

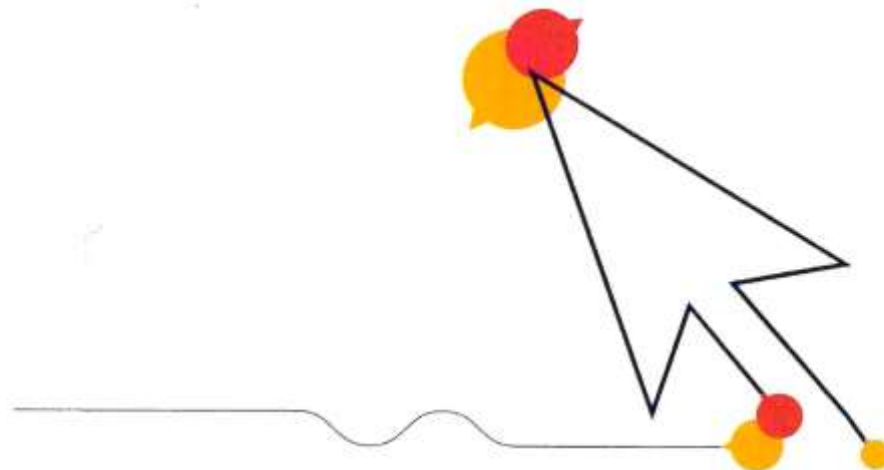


The Rype Swing Fixing Failures



Report by David Yearley

Site: The Rype Play Area
Owner: Lydd Town Council
Date of Report: 26th February 2025



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Photograph of the site

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1. Introduction

1.1 This report considers the failures of swing fixings at The Rype Play Area, Lydd.

1.2 This report is produced by review of the failed materials at the Town Council offices and a visit to the site on 3rd February 2025.

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2. Description of Failure

2.1 There have been three failures of fixings on swings at The Rype within a relatively short period of time, and on different swings.



Photograph 1. Photograph 2.

2.2 The fixings in Photograph 1 show significant wear and a snapping of the metal, accompanied by a twisting in the metal at and around the point of failure.

2.3 The fixing in Photograph 2 shows a clean snap of the metal at the point of failure and a bending of the fixings opposite the point of failure.

3. My Instructions & My Actions

3.1 I have been asked by Lydd Town Council to:

- 3.1.1 Visit the site and Town Council offices to view the equipment in question,
- 3.1.2 Give an opinion on the causes of failure.

3.2 I have compiled this report by consideration and review of applicable documents and by recourse to a site visit on 3rd February 2025.

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4. My Qualifications

4.1 I am David Yearley. I am employed by Playsafety Ltd as its Managing Director. Playsafety Ltd provides inspection, training and consultancy services to RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) and it and its predecessor have done so since the 1990s. Playsafety Ltd trades as RoSPA Play Safety under an exclusive licence agreement with RoSPA.

4.2 I have been employed by Playsafety Ltd as a playground safety inspector since 2000 and bear the title of Head of Play Safety for RoSPA. I oversee the operation of the company, which includes the provision of technical support and oversight for RoSPA Play Safety's team of playground safety inspectors. The company undertakes more than 20,000 safety inspections of children's playgrounds and recreational facilities every year, in addition to providing training to playground operators to enable them to undertake their own safety inspections. I oversee the provision of this inspection service and training provision by our inspectors, as well as conducting inspections myself and presenting this training to our clients.

4.3 Since 2001 I have been qualified at the highest level on the Register of Play Inspectors International Ltd (RPIL), holding the professional qualification to enable me to undertake annual and post-installation inspections of children's playgrounds, skateparks and multi-use games areas. Additionally, I act as one of the examiners for RPIL to invigilate and oversee examinations for entry onto the register. I am currently the Chairman of RPIL, having been a board member of RPIL since 2003.

4.4 Since 2001 I have been a member of the British Standards Institution (BSI) committee SW/65, which is the UK's committee with responsibility for the preparation of British Standards for Children's Playground Equipment and other related products. I have sat on the European Standards committee for the development of the first standard for skateparks.

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5. Review of Failed Equipment

5.1 There are two types of fixing which have failed.

5.2 Photograph 1 shows one type, which is used to connect the swing seat to the hanging chains on junior (flat) swing seats. Two failures of this type of connector have occurred at The Rype.

5.3 Photograph 2 shows the second type, which is used to connect the chains on a Tango seat (dual use adult and toddler seat) to the top fixings. One failure of this has been noted at The Rype.

5.4 Photograph 3 shows the swing frame on which the fixings in Photograph 1 were installed at the time of failure.



Photograph 3.

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5.5. Photograph 4 shows the top bar of the swing frame on which the fixings in Photograph 1 were installed.



Photograph 4.

5.6 Photograph 5 shows the hangers on the top bar of the swing frame on which the fixings in Photograph 1 were installed.



Photograph 5.

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5.7 Photograph 6 shows deep scoring on the top of the pivot bearing which connected the swing chains to the hangers.



Photograph 6.

5.8 I have reviewed our findings from 20 years of inspections of this type of swing fixing. I can find no previous instance in our records where this type of swing fixing has failed in the way seen in the two failures at The Rype.

5.9 I have correspondence from Mr Andy Yates, Technical Manager at HAGS GLOBAL, who is the manufacturer of the swings and the failed fixings. He confirms that he has not seen such a failure in 20 years of this fixing's use.

5.10 My study of the exact point of failure on the fixing, and the condition of the top bar where it is clear that the chains are being wrapped around it, and the condition of the swing hangers leads me to conclude that the fixings in Photograph 1 have failed as a result of deliberate and concerted efforts to induce failure by users.

5.11 The fixing in Photograph 1 is designed to comply with the loading requirements of the British Standards EN 1176-1:2017+A1:2023 and EN 1176-2:2017. It is my opinion that these fittings are fit for purpose and have proven themselves over a period of 20 years to be able to withstand the normal wear and tear associated with children's playgrounds.

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5.12 Photograph 7 shows the failed second fixing in a wider context than Photograph 2. The top bearing pivot can be seen to be free of any scoring which was present at photograph 6.



Photograph 7.

5.13 Photograph 8 shows the swing frame on which the fixing in Photograph 2 was installed.



Photograph 8.

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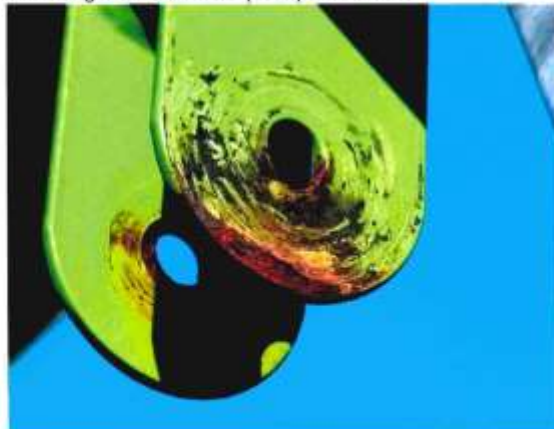
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5.14 Photograph 9 shows the top bar of the swing frame on which the fixing in Photograph 2 was installed. No significant damage can be seen to the top bar's paint.



Photograph 9.

5.15 Photograph 10 shows the hangers on the top bar of the swing frame on which the fixing in Photograph 2 was installed. Some elongation of the pivot hole can be seen, indicating wear where the pivot pin sits on it.



Photograph 10.

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5.16 Photograph 11 shows an intact and installed swing top fixing, including the type in Photograph 2, on the same swing frame. This holds the existing cradle (toddler) seat.



5.17 My study of the failed fixing in Photograph 2 and the swing frame, top bar and hangers from on which it was installed are inconclusive. There is no obvious undue wear to any of the components, although I did note some bending of the fixing on the opposite side to the point of failure, which in my opinion was likely caused at the moment of failure when the weight of the assembly and users upon it caused it to bend, given that it was designed to share the load with both sides of the fixing. On balance, it is my opinion that this failure has occurred as a result of overloading by a deliberate and concerted effort to induce failure by users.

5.18 The fixing in Photograph 1 is designed to comply with the loading requirements of the British Standards EN 1176-1:2017+A1:2023 and EN 1176-2:2017. It is my opinion that these fittings are fit for purpose and have proven themselves over a period of 20 years to be able to withstand the normal wear and tear associated with children's playgrounds.

5.19 In conclusion, it is my opinion that the fixings in Photograph 1 were caused by misuse, and it is likely that the fixing in Photograph 2 was caused by misuse.

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I shall be pleased to engage with the report's commissioning officer to ensure it is clearly understood.



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