

Submission to OSC, July 17th 2025

All five of the Adventure Playgrounds listed under the Leicester Play and Youth Cooperative banner, are **hopeful of maintain their current service for the duration of the current financial year**. Whilst continuing to **explore all possible options and opportunities** to bring in alternative funding and services in order to subsidise the existing provision.

This, as all CVS organisations will tell you, during the most challenging period for fundraising that anyone has been aware of. **Without any additional Council funding, the Playgrounds have a very uncertain future.**

All of us are committed to exploring whatever possible solutions that may be available during this period of intense competition that even results in us competing against each other. Various activities have been set up, or are in the planned process, aimed at **subsiding the opening of the Playgrounds**; whilst simultaneously recognising that it will be highly unlikely to fully subsidise our core costs.

Sadly, the support previously promoted by the Authority has never materialised.

All five of us have been **successful in finding funding for existing roles** that now take on different responsibilities, but this won't be enough to maintain the comprehensive service, required by our respective communities.

All the Playgrounds have **already adapted** to the currently and further forecast, reduced income with restructuring haven taken place to pro-long the longevity of individual projects. Whilst we are **trying to maintain existing services** for as long as possible we are extremely conscious of the knock effects noted by other agencies – Schools, Social Care and Health, Police etc.

Despite the current and future difficulties we all **committed to the provision of Open Access** Adventure Playground, making them freely available to the Children and Young People of the City. All our current efforts designed for that to happen.

As Projects set up by local Communities and funded by the wider Community, we are all committed to maintaining our original Aims and Objectives and not simply looking to offer Staff teams alternative employment, by morphing into another sort of organisation. We are **committed to meeting the needs of the community** that lobbied for our funding in the first place.

Collectively, we continue to seek funding for **collaborative work across the City**, to support work around health eating/ healthy weight, bring communities together and broader community cohesion.

We hope soon to be able to re-submit a proposal to the various strand of the national lottery and a new proposal to the City Council for the continuation of partnership working. If successful this would Children and Young People benefiting from a clearly thought out service to access in their leisure time as opposed to reactive services, parachuted in to areas identified as being problematic.

The very real danger of the ***City's Playgrounds disappearing comes at the same time that the needs for Children and Young people's play becoming ever more vital and recognised.***

Play England's latest successes in adding Play values to legislation and their latest published reports indicate the necessity to maintain Play provision. Please see below:

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/newsblog/appg-on-play-working-in-parliament-to-champion-all-childrens-right-to-play>

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/strategy>

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/newsblog/play-commission-report-everything-to-play-for-a-national-wake-up-call-on-play>

<https://www.playengland.org.uk/newsblog/to-play-or-not-to-play-mapping-unequal-provision-of-childrens-playgrounds>

Our collective aim is to seek to build on the increased awareness of the need for Play and to remain viable, in order to bid for any Central Government funding that will be aimed at Children and particularly young people.

Adventure Playgrounds have existed in this Country for nearly all of the post war period and in this ***City for over 60 years.*** As we have never been a statutory service we have always been vulnerable to funding cuts when savings are looking to be made.

Playgrounds have always given Children and Young People the opportunity to experience a childhood and freely choose their Play, in a safe environment. ***Playgrounds have now evolved to be the antidote the current list of ills identified as affecting Children and Young People*** – social isolation; inactivity; reliance on digital devices; general unhealthy lifestyles and a lack of Play space.

In short, they are needed more than ever.

Between the five Playgrounds we are expecting 16,000 individual visits, from 4,000 registered users during the School Summer Holidays – all with access to nutritional food. During the rest of the year we'd expect 35,000 individual visits, again all with access to food.

