

**Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales
& Northern Ireland**

10 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NN

To: all Chief Constables and Commissioners

Dear Colleague

Re: New investment in play provision: Supporting community cohesion and reducing offending

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) recognises the important role of local police services in the delivery of the government's 10-year national Play Strategy. The strategy commits £235 million of new funding for play areas, and describes the government's long-term vision and actions to deliver more and better play space for children and young people in England.

Evidence suggests that good play and recreational facilities contribute to reduced youth crime, help build safer communities and tackle the problem of social exclusion. Projects examined by Thames Valley Police showed significant reduction in vandalism and petty crime following the installation of play facilities and a youth shelter.¹ An evaluation of the Venture Park Adventure Play Scheme demonstrated that over the first five years of operation, juvenile crime dropped by 54 per cent.¹

Your police force area may include one or more of 30 local authorities to have been awarded play pathfinder status by the government. Each play pathfinder authority will develop at least 28 public play spaces, as well as at least one adventure playground. All other local authorities have been awarded playbuilder status and have funding to refurbish or develop 22 public play spaces.

Community based officers have an important role in actively encouraging children and young people to play in public areas, safely. Police services can support local play pathfinders and playbuilders by:

- liaising with local authorities, play partnerships and third sector groups in the delivery of play provision on the streets or other public open and enclosed space
- taking an active role in play area design and safer routes to play areas and activities, linking with Safer by Design
- support the development and maintenance of adventure playgrounds by, for example, becoming involved in steering and management groups
- establishing links between safer schools partnerships and play partnerships
- using existing local networks such as neighbourhood panels to discuss, promote and support the development of refurbished and new play areas.

Play England has been contracted as the delivery partner for the implementation of the Play Strategy and can assist in finding information on play in your local area. Attached is a list of Play England regional managers and their contact details (Appendix 1).

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is an independent, professionally led strategic body. In the public interest and, in equal and active partnership with Government and the Association of Police Authorities, ACPO leads and coordinates the direction and development of the police service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In times of national need ACPO, on behalf of all chief officers, coordinates the strategic policing response.

ACPO is registered as a private company limited by guarantee in England & Wales – registered address: 10 Victoria Street, SW1H 0NN. Company Number 3344583.

Further information is available at www.playengland.org.uk. A list of the 30 play pathfinder local authorities is also attached at appendix 2.

In order to progress this issue forces are asked to provide contact details to the Play England Regional Manager in their region.

Yours sincerely,

T/Assistant Commissioner

ACPO Lead on Citizen Focus Youth Portfolio

¹ Hampshire R and Wilkinson S (1999), Youth Shelters and Sports Systems: A good practice guide. Thames Valley Police

¹ Hill-Trout, J Lindsell, S and Pithouse, A. (1995) Evaluation of the Venture Caia Park, Wrexham. Executive Summary. Cardiff: University of Wales

Appendix 1

Play England regional programme manager contact details

East of England

Di Hardiman

C/o Play England
8 Wakley Street
London EC1V 7QE

07590 356369

London

Paul Durr

89-93 Fonthill Road
London N4 3JH

07809 086864

South East

Lynette Robertson

Antrobus House
18 College Street
Petersfield
Hampshire GU31 4AD

07590 356368

South West

Ben Ward

University of Gloucestershire
Willow Lodge
Oxstalls Campus
Oxstalls Lane
Gloucestershire
GL2 9HW

07738 194843

East Midlands

Richard Gott

MWB Business Exchange
15 Wheeler Gate
Nottingham NG1 2NA

07738 194846

North West

Jude Anderson

Suite 709
Silkhouse Court
Tithebarn Street
Liverpool L2 2LZ

07802 465970

North East

Michele Deans

Unit 15 Quay Level
St Peter's Wharf
St Peter's Basin
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE6 1TZ

07738 194842

West Midlands

Lakhvir Sahota

Regional Partnership Centre
Albert House, Quay Place
92 – 93 Edward Street
Birmingham B1 2RA

07738 194840

Yorkshire and The Humber

Cat Ross

The Clyde, MLS Business Centres
117 The Headrow
Leeds LS1 5JW

07738 194841

¹ Hampshire R and Wilkinson S (1999), Youth Shelters and Sports Systems: A good practice guide. Thames Valley Police

¹ Hill-Trout, J Lindsell, S and Pithouse, A. (1995) Evaluation of the Venture Caia Park, Wrexham. Executive Summary. Cardiff: University of Wales

Appendix 2

Play pathfinder authorities

First 20 play pathfinders The first 20 local authorities to become pathfinders are:	
East of England Cambridgeshire	East Midlands Nottingham City
South East Portsmouth East Sussex	North East Sunderland North Tyneside
London Hackney Tower Hamlets Camden Enfield Kensington and Chelsea	North West Knowsley Blackburn Rochdale
Yorkshire and The Humber Rotherham East Riding	South West Bristol Bath and North East Somerset
	West Midlands Wolverhampton Dudley

Final 10 play pathfinders The final 10 pathfinders are:	
East of England Luton	North East Newcastle
London Lambeth Merton	North West Wigan Blackpool
South East Oxfordshire	South West Cornwall
West Midlands Sandwell	Yorkshire and The Humber Kirklees

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¹ Hill-Trout, J Lindsell, S and Pithouse, A. (1995) Evaluation of the Venture Caia Park, Wrexham. Executive Summary. Cardiff: University of Wales