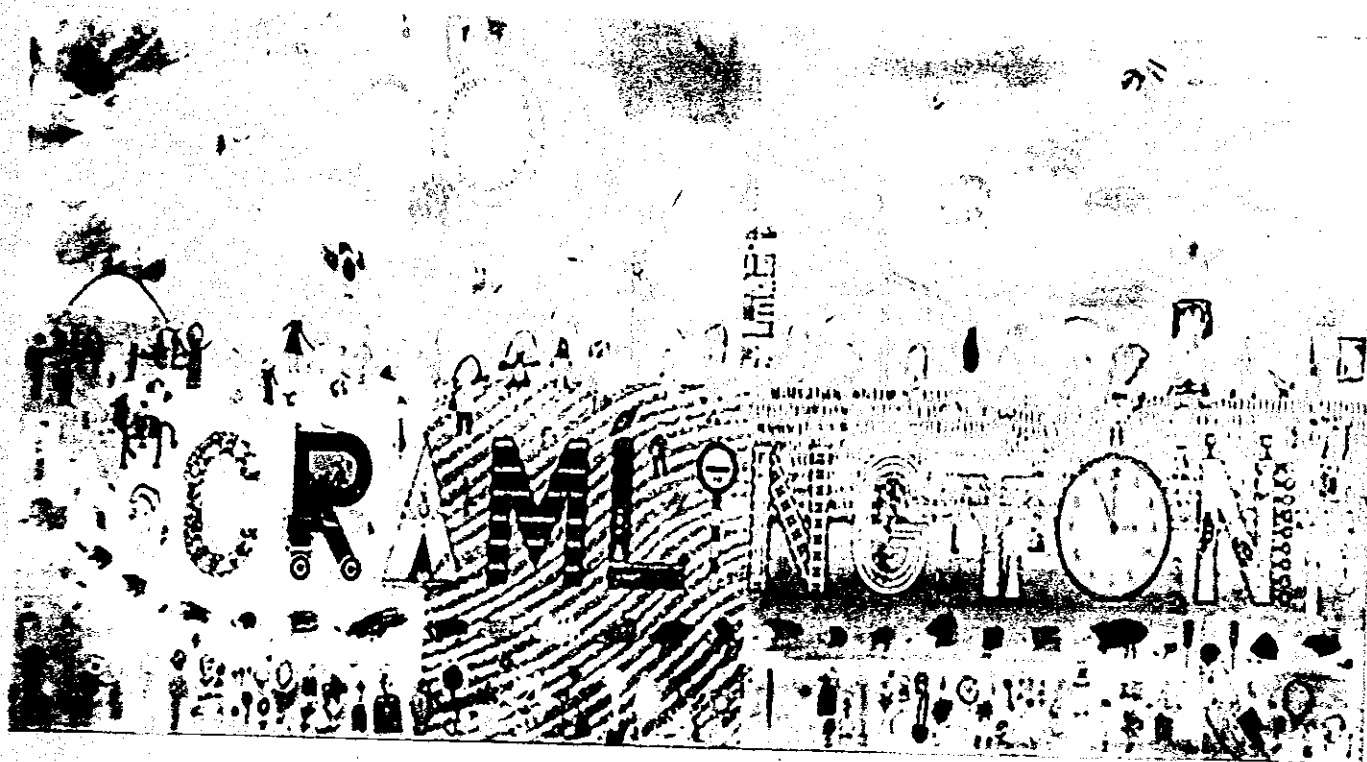


CRAMLINGTON: A CHILD FRIENDLY TOWN ?



**Jackie Boldon
Play consultant
April 2018**

1. WHAT IS A CHILD FRIENDLY TOWN ?

According to UNICEF who run the child friendly cities program, a child friendly city, or more generally a system of local governance, is a city, town or community which is committed to fulfilling children's rights, including their right to:

- Influence decision making about their city.
- Express their opinion on the city they want.
- Participate in family, community and social life.
- Receive basic services such as health care and education.
- Drink safe water and have access to proper sanitation.
- Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse.
- Walk safely in the streets on their own.
- Meet friends and play.
- Have green spaces with plants and animals.
- Live in an unpolluted environment.
- Participate in cultural and social activities.
- Be an equal citizen of their city with access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability.

UNICEF see the Child Friendly Town as the embodiment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the local level, which in practice means that children's rights are reflected in policies, laws, programmes and budgets. In a child friendly town, children are active agents; their voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence decision making.

2. THE UNICEF CHILD FRIENDLY CITY INITIATIVE – HISTORY AND SUPPORT

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative was launched in 1996 to act on a resolution passed at the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitats 2). The conference declared that the well-being of children is the ultimate indicator of a healthy habitat, a democratic society and good governance. Other related initiatives include UNESCO's Growing up in Cities and UN Habitat's Safer Cities Programme. A broad range of issues, concerns, trends and interests have influenced the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities initiative, including a growing interest in how community approaches can meet the Millennium Development Goals and the recognition that civic engagement and child participation are key to good local governance. The Child Friendly Cities secretariat was established in 2000.

The UNICEF website contains general information about the work of UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) across the world. *UNICEF is active in 190 countries and territories, promoting the rights and well-being of every child. The mission of UNICEF is "All children have a right to survive, thrive and fulfill their potential – to the benefit of a better world."* The UNICEF UK website contains a wealth of information on the Child Friendly Cities initiative including the accreditation process, case studies and toolkits.

UNICEF UK outline their role as: *"Using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as our guide, we work with political leaders, young people, social workers, community organisations and others, to make sure children have a say in shaping local services. In doing so we aim to create neighbourhoods, communities and cities where children and young people are treated with dignity, have a say in decisions that affect them, experience services that are built with and for them, know what services are available and feel safe and prioritised."*

The Child Friendly Cities and Communities Initiative is a worldwide programme. Launched in 1996 and active in 24 countries, the initiative supports cities and communities to put the human rights of children and young people at their heart, translating UNICEF's global mission into practical action at the local level. Between 2013 and 2016 the UNICEF UK team worked with Newcastle, Leeds, Glasgow, Derry, Stabane and Tower Hamlets on a pilot and launched an accreditation process in 2017.

4. IS CRAMLINGTON A CHILD FRIENDLY TOWN ?

In January 2017, the Cramlington Town Council received a report on Informal, Creative and Active Play which included a recommendation to take the first steps in creating a Child Friendly Town by organising a world café style event to listen to the views of children and young people. This report aims to explore a range of services which are available for children in Cramlington including: education, early years, youth services, play, sport and recreation and leisure and entertainment. It also explores a range of issues including: housing and safety, transport and independent mobility, green space, nature and conservation and food. It is not a comprehensive listing of all services and all issues, but aims to provide a starting point for further discussion and most importantly consultation with children and young people on the extent to which Cramlington could claim to be a child friendly town. A further debate would also be whether or not to apply for UNICEF accreditation. The final two sections of the report provide some recommendations for next steps. The recommendations take account of the UNICEF criteria for a Child Friendly Town (as outlined in section 1) and current opportunities arising from the timely development of the Cramlington Neighbourhood Plan.

Services for children and young people:

- 4.1. Education
- 4.2. Early Years Services
- 4.3. Youth Services
- 4.4. Play
- 4.5. Sport and recreation
- 4.6. Leisure and entertainment

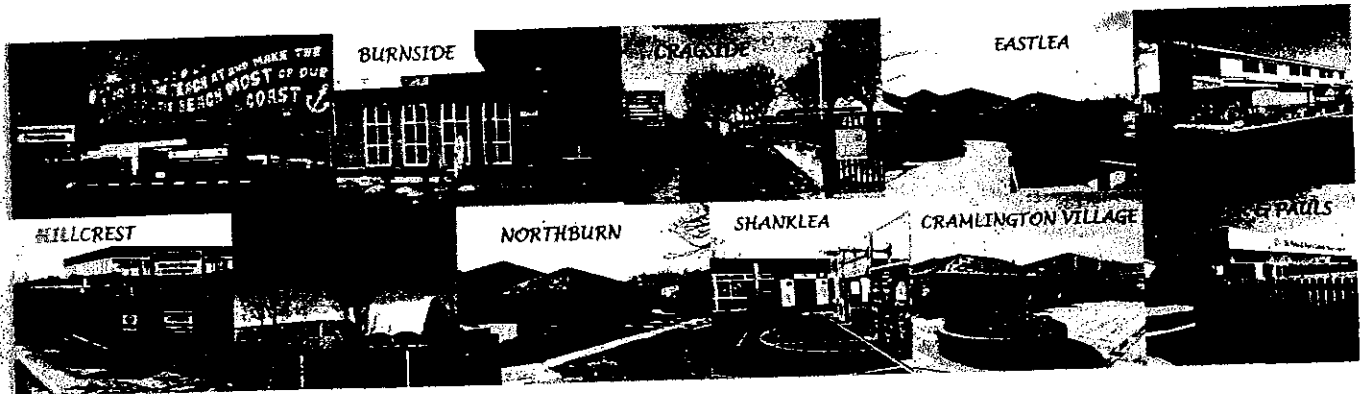
Issues affecting children and young people:

- 4.7. Housing and safety
- 4.8. Transport and Independent mobility
- 4.9. Green space
- 4.10. Nature and conservation
- 4.11. Food

Recommendations:

5. Children and Young People's participation.
6. The Cramlington Neighbourhood Plan – A vision for the next 30 years and

4.1. EDUCATION



Apart from home, school is the single most important place in the lives of children. In England schools are legally required to offer 380 teaching sessions (190 days of teaching) each year. Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

A recent report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on social mobility stated that along with history and maths, teaching 'character and resilience' should also be an essential part of every school's ambition. From 2015 all schools are expected to promote British Values as part of the Prevent Agenda and to develop strategies to protect children who may be at risk of radicalisation. The British Values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith) are seen to be part of the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Curriculum.

There are 10 primary schools in Cramlington, including one Catholic Academy, one Church of England Primary School, one Beach School and one Free School. There is one secondary school - The Cramlington Learning Village. All 11 schools in Cramlington have been meeting and working together through the Cramlington Schools Partnership which meets termly.

1. Beaconhill Primary School
2. Burnside Primary School
3. Cragside Church of England Primary School
4. Cramlington Village School
5. Eastlea Primary School
6. Hareside Primary School
7. Hillcrest Primary School
8. Northburn Primary School
9. Shanklea Primary School
10. St Peters and St Pauls Catholic Academy
11. Cramlington Learning Village

Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) is responsible for inspecting and regulating services that provide education, care and skills. School OFSTED reports cover: effectiveness of leadership and management, quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development, behaviour and welfare, outcomes for pupils and early years provision. All schools in Cramlington have been rated "Good" by OFSTED except for one which was rated "Outstanding" and one which "requires improvement".

Several schools in Cramlington place a great importance on learning outside the classroom and some have their own yurt which they use as an outdoor classroom. Some have incorporated Forest School into the way they work and the children of one school have their own minibus and Beach Ranger to take them to different beaches in Northumberland each day. Most schools include an outdoor pursuits residential for Year 6 pupils at a centre such as Robinwood or Hawkthirst.

Different schools celebrate different cultures and traditions which includes a Caribbean Carnival and an African project run by the NE African Society. One school has been busy fundraising to adopt various endangered animals, another school has been supporting their local Cat and Dog Shelter. Several schools have invested in improving their school playgrounds and play times and joined together for a Playground Games festival. All schools are involved in initiatives to support children in getting more active which includes: "Wake Up, Shake up" and "the Daily Mile".

One school is using its yurt for a photography project. A very wide range of science projects were promoted during STEM week (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Pupils have also benefitted from visits to local Cramlington destinations such as Nando's for cooking lessons, Concordia for a click and climb experience and Northumberlandia to explore nature and the world famous sculpture. Schools also have a wealth of resources on site from up to the minute I.T. facilities to an "immersive room".

Schools are also active in getting the safety message across to children – online safety, road safety, safeguarding and bullying awareness campaigns. Some schools have been working with Sustrans, the national cycling charity to encourage more children to cycle to school and to develop initiatives which can tackle the school parking problem such as "Be a Smarter Parker", "Travel Embassadors" and "Street Detectives".

1.2. EARLY YEARS SERVICES

If you could experience Cramlington from 95cm, the height of a 3-year-old, what would it look like and what would you change? When communities work well for pregnant women, babies, toddlers and young children, they also tend to nurture strong communities and work well for everyone. Yet urban environments can pose considerable challenges to families with young children:

- Unsafe streets and limited public transport options can make it a struggle to get around to childcare, doctors, shops, or just out for a walk;
- Poor air quality affects infants and young children more than healthy adults;
- As urban populations expand, newcomers may be far from extended family and find it difficult to make friends who can support them with back up childcare, advice, or just a listening ear.
- Availability of affordable childcare and early years services.

Research shows that children's early experiences have effects that last a lifetime. Communities which give their young children a good start in life are helping to shape new generations of productive workers and upstanding citizens. Research also shows that experiences in the earliest years of life plays a fundamental role in life-long learning, behaviour, and health. What researchers call our "brain architecture" is built starting from day 1 on this earth (and even before that). Our emotional and physical health, social skills, and cognitive abilities emerge in the early years and are not only important for success in school and the workplace, but also in the community at large.

Research on the biology of stress shows that healthy development can be derailed by toxic stress (prolonged activation of our stress response systems). Young children (ages 0-5) are particularly

physical changes, but also a time of increased demands on mental and emotional functions. Not only are pregnant women and soon to be parents bombarded with lots of new responsibilities and information, they are immersed in a time of planning for the future.

Northumberland County Council have responsibility for supporting services for pregnant women, babies, toddlers and pre school age children. In Cramlington, these services are delivered in the main through Barnado's.

Barnado's was set up by Dr Barnado in 1866 to care for vulnerable children. It grew rapidly and had 100's of orphanages across the county. The last traditional Dr Barnado's orphanage closed in 1988 and the focus since then has been on adoption and fostering and supporting families to continue to care for their children in their own homes. As well as a change of focus, the charity also changed it's name to Barnado's. Barnado's projects in the 21st century continue to work with vulnerable children on a wide range of issues from family drug misuse to disability, from youth crime to mental health, from sexual abuse to domestic abuse. The overall aim of Barnado's is to create better outcomes for more children by working with children, young people, their families and carers to build:

- Stronger families
- Safer childhoods
- Positive futures

The work that Barnado's carry out in Cramlington involves running two Children's Centres:

- Cramlington East Children's Centre based at East Lea School.
- Cramlington West Children's Centre based at Beaconhill School.

 Cramlington East
Children's Centre



 Cramlington West
Children's Centre



Barnado's deliver a wide range of courses and group sessions in the Children's Centres or other community bases to support families living in Cramlington.

- Breast Feeding Support Group
- Childminder Drop In
- HENRY Programme: An 8 week course covering Health Exercise, Nutrition for the Really Young and other health advice to provide a healthy start in life
- Volunteer/Parent Champion Training
- Learn Together Through Play
- ASD Family Group: Support group for parents and carers with a child on the autism spectrum
- Baby Life Saving

By running these services Barnado's hope to reduce inequalities (particularly around child development and school readiness; parenting aspirations, self-esteem and skills; family health and wellbeing), by:

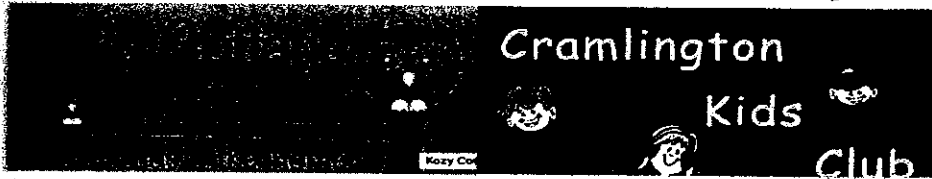
- Assessing need across the local community
- Providing access to universal early years services in the local area
- Providing targeted evidence based early interventions for families in greatest need, in the context of integrated services
- Acting as a hub for the local community, building social capital and cohesion
- Sharing expertise with other early years settings to improve quality



Little Angels
Nurseries and fun clubs



Hareside Nursery



As well as the work of Barnado's through the Children's Centres, Cramlington also has some excellent nurseries and childcare providers including:

- Little Angels in Cramlington Village
- Southfields Nursery on Sanderson Terrace, SE Cramlington.
- Kozy Cottage Childcare based at Hareside and Northburn Schools.
- Two Little Dicky Birds Nursery and Preschool based at St Peters and St Pauls School in SE Cramlington
- Cramlington Kids Club (based at Eastlea Primary School)
- Cragside breakfast and out of school club

The policy and funding landscape for early years services has experienced considerable change in recent years. Initiatives such as 15hrs free childcare for all 3 and 4 year old and 15hrs free childcare for disadvantaged two year olds have encouraged more families to access childcare services and introduced more children to early learning as part of the school readiness agenda. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which was introduced in 2008 and then revised in 2012 covers 7 areas of learning and development: personal, social and emotional development; communication and language, physical development, literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. The EYFS also includes Early Learning Goals which children of 5 are expected to achieve and assessments and progress checks at age 2. The EYFS is a play based curriculum which has been designed to provide a balanced programme of activities with both adult led play and child initiated play. Playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically are all supported through EYFS registered early years and childcare providers.

A very recent initiative which may bring extra funding and support to both schools and early years services is the North of Tyne Devo Deal. The Devo Deal is an agreement between the Government, Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland involving new powers and new funding. Support to ensure young children are ready for school is included in the Devo Deal plans. This includes ensuring they have the language, attitudes, social competence, emotional and physical well-being to be ready to learn as soon as they start full-time education.

14. PLAY

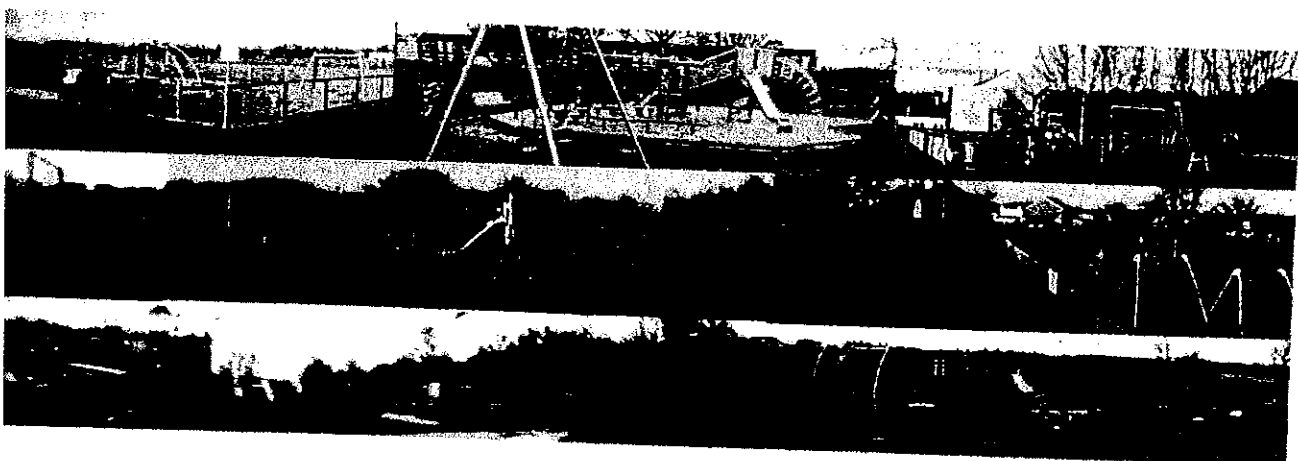
Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child aims to protect, preserve and promote the Child's Right to Play. There is now a considerable body of research which evidences play as both a right and a need. Cramlington Town Council recognised the Child's Right and Need to Play when it commissioned a feasibility study into Informal, Creative and Active Play in Cramlington and subsequently adopted the Charter for Children's Play.

The Charter includes a recognition that:

- Children have the right to play.
- Every child needs time and space to play.
- Adults should let children play.
- Children should be able to play freely in their local areas.
- Children value and benefit from staffed play provision.
- Children's play is enriched by skilled playworkers.
- Children at school need time and space to play.
- Children sometimes need extra support to enjoy their right to play.

Over a sustained period of time Cramlington Town Council has invested in a network of play areas which effectively means that every child in Cramlington has access to a play area within walking distance of their home. The Town Council has carried out regular safety and maintenance inspections of its play areas, including in 2017 a comprehensive independent health and safety inspection by the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) which has led to follow up repairs and removal of some equipment deemed to be unsafe. A barrier fence has been erected between the Abingdon Square Play Area and the park in response to RoSPA recommendation. There has also been a rolling programme of play area improvements which has included relocation of Alderley Way Play Area which was deemed to be too close to a main road by local residents.

In 2018 a Play Value Assessment of the play areas was commissioned which included the design of a Play Value Audit Tool so that the Councillors and Town Council Officers could carry out their own play value assessments. Given the increasingly high costs of playground equipment, ensuring value for money through consideration of not just maintenance and safety but also play value is an important consideration for the Town Council with high aspirations for its resident children and families but with tight constraints on the budget.



The Town Council have also supported the establishment of Cramlington Action for Play and Youth which is a multi-agency consortium of residents and professionals with an interest in enhancing the play and youth offer in Cramlington. The group had it's inaugural meeting in January 2018 and by Easter 2018 had met 3 times, agreed aims, values and work programme, adopted a constitution and submitted it's first funding bid.

One of the projects Cramlington Action for Play and Youth is keen to support is the development of the Cramlington Imaginary Play Area Web. Funds are being sought for a website which would include maps of Cramlington's network of walking and cycling trails together with children's illustrations supported by a community artist to encourage children to walk, cycle, scooter and imagine. The Imaginary Play Area Web would link with the Sustrans cycle tube map (see below) providing connectivity between houses, shops, schools and play areas. The aim would be to encouraging children and families to leave their cars behind more often and journey by foot with the added incentive of meeting the Cramlington Caterpillar, following the Hedgehog Gang or journeying to the Owl Tree. It is hoped that the Sustrans Tube Map project will go live after Easter 2018 and work on creating story trails to build the Imaginary Play Area Web will commence in 2019. The project would work in partnership with schools and community projects.

4.5. SPORT AND RECREATION

There are a range of sporting opportunities available to children and young people living in Cramlington. These include:

- Concordia Leisure Centre
- Northburn Sports and Community Centre
- Cramlington Learning Village Sporting Club
- Football pitches (some with changing facilities)
- Cramlington Community Tennis in Alexandria Park

There are also a range of sporting clubs that children and young people can join:

- Cramlington Junior Football Club
- Cramlington Rockets Rugby League
- Cramlington Vikings Basketball (supported by Newcastle Eagles)
- Cramlington Cricket Club
- Northern Gymnastics
- Flightpath Junior Badminton
- Northern Freestyle Karate Association (Cramlington Sporting Club & Beaconhill Community Association)
- Northern Academy of Ju-Jitsu (Concordia Leisure Centre)

and a choice of dance schools:

- Michaela Percival School of Dancing (Cramlington Village Community Centre)
- Dance Co (Bassington Lane)

There are also a number of active Scout and Guide groups in Cramlington including:

- 2nd Cramlington Scout Group (Armstrong Hall)
- 3rd & 5th Cramlington Scout Group (Cragside School)
- 4th Cramlington Scout Group (Beaconhill Community Centre)
- 6th Cramlington Scout Group (Shanklea & Burnside Schools)
- 7th Cramlington Scout Group (Northburn School)
- Viking Explorer Scout Group (Armstrong Hall)

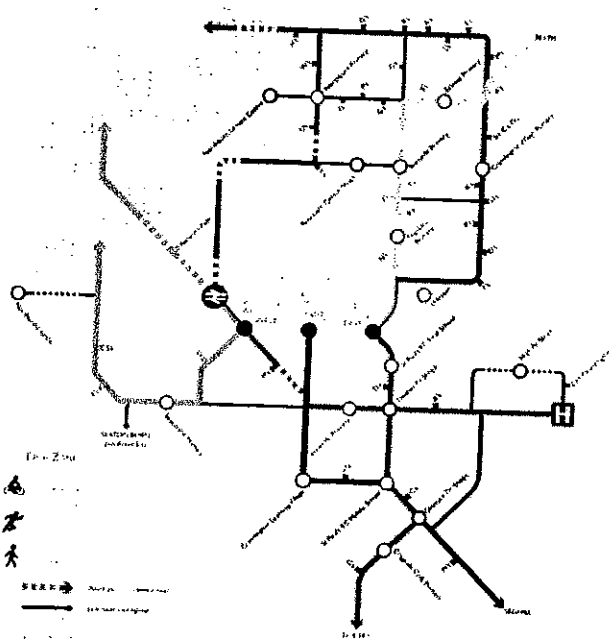
4.8. GREEN SPACE

According to UNICEF, Child Friendly Communities should have sufficient and useable public open spaces many of which are green, in order to promote exercise and recreation for all ages. Cramlington has an extensive network of open green spaces, which are in the main well maintained. There are also three parks: Seven Oaks Park, Alexandria Park and Beaconhill Park. The Town Council are keen to protect the green spaces of Cramlington and are looking to get particularly valued green space designated as "Local Green Space". From observation it is clear that the children and young people of Cramlington value their open green space network.

4.9. TRANSPORT AND INDEPENDENT MOBILITY

According to UNICEF, a Child Friendly Community should not rely on the automobile to get around, distances should be short, buildings accessible from the sidewalk and transport options plentiful and accessible to people of all incomes. Child Friendly Communities should include roads which are designed equally for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and road safety and sidewalks should be seen as paramount to street design. Traffic signals should be sufficient and road rules should be enforced. Shops, restaurants, entrances and trees should line the sidewalk to encourage walking and there should be sufficient lighting so that pedestrians feel safe day and night. *"When we create separated and connected bike lanes that are safe for children to use, we create a cycling network that works for all residents. When we design a streetscape to accommodate resting places for older adults with benches and shade, we create inviting public spaces for everyone to enjoy."* (Bernard Van Leer Foundation).

SUSTRANS, the national cycling charity have been working in partnership with Cramlington Town Council and Northumberland County Council over a three year period on a unique and ambitious "Cycle Tube Map Project". Cramlington was originally designed with a network of cycling and walking paths criss-crossing the estates, but these are not always easy to follow and are of variable quality in relation to surfacing, dropped kerbs, road barriers and signage.



Through extensive consultation and detailed mapping, SUSTRANS have now completed the infrastructure master plan and on the ground construction of 8 colour coded routes is due to commence soon after Easter 2018.

SUSTRANS have also been working in partnership with some of the schools in Cramlington which are perceived to have a parking problem. Members of the Beaconhill School Council (which includes representatives from all year groups) have been working with SUSTRANS on solutions to the parking problem through a Street Detectives Research Project. The initial research by the children has now led to concrete plans including: a painted street carpet on Langdale Road, painted bollards, improvements to the underpass and pavement games. Beaconhill School is a Beach Schools and the designs developed by the children reflect this theme.

4.11. FOOD



So what is a child friendly restaurant ? One with high chairs and baby changing facilities or one with a special children's menu and activity sheets ? Maybe a free toy ? Even better one with a soft play area or outdoor playground. Most importantly, child friendly restaurants need child friendly staff who know how to talk to children with respect and interest. Nando's has even invited school groups into it's kitchens to learn how to cook pizza. Cramlington has a wide range of eating places for families.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES'S PARTICIPATION

5.1. Participation and the UNCRC

The UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities initiative as explained in the introduction to this report is integrally related to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 of the UNCRC states that:

"State Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

The first two criteria for a child friendly community, as listed in the introduction to this report are opportunities to:

- influence decision making about their community.
- express their opinion on the community they want.

The principle recognizes that children have the right to express their views in all matters that affect them and requires that those views be heard and given due weight in accordance with children's age and maturity. It recognizes the potential of children to enrich decision making processes, to share perspectives and to participate as citizens and actors of change. The right to participation is one of the guiding principles of the UNCRC. Expressing an opinion is not the same as taking a decision, but it implies the ability to influence decisions. A process of dialogue and exchange needs to be encouraged in which children assume increasing responsibilities and become active, tolerant and democratic. In such a process, adults must provide direction and guidance to children whilst considering their views in a manner consistent with the child's age and maturity. Through this process the child will gain an understanding of why particular options are followed, or why decisions are taken that might differ from the one he or she favoured. Children should not be pressured, constrained or influenced in ways that might prevent them from freely expressing their opinions or leave them feeling manipulated. Among children, it is important that the older

and more advantaged foster the participation of the younger and most disadvantaged, including girls, the poorest, children belonging to minority ethnic groups and migrant children.

5.2. Participation and the role of adults

The child's evolving capacity represents just one side of the equation: the other involves adults' evolving capacity and willingness to listen to and learn from their children, to understand and consider the child's point of view, to be willing to re-examine their own opinions and attitudes and to envisage solutions that address children's views. For adults, as well as for children, participation is a challenging learning process and cannot be reduced to a simple formality. Fulfilling the right of children to participate entails training and mobilizing adults who live and work with children, so that they are prepared to give children the chance to freely and increasingly participate in society and gain democratic skills. Parents and other family members are most obviously included in this group, as well as teachers, social workers, lawyers, psychologists, the police and other members of the society at large.

5.3. Ensuring appropriate information

Children's right to participation as outlined in article 12 is closely linked to freedom of expression. It is also related to fulfilling the right to information, a key prerequisite for children's participation to be relevant and meaningful. It is in fact essential that children be provided with the necessary information about options that exist and the consequences of such options so that they can make informed and free decisions. Providing information enables children to gain skills, confidence and maturity in expressing views and influencing decisions.

Article 15 of the UNCRC states that children have the right to create and join associations and to assemble peacefully. Both imply opportunities to express political opinions, engage in political processes and participate in decision-making. Both are critical to the development of a democratic society and to the participation of children in the realization of their rights.

5.4. Genuine participation versus tokenism

Participation cannot be genuine if children have no opportunity to understand the consequences and the impact of their opinions—such non-genuine 'participation' often merely disguises what is actually the manipulation of children, or tokenism. Again, the key to genuine participation is ensuring respect for children's views. In addition to facilitating and supporting activities to foster child participation, it is becoming increasingly important to consider whether and how to ensure follow-up of children's recommendations and concerns.

Children's referendums and the 'What do you think?' project are but a few examples of a worldwide movement to increase the spaces and opportunities for child participation. In all such activities, strong monitoring and evaluation components must be present and initiatives tested against the principles of the Convention. Is the activity in the best interests of the child? Is any form of discrimination present? Do the most disadvantaged and marginalized children have opportunities to participate and are their voices heard? Are children genuinely participating? Can children make a difference in decision-making processes?

5.5. Next steps for Cramlington

There are a range of options which the Town Council could consider in relation to enabling children to express their opinions on the Cramlington they want and influence decision making about their community. Options include:

- ❖ **A Children's Voices Project** involving the Cramlington Schools Partnership and Cramlington play and youth organisations. This might involve seeking the views of children and young people on particular themes such as play areas, youth provision or green spaces or might involve a more open ended consultation on what children and young people like about Cramlington and what ideas they have for making it better. The views and ideas could be collated into a report or children's newspaper or video.
- ❖ **A Children's Conference** bringing together children from different schools, youth and play projects.
- ❖ **A Meet the Politicians** initiative where the Ward Councillors linked with the schools and youth projects in their ward on an annual basis to listen to the concerns and ideas of the children and young people.

6. THE CRAMLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – A VISION FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS

According to UNICEF, a Child Friendly Town or City has housing for all income groups and promotes integration between social groups. *At the same time as the research was being carried out for the 2018 play reports, the Cramlington Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was revising the draft Neighbourhood Plan which included a section on green spaces and a number of community actions including one on children's play.*

6.1. What is a Neighbourhood Plan ?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a way of helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work. It can be used to develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood. Work on the Cramlington Neighbourhood Plan began in 2014 with a number of community launch events followed by a number of local community and stakeholder workshops. The Cramlington Neighbourhood Plan is designed to cover the period up to 2031 and includes:

- An overview of the opportunities, challenges and issues facing Cramlington.
- A positive vision and objectives for the future of Cramlington.
- Planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications and provide a framework for sustainable development.
- Community actions which are intended to encourage action and influence decisions taken by relevant bodies.

Sub sections of the Cramlington Neighbourhood Plan include:

Section 6: Completing our town and extending housing choice. (including development of the South West Sector and other housing developments)

Section 7: Reinforcing Cramlington's sub regional employment role.

Section 8: Improving our town centre.

Section 9: Promoting and integrating sustainable transport.

Section 10: Enhancing the environment.

Section 11: Thriving and inclusive communities.
Annex 1: Community actions

The draft of Community action 6 related to “Developing informal, creative and active play opportunities” and drew on the recommendations in the first (2017) play report. It is proposed that Community Action 6 be further revised to take account of the findings in the subsequent two (2018) play reports and the recommendations in the seminal book by Rob Wheway and Alison Milward - Children’s Play: Facilitating Play in Housing Estates.

6.2. Community action 6 revised

Cramlington Town Council recognises that:

***“Children’s health and well being, their social, physical, cognitive, creative and emotional development, learning and attainment and most importantly their happiness and enjoyment of childhood are all affected by the extent to which they have time, space and permission to play.”
(Baldon 2017)***

In March 2017 the Cramlington Town Council formally recognised the Play England Charter for Children’s Play and agreed to take forward the recommendations in the report:

- *Towards a Child Friendly Cramlington - Developing Informal, Creative and Active Play Opportunities.*

In November 2018 the Town Council commissioned two further reports:

- *Cramlington Play Value and Location Toolkit and Audit and*
- *Cramlington – A Child Friendly Town ?*

As part of it’s vision for a Child Friendly Town, planners and developers are requested to take account of these reports and the following guidelines: “The ideal estate should be designed so that children can move freely throughout their neighbourhood and are able to enjoy a wide variety of social interactions and opportunities for physical, imaginative and creative play.” To this end children should be enabled to:

1. *move freely around their estate on foot, bicycle, skates or other wheeled vehicle.*
2. *travel safely without danger from traffic.*
3. *play in front or in sight of their homes.*
4. *be part of the community and the community's interactions*
5. *play in the natural environment.*
6. *play in purposefully provided play environments.*
7. *play football and other ball games.*
8. *play outdoors within the home environment.*
9. *attend play schemes, clubs or other organised activities.*

As part of the initiative to promote Cramlington as a Child Friendly Town, initiatives are being developed to promote imaginative play alongside initiatives to promote cycling and walking. These include the creation of the Cramlington Imaginary Play Area Web and the Cramlington Tube Map Project. Also as part of the Child Friendly Cramlington vision, strategies are being explored to enable the opinions and ideas of children to be heard on issues that affect them. The Imaginary Play Area Web and Children's Voices initiative are both supported by a newly created multi-agency consortium of agencies including schools and youth projects – Cramlington Action for Play and Youth.

7. THANKS

Thanks to the members of our newly created **Cramlington Action for Play and Youth** committee for their guidance, local expertise and support which was a great help in producing this report:

Peter Boldon - Photographer
Ruth Brooks - Barnado's Cramlington Children's Centres
Matthew Fitch - Northumberland Wildlife Trust
Amanda Forbes - Beaconhill School
Claire Gascoigne - Cramlington Voluntary Youth Project
Marc Johnson - Northumberland Community Voluntary Action Sara Newsom – NE Youth
Sara Newsom - NE Youth
Martin Podevyn - SUSTRANS

Also thanks to the Cramlington Town Council for their commitment to play and for their advice and local expertise including:

Cllr Pat Heard
Cllr Christine Dunbar
Bob Baker
Adam Harvey
Daryl Wood

8. REFERENCES

Bernard Van Leer (2017) Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods – www.bernardvanleer.org
Bernard Van Leer (2017) Building Better Cities for Young Children and their Families - www.bernardvanleer.org
Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University – www.developingchild.harvard.edu
Children's Society (2017) The Good Childhood Report – www.childrenssociety.org.uk
Department of Education (2014) Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in Schools.
Wheway, R. and Milward, A. (1997) Children's Play: Facilitating Play on Housing Estates.
Play England Charter for Children's Play
Policy Studies Institute (2015) Children's Independent mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action.
UNESCO Growing up in Cities - www.unesco.org
UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme – www.unhabitat.org
UNICEF – UK resources - www.unicef.org.uk
UNICEF – World resources - www.unicef.org
UNICEF - Fact Sheet :The Right to Participation - [www.unicef.org/crc/files/Right to Participation.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Right%20to%20Participation.pdf)
World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF (2008) World Report on Child Injury Prevention.

