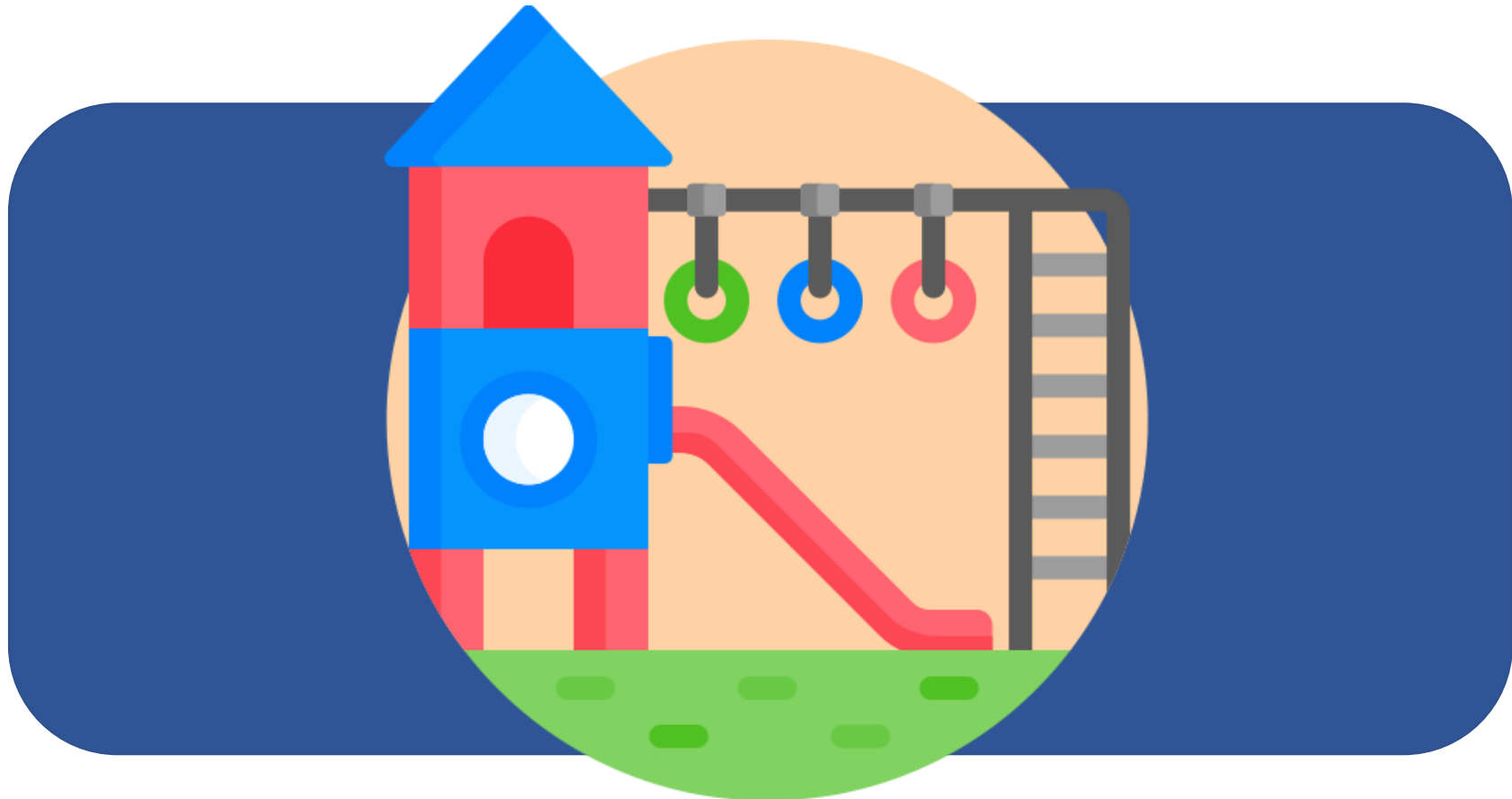


Playground Strategy 2021 - 2026



Leitrim County Council



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Leitrim
- a county that values
its children and young people,
with dedicated spaces for them to
play, socialize, learn, and develop
through leisure, recreation and fun

1. Policy Framework

Play is essential to the social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development of the child. The developmental nature of play makes it even more vital for children with disabilities.

This strategy has been prepared by Leitrim County Council to provide a five-year plan for playground provision across the County in a cost effective and strategic manner.

A number of national policies provide the framework for this strategy and aim to improve outcomes for children and young people, making Ireland one of the best countries in which to grow up and raise a family.

- The National Play Policy - *Ready, Steady, Play!*
- The National Children's Strategy, *Our Children – Their Lives*
- Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020
- Leitrim Co Development Plan 2022-2028 and Leitrim Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)
- Local Authority Play and Recreation Network (LAPRN)
- TeenSpace

For the purposes of this Playground Strategy the term Playground refers to facilities for the use of children aged 12 and under and in general, the term TeenSpace refers to facilities for the use of young people 12-18 years. As this is Playground Strategy objectives and outcomes identified within this strategy will focused on delivering improved outcomes for facilities used by children aged 12 and under. A further plan for developing spaces and facilities for young people aged 13 and over will be developed by Leitrim County Council with partners.



2. Vision and Mission

Vision Statement:

Leitrim-a County that values its children and young people, with dedicated spaces for them to play, socialize, learn, and develop through leisure, recreation and fun.

Mission Statement:

- That every child in Leitrim has a safe play environment within their local area, supporting healthy active children, promoting free play and inclusivity.
- That every young person in Leitrim has social and recreational spaces that enrich their lives and promote physical, social, and mental wellbeing in a youth friendly, safe and non-competitive environment



Objective 1:

**Identify and develop
Destination
playgrounds in the
County**



Objective 2:

**Ensure that all
playgrounds are
inclusive**



Objective 3:

**Ensure good design
and play value**



Objective 4:

**Maintain and
upgrade our existing
playground portfolio**

3. Existing Playground Provision in Leitrim

Categories of playground in Leitrim based on location, use and size:

Destination Playground

Large Public Playground serving both the local community and attracting tourists to the local area, complimenting existing tourist attractions. The playground should have carparking facilities and be close to WCs with accessible toilets, amenities, and services.



image: Glencar

Non-LCC Playground

Playground provided, maintained, and insured by a community group or private body

Neighbourhood Playground

Neighbourhood Playground is primarily for the use of residents

within housing estates. A local space where young children, accompanied by an adult, can play safely. In Leitrim there are 5 such playgrounds located within residential areas. *image: Breffni*

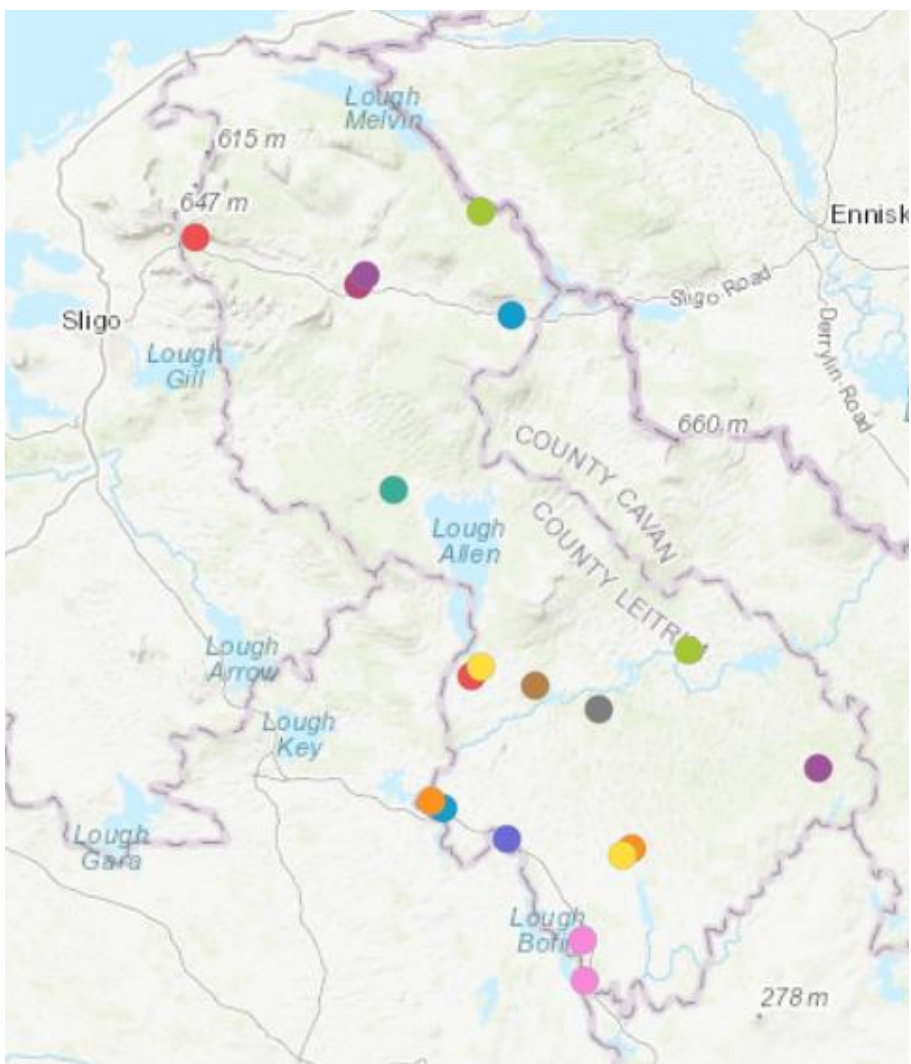


Community Playground

Community/Village Playground serving villages/small towns and surrounding area. A space for children where they can travel independently or with friends and with pathways for adults with young children to walk with ease.

image: Mohill





Interactive map on LCC website (Google My Maps)
<http://www.leitrimcoco.ie/eng/Community-Culture/Community/Playgrounds/>

Manorhamilton			
Destination Playgrounds	Community	Neighbourhood	Non-LCC playgrounds
Glencar Waterfall	Fairgreen, Manorhamilton Glenfarne Kiltyclogher Drumkeeran	McDermott Terrace Manorhamilton	Kinlough

Carrick on Shannon			
Destination Playgrounds	Community	Neighbourhood	Non-LCC playgrounds
Dromod	Mohill Town	Treanmore, Mohill	Leitrim Village Marina
Rooskey	Aura, Carrick on Shannon Drumsna	Breffni, Carrick on Shannon	

Ballinamore			
Destination Playgrounds	Community	Neighbourhood	Non-LCC playgrounds
Acres Lake, Drumshanbo	Ballinamore Carrigallen Town Drumcong Fenagh	Dristernan, Drumshanbo Barley Field, Carrigallen	

4. Objective 1: Identify and develop Destination playgrounds in the County



Leitrim County Council will prioritise the allocation of funding on the provision or upgrade of Destination Playgrounds. Provision of additional playgrounds in Leitrim must have regard to need and to current playground provision in the County. Where evidence of need/demand for a new playground emerges during the lifetime of this strategy, the Council may provide a new playground as appropriate.

Leitrim County Council will support communities to develop their own new playgrounds. This support may include assistance with funding applications, where funding has become available for such developments. A community group who intends to develop a new playground must consider the operation, management and maintenance of the facility to ensure its continued safe use by the Community. Responsibility for the provision of adequate insurance cover and on-going repair will rest with the community group retaining ownership of the playground.

Leitrim County Council may consider supporting a community group developing a new playground where insurance issues arise, subject to memorandum of understanding being put in place for the ongoing management and maintenance of the playground.

In line with Disability and Equality Legislation, Leitrim County Council will require that all future playground developments and /or retrofits will be disability proofed at the design stage.

The Council recognises the importance of playgrounds adhering to the relevant standards, currently ROSPA, or any such standards that are applicable during the lifetime of the document. It is expected that any such playgrounds supported by Leitrim County Council would adopt this requirement.



Interactive map on LCC website (Google My Maps):

<http://www.leitrimcoco.ie/eng/Community-Culture/Community/Playgrounds/>

5. Objective 2: Ensure that all playgrounds are inclusive



Leitrim County Council recognises the need to provide opportunities to play regardless of physical, sensory or mental development and ability.

Leitrim County Council will adopt a universal and inclusive design approach for playgrounds in Leitrim to ensure the greatest practicable opportunity for access for all.

The importance of inclusive play will be highlighted in any procurement process for design, supply and fit of Leitrim playgrounds. Leitrim County Council identifies inclusive play as meeting all children's needs in the same place and in a variety of different ways. It is not practicable that all equipment in a playground can be used by every child. However, this Strategy will aim to maximise the potential for most children to join in most activities and participate in the social experience of play.

Leitrim playgrounds will provide for three different categories of play:

1. Physical play, involving gross and fine motor skills – climbing frames, slides, etc.
2. Sensory play - tactile, auditory etc elements and quiet space

3. Imaginative play – can include simple props such as mirrors, letters/numbers/shapes on the ground



6. Objective 3: Ensure good design and play value



Leitrim County Council will adopt a county-wide coordinated approach to provide high quality inclusive play opportunities for children and young people.

Leitrim County Council is committed to the principles of inclusive and accessible design. Local children and young people will be consulted and encouraged to participate actively in the design and development process.

Playground rules

Rules displayed at all playgrounds to encourage respect of other users and include: no smoking, no dogs (except guide dogs).

Smoke Free Playground Policy

This is promoted in all Leitrim County Council parks and within 20 meters of play equipment.

Personal safety and security

Site and access routes feel safe at all times and have good exit routes. Site to be adequately protected from busy roads.

Tír na nÓg Playground Clós súgartha Tír na nÓg

Please enjoy it. Have fun, use it and don't abuse it.

No Bicycles **No Dogs** **No Smoking** **No Ball Games** **No Bottles**

- Soláthraítear an clós súgartha seo do pháistí faoi bhun 12 bliana d'aois.
- Bigí cúramach, bain taitneamh as agus seachain an mhí-úsáid.
- Cosc ar rothair, ar chíarscátáil agus ar chluichí peile.
- Cosc ar mhadráil (ach amháin do mhadráil treorach).
- Cosc ar thobac, ar ól, ar bhuideil ghloine agus ar chaint mhaslach.
- Ní mór do pháistí a bheith faoi smacht ag tuismitheoir nó duine fásta i gcónaí.
- This playground is provided for children of 12 years or under.
- Play safe, enjoy it and don't abuse it.
- No bikes, skateboards or ball games.
- No dogs (except for guide dogs).
- No smoking, drinking, glass bottles or abusive language.
- Children must be supervised by a parent or other adult at all times.

Report Damage/Accident to following:
Leitrim County Council, Áras an Chontae, Carrick on Shannon. Telephone 071 9650400
Comhairle Contae Liatroma, Áras an Chontae, Cora Droma Rúisc. Teileafón 071 9650400

Funded by:

7. Objective 4: Maintain and Upgrade our existing playground portfolio



Leitrim County Council will prioritise upgrade of our existing portfolio on the basis of usage, age of playground, inclusivity, cost of ongoing maintenance and funding availability.

Insurance:

All playgrounds must be upgraded and maintained to minimise risk to all users and covered by public liability insurance.

Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Ltd. (IPBMI) are the insurance advisers and brokers for local authorities. Under their general public liability policies, local authorities have cover for the provision and operation of playgrounds.

The cover operates under the following conditions:

- ✓ the playgrounds are operated directly under the control and management of the local authority;
- ✓ the authority is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the playgrounds and all equipment therein;
- ✓ weekly inspections of all equipment are carried out by suitably qualified employees of the authority;
- ✓ all defective/dangerous equipment is immediately replaced;
- ✓ records are available of the inspections, showing the date of the inspection and the name and qualifications of the person carrying out the inspection and the action taken.

Inspections:

Leitrim County Council staff will inspect all playgrounds on a weekly basis for wear and tear and identify any potential safety issues. An annual safety inspection will be carried out to Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) standards by a specialist playground inspection company.

Maintenance:

Routine maintenance will be carried out as required by Leitrim County Council. An annual budget will be provided for such routine maintenance. Service and replacement parts as necessary/appropriate will be procured from original playground provider.



Upgrading:

Many of the 20 playgrounds within Leitrim County Council's control have been in situ since the early 1990s. Leitrim County Council will review, prioritise need, and seek funding as available to upgrade older playgrounds and to make them more inclusive. Such funding has been provided in recent years from Town & Village Scheme and Department of Children & Youth Affairs.

A rolling programme of refurbishment and upgrade is prioritized according to a Priority List drawn up each year with LCC Engineers.

8. Public Consultation

Consultation formed part of the funding applications to upgrade playgrounds in Carrick on Shannon, Mohill, Manorhamilton, Glenfarne and Drumshanbo.

The process included children, parents and relevant support groups and agencies. It highlighted the need for accessible, integrated play environments for all abilities in the county.



Anything else you would like to add? I think a soft play part an zipline
 maybe a few training machines for parents more suitable monkey bars
 guardians and a mountain line for climbing by soft play area for smaller kids

Rock climbing trampoline ZIPLINE giant climbing
 roundabout things more swings Tunnel slides spinning

bathroom that are able to be used for disabled people. a round about The blue spinny thing in forest park
 The bike thing in forest park

I would like to see football goals and a chip-van
 basket ball nets

A play house more disability areas to build a Zipline
 a train (like Ballinamore) and MORE TOILETS dining net

exercise bikes that move around in a circle

A zip wire and new swings I would like to see a round about in
 and a new picnic table playground, a zipline, optical course, wooden beam

more sensory items
 a slide that goes in circles. What do you like in Acres Lake Playground?
 easier access for buggies & wheelchair I would like a trampoline, free bikes and
 disabled toilet with changing facility. scooters, go karts, tents and board games,
 a sensory area for disability.

Some things for people with Autism !! pull up bars, optical course

monkey bars There's nowhere to leave your bike
 Toilets There's only one bench for picnics

Exercise equipment put some designs on the ground - Hop scotch

I would like to see an outdoor
 table tennis stand and a basketball area.
 make the age limit 3-14? (just so older kids can have fun)

Floor games Hop scotch, Snakes + ladders, follow the line.

Anything else you would like to add? An Area for Older Children.
 That they aren't running into the smaller children. But boxes and bird houses
 A shelter to stand in

9. Acknowledgements

Leitrim County Council would like to thank all those who contributed their views to the development of this policy through the consultation process.

The views of children and young people were especially welcome.

Leitrim County Council acknowledges the ongoing support provided by these stakeholders:

- Leitrim Development Company;
- Residents Associations;
- Local schools;
- Public Participation Network
- Local Community and Voluntary groups
- Young people and their families.

September 2021