

Play Wales

IMPACT REPORT
2020 - 2021



Chairperson's report

When I wrote last year's Chairperson's report, we had just plunged into the first phase of the COVID-19 epidemic. As I write this year's report, we are beginning to emerge from what we all hope will be its final restrictions. In between, it has been difficult for everyone and a nightmare for some.

The job of a charity like Play Wales in such a crisis is three-fold. To survive it as an organisation vital to children's right to play, to find innovative ways of helping everyone else responsible for children's play, and to carry on developing ideas and practices for the future. You will see in this impact report how magnificently the staff of Play Wales have done all three.

Play Wales has always striven to provide advice about play and to find out directly from children about how that advice has been put into practice. Never has that been more vital than during the COVID-19 epidemic, where play has been essential to parents and children learning together around the kitchen table, to schools wondering how to help pupils maintain their physical and emotional health in times of social distancing, and to many organisations who have been cash-strapped and unsure of priorities.

Traffic to the *Playful Childhoods* website increased by a staggering 404% in three months of the first lockdown alone and the CoronaPlay initiative distributed practical resources to families online and through storybooks across Wales and beyond. A programme of online CPD events was developed and delivered to the playwork sector, and a new Quality Assurance Framework for playwork settings to assess their practice is in production. Advice to local authorities has continued throughout and Play Wales has been central to the Welsh Government's ongoing Ministerial Review of Play and how its needs are being met.

Not surprisingly, Play Wales has been congratulated for that work at home and abroad. By the way its resources have been so easily devoured by families and schools starved of other support, by the Welsh Government's financial backing, by grants from philanthropies around the UK, and by the International Play Association's

Special Award on the Right to Play in Time of Crisis. But the story, of course, does not stop there.

The world is opening up and so are the horizons of Play Wales. Already the website is being rebranded, a film has been commissioned to celebrate children's play in Wales, summer and autumn campaigns are being organised, and face-to-face playwork conferences will soon be back on the road, there will be more guides and toolkits available to look at the availability and use of play spaces in the community, and research will examine the play experiences for children of all ages.

I'm tempted to leave you with one example of how exciting this can be. Hong Kong has just been in touch, wanting to get hold of Play Wales educational resources on behalf of umpteen millions of children and families in China. It is a reflection of the worldwide reputation Play Wales is gaining for its work, but the true measure will be our own country's commitment to play and the greater health of our children as a result. Yes, the world is opening up, but the work of Play Wales never closed.

Which brings me to a final comment, and a warning. Churlish though it may seem amongst all this activity, success breeds its own problems. Over the last year, Play Wales' Board of Trustees has worried that the staff are being brought to the edge of exhaustion, both physically and emotionally, in their attempt to keep up with the demand to review old projects and initiate new ones. Yes, we can offer one-off rewards, but they are working way beyond their capacity and it is unsustainable. The core funding must be increased so that more staff may be recruited to share the load. Or their work will have to be pared down to a level they can safely carry out. And safety-first is not a concept that the staff of an organisation like Play Wales will happily adopt, even in their own interests.



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

Director's report

2020 - 2021 has been a hard year for so many of us. As lockdowns eased there was a sense that things would get easier. However, the reality has been less well defined, and life continues to be constrained in many ways by measures designed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. That said there has been a shift towards our former normality.

Play Wales has been heavily focused on contributing to the COVID-19 recovery programme generously supported by Welsh Government funding which has enabled us to commence a range of innovative developments. As our report shows, our impact has considerably improved along with our increased range of resources. However, this has been achieved at no small cost to the Play Wales workforce. We are a small and committed team, much reduced over the past years. We have become practiced in focusing on how we can use our limited capacity to best effect.

We regularly commit time to considering what actions might have the greatest strategic impact. Sometimes requiring hard choices and as much as we might wish to continue our actions to increase awareness and understanding, particularly amongst parents, of the role and importance of play in their children's lives, we have to recognise that we can only do so much.

This year has presented Play Wales with a unique opportunity – to support the development of the Ministerial Review of Play. The review, commenced in 2019 was paused as the first wave of COVID-19 hit. However, as we learnt to live with the pandemic, the review was recommenced with meetings anticipated throughout 2021.

The breadth of the review has become wide, embracing as it does, many aspects of the Welsh Government's responsibilities that impact on children's play. So as described above we have found ourselves, once more, in a position where we have had to reprioritise much of our work, to respond to the opportunity to contribute to an initiative of such strategic and long-term significance.

There are exciting times ahead. I have no doubt there will be some more changes in our priorities, work and the service we provide, arising from the findings of the review – but then it has been said that Play Wales has always been nimble of its feet. We will rise to the challenge.



Mike Greenaway
Director of Play Wales



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2020 - 2021 in brief

Online seminars delivered to

472
participants

7,000

Fun in the garden storybooks gifted

169,000
website hits

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

15,000

Playful Childhoods booklets shared with families across Wales

Published and widely distributed:

- 1** reading list
- 2** briefings
- 2** magazines
- 3** top tips
- 5** information sheets

11

national and international consultation responses

19,480

social media followers

2,500

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 to 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 teenagers' 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 2022) 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 2020 - 2021

Supporting national priorities

We work closely with local authorities and their partners to support the implementation of their statutory Play Sufficiency Duties.

Play Wales:

- ◆ Commissioned and published a research study exploring the conditions that support local authorities to secure sufficient opportunities for children to play.
 - ◆ Commissioned Swansea University to undertake workforce research.
 - ◆ Repurposed (to respond to COVID-19 regulations) the implementation of the Community Play Ambassador project, a three-year project funded by the Healthy Active Fund (HAF).
 - ◆ Delivered four Playwork Education and Training Council Wales (PETC) meetings – supporting a dialogue between playwork employers, national organisations, Welsh Government, Social Care Wales and Qualifications Wales.
 - ◆ Continued to work to actions within *A play friendly workforce for Wales*, Play Wales' plan for the ongoing development of the play and playwork workforces.
 - ◆ Led on the development of the playwork qualifications flowchart to support regulated settings to navigate qualification requirements more clearly.
 - ◆ Delivered 10 online events to support the play and playwork workforces.
 - ◆ Continued to develop the *Playful Childhoods* campaign and website. As well as helping parents, it is aimed at professionals working with families to provide practical ideas for giving children plenty of good opportunities to play.
- ◆ Responded to 11 relevant national and international consultations.
 - ◆ Developed a range of resources to support practitioners, including playworkers and teachers.
 - ◆ Drafted for the UNCRC Monitoring Group:
 - ◆ the Thematic Briefing Paper in respect of Play and Leisure
 - ◆ the Play and Leisure Chapter for Wales Civil Society Report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child to inform its List of Issues Prior to Reporting (LOIPR).

Ministerial Review of Play

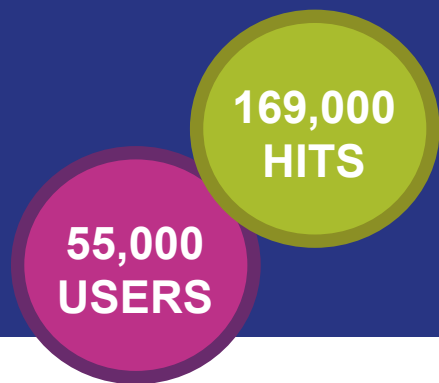
We contributed to the Ministerial Review of Play through active engagement at meetings and providing workshop facilitation support to the Welsh Government:

- ◆ Advised on timetable for recommencement of the review
- ◆ Provided two presentations at Autumn 2020 meeting
- ◆ Commented on papers prepared by the Welsh Government
- ◆ Planned and facilitated five workshops for the Steering Group.

'I've really enjoyed working with everyone at Play Wales, your commitment to play is "catching" and I have learnt so much.'

Welsh Government official

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 significant audience visit the website – attracting, between April 2020 and March 2021:

- ◆ 169,383 hits
- ◆ 55,395 users.

‘Every time I’m looking for a resource on any aspect of play, Play Wales have done it, produced something that is better than I could have dreamed of. I’m having a week of reflecting on things that have made a difference in the world. Play Wales is one of those things.’

Play Team Manager

Play Wales evaluation

When we asked ‘How has Play Wales’ support contributed to you/your organisation’s ability to achieve better outcomes for children’s play?’ this was the result.



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
6,131 followers



Twitter
8,018 followers



Email updates

We ensure our constituency, approximately 2,500 recipients who have a direct interest in children’s play, is kept up-to-date with regular emails featuring current information, including:

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

Publications



Throughout the year, we developed and distributed a variety of publications to help inform those who have an interest in, or responsibility for children's play. To support the sector, a number of the resources were developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All were downloaded extensively from our website and shared widely on social media.

Play for Wales magazine

Published twice a year, these issues were circulated digitally to over 2,000 subscribers.

Spring 2021
The **space to play outdoors** issue features:

- ◆ Examples of how organisations are supporting children's play in Cardiff, Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil and Wrexham
- ◆ Creating inclusive spaces to play – written by Theresa Casey
- ◆ Child-friendly streets, towns and cities – written by Tim Gill
- ◆ What children say about their outdoor spaces to play.



Autumn 2020
The **making play sufficiency happen** issue features:

- ◆ Play sufficiency and the role of playworkers – how the playwork profession helps to secure enough opportunities for children to play
- ◆ Sufficient playtimes in schools – resources to support schools to be as playful as possible
- ◆ Making it possible to do play sufficiency – Dr Wendy Russell gives an overview of a new research study.



Information sheets

We published a mixture of new and updated information sheets:

- ◆ *Play: mental health and well-being*
- ◆ *Play: health and well-being*
- ◆ *Thinking about loose parts in schools*
- ◆ *Promoting physical activity through outdoor play in early years settings*
- ◆ *Play sufficiency in Wales*

Top tips

In response to the pandemic, we published three new top tips listicles:

- ◆ *Play, schools and coronavirus*
- ◆ *Playworking and coronavirus*
- ◆ *Playing and being well*

Focus on play

Each issue is aimed at a specific professional audience. This year, we published two issues to respond to the pandemic:

- ◆ *Reopening parks, play areas and open spaces for children's play*
- ◆ *Reopening schools – prioritising play*

Reading list

To support teachers, we put together a list of recommended resources for thinking about play in schools. It's a starting point for those with an interest in improving children's opportunities for playing at school.



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

During the last year, we worked with Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales to:

- ♦ plan for the move to online learning in response to the pandemic.
- ♦ identify funding for the sustainable delivery of playwork qualifications. Courses were postponed between April and September 2020 due to the pandemic. This allowed for materials and session plans to be updated to allow for online delivery as well as planning for remote assessment of practice. During the rest of the period, 96 learners undertook playwork qualifications.

Chwarae o Safon

We led the development of a new Quality Assurance Framework for playwork settings in Wales. Titled using the Cymraeg, *Chwarae o Safon* (Play of Quality), the framework is being developed with the support of an expert reference group including organisations and individuals involved in the broad range of settings where playwork takes place.

The framework is suitable for both registered and unregistered playwork settings as well as settings where playwork is not the prime function, such as schools, that want to evidence quality playwork practice.

It will be available as a self assessment tool. Settings will be encouraged to go through a process of external assessment to receive a quality badge to demonstrate they have met the requirements of the quality framework.

Playwork Essentials videos

We produced eight online Playwork Essentials videos to support the workforce with play knowledge and understanding. The videos are presented by members of the Play Wales team and playwork trainers. Topics include:

- ♦ Children’s right to play
- ♦ Playwork Principles
- ♦ Dynamic Risk-Benefit Assessment.

Playwork guides

We worked with Ludicology to develop four playwork guides on the following topics:

- ♦ Childhood, play and the Playwork Principles
- ♦ Practicing playwork
- ♦ Developing and managing a playwork project
- ♦ Managing playworkers and working with other adults.

The first two volumes were published during 2020 - 2021.

‘We value our partnership with Play Wales. Working with them enables us to reach a sector we would not be able to access easily. It allows us to deliver training, teaching and learning packages that are not only developed in consultation but also informed by the sector, something we could not do without Play Wales.’

Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales

Events

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

- ◆ **Places to play seminar** – 150 participants registered to hear about good practice regarding the design and management of good outdoor spaces for playing. Keynote speakers included: Tim Gill, Theresa Casey and Phil Doyle.

'Great speakers. As a forest school practitioner wanting to create a more accessible experience the disability/accessibility talk was useful especially.'

- ◆ **Child-friendly planning and design: beyond TAN 16** – 88 participants registered to hear about good practice regarding the design of child-friendly neighbourhoods, with an emphasis on putting policy into practice. Keynote speakers included: Dr Jenny Wood, Dinah Bornat and Tim Gill.

'Great group of panelists – their talks all flowed well together, touching on current practice as well as opportunities for future progression of a child-friendly built environment.'

- ◆ **Children's right to play in schools** – 234 participants registered to hear about research to support promoting children's right to play in schools. Keynote speakers included: Cathy Atkinson, Rebecca Finney and Francesca Woods.

'It was very well presented with useful, up to date, interesting information, clear policy directives and a useful message to share with others, and help advocate for more free play.'

Play Wales Book Club

We hosted seven online reflective practice events on various books and research papers for playworkers. A total of 112 participants registered to attend the monthly events.

'It was a great conversation and I appreciated the thoughtful questions. I really enjoyed it.'

Academic collaboration

- ◆ In partnership with researchers from Manchester University and other partners, we contributed to the British Psychological Society's Division of Educational and Child Psychology short film about the importance of play.

UK and international collaboration

As part of our wider international centre of excellence work, we:

- ◆ Delivered a presentation about our CoronaPlay initiative at the Government and NGO Responses to Supporting Play during COVID event as part of the International Play Association's Right to Play Award webinar series.
- ◆ Delivered a keynote presentation about our work on 'Opening the school gates: Facilitating after-school play in school grounds' for the International Play Association Making Cities Child-Friendly in the Post-Pandemic World: Play and Public Place webinar series.
- ◆ Delivered a reflective practice workshop and keynote at eight weeks of conference, online playwork conference hosted by Meynell Games.
- ◆ Delivered a keynote presentation for the Landscape Institute at the Reimagining Play Post-COVID webinar.
- ◆ Provided support and guidance in the creation of the International Play Association's *Play in Crisis: Support for Parents and Carers* resources.
- ◆ Provided support and guidance to colleagues at Play South Africa.



Enquiries from the public

In addition to the considerable information provided through our website, we received and responded to a broad range of 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 Care Inspectorate Wales 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 and playtime
- ◆ Advice on piece of land or play space design
- ◆ 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.

Quality assurance

Play Wales proudly holds the PQASSO Level 1 Quality Mark. This followed a rigorous process by the staff team and the Board of Trustees to self-review, improve and finally pass an external assessment.

PQASSO is a quality assurance scheme for voluntary organisations. To help organisations to be run more effectively and efficiently it measures performance in a range of quality areas including governance, leadership and management, and results.

By achieving the PQASSO Level 1 Quality Mark, we have successfully demonstrated qualities such as: effective and responsible governance, robust financial control and building good relationships with other organisations.

'Play Wales has demonstrated an impressive level of achievement across all PQASSO quality areas. The director and staff showed absolute commitment to the mission, values and aims of the organisation and were seen to be a highly motivated, highly experienced and competent team. Governance is excellent – it is a real strength of the organisation in all its aspects. Play Wales also ranks highly for providing a friendly, warm welcome ensuring this site visit was one of the more memorable for the Assessor for all the right reasons.'



PQASSO Assessor

Collaborating locally and nationally

During 2020 - 2021, we collaborated with a range of organisations on specific projects, campaigns and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities. We:

- ◆ Implemented the Outdoor Play project, a three-year project funded by Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
- ◆ Designed and delivered a workshop for Welsh Women's Aid
- ◆ Delivered a lightning talk to the Network of Healthy Schools and Pre-school coordinators
- ◆ Facilitated a consultation and capacity building workshop for the UNCRC Monitoring Group
- ◆ Provided presentations to Cardiff University, Swansea University and Cardiff and Vale College
- ◆ Delivered a presentation about school playtime to Children in Wales' Policy Council
- ◆ Worked with Co-Train to deliver three workshops to 20 playwork trainers on adapting playful and participative training methods for online delivery.



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. As part of the 2020 Make a Big Noise for Playday campaign, we made a range of resources available online so families could celebrate at home, in line with Welsh Government guidelines.

Research

We commissioned and published a play sufficiency research report:

Making it possible to do Play Sufficiency

A research report exploring the conditions that support local authorities to secure sufficient opportunities for children to play.

It presents findings from a research study carried out by Dr Wendy Russell, Mike Barclay, Ben Tawil and Charlotte Derry. It also includes 26 report cards of examples of actions taken to support children's play.



This research study builds on three previous studies that saw the Play Sufficiency Duty as a matter of paying attention to the conditions that support children's ability to find time and space to play. The latest study took this principle back a level, focusing on the conditions that support local authorities to take actions in support of children's opportunities to play.



New audiences

Playful Childhoods



As part of our expanding work to engage with parents and carers we launched the *Playful Childhoods* website in September 2018 and we continue to develop useful and practical content. It aims to help parents, carers and community groups give children plenty of good opportunities to play. The website is also useful for local groups and town and community councils to provide play friendly neighbourhoods in their areas. The resources can also be used by professionals in their work with children and families.

The website provides:

- ◆ Practical ideas about providing time, space and stuff to play with
- ◆ Top tips, 'how to' guides and ideas for children's play
- ◆ Information about raising awareness about the importance of play.

In response to the pandemic, we developed an 'indoor play' section on the website. During 2020 - 2021, we continued to add timely blog posts, tips and simple ideas for playing in and around the home, in line with government guidance and regulations.

During the year, we:

- ◆ Worked in collaboration with play teams and hubs across Wales to distribute 10,000 copies of the *Playful parenting guide* and 5,000 *Playing at home guide* – along with other resources such as bookmarks and posters
- ◆ Distributed 7,000 copies of the *Fun in the garden* storybook to children across Wales.

During the last year we have seen a significant audience visit the website – attracting, between April 2020 and March 2021:

- ◆ 65,894 hits
- ◆ 34,238 users

Between April and June 2020, we saw a 404% increase in website traffic compared to the same period in 2019, with the majority of users visiting the 'indoor play' section created in response to the pandemic and associated restrictions.

We shared regular, relevant information and engaged with the target audience on the following social media platforms:



Facebook
4758 followers



Instagram
573 followers

To support settings who were working face to face with children as well as offering playful sessions online during lockdowns, we published a story telling pack to accompany our original storybook, *Fun in the dungeon*. The pack offers ideas on ways the storybook can be used to discuss play with children.



Community Play Ambassadors

A Play Wales project across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The lessons learned from the project will help us to develop it in other areas in the future.

The project includes working with local people to establish Play Action Groups to identify ways to sustain regular play opportunities. It also supports 14 to 19 year olds to become volunteer Community Play Ambassadors through training, qualifications and placements in playwork settings, enabling them to facilitate neighbourhood-based play opportunities.

Despite inevitable delays and change in delivery due to COVID-19, good progress was made on the project. Key highlights include:

- ◆ Community profiling and identification of four communities where new provision may be developed with support from the project – online engagement activity commenced with groups and individuals.
- ◆ Implemented a programme of online learning. Level 1 training was delivered to and completed by 28 learners in partnership with Cardiff and Vale College.
- ◆ Delivered an additional online level 1 course to five young people who had stated an interest in the project. The young people were recruited from across the two local authorities.
- ◆ Implemented a programme of blended learning with four young people from the Pupil Inclusion project in Cardiff and five young people from Splott youth project.
- ◆ Induction for face to face play sessions undertaken during Easter for spring bank holiday provision.

- ◆ Mentored existing Play Ambassadors through online sessions and meetings and supported them to pilot community auditing tools.
- ◆ Provided online meetings for three communities working toward the establishment of local Play Action Groups.
- ◆ Six learners progressed to the level 2 qualification.

To implement the project, we are working in partnership with:

- ◆ Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales
- ◆ Cardiff Children's Play Services
- ◆ Cardiff and Vale University Health Board/Public Health Wales Local Public Health team
- ◆ Re-create
- ◆ Vale of Glamorgan Sport and Play Development team.

This project is funded through the Healthy and Active Fund (HAF).



**Cronfa Iach ac Egniol
Healthy & Active Fund**

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 2020 - 2021* we had 302 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 2020 - 2021 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.



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 or private	£75
Local authority	£100

* Free membership for 2021 offered to all individuals and organisations in Wales and internationally in March 2021.

Partners

In addition to supporting the delivery of Welsh Government programmes, during 2020 - 2021 we worked in partnership and collaboration with the following organisations, groups and individuals on specific projects:

- ◆ Active Healthy Kids Wales Expert Group
- ◆ Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales
- ◆ Agored Cymru
- ◆ Cardiff and Vale University Health Board/ Public Health Wales Local Public Health Team
- ◆ Cardiff Council
- ◆ Cardiff Metropolitan University
- ◆ Cardiff University
- ◆ Care Inspectorate Wales
- ◆ Charity Comms Wales Committee
- ◆ Charlotte Derry
- ◆ Children's Commissioner for Wales
- ◆ Children's Play Policy Forum
- ◆ City & Guilds
- ◆ Cowshed Communication
- ◆ Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids' Clubs
- ◆ Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board Public Health Team
- ◆ Dr David Dallimore
- ◆ Dr Wendy Russell
- ◆ Design Commission for Wales
- ◆ Early Years Wales
- ◆ Early Years Workforce Network
- ◆ Education and Training Standards (ETS)
- ◆ HAPPEN – Health & Attainment of Pupils in a Primary Education Network
- ◆ Healthy & Active Fund
- ◆ International Play Association (IPA)
- ◆ Learning through Landscapes
- ◆ Ludicology
- ◆ NCFE Cache
- ◆ PETC Wales
- ◆ Petra Publishing (Caerphilly Parent Network project)
- ◆ Play England
- ◆ Play Safety Forum
- ◆ Play Scotland
- ◆ PlayBoard Northern Ireland
- ◆ Playday
- ◆ Playful Futures
- ◆ Public Health Wales
- ◆ Qualifications Standards Advisory Group (QSAG)
- ◆ Qualifications Wales
- ◆ Re-create
- ◆ Social Care Wales
- ◆ Swansea University
- ◆ The National Centre for Population Health & Wellbeing Research (NCPHWR)
- ◆ The Windfall Centre
- ◆ University of Manchester
- ◆ Vale of Glamorgan Council
- ◆ Wales UNCRC Monitoring Group
- ◆ Wrexham County Borough Council Play Development Team.

Achievements: 1998 - 2020

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 £1m 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 £13m 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, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.
- ◆ In 2019, following lobbying from Play Wales and others, the Welsh Government established the Holiday hunger: playworks pilot to test the feasibility of tackling holiday hunger through play and community-based settings. Using learning from the pilot, the Welsh Government has allocated £1m to this scheme to be distributed to local authorities annually.
- ◆ In 2020, as part of the COVID-19 Reconstruction – Challenges and Priorities funding package, the Welsh Government allocated £500,000 revenue funding for a Playworks Project and £3m capital funding for local authorities to improve outdoor playing opportunities for children.

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.
- ◆ In 2019, the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services took forward a Ministerial Review of Play. The aim of the review is to assess what the Welsh Government has achieved with respect to play policy and to inform how it progresses the play agenda in future years.

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 the 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) – as well as the review, update and roll out of the new P³ Level 2 Certificate and Level 3 Diploma, working with Agored Cymru and Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales.
- ◆ Play Wales provides the Secretariat to the Playwork Education and Training Council for Wales (PETC Wales) which approves qualifications to appear on the *Required List of Qualifications to work in the Playwork Sector in Wales*. This list is used by employers and Care Inspectorate Wales to ensure regulated settings have suitably qualified staff.

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.
- ◆ In 2018, Play Wales launched the *Playful Childhoods* campaign and website to help parents, carers and community groups give children plenty of good opportunities to play – at home and out in the community.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ In 2011, the then First Minister, Carwyn Jones, 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.
- ◆ 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 children in Wales 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.
- ◆ Two members of the Play Wales team wrote the IPA *Access to Play for Children in Situations of Crisis* toolkit.
- ◆ Play Wales has commissioned three reports that present the findings of 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. The third explores the perceptions of what has changed for children's play opportunities since the Play Sufficiency Duty was commenced in 2012.

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.

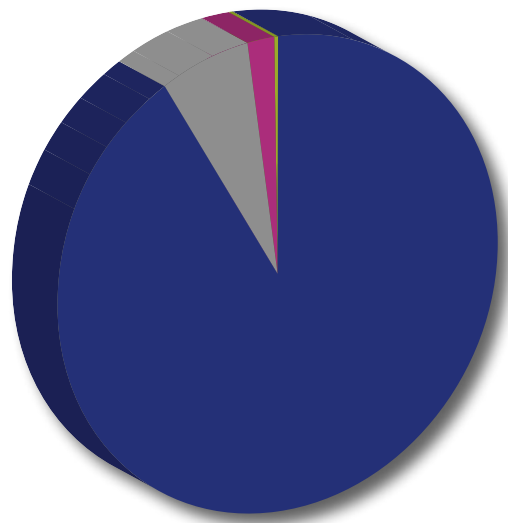


Financial review – summary

Play Wales income and expenditure reports for the financial year ending March 2021.

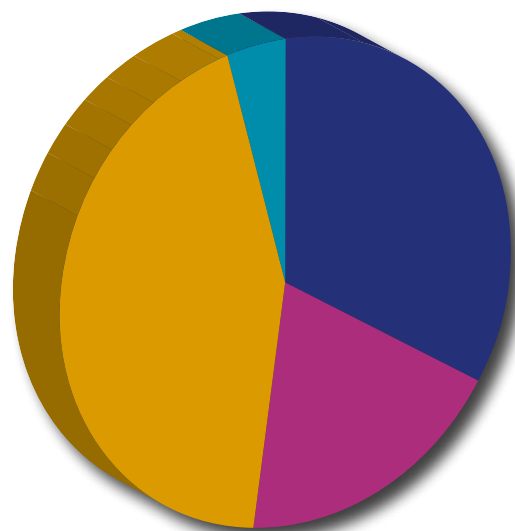
Total income £1,157,523

Welsh Government grant	£1,060,000	
Healthy and Active Fund	£73,522	
Other income	£23,263	
Membership	£738	



Total expenditure £967,998

Play policy, support and advocacy	£328,041	
Workforce development	£178,501	
Information Service	£422,134	
Governance	£39,322	



Our full annual report and financial statements, including the independent auditor's report, are available on The Charity Commission website.



Plans for the future: 2021 - 2022

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

Until March 2022, 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:

- Continue to support providers of play opportunities to respond to the pandemic in a play friendly way.
- Support the Welsh Government with undertaking and finalising the Ministerial Review of Play.
- Continue to deliver an information service aimed at our broad constituency through the provision of focused publications, direct mailing and up to date websites as well as social media engagement.
- Contribute to and inform local, national and international advocacy through project work and membership of committees and groups.
- Support local authorities and third sector organisations to engage and respond to national policy through events, network facilitation and advice.
- Work with The National Centre for Population Health & Wellbeing Research (NCPHWR) to identify what children say about access to play and what they would like in terms of play.
- Implement and monitor *A play friendly workforce for Wales*, our workforce development plan.
- Work with Swansea University to undertake workforce research.
- Work with Addysg Oedolion Cymru | Adult Learning Wales to ensure that the continued roll out of the Agored Cymru P³ qualifications is successful and continues to respond to the needs of the workforce.
- Finalise and pilot the *Chwarae o Safon* Playwork Quality Assurance Framework for playwork.
- Work with Public Health Wales to agree and share messages regarding children's play.
- Undertake a review of school playtime across Wales.
- Implement and deliver the Community Play Ambassadors Project.
- Develop and launch a new Play Wales website.
- Deliver a range of *Playful Childhoods* campaigns to support parents and carers to provide sufficient opportunities for children to play at home and in their communities.
- Produce and launch a new film to celebrate children's play in Wales and promote the importance of play in every child's life.
- Review, update and implement our Fundraising Strategy to enable delivery of additional projects.

To ensure these services are developed and delivered as effectively as possible, we will review and develop Play Wales' operational plan.

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 2021)

Board of Trustees

Dr Rhian Barrance
WISERD, Cardiff University

Dr Anne Crowley

Malcolm King OBE

Owain Lloyd
S4C

Professor Ronan Lyons
Swansea University

Dr Mike Shooter CBE (Chair)
Consultant Psychiatrist (retired)

Keith Towler

Professor Elspeth Webb

Observer organisations

Catherine Davies
Welsh Local Government Association

Owen Evans
Children in Wales

Play Wales team

(as at March 2021)

Mike Greenaway
Director

Paula Harris
Project Officer

Lowri Jenkins
Digital Communications Assistant

Martin King-Sheard
Workforce Development Officer

Marianne Mannello
Assistant Director (Policy, Support and Advocacy)

Kathy Muse
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