

## **BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, PLAY AND SPORT**

NPF4 seeks to support and enhance blue and green infrastructure and provide good quality local opportunities for play and sport. Blue and green infrastructure (such as green spaces, sustainable urban drainage systems, urban trees and green roofs and walls) can support health and wellbeing, climate resilience, flood risk management, temperature regulation in urban areas, reduction of air and noise pollution, biodiversity and nature networks, while also supporting good, green jobs. NPF4 also supports development that increases opportunities for play in open spaces and in the public realm, addressing unequal access to play spaces and facilities.

### **Local Development Plans should:**

- identify and protect blue and green infrastructure, safeguarding existing assets and identifying opportunities to enhance and expand provision and public access;
- identify new, enhanced provision of, or improved access to, play opportunities for children as part of enhancing and expanding blue and green infrastructure;

### **Development proposals:**

- that result in fragmentation or net loss of existing blue and green infrastructure should not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the overall integrity of the network of blue and green infrastructure will be maintained.
- in regional and country parks should only be supported where they are compatible with the uses. Natural habitats and character of the park;
- should not generally be supported where they result in the loss of outdoor sports facilities;
- that result in the loss of children's outdoor play provision should not generally be supported;
- for open space, green space or play uses on unused or under-used land, whether for temporary or permanent use, should be supported;
- should incorporate and enhance blue and green infrastructure wherever possible; designed to be multifunctional and consistent with the six qualities of successful places, take account of existing provision and identified requirements, to ensure the proposed blue green infrastructure is of an appropriate type(s), quantity, quality and accessibility.
- for new homes and other major developments likely to be used by children should incorporate well-designed, good quality provision for play, recreation and relaxation;

- that include new streets and public realm should incorporate the principles of Designing Streets and inclusive design, maximising the opportunities for informal and incidental play in the neighbourhood.
- should ensure that the long term stewardship of blue and green infrastructure is addressed by providing effective management and maintenance plans for all blue and green infrastructure. The management and maintenance plan should detail the functions and ownership of the blue green infrastructure, the maintenance requirements, the party responsible for maintenance and demonstrate long-term funding arrangements.

## **Responses to the Position Statement**

There was support for blue and green infrastructure as an integral part of a strategy for people, and recognising its benefits for health and in relation to climate change. But it was suggested that this could be further strengthened by ensuring it is defined and included in the definition of an infrastructure-first approach. There was also reference to the Scottish Government's Policy Framework on Water-Resilient Places, and it was noted that recommendations in the framework include a blue/green infrastructure-first approach in placemaking and master-planning "A number of comments addressed how policy framework for planning can ensure that blue and green networks support good placemaking and contribute to delivering climate change goals.

## **Policy changes**

Draft NPF4 builds on and expands the strategy in NPF3 of enhancing green infrastructure and improving access to open space in order to help build strong, healthier communities. It also builds on the requirements set out in SPP to facilitate the provision and long-term, integrated management of green infrastructure.

Draft NPF4 responds to the blue-green cities framework and has more of a focus, than the previous section in SPP, on blue infrastructure as well as green.

Draft NPF4 sets out a placemaking approach to considering the provision and protection of blue green infrastructure. Blue and green infrastructure is also reflected within the wider universal policy on design, quality and place, and the six qualities of successful places.

Draft NPF4 contains new policy on play, which recognises that providing quality opportunities for children of all ages to play will benefit their physical and cognitive development, and uphold their right to engage in play and recreational activities.