



## **NPF4 – call for ideas**

Response from 

### **How can planning best support our quality of life, health and wellbeing in the future**

We welcome that improving health and well-being is an outcome of the NPF4. We have seen increasing focus in spatial policy on this and we suggest this should continue by:

- Reinforcing links at local levels between community planning outcomes and spatial planning
- For sport and physical activity – having an evidence base of what an area currently has as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process. This links to the aim of better planning generally for infrastructure needs.
- For new development – there are lots of good examples of where new places for sport and physical activity have co-located with other facilities. Taking a place-based approach to planning enables the needs of an area to be considered in an integrated way, strengthening this requirement makes sense given the ongoing challenges for public spending.

### **How can planning improve, protect and strengthen the special character of our places**

Continued recognition of those areas where the natural environment enables people to get into the great outdoors, and the contribution they make to opportunities for people to be active, is needed.

### **What infrastructure do we need to plan and build to realise our long-term aspirations?**

For those places where people can get active – as a country we have access to an excellent range of places, natural and built. Factoring these more explicitly into evidence basing at an LDP level will enable best use of scarce resource.

Active Travel – much has been done to deliver improved opportunities, but more is needed if we're to create towns and cities where people can use walking and cycling as alternatives to road-based travel.

### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Infrastructure Planning and Delivery**

There is mention here in relation to the requirement in the 2019 Planning Act around education provision. As we've noted in other sections, maximum benefit is derived from considering provision in a holistic way – don't look only at education provision but how these facilities can deliver other community needs. We'd support policy in relation to infrastructure needs if it's done in this way.

In relation to evidence base as part of the Development Plan process. We suggest that this should include for those places where people can do sport and physical activity – outdoor and indoor places where sport happens.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Community Facilities**

Our observation is that while there is a plan led approach this doesn't always follow in the investment and delivery of building and projects. With the many challenges facing us, can the NPF take the opportunity to drive a holistic approach to place making which carries through to development/investment decisions? This approach is one we'd support more than a standards/requirement approach for different types of infrastructure.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Green Belts**

We think there remains a role for national policy around how these should be designated and development in them managed.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Valuing the Natural Environment**

When policy criteria are developed the role of the natural environment in providing for sport and physical activity needs to be considered, particularly given the unique natural environment we have in Scotland.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Rural Development**

Given the country's natural resources we'd highlight existing and potential opportunities for sport and physical activity here. We note the findings of the Ironside Farrar research on adoption of SPP in LDPs and suggest that the existing national policy is one that gets the balance largely right.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Tourism**

Welcome recognition of links between tourism and other areas. Whilst there is a spatial aspect, delivering these areas is also about people and programmes. Could NPF4 include some direction on integrated ways of working in these areas?

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Placemaking**

In terms of delivering green infrastructure, and other community infrastructure, could the 6 qualities of a successful place include something around having access to the buildings/places that are part of providing for good health and well-being?

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel**

Planning policy can guide new development but it's more challenging for spatial policy to influence where people currently live and work. The potential for towns and cities to switch from road based travel needs a spatial policy framework that supports it and investment which can deliver it.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Maximising the benefits of green infrastructure**

The requirement in the 2019 Planning Act for councils to undertake an Open Space Strategy has the potential to help in this area. A challenge has been having a robust evidence base around what is available and its quality. Also important is recognising the different roles that open space has. This should form part of the requirements for evidence base in the LDP process.

In relation to major developments – policy around place making should reference the need for blue and green infrastructure. However, in relation to this and other developments – in many places there is enough quantity, the issue is quality. National policy should enable the improvement of existing green infrastructure in relation to new developments.

Many outdoor sports facilities are part of green infrastructure, and many offer multi-purpose use. However not all do and as policy is evolving in this area the benefits of these uses for wider health and wellbeing should be recognised, even where they may not also have a wider green infrastructure benefit.

#### **NPF4 Early Engagement – Policies – Health**

NPF4 can complement this area by ensuring that the spatial aspects of health and wellbeing are known, understood and built into policy and development. We suggest that this should form part of the evidence base around Local Development Plans, and it's also linked to Open Space Strategies.

In relation to the need to consider the health effects of major and national development, we'd suggest that this should be done in a holistic way and guidance will be needed in terms of what aspects these are to cover.

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