

National Planning Framework 4: Call for Ideas

Response from the Committee of the Faculty of Public Health in Scotland

The Committee of the Faculty of Public Health in Scotland (CFPHS) welcomes the opportunity to engage with the development of the fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4). We are very pleased to see 'Improving the health and well-being of people living in Scotland' recognised as a high level outcome for NPF4. **We endorse this and strongly recommend that health and well-being should be identified as a priority within the final NPF4.**

Planning policies and development plans have a significant impact on health. Spatial planning shapes not only the physical environment but also the social and economic environments in which people live, grow up, work and play. These environments have long lasting impacts on health and wellbeing, which act through multiple pathways and health determinants. For example:

- High quality, accessible greenspace benefits both mental and physical health¹;
- Car dominated environments have adverse effects on health through increased air pollution, discouraging physical activity, community severance, injuries and stress²;
- Provision of high quality playspace is important for children's development³;
- High quality affordable housing enhances health⁴;
- Developments with poor access to employment, community facilities and services increase social and health inequalities and encourage car dependency⁵;
- All of the above may increase or reduce inequalities, depending how well the needs of all population groups are identified and considered.

These are some examples but there are also many other links between health and place. Current work to develop Place Principles will provide a framework to ensure the full range of these impacts can be identified and considered. This work involves both Public Health and Planning stakeholders. **We recommend that the final Place Principles should be incorporated within NPF4.**

The CFPHS call to action *Healthy Lives Fairer Futures*⁶ identifies areas where focused action is needed to reduce health inequalities in Scotland. We are advocating for a health in all policies approach to be adopted for policymaking in Scotland. This means using structured tools and approaches like the Place Standard and Health Impact Assessment to ensure that the range of health impacts is considered, to achieve the best health and wellbeing outcomes for all. We are pleased that the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 includes a requirement for assessment of health effects before approval of national or major developments. **We recommend that the development of NPF4 should use a Health in All Policies approach, which should include preparing an assessment of its expected health effects.**

About the Committee of the Faculty of Public Health in Scotland

The Faculty of Public Health (FPH) is a professional organisation that promotes, for public benefit, the advancement of knowledge in the field of public health. The Committee of FPH in Scotland acts as the professional focus for FPH members living and/or working in Scotland. As a registered charity, FPH supports those working in public health to achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of personal professional competence. And through collaboration of its several thousand expert professional members, FPH offers the public facility of independent and authoritative public health guidance.

¹ World Health Organisation (2016) Urban green spaces and health. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe.

² Douglas MJ, Higgins M, Austin H, Armour G, Jepson R, Thomson H, Hurley F. (2018) Health and Transport: A Guide. Scottish Health and Inequalities Impact Assessment Network.
<https://www.scotphn.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Transport-Guide-2018-Final-Formatted.pdf>

³ Muñoz S-A. (2009) Children in the Outdoors: A literature review. Sustainable Development Research Centre <https://www.ltl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/children-in-the-outdoors.pdf>

⁴ Tweed E, McCann A, Arnot J. (2017) Foundations for well-being: reconnecting public health and housing. A Practical Guide to Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities. ScotPHN.
https://www.scotphn.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2017_03_08-HH-Main-Report-Final-1.pdf

⁵ Douglas MJ, Watkins SJ, Gorman DR, Higgins M. Are cars the new tobacco?. Journal of Public Health. 2011 Jun 1;33(2):160-9.

⁶ Faculty of Public Health in Scotland (2017) *Healthy Lives Fairer Futures: a call to action*
<https://www.fph.org.uk/about-fph/board-and-committees/a-call-to-action/>