

# Children and Young People Engagement



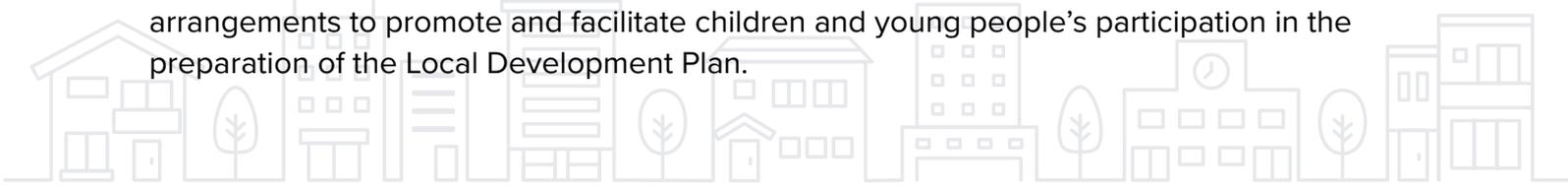
## Context

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced a requirement for planning authorities to promote and facilitate the participation of children and young people (aged 25 and under) in the preparation of the Local Development Plan.

To meet this requirement, planning authorities must consider how best to involve young people, including working with schools, youth councils, and youth parliament representatives. They must also publish information on their engagement arrangements and ensure this information remains up to date. This ensures that children and young people have opportunities to contribute to the planning process, helping to shape decisions that impact their communities.

## What Happened?

**June 2023** – Published information on the East Lothian Council website about arrangements to promote and facilitate children and young people’s participation in the preparation of the Local Development Plan.



**April 2023** – Facilitated session of small groups of primary aged children in 4 East Lothian Schools – utilising the Place Standard.

**April 2023** – Facilitator pack, including Place Standard based questions sent to primary schools.

**June 2023** – Met with Youth Parliament representatives for East Lothian.

**July 2023** – ELPA Summer events – early engagement with primary school children utilising scribble sheets and Local Development Plan leaflet.

**August 2023** – Met with Youth Parliament representatives for East Lothian.

**September 2023** – Longniddry Primary School, North Berwick High School, St Mary's Primary School, Dunbar Grammar, Knox Academy, Sanderson's Wynd Primary School, West Barns Primary School, Dirleton Primary School, Cockenzie Primary School, Whitecraig Primary School, St Matrin's Primary School, Rosehill High, Aberlady Primary School, Ross High School and Stoneyhill Primary School creative engagement.

**September 2023** – Google forms questionnaire to all secondary school pupils – confirmed circulation in North Berwick High, Dunbar Grammar, Knox Academy, Ross High, Rosehill High and Musselburgh Grammar.

**September 2023** – Promotion to Queen Margaret University, East Lothian Works, The Bridge Project (Musselburgh), the Ridge (Dunbar) and Meadowmill Sports Complex – online consultation and Place Standard for under 25's.

## Areas of Collaboration

Beginning in April 2023, pre-evidence report engagement was undertaken with children and young people across East Lothian. A variety of methods and approaches were used. Most of the engagement took place through schools, with additional engagement with the Youth Parliament representatives for East Lothian and older young people no longer at school. There are currently no Youth Parliaments in operation in East Lothian.

ELPA engaged with primary children and facilitated sessions in 10 of our primary schools during Sept 2023, with an average of 3 sessions per school. Based on the key themes of the LDP, with a focus on place. Tailored to the appropriate age group.

Play Scotland engaged secondary school children and facilitated sessions in 5 of our secondary schools (all were offered) based on the Place Standard tool.

ELC ran an online questionnaire through all our secondary schools, with prize draw for completions. There was a total of 308 valid responses to consider. For the older young people (Under 25s), no longer at school, the adult LDP consultation was marketed and targeted through specific agencies, such as QMU and East Lothian Works.



## Youth Parliament:

There are three representatives on the Youth Parliament of Scotland that represent East Lothian. Planning Officers met with the representatives, along with a Youth worker who acted as convenor. A second meeting was run as a focus group, gaining valuable insight into the representative's views of placemaking. The representatives were invited to partake in a Place Standard assessment – no returns were received.

## Primary Schools (ages 4 to 12):

East Lothian Council appointed East Lothian Play Association (ELPA) to undertake primary school engagement, with a focus on the Local Development Plan. With the guidance of Planning Officers, ELPA designed a creative interactive engagement programme tailored to primary aged children. A total of 10 primary schools were engaged, across all year groups.

Prior to the engagement Planning Officers created a video 'introducing a Planner' and leaflets and posters were circulated amongst the participating schools. Furthermore ELPA introduced the LDP and engagement ideas within their summer events programme. The Table in the 'What Happened' section above documents all the activities undertaken.

## Secondary Schools (aged 12 to 17):

There are 7 secondary schools in East Lothian, and all were invited to have pupils partake in Place Standard workshops, facilitated by Play Scotland, on behalf of East Lothian Council. Five schools took part.

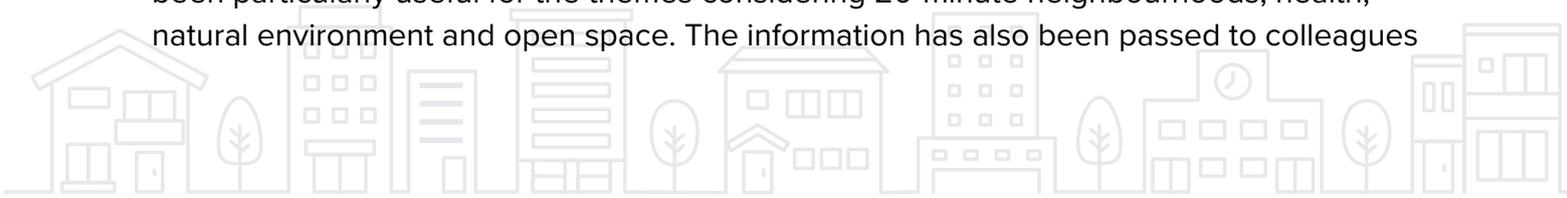
In addition, a questionnaire was sent to all 7 secondary schools, with distribution amongst pupils achieved in 6 schools. Responses varied between schools, but overall, there were 308 valid responses. ELC offered a monetary prize as an incentive to take part.

## Under 25s:

To reach those older young people no longer in school, publicity of the ongoing adult engagement storymap and Place Standard tool was made to Queen Margaret University, East Lothian works, The Bridge Project (Musselburgh), the Ridge (Dunbar) and Meadowmill sports complex.

## Overall Result

The Evidence Report refers to these results, and those of the wider community engagement and key stakeholders, and how they have been considered in preparing the evidence. Children's views along with other stakeholder views have been considered throughout the different themes of the LDP and used to identify gaps in existing policies/evidence in the Evidence Report for the East Lothian Local Development Plan 2. The children's views have been particularly useful for the themes considering 20-minute neighbourhoods, health, natural environment and open space. The information has also been passed to colleagues



in other departments to use for insight into children and young people's needs and wants and will be used to influence aspects of the next Open Space Strategy. Information has also been passed to those undertaking Local Place Plans, so they are aware of children's voices in their area.

## Lessons Learned

Collaborative working with ELPA, Play Scotland and Schools was a positive experience and strong partnerships were made. ELPA were very receptive to translating planning speak into an easy-to-understand format for the younger children. Providing information (video, leaflets and posters) in advance of the workshops was very helpful in preparing the children for what is expected in the sessions and to best utilise the time allocated. The youth parliament representatives were a pleasure to converse with and the focus groups offered good insight into what is important/not important to young people in the area.

