

DERBY'S NEW INCLUSIVE PLAY AREA AT THE ARBORETUM



ARBORETUM PLAY AREA

Client:	Derby City Council
Address:	Reginald Street, Derby, DE23 8FR
Budget:	£180,000
Age Range:	Toddlers, Juniors
Ranges:	Diabolo, Kanopé
Surfacing:	Wetpour

Project Story: Derby City Council recently chose Proludic to complete a major upgrade to the play area at Derby Arboretum - the first public park in Britain - creating a welcoming, inclusive space for children of all abilities. Located in the culturally diverse Rose Hill area, just south of the city centre, the Arboretum is a well-used community hub.

The new play areas were designed around accessibility and inclusion. It is divided into distinct zones: a fenced section for toddlers and younger children, and a more open area for older children with adventurous equipment like climbing structures and a zipwire.

The refurbishment focused on making the space inclusive for all users, especially those with mobility challenges. Inclusive equipment includes Proludic's J987 wheelchair-accessible seesaw, the J2409 wheelchair-accessible roundabout, and an in-ground inclusive trampoline. Multiplay units feature wide-access steps, and the play surface was upgraded with wetpour throughout, replacing a large sandpit to ensure smooth, consistent access.



We're proud to have delivered an inclusive play space at Derby Arboretum that reflects the community's needs - ensuring children of all abilities can play together in a safe, engaging, and accessible environment.



Tom Cooper
Proludic Area Manager



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Community involvement was central to the project. Derby City Council held consultations with residents and disability advocacy groups, helping shape the design and ensuring the space met the community's needs.

The project was funded through a combination of Section 106 developer contributions, the Derby City Council Parks Capital Programme, and National Lottery Awards for All. The design made efficient use of the existing layout and surfaces to maximise value within the available budget.

Derby Arboretum's inclusive play area now provides a safe, imaginative, and fully accessible environment - helping children of all abilities play together and supporting a healthier, more connected community.

To support broader community use, a fitness trail was added around the existing path, enhancing opportunities for free outdoor exercise. This addition responds to local demand, as many residents regularly use the park's gym equipment and value accessible fitness options.

A nature theme ties the area together, with wildlife-inspired play features and educational markings. The space also includes a storytelling zone, musical and sensory play elements, a sensory pathway, and leaf-shaped hopscotch - engaging children both physically and creatively. Durability was also key in selecting equipment, given the Arboretum's high visitor numbers. All items are built to withstand frequent use while maintaining safety and accessibility.

