

# The API ability to assist the Play England Project is demonstrated by its new playground design guide

DCE asked Richard Lumb, Chair of Outdoor Play at the Association of Play Industries (API), for the API view on the funding for Children's Play from the big Lottery Fund. Richard Lumb said "Whatever the outcome of Play England's inspired approach to bottom up strategies and thorough community consultation, as the UK's builders of playgrounds and makers and installers of play equipment, we want to be part of it, part of the design debate and build it. Indeed, the very positive response from the API is to ask, "How can we help and ensure best value from all available funding?" As the play industry's specialist constructors, we would like to be involved from the outset,". Mr Lumb said, and emphasised, "Life is simple. Local authorities commission API members. This is because they prove time after time they can deliver. And do it well. So we seek to be part of design and specification because we have so much to offer as valuable knowledge, know how, skill and expertise. It is what we do everyday."



Based on that extensive experience, recent news from the API is of its new publication 'The API Guide to Playground Layout and Design' available free at [www.api-play.org](http://www.api-play.org)

This ten page 'highway code of playground design' is free to download or print. Easy to understand, the content clarifies and explains in plain English with diagrams, the UK's agreed position on playground layout and design, a subject the European safety standard EN1176 does not cover as fully. The API Guide will be kept up to date with developments and gives a basis for an agreed interpretation of safety.

The API will also make the Guide available to the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) [www.playinspectors.com](http://www.playinspectors.com). The RPII will be asked to adopt these guidelines when undertaking either annual or post installation safety inspectors or reports.



Richard Lumb said "We were asked for this guide and within just a few months we are delighted to launch it. As the voice of the UK play industry, this is one of many services the API is ideally placed to provide. Some eighty percent of UK play areas are designed and built for public sector and commercial clients by API members. They welcome this guide to aid mutually agreed interpretation of safety standard with clients, safety inspectors and industry-wide."

Too safe? Not exciting? Inclusive? Accessible? Working closely with RoSPA the API is in accord with the RoSPA view that play areas and equipment 'should be as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible.' In response to parents saying their over-eights demand more challenging equipment, today's ranges are far more dynamic and demanding - but not dangerous." This new API Guide has a section on complying with the Disability Discrimination Act and is written with the aim of ensuring fully inclusive play is completely accessible to children of all abilities.