality of the existing sites designed for them – providing these were within a 15 minute walk of their home – was more important than creating additional ones.
- The internet survey for young people in the borough gave the reasons for using the facilities as: meeting friends (57%), free of charge (56%) and close to home (42%).
- 34.7% of respondents in Frodsham and Helsby deemed the existing play facilities for children (aged 12 years and under) as average, 24.2% thought them good.
- only 20.9% of respondents use children's play areas regularly (at least once per week), while 61.5% never use them.
- 61.7% of respondents in the borough walk to their chosen play site and assume that the facilities will be within a 10 minute walk of their home.
- The community group survey noted the limited opportunities that young people had to travel elsewhere.

COMMENTARY

Government guidance emphasises the need for opportunities for children and young people to interact with their peers and learn social skills within their home environment.

What have local people said about the existing play facilities in Frodsham? (Continued)

Frodsham Town Council's local consultation on play, March 2011

- The Townfield Lane site and its location was liked by respondents, although a significant number felt personal security and safety was compromised by the poor sight lines and edge of town location.
- The condition and suitability of the play equipment at Townfield Lane, Churchfields and Fountain Lane was disliked.
- The lack of seating provision at Churchfields and other sites attracted adverse comment.
- Litter and dog mess was cited at Townfield Lane and Churchfields.

COMMENTARY

1. Where is the demand for play in Frodsham?

Local population estimates by age group

In order to determine the areas of Frodsham that will generate the greatest demand for play and recreation, and identify where best to meet this demand within the local standard walking distances of 10 and 15 minutes from home, population estimates prepared in 2012 for six data collection areas were analysed. The following Table 3 and Figure 6 – Map of population data collection areas on page 34 describe and show the data collection areas.

Table 3 – Population estimates - Frodsham data collection areas

Ref	Area description	Play/recreation site included
L1	Ashton Dr/Ship St	Ship St Play Area
L2	Waterside Dr/Weaver Rd/Quayside/Penrith Cl/Thirlmere Cl/new development off A56	Saltworks Farm Recreation Area
L3	Bradley/Townfields La	Townfields La Play Area
L4	Town centre (High St), Fluin La-Church St-Red La triangle (but not between Health Centre & St Laurence Church)	Frodsham Leisure Centre
L5	All land N of M56 and between M56 & railway, up to Marsh Green/Fountain La/Park La/Kingsway/Queensway/Prince Way/Church End Rd/Froda Av	Churchfield Play Area Fountain La Play Area
L6	Netherton/Beacon Hill/Fivecrosses/Overton, W of Vicarage La	Castle Park Play Area Top Rd Play Area

COMMENTARY

The population of Frodsham is 9,260. The town has an older population profile than the borough average, with under-25's making up 25% of the town's population (compared to 31% for CWaC).

Population estimates (continued)

The following Table 4 shows the number of children and young people who are estimated to live in the areas described (and shown Figure 6 – Map of population data collection areas on page 34).

Age Group	Low to Med-High	Est.
0 – 4 years	L1 and L3	128
	L4	72
	L5	80
	L2 and L6	176
	Sub-total	456
5 – 9 years	L1, L3 & L4	222
	L5	82
	L2	90
	L6	98
	Sub-total	492
10 – 14 years	L1, L3 & L5	252
	L2 and L4	200
	L6	108
	Sub-total	560
15 – 19	L3 and L5	148
	L1, L2 & L4	246
	L6	98
	Sub-total	492
	TOTAL	2,000

Table 4

Population estimates for Frodsham by 4-year age bands, collected by area shown on the map in Figure 6 on page 34.

COMMENTARY

The figures show a particular concentration of children and young people in areas L2 and L6, where 38 – 40% of each 5-year age band lives.

The Saltworks Farm recreation area owned by CWaC is well-placed to meet demand from area L2. The railway underpass allows residents of the Francis Rd/Weaver Rd neighbourhood to access the site, while Quayside residents can use the designated path and cycleway.

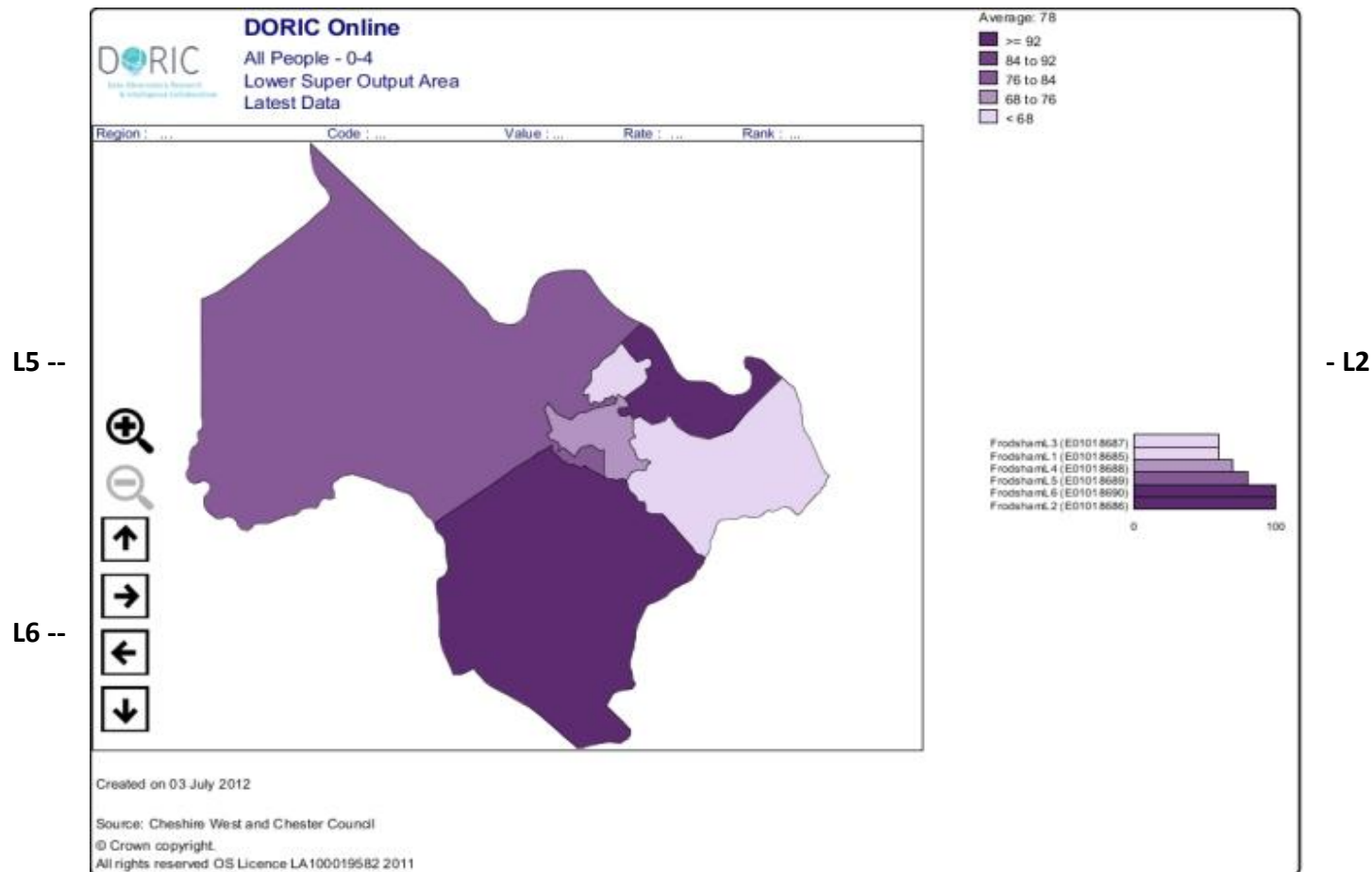
Overton (West of Vicarage Lane) is the neighbourhood in area L6 that is likely to generate the most demand for play from all age groups of children and young people. Churchfields is the best placed to meet this demand, even though crossing Vicarage Lane is necessary for residents of L6.

L5 is the area containing the third highest concentration of 0-9 year olds, in a central Kingsway area, best served by Churchfields.

Population estimates (continued)

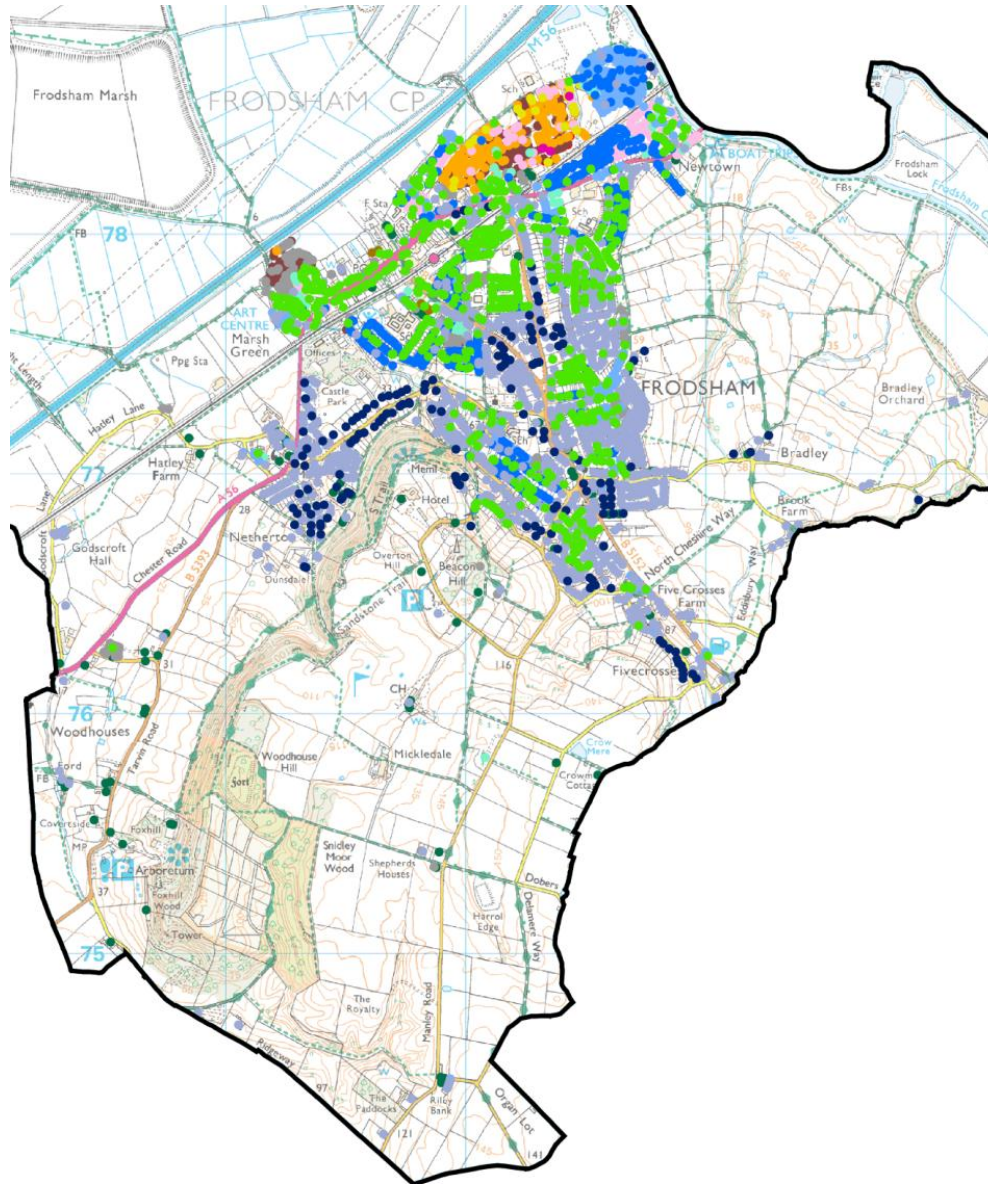
The following two maps show the population data collection areas used to estimate Frodsham's population in 2011 and the mosaic of household groups classified by lifestyle (2009).

Figure 6 – Map of population data collection areas



Analysis of household types in Frodsham

Figure 7 – Map of household groups by lifestyle



Analysis of household types (continued)

Households classified by lifestyle group

As a cross-check against the above estimated numbers of individuals under 20 years of age collected within six broad data collection areas in the town, it is helpful to analyse the town population for distribution of households classified by lifestyle groups. The map in Figure 7 on page 35 shows household types marked by colour coding. Patterns and clusters emerge from this mapping that can assist planning for play over the next 10 years.

The top five most common household types in Frodsham – making up at least 41.4% of households in the town – have no children or young people living in them. A further 4.0% of less numerous household types will similarly be childless. There are therefore clearly large swathes of residential areas in Frodsham that are not likely to generate a demand for play. There may even be a greater intolerance of play in these areas.

On the map, these low demand areas are defined as Group D in light grey (although up to one quarter of these households are owned by relatively well-off commuters, who may have children but are possibly less likely to use public play facilities); Group B in mid-green; Group M in purple.

There are two groups making up 7.5% of households that may have children but who are likely to be in the 10 – 20 year age group. These are Group J shown in pink and Group K in orange.

COMMENTARY

Area L1 (Ashton Drive/Ship Street) is ranked in the top 20% most deprived areas nationally. Area L5 (Ship St (West portion)/Fountain Lane) is ranked in the top 50%. The remainder of Frodsham Ward is ranked in the 40% least deprived areas nationally.

The patterns that emerge from household classification by lifestyle group can also help in targeting and choosing the best methods of consultation and communication.

Analysis of household types (continued)

The areas of Frodsham where high demand is predicted to lie are those with a preponderance of households with children in the 0 – 10 year age group. These are shown on the map as Group E (middle income families living in moderate suburban semis) in royal blue and Group F in mid blue/grey. Together (and including a proportion of Group D as described above), these groups make up around 20.5% of the town's households. This broadly equates with the estimated percentage of population in the relevant age range.

The household types relevant to play are therefore prevalent in the areas of the town listed below. The play site location maps in Figures 1 and 2 on pages 11 and 12 show these areas as segments of the 10-minute and 15-minute catchment areas.

Group E

Waterside Drive/Weaver Rd/Francis Road areas

Fountain Lane/Princeway/Churchfield Road areas

Overton (West of Vicarage Lane, near Primary School)

Group D

A much more widely distributed pattern is evident across the town, but generally these households are sited on the higher ground of Overton, E and W of Vicarage Lane, Fiveways, S of Keswick Drive and in Netherton. Unfortunately, the relevant group (with 5.4% of households) is combined with a larger type (at 15.6% of households) which will not have children living at home. Separating these sub-groups for greater reliability

COMMENTARY

Analysis of household types (continued)

in planning for play will need some field checking and questioning in consultation.

Group F

Waterside Drive

Groups J and K (children and young people aged 10 – 20 years)

Ship Street/Ashton Drive

When the households are classified and ranked in this way, it shows that a significant proportion of Frodsham's households (around 64%) are unlikely to make any use of the play and recreation facilities provided in the town. This makes it imperative that play investment decisions are made in the right places in the town to better satisfy demand and meet accessibility standards.

It is noticeable that several of Frodsham Town Council's play sites may no longer be in a location that is convenient for neighbourhood users (or for residents from the point of view of acceptance and tolerance). They appear to be surrounded either by households that no longer include children (eg Fluin Lane/London Road Fields, Townfield Lane, Hawthorne Road) or households where perhaps the common age of young people is now well in to the teenage years (eg Ship Street). Only Fountain Lane and Francis Road are appropriately positioned according to the age profile of their catchment areas. However, these two sites have their own disadvantages.

COMMENTARY

Fresh consultations and local people's expectations of play

Please see Appendix 2 for a list of individuals and organisations consulted for intelligence gathering prior to public consultation.

1. Helsby High School

Years 7 to 11 (aged approx. 12 to 15 years)

30 May 2012

63 completed online survey forms were returned, 52.4% female/47.6% male

42.9% from Year 8

23.8% from Year 9

30.2% from Year 10

3.2% from Year 11

40% lived in Frodsham; 36% in Helsby; 24% in surrounding rural area (Elton, Kingsley)

Summary of notable points from the online survey

Participants' use of existing play and recreation facilities in Frodsham

70% visited Frodsham's parks and play areas, 30% did not

The main reasons for using the sites were:

- to hang out and meet friends (89%)
- to play football on grass (35%)

COMMENTARY

Since the closure of Frodsham High School in 2009, the majority of Frodsham's 11 – 18 year olds attend Helsby High School for their secondary education.

The online survey was facilitated by a form tutor and this helped secure a good level of response.

The importance of outdoor spaces to young people for social interaction is shown by the high level of citation (89%). However, there is also a level of apprehensiveness about who may be encountered (see below).

A significant proportion (35%) of respondents want to go out and play football on grass.

BMX, skate and all-weather sports pitch use are more niche activities. However, this does not make them less important: strategic provision for recreation should not all be about mainstream activities and led wholly by percentages. There may be a significant latent or potential demand.

Helsby High School consultation (continued)

Lower ranking reported reasons:

- to BMX (13%)
- to use an artificial playing surface (11%)
- to skateboard (6.5%)
- to use activity equipment (6.5%)

The main reasons given for not using the sites were:

- sites too far away from home (21%)
- might encounter people I do not want to meet (21%)
- low play value/not age appropriate (12%)
- litter/broken glass/dog waste (10%)

Which sites did participants use and how did they rate them?

Frodsham Town Council sites

Table 5 – Usage & rating (Helsby High School survey)

Site	Usage (%)	V. poor/poor (%)	Fair (%)	Good/excel (%)
Townfield La	73	34	47	18
Ship St	66	73	25	2
Fountain La	67	53	40	7
Churchfields	67	49	38	13
Fluin La	67	36	33	31

COMMENTARY

Those living in Helsby are only likely to travel to Frodsham for specific recreational needs and are unlikely to walk.

The likelihood of actual or perceived intimidation by individuals or groups in outdoor spaces is a real issue for young people: more than one in five giving this as a reason for not venturing out to such places. This is a factor to be accounted for in the design of outdoor spaces and access to them.

Young people who took part in the survey expressed dissatisfaction with the Town Council's provision. Fluin Lane and Townfield Lane were given a 'middling' assessment; the rest all 'poor' or 'poor to middling'. Often the provision was regarded as not appropriate for teenagers.

Helsby High School consultation (continued)

Cheshire West & Chester Council sites

Table 5 (cont'd) – Usage & rating (Helsby High School survey)

Site	Usage (%)	V. poor/poor (%)	Fair (%)	Good/excel (%)
Castle Park				
u12s play	85	18	35	48
Teen activity	87	46	28	26
MUGA	82	31	36	33
Football pitch	85	14	26	60
Saltworks Fm				
U12s play	73	41	37	23
Skate/BMX	72	17	40	44
Basketball	70	53	26	21
Meeting points	70	45	47	9
Football pitches	73	20	37	43
Bike route	72	44	42	15
Frodsham LC				
Artificial pitch	76	12	33	55
Indoor skate	73	26	35	39
Other spaces				
Unknown	34	39	52	8

COMMENTARY

In contrast, CWaC's play and recreation provision was in some cases well rated. 'Good' ratings were given to the football pitch at Castle Park and the artificial pitch at the Leisure Centre. 'Fair – Good' was applied to Castle Park's under-12s play, Saltworks Farm skate/BMX and football pitches, and indoor skate at the Leisure Centre. The rest of the facilities listed were all rated 'poor – middling', some surprisingly so, ie the teen area and multi-use games area in Castle Park. The meeting points at Saltworks Farm fared badly too, and these examples illustrated how significant capital expenditure aimed at young people can miss the mark.

It is vital to consult thoroughly and keep up-to-date, as demands change and decision-making adults can be out of touch with young people and the environments in which they live.

Helsby High School consultation (continued)

Frequency of visits to Frodsham's parks and play areas

- Half of all respondents visited their preferred sites at least once per week in Spring/Summer, about a quarter once per month and the rest less frequently.

Means of travel to play destinations

- Just over half (52%) walked to their preferred play destinations, while 28% went by car and 9% cycled.

Convenience of play sites

- A small percentage (16.5%) found the existing play and recreation sites in the town to be difficult or moderately difficult to use. The precise reasons are not clear from the survey, so further work will be needed in this area, to inform future design solutions, eg an access audit by specialists.

Other activities tied in with visits to play sites

- Almost three quarters (73%) tied in another activity and by far the most common was to call in at a local shop.

Pathways used to access play and recreation

- There were no strong patterns of use or non-use of Frodsham's pathway network.

Other difficulties in using play sites

- There were few specific difficulties cited. Again, the people who might be encountered were given as an issue: either with respect to overcrowding and too

COMMENTARY

There remains a regular usage of outdoor public spaces by a sub-group of this age group.

Car travel to play sites may apply to over a quarter of participants because play is tied into collection from school, even at secondary school age. Nevertheless, walking remains at a reasonably encouraging level from a health perspective and may reflect the relative compactness of Frodsham's size and layout.

There remains scope to improve the cycling rate, although this will not come easily or quickly. Careful consideration needs to be given to the design of open spaces (including bike security), the access to them and the patterns of vehicle traffic. This will require collaboration between the appropriate authorities.

Helsby High School consultation (continued)

many young children (ie Castle Park at certain times) or possible intimidation.

General comments

- The need to improve the existing sites, for younger and older age groups was recognised.

Using out-of-town play and recreation facilities

- 30% did use such facilities, but in a widespread fashion with no strong, singular draw. For example, places such as Helsby Quarry, Runcorn parks, Chester; other varied leisure and social pursuits.

Comments on collages of natural and traditional play, recreation, skate and BMX

- 45% of participants liked the play examples given.
- 25% said they would use the sites if they were re-developed in the ways shown.
- 22% said they would not.
- Mostly, there were no alternative ideas put forward, only singular suggestions of providing quieter areas for older people, more meeting places with seating.

Preferred order of priority for re-developing the existing sites for play:

1. Churchfields (49%)
2. Townfield Lane (49%)
3. Frodsham Leisure Centre (47%)
4. Fluin Lane/London Road (53%)

11% mentioned Castle Park for early enhancement

COMMENTARY

2. Primary Schools

13 July 2012

Weaver Vale Primary & Frodsham CE Primary

Years 4 and 6 – aged approx. 8/9 and 10/11 years respectively, boys & girls living in Frodsham & Helsby

- All participants visited at least one of Frodsham's play sites, with Castle Park and Saltworks Farm the only destinations named specifically.
- All participants generally walked to the play sites, although bicycle and car were also modes of travel on occasion.
- The combination of a visit to a play site on the way home from school was not a regular occurrence: only sometimes or never was given as an answer.
- Two pathways were quoted as regular routes to play: Fountain Lane – Church St (alongside railway and Leisure Centre) and through Churchfields.
- Play destinations outside Frodsham were visited by all participants: for better parks with more exciting play with more choice of activity. Phoenix Park and Town Hall Park, Runcorn; Victoria Park, Widnes; Walton Gardens, Warrington were given as favourite destinations.
- Aspects of play that were attractive include: plenty of alternative types of play to choose from, including genuinely age appropriate facilities for older age groups and adventurous play. Houses nearby gave a feeling of safety. Cableways and mound slides were specifically named as favourite play features.
- Other features liked were rope apparatus; feelings of height and wider open space; equipment that could accommodate more than one person at a time (so as not to have to wait your turn); high timber log climber and tunnels.
- The play activities selected as favourites were: swinging, ball games, hanging, balancing, climbing, being high up, biking and hiding.
- Participants' own ideas for play included bike ramps, monkey bars, rope & knot swing, tree climbing, pirate ship, helter skelter & normal slides, big roundabout, basketball and water fountains.

Survey questionnaires were also sent to St Luke's Catholic Primary School, Manor House Primary School and Hinderton Special School (Ellesmere Port).

'The Den' and 'The Link' out-of-school clubs

'The Link' out-of-school club

(Serves Manor House Primary and Weaver Vale Primary Schools)

16 October 2012

Respondents ranged from Year 4 up to Year 6, boys and girls. There was nothing to distinguish the boys' returns from those of the girls'. All used Frodsham's parks, although none of the Town Council's sites were singled out as most visited. These were Castle Park, Saltworks Farm and Kingsley. Walton Gardens was cited as a favourite out-of-town play destination. Often friends lived elsewhere and play facilities were used when visiting them. The reverse is also likely to apply. The appeal of going somewhere different to play was mentioned.

Visiting a play site between school and home was occasional rather than regular. Most walked to play sites, using pathways.

Popular play activities/features were (in order of rank): climbing (eg space net), tunnel, cableway, being at height, crawling, bouncing, hiding, hanging, sliding and swinging.

Hinderton Special School, Ellesmere Port

COMMENTARY

3. Near Neighbour Surveys

Two Town Council-managed play sites were selected initially for a survey of near neighbours. Houses within visual and/or aural range of both sites were visited. The questionnaire was available to be completed face-to-face at the time of visit, or a hard copy completed and submitted by post or to a local drop point, or completed and submitted online. Numbers in brackets refer to number of responses with this view; otherwise singular.

a. Churchfields

31 questionnaires were presented, 15 returned (48%)

53.8% of respondents use the site on a daily basis (for access, play, etc)

46.2% consider the site to be very well used, mostly at weekends

41.7% consider the site to be well maintained (33.3% satisfactorily). Trees, hedges and perimeters sometimes get overgrown (3)

Site issues that affect respondents:

- Dog fouling to footpaths (4). Dog walking is a common activity on site.
- Steep steps and poor surface at Park Lane access (extended handrail and anti-slip surface needed); no path across grass, making access difficult for buggies; occasional congregation of adults/teenagers causing noise/litter (2). However, no serious anti-social behaviour problems experienced in recent years (6). Existing play area old and dilapidated with insufficient equipment, especially toddlers (4)

Priorities for site re-development:

- Take advantage of central location of site by promoting its use as a short cut and as a stopping-off point for play, with seating and possibly picnic table. Aim at pre-school use during the day, older children (up to early teens) for meeting up after school and at week-ends (3). Provide a choice of play activities with modern

COMMENTARY

Churchfields (continued)

equipment (3). Consider multi-user pathways and general exercise.

- Retain and refurbish ball games area, ie some minor drainage and levelling (5). Consider a goal end for football and basketball.
- Provide fence around play area to keep dogs and children separate.
- Open up hedge line bordering upper part of site.
- Site should remain as it is
- Additional footpath not needed

b. Townfield Lane

28 questionnaires were presented, 18 returned (64%)

35.5% of respondents used the site daily, 47.1% rarely

60.0% considered the site to be very well used, mostly after school. Usage had dropped since removal of some items in May 2012. Users come from other parts of town as well as the immediate neighbourhood.

57.1% considered the site to be satisfactorily maintained. Mowing this year not frequent enough (possibly due to wet weather).

Site issues that affect respondents:

- No problems with the site (18). Dog mess not an issue; football orientation resolved previous problem of damage to perimeter fencing; no graffiti; occasional litter/broken glass.
- Play area needs updating (18). Town Council response to complaint about this had been inadequate. There is a desire for the 'secret' and countryside character of the site to be retained, to complement other play in the town and for well-chosen and appropriate new play equipment to be installed.

COMMENTARY

4. General town-wide online consultation

An online questionnaire was publicised and the link placed on various locally relevant web sites from April through to October 2012.

Eleven responses were received by the date of publication and will continue to be recorded going in to the implementation phase of the play improvement programme. All respondents to date are adults in the 25 – 64 year age range; three quarters are female.

A high proportion (over 90%) of respondents lived in Frodsham and visited the town's parks and play areas. Play and recreation are the dominant reasons behind their visits (83.3%) although around a third used the sites to pass through to another destination.

80% visited the sites at least once per week and the same proportion walked to these destinations and described access to the sites as easy. No particular pedestrian routes were commonly used nor presented any difficulties. Around 40% visited a shop or school on the same journey.

Respondents generally rated the Town Council's play sites as 'poor' or 'very poor'. Cheshire West and Chester Council's (CWaC) play sites at Castle Park and Saltworks Farm were better rated:

Castle Park

Lower play area, multi-use games area and grass pitch: 'good' – 'fair'

Upper teen area: 'fair' – 'very poor'

Saltworks Farm

Under-12s play area, skate/BMX and basketball: 'fair'

Meeting shelters, grass pitches and cycle route: 'fair' – 'poor'

COMMENTARY

General town-wide online consultation (continued)

Frodsham Leisure Centre

Artificial pitch: 'good' – 'very poor'

Indoor skateboard room: 'good' – 'very poor'

On which sites to prioritise for play re-development, Townfield Lane had full agreement as first site, Churchfields split opinion equally.

General comments given included:

- As the Town Council's play areas have in recent years become run down, no-one seemed to take responsibility for modernising and improving them.
- On the play design ideas presented in the questionnaire, there is a desire for the design to be kept simple and to accommodate imaginative play.

Two thirds of respondents also used play facilities outside Frodsham: Helsby and Victoria Park, Widnes were cited as having good play equipment that interested children.

COMMENTARY

3. Which of Frodsham's sites to invest in and develop for children and young people, and which to divest?

Please refer to the town plans in Figures 1 and 2 on page 11 and to the site profiles in Table 2, page 20.

Children 12 years of age and under:

**Local Standard – play area to home walk time of 10 minutes
(equivalent distance 480m)**

General

The walk time and distance assumes an adult accompanying a 4 year old child. Children a year or two older - usually still accompanied – will be willing and able to cover a greater distance in this time, say 600 to 800m.

If walking and cycling are to be encouraged as means of travel to play opportunities, road crossing will inevitably be a part of the journey. The main routes of A56 High St/Main St/Bridge La, B5439 Fluin Lane and B5152 Church St/Red La/Vicarage La are all notably busy with vehicle traffic, from the point of view of those wishing to cross.

Both the A56 main road through Frodsham and the railway can act as a barrier for those living to the North side, with limited under- and over-passes and pedestrian-controlled road crossings. Some of these pose disincentives to use, eg poor sight lines, poor illumination or non-inclusive access, eg the steeply stepped footbridge over A56 Bridge La, above the railway tunnel. Few people are likely to use this footbridge and it is unusable for wheelchair users or those with buggies.

COMMENTARY

Frodsham Town Council owned or managed sites

(see also site profiles on page 20)

1. Churchfields

The site's catchment overlaps that of Castle Park by about 40%. However, Churchfields serves Overton in the upper part of the town that includes significant numbers of households with under-12s. The Fivecrosses area is outside the 10-minute walk threshold. However, this area does not include a significant proportion of households with under-12s.

The proximity of St Laurence's churchyard to the existing play area needs consideration with reference to the potential for noise and activity.

Those who live, or attend school East of B5152 Church St/Red La/Vicarage La have to cross this main highway to visit Churchfields. The two zebra crossings to Vicarage Lane are both to the SW of the catchment and so serve only a proportion of play visitors from these areas, with no crossing on Church St/Red La to assist those using Footpaths 60 & 61.

2. Townfield Lane play area

Fifty percent of the catchment is unpopulated and a further 25% contains households with few children. However the site does serve residential areas around Langdale Way and Manor House Primary School (which incidentally has its own playing field). The same quarter would be served by Fluin Lane Field if new provision for under-12s were to be built there (see below). The site is the subject of a lease by the Town Council from the Feoffees Trust. This could affect the eligibility or chances of success of a grant application for a land project proposed for this site. However, initial enquiries indicate that in principle, the Trust would support continued play provision on the site.

COMMENTARY

Frodsham Town Council owned or managed play sites (continued)

3. Fluin Lane/London Rd Fields

The households immediately around Fluin Lane/London Rd Fields tend not to include children or young people.

Those who live or go to school East of Fluin Lane, eg in Langdale Way area, have to cross Fluin Lane to visit this site. There is a pedestrian refuge between the junctions with Langdale Way and Blue Hatch, but the road alignment, sight lines and frequency and speed of traffic can make this crossing less than straightforward.

Due to the main A56 road and the railway, Fluin Lane is not easy to get to for those who live North of these routes, particularly those walking with young children. Those who live SW of Church St/Red La have to cross the latter highway to visit the site.

Fluin Lane/London Rd Fields therefore have a limited audience of under-12s and the Fields serve the same 12 years and under catchment as Townfield Lane play area (see above), but with the addition of being very convenient for those attending St Luke's Catholic Primary School. The School has an agreement with the Town Council for use of the bottom field for football and other activities. The School itself has limited school grounds.

4. Ship Street play area

The value of this site for play has been superseded by the development of Saltworks Farm Recreation Area by CWaC and the preceding borough authority.

COMMENTARY

Frodsham Town Council owned or managed play sites (continued)

Half of the site's catchment area is unpopulated and an additional 25% contains households with no children or young people. The households immediately surrounding the site generally do not include children or young people. The site could therefore be regarded as surplus to play requirements and could be considered for alternative use or disposal. (See land options on page 59.)

5. Top Road play area

The site's remoteness, its difficult and non-inclusive access and its very low level of present or potential use from its 10-minute catchment, mean that this site is inappropriate to develop for play. The site could therefore be regarded as surplus to play requirements and could be considered for alternative use or disposal. (See land options on page 59.)

6. Fountain Lane play area

The value of this site for play has been superseded by the development of Castle Park by CWaC and the preceding borough authority. The site could therefore be regarded as surplus to play requirements and could be considered for alternative use or disposal. (See land options on page 59.)

7. Francis Road open space

Where households in the Francis Rd/Weaver Rd area include young people, they are generally in late teenage years. Access to Saltworks Farm Recreation Area is possible for this age group via the railway underpass off Ashton Drive. The open space off Francis Road is really too small to develop for play, due to insufficient buffer distances to surrounding homes. (This has been proven in the past, with the removal of earlier

COMMENTARY

Frodsham Town Council owned or managed play sites (continued)

play equipment due to misuse and anti-social behaviour.) The ownership of the open space is to be confirmed. However, it is likely to remain as amenity open space, with a key pathway passing through the site and converging with another near the railway underpass off Ashton Drive.

8. Hawthorne Road

This site is unsuitable for play, so if title to the land is held by the Town Council, the site could be considered for alternative use or disposal.

Cheshire West and Chester Council owned and managed sites

1. Castle Park

The audience within a 10-minute walk is limited in extent and overlaps with that of Churchfields (see the map in Figure 1 on page 7), although local people will be prepared to walk a little further than this, due to the site's "destination" standard of facilities.

2. Saltworks Farm Recreation Area

Half the site's catchment area for under-12's is unpopulated, plus 25% contains households that do not generally include children and young people. However, the facility serves Waterside Way, the recent Overton Close development by Weaver Vale Housing Trust off Ashton Drive and Quayside, as well as Francis Rd/Weaver Rd areas.

COMMENTARY

Young people aged 13 years and over –

**Local standard: walk time of 15 minutes between site and home
(equivalent distance 720m)**

Frodsham Town Council owned or managed sites

1. Fluin Lane/London Road Fields

The site's central location in the town is its key value for young people, rather than straightforward 15-minute convenience. It could therefore be said to be an ideal location for the Youth Club housed within the Community Centre sited here. (From pre-consultation intelligence, there is some reluctance from young people to walk from the NE end of the town - where Saltworks Farm is situated - to the SW periphery of the town - where Castle Park is situated and vice versa. The Castle Park and Saltworks Farm 15-minute catchments almost meet at Fluin Lane.)

Young people like to be "where it's at" and peripheral locations in the town may offer recreational opportunities for some, but do not provide full value for social interaction. This desire for central, visible space of the right configuration, situation and access, probably applies to all groups of young people. It is particularly applicable (but can prove difficult to satisfy and get right) for teenage girls and 'minority' interests such as wheeled sports. (See also Frodsham Leisure Centre below.)

There are a relatively small number of events held annually on the upper field, eg car boot sales and a fair. These events occupy most of that field when they are held.

The upper field is unsuitable in its present ground configuration and condition for

COMMENTARY

Frodsham Town Council owned or managed play sites (continued)

sports field use. Surface re-grading would be required before any pitch construction would be appropriate, should this end-use be considered in addressing the presently declared shortage of football pitches in Frodsham. The lower field, which is more even and level - and therefore suitable as it stands for training and fixtures in football - is fully occupied if marked out for junior football fixtures.

The extent of occupancy of these current events and activities would appear to rule out space for the development of any permanent new play, physical activity or outdoor meeting place for young people. A review of these events and fixtures is needed if a suitable part of the Fields (up to a suggested maximum area of 40 x 30 metres) is to be given up for new outdoor provision for young people. Given the population profile and proximity of residents surrounding the site, any such sketch designs may not receive full support in the event of a near neighbour survey being carried out.

Furthermore, the open land to the SW of the Community Centre which might be considered for such a development is the subject of a lease by the Town Council to Frodsham Community Association. The 99-year lease is approximately halfway through its lifespan. This may affect the eligibility or chances of success of a grant application for a land project proposed for this portion of the Fluin Lane Field.

2. Churchfields

Given the site's conservation area status, proximity to St Laurence Churchyard and extensive catchment overlap with Castle Park, any outline design for play and recreation will need to take account of these landscape and townscape sensibilities. Conservation Area Consent will be required for any proposal. This may place a limit on the scale and extent of new facilities and infrastructure and possibly limit provision to that for those aged 14 years and under.

COMMENTARY

3. Townfield Lane

Given the site's peripheral location in the town, poor sight lines and proximity of surrounding properties, this site may be better regarded as more suitable for 12 years and under.

Cheshire West and Chester Council owned and managed sites

1. Frodsham Leisure Centre

The combination of its central location with adequate access, existing site infrastructure (including floodlights for winter evenings) and managed site status give the grounds of the Leisure Centre advantages for an outdoor wheeled sports site. This could be designed as a concrete plaza (with full user consultation and commissioning of specialist designers) for skateboards, inline skates, BMX bikes and scooters.

If the jump pit area adjacent to the NW boundary with the railway was to be considered for site development, there are adequate buffer distances to the nearest houses. The adjacent Princeway Health Centre would benefit from the diversion of skate activity away from its curtilage.

There is already an indoor skateboard room in an adjacent part of the Leisure Centre. This serves as an all-weather, all-season facility that has developed as a small 'hub' in the time of its existence. An entry fee of £1 is payable to use this facility.

The question of whether an outdoor wheeled sports facility could be offered on a free of charge / free to come and go basis within the present grounds of the Leisure Centre would need to be a part of early negotiations. So too would be the extent of any management responsibilities on the part of the Leisure Centre.

COMMENTARY

Cheshire West and Chester Council owned and managed sites (continued)

2. Castle Park

Castle Park's 15-minute catchment includes the railway station and Church St bus routes, so that for young people without access to independent car transport, it may still be reached from outside the town (eg from Helsby and some outlying villages) or from further parts of the town (eg from Fivecrosses or Newtown). The catchment includes Churchfields, suggesting that new provision here would represent some duplication. Fluin La/London Rd Fields is just outside the catchment (as it is with Saltworks Farm).

The floodlit multi-use games area in Castle Park is a key recreational asset for young people: for football, basketball and other potential games. This makes possible early evening use during the October to February period, when there may be few indoor alternatives open to young people.

The activity area in the upper part of the park designed for young people has patchy use and a number of defects/damage since its inception have not helped. Some young people find the lower play area and (on rainy occasions) Castle Park House more convenient places to meet up. This has caused some issues with the residents of Park Lane whose properties back on to this part of the park.

3. Saltworks Farm Recreation Area

The site's 15-minute catchment includes all areas North of A56 High St/Bridge La. The railway underpass between Francis Rd and Ashton Dr is essential in this accessibility. The bus service along Ship St serves the site. The Quay footpath/cycleway connects the site with Quayside/A56 Sutton Causeway.

COMMENTARY

Cheshire West and Chester Council owned and managed sites (continued)

4. Overflow car park by Frodsham Railway Station

Cheshire West and Chester Council's view is that given the site's strategic value and adjacency to conservation areas, they wish to retain their options on this land. Therefore it must be discounted as a possible site for wheeled sports.

Land options for Frodsham Town Council (FTC)

Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) would not normally advise or act on behalf of Town and Parish Councils over their land interests. In any case, the Council is likely to have to charge fees for its services. In terms of workload, both Property and Legal Services would struggle at present to fulfil any requirements. However, the Borough Council's Property & Information Manager may be in a position to assist to some degree and gave the following advice:

- FTC should develop local contacts with solicitors to obtain independent advice and valuations for their land. CWaC could suggest some practices to approach.
- FTC should register all its land holdings: this generally assists any disposal. FTC should negotiate an agreement with the Land Registry to register the sites collectively.

In the view of Groundwork Cheshire, the FTC land currently under recreational use that might be considered for change of use/disposal includes the following sites:

1. Fountain Lane play area (junction with Princeway) – this site falls within Frodsham Conservation Area

COMMENTARY

Land options for Frodsham Town Council (continued)

2. Ship Street play area – this site falls within the town settlement line, ie it is not designated open space under the Local Plan
3. Hawthorne Road – land ownership to be verified
4. Francis Road - land ownership to be verified

Obtaining planning consent for residential development of land will generally enhance its value. There will be costs involved in making such an application. Normally, an outline application for change of use would be made, in the above cases by FTC or their agent. The work required to put this together is almost equivalent to a full planning application. Therefore, it is essential to assess beforehand whether it is worthwhile submitting an application.

Obtaining guidance on a possible way forward could be achieved by a pre-application discussion with a CWaC planning officer in Development Control, based at Wyvern House. It would be advantageous to know who may be interested in developing the available site(s) at the time of such a meeting.

A requirement for affordable housing may apply to an indicative proposal, depending upon the number of residential units planned. (The relevant Supplementary Planning Document should clarify requirements.) A valuation for the land could then be prepared. Planning consent for market value houses to be built on a site will raise a higher land value than that for lower cost housing, for example through development by a Housing Association or Trust. Developers will also buy land for low cost housing.

COMMENTARY

4. Recommendations for Frodsham play, towards a 'best fit'

Short term actions

To ensure that local people using the Town Council's play areas find the existing play facilities in a clean and safe condition and to protect the Town Council from potential compensation claims arising from any injured parties, it is essential that a routine inspection, reporting and repair regime is carried out and recorded. This should start with an initial qualified inspection that includes a condition survey and an assessment of risk at each site.

Recommendation 1

Commission an **annual inspection and report** of all Frodsham Town Council play sites by a qualified inspector as soon as possible.

This will immediately protect the Town Council to some extent from possible accusations and claims arising from any incidents that might occur in the near future on its play sites.

There will need to be some consideration given as to how to **respond** to the inspection results and resources allocated accordingly, eg temporary decommissioning of equipment, site closure, selective repairs to equipment, safer surfaces or boundaries, or appropriate temporary signage. Financial and management resources will be needed to arrange ordering of materials and services as appropriate.

COMMENTARY

A basic inspection regime, carried out by a trained and competent person and diligently adhered to, will help defend most claims, especially if supported by reasonable efforts to make improvements to risks assessed and highlighted in a qualified inspector's report.

Play facilities that include equipment of the age prevalent on the Town Council's sites (ie 25 to 30 years old) often incur adverse notifications under inspection, over particular design issues with obsolete equipment, eg finger traps. This is a consequence of the BSEN Standards being revised during the intervening period. A lack of suitably inclusive play equipment and corresponding access will also be picked up in reports.

Recommendations for Frodsham play – short term actions (continued)

The inspection will generate specific information around the condition of equipment and surfaces. However, the inspection should also include an assessment of risks in and around each site as a whole and not just the discrete, equipped play area.

This might include the extent of natural surveillance and quality of sight lines; the condition and type of boundary walls, fences or hedges; the condition of internal and approach path surfaces; the extent and condition of any adjoining plantations; the presence, adequacy and condition of any lighting and other factors that might affect personal safety (actual and perceived).

Assessment of accessibility issues should be included in the inspection for each site, such as what would constitute reasonable measures for meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

Recommendation 2

Obtain fixed quotations for all remedial work or replacements to the existing play equipment, safer surfacing, hard surfacing for access and site furniture identified and prioritised by the qualified play inspector.

The cost of making the existing sites compliant with the relevant British & European (BSEN) Standards can thus be calculated and sites assessed individually and collectively.

COMMENTARY

Recommendations for Frodsham play – short term actions (continued)

How far each site is from being realistically maintainable to this basic standard can be assessed and a maintenance budget calculated and allocated.

This information also forms the basis upon which to make medium and longer term decisions for each relevant site. Scenarios may be set out for each site, depending upon the level of risk identified. A plan for each site can then be worked out.

Recommendation 3

Prioritise, select & commission repairs/replacements/removals/decommissioning arising from report.

A basic regular inspection and reporting system should be scheduled, formulated, procured and put in place, either provided in-house with appropriate training, or bought in. Maintenance responsibilities for each site should be clarified and confirmed with Cheshire West and Chester Council, so that there are no misunderstandings, duplications or gaps, and reporting lines clarified.

Recommendation 4

Fully specify and schedule (with frequencies and specific requirements such as weekend inspections expressed) a regular inspection, reporting and repair service for all play areas to be included in the programme going forward. Contingency arrangements for unforeseen incidents must be clearly stated.

Recommendation 5

Obtain quotations for the above service.

COMMENTARY

It may be possible that, through negotiation and agreement, the functions of inspection, reporting and repair of the Town Council's play facilities might be combined with those of CWaC. The borough presently employs an in-house team to undertake this work on its own play sites in Frodsham. Under present arrangements, CWaC Streetscene already undertakes grounds maintenance such as mowing and waste bin emptying on the Town Council's sites. However, like all its services, the borough Council's play maintenance arrangements are presently under review and adding the Town Council's play portfolio to their schedules may not be appropriate at present.

Recommendations for Frodsham play – short term actions (continued)

Recommendation 6

Commission the above inspection, reporting and repair service for a 12 month period. Review performance on a monthly basis and renew on a yearly basis. Alternatively, realistic estimates should be prepared for any in-house, shared service or community-based arrangements, with a robust agreement drawn up.

The Town Council's present play inspection regime represents a **minimum** level and it is recommended that the following additional measures are put in place.

- A **back-up arrangement** is put in place for the regular inspections, in the event that the General Assistant is absent or unable to carry out a round of inspection.
- These inspections should take place **at least twice per week** (separated by an appropriate interval) and scheduled according to local knowledge about any predictable incidence of mis-use, eg broken glass and peak times of use. Often mis-use occurs on Friday and Saturday evenings and legitimate users could be presented with unacceptable hazards the following morning. This should be avoided and therefore one of the two visits should be early Saturday or Sunday morning as appropriate. Arrangements should be reviewed after a period, and adjusted according to actual experience.
- The person(s) carrying out these regular inspections should have **basic training and competence** to do so and could combine litter picking and waste bin emptying on the same visit, according to need.
- There are computer software packages and handheld devices available to simplify the checklist of inspection, logging of faults and reporting and recording that would

COMMENTARY

Several of the play manufacturing and supply companies offer regular inspection and repair as a service and as the Frodsham play improvement programme progresses and the Town Council's portfolio of play facilities is modernised and grows, it may be prudent to factor in the costs of outsourcing at least a part of the regime. In the case of more complex repairs, such a company would, in any case, have to be brought in to rectify defects. The manner in which repairs are made can affect the warranty conditions attached to newer play equipment and whether it continues to meet the relevant British/European safety standards.

Recommendations for Frodsham play – short term actions (continued)

facilitate this whole part of the operation, and for a modest outlay, greatly improve protection of the Town Council's interests.

Recommendation 7

Investigate Town Council land options at Fountain Lane, Ship Street, Saltworks Farm and Top Road.

Recommendation 8

Commission a project management agreement to redevelop the **Churchfields** site for play, as **Project 1** of the play improvement programme. This would cover all stages from sketch design, secondary consultation, detailed design and tender, contract supervision and monitoring for a year after completion.

Recommendation 9

Commission a project management agreement to redevelop the **Townfield Lane** site for play, as **Project 2** of the play improvement programme.

Churchfields and Townfield Lane represent achievable projects that will be valued by play site users resident throughout Frodsham. Both locations are widely supported as play and open spaces amongst residents who live nearby and other key stakeholders. The completion of these two schemes by April 2014 (subject to match funding being secured) would represent a tangible and substantial start to the improvement programme, so that

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local people could see progress and following schemes gain more widespread support from stakeholders than they perhaps do at present.

Recommendations (continued)

The possibility of community asset transfer from CWaC to the Town Council at Saltworks Farm could be re-visited meantime and a project progressed that reflected consultation findings as funds permit. Similarly, negotiations with CWaC over use of part of Frodsham Leisure Centre grounds for wheeled sport may be continued. Presently, there are too many variables for CWaC to consider before making any commitment to a land allocation and end-use of this nature. Adding to or altering selected play and recreation features at Castle Park – although suggested as a Project 5 – could come forward if stakeholder consultation and funding opportunities present themselves. Fluin Lane top field presents a central location in the town next to existing indoor youth facilities. During the next three years, a review of the events traditionally held on the fields might be appropriate, to see if some land could be given up for (i) developing an outdoor landscape feature that specifically serves young people and (ii) enhancements to the open space for the general visitor, given that the site has a notable role for access across the town.

COMMENTARY

Equivalent case studies and illustrative costs

The following case studies are all projects managed by Groundwork Cheshire, from inception to completion. The projects are broadly equivalent to those proposed for Frodsham, in terms of their scope, landscape elements, quantities and therefore costs. The costs shown are actual and recent. They can therefore inform decisions to be made around project priorities, the Funding Strategy (to assess how much finance is required overall to fund a project and any phasing required) and the Action Plan.

Case Study 1 – Lower Heath Community Space, Congleton

A two-phase, neighbourhood play, recreation and open space project started in July 2009 (consultation with nearby residents) and completed ready for use by the public in October 2010. (The defects period ended in October 2011.)

The project included new play facilities for toddlers to 14 year olds, ball sport areas (both natural grass and hard surfaced), improved multi-user access through and around the open space, mounding and land drainage over a large extent, to facilitate all year round use. Plenty of seating and other furniture was included in the design. A local steering group was set up specifically for this project. A phased master plan for the whole open space was agreed with this group and the local authority (who own and manage the land) before detailed design and tender. Phase 1 was designed as a free-standing project, pending ratification of Phase 2 funding.

Phase 1 was funded by Playbuilder (to a value of £43,000), Phase 2 by a Section 106 contribution allocated by Cheshire East Council (£133,300). Congleton Town Council contributed to access improvement (£1,500).

Total funds secured £177,800

Case Study 1 – Lower Heath Community Space, Congleton (continued)

Table 6

Financial Summary

Total capital works	£143,300
Total project consultation, design & management fees	£34,500
Total project costs	£177,800

Breakdown of capital works costs

	Landscape element	Actual Cost (£)
1	Prelims	5,200
2	Site clearance & earthworks	6,700
3	Primary path	28,600
4	Safer surfacing	19,800
5	Site furniture	10,500
6	Play equipment	42,700
7	Recreation equipment	6,600
8	Reinstatement	6,600
9	Drainage	11,000
10	Contingency	5,600
	TOTAL	143,300

Case Study 1 – Lower Heath Community Space, Congleton (continued)

Case Study 1 – Lower Heath Community Space, Congleton (continued)

Figure 9 Photographs of completed project



Case Study 2 – Brereton Community Space

A three-phase, neighbourhood play, recreation and open space project started in July 2008 (local consultation) and completed ready for use by the public in July 2009 (Phase 1), February 2010 (Phase 2) and April 2011 (Phase 3). (The defects period ended in October 2011.)

The project included new play facilities for toddlers to 14 year olds, enhanced natural grass sports pitch, improved multi-user access through and around the open space, mounding and land drainage over a large extent, to facilitate all year round use. Plenty of seating, a picnic site, a meeting point for local young people and other furniture such as amenity lighting and power supply was included in the design. A local steering group was set up specifically for this project. A phased master plan for the whole open space was agreed with this group and the local authority (who own and manage the land) before detailed design and tender. Phases 1 and 2 were designed as free-standing projects, pending ratification of Phase 3 funding. The local Community Interest Group played (and continue to play) an increasing role in fund raising, additional new works and maintenance. The project has stimulated development of the local rural community and provides a central venue and destination for events and social interaction.

Phase 1 (land drainage) was funded by the Parish and Borough Councils (to a value of £10,000 each),

Phase 2 (play space & primary path) was funded by Playbuilder (£43,335), the Parish Council (£6,200), Cheshire Aggregates Fund (£18,532), Youth Capital Fund (£9,800), Cheshire East Council (£15,623) and Groundwork Cheshire (£6,300)

Phase 3 (secondary path, picnic area & planting) was funded by WREN Landfill Communities Fund (£11,000), community and arts grants awarded by Cheshire East Council (£11,000), five grants from various trusts and organisations (total £8,000), the Parish Council (£3,800) and a volunteers' in-kind contribution of £2,550 (based on time worked).

Total funds secured: £157,500

Case Study 2 – Brereton Community Space (continued)

Table 7

Financial Summary

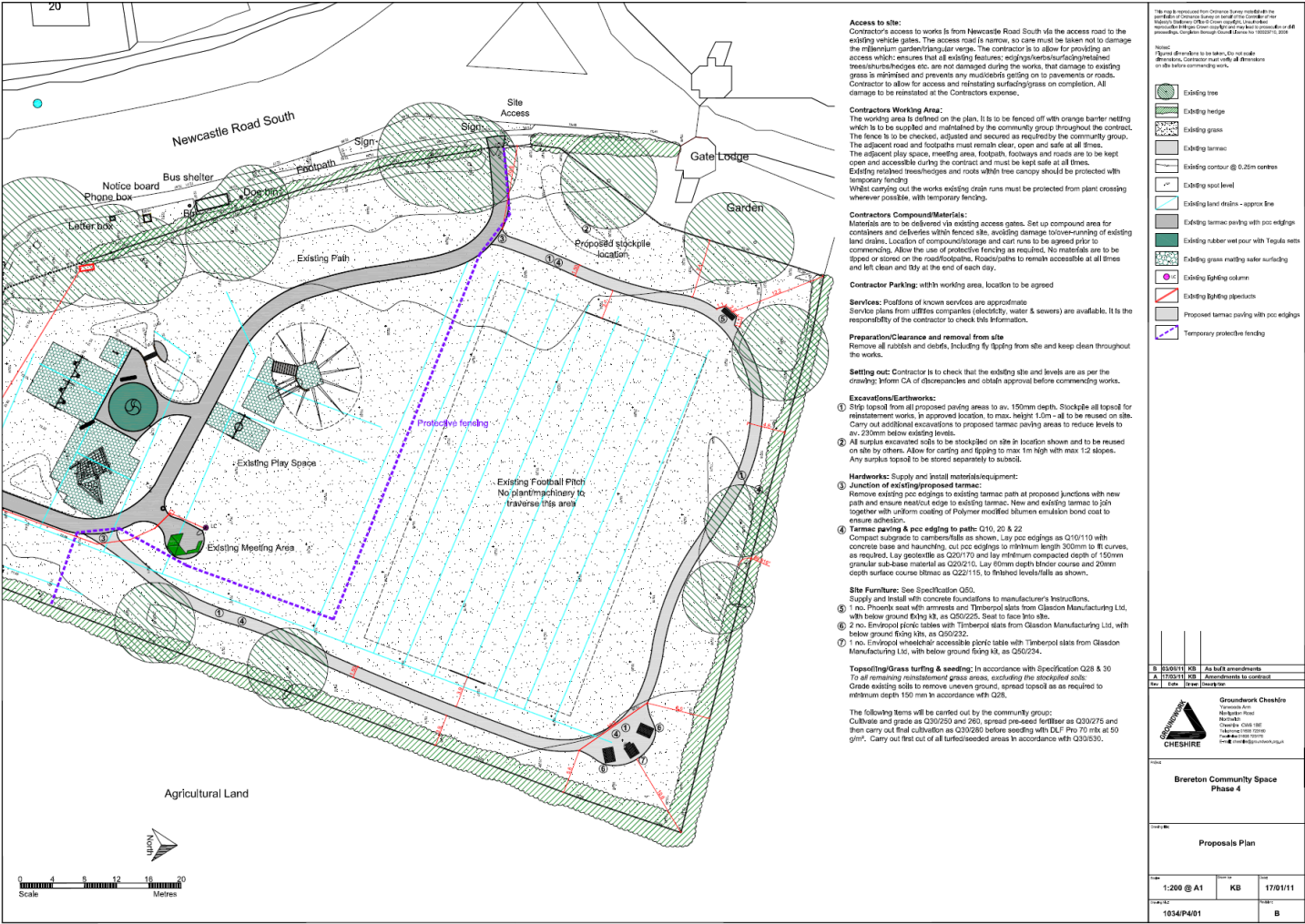
Total capital works	£120,000
Total project consultation, design & management fees	£37,500
Total project costs	£157,500

Breakdown of capital works costs

	Landscape element	Actual Cost (£)
1	Prelims	3,400
2	Site clearance & earthworks	7,000
3	Primary path	11,700
4	Secondary path	11,800
5	Safer surfacing	16,500
6	Site furniture	14,400
	Fencing/gates	5,300
7	Play equipment	19,000
8	Recreation equipment	800
9	Reinstatement	2,600
10	Drainage	14,700
11	Lighting	6,600
12	Contingency	6,200
	TOTAL	120,000

Case Study 2 – Brereton Community Space (continued)

Figure 10 Phased Master Plan (as built)



Case Study 2 – Brereton Community Space (continued)

Figure 11 Photograph of completed project



Case Study 3 – Weston Wheeled Sports Area, Macclesfield

The second phase of a three-phase, neighbourhood play, recreation and open space project, the Weston Wheeled Sports project was started in February 2011 (skate/BMX consultation) and completed ready for use by the public in July 2011. (Initial consultation with residents took place in Summer 2010. The defects period ended in July 2012.)

The overall project included improved multi-user access through and around the open space, mounding and land drainage over a large extent, to facilitate all year round use. Plenty of seating and other furniture was included in the design. A local community development group acted as project steering group. A phased master plan for the whole open space was agreed with this group and the local authority (who own and manage the land) before detailed design and tender. Phase 1 was a land drainage and pathway project which had to be undertaken first, Phase 3 was the construction of a play space, multi-use games area and installation of site furniture. The wheeled sports area is in situ concrete (with brick paved feature and steel grind rail), suitable for use on skateboard, in-line skates, BMX and scooter.

The Phase 2 Wheeled Sports project was funded by a combination of WREN Landfill Communities Fund (to a value of £26,125), Veolia Environmental Fund (£26,150) and a Section 106 contribution allocated by Cheshire East Council (£46,225).

Total funds secured: £98,500

Table 8 - Financial Summary

Total capital works	£95,000
Total project consultation, design & management fees	£3,500
Total project costs	£98,500

The contract let was a design and build one, where the specialist contractor led on consultation, and designed and constructed the wheeled sport area for the all-inclusive price of £95,000 tendered.

Case Study 3 – Weston Wheeled Sports Area, Macclesfield (continued)

Figure 12 – Perspectives of final design (as built)



Case Study 3 – Weston Wheeled Sports Area, Macclesfield (continued)

Figure 13 Photographs of Weston Wheeled Sports



Figure 14 Examples of other wheeled sports areas

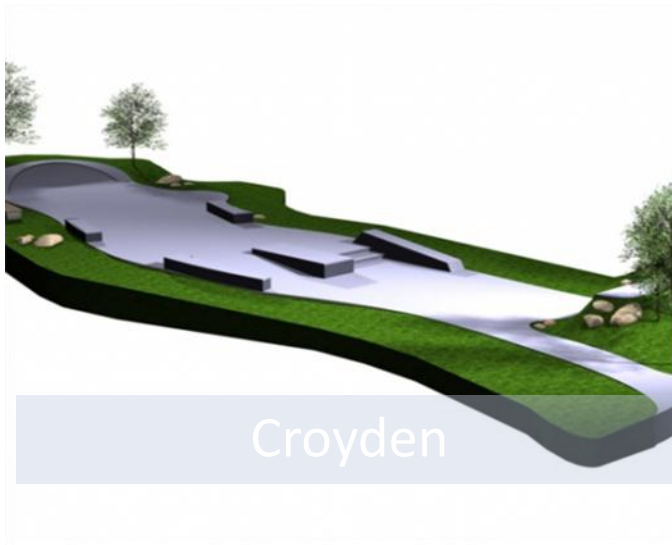




Figure 14 Examples of wheeled sports designs (continued)



Figure 14 - Examples of wheeled sports designs (continued)

5. A Funding Strategy

The following section describes potential sources of funds for the Frodsham play programme and suggests how best to be in a position to take up funding opportunities that might arise and how to improve the chances of success.

Grant awarding bodies

- Keep abreast of changing funding programmes and the criteria (often changed as a result of government policy). As a minimum, the Town Council needs to make annual checks on these programmes and criteria.
- Use a scoring matrix to gauge potential projects against funders' criteria.
- Create **appeal** for funders when putting together a potential project.
- Build a rapport with funders and bounce off ideas for new projects.
- Be aware of the relevant application deadlines.
- A key consideration is: who should be the **grant applicant**? Would a locally-based group have more chance of success? Would they need to be constituted and have a bank account?
- Another key consideration is who should be the **accountable body** for a grant award? This may be different from the applicant. An organisation in receipt of a grant award needs to be able to deal with the **cash flow** involved in a project that might have a contract value of between £60,000 and £150,000. Purchase order commitments must be underwritten and contractors' interim invoices may need paying on a monthly basis, often before any grant may be claimed.
- Funders' **decision timetables** need to be known, ie from the application deadline to letter of award and signing a grant contract.
- Any requirement for **Third Party Funding** needs to be borne in mind when setting budgets. This often amounts to 11% of the value of a grant awarded. This releases a grant but does not go towards the cost of work or fees. An organisation will have to meet this amount and in many cases it is a local authority.
- Different funders have varying requirements for the level of **match funding** which has to be secured.
- A key criteria in the assessment of grant applications can be level of deprivation. Neighbourhoods are scored in this respect against recognised indices. This can count against applications in many areas of Cheshire, but there are pockets of deprivation where a good case can be put together for particular types of project.
- Some funders prefer to fund around 40% of the total project costs. Others do not wish to be meeting a small proportion of the total costs, while other funders are reluctant to be the first to commit towards a required combination of funds. Some funders are open to the possibility of continuation funding or, conversely, others place a restriction on repeat applications.

A Funding Strategy (continued)

- Sustainability funding may be available, to promote and support use of newly developed facilities via a revenue grant.

Examples of funders to consider for the Frodsham play programme are:

- Landfill Communities Funds: WREN (up to £75k), Veolia (up to £40k), Biffa (up to £40k). (Sita, Cemex, Cory Env. are all not available in Frodsham).
- Big Lottery programmes: Awards for All (up to £10k), People's Millions

Public Sector

Frodsham Town Council (receipts from land sales and other capital; raised precept)

Cheshire West and Chester Council (Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy/Capital Programme/Members' budgets)

Private Sector

Corporate Social Responsibility programmes

Sponsorship from large local companies, eg Peel Holdings, Ineos Chlor

Supermarket community funds (often £2k to £5k) eg Morrisons, Tesco, United Cooperative Stores, Tesco (including partnership with Unilever)

Personal health budget agenda

Third Sector

Canal & River Trust (restoration grants)

Housing Associations and Trusts (improvement funds, regeneration budgets)

Mersey Forest

Health Sector

Primary Care Trust, GP Consortia (health & wellbeing agenda)

A Funding Strategy (continued)

Partnership working (for support, as opposed to a direct financial contribution)

Love Frodsham

Northwich & Rural Area North Area Partnership Board

In-Kind Contributions and local community buy-in

Probation Service (restorative justice)

Volunteering value, eg maintenance and reporting roles

Commercial companies' donations to the construction supply chain, eg aggregate

Direct benefits to schools, eg the involvement of children and young people at all stages of project proposals and improved links to their local community.

Project stages for which it is relatively difficult to find funding:

- The outline design stage of a project – including consultation, design development and submitting and supporting grant applications is often not funded by external grant awarding bodies. Therefore, the Town Council contribution may have to meet this cost component, plus any shortfall in funding the detailed design, tender and contract administration stages.
- It will be very difficult to find external funds for any increased costs in improving the inspection, repair and maintenance of new, enhanced and existing play areas. The Town Council may have to consider raising the precept to meet this recommendation.

The pattern of securing funds for a project is often the reason a project or programme must be phased. Planned phasing or other interruptions to projects (such as grant applications being declined) can give rise to additional costs that need to be anticipated and agreed or adjustments made.

Cheshire is not eligible for People's Postcode Lottery grants.

A Funding Strategy (continued)

Table 9 - Relevant and eligible sources of funds for Phase 1 of Frodsham play programme

Funding body	Grant programme	Criteria	Max. award (£)	Next deadline(s)	Website
WREN	Landfill Communities Fund	Outdoor public amenity	£75,000	22/8/12 then probably Nov 2012	www.wren.org.uk
Veolia	Environmental Fund	Outdoor public amenity	£100,000 (but commonly £25,000) (10% TPF for awards >£40k)	5/10/12 (planning consent required & 20% match funding secured before application); 4-6 months	www.veoliatrust.org
Biffa	Biffaward	Recreation	£50,000 (11% TPF for awards >£40k)	Rolling programme. Ideally, 50% match funds secured at application. Full application within 3 months of invitation.	www.biffa-award.org

Funding body	Grant programme	Criteria	Max. award (£)	Next deadline(s)	Website
Big Lottery	Awards for All	Improving lives	£10,000	Rolling programme (grants paid up front to community group)	www.awardsforall.org.uk
Big Lottery	People's Millions	Increased community involvement	£50,000		
Heritage Lottery Fund	Young Roots	13-20 year olds involvement in community and local heritage	£25,000		www.hlf.org.uk
SITA Trust	QEII Fields Volunteer Support Fund & Major Works Fund	Outdoor recreational spaces (focus on delivery by volunteers)	£5,000 and £25,000 respectively		www.sitatrust.org.uk/projects/qe2fields
Gannett Foundation		Creative approach to community needs	£50,000 (£5,000 more common)		
William Dean Trust	Grants	Countryside and environment	£1,500		

A Funding Strategy (continued)

Funding body	Grant programme	Criteria	Max. award (£)	Next deadline(s)	Website
MOTO	Moto in the Community Trust		£10,000		www.motointhecommunity.co.uk
Weaver Vale Housing Trust		Diversionary activities for young people		n/a	www.wvht.co.uk
Unilever Declined		Play area makeover	£50,000	31/7/12; close to Tesco store	sarah.reece-mills@groundwork.org.uk
Cheshire West & Chester Council	Rural Support Fund		£20,000	11/12; 50% match funding required	ruralsupport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
Cheshire West & Chester Council	Members' budgets		£5,000		
Cheshire West & Chester Council	Capital programme				greenspace@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

6. Action plans for the next 12 months and following 4 years

Frodsham Play Improvement Programme Year 1

Action Plan for Projects 1 and 2, October 2012 to October 2013

Summary of Activities – Project 1 (see also Figure 15)	Dates
Stage 1 - Project set up, surveys, briefing	Oct 2012
Stage 2 - Sketch master plan and budget cost estimate	Nov 2012
Stage 3 - Secondary public consultation	Nov/Dec 2012
Stage 4 - Post-consultation	Jan 2013
Stage 5 - Planning application	Jan - March 2013
Stage 6 - Grant & other funding applications	Jan - April 2013
Stage 7 - Preparation and issue of tender documents	<i>June 2013 at earliest</i>
Stage 8 - Grant agreements and award of construction contract	<i>July/Aug 2013 at earliest</i>
Stage 9 - Construction contract period	<i>Sept-Oct 2013 at earliest</i>
(Stage 10 - Monitoring period	<i>Nov 2013 - Nov 2014)</i>

Summary of Activities – Project 2	Dates
Stage 1 - Project set up, surveys, briefing	February 2013
Stage 2 - Sketch master plan and budget cost estimate	March 2013
Stage 3 - Secondary public consultation	April/May 2013
Stage 4 - Post-consultation	June 2013
Stage 5 - Planning application	June - Sept 2013
Stage 6 - Grant & other funding applications	July - Oct 2013

Figure 15 - Project 1 (Churchfields): the process from consultation to implementation

Frodsham Play Programme 1: Churchfields

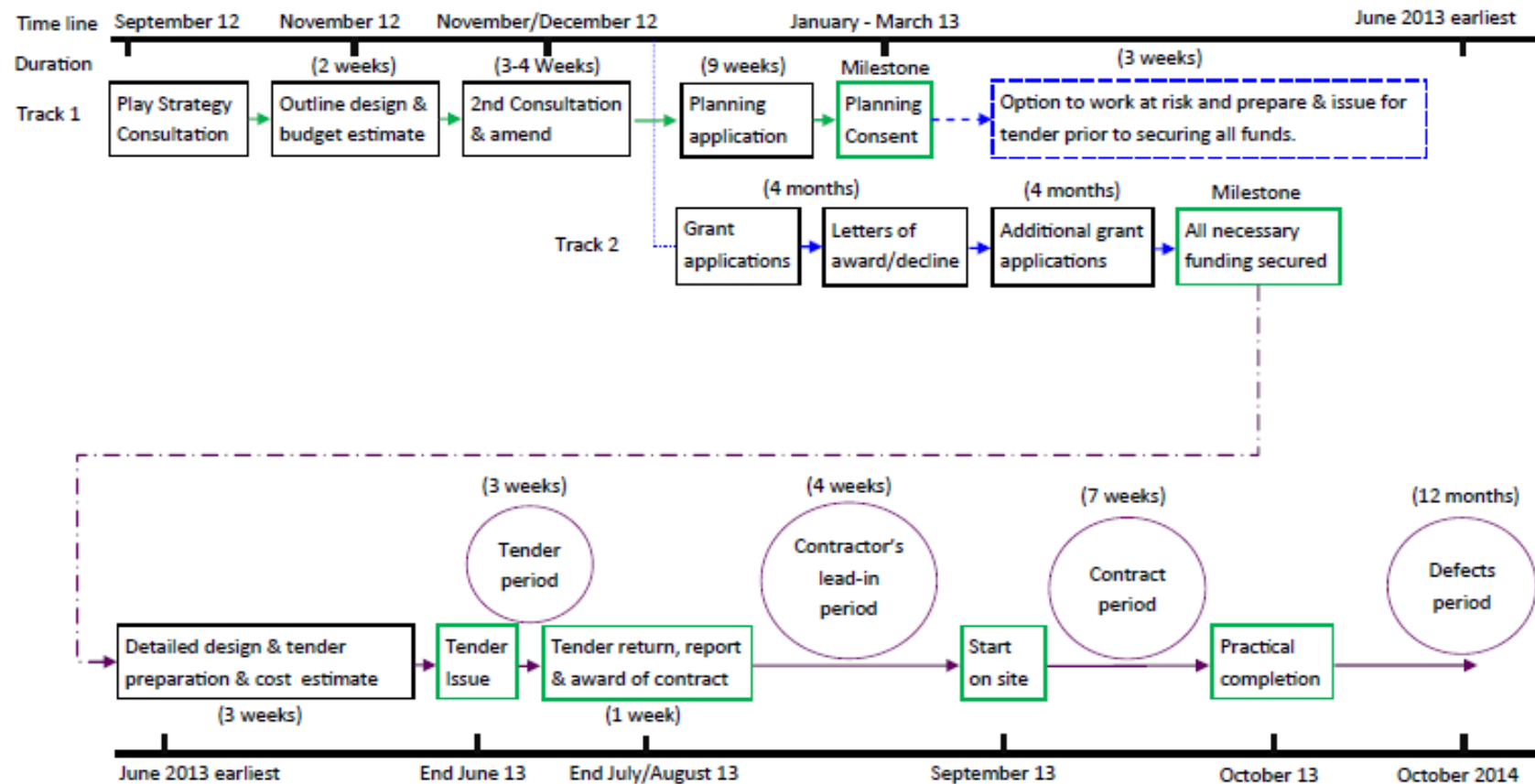
Features - Redevelopment of play for 12 & under, ball games & pathway access

Cost Estimate: (based on case study 2)

Works - £90,000

Fees - £15,000

Total - £105,000



Frodsham Play Improvement Programme

Five-Year Action Plan (October 2012 - October 2017)

	Play Strategy Recommendation		Provisional timeframe	FTC allocation (£)	Match funds (£)	Sources
1	Commission annual play inspection & report	2012/13	May 2012	350	0	
7	Investigate land options at Fountain Lane, Ship Street, Saltworks Farm & Top Road		Sept - Dec 2012	3,000	0	
2	Obtain fixed quotations for selected remedial work arising from report		Nov 2012	0	0	
3	Prioritise, select & commission repairs/replacements/removals/decommissioning		Nov 2012	1,000	0	
8	Commission project management of Project 1 (Churchfields) - see note 1		Nov 2012	15,640	0	
4	Specify regular play inspection, reporting & repair system		Nov - Dec 2012	450	0	
5	Obtain quotations for new system		Jan - Feb 2013	0	0	
6	Award 12-month inspection & repair contract (or in-house alternative/combination)		Feb 2013	4,800	0	
	Monitor contract for 12 months and review (or in-house alternative)		Mar 2013 - 14	2,000	0	
8	Commission project management of Project 2 (Townfield Lane)		Jan 2013	10,400	0	
	Milestone: Planning consent (fee) for Project 1		March 2013	1,300	0	
	Sub-total			38,940	0	
9	Commission project management of Project 3 (Saltworks Farm) - part design & build	2013/14	July 2013	10,500	0	
	Milestone: Tender return, contract award & place order - Project 1		Aug 2013			
	Milestone: All funding secured for Project 1		Aug 2013			
	Milestone: Planning consent (fee) for Project 2		Sept 2013	1,300	0	
	Milestone: Practical completion & public opening Project 1		Oct 2013			
	Total contract payments for capital works Project 1		Oct 2013	10,000	80,000	
	Commission project management of Project 4 (Frodsham Leisure Centre)		Jan 2014	10,500	0	
	Milestone: Tender return, contract award & place order - Project 2		Feb 2014			
	Milestone: All funding secured for Project 2		Feb 2014			
	Renew annual inspection & repair contract (or in-house alternative/combination)		Feb 2014	4,900	0	
	Milestone: Planning consent (fee) for Project 3		March 2014	1,300	0	
	Sub-total			38,500	80,000	

	Play Strategy Recommendation		Provisional timeframe	FTC allocation (£)	Match funds (£)	Sources
	Milestone: Practical completion & public opening Project 2		Apr 2014			
	Total contract payments for capital works Project 2		Apr 2014	10,000	50,000	
	Commission project management of Project 5 (Castle Park)		July 2014	5,800	0	
	Milestone: Tender return, contract award & place orders - Project 3		Aug 2014			
	Milestone: All funding secured for Project 3		Aug 2014			
	Milestone: Planning consent (fee) for Project 4		Sept 2014	1,300	0	
	Milestone: Practical completion & public opening Project 3		Oct 2014			
	Total contract payments for capital works Project 3		Oct 2014	10,000	90,000	
	Commission project management of Project 6 (Fluin Lane Fields)		Jan 2015	10,800	0	
	Milestone: Tender return, contract award & place order - Project 4		Feb 2015			
	Milestone: All funding secured for Project 4		Feb 2015			
	Renew annual inspection, reporting & repair contract		Feb 2015	5,000		
	Milestone: Planning consent (fee) for Project 5		March 2015	1,300		
	Sub-total	2014/15		44,200	140,000	
	Milestone: Practical completion & public opening Project 4		Apr 2015			
	Total contract payments for capital works Project 4		Apr 2015	10,000	110,000	
	Milestone: Tender return, contract award & place order - Project 5		Aug 2015			
	Milestone: All funding secured for Project 5		Aug 2015			
	Milestone: Planning consent (fee) for Project 6		Sept 2015	1,300	0	
	Milestone: Practical completion & public opening Project 5		Oct 2015			
	Total contract payments for capital works Project 5		Oct 2015	5,000	20,000	
	Milestone: Tender return, contract award & place order - Project 6		Feb 2016			
	Milestone: All funding secured for Project 6		Feb 2016			
	Renew annual inspection, reporting & repair contract		Feb 2016	5,150	0	
	Sub-total	2015/16		21,450	130,000	

	Play Strategy Recommendation		Provisional timeframe	FTC allocation (£)	Match funds (£)	Sources
	Milestone: Practical completion & public opening Project 6	2016/17	Apr 2016			
	Total contract payments for capital works Project 6		Apr 2016	5,000	20,000	
	Renew annual inspection, reporting & repair contract		Feb 2017	5,250	0	
	Sub-total			10,250	20,000	
	TOTAL			153,340	370,000	

8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Frodsham Town Council's Play Areas

Table 9 - Schedule of play equipment & site furniture (July 2012)

	Site	Equipment
1	Churchfields	1.6m 2-bay, 4 x cradle swing on black safety tiles 1.8m A-frame, 1 x flat swing on black safety tiles 2.2m A-frame, 1 x flat swing on black safety tiles Slide on black fleck wet pour Multi-unit (high level) on black wet pour Multi-unit (low level) on black wet pour Triple chin-up bars on grass; football goal 1 x seat; 1 x litter bin; 1 x sign Perimeter railing with 2 x pedestrian gates, 1 x vehicle gate
2	Fluin La / London Rd Fds	No play equipment
3	Fountain Lane	1.8m 1-bay cradle swing on black wet pour Multi-unit on black safety tiles See-saw on black wet pour Perimeter wall/fence with combined gate 1 x seat; 1 x litter bin; 1 x sign
4	Ship Street	1.6m 2-bay 4 x cradle swing on black safety tiles 1.8m A-frame, 1 x flat swing on black safety tiles 2.2m A-frame, 1 x flat swing on black safety tiles Slide on black fleck wet pour Triple chin-up bars on grass; football goal Perimeter railing with 2 x pedestrian gates, 1 x vehicle gate 1 x seat; 1 x litter bin; 1 x sign

Appendix 1 (continued)

Frodsham Town Council's Play Areas

Table 9 - Schedule of play equipment & site furniture (July 2012)

	Site	Equipment
5	Top Road	Springer elephant & horse on black wet pour 2.3m double arch swing, 1 x flat & 1 x cradle on black safety tiles Zig-zag tower slide on grass Perimeter railing with pedestrian gate 1 x seat; 1 x litter bin; 1 x sign
6	Townfield Lane	1.9m A-frame, 1 x flat swing on black safety tiles 1.8m A-frame, 1 x flat swing on black safety tiles 2.2m double arch swing, 2 x cradle on black safety tiles 8m mound slide with steps on grass Football goal Vehicle gate 2 x seats; 2 x litter bins; 1 x sign
7	Hawthorne Rd	No play equipment
8	Francis Rd	No play equipment

Appendix 2

List of individuals and organisations consulted for intelligence gathering purposes prior to public consultation

Darren Kelly – Councillor, Frodsham Town Council
 Simon Shepherd – ICT Strategy & Architecture, Cheshire West & Chester Council (11/6/12)
 Linda Sharp – Principal Planning Officer, Cheshire West & Chester Council
 Steve Ashall – Russell Play (19/1/12)
 Paul - Proludic (24/1/12)
 Debbie Chambers – SMP Playgrounds (19/4/12)
 Kevin Sellwood – Sutcliffe Play (4/5/12)
 Susie Woodward-Moore – Play Development Officer, Cheshire West & Chester Council (9/5/12)
 Jo Robinson – Teacher, Helsby High School (29/5/12)
 Richard Green – Property & Information Manager, Cheshire West & Chester Council (21/2/12)
 Tony Lozinski – Property Manager, Cheshire West & Chester Council (22/5/12)
 Fiona Dunning – Community Engagement Officer (Northwich & Rural Area North), Cheshire West & Chester Council
 Eleanor – Research & Consultation Team, Cheshire West & Chester Council
 Hazel Barber – Greenspace Policy Officer, Cheshire West & Chester Council
 Amanda Doyle – External Funding Officer, Cheshire West & Chester Council
 Kate Dodgson – Town Clerk, Frodsham Town Council
 Sam Williams – Chairman, Frodsham Community Association
 Stephanie Hefferan - Ranger, Cheshire West & Chester Council (11/7/12)
 Rod Hyde – Treasure, Frodsham Youth Association (12/7/12)
 PCSO Neil Flanagan – Cheshire Constabulary
 Steve Warren – Chairman, Frodsham Junior FC
 Paul Smith – Facilities Manager, Princeway Health Centre 17/7/12)
 Geoff Davies – Neighbourhood Manager, Weaver Vale Housing Trust (18/7/12)
 Mike Dix – Head of Leisure & Recreation, Cheshire West & Chester Council (7/12)
 Elly McFahn & Paul Ashley – Chief Executive, Brio Leisure; Manager, Frodsham Leisure Centre