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Outdoor exercise equipment made safe with the help of a new standard

BSI, the UK's National Standards Body has recently published a standard to cater for the growing interest in outdoor fitness facilities. PAS 888 *Publicly Accessible Outdoor Exercise Equipment* specifies the safety requirements for the permanent installation of outdoor fitness and exercise equipment. In a similar manner to playground equipment, exercise equipment is installed in unsupervised, freely accessible and public locations and requires stringent safety measures to enable its safe usage.

To ensure that users of outdoor gym equipment receive a safe workout, BSI and The Great Outdoor Gym Company created PAS 888 with collaborative input from major industry specialists. The experts responsible for the production of PAS 888 included representatives from Adidas, The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity, Lappset, London Southbank University and UKactive.

PAS 888 will enable users to experience a safe outdoor workout. Some of the factors that influence this include:

- Longevity of equipment in an outdoor environment
- Design and manufacture of equipment in consideration of the most vulnerable users
- Correct positioning of equipment
- Safe installation of equipment in a correct way
- Ensuring equipment is free from entrapments, crush points, sharp edges and unrestricted pendulums
- Adequate testing of equipment to ensure safety and fit for purpose
- Lighting of installation area

The standard is applicable to manufacturers, specifiers, installers, maintenance providers and inspectors of outdoors equipment who want to help ensure that unnecessary risks are managed and a high level of safety is maintained.

PAS 888 key features:

- Outlines requirements for equipment intended for cardiovascular and repetitive exercise use

- Specifies equipment for intended use by adults and young people but also appreciates that children cannot reasonably be denied access
- Addresses accessibility and safety in use for people of all abilities and fitness levels
- Provides guidance on situation of equipment
- Offers guidance on essential safety issues involving functional workings of equipment

Shirley Bailey-Wood, Director of Publishing at BSI, says: "Increasing health and fitness is an important factor in improving our quality of life. It is also the focus of current key government initiatives. We are seeing accessible exercise equipment appearing in open spaces such as our parks, helping differing ages and abilities to take some regular physical exercise. We want publicly accessed outdoor exercise equipment to be safe and now with the publication of PAS 888, it can be of a consistent standard across the entire industry."

- ENDS-

Notes to editors

- Other members of the steering group include Dudley Primary Care Trust and Vision Redbridge.

- BS EN 1176:2008 addresses the protection of children in playgrounds and although it deals with the use of outdoor play equipment it is not sufficient for exercise equipment.

About BSI

BSI (British Standards Institution) is the business standards company that equips businesses with the necessary solutions to turn standards of best practice into habits of excellence. Formed in 1901, BSI was the world's first National Standards Body and a founding member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Over a century later it continues to facilitate business improvement across the globe by helping its clients drive performance, manage risk and grow sustainably through the adoption of international management systems standards, many of which BSI originated. Renowned for its marks of excellence including the consumer recognized BSI Kitemark™, BSI's influence spans multiple sectors including aerospace, construction, energy, engineering, finance, healthcare, IT and retail. With over 68,000 clients in 150 countries, BSI is an organization whose standards inspire excellence across the globe.

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