

Analysis of Responses Made to Draft Open Space Strategies Regulations and Draft Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations Consultation

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The joint consultation on the draft Open Space Strategies (OSS) regulations and Play Sufficiency Assessments (PSA) regulations forms part of the Scottish Government's wider programme of work implementing the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The Act introduced new duties on planning authorities to prepare and publish Open Space Strategies and to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in their area for children.

The public consultation ran from 17th December 2021 to 31st March 2022. It sought to gather the views of stakeholders and the public with regards to the draft regulations concerning Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments. The consultation covered three main areas:

- Draft Open Space Strategies Regulations;
- Draft Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations, and;
- Partial / Interim Impact Assessments.

In addition to the public consultation, a Children and Young People's (CYP) survey was designed and coordinated by Play Scotland. Slightly different versions were used for primary and secondary school-aged respondents. This element of the consultation sought to gather the views of children and young people on issues relevant to the subject of the consultation.

Methodology

Horizons Research was appointed to carry out an analysis of the data collected during the public consultation and in response to the CYP survey.

The process for analysis included:

- Cleaning and validating the data set - this involved collating all the data gathered, identifying any issues or anomalies, and categorising respondents.
- Quantitative analysis - involving the development of formulae for closed questions in the consultation and survey, and the presentation of number-based analysis in tables as appropriate.
- Qualitative analysis - involving the review of all comments made to each question, identification of themes, and describing the weight of support and patterns amongst respondents where this was possible.

Respondent Profile

A total of 68 responses were provided to the main consultation. The largest respondent group was local or planning authorities, which accounted for 42.6% of responses.

A further 1,066 young people were involved in the CYP survey - either by submitting an individual response (140) or participating in a group response (926).

Summary of respondent views on the draft Open Space Strategies Regulations

- The vast majority of respondents (89%) supported the outcomes-based approach proposed by the Scottish Government, with a similar proportion (87%) agreeing with the specific outcomes proposed in the draft open space regulations.
- The majority of respondents supported the specific definitions used in the draft Regulations for “open space” (63%), “green space” (64%), “greenspace infrastructure” (78%) and “green networks” (71% agreement). Respondents asked for further clarity in the regulations or for guidance, especially in relation to blue and grey spaces, spaces which may be excluded, and the relationships between different terms and across policies.
- There was overall support (77%) for the proposed thresholds for open space audits. These were seen as workable, sufficiently flexible and in keeping with wider policy practice. However, challenges for rural authorities were mentioned.
- The majority of respondents (79%) agreed with the information that would be required to be included in audits, although some felt further guidance might be needed. A further 82% agreed with the proposed additional information that planning authorities ‘may’ include, according to the draft regulations.
- There was support (83% agreement) for requirements to require locality level place-based information in open space audits.
- The majority of respondents (82%) agreed with the proposed high-level aspects that should be considered in statements. Although clarity was sought on “accessibility” and “quality” in particular.
- The proposed list of consultees for open space audits was widely supported (87%), although respondents emphasised the need to be inclusive in any consultation activity.
- The vast majority of respondents (89%) agreed that assessments of current and future requirements should have regard for open spaces and green networks, and how these contribute to the outcomes. A similar proportion (88%) agreed that the assessment should be informed by engagement with specific groups set out in the regulations.
- There was broad support for requiring Open Space Strategies to: include a statement on outcomes (90% agreement), identify strategic green networks (89%), and identify how green networks should be enhanced (84%).
- The draft regulations set out proposed consultation requirements on draft Open Space Strategies, which 77% of respondents agreed with. Further, 75% agreed with proposed publication requirements.
- A 10-year minimum review period for open space strategies was supported by the majority of respondents (82%).

Summary of respondent views on the draft Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations

- The majority of respondents supported the definitions of “children” (87% agreed), “localities” (85%), and “open space” (75%). Comments reflected the same themes raised in relation to definitions for the draft regulations for Open Space Strategies. Further, a majority (78%) agreed with the definition of “play spaces”.
- There was broad support for the required approach to mapping play spaces, with 80% of respondents agreeing with the proposed regulations. However, clarity

was sought around how best to include areas of open space not specifically for play.

- The vast majority of respondents (89%) supported the requirement to assess play opportunities by age, although respondents did highlight the drawbacks of too narrow an approach, and the importance of meeting the needs of older young people.
- When asked for their views on the aspects to be considered in assessments, 88% agreed with the inclusion of “accessibility”, “quantity”, and “quality”. However, there was discussion about whether “accessibility” should or could mean “inclusivity”. In addition, the vast majority of respondents (85%) agreed planning authorities should provide written statements on play sufficiency for the totality of the area and for each locality.
- The vast majority of respondents agreed with the proposed consultation requirements for play sufficiency assessments (93%) and the proposed list of consultees (87%). Similarly, 90% agreed with the publication requirements.

Cross-cutting issues

A number of issues were consistently identified across questions and various areas of the main consultation:

- Some respondents highlighted their support for engagement work to be accessible and inclusive. It was suggested that further guidance, advice and best practice may be beneficial.
- The significant resource implications of the regulations were raised repeatedly by some respondents.
- The need for further clarity and consistency around terminology, parameters and timescales across a wide range of planning policy and guidance was identified.

Respondent views on the Partial / Interim Impact Assessments

The main consultation asked for views on a range of impact assessments which had been carried out. There was general agreement with these, with comments reflecting that many respondents didn’t have a view or felt decisions were best left to the Scottish Government. Where there was disagreement, this tended to relate to the importance the respondent placed on the impact of the regulations and associated implementation of policy.

Specifically, 87% of respondents agreed with the Fairer Scotland Duty screening and the conclusion that full assessment wasn’t required. A similar proportion (88%) agreed with the Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screening.

Children and Young People’s views on open spaces and play areas

Favourite ways to play

In the CYP survey, children and young people identified a range of different ways they enjoyed playing, with physically active and adventurous play being especially popular.

Quantity and sufficiency of local open spaces and play areas

Overall, respondents expressed a range of positive and negative perceptions with regards to the quantity and sufficiency of their local open spaces and play areas. Broadly speaking, primary school age respondents were somewhat more likely to be positive about the sufficiency of local spaces than secondary school age respondents.

Travelling to play areas

Children identified a range of ways they travelled to play areas. Respondents cited varying experiences in their responses, with some saying it was easy, but others saying it was difficult or specifying barriers in relation to travel and access.

Quality of local open spaces and play areas

Overall, respondents were most likely to identify seeing and making friends, having fun, and specific play equipment such as swings as being the best things about playing and hanging out in local spaces. Boredom, litter and broken or poorly maintained equipment were those most frequently seen as being negative aspects of their play experience. There were a range of positive and more negative viewpoints regarding the quality of local play areas and open spaces amongst respondents.

Frequency of playing outside

Overall, while many respondents feel that they play outside very often, a significant proportion would like to play outside more than they currently do. The most common barriers to playing outdoors were the weather, a perceived lack of things to do in local areas, and safety concerns.

Variety of opportunities and priorities for improvement

Overall, both primary school and secondary school age respondents identified a wide range of potential improvements to local open spaces and play spaces. In addition, the majority of secondary school respondents felt that their local areas did not have the right variety of spaces, places and activities. Having spaces to hang out with friends and opportunities to play sports were important priorities for change.

Other issues raised by respondents

There were some additional issues raised by respondents to the Children and Young People's survey which recurred in their responses to a range of different questions. These included:

- concern around the lack of accessibility and inclusivity of play areas and open spaces for children with disabilities;
- the proximity of spaces and the need to travel as a barrier to play participation;
- a need for more indoor places to play in because of the role of the weather in making outdoor activities unappealing; and
- the benefits of spending time in natural environments.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The joint consultation on the draft Open Space Strategies (OSS) regulations and Play Sufficiency Assessments (PSA) regulations forms part of the Scottish Government's wider programme of work implementing the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. The Act introduced new duties on planning authorities to prepare and publish Open Space Strategies and to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in their area for children. The Act requires the Play Sufficiency Assessment to be prepared to form part of the Evidence Report that informs the preparation of the new style Local Development Plans (LDPs), also being introduced at the same time.

More broadly, access to quality open spaces, play opportunities and green infrastructure is closely linked to strategic priorities such as the delivery of 20-minute neighbourhoods and the creation of pleasant, liveable, healthy and resilient places for communities across Scotland. The new OSS and PSA duties are also relevant to the wider policy context with regards to eliminating discrimination, advancing equalities, supporting Scottish Government's ambition in making Scotland 'the best place to grow up in' and upholding Children's Rights, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Having identified important crossovers and overlaps between the issues involved in planning for open spaces and for play spaces, the Scottish Government adopted a dual and holistic approach to developing the respective draft regulations for OSS and PSA. It has been widely noted, for example, that children do not only play in formal play parks, but rather do so across a wide range of different kinds of open spaces in their local communities and elsewhere.

As part of this dual and holistic approach, the Scottish Government worked in collaboration with a range of stakeholders in developing the draft regulations. This included a Core Group consisting of representatives from Greenspace Scotland, Play Scotland, NatureScot and Public Health Scotland, and a wider Working Group incorporating a wider selection of stakeholders with interests in open spaces and play. Local authorities and Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) were represented in the Working Group by two nominated local authority officers.

Additionally, during an early stage of developing the draft regulations, and working through the Improvement Service and HOPS, every local authority in Scotland was contacted about the work. Presentations and interactive workshop sessions were held with local authority representatives. Throughout the development stage, 66 local authority contacts have been involved in various discussions.

1.2 The Consultation

The public consultation ran from 17th December 2021 to 31st March 2022. It sought to gather the views of stakeholders and the public with regards to the draft regulations

concerning Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments. The consultation covered three main areas:

- Draft Open Space Strategies Regulations;
- Draft Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations, and;
- Partial / Interim Impact Assessments.

The consultation had 22 questions which included both closed and open sub-questions. Respondents were able to provide a response via Citizen Space (the Scottish Government's online portal for public consultations), by email or in writing.

In addition to the main public consultation, a Children and Young People's (CYP) survey was designed and coordinated by Play Scotland. This included 8 questions for primary school aged respondents, and 14 questions for secondary school aged respondents. This element of the consultation sought to gather the views of children and young people on issues relevant to the subject of the consultation. The CYP survey focused mainly on gathering perceptions with regards to the quality and quantity of the open spaces and play areas that children and young people have access to in their local areas.

Play Scotland promoted the opportunity widely amongst its networks. As part of this, all primary and secondary schools across Scotland were contacted and encouraged to participate in the online surveys or to run their own group discussions and submit their responses to Play Scotland. Play Scotland provided a 'Facilitator's pack' which gave guidance and advice on engaging individual children or groups in the survey. The pack encouraged those working with children to do preparatory work, which aimed to stimulate children's thinking and ideas and ensure responses were as meaningful as possible.

Specific survey questions were provided as a structure for engagement. However, Play Scotland encouraged the use of a wide range of different and creative engagement methods. As a result, contributions were made in a range of formats. These were collated into a single spreadsheet and submitted to the Scottish Government. In some cases, initial analysis was carried out by Play Scotland to interpret or summarise the data gathered.

1.3 Methodology

The approach to the analysis of the consultation proceeded in three stages.

Stage 1 aimed to check and validate the data which would be the subject of the analysis. Initially, this involved collating all the data from both the main consultation and the CYP survey in a master spreadsheet. Next, the project team at Horizons Research set out to review and 'clean' the data by identifying any potential defamatory responses, any potential campaign responses, blank forms and duplicate responses. After receiving confirmation from the Scottish Government and Play Scotland where necessary, we then removed responses identified as blank or duplicate from the master database, carefully recording all changes made to allow accurate auditing. No responses were identified as being potentially defamatory or part of a campaign.

This initial stage also involved identifying those respondents who had asked to remain anonymous. This allowed the researchers to identify responses to quote from - those in which the organisation or individual had agreed for both their response and name to be published. We worked with the Scottish Government to agree appropriate respondent categories for respondents to the main consultation, ensuring these were relevant and appropriate for further analysis. The agreed respondent categories are shown in the table in section 1.4, and used in tables throughout this report.

During Stage 2, we undertook a quantitative analysis of the demographic profile of respondents and of responses to the closed questions in the main consultation and CYP survey. This involved the development of formulae for the quantitative calculations and the production of tables to present the results. All numeric and percentage analysis of the closed questions has also been broken down by respondent category.

Finally, Stage 3 was the qualitative analysis of responses to all open questions in the main consultation and the CYP survey. This stage involved an initial read of all comments made in response to these questions, followed by the identification of key emerging themes, trends and the most appropriate processes for coding and analysis.

In the qualitative analysis of the main consultation, the following terms have been used to consistently indicate the frequency with which a theme or point was raised:

- Few - meaning up to 3 responses;
- Several - meaning 4 to 9 responses; and
- Many - meaning 10 and over responses.

It is worth noting that similar points were regularly made both by those expressing agreement and those expressing disagreement. Often, comments focused on broader themes beyond the detail of the regulations being asked about. We have included this wider discussion in our analysis, as these points may be relevant to the development of future guidance or policy.

Throughout this report tables are used to summarise the quantitative analysis of the data collected from the closed questions on the main consultation, and data collected from individual and group responses to the CYP survey.

Chapter 2 provides an analysis of the main public consultation. It includes summary tables of the quantitative data collected from the main consultation. The closed questions in the main consultation asked respondents to identify if they agreed, disagreed or had no view. The tables show the number of respondents in each respondent category who selected each option, and the number who didn't respond. At the bottom of each table there is a percentage figure to indicate the proportion of respondents answering the question that selected each option. It is worth noting that there was broad support for all the points asked about in the main consultation. The qualitative analysis often picks up points of support or disagreement where at least a few stakeholders discussed this, and explores the wider points being made. Quotes have been used to illustrate key themes.

Chapter 3 then provides an analysis of the consultation with children and young people, conducted via the CYP survey. This largely takes the form of a qualitative analysis of

responses to the open questions in the survey. It also includes summary tables showing the quantitative analysis of data collected from the closed questions in the survey, where this could be analysed in a meaningful way. As a result of data being collated in different formats and initial analysis, we have not used quotes from group responses in this chapter of the report.

1.4 Respondent profile

The following two tables provide an overview of respondent characteristics to the consultations, based on data available. Firstly, a total of 68 responses were submitted to the main consultation. The table below gives a breakdown of the categories of respondents.

Table i: Summary of responses to main consultation by category		
	No.	%
Agencies and Government Departments	4	5.9
Community Councils	2	2.9
Individuals	17	25
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	29	42.6
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	8	11.8
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	4.4
Play and Early Years Sector	5	7.4
Total	68	100

In addition, a total of 1066 primary and secondary aged respondents were involved in the consultation process through the CYP survey. There were 140 of these who submitted individual responses to the survey¹. A further 926 individuals were involved in 36 group responses. The following tables provide an analysis of the profile of all those involved in the CYP survey.

¹ Excluding duplicate and blank responses.

Table ii: Children and Young People's Survey - demographics of individual respondents

Age	No.	%
4 to 7	46	32.9
8 to 11	74	52.9
12 to 16	13	9.3
17+	5 ²	3.6
Not answered	2	1.4
Total	140	100.1³
Gender	No.	%
Male	71	50.7
Female	56	40
Other	1	0.7
Not answered	12	8.6
Total	140	100
School⁴	No.	%
Primary school	130	92.9
Secondary school	10	7.1
Total	140	100
Disability	No.	%
Yes	16	11.4
No	105	75
Prefer not to say	1	0.7
Not answered	18	12.9
Total	140	100

² Five respondents to the CYP survey entered ages considerably older than school age, for example 55 years old. As these respondents completed the Primary school age surveys, it has been assumed that these ages are those of adults responding to the survey on behalf of a child or young person.

³ Total does not always sum to 100 due to rounding.

⁴ Three individual respondents and one group respondent left the 'school' field blank. As they completed the Primary school age survey, it is assumed that these were Primary school age respondents.

Table iii: Children and Young People's Survey - demographics of individual respondents continued

Religion	No.	%
Church of Scotland	12	8.6
Roman Catholic	28	20
Other Christian	5	3.3
Buddhist	1	0.7
Muslim	2	1.4
Hindu	2	1.4
None	70	50
Prefer not to say	3	2.1
Not answered	17	12.1
Total	140	99.6
Ethnic origin	No.	%
White Scottish	102	72.9
White Polish	1	0.7
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	1	0.7
White British	8	5.7
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	2	1.4
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	2	1.4
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	1	0.7
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	1	0.7
African, African Scottish or African British	1	0.7
Prefer not to say	3	2.1
Other	3	2.1
Not answered	15	10.7
Total	140	99.8

Table iv: Children and Young People's Survey - demographics of group respondents

School	No. of groups	%
Primary school	33	91.7
Secondary school	3	8.3
Total	36	100

2. Analysis of responses to the main consultation

Draft Open Space Strategies Regulations

Q1 - An outcomes-based approach

The consultation paper asked respondents about their views on the Open Space Strategies taking an outcomes-based approach. This focuses on what the policy should achieve, rather than inputs and outputs. The Scottish Government proposed this would encourage organisations to work across traditional boundaries, looking at the bigger picture.

As the table below shows, the vast majority of respondents (89% answering this question) agreed with the idea of promoting an outcomes-based approach. Only a few individuals answered no.

Table 1a: Do you agree with the idea of promoting an outcomes-based approach through the Open Space Strategies Regulations?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	12	3	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	27	0	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	8	0	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	1	0	1	1
Play and Early Years Sector	2	0	1	2
Total	55	3	4	6
% of respondents answering question	89	5	6	

In total, 39 respondents provided comments.

Most commonly, comments related to the need for further guidance, support or information on monitoring and performance management of the outcomes-based approach. Many respondents agreeing with the outcomes-based approach talked about challenges associated with monitoring, or emphasised the need for further guidance on indicators, data collection or reporting. This included the need to track and report inputs and outputs, as well as outcomes.

“RTPI Scotland supports the promotion of the outcomes-based approach through the Open Space Strategies (OSS) Regulations. RTPI Scotland wishes to see more detail on how the outcomes are to be monitored.”

RTPI Scotland

“Agree with the outcomes based approach as a framework, however inputs and outputs cannot be ignored as they are essential as the evidence base and for monitoring purposes.”

Clackmannanshire Council

Many respondents talked about the benefits of the outcomes-based approach. Perceived benefits included a focus on impact or encouraging a more cohesive and holistic approach across local authority departments or across different areas of policy and guidance (for example, Place Making outcomes, the fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4), and draft LDP guidance).

“It is our view that a move towards outcomes focused policy-making is a key way to promote change and drive improved outcomes for all. It is extremely positive to see this approach taken through the Open Space Strategies Regulations. We encourage Scottish Government to consider how an outcomes-based approach can be demonstrated across Scottish Government policy.”

Children in Scotland

“Yes, agree these principles would help identify and secure multiple benefits. Note and welcome intention to prepare further guidance to support a structured approach by authorities. An outcomes-based approach promotes focusing on what the policy should achieve, rather than inputs. It encourages organisations to work across traditional boundaries, looking at the bigger picture. It is positive and forward-looking, thinking about what type of places we want in the future, and what they can help achieve.”

Stirling Council

Several respondents highlighted or raised concerns about the resource implications of the approach, and related data gathering.

Q1b - proposed outcomes

The Consultation asked for views on the proposed outcomes for the draft Open Space Strategies Regulations, which are:

- a) improving access to green infrastructure, open space and green networks,
- b) creating successful and sustainable places,
- c) improving health and wellbeing,

- d) advancing equality and eliminating discrimination,
- e) securing positive effects for biodiversity, and
- f) mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

When asked if they agreed with the suggested outcomes, the vast majority (87%) said they did.

Table 1b: Do you agree with the suggested outcomes?				
	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	12	2	0	3
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	2	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	7	1	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	1	0	1	1
Play and Early Years Sector	2	0	1	2
Total	52	5	3	8
% of respondents answering question	87	8	5	

In total, 41 respondents provided further comments.

In their comments respondents often highlighted similar points to those they raised in response to Question 1a. In particular, many emphasised the broad nature of the outcomes, which was often seen as beneficial. However, several commenting respondents talked about the importance of having meaningful guidance to support delivery, and the need for measurement frameworks to drive and monitor change in relation to the outcomes.

“We appreciate that the Scottish Government wishes to use the outcomes as a set of principles rather than measures to be assessed against. However, we question if this amounts to an outcomes-based approach in practice. We would encourage the OSS Regulations team to engage with the work underway in Scottish Government to

develop a series of wellbeing outcomes for children and young people and consider how these new outcomes can be embedded within the outcomes for the OSS regulations.”

Children in Scotland

“The Council agrees with the proposed outcomes, but, would suggest that practical guidance is produced to interpret how the open space strategy reflects some of these outcomes”.

South Ayrshire Council

“They reflect the types of outcomes that can be delivered by good open space provision. However, it needs to be acknowledged that these outcomes can only be achieved by working with other key strategies that are the responsibility of separate services within the council and only through collaborative working are they achievable. This becomes problematic when budgets are allocated as services are frequently competing for resources rather than working collaboratively.”

Perth and Kinross Council

Many respondents drew attention to specific omissions or proposed re-wording. This often related to very specific points or their main organisational interests. For example, some respondents called for the Scottish Government to look at the wording on equality. Other specific suggested additions were wide-ranging, and included the need to refer to: attractive environments; community involvement or empowerment; financial sustainability; quality and quantity of green spaces; climate resilience and public access rights.

A few respondents expressed disagreement with the approach, as they didn't feel it was necessary or warranted.

Q2a - open space definition

The consultation paper asked respondents for their views on several proposed definitions. Here the views on each of these definitions are explored in turn. The first of these is the proposed definition of open space which was set out in the consultation paper:

- **“open space”** means space within and on the edge of settlements comprising green space or civic areas such as squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas with a civic function.

As the table below shows, the majority of respondents (63%) broadly agreed with this proposed definition. Most respondent categories were supportive of the proposed definition. However, local and planning authorities appeared fairly split on the issue.

Table 2a: Do you agree with the proposed definition of ‘open space’?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	1	1	1	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	2	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	13	11	2	3
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	6	0	2	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	0	2	0	1
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	37	16	6	9
% of respondents answering question	63	27	10	

In total, 31 respondents provided further comments.

In a few cases, respondents who agreed with the definition took the opportunity to affirm their support for the definition in their comments. Some of those who agreed, and many of those who did not, talked about a range of different issues relating to the definition. The three main areas they asked for improvement or clarity were:

- **Types of spaces which aren’t clearly included** - Many of those who disagreed felt that the definition seemed to exclude, or didn’t clearly include, specific areas they thought were important. In particular, respondents referred to grey and blue spaces and sports areas (especially those which do not have grass).
- **The term “edge of settlement”** - Several respondents suggested the reference to ‘edge of settlement’ was problematic, especially in rural areas, where people might travel some distances to spaces which are still considered part of their community. They felt this needed further definition or explanation.
- **The term “civic function”** - Several respondents specifically queried the term ‘civic function’, or asked how certain spaces - such as private or shared gardens - might be included, given their importance in material planning decisions.

“Why is there no definition of green/blue spaces and green/blue networks?”

Cramond and Barnton Community Council

“The inclusion of ‘edge of settlement’ is problematic. In the case of East Ayrshire, land is either within or outwith a settlement boundary. Land outwith the settlement boundary is rural but does also include Country Parks. It is considered that ‘edge of settlement’ is a somewhat woolly definition which is not helpful.”

East Ayrshire Council

“Needs to make clear whether this refers to public open space or also includes private open space. PAN65 does not make this clear, referring to “sports areas” which are “generally bookable”. Not sure what the definition of a “civic function” is.”

Clackmannanshire Council

“Are these all publicly accessible? It's not clear. Where do private gardens or shared gardens (e.g. in tenements) fit into this? If not here, then where, as they are a material consideration in terms of plans for future provision of open space and play areas?”

OPENspace Research Centre, University of Edinburgh

Q2b - greenspace definition

The consultation proposed the following definition for greenspace:

- “**green space**” means space which provides a recreational function, an amenity function, or aesthetic value to the public such as areas of -
 - a) grass,
 - b) trees,
 - c) other vegetation,
 - d) water,but not including agricultural or horticultural land.”

As the table below shows, the majority of respondents (64%) indicated they broadly agreed with the proposed definition. As with the previous question, most respondent groups were broadly supportive of the definition. However, local and planning authorities were fairly split on the issue.

Table 2b: Do you agree with the proposed definition of ‘green space’?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	1	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	13	3	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	12	11	2	4
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	7	1	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	0	2	0	1
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	37	17	4	10
% of respondents answering question	64	29	7	

A total of 28 respondents provided further comments. Comments mostly came from those who disagreed. A few respondents referred to comments they made in relation to Question 2a.

Most suggestions related to how the definition needed to be clarified, further refined, or widened. There were three main areas respondents asked the Scottish Government to review:

- **The apparent exclusion of horticultural areas** - Several respondents specifically asked for clarity on, or called for the inclusion of, horticultural spaces such as allotments or community growing spaces.
- **The environmental value of land** - Several respondents felt the contributions land makes towards biodiversity and climate change needed to be recognised alongside the listed benefits to the public.
- **The reference to ‘water’** - Several respondents questioned or disagreed with the approach to ‘blue spaces’, beaches and coastal areas. Generally they felt that these areas were important, and should be recognised in the regulations in some way, but that the current reference to ‘water’ may exclude beaches and coastal areas. A few called for a separate definition of ‘blue space’ alongside that for ‘green space’.

“No. This definition does not include horticulture. Horticultural areas can be an important form of open space in urban areas, including allotments and community growing areas. Horticulture should not be included in the exclusion at the end of the definition set out in the draft regulations.”

City of Edinburgh Council

“Green spaces can and do provide recreational function, an amenity function, or aesthetic value to the public but they can also, importantly, support natural ecosystems and are of value because of that too. The definition would be more complete by acknowledging green space as space for nature as well as space for people to access nature.”

John Muir Trust

“Beaches (sandy or otherwise) and unbuilt coastal areas should be included in some of the examples to clarify that they are included. “

Individual

A few respondents asked for clarity on the inclusion of privately owned land, reflecting key points from the discussion in relation to Question 2a.

Q2c - green infrastructure definition

The consultation proposed the following definition:

- **“green infrastructure”** means features or spaces within the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem services.

As shown in the table below, the majority of respondents (78%) broadly agreed with the definition. There was broad support from all respondent groups on this definition. Disagreement mostly came from local and planning authorities.

Table 2c: Do you agree with the proposed definition of ‘green infrastructure’?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	15	0	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	18	5	2	4
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	6	2	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	0	1
Play and Early Years Sector	0	0	2	3
Total	45	8	5	10
% of respondents answering question	78	14	9	

20 respondents provided further comments. Comments mostly came from those who disagreed. Reflecting comments to earlier questions, several respondents felt that the existing definition does not clearly include ‘blue infrastructure’. A few suggested that it would be helpful to refer to both blue and green infrastructure, possibly as separate definitions. One respondent mentioned that this would be more in keeping with NPF4.

“NPF4 [is] very clear on the inclusion of green and blue infrastructure. Flooding is mentioned in paragraph 12 and ecosystems are mentioned in the green infrastructure definition, blue infrastructure has a big part to play in both of these.”

Clackmannanshire Council

Several respondents suggested the definition was too broad, or conflicted with other relevant definitions, such as those used by the Landscape Institute, HM Government or NatureScot. More specifically, respondents asked about whether this definition would include streets (for example, those which had trees), farmed areas, and private gardens.

Q2d - green network definition

The consultation proposed the following definition:

- **“green networks”** means connected areas of green infrastructure and open space, that together form an integrated and multi-functional network.

The majority of respondents (71%) agreed with this definition. Although all respondent groups showed overall support for the definition, disagreement mostly came from local and planning authorities and open space, environment and sustainability sector respondents.

Table 2d: Do you agree with the proposed definition of ‘green networks’?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	13	1	2	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	16	7	2	4
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	3	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	0	1
Play and Early Years Sector	0	0	1	4
Total	40	11	5	12
% of respondents answering question	71	20	9	

When invited, 23 respondents provided comments to support their response.

Mostly, respondents queried or asked for further guidance from the Scottish Government around what is and isn’t included in the definition. In particular, they talked about:

- ‘blue’ as well as ‘green’ spaces;
- how the terms ‘green space’ and ‘open space’ relate in relation to this definition;
- the relationship between, or difference in, ‘green networks’ and ‘nature networks’; and
- the terms ‘connected’ and ‘network’, and how these might be different in rural and urban areas.

A few respondents again emphasised the need to have consistent terms and definitions across different policies and legislation.

“RTPI Scotland wishes to highlight concerns expressed in response to both the draft NPF4 and draft LDP guidance and regulations over the use of ambiguous related terms such as nature networks. We believe that clear definitions need to be set out across the documents and then carefully aligned.”

RTPI Scotland

“Overall agree. Care needs to be taken that this definition fits with a definition for Nature Networks that is provided in the NPF4 draft. Arguably, we need both green networks and nature networks (which the draft NPF4 has).”

John Muir Trust

Q2e - ecosystem services definition

The consultation proposed the following definition:

- **“ecosystem services”** means the benefits people obtain from ecosystems.

The majority of respondents (68%) supported the definition. Disagreement mostly came from local or planning authorities and individuals. However, all respondent categories demonstrated overall support for the definition.

Table 2e: Do you agree with the proposed definition of ‘ecosystem services’?				
	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	11	4	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	16	7	2	4
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	6	0	2	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	1	0	0	2
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	39	12	6	11
% of respondents answering question	68	21	11	

Further comments were provided by 24 respondents.

Many respondents suggested the term was not well understood and needed further explanation. They asked for further definition, or examples that would support understanding.

“Yes, although it would help to list in guidance some of the main examples of the benefits that can be derived from ecosystem services.”

City of Edinburgh Council

A few suggested there is a need to first define ‘ecosystem’. A few also asked whether ‘benefits’ rather than ‘services’ might be more appropriate.

A few respondents felt the definition was too focused on people, and it would be beneficial to reflect the benefits to nature as well.

“Yes, but the term ‘ecosystems’ should be updated to reflect reciprocal ecological relationships between humans and nature. This should be the default rather than focusing on the benefits humans derive from ecosystems.”

Play Scotland

As with other questions, a few respondents asked for more consistent use of terminology across policies, guidance and stakeholders. A few respondents specifically drew attention to the NatureScot definition in relation to ‘ecosystem services’.

“Generally support these definitions, but important they are consistent across all planning based legislation and regulations. Consider having a better/clearer definition for ‘ecosystem services’ by using the term ‘ecosystem benefits’.”

Stirling Council

Q3 - Thresholds For Open Space Audits

Draft Regulation 4(2) sets out that planning authorities must audit all open spaces in their area that are 0.2 hectares or greater, and any other smaller spaces that the planning authority considers appropriate to include.

The table below shows that 77% of respondents indicated they agreed with the proposed thresholds.

Table 3: Do you agree with proposed thresholds for open space audits in Draft Regulation 4(2)?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	10	3	3	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	26	1	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	4	0	4	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	48	4	10	6
% of respondents answering question	77	6	16	

In total, 42 respondents provided further comments to support their answer. Most comments came from those who agreed with the proposed thresholds. Many of these respondents suggested the threshold was workable, and fitted well with existing policy and practice, including their current approach to open space audits.

Many also mentioned the value of having flexibility to include smaller spaces. They recognised that it may be important for authorities to include smaller spaces, particularly in certain areas or for specific types of spaces, such as play areas. Several suggested this should be emphasised in guidance which might also provide direction on which types of smaller spaces should be considered for inclusion in audits.

“We welcome the flexibility to include smaller spaces which are recognised as of particular value to the community.”

Greenspace Scotland

“It appears that 0.2ha is quite a large area, given some of the region’s smaller but valuable urban open spaces. However we note that different uses will need different thresholds to be audited in a manner that fits the local authorities’ requirements, clarity on how this may be applied would be welcomed.”

Scottish Borders Council

The planning authority who disagreed with the threshold, and two others who broadly agreed, emphasised the challenges for rural authorities. Such authorities often cover very large geographical areas and have dispersed populations, which may make the auditing requirements associated with the threshold quite challenging. They called for a change, or further clarity, on the application of the threshold in more rural authorities.

Q4a - Required information to include in audits

Draft Regulation 4(3) requires audits to include for each open space covered by the audit, information on its location, size and type. Digital mapping systems (Geographic Information Systems) can show this information, which is available as part of the Ordnance Survey Greenspace dataset.

As the table below shows, the majority of respondents (79%) expressed agreement with the proposed information requirements. Most respondent categories demonstrated broad support for the proposal, with the exception of the open space, environment and sustainability sector respondent group, which seemed fairly split on the proposal.

Table 4a: Do you agree with suggested information to include about each open space (location, size and type)?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	2	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	2	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	3	4	1	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	49	9	4	6
% of respondents answering question	79	15	6	

A total of 35 respondents provided further comments.

Several respondents who agreed with the proposal highlighted that the approach was practical, and fitted with existing planning policy and practice in relation to data collection, audits and strategies.

“Yes. Note and welcome intention to prepare further guidance. Planning authorities are accustomed to using the PAN 65 [Planning Advice Note 65] types and providing information, identifying the type of open spaces in their area, as evidenced by the inclusion of type data in authorities’ previous open space audits. It seems prudent to repeatedly use this.”

Stirling Council

Respondents who agreed and some who disagreed suggested that the Scottish Government should either require, or give guidance on, further detail that should be included in the audits. There were varied suggestions. Several respondents emphasised the need for audits to take account of the quality or value of spaces, alongside the other proposed information. Several also called for information on accessibility to be included. A few mentioned the need to consider the value of spaces, including in relation to nature recovery or climate change.

“I think that accessibility and quality/condition/function should also be required as these will be fundamental in assessing provision, undertaking consultation and defining a strategy.”

GCV Green Network

Several respondents emphasised particular types of spaces they felt should be included or emphasised in some way. This seemed to be because they were important in terms of earlier defined definitions, or useful for audit purposes. However, there was also recognition that there would be significant resource implications associated with including some of these spaces in the audit. Several respondents queried whether private gardens (individually owned or shared), derelict or vacant land, and wilder spaces (such as woodlands and hedgerows) needed to be included. A few mentioned blue spaces such as reservoirs and canals. Common ground or land for grazing (which is common in crofting areas) or spaces owned by a Community Land Trusts were also mentioned by single respondents as important rural issues.

“It is not clear whether wilder open space (within the definition of ‘open space’ provided) has been captured by the list of types. To make this clearer, the list could refer to ‘wild places’ or it could reference habitats associated with a spectrum of wild places, which could be within the open space definition. Examples could include moorland, peatlands, heathland, wetlands.”

John Muir Trust

“. . . In relation to type we have the following comments about types which we would encourage Scottish Government to address in guidance: . . . We recommend that information about vacant and derelict land should also be included in the audit . . . With the outcomes set out in the draft Regulations on ‘securing positive effects for

biodiversity’ and ‘mitigation of and adaptation to climate change’, we would highlight the potential role for gardens and other private spaces in terms of habitat corridors, nature networks and climate resilience.”

Greenspace Scotland

Q4b - Additional information which may be included in audits

Draft Regulation 4(5) sets out other aspects that planning authorities may include information on:

- accessibility to the public;
- functions of open spaces;
- the extent to which open spaces deliver those functions;
- presence of play opportunities; and
- condition.

The majority of respondents (82%) agreed with Regulation 4(5). As the table below shows, there was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 4b: Do you agree with Regulation 4(5) on the Agencies and government departments information planning authorities may include in the audit?				
	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	13	3	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	23	2	1	3
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	6	2	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	49	8	3	8
% of respondents answering question	82	13	5	

In total, 41 respondents provided comments.

Several respondents that agreed suggested that having this list of additional information would allow flexibility at a local level, and that the list was in keeping with existing policy and practice.

However, a few of those who disagreed with the approach, and a few who indicated their general agreement, felt that it was not helpful or necessary to have a list of information in regulations which was not required. A few also suggested that some of this information would be needed if a planning authority was to deliver on its wider commitments within the legislation.

“Whilst we understand the desire to provide flexibility to authorities and ensure the audit is not too onerous and resource intensive – and hence use of the word ‘may’ in the draft regulations - we are concerned that without undertaking an assessment of function, quality, accessibility and condition of individual spaces it will not be possible for authorities to make statements about accessibility and quality for each locality and the totality of open spaces within their area.”

Greenspace Scotland

Single respondents identified a range of specific information they felt it might be useful to include in this list, or in further guidance. This included information on maintenance or stewardship, which was highlighted by several respondents. A few mentioned the importance of accessibility or inclusivity, including in relation to the needs of people with protected characteristics. A few respondents also took the opportunity to emphasise the importance of nature and biodiversity as a consideration.

“The Council is satisfied with the other information proposed within the regulations that the Council may include information on within its open space strategy. However, it would be useful if maintenance and stewardship were included as this would help analyse if the current regimes in this regard were fit for purpose and so on.”

South Ayrshire Council

Q5a - locality level information requirements

Draft Regulations 4(6) and 4(7) require open space audits to include statements covering the accessibility, quality and quantity of open spaces and green networks, for the totality in their area and for each locality.

As the consultation paper sets out, localities are:

- electoral wards; or
- areas the Council defines that are no greater than 30,000 population.

As the table below shows, the majority of respondents (83%) agreed with the suggested approach. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 5a: Do you agree with the suggested approach to require locality level place-based information?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	12	3	2	0
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	2	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	6	1	1	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	3	0	0	2
Total	53	6	5	4
% of respondents answering question	83	9	8	

A total of 41 respondents provided further comments. Many of these comments came from those who broadly agreed with the proposals. Those supporting the proposal highlighted the benefits suggested by the Scottish Government, and welcomed the flexibility it offered, particularly in allowing planning authorities to define localities in a workable manner.

“For authorities with more rural areas, providing information on an electoral ward basis could be difficult and resource intensive if open space in multiple small settlements required to be assessed. Therefore, allowing the Council to define appropriate areas is welcomed.”

Moray Council

Several respondents referred to the 30,000 population size which is proposed as the upper limit for a ‘locality’. A few called for further flexibility or discretion in relation to this. A few others suggested this scale was too large for certain authorities, where populations are often more dispersed.

“More discretion over the maximum size of population that can be considered to exist in a single neighbourhood would be welcomed, however it is appreciated that the definition of localities comes from existing legislation and so redressing this would require a breaking from an established definition and may present issues of inconsistency.”

City of Edinburgh Council

Several respondents talked about the importance of accessibility and inclusivity, and the need to engage with and take account of the needs of particular groups - including people living in areas of high deprivation, children with additional support needs, and others who may face barriers to using spaces and places.

“We are also pleased to see that accessibility has been considered within the information required in relation to locality level place-based plans. It is essential that these considerations are given priority, not viewed as an add-on.”

Children in Scotland

A few respondents also drew attention to the resource implications of information gathering and data analysis associated with this area of the Regulations.

Q5b - proposed high level aspects

The consultation asked for views on the requirement for planning authorities to consider the ‘quantity’, ‘quality’ and ‘accessibility’ of open space on a locality basis.

Overall, the majority of respondents (82%) agreed with the proposed aspects. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 5b: Do you agree with the three high level aspects that should be covered in these statements ‘accessibility’, ‘quantity’ and ‘quality’?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	11	3	1	2
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	2	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	2	1	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	2	0	0	3
Total	50	7	4	7
% of respondents answering question	82	11	7	

Further, 41 respondents provided comments.

Several respondents emphasised their support for the proposals, and how these reflected existing policy and practice. A few respondents emphasised their support for specific aspects - such as the reference in the consultation to climate change or playability.

“Agree - Accessibility, quantity and quality are the standard components for an OSS and there are existing measures for assessing and scoring these factors.”

South Lanarkshire Council

Several respondents called for greater clarity regarding the term “accessibility”. In particular, respondents drew attention to the differences between physical access, accessibility, and inclusivity. Related to this, several respondents emphasised the importance of understanding and taking account of the needs of specific equality groups.

“Play Scotland would expect clarity on the difference between being inclusive and being accessible. These terms and approaches are not interchangeable. They should not be

merged in consideration of, for example, the diverse needs and rights of disabled children.”

Play Scotland

In relation to ‘quality’, several respondents called for clarity about when and where further guidance might be provided. It was suggested that further guidance was needed to avoid a subjective or too varied approach. Specifically, they asked about updates to guidance or methodologies in relation to the Greenspace Quality Guide, and guidance on the quality of civic or blue spaces.

Concerns relating to resource requirements were again emphasised by several respondents.

A few respondents drew attention to the need for a definition of ‘blue space’, in line with views they expressed in relation to earlier questions.

Several respondents suggested specific additions to the high-level aspects. This included a few respondents in each case proposing:

- a reference to biodiversity and habitat connectivity;
- a reference to diversity or variety of spaces; and
- community or cultural value.

Q6 - proposed list of consultees for open space audits

The draft regulations include the following consultees for open space audits:

- children and young people, as defined by section 16B(14) of the Planning Act,
- older people,
- disabled people, as defined by section 16B(14) of the Act,
- community councils, established under Part 4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973,
- the public,
- key agencies, and
- any other person or community body which the planning authority considers to be appropriate, and
- the Green Action Trust, (where a planning authority’s area (whether in full or partially) falls within the boundary of the Central Scotland Green Network).

Key agencies are defined as meaning:

- Historic Environment Scotland,
- NatureScot (meaning Scottish Natural Heritage),
- Sportscotland (meaning the Scottish Sports Council),
- The Scottish Environment Protection Agency,
- Scottish Water,
- Public Health Scotland, and
- Regional Transport Partnerships (established under section 1 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005).

As the table below shows, the vast majority of respondents (87%) agreed with the list of consultees. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 6: Do you agree with the list of consultees for the open space audit?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	11	4	0	2
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	3	0	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	8	0	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	3	0	0	2
Total	54	7	1	6
% of respondents answering question	87	11	2	

In total, 38 respondents provided further comments.

Many respondents, most of whom broadly agreed with the list, called for further emphasis on groups who are not experiencing equity in relation to using spaces. Examples included people affected by poverty and multiple deprivation, women and girls, disabled people and families with disabled children, and black and minority ethnic families.

“We would encourage the Scottish Government to consider how an equalities focus can be embedded within the list of consultees for the open space audit and consider stating that there should be engagement with people with protected characteristics, for example.”

Children in Scotland

Many respondents, most of whom agreed with the list, drew attention to the resource implications of the specific consultation being suggested. It was suggested that the scale of the task was significant, and that local authorities may often not have the capacity or scales to do the engagement effectively.

“The issue isn't one of whether these are the right groups but one of capacity, resources and skills to do it effectively. This is a more onerous requirement than was previously the case with local authority capacity more stretched than ever. I think it will be very difficult for this to be undertaken at the scale and depth suggested.”

GCV Green Network

However, several respondents suggested there are opportunities to bring together engagement processes for the open space audits and other developments such as the Local Development Plans. A few respondents also highlighted the opportunities to work with relevant organisations with the expertise to engage with key groups or which could provide expert advice.

A wide range of groups and organisations were suggested as additional consultees - either to be added to the list, or as groups that authorities might consult with. In particular, several respondents emphasised the need to include landowners as consultees. A few also suggested adding National Park Authorities (where these are relevant) and Community Planning Partnerships to the list.

Q7a - regard for open spaces and green networks in assessment of current and future requirements

The Act requires open space strategies to contain an assessment of current and future requirements. In the consultation, the Scottish Government suggests this is an opportunity for planning authorities to consider how well the open space resources in their area help contribute to the outcomes (in terms of access to open space, place, health and wellbeing, equalities, biodiversity and climate change) and what future changes and requirements might be needed to help deliver on the outcomes.

As the table below shows, the vast majority of respondents (89%) agreed with this proposal. Overall, all respondent groups were broadly in support of the proposal.

Table 7a: Do you agree the Assessment of Current and Future Requirements should have regard to how open spaces and green networks in the area are contributing to the outcomes?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	15	1	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	24	3	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	8	0	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	2	0	1	2
Total	56	4	3	5
% of respondents answering question	89	6	5	

Further, 37 respondents provided comments. Mostly these were made by those who broadly supported the proposal.

Those that supported the proposal made a range of points. In particular, many emphasised the importance of further guidance from the Scottish Government. It was suggested there is a need to clarify how different audit, assessment and engagement processes and key documents relate to one another, and guidance may be needed in using data to inform assessments and decision making.

“The Council is content that the assessment of current and future requirements in this regard should also help to deliver an outcome-based approach as prescribed in the regulations. Again, the Council would ask for detailed guidance on how to achieve this to be produced by the Scottish Government.”

South Ayrshire Council

Several respondents drew attention to concerns they had relating to the reference made to maintenance, which is not necessarily something that planning authorities can control, which caused concern that there may be an issue with unrealistic expectations.

“However, there is reference to OSSs considering issues of maintenance but often planning authorities can’t enforce maintenance arrangements.”

Perth and Kinross Council

A few respondents emphasised the importance of assessing demographic data - including in relation to population change, and health outcomes. A few supported the reference to food growing.

“In making the Assessment of Current and Future Requirements, we also consider it essential that authorities consider demographic data, areas of change, growth areas etc. . . . There is a risk that Open Space Strategies may not meet local need if the assessment of current and future use is not informed by available demographic, health and socio-economic data.”

Greenspace Scotland

As with other questions, several respondents raised concerns about the resource implications of the proposed approach.

Those who disagreed and offered comments focused on varied issues.

Q7b - engagement with specific groups

As described in the consultation, the draft Regulations require the assessment of current and future requirements to be informed by engagement with those consulted on the audit (and discussed in relation to questions 6a and 6b above).

Overall, the vast majority of respondents (88%) agreed with the proposed provisions relating to engagement with the specified groups to inform the assessment of current and future requirements. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 7b: Do you agree with the proposed provisions for the assessment of current and future requirements for the assessment to be informed by engagement with the groups set out?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	1	0	2
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	2	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	8	0	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	0	0	1	4
Total	53	4	3	8
% of respondents answering question	88	7	5	

In total, 30 respondents provided additional comments. However, most of these either expressed broad support or referred to their earlier answers to Q6 where they had suggested important or additional consultees.

As with other questions, several respondents reinforced concerns regarding the level of resource required to support engagement. A few suggested guidance should support local authorities to streamline engagement across a range of planning related activities, to make best use of resources and consultee engagement.

Q8a - statements on outcomes

The consultation asked for views on whether Open Space Strategies should include a statement explaining how they contribute to the outcomes.

As seen in the table below, the vast majority (90%) of respondents agreed they should. There was strong support from all respondent groups.

Table 8a: Do you agree Open Space Strategies should include a statement setting out how they contribute to the outcomes?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	1	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	26	1	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	7	0	0	1
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	2	0	1	2
Total	56	2	4	6
% of respondents answering question	90	3	6	

When invited, 30 respondents provided further comments. However, often these reinforced their broad support or drew attention to their answers to earlier questions relating to outcomes or statements.

A few respondents reinforced the importance of linking or aligning the statement with wider strategies or plans which were relevant locally.

“Yes, although it should be made clear that OSSs and PSAs can make reference to other related strategies where these set out further details on how these outcomes are addressed; for example Forestry and Woodland Strategies.”

City of Edinburgh Council

A few also emphasised the importance of having monitoring approaches or action plans alongside any statement, with one respondent suggesting this needed to be set out in legislation.

“We would strongly recommend that a legal requirement is included in the Regulations for Open Space Strategies to have an Action Plan and Monitoring Framework. Without

this, there is a concern that adequate resources will not be applied to take forward the implementation of the OSS.”

Greenspace Scotland

Q8b - Identification of strategic green networks

When the consultation asked for views on whether Open Space Strategies should identify strategic green networks, the vast majority of respondents (89%) agreed they should. Again, there was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 8b: Do you agree Open Space Strategies should identify strategic green networks?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	1	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	1	1	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	7	1	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	54	3	4	7
% of respondents answering question	89	5	7	

A total of 30 respondents provided further comments.

Several of those who agreed, as well as a few who disagreed, asked for clarity and guidance on the definitions of ‘strategic green network’ and how this related to terms used in NPF4 or elsewhere - including ‘nature networks’ and ‘networks of blue and green infrastructure’.

“Yes, although it would help to define some of the terms within the guidance.”

Scottish Borders Council

Several respondents suggested this proposal represented a significant widening of scope in relation to what was expected of planning authorities, and queried whether, for example, a wider greenspace strategy might be needed.

“This appears to be a new area to be included in an OSS. It is unclear how this high level requirement sits with the definition of Open Space earlier in the document. Should it therefore be an Open Space and Green Network strategy we are preparing, as OSS alone just implies urban and urban edge sites?”

South Lanarkshire Council

“We are unsure and suggest that further guidance is needed. Does this imply some sort of cross boundary collaboration to identify networks which straddle local authority boundaries? How does this fit with the Central Scotland Green Network which covers our entire Council area?”

Falkirk Council

Related to this, several respondents highlighted the need to work in some way with neighbouring authorities.

“Need to ensure coordination between neighbouring authorities when identifying strategic green networks which transcend council boundaries.”

Clackmannanshire Council

Q8c - Identification of how green networks should be enhanced

When asked whether Open Space Strategies should identify how green networks should be enhanced, the majority of respondents (84%) agreed this should be included. There was broad support from all respondent groups.

Table 8c: Do you agree Open Space Strategies should identify how green networks may be enhanced?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	13	2	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	23	2	2	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	7	1	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	51	5	5	7
% of respondents answering question	84	8	8	

In total, 28 respondents offered further comments in relation to this question.

As with comments on other questions, several respondents asked for further guidance or clarity on terminology - for example, in relation to greenspace strategies, the meaning of 'strategic' green network or the term 'enhanced.' A few also asked for clarity on the relationship with nature networks.

A few respondents indicated the need to ensure that enhancement was specified at a fairly high level - rather than being detailed or specific in terms of commitments.

Q9 - consultation on draft Open Space Strategies

The draft Regulations set out consultation requirements for draft Open Space Strategies. These require the planning authority to:

- publish a draft Open Space Strategy;
- consult the consultees (see more information under Question 6);

- advertise the consultation in one or more newspapers circulating in the area for two successive weeks, along with details of the date by which any representations must be made to the planning authority;
- hold a 12 week minimum consultation; and
- have regard to any valid representations.

The majority of respondents (77%) agreed with the proposed consultation requirements regarding draft Open Space Strategies. While there was overall support from all respondent groups, disagreement mostly came from the local and planning authorities.

Table 9: Do you agree with the proposed consultation requirements on draft Open Space Strategies?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	11	2	3	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	22	5	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	8	0	0	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	48	8	6	6
% of respondents answering question	77	13	10	

In addition, 37 respondents provided comments. These included general statements indicating agreement with the approach, or specific aspects of it.

Several respondents who broadly agreed with the approach and a few who disagreed emphasised the importance of further, more deliberative engagement with communities. It was seen as important for planning authorities to go beyond publication and awareness raising as stated in the regulations, to ensure a range of interests were effectively taken into account. This included actively involving people who may experience disadvantage, children and young people, and potentially others. It was suggested that effective engagement might require working with specific groups or

organisations, or targeted engagement activities. Some felt this was assumed, but it was also suggested this may need to be reinforced in some way within the legislation.

“Participation work with children and young people takes time to conduct meaningfully, and an extended time period will support this. It is also positive that the consultation requirements outline that the groups who were engaged with during earlier stages of the audit are engaged with on the draft Open Space Strategy.”

Children in Scotland

“Does it need to state that planning authorities can, and should be encouraged to, go beyond these minimum requirements, or is that taken as read.”

Clackmannanshire Council

A few of those who disagreed and provided comments highlighted specific aspects they disagreed with or felt were excessive. A few felt the requirement for 12 weeks was too long, and not in keeping with other planning consultation processes. However, a few others highlighted their agreement with the timeframe.

A few respondents queried how the consultation could be linked with consultation on the LDP. In addition, a few asked for clarity on whether further consultation would be needed if changes were made as a result of views expressed.

Q10 - publication requirements

The draft Regulations set out specific requirements relating to publication.

The regulations allow planning authorities to modify the draft OSS, after the closing date for representations, to take account of:

- any timeously made representations or any matters arising out of representations,
- any matters arising in consultation, and
- any minor drafting or technical matters.

The draft Regulations require the planning authority to publish the Open Space Strategy by electronic means (after the minimum 12 week consultation period, the closing date for representations, and any modifications have been made).

As the table below shows, the majority of respondents (75%) agreed with the proposed publication requirements.

Table 10: Do you agree with the proposed publication requirements for Open Space Strategies?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	1	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	0	2	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	20	5	2	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	6	1	1	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	1	0	2	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	46	7	8	7
% of respondents answering question	75	11	13	

When asked, 24 respondents provided further comments.

Several respondents emphasised the importance of going beyond simple publication to raise awareness of the strategy. It was suggested that this should be proactive, and should involve people or organisations that had participated in the consultation process.

A few respondents emphasised the need for hard copies, but a few others disagreed and felt that online publication was a better use of resources. A few also suggested there is a need to ensure the language is accessible or user friendly.

“We believe online publication of the final OSS is a sensible approach. We would also encourage a requirement to send the final version to all those who contributed to its development. The final strategy should also be published in accessible language. We would also encourage development of additional resources to support awareness of the strategy.”

Children in Scotland

“We recommend Open Space Strategies should be published in hard copy as well as online to ensure they are accessible to those who do not have, cannot or choose not to

access the internet and disseminated via community routes such as local libraries. We would also support the preparation of easy-read and child-friendly versions.”

Greenspace Scotland

Q11 - 10 year minimum review period

The draft Regulations require planning authorities to review their open space strategy and publish an updated open space strategy within 10 years, beginning on the date of publication of the most recent open space strategy.

The 10 year period links to the 10 year review cycle for local development plans.

The majority of respondents (82%) agreed with the proposed review period for updating audits and strategies. There was broad support from most respondent categories. In this case, most disagreement came from individuals.

Table 11: Do you agree the Regulations should set a 10 year minimum review period for updating open space audits and strategies?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	3	0	0	1
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	11	5	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	27	1	0	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	3	0
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	1	3
Total	51	6	5	6
% of respondents answering question	82	10	8	

In addition, 32 respondents provided comments in relation to this question.

Several respondents took the opportunity to reinforce their support, with several highlighting that the maximum time frame of 10 years would fit with the LDP cycle and was consistent with wider requirements.

The main reason offered for disagreeing was that this time frame would be too long, given the likelihood that issues would arise and need to be taken into account. Several of the respondents who expressed agreement with the approach still felt there is likely to be a need to respond to emerging issues, data, or specific new sites over a shorter period of time. It was suggested that further guidance might be required to encourage and support planning authorities to review their plans in the shorter term. A few respondents were specifically concerned about this long time period given the urgency of the climate change agenda, and the need for plans to reflect this. A few respondents suggested an interim review, report or plan update might be useful after five years.

“There is no objection to the 10 years period but only on the condition there is the option for interim updates to particular parts of OSSs, PSAs and/or associated audits. This would ensure they remain fit for purpose. In particular this would assist monitoring and evaluation of the standard of open spaces and green networks. It would also allow new greenspace proposals to be added as they emerge and for the status of existing proposals [to] be updated as they go through the different stages of design and delivery.”

City of Edinburgh Council

“Given green spaces are also to be used for climate change mitigation, 10 years is too long to find out whether they are serving that purpose or not. Green spaces which are being used for that purpose should be reviewed every 1-2 years until it is clear they are becoming established as required, after which time the review period can be extended.”

Individual

A few respondents highlighted the challenges of the audits and strategies falling ‘out of sync’ with timeframes for LDPs, or where they were working across more than one authority timetables.

Draft Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations

Q12a - definition of ‘children’

The consultation asked for views on the proposed definition of “children” within the regulations, as “persons under the age of 18 years”. As the table below illustrates, the vast majority of respondents (87%) indicated agreement with this definition. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 12a: Do you agree with the proposed definitions? - “children”

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	3	0	0
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	25	0	2	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	4	1	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	4	0	0	1
Total	53	4	4	7
% of respondents answering question	87	7	7	

Only 15 respondents provided further comments.

Those who agreed tended to express support, highlighting that this approach is logical, practical or in keeping with other legislation.

A few respondents did suggest that “play” would normally refer to younger children, while those who offered comments to support their disagreement tended to feel the definition covered too old an age group or was not broken down sufficiently.

Q12b - definition of ‘localities’

In the draft regulations, “localities” has the meaning given in section 9(2) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

The vast majority of respondents (85%) agreed with this definition.

Table 12b: Do you agree with the proposed definitions? - “localities”

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	15	0	1	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	21	4	2	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	4	0	0	1
Total	51	4	5	8
% of respondents answering question	85	7	8	

Only 9 respondents offered comments. A few simply referred to their responses to previous or later questions.

A few respondents who supported the definition suggested this was a sensible approach, or offered flexibility.

A few of those who disagreed and offered comments suggested they wanted greater flexibility, and seemed to suggest that the 30,000 size was too large for their needs locally. Another called for flexibility to allow a slightly larger population size, where this was useful locally.

Q12c - definition of ‘open space’

Within the draft regulations “open space” has the meaning given in section 3G(4) of the Act (which was discussed in relation to Q2).

The majority of respondents (75%) agreed with this definition. Although there was overall support from all respondent groups, the data shows that most disagreement came from local or planning authorities.

Table 12c: Do you agree with the proposed definitions? - “open space”

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	15	1	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	16	9	2	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	1	1	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	4	0	0	1
Total	45	11	4	8
% of respondents answering question	75	18	7	

Only 12 respondents provided further comments.

Almost all the comments came from respondents who disagreed with the definition. Often, these reinforced views expressed in relation to the earlier question about this definition in relation to the draft Open Space Strategy Regulations. In particular, it was suggested that the term was too broad, and didn't clearly include certain important spaces - such as blue spaces, grey spaces of civic value, and community growing spaces (which might be considered horticultural). A few also highlighted issues considered earlier in this analysis relating to the definition of a “settlement” and its associated boundaries.

Q12d - definition of ‘play spaces’

As defined in the consultation paper, “play spaces” means outdoor spaces which are accessible by the public and which offer play opportunities for children.

The majority of respondents (78%) agreed with this definition. There was overall support from all respondent groups. Disagreement largely came from individuals and local or planning authorities.

Table 12d: Do you agree with the proposed definitions? - “play spaces”				
	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	12	4	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	19	4	2	4
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	4	1	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	1	0
Play and Early Years Sector	4	0	0	1
Total	45	9	4	10
% of respondents answering question	78	16	7	

In total, 20 respondents provided comments.

Several of those who disagreed and a few of those who agreed called for greater clarity in relation to what types of spaces are included in this definition. In particular, they asked about spaces which had equipment or which might be considered sports areas (such as Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) or skateparks) in comparison with open spaces where play may take place. They felt this needed to be broken down further to avoid confusion.

A few respondents also suggested there should be clarity around whether this meant outdoor spaces only, given that some play spaces can be indoors. In addition, a few respondents queried the use of “play” as a term for children as defined up to the age of 18.

Q13 - mapping play spaces

The draft Regulations require play sufficiency assessments to show, by means of a map, the location of play spaces for children within its area. It is to identify those play spaces—

- (a) which are specifically for play, and
- (b) which are within areas of open space and not specifically for play.

As the table below shows, the majority (80%) of respondents agreed with this proposal. While there was overall support from all respondent groups, disagreement came mostly from local and planning authorities, and individuals.

Table 13: Do you agree planning authorities should map the locations of the two categories of play spaces, and how they are described in Draft Regulations 3(2)(a) and (b)?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	1	1	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	3	0	0
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	18	6	1	4
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	5	0	0	0
Total	48	10	2	8
% of respondents answering question	80	17	3	

In total, 41 respondents provided comments.

The main concern related to the second type of play space, referred to in part (b). Several of those who disagreed, as well as several who said they agreed, felt that this element lacked specificity. They highlighted that as currently drafted, it would potentially be a very large task to identify these spaces, or that the process could be

very subjective. Officers may also not have the skills or knowledge to effectively identify the second category. It was suggested by a few that further guidance was needed to support mapping of this type in particular - for example regarding what to do if a space fits with both definitions, or on the size of spaces to include.

“Arguably there are no open spaces which do not offer any opportunity for play, so the issue is more about how the quality of opportunities for play are assessed rather than how they are mapped.”

Falkirk Council

“Areas for children's play within open spaces where the primary function is not children's play are very important to map and make plans for. However, I imagine this will be extremely difficult to map top-down, as (given appropriate freedom) children will use their imagination and creativity to play in many different types of spaces. So it could potentially include any type of open space or green infrastructure.”

OpenSpace Research Centre, University of Edinburgh.

Several commenting respondents drew attention to the importance of informal play that occurs in other spaces - such as streets. A few of these argued for as wide a definition as possible of play spaces. Others asked for guidance on how to support safe, active play and travel in a wide range of spaces, in addition to the focus of the regulations above.

“Yes, formal and informal play spaces should be mapped. The widest definitions of play spaces should be used. Play Scotland recognises that potentially all space is play space in line with established principles such as the Rotterdam norms which outline the use and importance of outdoor spaces for play in the city.”

Play Scotland

Q14 - assessing suitability by age

The draft Regulations require that the PSA must describe the play opportunities for all ages of children.

The vast majority (89%) of respondents agreed with this proposed requirement. Broad support came from all respondent groups.

Table 14: Do you agree with the proposed requirement to assess play opportunities in respect of their suitability by age groups?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	15	2	0	0
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	22	2	2	3
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	5	0	0	0
Total	54	4	3	7
% of respondents answering question	89	7	5	

In total, 47 respondents provided additional comments.

Several of those commenting generally expressed their support for the approach. They tended to emphasise the importance of meeting a range of needs, and that understanding provision for a range of ages was useful.

“It would be helpful to have an overall handle in settlements/localities of what the provision is for different age ranges (% of all available/appropriate spaces per age grouping perhaps). . . Understanding our position may mean we can design more integrated spaces to cater for a wider range of needs.”

Perth and Kinross Council

Several respondents specifically mentioned the importance of meeting the needs of older children, whether this was considered as ‘play’ or ‘hanging out’. The danger of artificially designating certain types of play to narrow groups was highlighted by a few respondents. A few suggested that the needs of adults should also be taken into account in the design of play spaces, and the approach we take to play. Several respondents queried the use of the proposed age brackets, or suggested it would be important not to focus on these too narrowly. A few argued that this was too

stratified an approach, and that play needs are often related to ability and interests and influenced by factors such as disability and gender as much as age. A few suggested having fewer categories.

“Play Scotland would emphasise the intersectionality of children’s lives and that age categories are not always accurate or sufficient to reflect children’s diverse childhoods, noting paras 86 and 88 of the consultation.”

Play Scotland

A few mentioned the need for further guidance on how the assessments could be carried out in a robust and meaningful way. A few also highlighted the need to reference nature or connection to nature in the types of play.

Q15a - aspects of assessment

The consultation asked for views on the proposed aspects of assessment: quality, quantity and accessibility of play opportunities, at a local authority area level and for each locality. As shown below, the vast majority of respondents (88%) agreed with the proposal. There was overall support for the proposal from all respondent groups.

Table 15a: Do you agree with the proposed three aspects of assessment - ‘accessibility’, ‘quantity’ and ‘quality’?				
	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	1	1	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	2	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	23	2	1	3
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	4	0	0	1
Total	52	5	2	9
% of respondents answering question	88	8	3	

When invited, 40 respondents provided comments.

Most discussion related to the terms “accessibility” and “inclusiveness”. It was suggested that the term “accessibility” seems to be primarily used in the regulations in terms of proximity and related access issues, which is quite a narrow focus. However, many respondents emphasised their support for a focus on inclusiveness within the legislation or the guidance. Several felt “inclusivity” needed to be embedded within the regulations. A few specifically mentioned the need for planning authorities to take account of inclusive play needs and the needs of young women and girls as examples. The opportunity to link with health inequalities was also mentioned by a few respondents. The discussion emphasised the importance of inclusiveness, but explored a range of options for dealing with this.

“Play Scotland would expect there to be clarity on the difference between being inclusive and being accessible. These terms and approaches are not interchangeable. They should not be merged in consideration of, for example, the diverse needs and rights of disabled children. Play Scotland has expertise and a wide range of resources on inclusive play (see for example ‘Including Disabled Children in Play Provision’)* which can be made widely available.”

Play Scotland

On the topic of accessibility, a few respondents felt that the specified travel distance was quite short, especially in rural areas. A few mentioned the inconsistency in distance between the consultation paper sections on the PSA and OSS.

Several respondents expressed the view that terms such as “quantity”, “quality” and “sufficient” were quite subjective, or asked for clarity or additional guidance on how such aspects could or should be measured.

As with other aspects of the consultation, several respondents highlighted the potentially significant resource implications of the approach.

Q15b - written statements

The paper also asked for views on providing information on these aspects in written statements, for the whole of their area and at each locality level.

The vast majority (85%) agreed with this proposal. There was overall support from all respondent groups, with disagreement coming from a few individuals and a few local and planning authorities.

Table 15b: Do you agree to provide them in written statements in respect of the totality of the Local or planning authority area and at each locality level?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	12	3	2	0
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	24	2	1	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	3	0	0	2
Total	51	5	4	8
% of respondents answering question	85	8	7	

In total, 27 respondents provided comments in relation to this question.

Several respondents expressed support or their broad agreement with the approach. In particular, several emphasised the usefulness of having locality level statements, as this would allow for more local needs to be discussed. However, a few didn't feel the locality focus was local enough to take account of specific needs of the community.

Several respondents reinforced or drew attention to comments they had previously made in relation to written statements and data collection at a locality level, such as the resource implications or challenges with the definition.

Q16a - consultation requirements

In the consultation paper the Scottish Government indicated it does not plan to specify how engagement should take place or what methodology must be used. Instead, it proposes that engagement should take place as part of the assessment process.

The vast majority of respondents (93%) agreed with the proposed approach. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 16a: Do you agree to the requirement to consult as part of the process of carrying out the play sufficiency assessment?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	15	1	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	26	1	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	5	0	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	4	0	0	1
Total	57	2	2	7
% of respondents answering question	93	3	3	

A total of 29 respondents provided comments.

Many respondents reinforced their support in their comments. In particular, several welcomed the flexibility this approach provides. Several respondents also emphasised their support for further guidance or best practice to support this process to ensure engagement was effective, meaningful and inclusive. A few recognised the skills that would be needed, with a few highlighting the significant resources required to do the engagement well.

“Whilst welcoming the flexibility provided to planning authorities to choose the consultation methods that best suit their local circumstances, we would strongly recommend providing guidance on appropriate and creative ways to engage and consult with children and young people. welcome the intention to share good practice and learning.”

Greenspace Scotland

Consultation is an integral part of any policy or strategy development and we therefore agree with the requirement to consult. However, it could be immensely time and resource consuming.”

South Lanarkshire Council

Q16b - proposed consultees

The Scottish Government's proposed consultees for Play Sufficiency Assessments are:

- children,
- parents and carers,
- community councils within the planning authority's area established under Part IV of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973,
- the public, and
- any other person or community body which the planning authority considers to be appropriate.

The vast majority (87%) of respondents broadly agreed that the proposed list of consultees should be involved in play sufficiency assessments. All respondent groups were broadly supportive of the list. Disagreement mostly came from individuals.

Table 16b: Do you agree with the proposed list of consultees on Play Sufficiency Assessments?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	2	0	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	12	4	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	26	1	1	1
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	4	0	2	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	3	0	0	2
Total	52	5	3	8
% of respondents answering question	87	8	5	

In total, 29 respondents provided comments.

Respondents suggested a wide range of specific additions, often related to their organisational interests. A few drew attention to the need to engage with a range of

organisations supporting or promoting the interests of children and young people. A few also suggested adding landowners or developers, or different community groups. Several respondents emphasised the need to ensure that the consultation effectively engaged with people who may not ordinarily become involved in engagement or consultation, and this included people with protected characteristics. Disabled people, young women and people with low incomes were all mentioned. A few suggested these groups of people, or organisations that support them (such as Access Forums), should be included in some way in this section of the regulations.

Q17 - publication requirements

The draft Regulations require planning authorities to publish the play sufficiency assessment by electronic means. The Scottish Government also indicated it will encourage planning authorities to consider publishing a child friendly version.

Overall, the vast majority of respondents (90%) agreed with the publication requirement. There was overall support from all respondent groups.

Table 17: Do you agree with the publication requirement for play sufficiency assessments?

	Yes	No	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	1	1	0	2
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	14	2	0	1
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	26	0	1	2
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	4	1	1	2
Planning and Built Environment Sector	3	0	0	0
Play and Early Years Sector	3	0	0	2
Total	53	4	2	9
% of respondents answering question	90	7	3	

In total, 24 respondents provided further comments.

Several expressed support for online publication. However, several respondents highlighted issues of digital access or traditional preferences, and proposed that hard copies may also be needed.

Many were supportive of the idea of having a more accessible version. A few felt that this should be a requirement, while a few respondents asked for guidance or good practice to support authorities to develop more accessible versions. A few others highlighted the resource implications for planning authorities of preparing two separate versions. In addition, the need to inform people and organisations who had contributed to the consultation of the publication of the PSA was mentioned by a few respondents.

“Yes. It is essential that play sufficiency assessments are publicly available and widely accessible. The publication of play sufficiency assessments should be publicised and published in formats which are accessible to children and young people. Children and young people and relevant organisations involved in any consultation should proactively receive details of the assessments.”

Play Scotland

A few respondents also discussed challenges or raised questions about timetabling or alignment of the timescales for finalising the PSA and the LDP.

Partial / Interim Impact Assessments

The consultation asked for views on the draft Integrated Impact Assessments in relation to the draft Open Space Strategies Regulations and draft Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations. The impact assessments include:

- An Interim Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA);
- A Children’s Rights and Welfare Impact Assessment (CRWIA);
- The Fairer Scotland Duty Screening;
- Partial Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA);
- Partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA); and
- Strategic Environmental Assessment - Pre-Screenings.

Q18 - Additional Supporting Information

The consultation asked: ‘Do you have or can you direct us to any additional information that would assist in finalising these assessments (BRIA, EQIA, CRWIA, ICIA)?’

Only 15 respondents provided comments. Several of these respondents reinforced key points already made in relation to specific consultation questions.

A few respondents offered further support or proposed stakeholder organisations that may be able to provide advice or direction. Several identified specific information that may assist further. They suggested a list of reports and studies which might be beneficial, and have been provided separately to the Scottish Government.

Q19 - Comments on the Assessments

The consultation asked: “Please give us your views on the content of these assessments and how they have informed the draft provisions, or if you think changes are needed to the Regulations to further respond to the issues.”

Only 13 respondents provided comments. Several respondents offered general support for the use or content of the assessments. Several drew attention to other comments they had made elsewhere in the consultation, such as in relation to inclusiveness or proposed consultees. A few others made very specific suggestions or comments.

Q20 - Fairer Scotland Duty Screening

The vast majority of respondents (87%) agreed with this screening, and the conclusion that a full assessment is not needed. Generally, respondent groups were broadly supportive. Most disagreement came from individuals.

Table 20: Do you agree with the Fairer Scotland Duty screening and our conclusion that full assessment is not required?

	Agree	Disagree	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	0	0	0	4
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	7	5	0	5
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	19	0	0	10
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	3	0	0	5
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	0	1
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	0	4
Total	34	5	0	29
% of respondents answering question	87	13	0	

Only 6 respondents provided further comments. Those who agreed and offered comments were generally supportive. A few of those who disagreed (who were all

individuals) emphasised the significance of the policy and the need to take a thorough approach.

Q21 - Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screenings

The vast majority of respondents (88%) agreed with these pre-screenings and the conclusion that the regulations under consultation are exempt from the further assessment requirements. As with the previous question, most disagreement came from individuals.

Respondents were offered the opportunity to provide further comments in relation to:

- their view on the decision about supplementary assessment;
- suggestions for additional sources that could help inform these assessments, if they felt fuller assessment was required; and
- any other comments.

Table 21: Do you agree with the Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screenings, that the Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations are exempt from the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, as the environmental effects are likely to be minimal?

	Agree	Disagree	No View	Not Answered
Agencies and Government Departments	1	0	0	3
Community Councils	2	0	0	0
Individuals	9	4	0	4
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	19	0	0	10
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	2	1	0	5
Planning and Built Environment Sector	2	0	0	1
Play and Early Years Sector	1	0	0	4
Total	36	5	0	27
% of respondents answering question	88	12	0	

Only 11 respondents provided any further comments. In addition, a number of respondents simply said they had no comments to make.

A few of those who disagreed or raised concerns felt that the regulations under consultation and associated policies could potentially have a significant positive environmental impact, if they led to positive action in relation to climate change and biodiversity.

Q22 - Other comments

Respondents were invited to provide further comments in relation to the consultation.

When invited 22 respondents offered further comments.

Many of these respondents drew attention to the resource implications of carrying out the required audit, assessment and reporting. Several of these disagreed with the additional cost estimates provided, suggesting these were inaccurate or out-dated.

Other respondents made a range of specific points to highlight particular issues of interest to their organisation, or the value of focusing on open spaces and play sufficiency. The health, cultural, biodiversity and climate value of open and play spaces was highlighted.

3. Analysis of Responses to the Children and Young People’s Survey

This section analyses responses to the second aspect of the consultation, the Children and Young People’s survey. Two versions of the survey were created and distributed - one for primary school aged children and one for secondary school aged children and young people. Responses were gathered from both individuals and group respondents. This survey was promoted, coordinated and responses collated by Play Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government. A summary of the demographic characteristics of the respondents to the survey can be found in the introduction section of this report, along with a description of the methodology used.

Both versions of the survey consist of both open and closed questions. Due to the open nature of most of the questions in the survey, and the difficulty involved in accurately quantifying group responses to the survey, a qualitative analysis was chosen as the main means of examining the results of the survey. Where different types of responses to questions are listed, these are done so in the order of frequency (with the first item in the list indicating the most frequent type of answer, the second item indicating the second-most frequent and so on). Where closed questions were asked in the survey, the analysis also presents tables providing a quantitative summary of responses to those questions. The analysis proceeds thematically, looking at responses to different questions in the survey as they relate to key topics covered, such as ways of playing and the perceived quality and quantity of local open spaces and play areas. The full list of survey questions can be found in Annex B of this report.

Favourite Ways to Play

Firstly, the primary school aged survey asked, “What are your favourite ways to play?” Options of different ways to play are offered and the individual and group responses to this question are shown in Table 22 on the next page.

As can be seen, “be active” (for example by running, jumping, sliding or playing ball games) was the most common answer selected by individual respondents, while “be adventurous” (including activities such as climbing, hanging upside down and swinging high) was the most commonly chosen answer amongst groups. Taking both types of respondents together, the next most frequently chosen answers were “make things”, “use wheels” and “hang out”. The three least common answers were “get wet or grubby”, “be quiet” and “feel free”.

Table 22: What are your favourite ways to play? (Primary school survey, question 3)

	Number of individuals	Number of groups
Be active: run, jump, slide, swing, ball games, skip, chase.	97	27
Be adventurous: climb, be daring, hang upside down, jump from high up, swing high, walk on logs	80	28
Hang out: meet friends, chat, laugh, shout, sit around (generally hang around)	63	15
Make things: create, draw, paint, build things, make dens	81	19
Use wheels: cycle, scooter, skate, skateboard	74	22
Be quiet: imagine, dream, invent, hide, chill	32	14
Get wet or grubby: paddling, mud, digging, buckets, mixing	44	17
Feel free: get out of the house, express yourself, away from adults, be yourself	29	16
No answer	1	2

Quantity and Sufficiency of Local Open Spaces and Play Areas

The Children and Young People’s survey also explored the following questions with primary and secondary school-aged respondents, which related to the quantity and sufficiency of open and play spaces:

- Primary school aged survey question 4: Do you have places to play in your favourite ways in your local area? Where are they? Are there enough?

- Secondary school aged survey question 3: What spaces are there for play, recreation, informal sports and hanging out where you live?
- Secondary school aged survey question 5: What are they like, and are there enough?

Most commonly, respondents listed open spaces and play areas local to them, often preceded by a “Yes” indicating that they do feel they have places nearby where they can play in their favourite ways. By far the most frequent types of places mentioned were local parks. This was followed by woods, sports pitches, and open spaces at locations near to schools. For example, one respondent answered “Yes the park, it has swings and things. There is also a skatepark there. I can’t think of anything to add.”

Other respondents listed one or more local places in which they liked to play, but along with the caveat that either these places were not sufficiently well equipped or that there were not enough of them to enable them to play as they would like. For example, one respondent stated that “there’s a local park but it’s not well equipped”, while another answered “kind of but not really as the park needs done up. They have taken away the best bit - the tyre swing. And some of the play stuff is just for little kids.”

Other respondents simply answered “no” or “not enough”, sometimes alongside complaints with regards to the condition of local play areas and the consequent need to travel long distances to access opportunities to play.

When secondary school-aged respondents were asked about the spaces respondents have in their local areas for playing, recreation, informal sports and hanging out, several key themes emerged:

- Local parks were identified as nearby spaces in which respondents could play or hang out;
- There were complaints about the lack of appropriate spaces in respondents’ local areas - either because respondents felt there were no such spaces or because those available were not seen as well-suited to respondent needs, and;
- Other spaces than parks were identified for play or hanging out, such as sports pitches and community centres.

When secondary school aged respondents were asked about what these spaces are like and whether there are enough of them, common descriptions included:

- Local spaces that are run down or in poor condition. For example, one respondent stated that “the equipment is old, rusty. In one of the parks dogs foul in it... There are not enough spaces.”
- Local spaces that are unsuitable for their age as they are too small, or only have equipment which is meant to be used by smaller children rather than teenagers. One respondent stated that local spaces were “nice but at the park near me there’s nowhere for teenagers”. Another described their local park as “small and not for teenagers.”
- Positive comments about local open spaces and play areas, with one respondent describing their local park as “nice and big.”

Overall, respondents expressed a range of positive and negative perceptions with regards to the quantity and sufficiency of their local open spaces and play areas.

Broadly speaking, primary school aged respondents were somewhat more likely to be positive about the sufficiency of local spaces than secondary school age respondents.

Travelling to and from Open Spaces and Play Areas

The Children and Young People’s survey explored travel in the following questions:

- Primary school aged survey question 5: How do you most often get to the place or places that you play in? By walking, cycling, wheeling etc? Or by bus or car?
- Secondary school aged survey question 4: How do you normally get to the places you play in? By walking, cycling, wheeling? Or by bus or car?
- Secondary school aged survey question 12: Is it easy for you to get to the open spaces and play areas you want to go? If not, why? Are there other things that put you off going, and what could make it easier?

An analysis of the closed questions is presented in Table 23 below.

Table 23: How do you most often get to the place or places that you play in?						
	By walking, running, skipping, jumping	By car	By cycling, scooting, wheeling	By bus, train, or tram	A mix	Not answered
Primary school individuals	54	43	16	1	15	1
Primary school groups	14	18	9	3	9	6
Secondary school individuals	5	4	0	1	0	0
Secondary school groups	1	2	0	0	1	0

As can be seen, taking all responses together, “by walking, running, skipping or jumping” emerges as the most common way of getting to play areas, followed by taking the car (which was a slightly more common answer amongst group respondents). Overall, “By cycling, scooting or wheeling” and “a mix” were the joint-third most common answers amongst all respondents, while “by bus, train or tram” was the least frequent means of travelling to places to play in. The answers may be reflective of the fact that most respondents played near to their homes or schools.

When secondary school age respondents were asked about the extent to which it is easy to get to the open spaces and play areas they want to go, they talked about:

- finding it easy to travel to play areas, including comments such as “yes, easy to get on to a traffic free cycle path”;
- difficulties with travelling to play areas, for example because of “busy roads (and) poor lighting”; and
- additional efforts they had to make to get to open spaces and play areas because of particular factors such as disabilities.

Amongst all individual and group responses to the secondary school aged survey, the proportion stating that it was easy to get to play areas and open spaces was similar to the proportion stating it was difficult.

Quality of Local Open Spaces and Play Areas

The Children and Young People’s survey explored the quality of local open spaces and play areas through the following questions:

- Primary school aged survey question 6: What are the best things about playing, hanging out and doing hobbies in your local area?
- Primary school aged survey question 7: What are the worst things about playing, hanging out or doing hobbies in your local area?
- Secondary school aged survey question 6: Are some places better to play or hang out in than others?
- Secondary school aged survey question 7: Why are they good / what features do they have (e.g. slopes, plants, trees, water, things to sit on, steps, shelters, wi-fi....)?
- Secondary school aged survey question 8: Why are some places not-so-good, and what would make them better?
- Secondary school aged survey question 13: What are the best things about playing or hanging out near where you live?
- Secondary school aged survey question 14: What are the worst things about playing or hanging out near where you live?

When talking about the best things about playing, hanging out and doing hobbies in their local areas, the most common themes to emerge were:

- Seeing and/or making friends (which was by far the most common theme). One respondent, for example, said the best thing about playing in their local area was that “I get to see my friends and have a good time”, while another said that “playing around with friends” was what they most enjoyed.
- Having fun. Some respondents referred to fun in quite a general way, with one stating that “the best thing about playing is that I get to have fun”; while others referred to somewhat more specific types of fun, such as “lots of outdoor fun in the woods.”
- References to specific equipment present at local play areas and open spaces, for example swings and slides.

Other less common things identified as “the best things” included doing sport, adventurous play (for example by climbing trees), and getting fresh air. Secondary school aged respondents were somewhat more likely to mention open space as a positive aspect of playing or hanging out near where they live, and less likely than primary school aged respondents to mention seeing or making friends and having fun.

When the surveys explored the worst things about playing, hanging out and doing hobbies in their local areas, the strongest themes to emerge were:

- Boredom, most commonly because respondents either felt there was not enough to do at their local play areas or because they were now too familiar with their local places. One respondent, for example, stated that “the same places can get boring, there’s not much to do”, while another felt that “it can get boring as there aren’t different spaces we can walk to from home”.
- Litter or rubbish, and broken glass in particular. For instance, one respondent described their local play area as “often littered with glass from broken bottles”, while another stated that “there is too much litter and dog poo around the grassy places and the streets have a lot of litter.”
- Equipment being broken or in poor condition. For example, one respondent felt that “everything is old and broken... it all needs cleaned and fixed.”

Other less common themes included older children or adults being loud, intimidating or threatening; a lack of particular amenities such as sports pitches; and complaints about poor weather conditions such as rain, coldness and mud. Similar kinds of themes emerged from primary school aged and secondary school aged respondents in this part of the survey.

When secondary school aged respondents were asked about whether some places are better to play or hang out in than others, there were varied responses. Some felt that some local places are better to play or hang out in than others. Other respondents felt there were not really any local places which are particularly better than others. In addition, some young people expressed the view that they don’t really have anywhere in their local areas to play in, outside their own homes.

When respondents were asked about their reasons for some places being better than others they mainly discussed particular play features - such as swings, slides and sandy areas - which made some local places better than others. Others suggested having some form of shelter as being a benefit.

Other features identified in response to this question included the presence of a large amount of space in which to walk or play in preferred play areas, and the presence of sensory play activities.

When asked for their reasons for identifying some spaces which were not-so-good and how these could be improved, respondents suggested:

- more or better play equipment, including particular types such as swings and flying fox rides;
- additional space due to some places not having sufficient space, including space for older children in particular; and
- more seating, for example benches, which would improve local open spaces and play areas.

Overall, then, respondents were most likely to identify seeing and making friends, having fun, and specific play equipment such as swings as being the best things about playing and hanging out in local spaces. Boredom, litter and broken or poorly

maintained equipment were those most frequently seen as being negative aspects of their play experience. There were a range of positive and more negative viewpoints regarding the quality of local play areas and open spaces amongst respondents.

Frequency With Which Respondents Play Outside

The consultation with children and young people also explored the following question about the frequency of outdoor play:

- Primary school aged survey question 8: How often do you play outside? Is it often enough? What stops you playing out more often?

When asked how frequently they played outside, respondents answered in the following way (ordered from most frequent to least frequent):

- All of the time / every day / very often (by some distance the most common response);
- Sometimes / a few times a week / quite often, and;
- Rarely / not very often / never.

In their comments, respondents also spoke of the important influence of the weather on the frequency with which they play outside. Some respondents specified that they play outside much more in the summer and less frequently during the winter.

The second part of this question, asking respondents whether they felt they played outside often enough, was asked as a closed, multiple-choice question, with the numbers of respondents selecting each answer presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Is it often enough? (how often you play outside) (Question 8, Primary school age survey)

	Yes - I play out enough	No - I wish I could play out more	I am not sure	Not Answered
Individuals	50	62	16	2
% of individuals answering question	39	48	13	
Groups	5	17	2	9
% of groups answering question	21	71	8	

As can be seen, there was a spread of responses. Almost half of individuals responding (48%) stated that they wished they could play out more often than they did, while 39% felt that they played outside enough. With regards to group respondents, a majority (71%) answered that they wished they could play out more, while just over one in five (21%) stated that they played outside enough.

When respondents were asked about anything that they felt stopped them from playing outside more often the main issues identified were:

- bad weather (by far the most common single factor mentioned), in particular the rain and coldness during winter;
- a lack of variety of things to do in local play areas and open spaces; and
- concerns about the safety of local play areas and open spaces.

Other respondents mentioned a lack of inclusive play areas, a lack of people to play with in respondents' local areas, and parents being too busy to accompany respondents to play areas.

Overall, while many respondents feel that they play outside very often, a significant proportion would like to play outside more than they currently do. The most common barriers to playing outdoors were the weather; a perceived lack of things to do in local areas; and safety concerns.

The Variety of Local Open Spaces and Play Areas and Priorities for Improvement

The following questions explored the variety and priorities for change amongst respondents:

- Primary school aged survey question 9: If you could wave a magic wand, what more / other / better places would you have to play, hangout or do your hobbies in your local area? What, of these ideas, is the most important – what are our priorities for change?
- Secondary school aged survey question 9: Do you have the right variety of spaces, places in your local area and activities to take part in?
- Secondary school aged survey question 10: Do you prefer it when all the things you want to do are in one place, or do you prefer a variety of different places, or you don't really mind?
- Secondary school aged survey question 11: Are there things you can't do near where you live, that are important to you?
- Secondary school aged survey question 15: If you could wave a magic wand, what more / other/ better places would you have near where you live for play, recreation, informal sports and hanging out? What, of these ideas, is the most important – what are our priorities for change?

When primary school aged respondents were asked to identify what other places they would like to have to play, hang out or do hobbies in locally the most common priorities were:

- More and better parks nearby, including parks which have more space to play in and parks with better play equipment (such as swings, climbing frames and sandy areas);
- Skateparks; and
- More areas for playing sports, such as football pitches, basketball courts and tennis courts.

Other suggestions included BMX or bike parks and paths, swimming pools, climbing walls and more inclusive play areas.

Secondary school aged respondents had the following main priorities:

- Outdoor, sheltered seating areas to hang out in;
- Parks or play areas aimed at teenagers and older children; and
- Better spaces to play sports in such as tennis and basketball.

Other suggestions included climbing walls, places with accessible play equipment, skateparks and bike paths.

Secondary school aged respondents were asked for their views on the variety of spaces, places and activities available to them locally. The majority of all respondents (including seven out of nine individual respondents) felt that their local areas do not have the right variety of activities.

When asked about their preferences around having things to do concentrated in one place or spread out across a variety of different places, there were mixed views, as shown in the table below.

Table 25: Do you prefer it when all the things you want to do are in one place, or do you prefer a variety of different places, or you don't really mind? (Secondary school age survey, question 10)

	All in one place	A variety of different places	Don't really mind	Not answered
Individuals	1	1	6	2
% of individuals answering question	13	13	75	
Groups	0	2	1	0
% of groups answering questions	0	67	33	

Secondary school aged respondents were also asked if there were things they can't do near where they live which are important to them. They commonly discussed:

- Hanging out with friends, particularly in areas which are sheltered, feel safe and appropriate for teenagers;
- Feeling they can do the things that are important to them; and
- Playing a particular type of sport (examples given include badminton, football, basketball and netball).

Other suggestions to this question included BMX or off-road cycling and just being able to go for a walk, if paths and roads were improved.

Overall, both primary school aged and secondary school aged respondents identified a wide range of potential improvements to local open spaces and play spaces. In addition, the majority of secondary school aged respondents felt that their local areas did not have the right variety of spaces, places and activities. Having spaces to hang out with friends and playing sports were important priorities for change.

Other Issues Raised by Respondents

There were some additional issues raised by respondents to the Children and Young People's survey which are relevant to the analysis.

Firstly, a minority of respondents expressed a consistent concern around the lack of accessibility and inclusivity of play areas and open spaces, for children with disabilities. They emphasised the importance of sensory play and accessible equipment.

Distance was raised as an issue or concern across a range of questions in the surveys. A number of respondents, for instance, highlighted the need to be driven to their nearest or preferred play area as an important factor limiting the frequency of their play. Others highlighted the impact of the quality of nearby roads and pavements on accessing open spaces and play areas.

In addition, some respondents suggested there was a need for more indoor places to play in because of the role of the weather in making outdoor activities unappealing.

Finally, some respondents emphasised the benefits of spending time in natural environments. They spoke of this as one of their favourite aspects of local places, or as an aspect of play and open spaces they would like to experience more.

Annex A: Main Public Consultation Questions

The full [Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments Consultation Paper](#) can be read on the Scottish Government website.

Open Space Strategies Regulations

Consultation Question 1

a) Do you agree with the idea of promoting an outcomes-based approach through the OSS Regulations? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

An outcomes-based approach means focusing on what the policy should achieve, rather than inputs and outputs. It encourages organisations to work across traditional boundaries, looking at the bigger picture. It is positive and forward-looking, thinking about what type of places we want in the future, and what they can help achieve. For further information, see paragraphs 14-19 of the Consultation Paper.

b) Do you agree with the suggested outcomes? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

The proposed outcomes in the draft Open Space Strategies Regulations are:

- a) improving access to green infrastructure, open space and green networks,
- b) creating successful and sustainable places,
- c) improving health and wellbeing,
- d) advancing equality and eliminating discrimination,
- e) securing positive effects for biodiversity, and
- f) mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

Consultation Question 2

Do you agree with the proposed definition of

- a) “open space” Yes/No/No View Any Comments
- b) “green space” Yes/No/No View Any Comments
- c) “green infrastructure” Yes/No/No View Any Comments
- d) “green networks” Yes/No/No View Any Comments
- e) “ecosystem services” Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

“open space” means space within and on the edge of settlements comprising green space or civic areas such as squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas with a civic function.

“green space” means space which provides a recreational function, an amenity function, or aesthetic value to the public such as areas of -

- (a) grass,
 - (b) trees,
 - (c) other vegetation,
 - (d) water,
- but not including agricultural or horticultural land.”

“green infrastructure” means features or spaces within the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem services.

“green networks” means connected areas of green infrastructure and open space, that together form an integrated and multi-functional network.

“ecosystem services” means the benefits people obtain from ecosystems.

For further information, see paragraphs 21-22 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 3

Do you agree with proposed thresholds for open space audits in draft Regulation 4(2)?
Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

Draft Regulation 4(2) sets out that planning authorities must audit all open spaces in their area that are 0.2 hectares or greater, and any other smaller spaces that the planning authority considers appropriate to include.

The 0.2 ha threshold is already used in many open space audits as well as the [Development Management Procedure \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#) (in defining Outdoor Sports Facilities). We also recognise there may be smaller spaces that authorities may wish to include, and so flexibility has been provided to allow these to also be included should the authority wish.

The requirement to include these spaces in the audit does not mean a full assessment has to be carried out for each open space.

For further information, see paragraphs 23-27 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 4

a) Do you agree with suggested information to include about each open space (location, size and type)? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

Draft Regulation 4(3) requires audits to include for each open space, included in the audit, information on its location, size and type. Digital mapping systems (Geographic Information Systems) can show this information, which is available as part of the Ordnance Survey Greenspace dataset.

We believe these pieces of information are vital in considering levels of provision, and the quantity and accessibility of different types of open spaces.

For further information, see paragraphs 27-33 of the Consultation Paper.

b) Do you agree with Regulation 4(5) on the other information planning authorities may include in the audit? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

Draft Regulation 4(5) sets out other aspects that planning authorities may include information on:

- accessibility to the public;
- functions of open spaces;
- the extent to which open spaces deliver those functions;
- presence of play opportunities; and
- condition.

This was drafted to reflect advice in PAN 65, reflecting established practice. It provides some flexibility for planning authorities, as to whether or not they provide information on these aspects; or prioritise it for particular types of open space.

For further information, see paragraphs 34-40 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 5

a) Do you agree with suggested approach to require locality level place based information? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

Localities are

- electoral wards or
- areas the Council defines that are no greater than 30,000 population.

As part of a place based approach, we believe that as well as the data on individual open spaces, it will be helpful for open space audits to provide information about the overall local authority area and for localities, which is at a more neighbourhood level.

Draft Regulations 4(6) and 4(7) requires open space audits to include statements covering the accessibility, quality and quantity of open spaces and green networks; for the totality in their area and for each locality. This is intended to provide both a high level picture as to the state of open space in each local authority area; and a localised approach to support 20 minute neighbourhoods.

This should help authorities put in place policies and proposals, to ensure greater equity in access to quality open space.

For further information, see paragraphs 41-45 of the Consultation Paper.

b) Do you agree with the three high level aspects that should be covered in these statements 'accessibility', 'quantity' and 'quality'?
Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

People from different backgrounds, different groups, and living in different areas may experience different levels of quantity, quality and accessibility to open spaces and play spaces. Requiring planning authorities to consider the 'quantity', 'quality' and

'accessibility' of open space on a locality basis should help ensure local authorities have information on the amount and quality of open space within local neighbourhoods. This will help authorities to put in place policies and proposals, and to take action to seek to ensure greater equity in access to quality open space.

For further information, see paragraphs 45-46 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 6

Do you agree with the list of consultees for the open space audit?

Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

The proposed consultees are:

- children and young people, as defined by section 16B(14) of the Planning Act,
- older people,
- disabled people, as defined by section 16B(14) of the Act,
- community councils, established under Part 4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973,
- the public,
- key agencies, and
- any other person or community body which the planning authority considers to be appropriate, and
- the Green Action Trust, (where a planning authority's area (whether in full or partially) falls within the boundary of the Central Scotland Green Network).
- Key agencies are defined as meaning:
 - Historic Environment Scotland,
 - NatureScot (meaning Scottish Natural Heritage),
 - Sportscotland (meaning the Scottish Sports Council),
 - The Scottish Environment Protection Agency,
 - Scottish Water,
 - Public Health Scotland, and
 - Regional Transport Partnerships (established under section 1 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005).

For further information, see paragraphs 47-50 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 7

Do you agree with the Assessment of Current and Future Requirements should

a) have regard to how open spaces and green networks in their area are contributing to the outcomes? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

The Act requires open space strategies to contain an assessment of current and future requirements.

We think this is an opportunity for planning authorities to consider how well the open space resource in their area helps contribute to the outcomes (in terms of access to open space, place, health and wellbeing, equalities, biodiversity and climate change) and what future changes and requirements might be needed to help deliver on the outcomes.

For further information, see paragraphs 51-52 of the Consultation Paper.

b) be informed by engagement with the groups set out?

Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More Info

The EQIA highlights it is vital that the needs of people from different groups and protected characteristics are taken into account when considering current and future requirements. We believe planning authorities should consider how well the open space resource, and provision of different types of space, across their area meets the needs of the community. The draft Regulations require the Assessment of Current and Future Requirements to be informed by engagement with those consulted on the audit (see More Information under Question 6)

For further information, see paragraphs 53-58 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 8

Do you agree Open Space Strategies should

a) include a statement setting out how they contribute to the outcomes?

Yes/No/No View Any Comments

b) identify strategic green networks? Yes/No/No View

c) identify how green networks may be enhanced? Yes/No/No View

More info

For further information, see paragraphs 60-62 of the Consultation Paper

Consultation Question 9

Do you agree with the proposed consultation requirements on draft Open Space Strategies? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

The draft Regulations set out consultation requirements for draft Open Space Strategies, these require the planning authority to

- publish a draft Open Space Strategy;
- consult the consultees (see More information under Question 6);
- advertise the consultation in one of more newspapers circulating in the area), for two successive weeks, along with details of the date by which any representations must be made to the planning authority;
- hold a 12 week minimum consultation; and
- have regard to any valid representations.

For further information, see paragraphs 63-66 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 10

Do you agree with the proposed publication requirements for the OSS?

Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

The draft Regulations allow planning authorities to modify the draft OSS, after the closing date for representations, to take account of:

- any timeously made representations or any matters arising out of representations,
- any matters arising in consultation, and
- any minor drafting or technical matters.

The draft Regulations require the planning authority to publish the Open Space Strategy by electronic means (after the minimum 12 week consultation period, the closing date for representations and any modifications have been made).

For further information, see paragraphs 68-68 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 11

Do you agree the Regulations should set a 10 year minimum review period for updating open space audits and strategies? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

The draft Regulations require planning authorities to review the open space strategy and publish an updated open space strategy within 10 years beginning on the date of publication of the most recent open space strategy.

The 10 year period links to the 10 year review cycle for local development plans, and is intended to support evidence led plan making.

For further information, see paragraphs 69-70 of the Consultation Paper.

Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations

Consultation Question 12

Do you agree with the proposed definitions?

“children”	Yes/No/No View	Any Comments
“localities”	Yes/No/No View	Any Comments
“open space”	Yes/No/No View	Any Comments
“play opportunities”	Yes/No/No View	Any Comments

More info

“children” means persons under the age of 18 years

“localities” has the meaning given in section 9(2) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

“open space” has the meaning given in section 3G(4) of the Act, [This is the same as referred to under Question 2 above], and

“play spaces” means outdoor spaces which are accessible by the public and which offer play opportunities for children.

For further information, see paragraph 75 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 13

Do you agree planning authorities should map the locations of the two categories of play spaces, and how they are described in draft Regulations 3(2)(a) and (b)?

Yes/No/No View

More info

The draft Regulations require play sufficiency assessments to show, by means of a map, the location of play spaces for children within its area. It is to identify those play spaces—

- (a) which are specifically for play, and
- (b) which are within areas of open space and not specifically for play.

Play spaces specifically designed and managed for play are essential in meeting the needs of children to play outdoors, to have fun and to relax. Additionally, valuable informal play opportunities also exist in many open spaces, including natural spaces, woodlands, urban forestry and in some public realm areas. It is well-recognised that increasing children’s contact with nature improves their physical and mental wellbeing, and can build resilience. Allowing children to use the natural world can help foster better understanding of nature and the need to protect and care for the environment

For further information, see paragraphs 78-85 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 14

Do you agree with the proposed requirement to assess play opportunities in respect of their suitability by age groups? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

Discussions with stakeholders indicated to ensure there is adequate provision for outdoor play for children of all ages, the play sufficiency assessment must identify the play opportunities that are suitable for children of different ages, taking account of children's play needs or play preferences at different stages of their growth and development.

The draft Regulations require that the PSA must describe the play opportunities for all ages of children.

This is not intended to require segregation by ages but to ensure consideration is given to meeting the needs of children of all ages and to help show where potential exclusion may be present, preventing certain ages of children from accessing suitable play opportunities in their area.

We will continue to work with stakeholders and experts in the play sector to provide guidance around how to identify what is suitable for different ages of children.

For further information, see paragraphs 86-90 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 15

a) Do you agree to the proposed three aspects of assessment - 'accessibility', 'quantity' and 'quality'? Yes/No/No View Any Comments and,

b) to provide them in written statements in respect of the totality of the local authority area and at each locality level? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

Information on the quality, quantity and accessibility of play opportunities, at a local authority area level and for each locality should help inform the assessment of the sufficiency of play opportunities, and in considering whether the everyday play needs and demands of children can be met.

Shared good practice and guidance may offer more details on how to consider, assess and evidence quality, quantity and accessibility. The consultation paper sets out potential indicators that planning authorities may wish to consider in relation to these aspects.

For further information, see paragraphs 91-98 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 16

a) Do you agree with the requirement to consult as part of the process of carrying out the play sufficiency assessment? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

We believe meaningful engagement must be integral to the process of carrying out play sufficiency assessments.

We do not intend to specify as to how the engagement should take place or what methodology must be used, only to emphasise that we expect the engagement to take place as part of the assessment process. We encourage sharing good practice and learning in this respect.

For further information, see paragraphs 104-107 of the Consultation Paper.

b) Do you agree with the proposed list of consultees on play sufficiency assessment? Yes/No/No View Any Comments

More info

The proposed consultees are:

- children,
- parents and carers,
- community councils within the planning authority's area established under Part IV of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973,
- the public, and
- any other person or community body which the planning authority considers to be appropriate.

Many stakeholders agree that children themselves know best where they play and what types of play opportunities suit them best. We want to ensure they are engaged in ways so they can properly and meaningfully participate, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that every child has a right to express their views and have them given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

See paragraph 106 of the Consultation Paper.

Consultation Question 17

Do you agree with the publication requirement for play sufficiency assessments? Yes/No/No View

More info

The draft Regulations require planning authorities to publish the play sufficiency assessment by electronic means. This is intended to ensure it is readily available online, minimising the need for travel to view a printed copy.

We would also encourage planning authorities to consider publishing a child friendly version.

For further information, see paragraphs 108-110 of the Consultation Paper.

OSSPSA Impact Assessments The [OSSPSA Impact Assessments](#) can be read on the Scottish Government website

Consultation Question 18

Do you have or can you direct us to any additional information that would assist in finalising these assessments (BRIA, EQIA, CRWIA, ICIA)?

Consultation Question 19

Please give us your views on the content of these assessments and how they have informed the draft provisions, or if you think changes are needed to the Regulations to further respond to the issues.

Consultation Question 20

Do you agree with the Fairer Scotland Duty screening and our conclusion that full assessment is not required? Agree/Disagree Any Comments

More info

The Fairer Scotland Duty applies to 'decisions of a strategic nature' – these are the key, high-level choices or plans that the public sector makes. We have considered that the preparation of the secondary regulations themselves would not constitute a strategic decision under the definition in the Fairer Scotland Duty Interim Guidance, and therefore an assessment is not required. However, consideration of potential impacts and benefits for people living on low income or in poverty is set out in the EQIA.

For further information, see Appendix F of the Impact Assessments document.

Consultation Question 21

Do you agree with the Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screenings, that the Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations are exempt from the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, as the environmental effects are likely to be minimal?

Agree/Disagree Any Comments

[If you consider full assessments are required please suggest any additional sources that could help inform these assessments]

More info

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires Scottish public bodies or those exercising functions of a public character (Responsible Authorities) to undertake a SEA when preparing plans, if it is likely to have significant environmental effects.

An exemption from the requirements of SEA can be gained for certain plans and programmes where the environmental effects can be shown as likely to be minimal. We believe these Regulations fall within the scope of this exemption and the pre-screening documents have been prepared

For further information, see Appendix F of the Impact Assessments document.

Consultation Question 22

Any other comments

Annex B: Children and Young Peoples' Survey Questions

Children (Primary School Age)

3. What are your favourite ways to play?

- Be active: run, jump, slide, swing, ball games, skip, chase.
- Be adventurous: climb, be daring, hang upside down, jump from high up, swing high, walk on logs
- Hang out: meet friends, chat, laugh, shout, sit around (generally hang around).
- Make things: create, draw, paint, build things, make dens
- Use wheels: cycle, scooter, skate, skateboard
- Be quiet: imagine, dream, invent, hide, chill
- Get wet or grubby: paddling, mud, digging, buckets, mixing
- Feel free: get out of the house, express yourself, away from adults, be yourself

4. Do you have places to play in your favourite ways in your local area? Where are they? Are there enough?

5. How do you most often get to the place or places that you play in? By walking, cycling, wheeling etc? Or by bus or car?

6. What are the best things about playing, hanging out and doing hobbies in your local area?

7. What are the worst things about playing, hanging out or doing hobbies in your local area?

8. How often do you play outside? Is it often enough? What stops you playing out more often?

9. If you could wave a magic wand, what more / other / better places would you have to play, hangout or do your hobbies in your local area? What, of these ideas, is the most important – what are our priorities for change?

10. If our local area was suddenly cut off from the rest of the country – by shark infested water, or by natural disaster, what would we do? What do we have already that would help? What would we need to build or make or do together to survive? It can be useful to draw a boundary around a map if you are using one, to show where the border would be.

Young People (Secondary School Age)

3. What spaces are there for play, recreation, informal sports and hanging out where you live?
4. How do you normally get to the places you play in? By walking, cycling, wheeling? Or by bus or car?
5. What are they like, and are there enough?
6. Are some places better to play or hangout in than others?
7. Why are they good / what features do they have (e.g. slopes, plants, trees, water, things to sit on, steps, shelters, wi-fi....)?
8. Why are some places not-so-good, and what would make them better?
9. Do you have the right variety of spaces, places in your local area and activities to take part in?
10. Do you prefer it when all the things you want to do are in one place, or do you prefer a variety of different places, or you don't really mind?
11. Are there things you can't do near where you live, that are important to you?
12. Is it easy for you to get to the open spaces and play areas you want to go? If not, why? Are there other things that put you off going, and what could make it easier?
13. What are the best things about playing or hanging out near where you live?
14. What are the worst things about playing or hanging out near where you live?
15. If you could wave a magic wand, what more / other/ better places would you have near where you live for play, recreation, informal sports and hanging out? What, of these ideas, is the most important – what are our priorities for change?
16. If our local area was suddenly cut off from the rest of the country – by shark infested water, or by natural disaster, what would we do? What do we have already that would help? What would we need to build or make or do together to survive? It can be useful to draw a boundary around a map if you are using one, to show where the border would be.

Annex C: List of Organisational Respondents

Below is a list of the names of the organisations that submitted a response to the main consultation, and agreed for their names to be published.

Category	Name of organisation / individual
Community Councils	Cramond and Barnton Community Council
Local Authorities / Planning Authorities	Stirling Council City of Edinburgh Council West Lothian Council (Planning Services & with NETs & Land Services) East Ayrshire Council Perth & Kinross Council Scottish Borders Council Clackmannanshire Council Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority Moray Council South Ayrshire Council South Lanarkshire Council Falkirk Council
Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Sector	John Muir Trust GCV Green Network Greenspace Scotland Paths for All Ramblers Scotland
Planning and Built Environment Sector	OPENSspace Research Centre, University of Edinburgh PAS (Planning Aid Scotland) RTPI Scotland
Play and Early Years Sector	Children in Scotland Play Scotland

Annex D: List of Acronyms

BRIA: Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

CRWIA: Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

CYP: Children and Young People

EQIA: Equality Impact Assessment

HOPS: Heads of Planning Scotland

ICIA: Island Communities Impact Assessment

LDP: Local Development Plans

MUGA: Multi Use Games Area

NPF4: The fourth National Planning Framework

OSS: Open Space Strategy

PAN 65: Planning Advice Note 65

PSA: Play Sufficiency Assessment

RTPI Scotland: The Royal Town Planning Institute Scotland.

SEA: Strategic Environmental Assessment



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