

Play Wales

IMPACT REPORT
2017 - 2018



Chairperson's report

I've just come back from a nostalgic trip to Cornwall – revisiting all the places we used to take the kids on holiday when they were little. Walks, swimming, pubs, walks, swimming ... they slept like logs, happy in the knowledge that there would be new adventures tomorrow under a cloudless sky.

I sat on the harbour wall at a fishing port in Cornwall, trying to ignore the dizzying drop, and remembering how the children leapt from the iron ladder into the gaps between the boats below. They came up laughing and spitting water, sometimes needing comfort when the salt got in their eyes or a plaster for a cut toe, then they were off to queue up with the rest of the kids and jump again.

I'm telling you this because for those of us who are parents, you will remember the time when you too, as a good-enough parent, had to balance your children's need to take risks against the need to intervene when the risks threatened to get too great. And hopefully, in the process, your children will have grown up physically, emotionally and socially healthy by learning how to master their fears in the company of others. An essential ingredient of child development.

And now I'm writing this chairperson's report for an organisation that does exactly the same – takes risks and supports those who take risks with the risk-taking children in their care. I am full of admiration for the way the staff of Play Wales have continued to pioneer the need for healthy risk-taking on all levels and the rewards they have reaped nationally and internationally – as you will read in the list of achievements over the past year.

Every few months, the Board of Trustees meets to discuss what is happening in Play Wales and its plans for the future. One of the standing items on the agenda is the Risk Register – the hazards that must be faced and how we might deal with them, such as funding, of course – thanks to the Welsh Government for showing its respect for the role of Play Wales with continued financial support.

The risk to our reputation is sometimes anxiety-provoking. Risks always are. But just as children must learn to take risks if they are to develop, and parents and carers must take risks in letting them, so Play Wales must put itself on the line in advocating the need for risk. We cannot ask our children to take risks unless we do too. Only then can they and we face up to new challenges without retreating into timid and safety-first attitudes that may seem sensible at the time but are storing up trouble for the future.

So, long may our children jump into the water, long may their parents cheer from the sidelines or jump in with them, and long may an organisation like Play Wales jump in metaphorically too. Happy risk-taking for another year!



Dr Mike Shooter CBE
Chair of Play Wales' Board of Trustees

Director's report

We are 20 years old. Who would have known, when we registered Play Wales as a charity in 1998, what a journey lay ahead. Our world has changed so much since then.

Twenty years ago we recognised the unintended consequences of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 in creating what was becoming an increasing risk averse environment. There is clear evidence that the tide has turned and there is an ever widening recognition of the need for children to experience opportunities to take risks – for every risk there is a benefit.

We have seen a Welsh Government that demonstrates a capacity to take risks, early on adopting the world's first national play policy in 2002 and latterly and arguably more significantly the National Assembly for Wales responded to our calls and passed a law in 2010 to support children's play. This is an explicit recognition of the importance of play and what might be done to create an environment where children have as many opportunities to play as their grandparents did. It is an approach that has been advocated in 2013 by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment 17 on Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

And for the future ...

The evidence of the impact of our increasingly sedentary environment and calorie rich, sugar laden diet has been increasingly evident for decades, it is now unarguable. People say we can't return to the world of our grandparents, but when it comes to childhood, in some ways, we have to. For our continued wellbeing children need to grow up in an environment where they are actually free to play outside – where the balance of what we see as important and a priority moves from the

car driver to the pedestrian. Like it or not, it will require government legislation to lead these changes.

The Welsh Government – Ministers, Assembly Members and officials – have all contributed to making the changes so far. We should thank them, but they have only just started. There is still a considerable job to be done, to undo the damage and constraints that have impacted on children's opportunities to play in public space.

Play Wales is alive to the concerns of children and parents throughout Wales. However, our work has from the outset been strategically focused on supporting people and organisations whose works impacts on children's play rather than by directly working with children. As a small organisation it is how we have been so effective. However, in 2018 we made a small departure from this strategy and launched our *Playful Childhoods* campaign – intended to go some way to directly providing parents, carers, grandparents and local groups with information and resources to support play opportunities at home and out in the community.

None of this would have been possible without the commitment and support of staff, trustees, politicians, government officials, friends and colleagues who have contributed to our journey, whether it be through direct involvement or critical friendship.



Mike Greenaway
Director of Play Wales

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2017 - 2018 in brief



1000
queries from
the public

92
Play Wales
members

131,800
website
hits

Level 2 and 3
qualifications
delivered to

234
learners

*'Play Wales is a highly focused,
policy-oriented non-governmental
organisation.'*

Published and widely distributed:

- 2** toolkits
- 2** top tips
- 3** briefings
- 3** information sheets

22

local authority Play
Sufficiency Action Plans and
progress reports reviewed

2781

recipients with an interest
in children's play received
regular news and information



About Play Wales

Play Wales is the national charity for children's play.

Our vision: A future where play is respected for being critically important in childhood.

Our mission: Campaigning for a play-friendly Wales and championing every child's right to play.

We work to raise awareness of children and young people's need and right to play and to promote good practice at every level of decision making and in every place where children might play. We provide advice and guidance to support all those who have an interest in, or responsibility for providing for children's play, so that one day Wales will be a place where we recognise and provide well for every child's play needs.

From October 2014 (to March 2018) the Welsh Government has funded Play Wales through the Play Wales Strategic Policy Grant to provide a range of strategic support to the Welsh Government, local authorities and other stakeholders.

Our work includes:

- **Policy:** to work with individuals, organisations and networks to inform the development of policy and matters related to children's play in Wales
- **Information Service:** to promote the value of children's play in Wales through the provision of timely and current information to our stakeholders
- **Advice and support:** to provide specialist knowledge regarding all issues about and affecting children's play
- **Workforce development:** to contribute to the professional development of the play and playwork workforces in Wales.

Summary of achievements 2017 - 2018

Supporting national priorities

We work closely with local authorities and their partners to support the implementation of the Play Sufficiency Duty, placed on local authorities by the Welsh Government.

Play Wales:

- ◆ Undertook a review of local authority play sufficiency action plans and progress reports and produced a review of local authority support for accessible play spaces
- ◆ With Welsh Government, facilitated three regional workshops for local authority play sufficiency leads and their partners
- ◆ Delivered a cross-policy play sufficiency workshop for Welsh Government officials
- ◆ Acted as the lead for the active play indicator on the Active Healthy Kids (AHK) Wales 2018 report card expert group which included gathering data and collectively allocating grades to indicators
- ◆ Co-ordinated four meetings of the Playwork Education and Training Council Wales (PETC Wales) to provide an important strategic link between SkillsActive, Welsh Government and playwork employers
- ◆ Provided support for open access play providers regarding completion of Care Inspectorate Wales' Self-Assessment of Service Statement (SASS)
- ◆ Delivered two workshops and provided an information display at a Children in Wales conference on health, wellbeing and resilience in the early years
- ◆ Attended and actively contributed to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee round table discussion – Inquiry into physical activity of children and young people
- ◆ Provided a briefing paper to Assembly Members to inform the Member's debate on an inclusive play Bill.

'I value the knowledge that the Play Wales staff are available to offer, and support and guidance when it is needed by the [local] authority. Play Wales are one of the main sources of ensuring that we keep up to date with play related matters in the authority.'

Principal Healthy Living Officer

'I value Play Wales for being the voice for children and young people's play.'

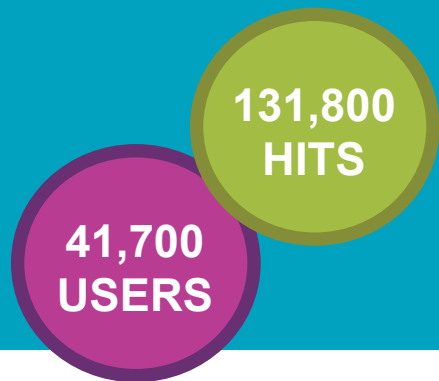
Play and Facilities Manager

'Play Wales is constantly striving to make the case for play, offering specific support when needed, very active in the sector.'

Principal Play Officer



Engagement



Website

Our website is at the centre of the Play Wales Information Service. It is regularly updated with timely and relevant information. During the last year we have seen a significantly increased audience visit the website – attracting, between April 2017 and March 2018:

- ◆ 131,800 hits (73% increase on last year)
- ◆ 41,700 users (128% increase on last year)

‘Since I live in the US and not in Wales I find more use for the reference materials and publications that are provided electronically. Your reach and influence goes far beyond your country. In fact, I changed the name of our organization to Play Atlanta out of respect for the work you do.’

Founding director

Play Wales evaluation 2018

How has Play Wales’ support contributed to you/your organisation’s ability to achieve better outcomes for children’s play?



Social media

Play Wales’ bilingual social media following is growing daily and is attracting more engagement from a wide and varied audience in Wales, the UK and internationally.

Facebook
2,179 likes
49% increase

Twitter
3,954 followers
29% increase



Email updates

We ensure our constituency, approximately 2,781 recipients who have a direct interest in children’s play, is kept up-to-date with regular emails featuring current news and information, including:

- ◆ Upcoming events
- ◆ News updates
- ◆ New Play Wales publications
- ◆ Consultations
- ◆ Policy information.

Publications

Throughout the year we developed and circulated a variety of publications to help inform those who have an interest in, or responsibility for children's play. They were downloaded extensively from our website and shared widely on social media.



Play for Wales magazine

Published twice a year it is circulated in paper form and electronically to approximately 3,350 recipients.

Autumn 2017
The **Play: a healthy childhood** issue features:

- ◆ Keeping children safe means letting them take risks – Dr Mariana Brussoni
- ◆ Taking risks in the early years – Professor Ellen Sandseter
- ◆ Public Health Wales to give every child the best possible start
- ◆ Play and health rights: making the links.



Spring 2018
The 50th issue marked Play Wales' twentieth anniversary. The **Playful Childhoods** issue features:

- ◆ 20 years of Play Wales – staff and trustees' highlights
- ◆ Playing in Wales – capturing the views of children
- ◆ Playing through childhood – how children play at different ages
- ◆ A childhood full of play – parents' observations on their children's play.



Toolkits

Resources for playing – providing loose parts to support children's play – supports adults in the play, early years and education sectors to provide loose parts play within their settings. It includes examples and quotes from settings which are using loose parts as part of their provision for play.

Creating accessible play spaces – provides information to help understand and address issues of concern and it includes practical, step-by-step tools and templates for undertaking work linked with removing the barriers to accessing play space faced by disabled children and their families.

Information sheets

Play types – explores the 16 play types including creative play, rough and tumble, deep play and social play. It also makes brief comparisons between some of the play types.

Play, playwork and food – explores the current health agenda, play and health, how food can be provided in a playwork setting as well as attitudes and values towards food.

Play and digital technology – takes a critical look at children and young people's use of mobile phones and other mobile devices, focusing on play.

Top tips

We published two sets of top tips for playworkers and other professionals working with children: *Continuing professional development*, and *Screen time and digital play*.

Focus on play

We published three issues, with each one aimed at a specific professional audience: Families First programme, community and town councils, and public health professionals.



Well-informed professionals

The Welsh Government defines the play workforce as ‘anyone employed whose role has an impact on children playing – those who may either directly facilitate their play, design for playing, or those with the power to give permission for children to play, or not’ (*Wales – a Play Friendly Country*, 2014).

The play workforce includes playworkers but also a huge range of other professionals from schools, planning departments, highways and transport, health and safety and childcare, as well as voluntary and community groups, town and community councils and elected members.

Play Wales has undertaken a range of activity to ensure that the play workforce has the opportunity to deepen their understanding of their role in ensuring children have increased opportunities for playing.

Delivering playwork qualifications

There continues to be a growing demand for playwork qualifications with both childcare settings and other sectors realising the value of understanding a playwork approach. The Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP) is proving to be a transformative qualification with learners coming from youth work, sports development, teaching and community development backgrounds.

We have worked with Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales (ALW) to identify funding for the sustainable delivery of playwork qualifications. During 2017/18, the following learners have completed playwork qualifications: P³ – 19, L2APP – 162, MAHPS – 53.

We have also begun the preparatory work for a review of the Playwork: Principles into Practice (P³) qualifications which will provide a more coherent progression route for playworkers to become qualified to practice.

‘Course was excellent and well delivered – recommended the course to others because it is great.’ L2APP learner

‘I came in not thinking I’d learn much than I knew with my past experience. I’ve left having learnt a good amount working in a playscheme and certain rights/legislation I never knew before. Highly beneficial course for me and will aid me in future jobs in Wales I believe.’ L2APP learner

Award in Delivering Dynamic Playwork Training

We worked with ALW to develop the Agored Cymru Level 3 Award in Delivering Dynamic Playwork Training (ADDaPT). Play Wales funded this work through the Welsh Government contract to provide a standard for trainers delivering L2APP, MAHPS and P³ through our partnership with ALW.

This course provides a more sustainable way of upskilling playwork tutors and other training providers in Wales who want to upskill their playwork tutors.

We have delivered a pilot of ADDaPT to eight learners – five existing trainers and three new, including one bilingual tutor which will support in building the infrastructure for playwork training in Wales.

‘Excellent course, really interactive, lots of techniques and new strategies’. ADDaPT learner

Changes to childcare qualifications in Wales

Following the review of Health and Social Care and Childcare qualifications undertaken by Qualifications Wales, Play Wales has remained engaged in the development of the new suite of qualifications. Whilst they will not replace the need for staff working in out of school childcare and open access settings to have playwork qualifications, there is a renewed focus on the importance of play within childcare and its impact on learning and development. Play Wales has provided expert advice to Social Care Wales and to the consortium developing the new qualifications.

Events

Throughout the year we supported the development, organised and hosted a number of conferences, seminars and CPD opportunities for the wider play and playwork sector, including:

- ♦ **Spirit 2017: A healthy childhood** (Cardiff) – 104 delegates were informed by inspiring, international keynote speeches including Mariana Brussoni and Ellen Sandseter and participated in workshops on topics including play and digital technology, play and public health, playwork in schools and building play structures.

‘Excellent event, well organised, brilliant resources from Play Wales – supportive and welcoming.’

- ♦ **Playworkers Forum 2017** (Brecon) – 48 delegates attended the two-day event which provides an opportunity for staff from adventure playgrounds and play projects to share good practice and learn and develop practical skills to support playing children.

‘It’s my first time. I loved it. You are doing a fantastic job, keep up the good work.’

- ♦ **Workshops** – delivery of various workshops including: ‘Playing with the elements’ training for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, ‘What is play?’ training for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Cardiff City Council.

‘As part of their plan for establishing prevention work as core business South Wales Fire and Rescue Service was very excited to attend “Mud and Sparks” training. Staff attending the training had an energetic, fun and thought provoking two-day workshop.’

- ♦ **School Life 2017** (Blaenau Gwent) – we worked in partnership with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to deliver a conference aimed at schools and their partners. It focused on improving the conditions for play both within and beyond the teaching day in schools. It attracted 65 delegates.

‘Very informative, very engaging.’

- ♦ **Play and public health conferences** (north Wales and south east Wales) – we worked in partnership with Public Health Wales to deliver the two conferences. Attended by over 100 delegates, these regional events focused on how children’s ability to find time and space to play is a critical public health issue. Delegates spent the day considering what they, as health practitioners, could do to support this agenda.

‘Excellent content and delivery – a good balance of delegate voice and directed discussion from speakers.’

International events

International Play Association world conference 2017 – at the triennial conference in Calgary, Canada we delivered a one day pre-conference workshop promoting Welsh playwork qualifications. We also delivered a range of workshops at the conference relating to playwork training, access to play in crisis resources, the right to play in school and dynamic risk assessment.

Supporting Vulnerable Children and Young People in an Uncertain World – we provided a range of workshops with partners regarding the right to play at the International School Psychology Association conference in Manchester.



Enquiries from the public

In addition to the considerable information provided through our website, we estimate that we received and responded to approximately 1000 telephone, social media and email queries from parents, elected members, learners, schools and small organisations during the last year. The queries we have responded to by providing information, advice and signposting include:

- ◆ Appropriate qualifications for CIW registered play and childcare settings
- ◆ Funding advice for play equipment and developing play areas in communities
- ◆ Relevant qualifications required for running a playscheme
- ◆ Learners wanting to undertake playwork training, in particular level 3 qualifications
- ◆ Research queries from playwork and childhood studies students
- ◆ Funding advice for play provision
- ◆ Support for saving school playing fields
- ◆ Advice on piece of land or play space design (usually from housing associations)
- ◆ Job advertising, in particular summer playschemes
- ◆ Letters of support to communities campaigning for play areas and for funding applications.

These queries are regularly reviewed and used to inform the addition of new information on our website.

Collaborating locally and nationally

Flintshire Professional Development Programme

We worked in partnership with Flintshire County Council to deliver a Professional Development Programme with Wendy Russell (University of Gloucestershire). It brought together a range of local authority and third sector stakeholders to consider how their areas of work respond to priorities within the play sufficiency action plan and contribute to the local authority's statutory duty to secure sufficient play opportunities.



'The workshops helped the group to reflect on and change its views on children's play. It has helped to reinvigorate an interest in play locally and there is a desire to work more collaboratively to support play in our local authority.'

Workshop participant

Supporting street play in Cardiff

In partnership with Playing Out, we supported resident-led street play in three communities in Cardiff. Streets were closed to through traffic to open them up for play for short periods of time as part of Playday. Sessions continued for several months to ascertain the feasibility of a city-wide approach.



'Without the support and wealth of knowledge of Play Wales, these sessions would never have got off the ground. After speaking with families in the street, the message was simple – families were concerned with safety from cars which would regularly use the street as a cut through. Our long-term hope is that children and families will become more confident in using the street and children will become more street aware.'

Parent and street play activator

Right to play storybook

Funding from the National Lottery Awards for All programme enabled Play Wales to develop a storybook about the child's right to play. We worked with a storyteller, cartoonist, children and parents at Mount Stuart Primary School in Cardiff to write *Fun in the dungeon*. The book is for children and parents, empowering children to be advocates as right bearers and parents to advocate for local play.

'These young children have gained much from the project, they jumped with excitement when it was storytelling project day. This unique experience will stay with them as a fond memory of what learning can be like and the book will be a wonderful reminder that they will treasure and hopefully share with their own children.'

Head Teacher, Mount Stuart Primary School

Public Health Wales

During summer 2017, we worked in partnership with Public



**GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES**

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Health Wales on its *Every Child Wales* programme. Public Health Wales identified ten evidence-based steps to help children in the early years to maintain a healthy weight which it is promoting under *Every Child Wales*. Step six focuses on outdoor play, with the ambition that every child will be given the chance to play outside every day. To support the programme we produced a range of new publications and blogs.

Following successful partnership work to help launch the *Every Child Wales* programme, and to deliver a joint symposium about play and risk, a number of opportunities to harness the expertise of Play Wales to deliver action were identified, giving a greater specific focus to outdoor play in the early years.

'In early 2018 Public Health Wales worked closely with Play Wales to develop a Joint Play Statement. Public Health Wales and Play Wales both recognise the health benefits of play and are committed to every child having the opportunity to play outdoors daily. There are clear benefits to children and young people in playing outdoors, for both mental well-being and short and long term physical health. Play Wales understands partnership working and have a flexible approach.'

Public Health Wales

Analytic Volunteer Programme

Through the Volunteer Analytic Programme, we worked with analysts from the Office for National Statistics and Welsh Government to review local authority play sufficiency surveys of children and produce pan Wales data.

'I've really enjoyed working with Play Wales on the interesting topic of children's access and experiences with play. Collaborating on the Play Sufficiency data has extended my experience of the challenges associated with obtaining data from different sources for one output. It was a great experience and I was encouraged by the interest that staff at Play Wales had in the work that I was doing.'

**Analytical Programme volunteer,
Office for National Statistics (ONS)**

Conwy Looked After Children's Team

We worked with Conwy Voluntary Services Council (CVSC) and Conwy County Borough Council on the delivery



of a comprehensive training package aimed at foster carers, social workers and senior managers within the Looked After Children Team to implement a department wide approach to ensuring looked after children are not unduly restricted from play and risk-taking. This training has opened up a dialogue within the team about the importance of children's play and how it can be supported in the community and home given the specific circumstances of children in foster care.

'Really engaging and stimulating training which allowed me to think creatively about play and how to include this in my practice and with foster carers in the home.'

Social Worker

Playday

The annual UK celebration of children's right to play. It is co-ordinated by Play Wales, Play England, Play Scotland and PlayBoard Northern Ireland. We represent Wales on the Playday Steering Group which co-ordinates the annual campaign. At Play Wales we see Playday as an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of children's play and the need for quality play provision every day of the year in all areas of Wales.



Partners

In addition to supporting the delivery of Welsh Government programmes, during 2017-2018 we have worked in partnership/collaboration with the following organisations and groups on specific projects:

- ◆ Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales
- ◆ Agored Cymru
- ◆ All Wales Strategic Play Network
- ◆ Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- ◆ Cardiff Metropolitan University
- ◆ Cardiff University
- ◆ Charity Comms Wales Committee
- ◆ Children's Play Policy Forum
- ◆ Community and Voluntary Support Conwy (CVSC)
- ◆ Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs
- ◆ Early Years Workforce Network
- ◆ Education and Training Standards (ETS)
- ◆ Flintshire County Council
- ◆ Grounds for Learning, Scotland
- ◆ Inspiring Scotland
- ◆ International Play Association (IPA)
- ◆ International Play Association EWN1 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
- ◆ Learning through Landscapes
- ◆ Mount Stuart Primary School
- ◆ PETC Wales
- ◆ Petra Publishing (Caerphilly Parent Network project)
- ◆ Play England
- ◆ Play Safety Forum
- ◆ Play Scotland
- ◆ PlayBoard Northern Ireland
- ◆ Playday
- ◆ Public Health Wales
- ◆ Qualifications Standards Advisory Group (QSAG)
- ◆ Qualifications Wales
- ◆ Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
- ◆ Sioned Williams Landscape Design
- ◆ SkillsActive
- ◆ Social Care Wales
- ◆ Space Saviours Project
- ◆ Swansea University
- ◆ University of Gloucestershire
- ◆ University of Manchester
- ◆ Wales Pre-school Providers Association
- ◆ Wales UNCRC Monitoring Group
- ◆ Wrexham County Borough Council Play Development Team
- ◆ Valleys to Coast Housing.

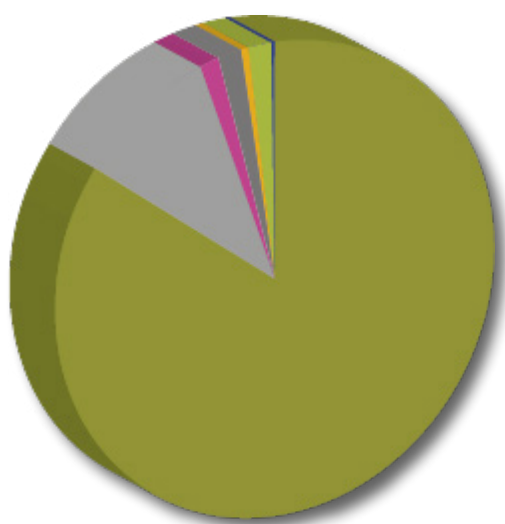


Financial review – summary

Play Wales income and expenditure reports for the financial year ending March 2018.

Total income £459,021

Welsh Government grant	£390,000
Other income	£44,712
Workforce training	£5,910
Spirit 2017 conference	£7,648
Membership	£2,878
Merchandise	£7,665
Investment income	£178
Royalties	£30



Total expenditure £428,172

Play policy, support and advocacy	£133,479
Workforce development	£117,334
Information Service	£142,764
Governance	£34,595



Membership

Play Wales is a membership organisation.

All members, on joining, are asked to endorse the Playwork Principles and the Welsh Government Play Policy.

In 2017-2018 we had 92 members, which included:

- ◆ Local authorities
- ◆ Town and community councils
- ◆ Universities and colleges
- ◆ Regional and local play associations
- ◆ After-school clubs, breakfast clubs, holiday playschemes and nurseries
- ◆ Commercial companies
- ◆ National organisations in Wales and internationally
- ◆ Individuals such as playworkers, playwork trainers, teachers and lecturers.

Associate membership is open to all organisations and individuals living in Wales.

International associate membership is open to any organisation or individual living or working outside Wales that would like to support the work of Play Wales. There are restricted membership benefits because as a charity we are registered to work for the benefit of those within Wales.

In 2017-2018 our members benefitted by receiving:

- ◆ Alerts to key consultations and by providing input to our responses
- ◆ Regular information of news developments and new research
- ◆ Discounted delegate places at our events
- ◆ Free delivery when purchasing our publications.



'Membership of Play Wales is important to me because the information included in publications and on the website is the most up-to-date and the most relevant to our organisation.'

'Play Wales provides me with information about latest research, new thoughts and ideas and constantly reinforces the importance of play in children's lives. Having support for an area of work which is so important and yet so underfunded is very reassuring and encouraging and importantly the status of children's play in Wales gives us hope for the future.'

Playwork Consultant

'We have definitely benefitted from using the reference library and the wonderful resources you have to view there. Also, I have contacted Play Wales for a number of different reasons, asking for advice and support on playwork and the response has been valuable. Play Wales are a great advocate for play!'

Playwork Trainer

Individual	£10
Organisations (one full-time member of staff or fewer)	£25
International (outside Wales)	£25
Organisations (more than one full-time member of staff)	£50
Commercial / private	£75
Local authority	£100

'We value being part of the play movement, connected with other individuals and organisations and being kept updated on the latest research and developments in the play sector.'

Director, outdoor play organisation

'I like to feel part of a wider playwork community and, in particular, proud to support the pioneering Welsh organisation. It is useful to legitimise my professionalism when talking to employers and organisations, I feel comforted to have advice available should I need it.'

Communications Manager, adventure playground



Achievements: 1998 - 2018

Since 1998, Play Wales has successfully campaigned and advocated for play, encouraged and supported the Welsh Government to make some internationally ground-breaking commitments on behalf of children.

Increased funding for children's play

- ◆ In 2000, following lobbying by Play Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government distributed a £1million Play Grant to create staffed open access play provision. Although originally intended as funding for one year, the grant has continued as part of other grant funds in subsequent years.
- ◆ In 2006, Play Wales was contracted for three years to help deliver the Big Lottery Fund £13 million Child's Play programme to support capacity building and strategic play projects in Wales.
- ◆ Most recently, Play Wales supported local authorities to make best use of funding made available through the Increasing Play Opportunities Grant in 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018.

Increased national recognition of play

- ◆ Play Wales supported the Welsh Assembly Government to develop the 2002 *Play Policy* – the first in the world. Play Wales also supported the work of developing the Welsh Assembly Government *Play Policy Implementation Plan* (2006).
- ◆ In 2012, the Welsh Government legislated for children's play. Play opportunities are included in the Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010. This places a duty on local authorities 'to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas as far as reasonably practicable'. By responding to consultations our members helped to ensure that the importance of play features strongly in this ground-breaking Welsh legislation. Another world first – this is probably the most important development to happen for children's play in Wales.
- ◆ In 2014 the Welsh Government published *Wales – a Play Friendly Country*, statutory guidance on assessing and securing sufficient play opportunities.

Play Wales has continued to provide support and advice to all stakeholders in relation to implementing the guidance.

- ◆ In 2017 Play Wales worked closely with Public Health Wales on the *Every Child Wales* programme which recognises the crucial importance of playing to children's physical and emotional health.

A dynamic workforce

- ◆ Play Wales developed *The First Claim ... a framework for playwork quality assessment* and *The First Claim – desirable processes*. These publications aim to support those working with children to analyse play environments and provide a framework to assess the quality of what is being provided for, and experienced by children.
- ◆ Play Wales led the UK review of the Playwork Values and Assumptions. Following consultation, the Playwork Principles were adopted by the sector and endorsed by SkillsActive, the Sector Skills Council for Playwork, in 2005. The Playwork Principles now underpin the occupational standards for playwork in the UK.
- ◆ To develop contemporary playwork practice, Play Wales worked with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to offer Playwork: Principles into Practice (P³) qualifications at Level 2 and 3. To support this innovative training we produced inspiring learning materials.
- ◆ Between Play Wales, the Welsh Government and European funding we have invested over £1.5m in the development, piloting and delivery of Playwork: Principles into Practice (P³).
- ◆ Play Wales has continued to collaborate with Welsh Government to ensure that playwork training and qualifications meet the needs of the workforce. This work has included the development of two



qualifications aimed at those working in holiday play schemes – the Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice (L2APP) and the Level 3 Managing a Holiday Play Scheme Award (MAHPS) (Agored Cymru).

This all means that the people who work with our children are as well trained as possible.

Increased awareness of play locally, nationally and internationally

- ◆ Through the website and by producing regular e-bulletins, magazines, information sheets, toolkits, books and posters, Play Wales widely promotes children’s play. Our website is internationally regarded as one of the most effective for conveying timely information about children’s play.
- ◆ Play Wales provides training, seminars and conferences for all those who provide and support children’s play – including the International Play Association (IPA) 2011 World Conference.
- ◆ The First Minister, Carwyn Jones AM, accepted the IPA Right to Play Award on behalf of all those in Wales who strive to make Wales a play friendly place. Wales is the first country to receive this prestigious award. This led to Play Wales establishing its *Wales – A Play Friendly Place* campaign.

- ◆ Play Wales supported IPA’s work with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child to draft and adopt a General Comment that clarifies for governments worldwide the meaning and importance of Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Play Wales worked with Welsh children to develop resources to promote the rights set out in Article 31 of the UNCRC for IPA to coincide with the launch of the General Comment.
- ◆ Play Wales worked with the University of Gloucestershire to produce two reports that present the findings of two small-scale research projects, the first exploring how local authorities responded to the introduction of the duty to assess sufficient play opportunities for children and the second a follow-up looking forward to the commencement of the second part of the Duty, to secure sufficient play opportunities for children.

All this has contributed to more children having time, freedom and permission to play. There is still work to be done to make Wales a place where play is respected for its critical importance to childhood – add your voice to help us do more.



Plans for the future: 2018 - 2019

Play Wales will continue to work to promote children's play, and act as an advocate for children and their play needs.

Until March 2020, the Welsh Government will fund Play Wales through the Play Wales Strategic Policy Grant to provide a range of strategic support to the Welsh Government, local authorities and other stakeholders.

Particularly we anticipate that we will undertake the following:

- Develop, launch and maintain the new *Playful Childhoods* website – aimed at parents, carers and community groups
- Continue to deliver a communication service aimed at our broad constituency through the provision of focused publications, direct mailing, an up to date website and social media engagement
- Contribute to and inform local, national and international advocacy through project work and membership of committees and groups
- Support Welsh local authorities and third sector organisations to engage with and respond to national policy through events, network facilitation and advice
- Implement and monitor *A play friendly workforce for Wales*, our workforce development plan

- Review and re-write the Playwork: Principles into Practice (P³) qualifications to provide a more proportionate and achievable qualification pathway for playworkers in Wales and beyond.

To ensure these services are developed and delivered as effectively as possible we will:

- Implement a quality self-assessment scheme across the organisation and work towards accreditation
- Develop Play Wales' business plan
- Review, refine and implement our sustainability plan.

These targets will be detailed in a revised Play Wales five year and 10 year strategy. Other fundraising activity will continue to enable us to continue to advocate for children's right to play.

Play Wales Board of Trustees – governance

We have a Board of Trustees that oversees the running of Play Wales to ensure that we meet our objectives effectively and efficiently within the law. There are also a number of Observers to the Board who support the Trustees but who cannot vote. Our Trustees are elected by our membership or co-opted so as to represent an area of expertise.

(as at March 2018)

Board of Trustees

Dr Anne Crowley

Professor David Egan
Cardiff Metropolitan University

Helen Hughes
Stephens and George Charitable Trust

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Children in Wales

Play Wales team

(as at March 2018)

Mike Greenaway
Director

Martin King-Sheard
Workforce Development Officer

Marianne Mannello
Assistant Director (Policy, Support and Advocacy)

Kathy Muse
Office Manager

Ruth O'Donoghue
Finance Officer

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