

Public Health England consultation: *Everybody Active, Every Day*

Response of the Landscape Institute, 22 September 2014

Background

The Landscape Institute is the royal chartered body for landscape architects. We are a professional body and educational charity working to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for the public benefit. We work to improve the planning, design and management of urban and rural landscapes. Through our advocacy programmes and support to our 6000 members (working in private practice and the public sector) we champion landscape, and the landscape architecture profession, in order to inspire great places where people want to live, work and visit.

The Landscape Institute's interest in *Everybody Active, Every Day*

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the draft physical activity implementation document, *Everybody Active, Every Day*. The document makes a compelling case for the urgent need to improve the physical activity of the nation. In particular we were greatly encouraged by section 3 of the Implementation and Evidence guide which highlights the strong relationship between the physical and social environment and physical activity.

In November 2013 we launched our own position statement, [*Public health and landscape: Creating healthy places*](#) to highlight the significant relationship between health and wellbeing, in its broadest sense, and the way our environments are planned, designed and managed. Based on an overview of the available evidence, our position statement sets out five principles of a healthy place:

1. Healthy places improve air, water and soil quality, incorporating measures that help us adapt to, and where possible mitigate, climate change;
2. Healthy places help overcome health inequalities and can promote healthy lifestyles;
3. Healthy places make people feel comfortable and at ease, increasing social interaction and reducing anti-social behaviour, isolation and stress;
4. Healthy places optimise opportunities for working, learning and development;
5. Healthy places are restorative, uplifting and healing for both physical and mental health conditions.

We believe strongly that how places are planned, designed and managed should be guided as much by their importance for health as for all other functions. Every intervention in the landscape, be it the design for new school grounds, the development of new housing, the management of existing parks or the planning of our streets and highways, has the potential to integrate physical activity into the everyday lives of all sections of society.

We have been working hard to promote the messages contained within our position statement to a range of audiences, including public health professionals, planners, local councillors and built environment professionals, including our own members and also architects. Through our Strategic Framework we have made a commitment to continue our work on this subject and as part of this we

would welcome the opportunity to help further by being an active partner in the *Everybody Active, Every Day* initiative.

The following sections outline our responses to the three questions posed on the consultation website.

1. Is there recently published evidence not included in the documents that should be?

Our position statement, [*Public health and landscape: Creating healthy places*](#) refers to evidence we used to devise our five principles of a healthy place. These references are included as endnotes in the position statement and can be found on pages 37-39. They are structured according to each of the principles. Those most relevant to the subject of physical activity are principles 2 and 3.

2. Are there additional actions that PHE, as a system leader, could enable to support you and your organisation to implement *Everybody Active, Every Day*?

We would be keen to be included in, and help support, initiatives relating to two of the 'four domains for action' outlined in the draft documents. These are highly relevant to our own aims and objectives, particularly in relation to our programme of work on public health.

Moving professionals: activating networks of expertise

The work of landscape architects is critical in ensuring that places are planned, designed and managed in a way that encourages physical activity. From strategic planning which can encourage more active engagement with the landscape on an everyday basis, through to detailed design to deliver beautiful public, healthy spaces in which people want to spend their time, the work of the landscape architect is key to delivering the right kind of environments to support this agenda.

As part of the development of our work on health and wellbeing we have already engaged with several directors of public health and also NHS Health Scotland's principal public health advisor to ensure that our messages are relevant to the public health sector. We will be delivering training for a network of public health trainees in London in October to highlight the ways the environment, and the way it is planned and designed, can have a positive impact on physical activity over the whole life course. We would like to do more and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with Public Health England.

We will also be delivering training for our own members, so that they have a greater understanding of the needs of the public health sector and their own role in promoting physical activity in their planning and design work.

Active lives: creating the right environments

We strongly support the need to integrate health policy with our policy areas. During the recent planning reform we argued strongly for the need to support health and wellbeing through the planning system and highlighted to Government the omission of a chapter on health in the draft National Planning Practice Guidance.

We would like to create new partnerships to foster greater collaboration between public health professionals and landscape architects. We would welcome Public Health England's support in doing this.