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RAY CEREDIGION

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## **PETITION submitted 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

### **We need Welsh Government funding for play!!**

“

We call on the National Assembly for Wales to provide annual designated funding to provide financial support to all Local Authorities in fulfilling their duty in line with their Play Sufficiency Assessments in order to avoid further closure of open access play provision such as RAY Ceredigion

”

### **Message of Petition**

£20 million was invested in play across Wales under the Big Lottery Child's Play programme creating 10 infrastructure projects - £1 million was invested in Ceredigion. Of these 10 infrastructure projects 3 remain shortly to become 2 as RAY Ceredigion faces closure. As the timeline below shows the Childs Play project was a project shaped by the Welsh Government to deliver on Welsh Government strategy.

This highlights 2 failures on behalf of Welsh Government:

1. A failure of Welsh Government to secure the play provision created under the Child's Play programme DESPITE an increase in legislation supporting a sufficiency of play. In fact since the Child's Play project play provision in Wales has DECREASED, for example all 7 open access play sites in Cardiff have CLOSED, and the world renowned open access play delivered in Wrexham fights for survival
2. A failure on behalf of Welsh Government to fund the duty imposed on local authorities to provide sufficiency of play provision other than irregular and inconsistent amounts of underspend which allow local authorities a matter of weeks to allocate (eg this year some local authorities have turned down this money due to the difficulties of the timescale within which it is offered) – this has been counted by Minister Iwanrann-Davies in his letter of 05-03-2018 as if it was planned spend that local authorities could rely on. Instead this type of unreliable 'last minute' funds mitigates against a sustainable source of finance for play and in no way compensates for secure designated funds for play. Families First funding is mentioned by Minister Iwanrann-Davies in his letter, and we have been fortunate to be able to use this for play sessions in Ceredigion – however this has been the only regular funding for play, and it has taken a certain amount of 'programme bending' to enable this which in many counties has not been replicated – Families First funding for play is not universal and is not a reliable income stream as guidelines are interpreted differently on the links between Families First and play across Wales.

Children in Wales are not being best served by the Welsh Government and we call on members to work towards funding this element of the Children and Families (Wales) Measure in future annual budgets.

# Background to Petition - Play Timeline in Wales

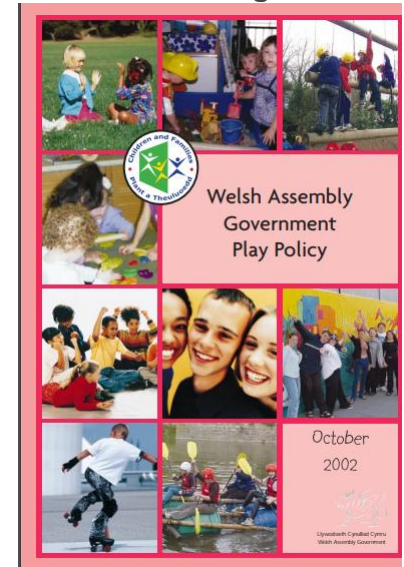
## 2002 Welsh Assembly Government Play Policy

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/3291781/?lang=en>

The Policy was announced in a plenary session of the Welsh Government on 22 October 2002, and believed to be the first in the world.

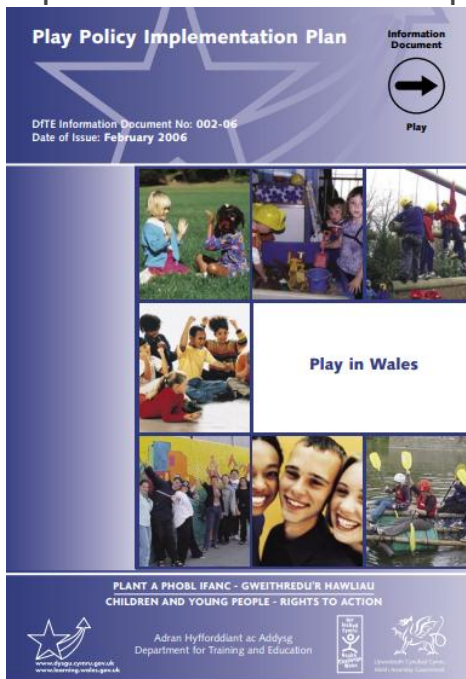
Jane Hutt, Minister for Children in Wales, spoke to the Government:

*At all levels of government we should consider the impact of our decisions on children's opportunities to play ... The Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that all children have access to rich, stimulating play experiences, with safeguards from inappropriate risk ... ,*



## 2006 Welsh Government Play Policy Implementation Plan

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/media/departmental/sell/pdf/wellbeinghealth/Policy-Implementation-Plan-2006.pdf>



The Big Lottery Fund has consulted on priorities for its programmes, agreed with the Assembly Government. It is now developing a new programme on Children's Play and Active and Healthy Families that will • develop new and stimulating play opportunities for children; • promote the long-term strategic development of play provision across Wales; and • develop joined up approaches to promote healthy eating, exercise and play among children and families. The Programme has an overall budget of approximately £20 million, and will incorporate dedicated funds for play development and for new play provision. Action: The Big Lottery Fund will work with the Welsh Assembly Government and key stakeholders working on play and healthy lifestyles to ensure that the programme meets local and national priorities and has a clear strategic impact. (Page 7)

## 2007 – 2015 Big Lottery Healthy Families programme: Child's Play

Promoting healthy and active lifestyles among children and families

<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/wales/healthy-families-childs-play>

Healthy Families



£20 million across Wales – 10 projects covering all 22 local authorities with only Powys and Ceredigion permitted to apply as single counties, all other counties had to apply as a bi or tri county projects – this was to recognise how far behind we were in developing a play service.

Ceredigion received £1 million between 2008 and 2014, RAY Ceredigion lead applicant on behalf of county, RAY established and managed the first team of playworkers, resourced them with vehicles, training, equipment etc. No continuation funds available at the end of the project in December 2014 – leading to loss of 7 of the 10 original projects

## 2010 Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010

[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2010/1/pdfs/mwaen\\_20100001\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2010/1/pdfs/mwaen_20100001_en.pdf)

‘The Welsh Government recognises that to achieve its aim of creating a play friendly Wales and to provide excellent opportunities for our children to play it is necessary for local authorities, their partners and other stakeholders to also work towards this purpose. Therefore a section on Play Opportunities was included in the [Children and Families \(Wales\) Measure 2010](#).

The Play Sufficiency Duty comes as part of the Welsh Government's anti-poverty agenda which recognises that children can have a poverty of experience, opportunity and aspiration, and that this kind of poverty can affect children from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds across Wales.’

Section 11 of the Measure places a duty on local authorities to assess and secure sufficient play opportunities for children in their area.

*Gill Byrne, 06-03-2018*