

Report to Executive

Agenda
Item:

A.1

Meeting Date: 30th September 2013
Portfolio: Environment and Transport
Key Decision: Yes: Recorded in the Notice Ref:KD
Within Policy and Budget Framework YES
Public / Private Public

Title: CARLISLE'S PLAY PROVISION
Report of: The Director of Local Environment
Report Number: LE 29/13

Purpose / Summary:

The report describes the process for reviewing Carlisle City Council's provision of fixed play areas and seeks endorsement of the principles to be adopted in the review.

Recommendations:

1. That the Executive receives the report and refers it to the Community Overview and Scrutiny panel for consideration and comment.

Tracking

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Executive: | 28/10/13 |
| Overview and Scrutiny: | 17/10/13 |
| Council: | |

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Safe spaces in which to play are a fundamental right for every child. Play is an important part of the learning and development process in children. It teaches them about the basic capabilities of their growing bodies – balance, hand-eye coordination, strength and stretching. During play, children learn how to take calculated risks and how to challenge themselves to extend their abilities.
- 1.2 Play takes many different forms and can be undertaken alone or as part of a group. Definitions of play vary, but often include the principle that it is not supervised by adults – children are free to express themselves in whatever activities or behaviours seem appropriate to them.
- 1.3 Children will find opportunities for play in almost any environment, natural or artificial. While there is evidence to suggest that the radius of movement (with home at the centre) has declined for modern children, there is no doubt that many of them are engaged in similar activities as their parents and grandparents – building dens, collecting conkers, climbing trees etc. However, evidence of declining levels of physical activity among young people is mirrored by increasing incidence of childhood obesity and a concurrent rise in solitary, indoor activities based around a screen. Many initiatives are underway to try and counter this trend which is recognised as a threat to the future health of a generation. One way is to make play spaces as interesting as possible for young people. Local authorities have traditionally provided dedicated spaces for play, equipped with a variety of apparatus designed to encourage children to challenge themselves and have fun.
- 1.4 In addressing the priorities set out in the Carlisle Plan, we shall also contribute to **Equality** (by ensuring that all areas of the City have access to high quality play areas); **Community Safety** (by working with others to create safe play environments, for example by tackling anti-social behaviour); **Environmental Enhancement** (by improving the quality and environment of play areas as part of our on-going programme of improvements to Carlisle's parks and green spaces); and **Accessibility and Social Inclusion** (by ensuring that play areas are accessible and useable by all children and young people).
- 1.5 The views, opinions and experience of children and young people should be central to the planning and design of the environments in which they play.

2. The Resource

- 2.1** Carlisle City Council operates 69 play areas serving its population of 106,000. *'Play for Today, Play for Tomorrow'* was the City Council's Play Policy and Strategy for Children and Young People 2007 - 2012 and it is now time for the City Council to review its approach to play area management.
- 2.2** The intention will be to create a legacy of play facilities offering high play value in a safe environment, accessible to every child and allowing them to explore their individual abilities and learn to assess and overcome the risks inherent in physical challenge.
- 2.3** To do this successfully our proposed strategy is to focus on quality. A methodology is set out below by which an assessment can be made of the quality, play value and accessibility of each individual equipped play area. The outcome of the assessment will be used to determine the type, specification and maintenance requirements of each site in the future. These may be broadly characterised as
- 'Destination' sites – where the accessibility and play value combine to attract visitors from a wider catchment area ((2,000m)
 - 'Neighbourhood' sites – used by children and young people living in the vicinity (1,200m)
 - 'Local Play' – smaller areas that may have no formal equipment but are managed as spaces for free play by all age groups (500m)

The standard adopted will aim to ensure that every child has access to a high quality play area within 500 metres of their home.

- 2.4** In some instances existing play equipment is either obsolete or poorly located (or both) and is no longer providing a quality play experience. Application of the criteria will identify these sites and allow decisions to be made on how their future management can contribute to raising quality standards, the outcome of which could be that the equipment is removed and not replaced. The Green Spaces team has therefore conducted a review of our stock of equipped play areas during 2013.

3. Risk Assessment

A brief analysis of risks associated with the current play area stock includes:

- Escalating costs of repairs and maintenance of out-dated equipment
- Low play value of obsolete equipment leads to lack of engagement of children and young people in active play

- Vandalism – associated costs and safety issues
- Insurance claims resulting from our inability to maintain high standards of safety on ageing equipment (financial and reputational risks)
- Staff resources at full capacity on inspections and repairs
- Limited resources for development and improvement of play areas

4. Play Areas Review - Aim and Outcomes

Aim: *Carlisle will be a child-friendly city where all children and young people have access to play opportunities in a range of different settings which offer variety, adventure and challenges. They will be able to play freely and safely and make choices about where, how and when they play.*

Outcomes: *This play area review focuses upon delivering two priority outcomes:*

- *Children are more physically active, emotionally resilient and are able to experience, judge and manage risk.*
- *Good quality and varied play spaces are widely available to children and young people in Carlisle.*

5. Review Methodology

The review will be undertaken in 3 parts:

- Desk Study – examination of our records, files, inspection sheets, and annual RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) reports and risk assessments to get an understanding of the age and condition of each play area.
- Site audit – visit every play area to get an understanding of its location, siting, appearance and evidence of usage levels.
- Mapping – using GIS to map the access radius and status of each play area in order to present the results of 1 and 2 (above) in a way that is easy to visualise and comprehend.

6. Criteria

The criteria by which the assessment is undertaken includes the following:

- Play Value
RoSPA use a scoring system against a range of criteria in order to assess 'play value'. Depending upon their total score, play areas are categorised as being 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Average' etc. In practice, the approach means that 'Average' will be in excess of the national average for existing play areas.
- Play Space Access Standard

Residents should have access to at least **one** of the following:

- A play space of 'Average' play value within 500 metres walking distance
- A play space of 'Good' play value within 1200 metres walking distance
- A play space of 'Excellent' play value within 2000 metres walking distance

NB. All play areas will be high quality – 'play value' is a specific measure of the range and type of equipment present.

(Adapted from a similar system used by Edinburgh City Council and based on the RoSPA 'play value' criteria)

7. Conclusions

The review of play provision in Carlisle is timely and will ensure that the highest standards can be maintained at all times. For the first time the City Council has set out the criteria for assessment and by which our play areas will be measured. As a result the community will be assured that the quality of provision is the best it can be.

8. Analysis

In producing this review we have combined the following analyses:

- i. An audit of all known play areas in the city and district, produced for the City Council by RoSPA, following their 'Playsafe' approach which includes assessing each play area in terms of its age-group provision, age, play value, condition and safety; and
- ii. A spatial analysis, encompassing access to play areas, based upon the agreed access standard.

(Note that the analysis only covers City Council owned and operated sites)

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Executive receives the report and refers it to the Community Overview and Scrutiny panel for consideration and comment.

10.0 CONSULTATION

- 10.1** No external consultation has been undertaken up to this point. Ward Councillors, 'Friends' of Parks and residents groups (where appropriate) will be consulted as the review moves to its action phases.

11.0 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1** Raising the standards of our children's play facilities will contribute to a number of 'Carlisle Plan' objectives and will also have an impact on wider social issues such as health and physical activity of young people. We believe the Play Provision Review is an important step towards these better standards.

12.0 CONTRIBUTION TO THE CARLISLE PLAN PRIORITIES

Aim 1: Develop vibrant sports, arts and cultural facilities, showcasing the City of Carlisle. The provision of fixed play equipment allows young people to develop balance, strength and hand-eye coordination, giving them skills they can use in a number of sports and outdoor activities elsewhere. High standard play areas provide challenges to help children measure their own capabilities and assess risks inherent in climbing, balancing and swinging.

Aim 4: Support growth by ensuring a high quality environment which is attractive to new businesses and residents. Facilities for children's play close to where they live is a factor in determining the attractiveness of an area for residents - play areas on well established residential areas need to be kept at the highest possible standard in order to remain as an asset to residents and the children who live nearby. New developments will normally have play areas included as part of the planning process and where the provision can only be made off-site the Council will seek developer contributions to improve the standard of existing play areas.

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**Appendices
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS/RISKS:

Chief Executive's -

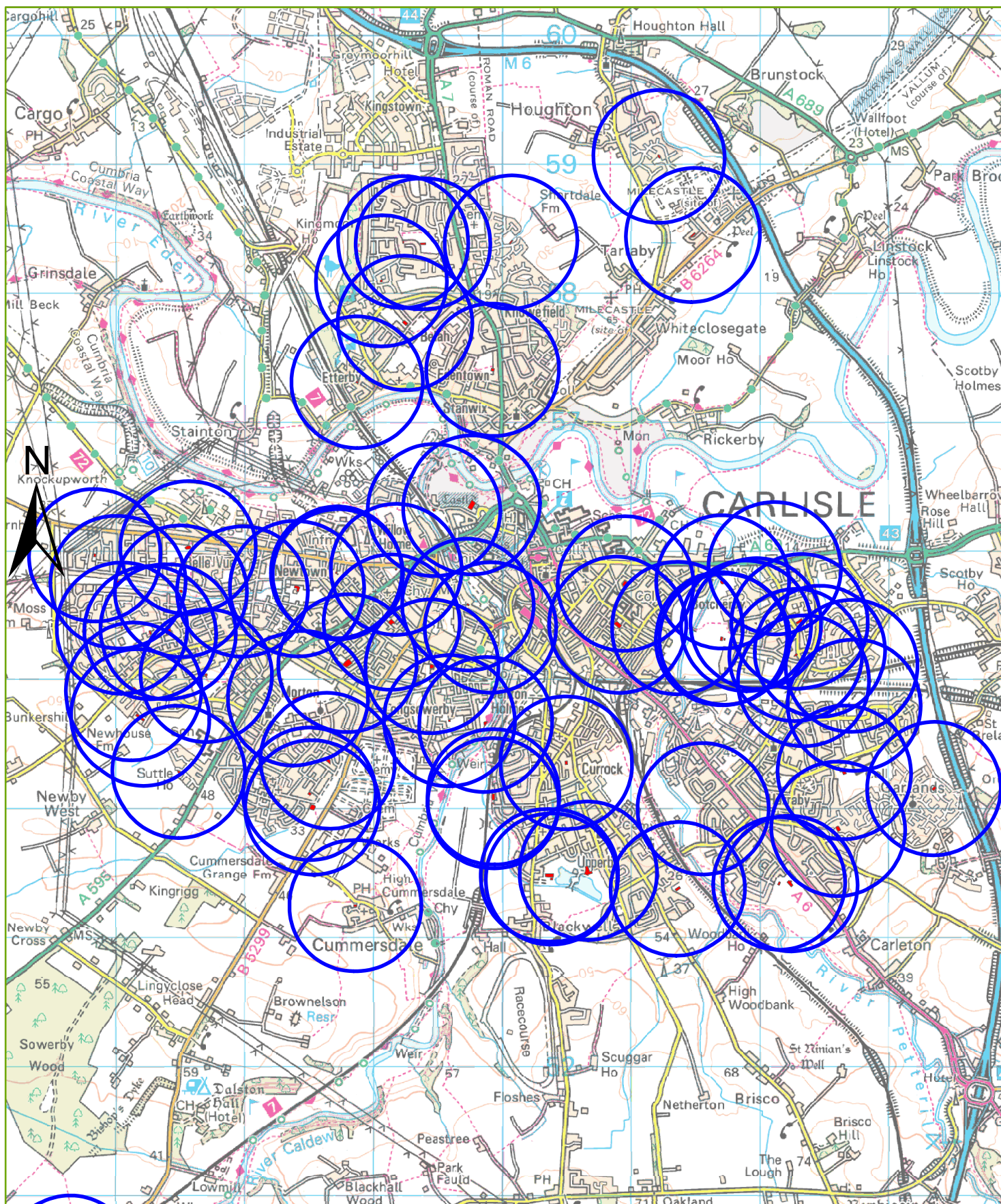
Community Engagement – The principles for playground assessment proposed here are wholly appropriate. In keeping with good practice in developing sports and active recreation, the application of these principles will promote access to good quality play opportunity and enhance healthy and active lifestyles.

Economic Development –

Governance – The Council has a responsibility to manage its assets and ensure that those using its play areas (whether by invitation or trespass) are reasonably safe. The proposals in this Report are about ensuring the best management etc of the Council's play assets.

Local Environment –

Resources - This review of the Council's play provision will be undertaken by existing staff and within existing base budgets.



Play Area existing locations

500m buffer

Scale: 1:40000

Date: 05/07/2013

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CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL



www.carlisle.gov.uk

Civic Centre
Rickergate
Carlisle
CA3 8QG

Play Area Condition Survey

| | | <u>Equipment:</u> | <u>Equipment Condition:</u> | <u>Surfacing:</u> | <u>Surfacing Condition:</u> | <u>Furniture:</u> | <u>Furniture Condition:</u> | <u>Estimated Usage:</u> |
|----|---|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Sheffield Street | 2 swings (2 cradles) 1 rocker 1 roundabout | Average | Bark | Poor | 2 benches 1 bin | Poor | Low |
| 2 | Milbourne Street | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 climber (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers | Average | Bark | Good | Fencing 1 self closing gate 1 bench | Average | Low—Medium |
| 3 | Bitts Park, Dacre Road | 4 swings (2 baskets/2 flats/4 cradles) 2 climbers 4 MPU's (+ 1 net climber/2 slides) 4 rockers 2 spinners 2 water features 1 sand pit 2 play panels 1 willow tunnel | Good—Excellent | Wetpour Sand Grass | Good | Fencing 2 self closing gates 10 seats 6 bins | Good | High |
| 4 | Toronto Street, Currock | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 climber | Average | Bark | Good | 1 bin | Excellent | Low |
| 5 | Lund Crescent, Jubilee Road, Currock | 2 swings (4 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 3 rockers | Average | Bark Wetpour | Average | Fencing 1 self closing gate | Average | Low-Medium |
| 6 | Upperby Senior Hammonds Pond | 1 games wall 1 basketball hoop | Good | Tarmac | Good | 3 seats | Good | Medium |
| 7 | Upperby Junior Hammonds Pond | 3 swings (4 flats/2 cradles/1 basket) 1 rotating swing 4 MPU's (+ 3 slides/1 net climber) 1 slide 3 climbers 1 rocker 1 roundabout 1 spinner 1 aerial runway | Good | Bark Enviromulch Grass pack | Good | Fencing 2 self closing gates 6 seats 4 bins | Good | High |
| 8 | Cammock Crescent Upperby | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 2 rockers | Good | Wetpour | Good | | | Low-Medium |
| 9 | Denton Street Denton Holme | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 cantilever 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 playhouse (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers 1 roundabout | Good | Wetpour | Average | Fencing 2 gates 2 benches 1 bin | Average | Medium |
| 10 | New Mills Denton Holme | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 rocker | Average | Rubber tiles Wetpour | Poor—Excellent | Fencing 1 self closing gate 1 seat 1 bin | Average | Low |

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|----|--|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 11 | St James' Park Denton Holme | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 climber 1 playhouse 1 slide 1 seesaw 1 rocker 1 roundabout 3 balance steps 1 cycle track | Good | Wetpour Grass matting | Good | Fencing 1 self closing gate 4 benches 1 bin | Good | Medium |
| 12 | Borrowdale Road Morton | 2 swings (4 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) | Average | Bark Wetpour | Average | Fencing 1 gate | Average | Low |
| 13 | Morton Park Chances Park | 2 swings (4 cradles) 1 cantilever 1 adventure trail 2 MPUs (+ 2 slides) 2 climbers 1 net climber 1 rocker 1 spinner 1 rotating swing 1 aerial runway | Average—Excellent | Bark Wetpour Grass matting | Average—Good | Fencing 3 self closing gates 4 benches | Good | High |
| 14 | Raiselands Road Morton | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 adventure trail 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) | Average | Bark | Good | 1 bin | Average | Low-Medium |
| 15 | The Beeches Morton | 2 swings (4 flats/4 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers 1 games wall 1 basketball hoop | Good | Wetpour | Good | Fencing 1 gate 2 benches 1 bin | Good | Low-Medium |
| 16 | St Edmunds' Park Orton Road | 1 swing (1 flat/1 cradle) 1 climber (+1 slide) | Average | Bark | Poor | Fencing 1 bench | Excellent | Low |
| 17 | Yewdale Road Yewdale Park | 1 swing (2 cradles) 1 X-Scales 1 MPU (+1 slide) 1 climber 2 rockers 1 roundabout 1 spinner | Average | Bark | Average | Fencing 2 self closing gates 2 benches | Good | Medium |
| 18 | Coniston Way Yewdale | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) | Average | Bark | Good | Fencing 1 gate 1 bench | Average | Low |
| 19 | Morton West Richmond Green | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 cantilever 1 climber (+ 3 net climbers) 1 slide 1 rocker 1 spinner | Excellent | Wood Chip | Good | Fencing 2 self closing gates 2 seats | Good | Medium |

Play Area Condition Survey

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|----|--|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20 | Trinity Caldewgate | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers 1 spinner 2 goal posts | Excellent | Grass matting | Good | Fencing 2 self closing gates 2 benches 1 bin | Good | Medium |
| 21 | Peel Street Raffles | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 1 climber 1 rocker | Average | Bark | Good | Fencing 2 self closing gates 2 benches | Poor | Low-Medium |
| 22 | Turnstone Park Newtown Road | 1 swing (2 cradles/1 basket) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 2 rockers 1 spinner 1 OXO panel | Good | Wetpour | Good | Fencing 3 self closing gates 1 bench 1 bin | Good | Low—Medium |
| 23 | Beaver Road Spider Park | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 cantilever 1 adventure trail 1 MPU (+1 slide/1 net climber) 1 climber (+ 2 spinners) 2 rockers 1 roundabout 1 games wall 1 basketball hoop | Good | Wetpour Grass | Good | 1 bench 1 bin | Good | Low-Medium |
| 24 | Acredale Road Belle Vue | 3 swings (2 flats/2 cradles/1 basket) 2 MPUs (+ 2 slides/2 net climbers) 1 climber 4 rockers 1 roundabout 4 spinners 1 aerial runway 1 play panel 1 skater 11 gym equipment | Excellent | Grass matting | Good | 7 seats 2 bins 3 gates | Good | Low-Medium |
| 25 | Heysham Park Raffles | 1 swing (1 basket) 1 MPU (+1 slide) 1 climber 1 rocker 1 roundabout 1 spinner | Good | Grass matting | Good | 1 seat 1 bin | Excellent | Medium |
| 26 | Raffles Community Centre Raffles Avenue | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 adventure trail (+ 1 net climber) 1 spinner 1 aerial runway | Poor—Good | Bark | Good | Fencing 2 gates | Average | Low—Medium |
| 27 | Heysham Park Extension Green Lane | 2 swings (1 basket/2 cradles) 1 rotating swing 1 climber 1 slide 1 rocker | Excellent | Grass matting | Good | | | Low |

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|----|--|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 28 | Chesterholme Yewdale | 1 swing (1 cradle) 1 rocker | Average | Bark | Poor | | | Low |
| 29 | Summerfields Dalston | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 rocker | Average | Rubber tiles | Poor | 2 seats 1 bin Fencing 1 self closing gate | Average | Low |
| 30 | Cummersdale | 2 swings (1 basket/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+1 slide/1 net climber) 1 slide 1 rocker 1 roundabout | Good | Wetpour | Good | 3 seats 1 bin | Good | Medium |
| 31 | Broad Street St Aidans | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+1 slide) 1 climber 1 rocker 1 roundabout 1 spinner 2 goal posts | Good | Wetpour | Good | 5 seats 1 bin Fencing 2 gates | Good | Medium |
| 32 | Fusehill Street St Aidans | 1 swing (1 basket) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 climber 1 rocker 1 spinner 1 goal post | Average—Good | Wetpour | Average | 2 seats 2 bins Fencing 2 gates | Average | Medium |
| 33 | Melbourne Park St Aidans | 2 swings (4 flats/4 cradles) 1 MPU (+1 net climber/1 slide) | Average | Grass matting Wetpour | Average | 2 seats Fencing 1 self closing gate | Average | Low-Medium |
| 34 | Eden Park Side Botcherby | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 rocker 1 spinner | Average | Bark | Good | | | Low-Medium |
| 35 | Broad Oaks Grange Botcherby | 1 swing (2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers | Average | Bark | Excellent | | | Low |
| 36 | Scotby Road Durranshill | 1 swing (2 flats/ 2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers | Average—Good | Wetpour | Average-Good | 1 seat 1 bin Fencing 1 self closing gate | Average | Medium |
| 37 | Scotby Gardens Durranshill | 1 MPU (+ 1 net climber) 1 rocker | Average | Bark | Good | Fencing 1 gate | Average | Low |
| 38 | Metal Box Botcherby | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 cantilever 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 climber 1 aerial runway | Average | Bark | Good | 2 seats Fencing 2 self closing gates | Average | Medium-High |

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|----|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 39 | Keenan Park Harraby | 2 swings (2 baskets) 1 adventure trail 1 net climber 2 slides 1 rocker 2 spinners 1 aerial runway 1 teen shelter | Average—Good | Grass matting | Average | 4 seats 1 bin | Good | Medium-High |
| 40 | Harraby Community Centre | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 1 climber (+ 1 net climber) 1 rocker 2 roundabouts 1 spinner 1 aerial runway | Good—Excellent | Grass matting | Good—Excellent | 3 seats 1 bin | Good | Medium—High |
| 41 | Lonsdale Grange Longholme Road | 1 swing (1 flat) 1 rocker | Average—Good | Bark | Average | | | Low—Medium |
| 42 | Hunters Crescent Garlands | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+1 net climber/1 slide) 1 seesaw 2 rockers 1 roundabout | Good | Wetpour | Good | Fencing 1 self closing gate | Poor | Medium |
| 43 | Parkland Village Garlands | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 2 MPUs (+1 net climber/ 2 slides) 1 seesaw 1 rocker 1 roundabout 1 games wall | Good | Wetpour | Good | 2 seats 1 bin Fencing 1 self closing gate | Good | Low-Medium |
| 44 | Dale End London Road | 2 swings (4 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+1 slide) 1 seesaw 2 rockers 1 spinner 2 play panels | Average | Bark | Excellent | 5 seats Fencing 2 gates | Average | Medium |
| 45 | Carliol Drive Harraby | 1 swing (2 cradles) 1 cantilever 1 climber 2 rockers 1 spinner | Average | Grass pack | Poor | 2 seats 1 bin | Average | Medium |
| 46 | Clarksfield Scotland Road | 1 swing (2 cradles/2 flats) 3 rockers (2 small/ 1 large) 1 roundabout 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 4 stepping stones | Average | Wetpour | Average | Fencing 2 self closing gates 1 bench 1 bin | Good | Medium |

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|----|---|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 47 | Moorville Drive Stanwix | 3 swings (1 basket/5 flats/2 cradles) 1 multiplay (+ 1 slide/ 2 net climbers) 1 climber (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers 2 roundabouts 2 spinners 1 aerial runway | Good—Excellent | Grass matting | Good | 3 benches | Excellent | Medium |
| 48 | Esk Road Lowry Hill | 1 swing (2 cradles) 1 adventure trail | Good | Grass matting | Good | | | Low |
| 49 | Crindledyke | 1 slide 1 spinner 2 rockers | Excellent | Grass matting | Excellent | Fencing 1 self closing gate 1 bench | Excellent | Low |
| 50 | Windsor Way Stanwix | 2 swings (4 flats/4 cradles) 2 MPUs (+3 slides) 1 rocker | Good | Wetpour | Average—Poor | Fencing 1 self closing gate 3 benches | Good | low-medium |
| 51 | Mountain View Belah Community Centre | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 rocker 1 spinner 1 cycle track | Average—Poor | Grass pack | Average—Good | Fencing 2 self closing gates 1 bench | Good | low-medium |
| 52 | Belah Parkside Belah Road | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 Climber (+ 1 slide) 1 rocker | Poor | Bark | Average | 1 bench | Good | Low |
| 53 | Etterby Gardens Gleneagles Drive | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 2 rockers | Average | Rubber tiles | Poor | Fencing 1 self closing gate 1 bench 1 bin | average | low-medium |
| 54 | Houghton Tribune Drive | 2 swings (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 2 rockers 1 roundabout | Average | Bark | Good | Fencing 1 self closing gate 2 benches 2 bins | Good | low-medium |
| 55 | Hadrians Gardens Centurions Walk | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+1 slide/1 net climber) 1 Climber (+1 slide) 1 seesaw | Average | Enviromulch | Good | 2 benches | Average | Low |
| 56 | Talkin Tarn | 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 1 adventure trail | Excellent | Bark | Average | Fencing 1 self closing gate | Excellent | High |
| 57 | Irthing Park Brampton | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide/1 net climber) 1 Rocker | Average-Good | Wetpour | Good | Fencing 1 self closing gate 2 benches | Average | low-medium |
| 58 | Longtown Old Road | 2 swings (2 cradles/1 basket) 1 MPU (+ 1 slide) 1 rocker 1 roundabout | Average | Bark | Poor | Fencing 1 self closing gate 1 bench | Average | low |
| 59 | Moor Crescent Longtown | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 roundabout | Excellent | Grass matting | Good | | | low |
| 60 | Sandysykes | 1 swing (2 flats/2 cradles) 1 climber | Good | Bark | Good | | | low |