



Grounds and Environmental Services Committee

Date: 6th September 2021

Title: RoSPA Play Areas Inspection Review

Purpose of the Report:

To provide Members with an update and findings from this year's annual independent playground and equipment inspections.

Contact Officer:

Ian Haynes, Head of Grounds and Environmental Services

Corporate Objective/s	LLTC Three Year Plan – Aim 3. “To provide great public open spaces, varied opportunities for sport and leisure and to exceed expectations in delivering cemetery and allotment services”	
Implications:		
Financial	No	
Human Resources	No	
Operational/Service delivery	No	
Procedural/Legal	Yes	It is a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 for the operator of playgrounds to have undertaken a risk assessment both for risks to any staff employed on the area but also the risk to the user
Risk/Health and Safety	Yes	All of the associated costs to undertake the necessary repairs will be covered under existing revenue budgets.
Environmental Aims	No	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee be minded:-

1.1 To note the report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In May 2021, our yearly independent safety assessment of our playgrounds and equipment was produced for RoSPA by PlaySafety Limited.

2.2 The British and European safety standard BS EN1176 and the Health and Safety Executive strongly recommend that all play areas have at least one inspection every year from an independent suitably qualified body such as RoSPA.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The independent safety assessment of our playgrounds and equipment provides each site with its own overall risk rating. The following ratings have been identified:-

3.2 The break down of faults and common failures is given in terms of low, medium and high. As a generally agreed principle within the industry, items that are marked as “low” only require monitoring. Whereas, items that are marked as “medium” require an appropriate action (either monitoring or repair for example) within the available resources of the owner. Items marked as “high” require urgent action. In rare cases where an item is likely to result in major injury or death, the operator or appropriate representative will be notified from the site by telephone. This will be indicated on the report, none of these have been received.

3.3 RoSPA risk scores come in the following bands:

1 to 3 Very Low Risk
4 to 7 Low Risk
8 to 12 Medium Risk
13 to 20 High Risk
21+ Unacceptably High Risk

3.4 It should be noted that due to the increased risk posed by some of the Town Council assets - such as the skate park and the BMX tracks - the risk scores cannot be lowered and in the case of Linslade Memorial Playing Field – Junior play area the large swing set would need to be destroyed to ascertain the structural integrity of the item.

Site Name	Overall risk rating for the play space	Reason why the park or play equipment is categorised in the way it is.	Timescale for rectification
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Adams Bottom	Medium	Water area and culvert adjacent to play area. And minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Alwins Field	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Astral Park & Outdoor Gym	High	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and dismantle single point swing according to manufacturer's instructions.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Danes Field - BMX	Medium	The item and its surfacing meet with the requirements of the relevant standard. Please note this was classed as high prior to its refurbishment.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Danes Field	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Derwent Road	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Dimmock Close	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Draper Way	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Johnson Drive	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Linslade Recreation Ground	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Linslade Memorial Playing Field - Junior	High	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and dismantle the large swing set according to manufacturer's instructions. This would need to be destroyed to access the structural integrity.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Linslade Memorial Playing Field - Toddler	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Linslade Memorial Playing Field – Goal End	Medium	Erosion of surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.

Mill Road	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Nicolson Drive	Medium/Low	Minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Pages Park – Outdoor Gym	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Pages Park	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair. Please note is shortly due for a refurbishment.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Parson's Close Recreation Ground	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Parson's Close - Skatepark	High	The item and its surfacing meets most of the requirements of the relevant standards. Minor equipment repair required. Will not lower risk rating.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Parson's Close Beach	Medium	Minor fencing repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Parson's Close - Splash 'n' Play	Medium	Retaining wall within play space and surfacing requires cleaning.	Cleaning booked for May 2020
Ridley Drive	Medium	Minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Vandyke Playing Fields – BMX	Medium	The item and its surfacing meet with the requirements of the relevant standard. Please note this was classed as high prior to its refurbishment.	No work required
Vandyke Playing Fields	Medium	Minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Vimy Road	Medium	Minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.
Western Avenue	Medium	Shrinkage / separation of the safer surfacing and minor equipment repair.	As soon as is reasonably practicable.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Each of the independent safety assessments of our playgrounds and equipment have been reviewed and a bespoke programme of works will be created in order to complete all of the necessary recommendations.

Please note some recommendations will not be completed based on the level of expenditure required to minimise the risk.

- 4.2 All of the associated costs to undertake the necessary repairs will be covered under existing revenue budgets and all repairs will be undertaken by our in-house qualified operational inspectors as soon as is reasonably practicable.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Children's Playgrounds should be inspected annually by an independent specialist to ensure the long-term safety of the site, equipment and ancillary items. This will also meet legal and insurance responsibilities as well as complying with the requirements of EN1176.
- 5.2 In doing so this Council has met its legal and moral obligations to ensure our play areas are fit for use.

End.