

PLAY

is

POWERFUL



LONDON PLAY

PEARSON STREET ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND




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People for Play

- London Play and play in London
Fiona Sutherland
- Fair Play, Barnet
The ultimate accessible playground?
Deborah Gundle & Nathalie Esfandi
- Story time
Your turn to share your experiences
from across London
- Workshop sessions
- Group feedback/evaluation
- Picnic and play!





“The right to play is the child’s first claim on the community. Play is nature’s training for life. No community can infringe that right without doing enduring harm to the minds and bodies of its citizens.”

DAVID LLOYD GEORGE, PRIME
MINISTER OF THE UK 1916-1922

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LUMPY HILL ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

A young girl in a white sports bra and denim shorts is performing a handstand on a sandy area in a park. She is wearing black sneakers with white laces. In the background, there is a green canopy tent, other people, and trees under a blue sky with light clouds.

LONDON **PLAY**

We want every
child in London
to have the
SPACE,
TIME and
FREEDOM
to play outside,
daily, near to
where they live

GREENWICH PARK, PLAY IN THE PARK



Need for play is acute

Space

- 1 in 4 children in overcrowded homes
- 82,000+ in temp housing
- 21% households have no garden

Time

- School, more testing, screens

Freedom

- Traffic, parental fears

Suffering

- Poverty, high levels of childhood obesity, inactivity and rising mental health problems



Provision for play is poor

- Play: first victim of austerity in 2010
- Council play teams disbanded, play budgets cut
- Play associations disappearing
- 12 adventure playgrounds closed in London since 2012
- Public playgrounds neglected and closing
- One playground for 866 children in London
- Access uneven across capital

A photograph of two children playing in a sandpit. The child in the foreground is a young boy with dark skin, wearing a white tank top and a black mask, focused on playing with the sand. A white bucket with colorful patterns is on the left. The child in the background has blonde hair and is also playing. The setting is an outdoor adventure playground with wooden structures and greenery in the background.

Adventure
playgrounds

Play streets &
play estates

Campaigning
for play

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SHAKESPEARE WALK ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

Communities Unite for Play

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Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality



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VOTE FOR

#LondonsSaddestPlayground

**WHICH SAD PLAYGROUND IS MOST IN NEED OF LOVE?
VOTE BY MIDNIGHT, VALENTINES' DAY WED 14 FEBRUARY**

www.londonplay.org.uk

1. Mack's Rd play area, Bermondsey
2. Bellingham Play Park, Lewisham
3. Grove Park Library Gdn, Lewisham
4. Kirby Estate, Bermondsey
5. Priory Park, Newham
6. Upper Mall O Space, Hammersmith
7. Abbeyfield Estate, Bermondsey
8. Rowberry Mead, Fulham



Of our children live in flats : London park boarded up by developers

Ready yet to restore park after finishing construction work in
London, leaving children with no green space



Hatcham Gardens was closed by Peabody in 2018 for the construction of new homes.
Photograph: Martin Godwin/The Guardian

Families in south London are demanding that an award-winning developer
opens a park that was boarded up in 2018 for the construction of new
flats.

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CASE STUDY 1

Hatcham Gardens

Playground boarded up for five years

Compiling hard-hitting stats about play deprivation and overcrowding attracted national media attention and placed pressure on the developer.

Today we can report that the playground has finally been reopened!

TOOL

Building a picture of local need

NEED FOR PLAY 03 BUILDING A PICTURE OF LOCAL NEED USING CENSUS DATA



The 2021 National Census has a fantastic interactive website where you can define an area of your choosing, and then build a picture of the people who live there to help make an argument about the need for better play provision. Data available includes age, ethnicity, household type/composition, education, employment, health and even car ownership. You can also compare the figures for your chosen area against those for the borough as a whole, or London or the country.

1. Define your area

Click here <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/draw> and input the post code or area you are interested in. Then use the drawing/selection tools to add or subtract 'jigsaw pieces' on the map.

If you want to define an area around a playground to include all who might access it, you may decide to select areas centred on the playground, but with a boundary along nearby large roads or railways that form natural barriers to children who might otherwise access the space.

Or, you might decide to select an area which is loosely within walking distance of a play area or service, (or see what play areas are within walking distance of a particular post code). The radius tool can help here, allowing you to select the jigsaw pieces that fall at least partly within that radius and define the population living within a 5-10 minute walk.

What is walking distance?

For truly local play, ideally children should be able to access a local play area within 100m of their home. A ten minute walk (800m or half a mile) is generally agreed as the upper limit for easy accessibility.



PEARSON STREET ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND CATCHMENT

To generate the map above we drew a circle with a radius of 400m (5 minute walk) from the playground and then 'deselected' the pieces of the jigsaw outside the area bounded by major barriers: main roads to the east (A10) and south (Hackney Road); and the canal to the north.

Resulting population 6,600

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CASE STUDY 2

Grove Park Library

Well located playground in disrepair

Voted as London's 'second-saddest' playground

Council responded immediately – repairs have been made, funding prioritised

Friends Group established



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CASE STUDY 3

Kirby Estate Play Area

Accident on swing 2019 due to erosion,
roped off and inaccessible since

London Play supported group in making a
deputation to the council

Secured additional funding and a promise
to look at auditing playgrounds in the
borough





Southwark Council

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TOOL

Power and play in London

POWER & PLAY 01 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT?



To target your campaign, it's important to know who is responsible for providing what - and who has the power to change things. The table below summarises the legal responsibilities and obligations that various layers of public authorities have when it comes to provision of play facilities and services in London. For most play campaigners, the local authority or housing provider is likely to be their focus.

International: United Nations

[Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC) is commonly known as the child's 'right to play' and reads: "States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child..." It is the most ratified international treaty in existence with 196 countries signed up to it (the US alone has not). But the UN has no power to compel signatory countries to act on it.

National: United Kingdom

The UK signed the UNCRC in 1991 but it has yet to incorporate all aspects of the convention into domestic law, including Article 31. There is no legislation governing play provision. The devolved nations of [Wales](#) and (more recently) [Scotland](#) impose a Play Sufficiency Duty on local councils requiring them to assess provision and identify gaps. [No such duty exists in England](#) or Northern Ireland. The first and last National Play Strategy, published in 2008 was abandoned.

Regional: Greater London

The Greater London Authority or GLA is headed up by the Mayor of London, and is responsible for producing the regional spatial strategy, known as the [London Plan](#). This, along with [Supplementary Planning Guidance on Play](#) and Informal Recreation, sets out minimum space requirements for play provision for new developments as well as guidelines for accessibility and quality of play facilities. As guidance rather than law it is not consistently applied or monitored.

Local: 32 London boroughs & the City of London

London's 33 local authorities provide and maintain most public playgrounds, but are under no legal duty to ensure children have sufficient opportunities to play. Local development documents should be 'in general conformity' with the London Plan. Councils' strategic plans usually commit them to improved public health and liveable neighbourhoods, both which play contributes to.

Neighbourhood: Housing providers

New housing developments should conform to the requirements set out in the London Plan and be encouraged by the council. In practice some new play provision has been tokenistic, and in some cases segregated by housing tenure. For existing housing, social housing tenant agreements stipulate minimum standards for shared services (including outdoor and play areas) and their vision statements will often reference high quality community environments. They are supposed to be accountable to their tenants and regulated by the [Requirements of Social Housing](#).



London Parade for Play 2024

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Five ways to a playful London

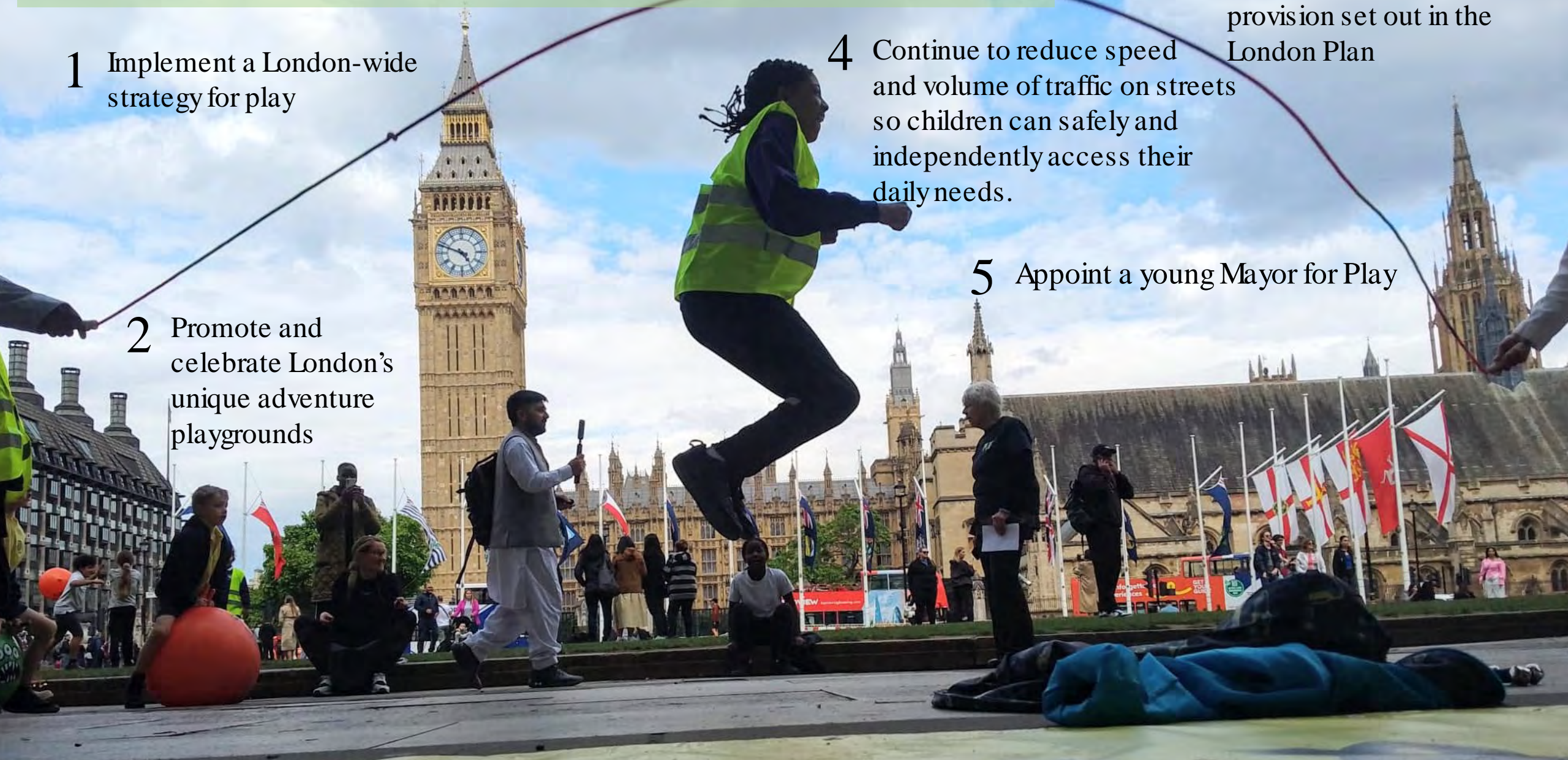
1 Implement a London-wide strategy for play

2 Promote and celebrate London's unique adventure playgrounds

4 Continue to reduce speed and volume of traffic on streets so children can safely and independently access their daily needs.

5 Appoint a young Mayor for Play

3 Enforce the guidelines on quality and quantity of play provision set out in the London Plan





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SAY YEY TO PLAY



London's children need
SPACE, TIME & FREEDOM TO PLAY

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PLAY APP
IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO PLAY

WELCOME TO PLAY

We PLAY

It's Our Rights to Play

FUND PLAY NOW

#PLAY MATTERS
More Fun!

Play is the highest form of research

WE NEED PLUS CELESTIAL PLAY

LET'S NO PLAY THIS

PLAY IN PEACE

LET'S PLAY

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- londonplay.org.uk
- londonplaystreets.org.uk
- londonadventureplaygrounds.org.uk