

Barcombe Community Play Space

What are the national guidelines for play?

Guidance regarding play comes from two main sources of information: Fields in Trust (FIT) and Play England.

New FIT guidelines were introduced in August 2008 to update 'The Six Acre Standard' (produced in the 1930s). These new guidelines are entitled 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' (PAD). The following points are of particular relevance for residential developments:

- Playground areas no longer have to provide a set number of pieces of equipment, but rather play experiences.
- We no longer need to enclose a play area within a fence, only if the play area abuts a road, water course or other hazard.
- The methodology of assessing existing play spaces has changed and is now based on a points system which will conclude if the local provision is of a high quality and experience.

Why is a playground so important in Barcombe?

The park is a central place for young people to engage in energetic activities and for families to socialise with each other in the village. Children of all ages benefit from spending time outdoors.

Why make changes to the existing playground equipment?

Johnson (2004) suggests that the opportunity to engage in adventurous play, involving imagination and even an element of risk, is missing in many contemporary adult-designed play spaces. Research also suggests that nature is missing from adult-designed play spaces even though it has been shown that children take pleasure from being in natural spaces and that particular natural features can increase their physical and creative play (White, 2004).

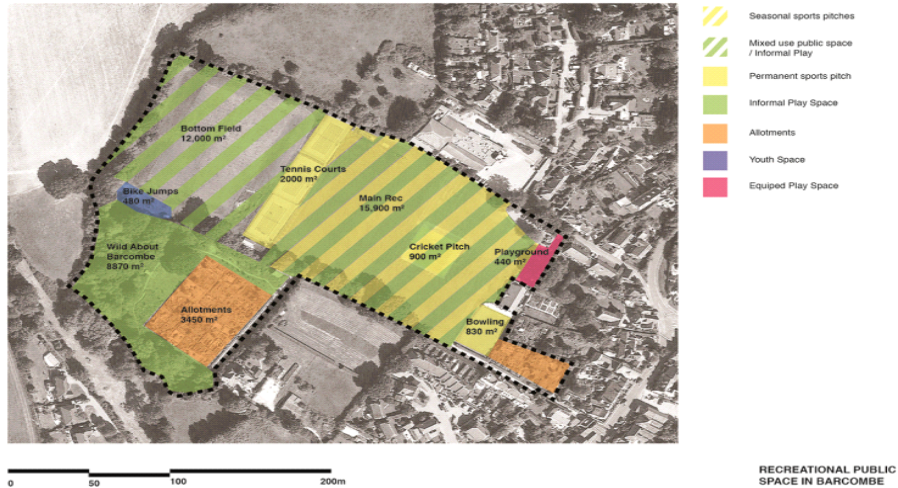
Research has also examined how the use of 'playground' spaces varies over the course of each 24 hours (Matthews and Limb, 1999) – being a space for younger children who are often supervised, even peripherally, by adults during the day (Blackford, 2004) and then, when vacated by these users in the evening, becoming areas in which teenagers congregate (Matthews et. al., 1998). The appropriation by teenagers of such spaces, which are viewed as for younger children highlights that outdoor spaces are used in diverse ways by different age groups of children, at different times of the day, and that research and policy needs to be sensitive to this.

Playing out helps to build their bodies, gets them fit and teaches them vital skills such as: planning, negotiating, being creative, not being afraid to take risks and to experiment, having fun and enjoying themselves (Play England, 2009)

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equality Act 2010 require us to provide access for people with disabilities to take part in these opportunities. This is currently not accounted for in the play space in Barcombe.

The space we currently have

This is a Satellite image of the rec showing how the space is used. Lewes District Council have advised that the current space is too small for the population.



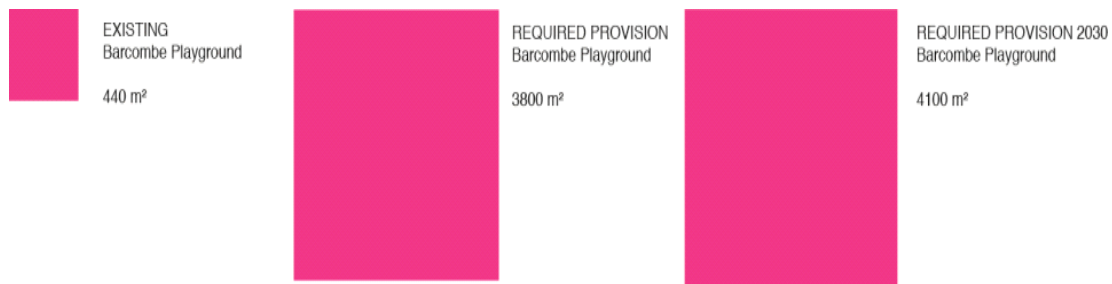
How much space is recommended for our population?

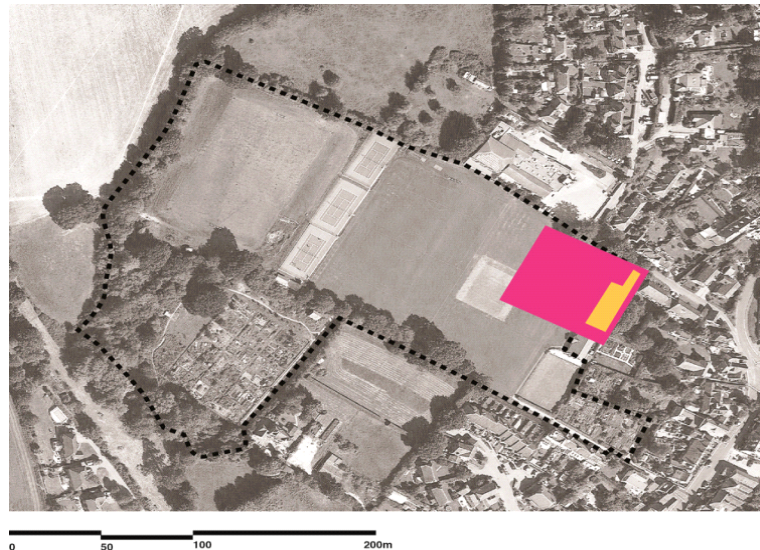
These figures, provided by Lewes District Council, reveal a shortfall in the amount of equipped play space, and this is set to increase as new housing is introduced.

Existing equipped play space	Required provision for current population	Existing shortfall	Projected shortfall based on increased housing
400 sq m (4, 305 sq ft)	3800 sq m (40, 903 sq ft)	-3200 sq m (-34,444 sq ft)	-3500 sq m (-37,674 sq ft)

Reference: Fields in Trust benchmark

What this looks like





What has the community said?

A survey on Barcombe's play space was completed by 109 members of the community in July 2016. 28% of those who completed the survey were under the age of 15, and 60% were aged 26-55, therefore reflecting the main users of the playground: children and parents.

Key themes that came from the responses to the survey were that the play space in Barcombe is too small for the number of children, that the current equipment is aimed at younger children, outdated and not accessible for all. Notably the fence surrounding the playground makes it feel like a 'cage'.

Vision for future play space in Barcombe

Our vision for play in the village is based on both Play England's 10 principles of design for successful play spaces and our initial consultation:

1. Built to fit the specific needs of the village
2. Provides a sense of freedom for children within a safe environment
3. Encourages challenging physical activity and creative play
4. Uses locally sourced, sustainable materials
5. Harnesses the particular strengths of the community to forge a sense of pride and ownership
6. Reflects local character and enhances the natural beauty of the setting
7. Appeals to children of all ages and abilities
8. Accessible and welcoming for all members of the community
9. A valued meeting place and a focal point for the village
10. Can adapt and evolve through flexible design features

With more space allocated for a playground, what could we achieve?

- Exciting equipment which provides increased challenge and creative opportunity for children and teenagers
- Play experiences which are accessible to people of all abilities, including residents of Bevern View
- Integrated areas of smooth surface suitable for scooting, cycling, skating and wheelchairs
- Areas of planting to create an attractive, colourful and sensory area for the whole community to appreciate
- A seating area so that the natural setting can be enjoyed by all ages of the community
- Space for children and teenagers to spread out and experience increased independence and freedom whilst being safe
- A playground which is built to fit the specific needs of the village
- Opportunities for local businesses who could take on some of the work
- Support for the shops, pub and school by giving families another reason to choose Barcombe
- A playground which enhances the natural beauty of the setting
- Ensure that we create a playground that is futureproof and part of a wider 'play strategy' for the village

Relevant data and information

- Population: 1,473 (2011).
- 21% or 315 under 16s.
- 62% of households are families including children
- 30 new houses planned 134 school students (89 students 30 yrs ago)
- School plans to federate with other local schools
- Bevern View - 9 permanent residents.

Key Terminology

LAP (Local Area of Play)	A LAP is a small area of open space specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children to play close to where they live
LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play)	LEAPs are to be designed and laid out specifically for children who are beginning to go out and play independently and has a minimum activity zone of 400m ² . The main change to the play criteria is that the area is to provide play experiences (rather than a set number of pieces of equipment). The space is therefore to be designed to provide a <u>stimulating and challenging</u> play experience and PAD recommends that a minimum of six play experiences (from their list) are to be provided.
NEAP Neighbourhood	The NEAP is an area of open space specifically designated, laid out and equipped mainly for older children but with the play opportunities for

Equipped area for play	younger children as well. NEAPs have a minimum activity area of 1000m ² , with 465m ² of the area laid out for a kick-about area. Like the LEAP, the main change to the play criteria is that the area is to provide play experiences (rather than a set number of pieces of equipment). The space is therefore to be designed to provide stimulating and challenging play experiences and PAD recommends that a minimum of nine play experiences (from their list) are to be provided, as well as bicycle parking . The play area should also have a buffer zone of at least 30m in depth, containing varied planting .
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