

Fields in Trust launch new Green Space Guidance for Scotland and Wales

Tuesday 31 January, 2017

New benchmark guidelines for the design of spaces for outdoor sport and play have been published by Fields In Trust 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard', is a crucial tool for local planning authorities, developers, planners, urban designers and landscape architects in the design of outdoor sport, play and informal open space. It is provided as free to use interactive PDF at the Fields in Trust website www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance.

The new guidance has been produced to reflect a new planning policy landscape. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, and the introduction of The Localism Act have changed how local planning operates. Additionally the devolved administrations have each determined the detail and operation of their own primary planning legislation. To reflect these different systems the Fields in Trust Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play has been reconfigured in special editions for Scotland and Wales, and is also available in a Welsh language version.

Speaking at the launch of the new guidance on 25 January at a Green Space Wales Symposium for practitioners **Lesley Griffiths AM** Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs said: *"It is vital we secure sufficient land for outdoor recreation, so I welcome this updated guidance on open space provision from Fields in Trust. The document is referenced as a useful tool by the Welsh Government's Technical Advice Note (TAN)16 Sport, Recreation and Open Space and is widely adopted by the Local Planning Authorities."*

As part of its work, Fields in Trust has supported practitioners since the 1930s on open space provision and design originally identified as The "Six Acre Standard". The new editions of the guidance backed up by new research retains the same headline rates of provision, but draws out new recommendations for accessibility, for flexible application of standards and the minimum dimensions of formal outdoor space. This revision of the guidelines introduces benchmarking for informal open space - places for recreation, not involving organised sport and play - and includes parks and gardens, and natural and semi-natural habitats. The guidance also no longer differentiates between urban and rural areas. The updated guidance for England, Scotland and Wales are available as online tools with links to external data and recommendations.

Writing in the foreword of the Welsh document **Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson** said *"To create an active nation one of the things that we need to do is make sure that appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities are available to everyone regardless of age or ability. We also have to recognise the role of play in developing physical literacy in young children. All important things for the future. Without access to grassroots facilities there are many who will lose the chance to identify and hone their skills."*

Fields in Trust Chief Executive **Helen Griffiths** said: *"Adopting this guidance will help planners and designers ensure that the provision of outdoor sport, play and informal open space is of sufficient size to enable effective public use, in an accessible location close to local communities. It is important that outdoor space has a design quality which will maintain its longevity and to encourage continued use"*

Fields in Trust's projects and protection programmes operate across the UK. Fields in Trust currently safeguards over 2,600 sites, a total of 30,000 acres of land (12,140ha.) including playgrounds, playing fields, and formal and informal parkland across the UK.

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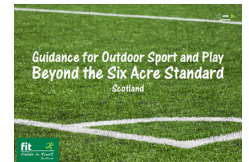
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Fields in Trust is a national charity that operates throughout the UK to safeguard recreational spaces and campaign for better statutory protection for all kinds of outdoor sites.

Founded in 1925 as the National Playing Fields Association by King George V, their mission is the same now and as it was then: to ensure that everyone – young or old, able-bodied or disabled and wherever they live – should have access to free, local outdoor space for sport, play and recreation. These spaces

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are vital to building happy and healthy communities and sadly continue to be threatened by all kinds of development.

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