

PUBLIC HEALTH LEGISLATION IN SCOTLAND: A CONSULTATION GREENSPACE SCOTLAND CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Introduction

1. **greenspace scotland** welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Scottish Executive's consultation on public health legislation in Scotland.
2. **greenspace scotland** was established in 2002 to deliver Scottish Natural Heritage's Greenspace for Communities Initiative. It exists to champion greenspace at a national level, and develop and support action at a local level.
3. This consultation response is based on our research work into the links between health and wellbeing and greenspace quality and accessibility.

Comments

4. **greenspace scotland** has prepared research which shows links between public greenspaces and physical and mental health improvement. Quality greenspaces can produce health benefits by offering opportunities for physical activity, and it has been demonstrated that even passive interaction with greenspaces can have important benefits for physical and mental health. Summary information on this research is available at <http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/upload/File/GS%20Health.pdf>
5. We welcome the emphasis throughout the consultation document on promoting health, supporting the community in health improvement and ensuring the safety and quality of the general environment.
6. Our only significant comment is that we would have welcomed a reference in this document to the significant impact that overall environmental quality can have on physical and mental health. The consultation document states that public health includes '*preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through organised efforts of society*', and we consider that some reference to broader factors relating to well being would be relevant to this document.
7. While we accept that the main focus of this consultation is on dealing with health risks and hazards, we believe that is also important to acknowledge a broader role for public health in promoting physical, mental and social well-being. This requires recognition of the role that general environmental quality can play in health.

Conclusion

8. In conclusion, **greenspace scotland** welcomes the opportunity to comment on the consultation on public health legislation in Scotland.
9. We are happy to have this response placed in the public domain, and hope that this feedback is helpful in developing the legislation.

greenspace scotland
11 January 2007