



Monday 30 March – for immediate release

Diary date: Programme announced
Parks for Play
21 April 2009
Sheffield

The full programme is now confirmed for Parks for Play, a conference which will focus on the future of play provision in parks and green space. The conference will take place on Tuesday 21 April 2009 at St Mary's Conference Centre in Sheffield and is organised by GreenSpace in partnership with IPGS and sponsored by Proludic.

Speakers at Parks for Play will include Grant Lambie, designer and creator of Free Play, the playscape construction and consultation organisation. He will explore the best way to move from the consultation process to delivery of excellent play areas, advocating a slow and sustained approach with regular feedback from stakeholders.

PLAYLINK's Bernard Spiegel will explore the issue of risk in play, asking whether play providers are scared to make informed judgements on levels of risk, and exploring what might be done to improve this situation. Helen Woolley, senior lecturer at Sheffield University, will provide advice on the design and maintenance of natural play areas.

The afternoon session will offer delegates the choice of several practical site tours and workshops. Anne Parkin from Proludic will lead a workshop on how to involve teenage girls in play and sports in parks, based on recent research undertaken in this area. The issue of how to provide inclusive play opportunities will be explored by Lynsey Robinson of the Sensory Trust, and further workshops will feature advice on involving children in the consultation process and adopting a partnership approach to play provision. There will also be site tours to Sheffield City Council's parks, focusing on recent play projects undertaken by the council.

Paul Bramhill, Chief Executive of GreenSpace, said: "We know the benefits that excellent play provision can provide, but we need to work towards ensuring parks professionals have the tools and information needed to create and manage play areas that are high quality, accessible and inclusive.

"This conference will provide delegates with up to date information and advice on creating innovative play spaces, with practical workshops and site tours in the afternoon session."

Places are limited and delegates are advised to book as soon as possible. Attendance is £180.00 for IPGS and GreenSpace members and £230.00 for non-members (prices include VAT). A limited number of subsidised places, priced at £90.00, are available to registered GreenSpace Community Network members and those in full-time education.

To find out more and book your place, please call Jessica Reid on 0118 946 9068, email events@green-space.org.uk or go to www.green-space.org.uk.

-Ends-

-Notes to Editors-

- For further information, or to arrange a press pass, please contact:

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- GreenSpace is a registered charity which works to improve parks and green spaces by raising awareness, involving communities and creating skilled professionals. For more information please go to www.green-space.org.uk
- **Presentations include:**

National Play Strategy, Play England (speaker TBC)

Play England are taking a key role in the delivery of the Government's Play Strategy, working closely with the DCSF and DCMS to improve play opportunities across the country. A Play England representative will offer an insight into the strategy and its implications for play workers and parks staff.

Beyond consultation: how to deliver successful play areas, Grant Lambie, Designer and Creator, Free Play

What is the best way to move from consultation to delivery of play areas? Grant Lambie will explore the options and make the case for a slow process with continuing feedback from stakeholders in order to create spaces that are successful for all involved.

Managing risk in play, Bernard Spiegel, Principal, PLAYLINK

This presentation will discuss the legal issues surrounding risk in play, and consider the benefits and drawbacks of working with play equipment inspectors, and of working to agreed standards. It will ask whether play providers are scared to make informed judgements on levels of risk, and, if so, what might be done to address this.

Playing naturally, Helen Woolley, Senior Lecturer, Sheffield University

What are the factors to consider when designing and commissioning natural play areas? What are the challenges of maintaining such spaces? Helen Woolley will examine the benefits and challenges of natural play, providing advice on the most successful methods of adopting this approach.

Afternoon session. Delegates choose to attend a workshop or site tour:

Workshop 1: Encouraging teenage girls to get active, Anne Parkin, Proludic Ltd
Engaging teenage girls to be active outdoors has long been a difficult task, with research showing they often don't feel that traditional play and sports equipment is relevant to them. Based on a consultation run by Proludic with a group of 13 year-old girls, this workshop will provide delegates with practical, evidence-based advice on how to address this problem in their own parks and green spaces.

Workshop 2: Inclusive play, Lynsey Robinson, Sensory Trust
Providing play opportunities for all ages, abilities and backgrounds can be a challenging task. This workshop will look at the principles for creating successful inclusive play spaces, providing examples of good design practice, and including practical work on how to get the best out of a site and the people who will use it. **Please note: some of this workshop will take place outdoors.**

Workshop 3: Consulting children, Marc Armitage, Playpeople
It is often said that involving children in park and playground design leads to better provision, but is this true? What do children and young people say in consultations: are there any general agreements, patterns or contradictions? This workshop will explore these questions and highlight the dangers of false interpretation, the consequences of asking 'the wrong questions', and point out the one, highly important, question that children are never consulted on.

Workshop 4: Partnerships in adventurous play, Natasha Rutherford and Gill Sharples, Manchester City Council Play Team
This workshop will focus on the Parktastic project in Manchester, which encourages children to play adventurously in the city. The workshop will explore the concept of adventurous play, and provide advice on adopting a partnership-based approach to engage a variety of organisations in delivering play opportunities.

Site Tour 1: Endcliffe Park

This site tour will offer delegates the opportunity to visit an inclusive play area designed in partnership with a friends group, with the needs of local children in mind.

Site Tour 2: Further details available soon.