



Ward: [All in Adur and Worthing]

## Adur and Worthing Play Streets Pilot

### Report by the Executive Head for Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing

#### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs the Joint Cabinet about the Play Streets pilot carried out during 2013. Play Streets is a resident-led activity for the purposes of children's play, supervised by parents, which involves restricting traffic on a road / street for a limited period.
- 1.2 Play Streets has several benefits: getting residents and families active in their own streets and working together; improving the health and wellbeing of children and their families; reducing social isolation for older people; developing more cohesive and joined up neighbourhoods; and improving the Councils' reputation (as an enabled for community action) in local communities.
- 1.3 The Cabinet is asked to consider this report, the benefits of this work and the lessons learned and to approve its continuation into 2014 as set out below.

#### 2.0 Background

##### 2.1 Playing Out – Adur and Worthing Play Streets

- 2.1.1 The Adur and Worthing Play Streets pilot was launched earlier this year commencing with its first formal session in April (although two informal sessions were held in 2012) and the last one in October. Modelled on the Bristol "Playing Out" scheme, developed by local Bristol mums, its aim is ultimately about enabling traditional street play for children in their street/road, which older generations once took for granted.
- 2.1.2 The purpose of Playing Out is to enable children to undertake free play, in their streets, during specified dates and times and under the supervision of their parents (see the Bristol scheme below Appendix 1). This is about children taking over the pavements and road for a short period in a way that they can play safely, ride their bikes and scooters, chalk around each other and play in all the other ways that enable children to have fun, socialise and improve their health and wellbeing.
- 2.1.3 Although sessions are child-led and free play, with a degree of independence, parents are responsible for their children's safety and the running of the sessions. The Bristol Council supported scheme is promoted as an after school session,

taking place whilst the road is temporarily closed and car access is restricted (but not stopped – residents take turns to 'steward' cars needing access to or from their properties). This is not about traffic calming – this provides a dedicated space and time for children to play out.

2.1.4 Playing Out is supposed to be an easy and manageable project for small communities to do for themselves. The Playing Out website is a great resource with information, advice and materials for residents to use [www.playingout.net](http://www.playingout.net). Those that set the website up also offer advice and guidance to other areas and have indeed been involved in the Adur and Worthing Pilot.

## 2.2 Worthing's first Playing out session

2.2.1 At the time of the Jubilee celebrations, a local resident carried out Worthing's first, informal, Playing Out session, in Boundary Road, Worthing. This was free of any road closure fee (normally costing £100) because of the Jubilee celebrations. This resident did not take out Public Liability Insurance (PLP) because of the guidance she had referred to by DCLG for local authorities, which stated this should not be a requirement for street parties.

2.2.2 Following consultation with her neighbours, the road closure was secured and the first session took place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012. Over 30 children and 30 adults took part, playing a variety of free play and games: hopscotch, hula hooping, football and skateboarding. Many non-parents also joined in this session.

## 2.3 Adur and Worthing Play Streets pilot

2.3.1 Following the success of this the local resident approached the Council to develop a scheme and wrote a short report about the first session and asking for help. The barriers she found at that time included: the costs of a road closure notice (£100), our Councils' stated need for residents to take out PLP, and the lack of specific guidance for Playing Out, which is different to a street party (the current Adur and Worthing guidance is designed for street parties /events).

2.3.2 A paper was prepared for Management Team, in consultation with both Cabinet Members for Health, Safety and Wellbeing, requesting that both Councils develop and trial a Playing Out scheme locally. Research was carried out which included: looking at the Playing Out model, the DCLG guidance for road closures and insurance issues, and looking at other lead Councils that had developed Playing Out (including Oxford, Newcastle and Hackney).

2.3.3 All of the lessons learned and best practice was used to inform the development of the Adur and Worthing Play Streets pilot (we were asked to develop a different and local name by Bristol). This was led by the Communities Team, working with a number of departments and different authorities, including the General Administration Team (responsible for road closure notices), Emergency Planning, Sussex Police and West Sussex Highways Department.

2.3.4 The work that followed was carried out in collaboration with the original resident from Boundary Road and a couple of other interested residents. This helped to ensure that guidance would be simple and easy to use for applicants.

2.3.5 Three key issues were addressed at the outset: PLP, road closure fees and signage.

2.3.5.1 **Public liability insurance:** current guidance (for the purposes of a standard road closure) states that indemnity insurance must be taken out by residents. DCLG guidance however is clear, stating: “There is no requirement from central government to have public liability insurance. Many councils do not insist on it so you can challenge those who do” – taken from ‘[Your guide to organising a street party](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-guide-to-organising-a-street-party)’ (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/your-guide-to-organising-a-street-party>).

The DCLG's Guidance on social cohesion through Meaningful Interaction recommends reviewing 'whether well intentioned requirements prevent small activities from taking place and draws specific attention to the need to 'make paperwork less onerous by reducing the need for PLP' (page 21).

The other lead Councils' (mentioned above) have all stated that PLP is not a requirement for residents for their Playing Out schemes.

As such, written confirmation was provided by West Sussex Communities Team (which had responsibility for Highways at that time) in 2012, stating that residents would not require PLP for Play Street sessions.

2.3.5.2 **Closure fees:** the normal fee for a road closure is £100 (per application not per street closure), which includes administration time and consultation with Highways and Sussex Police (via email). This was viewed by residents as prohibitive to them taking part. Other lead Councils for Playing Out had all waived these fees for residents. It was therefore agreed that for this purpose of this pilot, fees would be waived on the basis that residents could apply once for between 1-6 sessions at the same time, at least 8 weeks in advance of their first road closure (provided on specific dates running between April and October).

2.3.5.3 **Signage:** ensuring clear signage for Playing Out is crucial. The Playing Out website has a good range of resources for local residents including DIY print out signs residents can use and attach to their wheelie bins for use at the beginning and end of the closure. This site and these resources were promoted to residents and help was offered to those that could not print out signs large enough for their bins. The Council also produced some correx signage for residents to borrow and liaised with the Councils Emergency Planning Officer and Sussex Police to determine the size and placement of these signs.

2.3.6 The Communities Team undertook a range of work for Play Streets including:

- Identifying the needs and issues;
- Making contact and developing relationships with residents;

- Developing the guidance for the scheme, with residents and key departments and organisations;
- Working with other partners and departments to address issues and ensure their input to the scheme;
- Helping and supporting residents with their first application and getting started;
- Linking residents together, particularly where more than one application had been received in adjacent streets, i.e. encouraging them to work together;
- Promoting the scheme – although this has not been extensive given the need to keep it relatively small to enable lessons to be learned;
- Monitoring the sessions and troubleshooting any issues, including attending sessions, providing advice and support, dealing with any complaints from neighbours;
- Feeding back progress to the Cabinet Members and LSP partners.

## 2.4 Requirements of residents for Play Streets

2.4.1 The guidance developed for this pilot sets out clearly what is required of applicants for the scheme (see Appendix 2). In the first instance residents are guided to speak to the Communities Team for help, support and advice before making an application. Following on from this, residents are signposted to other applicants to help link them together and provide mutual support. They are also, where appropriate guided to Sussex Police about signage, if needed (note this is a new development through the learning from the pilot and an Officer within Sussex Police has been identified to provide this help).

2.4.2 The guidance informs applicants about the need for agreement from the relevant Authorities (Highways and Police) for the Road Closure Order. Not all roads can be closed and this is dealt with on a case by case basis by Highways and the Police. In summary (see Appendix 2) residents must:

- Supervise and ensure parents are responsible for their children during the session. This is a resident-led activity, facilitated by the Councils.
- Inform and consult their neighbours about the scheme, including the proposed dates and times and make themselves available to speak to anyone with concerns. Note, anyone with concerns can also come and speak to the Communities Team and indeed have done so.
- Have signage in place to make it clear to oncoming traffic. As stated above, DIY signage has been promoted and used by residents. The Communities Team has also produced some signage that residents can use, free of charge. In some cases however, Road Ahead Closed signs have been an additional requirement for some roads and the Communities Team has been providing these for residents as and when specified by Highways and the Police. This has been the most challenging issue faced so far and is discussed below.
- Provide stewards at either end of the road closure to deal with any cars and, where necessary, ensure vehicles access or leave their properties in a safe and slow manner.

- Undertake a risk assessment – residents are guided to undertake this to ensure they have considered risks and put plans in place to mitigate these. Templates and help is available on the Playing Out website.
- As stated above, for a first time application, residents are guided to speak to the Communities Team for help and support.

## **2.5 Progress made and lessons learned.**

2.5.1 To date there have been 15 streets/roads that have applied for Play Streets: 11 in Worthing and 4 in Adur. The list below shows which streets/road took part and how many sessions took place.

### Worthing

Reigate Road – 2  
 Broomfield Ave – 4  
 Westcourt Road – 3  
 Boundary Road – 2  
 Tower Road – 3  
 Stanley Road – 1  
 Rugby Road – 2  
 Ripley Road – 3  
 St Dunstons Road – 1  
 Westbourne Ave – 1  
 Robson Road - 2

### Adur

Gordon Road – 1  
 Parkside - 4  
 Greenoaks – 1  
 New Road - 1

Some streets applied for more closures but then did not take up some of these. For example, Tower Road applied for 6 closures but only carried out 3.

2.5.2 For each of these sessions, Officers and / or the Cabinet Members for Health Safety and Wellbeing have attended (for a short-time and not all of the sessions) to check on progress, numbers, feedback and issues. This has enabled the Councils to gather a good overview of the scheme and any issues and this has been used to inform this report.

2.5.3 The success of Play Streets has been picked up by local and national media, resulting in South Today filming an early session in April and the BBC's One Show producing a 5 minute production on a later session in June. Both of these films showed the scheme and the Councils in a very positive light and the BBC has shared their DVD with the Councils to showcase at the LSP conference in October.

2.5.4 The most significant benefits have been evident from the feedback from the residents that have taken part, outlined in Appendix 3 (which has been written by the aforementioned local resident). The numbers of children playing out as part of this scheme, having fun, getting exercise, using their streets and roads for free play has been significant.

- 2.5.5 Alongside this there have been several other benefits: the numbers of residents involved (not all of whom are parents), the community cohesion created by residents meeting each other, older residents taking part (reducing social isolation) and the general community spirit that has been raised. This scheme has been truly about the Councils responding to local needs and facilitating community action. One resident stated that it had made her think about the Councils in a much more positive light.
- 2.5.6 Play Streets contributes to a number of the Councils priorities and fits with Members desire to see the Councils undertake a more enabling role for local communities, which includes a balancing act of reducing the barriers and red tape and facilitating and providing light touch support. Residents have set up their own, closed, Facebook site which has over a 100 local residents sharing information, learning, pictures and knowledge with each other about Play Streets. Due to the good relations that have been established with these residents, Council Officers and the Cabinet Member have been accepted as members of this Facebook group. Following the last sessions in October the comments and pictures have been extremely positive on these social media pages.
- 2.5.7 Importantly, this pilot has brought a number of issues to the attention of Officers and Members, some of which are applicable to other areas of Council business around communities and engagement. These include:

i) The Councils approach to risk.

The Councils approach to risk is fundamental to this whole scheme. Play Streets is a resident-led activity, which always carries some element of risk. There have been very few problems with the pilot overall. However there is always the risk that something could go wrong. Residents are provided with clear guidance and encouraged to work together, consult their neighbours, they are guided to risk assess their own sessions and put control measures into place and most importantly – they take responsibility for their own sessions and children. All of this minimises any risks and maximises the aforementioned benefits of the scheme.

However, no risk will ever be eliminated and problems could occur. If the scheme is to continue to work it is essential that it does so with minimum red tape and maximum “common sense”. For some departments and authorities this requires a culture change from being risk averse to enabling communities to take charge and take responsibility. The Adur and Worthing pilot is being looked at by Play England, who is trying to roll out Playing Out nationally, to see how our lessons can be used nationally to encourage other councils to take up similar schemes.

The approach to risk does however need to consider how it can be practically managed and discussions have been held with WS Highways, the Councils Emergency Planning Officer and Sussex Police to help find a sensible way forward.

ii) Adur and Worthing resident take-up

Promotion of this scheme has been limited, in a planned manner, to keep uptake manageable and enable lessons to be learned with a smaller number of residents. A key resident who has helped promote the scheme lives in Worthing and for this reason uptake there has been better than Adur, where there have been only 4

applicants. If the Cabinet agrees to continue this work, promotion can be rolled out across Adur and Worthing through some key places: schools, Children and Family Centres, residents (word of mouth is key) and other venues. Finding lead residents in Adur will also be critical to its future success.

iii) Inequalities

Play Streets has largely been taken up in more affluent areas across Adur and Worthing. This was at the anticipated at the outset, i.e. early adopters have residents in positions to take this scheme up. Indeed by working with residents who have readily taken up this scheme we have made contact with a number of valuable people that are assets in our local communities, some of whom are keen to help and engage others. These residents and their promotion of this scheme will inevitably encourage others to engage and help us to introduce this scheme into areas of most need in future years.

iv) Public Liability Insurance.

The issue with PLP did cause some problems. This was largely due to concerns being raised by WS Highways prior to the first session about the need for all closures to have Road Ahead Signs, which the guidance states must be A-framed and due to the risks of blowing or falling over require residents to take out £5 million of PLP cover.

This did create some issues at the outset and a lot of reassurance work was required for those first residents that signed up. Officers did resolve this by creating correx signs and lending some A-framed signs for roads and personally delivering this to the roads that had signed up. The issue of PLP was dealt with through Adur and Worthing Councils providing this free of charge for applicants.

Since this time written confirmation has been given directly by the Chief Executive of WSCC stating that “there is no need for additional signs or insurances to be in place” for the purposes of Play Streets.

v) Signage

Since the development of the scheme and the work with Sussex Police and WS Highways it has been shown that there is three levels of signage for Play Streets. The first is for all closures and the latter two should only be for some of those that are appropriate.

- (i) “Road Closure” signs – required for all the closures, placed immediately at the beginning and end of the street/road. Residents are pointed to the Playing Out website and its resources enabling signs to be printed out and placed on to bins with bunting placed between bins to stop traffic. Correx signs have also been printed which are waterproof (but not reflective for the darker months) that can be attached to bins.
- (ii) “Road Ahead Closed” signs – these are required for **some** closures, placed before the road to warn motorists about the closure. Highways and Sussex

Police have recently agreed that these signs will only be needed in cases where the “Road Closure” signs cannot be placed at the immediate junction between the road closure and the next road. The correx “Road Ahead Closed” signs purchased by the Communities Team can be used by residents, instead of the metal a-frames, by attaching them to street furniture or weighted bins.

(iii) In some cases, where prior notice is needed but might be unclear, a unique road sign is needed, warning motorists of a specific named road that will be closed. This was the case for one street so far and a sign was produced for these residents.

vi) Resident consultation

The guidance states residents must consult their neighbours about their closure and engagement with residents has highlighted this has worked well overall with some good flyers and letters being produced and shared with other residents. There have however been four complaints from neighbours about the scheme to the Councils, some of who have claimed not to have not to have been consulted. Whether they were or were not consulted however cannot be confirmed. The organisers claimed they did and one complainant did concede that they may have thrown the paper in the bin. On each occasion the complainant has spoken to the Communities Team about their concerns and where possible feedback to the organisers has been given (note on a few occasions the complainant requested that their concerns remain confidential). One way of improving this could be to disseminate leaflets on a Sunday to maximise the chances of consultation literature being seen.

vii) Road closure permissions

In some cases there have been applications from a few streets next to one another, which could have had a detrimental impact on through-traffic. In these cases residents were encouraged to work together and take turns for their closures, leading to wider benefits of Play Streets by residents and children working together and meeting one another. This has led to some good links between communities.

viii) Dates

For the pilot six dates were offered per month from April through to October. These all fell on different days to trial what worked best. Resident feedback highlights the Sunday session as the best one (see Appendix 3). WS Highways and Sussex Police have both stated that fixed dates should be avoided going forward due to capacity of all the closures on the same dates. Allowing flexibility around future dates would help to spread the workload and capacity, for the Communities Team and other departments/agencies involved. This has been discussed with residents and they are in agreement.

2.6 Since this scheme has been piloted there have been funding announcements nationally with Play England being allocated £1.1m by the Department of Health for the purposes of street play. They are working closely with the Bristol Playing Out scheme and have approached our Councils to show case this Pilot, asking for information updates in the form of a blog to help inform their work. This pilot has therefore been ahead of the game and is helping to shape this national programme.

### **3.0 Play Streets proposals for 2014 and beyond**

- 3.1 Play Streets has on the whole been deemed to be a great success. From the Councils' perspective it has been invaluable working alongside a group of residents that have been so enthusiastic, driven and patient. The learning from this has been invaluable and can be applied to other areas of the Councils' business, particularly around risk, the Councils role as an enabler and community involvement. The scheme is very much about enabling the community to get involved, reducing the barriers and working together.
- 3.2 Going forward there is a real desire to see Play Streets continue into and beyond 2014. Members are asked to consider the background and lessons learned and to consider supporting an on-going Play Streets scheme in Adur and Worthing which would continue to build on the existing scheme and embed it further, particularly in Adur and in areas of deprivation (although it would not be exclusively about our areas of most need given the other and wider benefits of the scheme outlined above) and in those neighbourhoods we are focused on through neighbourhood working and Think Family Neighbourhoods.
- 3.3 Both WSCC Highways and Sussex Police have confirmed their support for the scheme and agreed that the existing consultation process for road closures will continue in the way that it has been developed during this pilot. This will include comments being passed to each individual applicant and road signs and types (e.g. whether Road Ahead signs are needed) being reviewed on a case-by-case basis and commented upon.
- 3.4 The Police have also requested a database be established of all road closures to ensure that the number and location of multiple road closures do not impact on localised traffic management and through flow. The establishment of such a database is currently being considered by the General Administration Team working with the GIS Team. Where there is multiple road closure requests on adjacent streets on the same date, Sussex Police have requested that the Council Communities Team continue to liaise with applicants and encourage them to work together, sharing their road closures, as outlined above.
- 3.5 The conditions of the scheme would require Members to agree:
- (i) to continue to waiver the road closure fee for applications, on the basis of one application for the year (which could include several road closures). This does require some administration time from General Administration Team for each closure;
  - (ii) flexible dates and days, which are not fixed, allocated on the basis of one application for no more than 12 closures in any calendar year. This was an important point for residents who felt that some residents would want to close their roads more regularly to enable residents to get used to the scheme and

- children to benefit from more regular sessions, which could be monthly. Other residents could apply for fewer sessions;
- (iii) that PLP is not a requirement for the scheme, as outlined in the report and subject to residents following the Play Streets guidance and being assisted (by the Councils and other residents) with their first session;
- (iv) clarity about these sessions being about children's play and not a "street party".

#### **4.0 Legal**

- 4.1 There is no legal obligation upon the Council to provide financial or other assistance to the Voluntary and Community Sector. However, the Council recognises the vital part played by voluntary groups in the life of the Borough and District.
- 4.2 The Council does have the discretionary power to provide assistance, financial or otherwise, to the Voluntary and Community Sector as under Section 1(1) Localism Act 2011 a Local Authority has the power to do anything that individuals generally may do anywhere in the UK, or elsewhere, for commercial purpose, for a charge or without charge and for the benefit of the Authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area, or not. The general power of competence does not apply in situations where pre-existing legislation prevents it but there is no such pre-existing legislation that would be relevant to the Play Streets proposal.
- 4.3 Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers the Council to provide either indoor or outdoor recreational facilities as it thinks fit and that includes the power to provide assistance of any kind, either without charge or on such payment as the Authority thinks fit.

#### **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 There are financial implications for this scheme in terms of Officer time and support, including:
- the Communities Team and the work that has been done to set this scheme up and support it;
  - the General Administration Team who administer the road closures. The number of applications received during the Pilot was higher than the number of closures that took place (i.e. not all were carried out as stated above). The impact of this on the team will need to be closely monitored in the future;
  - Emergency Planning who input as appropriate;
  - WSCC Highways and Sussex Police as statutory agencies that need to be consulted with.
- 5.2 Other small financial costs have been met by the Communities Team for the purposes of signage for the closures.
- 5.3 The benefits of this scheme however outweigh these costs and demonstrate that for some investment of Officer time alongside minimal resources, considerable community impact can be achieved. It can also lead to other resources for the area. Indeed the lead resident for Play Streets has already submitted an application to Worthing CLC for funding for further support for the scheme, which includes training

for residents using Playing out Bristol and for resource packs that can be used by residents.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 The Joint Strategic Committee is recommended to:

- i) Note the report, lessons learned and benefits to this scheme as outlined in the report;
- ii) Consider and approve the continuation of Play Streets into an beyond 2014 as set out within Section 3 and ensuring that it adheres to the recommendations set out under 3.5.

### **Local Government Act 1972 Background Papers:**

None.

### **Contact Officer:**

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## **Schedule of Other Matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

- 1.1 Corporate priority 2) “Work more closely with and commission our communities, the voluntary sector, public organisations, business and commercial sectors”

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

- 2.1 (c) Deliver interventions that improve the health of our communities.
- Adur and Worthing Public Health Plan
  - Wellbeing Hubs/Commissioning Role
  - Promote active, healthy lifestyles

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

- 3.1 Sustainability issues have been considered in the report.

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

- 4.1 This proposal will have a positive impact on some sections of the community including those that are socially disadvantaged.

### **5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- 5.1 There are benefits to community safety in terms of working with children and communities.

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

- 6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

### **7.0 Reputation**

- 7.1 Project has positively raised the profile of Adur and Worthing Councils in the local community.

### **8.0 Consultations**

- 8.1 Consultation has been carried out with residents, internal Departments, WS Highways and Sussex Police.

### **9.0 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 Risks of the community leading this activity as stated in the report. This is mitigated by risk assessments for residents and clear guidance for them to follow along with support.

## **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

10.1 These are issues for residents and as stated above and in the report.

## **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

## **12.0 Partnership Working**

12.1 Partnership working strengthened between Adur and Worthing Councils, local residents, WSCC and Sussex Police.

## Appendix 1

Press Release for Bristol

### **Red tape cut to encourage playing out**

#### **Media enquiries**

For follow up media enquiries on this press release please call the Press Office on **0117 922 2650**.

Release date: Tue, 02/08/2011

A campaign to enable more children and young people to play out safely on residential streets is being backed by the city council.

The green light has been given for more frequent road closures for a few hours after school by groups of neighbours and communities, without having to apply each time. Until now, residents have been allowed to apply for three formal road closures a year for street parties or other community activities.

Instead they will be able to do one annual application as long as all the neighbours are consulted.

The aim is to encourage more resident-organised street play sessions for children and young people in their streets, based on a model developed by the Bristol-based Playing Out project, where the street becomes a temporary 'play street', with through traffic diverted but residents still have car access for parking. Residents 'steward' either end of the street to ensure this happens safely.

This will be the theme of this year's popular Bristol Playday on College Green tomorrow (Wednesday 3 August) between 12 noon to 4pm.

It will highlight the benefit for communities of seeking more playing out opportunities for their children and young people, together with a number of street play events around Bristol, organised by residents with support from our partners Playing Out

[www.playingout.net](http://www.playingout.net) and Streets Alive [www.streetsalive.org.uk](http://www.streetsalive.org.uk)

Alice Ferguson, co-founder and Director of the Playing Out project said: "There is a widespread feeling that children need to have more freedom to play outside safely, for their health and happiness. We are very happy to see Bristol taking a lead in this way and hope that other cities will soon follow."

Chris Gittins, Director of Streets Alive said, "During the 100s of street parties in Bristol every year residents have told us how amazing it is for kids to be able to play safely for a change in the street. Our surveys have clearly shown that the events give them courage to support play at other times in the street or elsewhere."

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Cllr Clare Campion-Smith said: "Playing is such an important part of a child's life, giving them the freedom to run around outside and enjoy themselves with their friends. It's healthy, it's fun and it helps build our communities.

"Bristol has a strong reputation for encouraging street parties, as was seen for the Royal Wedding. We now want to lead the way in helping communities organise safe playing out for children and young people in our neighbourhoods on a more regular basis."

Cllr Jon Rogers, Cabinet Member for Care and Health said: “This is a very significant move for a city the size of Bristol, sending out a clear signal to parents and communities that we will support them organise street play activities.

“Parents are concerned that our children and young people are living more sedentary life styles, so initiatives like this are an important way of encouraging our youngsters to play outside in a safe environment.”

Transport Cabinet Member Tim Kent said: “We were very keen that the rules governing street closures should be relaxed and red tape cut to help community groups make this initiative happen on the ground. We believe this is a first for our city and I hope will be taken up enthusiastically.”

Details of the new procedure and a new application form are being worked on by council officers and will be launched this autumn.



# **GUIDANCE ON APPLICATIONS FOR A TEMPORARY PLAY STREET ORDERS**

# Guidance on Applications for a Temporary Play Street Order (TPSO)

## Important – please read carefully!

Please use this guidance if you wish to apply for a Temporary Play Street Order. This Order will permit you to close your road for the purpose of Street Play on one or all of the above specified dates.

Adur District Council & Worthing Borough Council cannot guarantee that an Order will be made, and any Order made under this application will be revoked if any of the Council's current Road Closure Conditions are not met.

## 1.0. Temporary Play Street Sessions

A Temporary Play Street is a resident-led, outdoor free street play activity for children. It is independent from the Councils and requires parent / adult supervision. It is a short stewarded after school road closure which gives children the space to play out. The road is closed to through traffic, although residents have access if necessary.

Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council are piloting a Temporary Play Street scheme during 2013, enabling residents to apply for a Road Closure Order at no cost on one or all of 6 specified dates:

Friday 19th April,  
Tuesday 7th May  
Sunday 9th June  
Monday 8th July  
Friday 6th September  
Monday 7th October

Temporary Play Streets is an easy and manageable project for residents to do. Playing Out is the Bristol-based organisation who originated this idea and can provide guidance and resources to anyone wanting to do it on their street.

To find out more, please visit [www.playingout.net](http://www.playingout.net) .

Adur and Worthing Councils' Communities Team is also able to offer support to residents, if needed, to establish their first session (Please see Communities Team contacts on page 5).

## 2.0. What permissions and licences are needed?

Typically a TPSO session will involve closing the street on which the session is being held. To do this, you need to submit a TPSO road closure application at least six weeks before the event is due to take place.

No activity requiring any form of license (under the Licensing Act 2003) may be undertaken when this Order is in force.

An Order is made entirely for the purposes of children's play and may not involve the placement of any structure (e.g. bouncy castles or stalls) on the highway during its use.

### **3.0. Insurance**

We are delighted to advise that Adur & Worthing Councils do not require you to take out third party insurance for the purposes of street play. You will, of course, be responsible for the safety of your event and you may wish to take out insurance even though it is not required by the Councils.

In practice Play Streets are usually very low risk events, but we strongly advise that you carry out a risk assessment (See 5.0. Temporary Play Street Order FAQs and checklist): think about minimising risks from traffic, electricity, games, cooking, rain, etc. Agree in advance that everyone should take responsibility for themselves and watch out for each other, especially children - you might say this on your invitation. See also the insurance section of [www.streetparty.co.uk](http://www.streetparty.co.uk) for more information.

### **4.0. Barriers / Signs**

The applicants must themselves provide, erect and dismantle barriers and signs which clearly show that the road has been closed. All barriers should be clearly visible to approaching motorists before they enter the road which is closed to avoid the possibility that vehicles will be reversing and turning in confined areas which will be thronged with pedestrians.

Vehicular access at walking speed for emergency services / residents / businesses must be maintained during any closure period and supervised by a responsible adult.

Remember that members of the public cannot stop traffic to close a road, wait until there is no traffic approaching and then put out your road closed signs.

Residents are advised to print out Road Closure signs for the purposes of TPSO's which can be accessed via the Streets Alive Website <http://www.streetparty.org.uk/road-closed-signs.aspx> . It is the applicant's responsibility to stick these to barriers (which could be wheelie bins) at each point of closure. Each closure must be supervised and maintained at all times by responsible and clearly identifiable adults.

### **5.0. Temporary Play Street Order FAQs and checklist**

#### **Q. How do I tell people about the Temporary Play Street session?**

A. Inviting people face to face is a must to get people involved. You need to send a resident consultation letter (See below for template) round– this is needed to show the Council that you have “consulted” everyone. TPSO's are for residents only and there is no outside “publicity” (that would make it a public event). Remember to include local businesses in your consultation if they would be affected by your road closure.

#### **Q. Who organises the Temporary Play Street session?**

A. There should be a lead person from the street who can apply for the road closure order on behalf of the residents. This person should also be the main contact for the Council and the Emergency Services.

#### **Q. How long should a Temporary Street Play session last?**

A. Temporary Street Play sessions take place on the weekend or after school allowing

children the space to play out. No closure may be of more than 3 hours duration.

**Q. Do we need insurance cover?**

PLEASE SEE SECTION 3.0. GUIDANCE NOTES

**Q. Do I need a Risk Assessment?**

A. A formal risk assessment is not a legal requirement for a residents' event such as this. However, we would recommend doing a simple risk/benefit exercise, to help think it through and for your own peace of mind. A good example of a Risk Assessment Template can be found on the Playing Out website here <http://playingout.net/instructions-and-helpful-things/print-outs-and-posters/>

**Q. How do I close the road?**

A. You must have a road closure order in place to close the road. The order will identify the times from when you can close the road.

**Q. Do I need to have marshals?**

A. Although there is no need to employ qualified persons to marshal your event, you must have sufficient stewards position themselves by the road closure signs to answer any questions from vehicle drivers and also to stop non-residents from "gatecrashing" your event. Marshalls should wear a suitable reflective tabard. (The Communities Team has limited stock of reflective tabards to lend out, please contact Officers listed below).

**Q. Do we need to clean up afterwards?**

A. Yes, you will need to clean up after your session. It's your street, so keep your local area clean and tidy. Remember that the clean-up time should be considered when applying for the road closure order so that the clean-up can be safely undertaken while the road is closed. Do not forget to take down all signage after the event.

**6.0. What do I need to do now?**

1. Start by asking a couple of neighbours you know whether they are keen. Agree a date early on.
2. Invite the whole street to the first meeting, ideally *in the street* as it is more welcoming, or try different houses to meet. 2 or 3 more meetings will be needed to chat and plan. Someone could take notes of who is doing what and to copy invitations to all houses. Keep meetings informal and share out the activities and jobs – don't let anyone dominate.
3. Complete the road closure application form for a TPSO and send it to the address shown on the form, together with all the other documents specified. Make sure that this is done **at least eight weeks before your event**.
4. Please ensure that you contact one of the Officers below prior to making an application:

Lucy Adams, Active Communities Officer,

[lucy.adams@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.adams@adur-worthing.gov.uk), 01273 263174

Lee Billingham, Neighbourhood Worker,  
[lee.billingham@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:lee.billingham@adur-worthing.gov.uk) 01903 221053.

These Officers can also help link residents together to help support and guide each other.

5. There is also a comprehensive website for residents to use <http://playingout.net> which provides information and helpful tips around planning, consulting and provides templates for leaflets for neighbours, posters etc.

### Template Consultation Letter to residents

To: Resident  
My tel. no: .....  
My e-mail: .....

From: .....  
Address: .....  
Date: .....

Dear Sir / Madam,

#### **Re: Proposed Temporary Play Street Order**

I am writing to inform you that I am in the process of applying for a Temporary Play Street Order on the following road(s):

.....  
.....

This Order would be valid until ..... and, subject to Council approval. The closures would only take place at the following periods / times:

.....  
.....

The road will be fully closed to through traffic and points of closure will be marshalled. Residents will be allowed full access but are requested to drive at walking speed when within the closure area. It is not necessary to move parked vehicles from the street. Events will be under adult supervision and access will be maintained for emergency services at all times in all parts of the street(s). Parents will be fully responsible for their own children's safety and behaviour.

Please direct any comments, queries or objections regarding this proposal to me in the first instance. If I cannot resolve your concern I will refer it to [Road.Closures@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:Road.Closures@adur-worthing.gov.uk) , or Road Closures, General Admin, Customer Services, Worthing Borough Council, Town Hall, Worthing, BN11 1HA

Many thanks in advance for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

.....

## **Playing Out – Adur & Worthing Pilot 2013**

*Report written by residents and key organisers of Playing Out sessions, compiled by Kathryn Kay  
October 2013*

**A core group of organisers of Adur & Worthing Playing Out sessions was set up by Kathryn Kay in May 2013, part way through the Temporary Play Streets Pilot. This group consists of those who have hosted Playing Out sessions in their streets and meets regularly to share thoughts, comments, issues and visions for the future of street play in Worthing. Not all organisers have been able to make meetings but have been invited to do so, and some have provided comments by email.**

### **Timeline**

- June 2012 First one-off 'Playing Out' session, Boundary Road, West Worthing, using Jubilee Street Party application (as fee was waived)  
Cllr Paul High (Cllr for Boundary Road) and Cllr Paul Yallop (leader of the council) attended, both bringing their children. Lucy Adams (Active communities) and Lee Billingham (Neighbourhood Worker) also both attended.
- Sep 2012 Playing Out session on Boundary Road at the request of Cllr Tom Wye and Lucy Adams (Active Communities) to further understand the nature of a Playing Out session  
Council waived fee for road closure. Lucy Adams, Lee Billingham, Cllr Tom Wye attended.
- Feb 2013 Temporary Play Streets Pilot was launched by Adur & Worthing Councils, announcing the 6 dates where it would be free to close the road for the purposes of children's play.
- Feb 2013 Information about the pilot shared through Facebook groups – e.g. Transition Town Worthing; Arnica; Worthing Mums and Dads and through friends. Adur & Worthing Playing Out Facebook group set up.
- March 2013 First streets have residents' meetings. Kathryn Kay attended three of these to offer support.
- April 2013 First date of the trial – 3 streets hosted sessions.
- May 2013 Ripley Road's Playing Out session featured on BBC South Today and on BBC Radio Sussex. Pilot scheme also featured in the Worthing Herald.
- May 2013 Adur & Worthing Playing Out Core Group (comprising of street organisers and main helpers who wished to be involved) set up to share ideas, support each other and discuss the future.
- June 2013 BBC The One Show came to film a session in Westcourt Road, Worthing with childhood expert Tim Gill. The film was aired on national TV on 24 June.

- June 2013 Transition Town Worthing invited Kathryn to give a presentation on Playing Out at a meeting where they launched their Local Groups initiative connecting local people).
- June 2013 Kathryn visited the Playing Out shop in Bristol to meet Alice Ferguson for a discussion about the sustainability of the Playing Out model with Tim Gill, Claudia Draper (Hackney organiser) and others.
- Sept 2013 Kathryn invited to represent Adur & Worthing Playing Out at a Better Places meeting (Council meeting – part of Wellbeing Team)
- Sept 2013 Street organisers meeting to discuss the pilot and plans for next year. Cllr Tom Wye, Lucy Adams and Tina Favier attended.
- Oct 2013 Kathryn was invited to introduce the Playing Out clip from The One Show at the 'Waves Ahead' council conference.
- Oct 2013 Adur and Worthing Playing Out formally set up as a Community Group with a constitution and committee of 8 members (including Lucy Adams as an advisory member). Opening a bank account.

## **Response to the Temporary Play Street Trial**

Number of streets 15

Number of Playing Out sessions 32

Number of children benefitted 510

Overall the trial has been seen as a huge success by the organisers, residents and children.

The set dates of the pilot proved quite restrictive in terms of work and after school club commitments for different families on a street. Therefore some streets could not commit to all dates, or had to cancel a session because of stewarding or work issues. Also a handful of streets in a small area wishing to apply on only selected dates meant that they had to share the sessions between them rather than run their own. However having a deadline for applying for each session possibly mobilised people into getting things going in their street. There was a mixture of streets applying for just one session, a handful and all 6.

We think this worked well for the pilot, but we would like each street to be able to choose the frequency and the day of the week in the future. No particular day worked best for everyone.

## **Spreading the word – how streets got involved**

Most of the street organisers had heard about the scheme through a friend or through the posting and sharing in local groups on Facebook. One street in Shoreham had heard through a school's newsletter and one had read it the very small paragraph in the Herald.

A small number had previously heard about Playing Out Bristol via the internet or the Guardian article (2012) and had been thinking that they would like to get something going in Worthing, so were delighted to hear of the council endorsement already in place! Due to time constraints we so far have not able to publicise this more widely but as more streets

are involved now and have experiences to share then we can publicise more next year, depending on funding.

There are currently 112 members in our Adur and Worthing Playing Out Facebook group who support each other, share photos and experiences. It is also a forum for people to ask questions, especially when preparing for their first session. A number of streets have set up their own Facebook groups to plan for sessions, organise stewards etc.

## **Quotes from residents/organisers/children**

"It's made me view the council in a much more positive light" (street organiser)

"People are more likely to hello to one another, and even the odd chit chat with someone they would previously not spoken to." (street organiser)

"I think it has been well thought out and Lucy and Lee at the council were great" (street organiser)

"The scheme is fantastic, the neighbourhood adults have bonded as much as the children." (street organiser)

"I'm just being a pirate dracula!" (child)

"This is a great idea, I would like traffic calming all the time" (resident, works from home, no children at home)

"Older children got involved too. We had a group of teenagers just sitting in the road chatting"(street organiser)"

"It's brilliant" (child, aged 5)

"Such a lovely community event, wonderful" (resident, no children at home)

"It was fun, I kept falling over" (child, 5)

"My house is all clean and tidy [due to the kids playing out]" (resident and parent of 2 children)

"The sound of children playing is much better than the sound of traffic" (resident, non-parent)

"I loved watching the children make up ways of playing with the equipment and obviously enjoying being outside so much" (street organiser)

"Great team work between organisers, Lucy and Kathryn. My children often ask to 'play out' now and we have become friendlier with some of our neighbours." (street organiser)

"I had no idea this many children lived on our street" (parent)

"this is the best day EVER". Big tears at bed time that we can't close the road again tomorrow. (young girl)

"My disabled neighbour who rarely leaves the house got involved, chatted to neighbours and enjoyed watching the children playing" (street organiser)

"I'm having a lovely time watching the children" (older resident who lives in a flat and is unable to get out much. She came out and sat on a bench and watched the children playing.)

"Just to say what a great idea it was to open up the street yesterday and how wonderful it was to see the kids out playing. We are both in our sixties and it really brought back our childhood in London, where we'd be out every night playing street cricket & other games. All the kids knew each other and it brought the parents closer together, too. We noticed how many adults came out yesterday and guess some were meeting for the first time. This

was a very uplifting experience for us and we send our best wishes and congratulations to all involved.” (residents without young children)

Reports post-session include a greater sense of community cohesion; neighbours borrowing tools; offering to babysit; going out for drinks; chatting in the street; finding friends from school (who they didn't know lived so close); having a yard sale; children playing together on the pavement etc. Two older neighbours meeting for the first time during a session discovered a shared knowledge of another town where they had both lived at the same time in the past.

On a couple of streets where older children *do* play out sometimes (choosing the safest part of the street), the residents still commented on how positive the Playing Out session was, as it brought children of all ages out together, creating more cohesion and was more inclusive.

## Issues and resolutions

Response from residents has been over 90% positive or no objections raised.

- Where objections were raised, organisers tried to resolve by speaking to the resident or via email and explaining more about the scheme, the benefits and how, if at all, the resident would be affected. If after the session, the resident was still unhappy, the organiser asked for any suggestions in how to improve the process.
- Long roads with a bend in the middle were more difficult to manage during sessions. One street with a lot of car movement decided for the next session to have a Playing Out area (shorter section). This needed more stewards but was more successful. Another street had a floating steward on a bicycle watching out for car movements within the section.
- Drivers trying to drive past the barriers. In one case, a PCSO was informed who visited the motorist after the event.

## Wider network

- Blog post on the Adur and Worthing scheme posted on the Playingout.net website (written by Kathryn)
- A headmaster from a local school showed the One Show clip in assembly to all the children to illustrate how to look after each other and how to play with a greater sense of awareness of those around them.

### **Blog posts inspired by Playing Out in Worthing:**

Resident and parent – author of Bringing Up Brits blog:

<http://www.bringingupbrits.co.uk/blog/playing-out-days-in-britain>

Street organiser and parent who works for Action for Market Towns and wrote a post for their website:

<http://towns.org.uk/2013/06/11/activate-street-play-in-your-neighbourhood-with-playing-out/>

## **Support from Adur & Worthing**

All organisers have expressed how supportive the council have been over the scheme, especially Lucy Adams who has been so friendly, approachable and willing to help at all times, going over and above her job to make sure sessions ran smoothly. Help and support from Lucy with signage, paperwork and objections, especially for a very first Playing Out session has been invaluable.

## **Issues and considerations for the future**

- What is the procedure if a session has to be cancelled for illness/lack of stewards?
- To make sure the post-application process is made aware to first time applicants (who the acknowledgement email will come from; time-scale for formal yes/no etc)
- Drivers trying to drive past the barriers to get to their drives
- Drivers reversing off drives without realising it's a Playing Out session
- Clarity of the use of Road Ahead Closed signage

## **Next year**

- To be able to apply for a year's worth of regular sessions at once and to be able to choose the days.
- Publicising via school newsletters
- Reaching out to Adur Facebook groups
- Sharing and storing of Road Closed signs
- Workshop with Alice Ferguson from Bristol Playing Out to encourage new streets, support existing streets
- Kathryn is applying for CIF money through Michael Cloake, CLC member, for a workshop,
- materials (signs and leaflets, hi-viz vests etc) and promotional leaflets
- Worthing Daily (online newspaper for Worthing) has asked to publish a story on Worthing Playing Out. Kathryn has already met with the editor to discuss the scheme.
- Vicki Hoarty, the editor of Families magazine may be interested in running a story. Kathryn will follow this up.
- Working with Lee Billingham through the NAPs and Group Spaces to encourage streets from the more deprived wards to become involved. Kathryn has been invited to meetings and is on the
- Group Spaces network but due to time restraints has been unable to get involved this year.

## **Kathryn's voluntary involvement:**

- Setting up the Facebook group. Spreading the word through Facebook.
- Emailing and supporting street organisers.
- Organising 3 meet-ups in the pub
- Attending 5 other streets' Playing Out sessions to meet residents and organisers
- Giving talks and attending meetings

- Liaising with Alice Ferguson and Naomi Fuller (Playing Out CIC) especially over the press interest. Briefing the media crew and producer and being present when they were filming to support the street organiser and to ensure the media didn't alter the 'feel' of a free-play Playing Out session.
- Visiting the Playing Out shop in Bristol for a meeting on the future of the Playing Out model
- Writing reports and liaising with Lucy Adams