



Report on consultation & engagement with children for the East Lothian Council Local Development Plan (LDP)

East Lothian Play Association SCIO

November 2023

East Lothian Play Association SCIO Local Development Plan (LDP) Consultation Conducted August – September 2023

Introduction

East Lothian Play Association SCIO (ELPA) was commissioned by East Lothian Council (ELC) to engage primary-school-aged children in the Local Development Plan (LDP) consultation. The intention was to collect children’s views on what is important to them about where they live, and to understand children’s views on the future of East Lothian. This report presents these findings to inform the development of the East Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP) for 2024-2034. The report draws together views collected during ELPA-led play sessions during the summer holidays and consultation sessions held across 10 local authority primary schools in term time.

ELPA staff and ELC Planners worked closely together to create child-friendly information about the LDP and creative consultation materials. At all stages, the quality of the engagement process and experience of children were carefully considered. The engagement process was participative and age-appropriate, resulting in a variety of rich materials that capture children’s experiences and ideas. The report presents key findings using children’s words and drawings throughout.

About ELPA

ELPA supports and promotes children’s right to play throughout East Lothian. ELPA delivers support to play in a range of school and community settings including regular Play Ranger sessions in local community spaces such as parks and green spaces. ELPA delivers training for people who work for and with children and is experienced in working collaboratively with children and young people, using creative, inclusive and participatory methods. ELPA is a Scottish registered charity, no. SCO50202.

Authors of the report: Susan Humble, lead investigator and Theresa Casey

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1. Key findings

- Children care about the world around them and they actively engaged with the consultation process.
- Concern for nature was an overarching theme across all locations. Children showed knowledge and passion for natural areas and presented thoughtful ideas about the future to protect and create diverse habitats for wildlife.
- Ease and frequency of access to natural areas such as beaches and woods, green spaces and parks is highly important to children.
- Independence to meet friends and go to places to play sports, play and hang out is highly important.
- Traffic levels and lack of safe crossing points are key concerns for children.
- Planning decisions around green spaces, traffic and lighting are closely link to children's independence and feelings of safety.
- Health is mentioned most frequently in relation to staying active. Parks for older children, sports facilities, safe roads and cycle paths are frequently mentioned in relation to this.
- Health, being active and having access to green space are closely linked for children.
- Children's responses show that the themes of places we live, health and nature crisis are closely linked.
- Children showed an interest in engaging with discussions about housing and climate change. Child-friendly information on these issues could support children's understanding of local decisions and ongoing engagement.
- Children's care for woodland, green spaces, trees and habitats shows they should be involved in decisions about their local area.

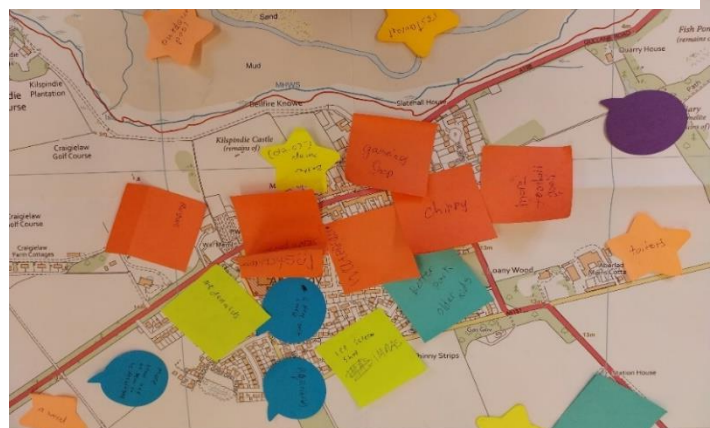


Figure 2. Annotated map at Aberlady Primary School

2. Report on engagement of children

2.1 Locations and participants

- Consultations during summer holiday play sessions led by ELPA
- Consultations at 10 local authority primary schools across East Lothian.

During the 2023 summer holidays, ELPA ran play sessions in parks and green spaces across East Lothian. These were free, open-access sessions for children of all ages including children with ASN. They offered a wide variety of play opportunities such as den building, water play, loose parts play, arts and crafts facilitated by Play Rangers. During these sessions, children and young people were invited to respond to the consultation supported by ELPA staff. Consultation at these sessions allowed for a wider range of geographic areas to be covered and consultation in different types of locations. The informality of the play sessions allowed children to choose to participate or not in a relaxed, supportive environment. The summer sessions helped ELPA to understand children’s concerns and to refine the approach for the engagement in schools.

Engagement sessions in primary schools were held during school hours in locations selected by ELC Education Department to represent a range of locations across the county. Three groups of children were involved from each school. Groups ranged from 10 – 15 children per group, covering primary years 1-7. Sessions lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour 15 minutes depending on age of children and group size.

The selection of children for the groups varied with each school. In some schools, selection was linked to existing groups such as pupil eco-groups. All schools were provided with information about the LDP in advance of the consultation. The expressed intention was for children to see these materials and then given the option to participate or not. However, in most schools, selection was by teaching staff.

Summer holiday engagement

Location	Area	Number of participants
Lewisvale Park, Musselburgh	Musselburgh	22
Fisherrow Links Playpark, Musselburgh	Musselburgh	24
Wallyford Playpark	Musselburgh	7
Winton Place/Lindores Drive green space, Tranent	Fa’side	12
Memorial Park, Haddington	Haddington and Lammermuir	10
Cockenzie House, Cockenzie	Preston, Seton, Gosford	10
		85

Primary school engagement

Stoneyhill Primary School, Musselburgh	Musselburgh	45
Dirleton Primary School	North Berwick, Coastal	42
West Barns Primary School	Dunbar	22
St Martin's Primary School, Tranent	Fa'side	29
St Mary's Primary School, Haddington	Haddington and Lammermuir	25
Longniddry Primary School	Preston, Seton, Gosford	33
Aberlady Primary School	North Berwick, Coastal	32
Whitecraig primary School	Musselburgh	39
Cockenzie Primary School	Preston, Seton, Gosford	39
Sanderson's Wynd Primary School, Tranent	Fa'side	33
		339

Total engagement of children aged 4-12 years old in community and school settings: 424

When asked "why is it important to ask children about the LDP?" children showed concern for their local area as well as understanding of their rights and responsibilities. For example:

- ... so trees you've seen your whole life don't get cut down.
- ... so a park you go to every day is looked after.
- ... so woods you walk in don't get destroyed.
- ... it's one of our children's rights.
- ... it's our place where we'll grow up and our future.
- ... we'll be looking after ourselves and others.

2.2 Guiding principles

ELPA developed a range of creative engagement methods to involve children in the LDP consultation. We worked closely with ELC Planners to ensure the approach was purposeful, and we drew on our own expertise to ensure the methods were engaging, inclusive and age appropriate. The focus was on qualitative methods as the most appropriate way to engage with children and to understand the richness of their experiences.

Across our participation and consultation work, ELPA aims to put into practice the principles of children's participation described as **Space, Voice, Audience and Influence**. [Enabling the meaningful participation of children and young people globally: The Lundy Model \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

We are mindful of the **UNCRC principles of children's participation**, so that participation is effective and meaningful, and understood as a process, not as a one-off event. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends these principles are integrated into participation processes – children's participation must be:

- transparent and informative
- voluntary
- respectful
- relevant
- child-friendly
- inclusive
- supported by training for adults
- safe and sensitive to risk
- accountable.

These are explained more fully in UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No.12 (2009) *The right of the child to be heard*, CRC/C/GC/12 20 July 2009)

In schools where children had seen the pre-consultation materials and children were offered the choice to participate, the level of interest and engagement in the session was noticeably higher than in schools which had not done this.

We conclude that the pre-consultation materials were an effective resource to support the capacity of children to participate and to allow them to make an informed choice about participating.



Figure 3. Engagement at Aberlady Primary School

2.3 Methods

ELPA worked closely with Planners at ELC to firstly ensure our own understanding of the LDP and requirements of the consultation process, and secondly create child-friendly information (Appendix A). This pre-consultation material included:

- a leaflet and poster using child-friendly language written by ELPA and designed by ELC
- a short film (5 minutes) scripted by ELPA, recorded by and featuring ELC Planners explaining what a Planner is, what they do and the LDP process.

Posters and leaflets were available during the summer sessions and all materials were sent to schools in advance of the engagement sessions. The aim of these materials was to ensure children understood what was being asked of them, could make an informed choice to participate or not, and to support the quality of the engagement.

ELPA and ELC also worked together to produce consultation materials including a large “scribble sheet” to capture children’s notes and drawings and a sticker sheet (Appendix C).

ELPA designed a workshop incorporating drawing and play activities as well as opportunities for children to share ideas in written form and verbally (Appendix B). We were mindful to offer a range of ways for children to participate and to adapt the session for different ages and children with additional support needs.

Engagement over the summer provided an opportunity to use the consultation materials and develop an approach that would intrigue and engage children. During these sessions the wording of questions was refined to reflect children’s own language on the topic. A suitcase holding the engagement materials and props encouraging children to look around was developed and the scribble sheet evolved into a future map of East Lothian.

The suitcase was intriguing and also worked as a sensory resource during the session. This enabled some children with ASN to explore the resources and participate with 1:1 support from ELPA staff or school support staff. During all sessions, children were free to move around as needed and a range of options to participate were offered.

During the school sessions the methods continued to evolve and a storybook was created to appeal to children in the early stages of primary school. This offered similar participation opportunities but in a familiar story-based format. Sessions for older children made more use of local maps as this format appealed and led to fruitful conversations.

Engagement kit

<p>Consultation materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future map and spare scribble sheets • Posters and leaflets about the LDP • Paper • Local maps • Voice recorder 	<p>Props</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnifying glasses and cellophane • Prop binoculars • Giant magic wand • Kaleidoscope <p>Creative bits</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stickers• Storybook	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pens, pencils• Post-it notes• Postcards• Sellotape
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Two members of ELPA staff were present at all sessions to ensure children could be supported and their views recorded accurately. During the engagement sessions, their role was to:

- support participation in activities
- encourage children to offer and record views
- capture children's ideas by taking notes during discussions or creative activities
- record children's views on their behalf (e.g., adding captions to drawings using their own words)
- capturing views expressed non-verbally
- adapting the session to the needs or preferences of participants as they went along (e.g., allowing a child to work individually, finding different materials, moving to an appropriate space).

In this way the engagement was fun, creative and appropriate to the participants.

The range of ways offered to children to participate was very important. Several teachers commented with surprise how well and for how long children participated.

For some children, the use of the voice recorder was very effective. This method captured children's thoughts, evoked a more serious reporting atmosphere in the room and in one school led to long interviews between children sharing experiences of their local area.

Despite adaptations and flexibility, one school commented that some children had not been selected for the group as it was felt they wouldn't be able to take part. More discussion between the school and ELPA could have perhaps reassured schools or supported ELPA to develop different approaches, if felt necessary.

Following each workshop, notes and information were uploaded to an online form. As children described the places that were important to them staff noted the frequency of significant words. These were then used to create a word cloud for each school to share the children's ideas simply and visually. This has been simplified and the language adjusted for consistency to create a word cloud showing the places that are most important to children across East Lothian.

Responses to questions were analysed to identify the key themes and issues that are important to children and their hopes for the future of East Lothian.

Short, visual reports were created for each school to enable the materials to be analysed in small groups, identifying key themes by location and ensuring children receive feedback about the engagement in an appropriate timeframe. (These are provided as a set of accompanying documents). This follows good practice in children's participation that ELPA adheres to.

There was a commitment in place from the beginning to report back to the children on what is happening with the information they have provided.



Figure 4. Consultation materials



Figure 5. Engagement at St Mary's RC Primary School

3. What matters to children about where they live



Figure 6. Word cloud showing frequency of responses to the question “What’s special to you about where you live?”

3.1 Nature

When asked “What’s special about where you live?” the most frequent answers from children relate to natural areas. East Lothian is fortunate to have beautiful beaches, woodland and hills, these are clearly appreciated by children. Some children are able to visit these places often as they live very close-by; others talk about the excitement of visits and exploring.

From the children’s responses across East Lothian, it’s important to note that natural areas can be parks, small green spaces, trees and pathways. Small pockets of nature are as important to children as the bigger, more scenic places. Being able to go to natural areas easily and frequently seems to be the important factor.

Children gave many reasons for enjoying natural areas including the importance for wildlife, fun and relaxation.



Figure 7. Drawing by child at West Barns Primary School showing local natural areas

Wildlife is frequently mentioned by children in relation to places that are special to them. Flowers and trees give pleasure and are understood by children to be important for the environment. Many children are very knowledgeable about wildlife; they enjoy seeing different animals and looking after them in their gardens. This level of knowledge is important for their aspirations to protect areas and their practical ideas to create more diverse habitats.

“I like where we live because it’s a safe space for wildlife.”
Child at West Barns Primary School

“I like the woods, I see a lot of birds and bugs.” Child at Dirleton Primary School

“What’s special to me are the trees and flowers and my family.” Child at Whitecraig Primary School



Figure 8. Drawing of trees and flowers by child at Whitecraig Primary School

Woods, parks and green spaces are places children have fun with friends, family and dogs.

“There are trees and bushes near my house that I can climb in.” Child at
Cockenzie Primary School

“I like jumping in the sea and swimming in the sea.” West Barns Primary School



Figure 9. “Climbing on the trees”
by child at Cockenzie Primary
School



Figure 10. Drawing of tidal pool
at North Berwick beach by child
at Dirleton Primary School

Specific bushes and trees are mentioned as local landmarks and important places children play near and pass regularly on their way to school. These bushes and trees feature in children’s drawings and stories of the area and seem to help children feel connected to nature and their surroundings. These landmarks are also things children want to protect.

“I like the route to school. There’s a big bush I always run into.” Child at Stoneyhill Primary School

Figure 11. Route to school, showing key landmarks by child at Stoneyhill Primary School



Children also link natural spaces with relaxation. Many children talked about the beautiful scenery in East Lothian and that they enjoy hill walks, the views, sunsets and having space around them.

“What’s special is there’s places for walks and lots of space.” Child at Longniddry Primary School



Figure 12. “The Law” by a child at Dirleton Primary School



Figure 13. "Good chilling spot" by child at West Barns Primary School

Climate change – children recognise the role of trees, flowers and bees in looking after the planet. There is a lot of concern for this and a crossover with the theme of nature crisis.



Figure 14. Drawing by child at Sanderson's Wynd Primary School

3.2 Sports and being active

Local sports pitches, parks, sports centres and swimming pools are mentioned as important places to be active, stay healthy and to hang out with friends.

Some children feel lucky to have pump tracks and skateparks nearby. Many other children travel to these and would love to have one close-by. Dunbar swimming pool with wave machine and large slide is frequently mentioned. Another destination frequently mentioned is Ormiston Playpark, this is seen as more challenging than other parks, has choice of play area and pump track as well as natural areas with trees and a river-side walk.

Children also talk about being active by playing out on bikes and scooters, walking and cycling to school.

“The thing I like most is Pinkie ‘cause I like lots of sports and being active.” Child at Stoneyhill Primary School

“I meet my friends at the hockey pitch and hang out. We live in different bits and all meet there.” Child at St Martin’s RC Primary School



Figure 15. Drawing of sports pitch by child at St Martin’s Primary School

“I want to be a professional footballer so it’s important to me to have a football pitch, clubs and to eat healthy.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

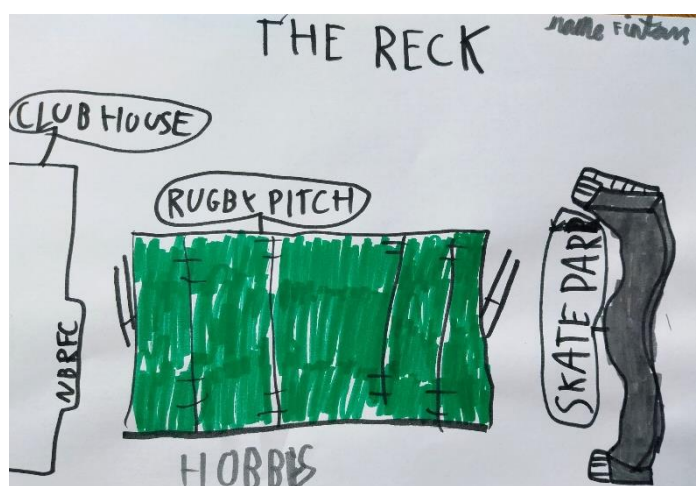


Figure 16. Drawing showing sports at North Berwick by child at Aberlady Primary School

3.3 Playing out and friends

Having friends close by, spaces to meet and play is really important to children.

“What’s special about my home is people play out quite a lot as we have a play park and a field. I’m allowed out by myself, you can see lots of other people to play with. They can look after you and you can look after them.” Child at St Mary’s RC Primary School

“What’s special is I can play out on scooters and bikes. We play at the wee green bit on my street.” Child at St Martin’s RC Primary School



Figure 17. Playing out in the street, drawing by child at St Martin’s Primary School

In several areas, children are very animated when talking about areas such as paths, tracks and old railways lines. These are significant spaces to play. These places are often on the edge of towns and villages and tend to be free from cars, close to housing but not used frequently by adults. They are spaces children can play freely, creating their own games using the landscape and what they can find. Examples of these spaces can be found in different parts of the county, both rural and urban. Children talk about creating tree swings, playing on bikes on steep banking and building dens. These are also mentioned as important places for wildlife.

3.4 Local facilities and community

Children like having sports facilities, parks, school, shops and community centres close by. Not having to drive to these facilities is important. Communities that children describe as safe have lots of paths to walk and cycle, places to play, see friends and family. This “walkability” is really important to children.

“I like that I don’t need to drive to go to shops, friends and school.” Child at Longniddry Primary School



Figure 20. Drawing showing route to school by child at Stoneyhill Primary School with thumbs up

3.5 Significant points

Frequent, easy access to natural spaces and places to play is important.

“Walkability” is important, characterised as car free routes, well-lit paths, areas with friends and family close by.

Children enjoy being active, both by playing sports and active travel such as cycling, scooting and walking. The need for parks for older children is mentioned frequently.

Children appreciate local facilities such as shops, community centres, sports facilities that they don't need to drive to.

Playing out is mentioned frequently as important to children. The common factors supporting this are spaces without cars, natural spaces, safe routes, street lighting.



Figure 21. “My house, my friend’s house” drawing by child at Aberlady Primary School



Figure 22 Drawing showing route to school, friends' houses and large trees by children at Stoneyhill Primary School

4. Important issues

Litter, housing, lighting and road safety are issues that were frequently raised by children across locations. Maps were particularly useful to discuss areas of concern. As well as problems, children were keen to find and present solutions to improve the areas where they live and visit, both for themselves and to look after the environment.

4.1 Litter

Littering was mentioned in every school and was often a key concern for children. Littering was linked with concern about wildlife and climate change. While children recognised everyone's responsibility to use bins and recycle, they felt there should be more bins available.

"I'd like East Lothian to have a lot more bins around the place. There's not enough. When you're playing with friends, you can't find one." Child at Longniddry Primary School

"I care about the world around me. Stop littering and pollution." Child at Dirleton Primary School



Figure 23. Drawing of sea and bees with "no litter" sign, by child at Longniddry Primary School

4.2 Housing

Housing was an issue often raised by children and one which drew lots of different opinions. Some children recognised a need for new housing, they appreciated that East Lothian is a good place to live or they wanted more children to play with.

“We need new houses for people who are homeless and one’s people can afford.” Child at St Mary’s Primary School

“More housing to allow people to live in Longniddry that want to.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

“I think there should be more houses so there’s more people here and that will be more fun.” Child at Whitecraig Primary School

Other children were completely against new houses. Some had seen areas that were special to them built on, many were concerned about loss of natural areas or the impact on their communities.

“I want for nature to be protected and there not to be so many houses being built everywhere.” Child at St Mary’s RC Primary School

“New houses should fit in with older ones.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

Another group of children were less decided but felt new houses should be built to help people and so be affordable and minimise impact on wildlife.

“We need more houses but good quality affordable ones.” Child at St Mary’s RC Primary School

“I think it would be better if we don’t build a lot of houses for no reason.” Child at Whitecraig Primary School

“We need more houses but space for wildlife.” Child at Aberlady Primary School

“Replace old houses instead of building new ones.” Child at Aberlady Primary School

“With new houses, they need to build more fences, passages and houses to keep animals safe.” Child at Aberlady Primary School



Figure 24. "Stop destroying animals' homes" by child at Longniddry Primary School

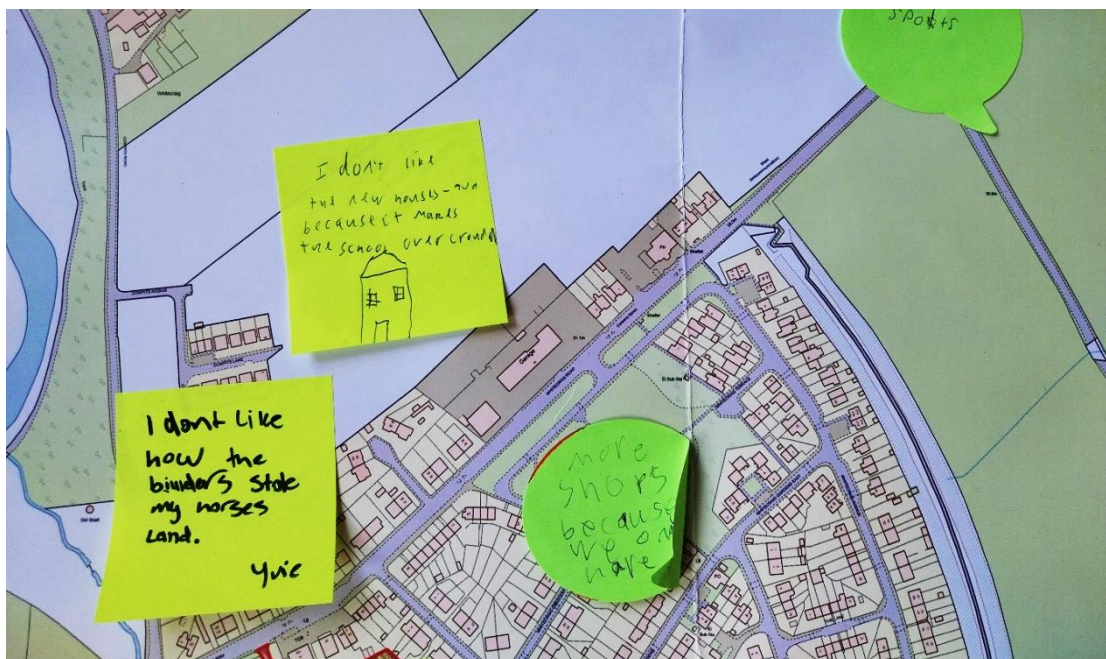


Figure 25. Annotated map at Whitecraig Primary School

Children described the impact of new houses on traffic and local facilities and the need for an accompanying increase in local facilities.

“We need more facilities such as shops, swimming pools, sports centres, parks and car parks.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

“With more houses, the roads are going to get busy, we need more safe crossings and walkways and safe paths to woods around the village.” Child at Longniddry Primary School



Figure 26. Drawing showing house for animals by child at St Mary's RC Primary School

4.3 Safety

Children's safety is impacted by street lighting and traffic. Road safety was mentioned as a significant concern in several schools, both urban and rural. Looking at maps helped us to understand the local area, routes children use and areas of concern.

“Parks don't feel safe in the dark.” Child at Stoneyhill Primary School

This comment led to a discussion about the need for more lighting in parks, especially along paths, including tracks used to walk dogs.



Figure 27. Annotated map at Sanderson's Wynd Primary School

Traffic has a significant impact on children's daily lives, affecting their ability to play out, how they travel to school and places they can visit.

"I can't walk to school by myself cause there's too many cars." Child at St Martin's RC Primary School

"It's dangerous if there's no paths and you can't access some places if you're walking or cycling." Child at West Barns Primary School

Children were keen to suggest improvements to make roads safer and, in some cases, specific places that road crossings would make their daily journeys safer.

"We need fewer cars on the road and more safe crossing." Child at Sanderson's Wynd Primary School

"More safe crossing and more safe crossing for disabled people." Child at Sanderson's Wynd Primary School

Cycle paths are a frequent suggestion as they are fun, environmentally friendly and a way to stay healthy.



Figure 28. Annotated map at Aberlady Primary School

Wish list by children at West Barns Primary School

- Safer roads to walk and cycle
- More paths
- More safe crossings
- Cycle lanes
- More speed cameras
- Slower traffic
- More parking spaces
- Use cars less.

5. Our future in East Lothian



Figure 29 “Things I want to protect” by child at Aberlady Primary School

5.1 Places we live

Children describe clean towns with local facilities that are safe and easy to walk and cycle to. Parks, places to play, swimming pools and shops are frequently mentioned. Safety comes from street lighting, fewer cars, cycle paths and knowing people in the neighbourhood.

“[I’d like] local parks and sports facilities that children can easily and safely walk or cycle to.” Child at Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School

“We need neighbourhoods to play out with friends. This means fewer cars or times when there are no cars allowed.” Child at Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School

“[I’d like] lots of shops and safe places to play. Not much cars and roads around and it’s not busy.” Child at Stoneyhill Primary School

“Better and more lighting in parks. No litter and dog poo. Put up signs.” Child at Stoneyhill Primary School

Children have thoughtful ideas to help the whole community, thinking about people of different ages and abilities.

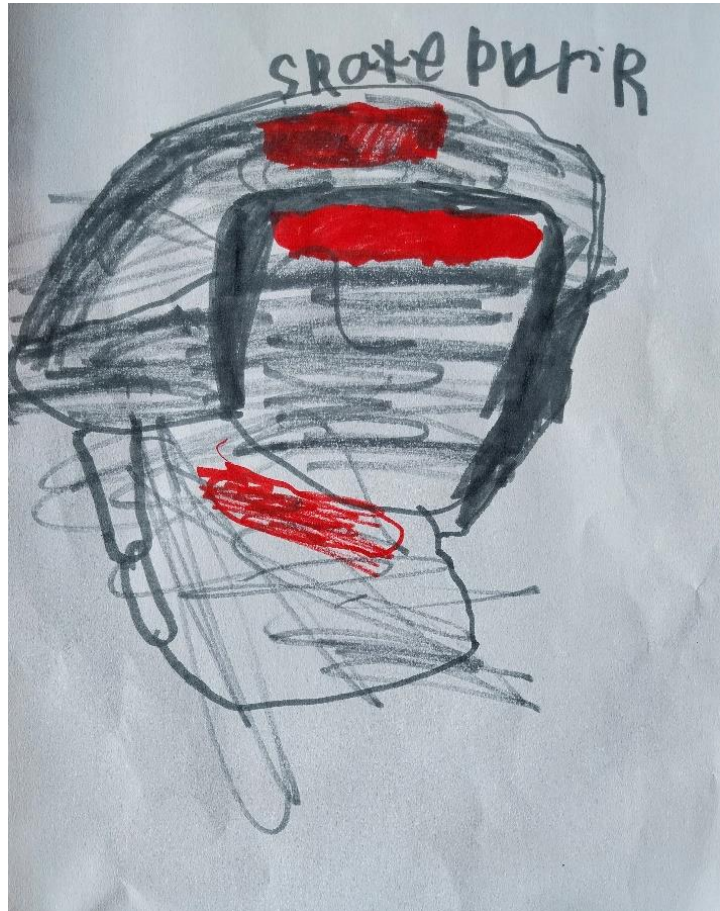
“We need a football stadium as there is a lot of parents who may have sore legs standing so we need seats so they can sit and watch us.”
Child at Longniddry Primary School

“More interesting stuff in the park and a shelter.” Whitecraig Primary School

“I’d like for there to be more parks for older children, a skatepark, bigger village park and ninja places, like parkour.” Dirleton Primary School

“A nursing home in a nice place so it’s not far to travel to visit people.”
Aberlady Primary School

Figure 30. “Skatepark” by child at Whitecraig primary School



“I would like there to be a gym for disabled people, the basketball hoops could be lower and people to help.” Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School

“More safe crossing and more safe crossing for disabled people.” Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School

Figure 31. Drawing showing a wheelchair user crossing a road by child at Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School



As previously discussed, traffic is a major point of concern for children and is frequently mentioned when discussing what is important for the next LDP. Children say there is a need for lower speed limits, safe walkways and cycle paths. They realise cars won't be eliminated so we need more car charging points as a solution that is better for the environment.

“Safe places to play on scooters at houses, that would make me happy.” Child at Aberlady Primary School

“We need safer roads with lower speed limits and cycle paths.” Child at Dirleton Primary School



Figure 32. “Safe” by children at Longniddry Primary School

Figure 33. “Less cars more crossings” by child at Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School

5.2 Nature crisis

Nature is very important to children across East Lothian. For children this means protecting existing wildlife, creating new habitats and appreciating nature.

Children want to protect the wildlife we have in East Lothian and feel strongly that this should be considered when building new houses and roads.

“Build homes but don’t destroy habitats.” Child at Dirleton Primary School

“Keep this a safe place for wildlife.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

“Make tunnels to keep hedgehogs safe on the roads.” Child at St Marys RC Primary School



Figure 34. House near woods and beach by child at Dirleton Primary School



Figure 35. “Nature” by child at West Barns Primary School

Creating diverse habitats is described as beneficial for wildlife and humans. For the future of East Lothian children would like to see more trees, ponds, flowers and animals.

“Look after woods and more habitats for wildlife such as ponds.” Child at Dirleton Primary School

“Plant more trees and flowers.” Child at Whitecraig primary School

“Make spaces for wildlife.” Child at St Mary’s RC Primary School

“Hedges and bushes with berries that give food for the birds.” Child at St Mary’s RC Primary School

“Better nutritious food by planting fruit trees.” Child at St Mary’s Primary School

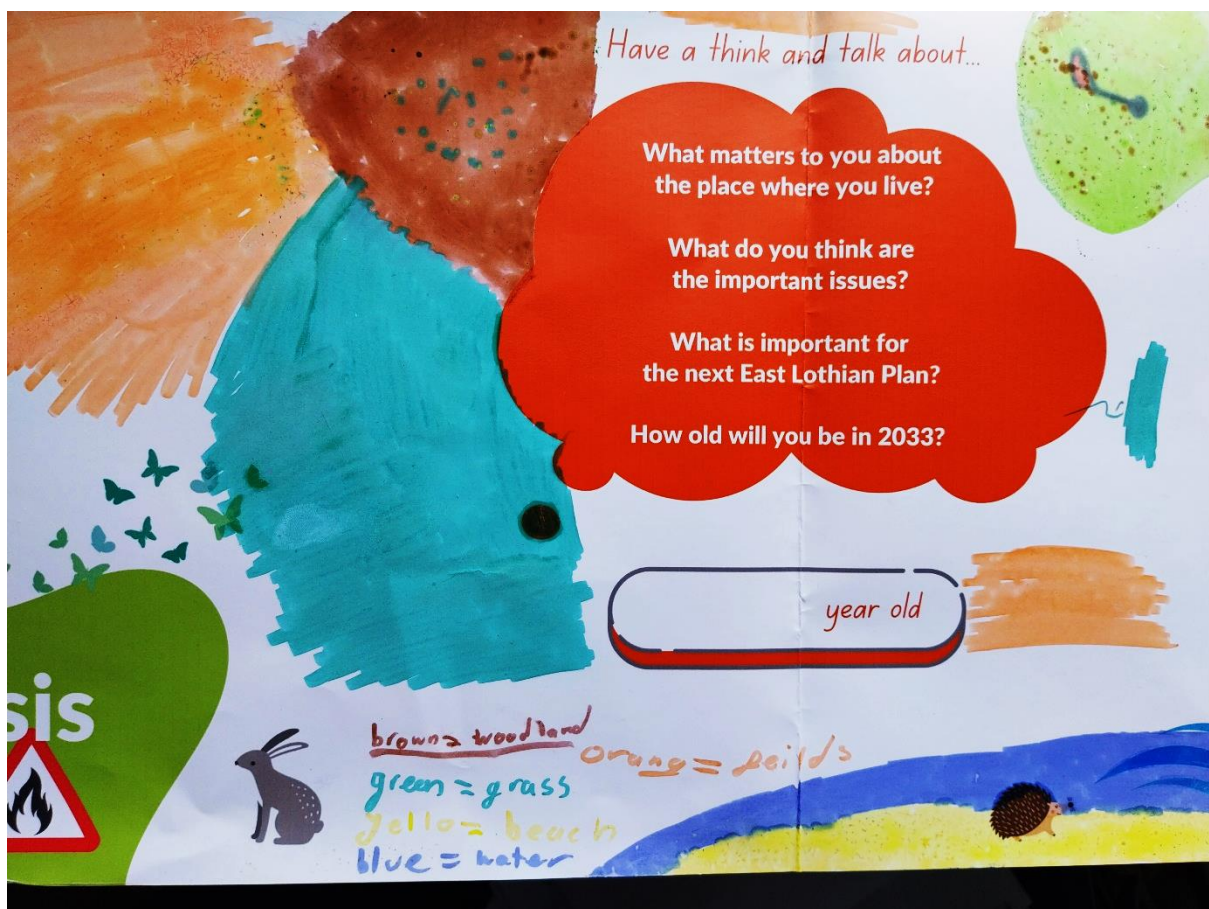


Figure 36. A future map of East Lothian by children at Dirleton Primary School. The key shows large natural areas.

Trees are often mentioned as children are concerned that trees are being cut down, and there is a desire from children to plant more trees, ensure they are looked after and protected. Children describe this as important for wildlife, for us and to help climate change.

“More trees, you should plant the seeds now.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

“Help trees so don’t cut them down try to help them grow. The other reason you shouldn’t cut them down is you’re destroying animals’ homes. You need to help other people look after trees. You should plant more trees around Scotland as lots of them are getting knocked down.” Child at Dirleton Primary School



Figure 37. “More places for wildlife” by children at Cockenzie Primary School

Figure 38. “Help Trees” by child at West Barns Primary School

Children also describe links between nature, health and wellbeing with practical ideas to benefit people and the environment.

“I think there should be less deforestation because no one will have calm places and more bike places as you want to feel safe when you go on your bike.” Child at Cockenzie Primary School

“More relaxing bits because sometimes you feel really stressed or angry and you need to calm down, we need something like a circle of meadow with chairs and you can meditate on them.” Child at Cockenzie Primary School

5.3 Health

In some locations, children discussed the need for more health care facilities such as GP surgeries, hospitals and dentists. In most cases, children linked health to being active and staying active as they get older.

“Stay healthy by being active - cycling and playing sports.” Child at Dirleton Primary School

For this, children talked about the need for more swimming pools, sports facilities and pitches that are easy to get to. Children frequently complain that there aren't many parks for older children and would like challenging play facilities such as bigger parks, parkour, skateparks and pump tracks. Active travel was also frequently mentioned, reducing traffic, creating more cycle paths and safer paths would help with this.

“Safe free cycle paths and better walkways.” Child at St Mary's RC Primary School

“Cycling to and from friends' houses is important to be healthy.” Child at Longniddry Primary School

“Look after woods and beaches make safe ways to get there.” Child at Longniddry primary School

“More parks for rugby and basketball. The astro should be open evenings and weekends.” Child at Cockenzie Primary School

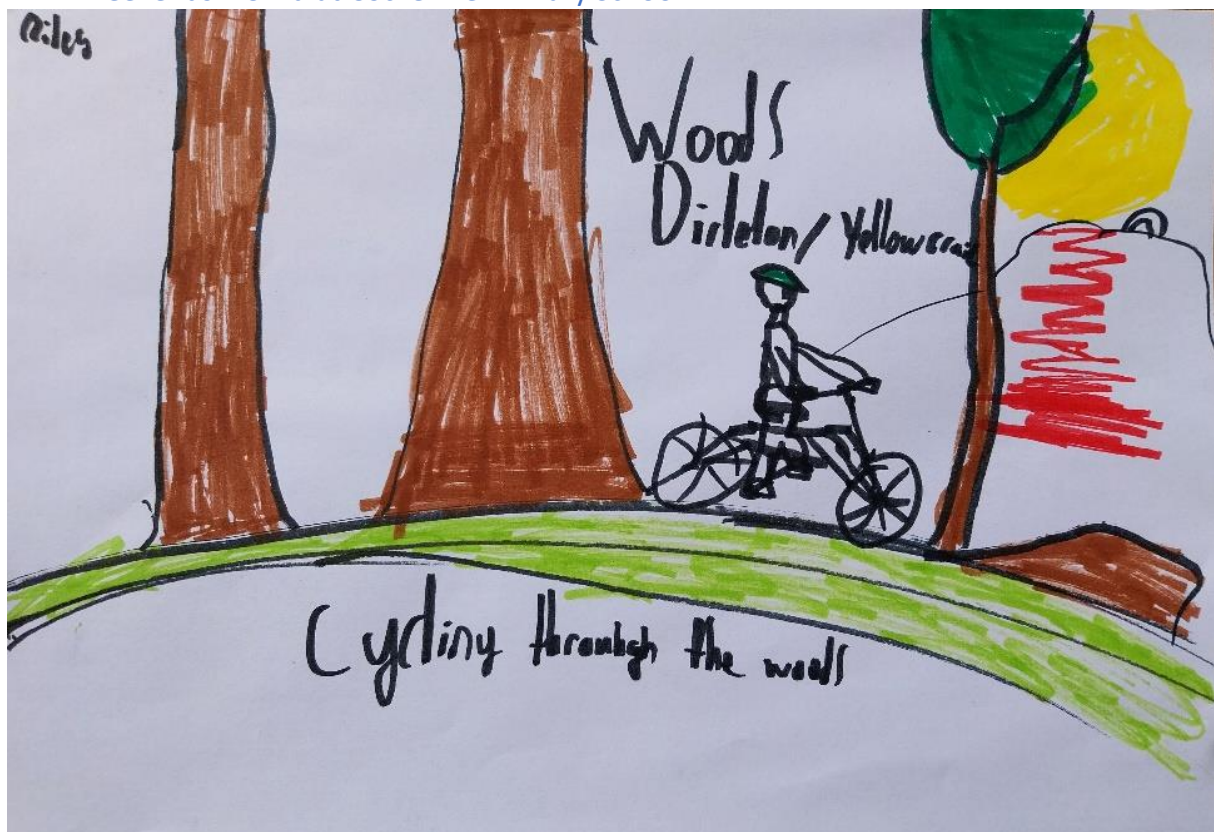


Figure 39. "Cycling through the woods" by child at Dirleton Primary School

5.4 Climate change

Nature crisis and climate change are closely connected for children. Many of the children's drawings of the future they'd like in East Lothian show trees, flowers, ponds, a clean environment.

"Trees, because if we have trees we can breathe, we should plant more woodland"
Child at Aberlady Primary School

Figure 40. "More trees, more bins." Child at Sanderson's Wynd Primary School



"I think we need more charging points for electric cars in the future." Child at Cockenzie Primary School

"More electric car charging points." Child at St Mary's Primary School

Figure 41. "More charging points" by child at Cockenzie Primary School



Unlike the other topics, climate change wasn't raised in all schools. When it was, children were passionate and knowledgeable about alternative energy sources.

"Solar panels can make power from the sun." Child at St Mary's Primary School

"I think there should be a lot more wind farms and solar power. It's not good when you collect it from coal under the ground and all the pollution goes up into the world. It makes forest fires, there should definitely be more wind farms and solar panels on houses. The wind farms could be in the hills or out at sea." Child at Cockenzie Primary School

"Wind farms at sea and solar panels on houses. Train stations, less cars." Child at Cockenzie Primary School



Figure 42. Large map future map of East Lothian by children at Aberlady Primary School

6. Summary and significant points

6.1 Summary

What's important to children about where they live?

Nature

Playing out with friends

Sports and being active

Local facilities and community

The important issues are:

Litter

Housing

Traffic

Nature crisis



Figure 43. Drawing by child at Longniddry Primary School showing houses and trees on a green planet

What's important to children for the next Local Development Plan?

Nature

- Protect natural areas, parks and green spaces
- Create diverse habitats, including ponds
- Plant more trees and flowers
- Develop safe access to beaches, woods, parks and green spaces so children have frequent access to natural areas.

Local facilities and community

- A variety of shops and cafes
- Parks for all ages, including older children
- Facilities for all ages and abilities – accessible crossing points, inclusive sports facilities, seating in parks and sports facilities, care homes
- Safe and clean neighbourhoods – fewer cars, safe crossings, good lighting.

Health and being active

- Access to local health care facilities
- Sports centres and pitches
- Skateparks and pump tracks
- Neighbourhoods to play out (green space, less traffic, adequate lighting)
- Swimming pools
- Cycle paths and safe walking routes.

Climate change

- More electric car charging points
- More use of solar and wind power
- More bins and recycling facilities.

6.2 Significant points

Engagement with children highlights the connections between the LDP themes of places we live, nature crisis, health and climate change.

“Fewer cars would help with pollution and also make roads safer to walk.” Child at Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School

- The need to stay active and healthy is highlighted by children along with the significant impact cars have on their daily lives.
- Safer areas to walk and cycle could keep us healthy and be better for the environment.
- A more natural environment could improve our health and wellbeing.
- Areas with more trees, flowers and wildlife also helps climate change.

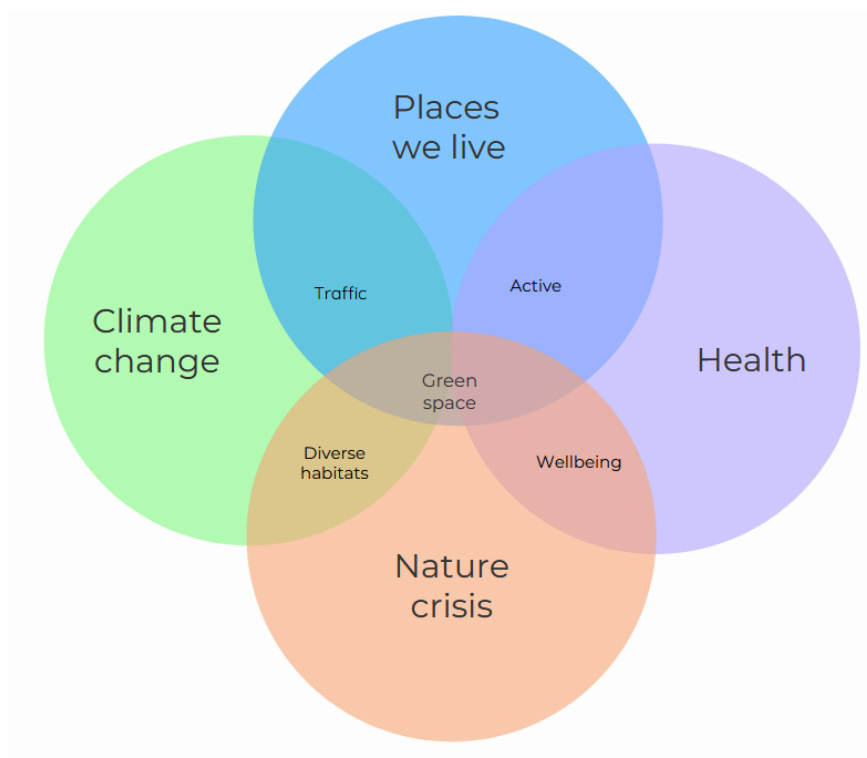


Figure 44. Summary of children’s ideas for the future of East Lothian showing connections between the LDP themes

Appendix A

Pre-consultation materials

In consultation with Planners at East Lothian Council, ELPA scripted a child friendly video about the LDP and engagement process. This was subsequently filmed by ELC, featuring a Planner. A link to the film was sent to all school in advance of the engagement sessions. A leaflet about the LDP was also available at all sessions, including summer holiday engagement sessions, see following pages.

Link to child friendly film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fzx2w6HvmDs>

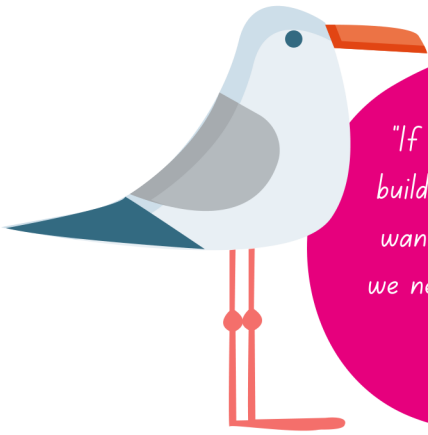
East Lothian's new Local Development Plan

(we call it the LDP for short)



This leaflet provides
information on the
council's new LDP.

wild spaces
health + wellbeing
environment
sport facilities
creative spaces
villages
homes
accessible spaces
climate
energy
public transport
bike paths
towns
nature



"If we didn't have a plan, people could build anything they liked, wherever they wanted! That wouldn't be fair because we need to think about everyone's needs and wishes for where we live."

What is a Local Development Plan?

Every area in Scotland has to make an LDP.

It is a plan for how East Lothian can be changed, developed and protected for the next ten years.

In the plan we try to think about things that affect everyday life. Things like:

- ✓ **public transport** (buses and trains)
- ✓ **new houses**
- ✓ **schools**
- ✓ **parks**
- ✓ **bike paths**
- ✓ **roads**



We also think about protecting land and conserving special spaces that are important for nature and wildlife, for relaxing and for tourists to visit. That can be places like beaches, countryside, wild spaces, parks and historical environments.

About the new East Lothian LDP

The plan we are working on now is for ten years;
from 2023 until 2033.

How old are you this year - 2023?



How old will you be in 2033?



Local Development Plans are all about the places you grow up, where you go out to play, learn, work and perhaps have your own family one day.

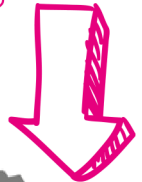
So the big themes it includes are:

- ✓ **Climate change**
- ✓ **Nature crisis**
- ✓ **Health and wellbeing**
- ✓ **The places we live**

Our plan is for the whole of East Lothian.

Planners get to make maps. We ♥ maps! Do you?

Can you point to the area where you live?



What do you think about these important themes?

How do they affect your life?

How would you like things to be in the future?



We might see you in school in September!

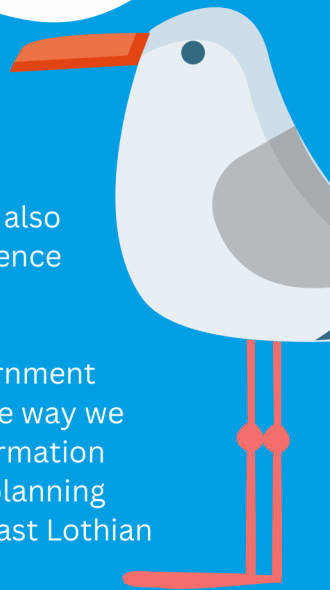
We are organising creative sessions for children in ten East Lothian primary schools to look at the LDP in more detail.

East Lothian Play Association (ELPA) will be running these to think about things like planning, towns, housing and countryside – and how they all join together!

What happens next?

The thoughts and ideas we gather from children (and adults) will help us write the new LDP. We will also be looking at information from the public and evidence we already have or get from experts.

We will send this information to the Scottish Government for them to check we have involved everyone in the way we should. It takes quite a long time to put all the information together. The draft of the LDP (which will include planning policies and maps) should be ready for people in East Lothian to see by the end of 2024.



How can the general public share their views on the LDP?

By visiting us online at: www.eastlothian.gov.uk/ldp2

have your say



The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is a long term plan for Scotland. Local Development Plans are part of this.

Appendix B

Workshop plan

Local Development Plan – school workshops September 2023

Led by East Lothian Play Association

The aim of the workshops is to involve children from across East Lothian in developing East Lothian's next Local Development Plan. In particular, we are seeking children's views on place – what they like, don't like and would like to see improved. The workshops will relate to the themes of the LDP, be creative and age appropriate.

Session plan

Room set-up

Ensure there is room to move around and to sit on the floor or in groups around a table if preferred

Have other materials to hand (see list of resources)

Have a map of the local area

Engagement kit

Consultation materials <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scribble sheets (plenty)• Posters and flyers about the LDP• Future map• Paper• Local maps• Voice recorder• Stickers• Storybook (use with younger children)• Record sheets	Props <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magnifying glasses and cellophane• Prop binoculars• Giant magic wand• Kaleidoscope Creative bits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pens, pencils• Post-it notes• Postcards• Sellotape
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Role of staff during sessions:

- support participation in activities
- encourage children to offer and record views
- adapt sessions to participants
- capture children's ideas by taking notes during discussions or creative activities
- record children's views on their behalf (e.g., adding captions to drawings using their own words)
- capturing views expressed non-verbally

- adapting the session to the needs or preferences of participants as they went along (e.g., allowing a child to work individually, finding different materials, moving to an appropriate space).

Local Development Plan – school workshops September 2023

Led by East Lothian Play Association

Item	Time allocated	Notes
Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce ELPA staff • Invite children to share names 	5 mins	At this point can ask a question, eg. what's your favourite thing to do after school
Explanation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check children's understanding • Discuss in more details as needed • Discuss why children's views are important • Set-out plan for the session 	5 mins	Show LDP film if not already seen
Where you live – drawing activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask children to find a space in relation to the model school Do they live close? Stand close. If further far away, stand further • Look around, what do you see. Use special binocular to see across east Lothian • Ask children to draw "what is special about where you live" • Invite children to share their drawings and ideas 	15 mins	Use binoculars as a prop Offer a range of drawing materials, have plenty to hand Staff can talk to children while drawing Group sharing if appropriate
Movement break <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move the card that shows how you travelled to school • Strike a pose – what do you like to do after school? • What makes you feel happy, healthy, safe? 	5 mins	Have cards ready around the room This is most needed with younger children Staff to take notes
Looking to the future – drawing and discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask children how old they are now and how old they will be in 2033 • Look around again, this time using special binoculars – what would you like to see in East Lothian in 2033? • Create a future map, each child contributing an idea • With older children – one group work on current map – how improve the area to feel happy, healthy and safe? • Group sharing 	20 - 30 mins	This can be done in two groups Use consultation sheets as future maps Use binoculars and wand as props With older children, use prompts of happy, healthy and safe ELPA staff to take notes Likes, dislike improvements, ideas Important themes

<p>The places we live – map activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the map, can you find the school and other important places? • How do you travel to these places? • What do you like, what do you not like? • What would make it better 	<p>15 mins</p>	<p>With older children P4-P7</p> <p>ELPA staff to facilitate discussion and take notes</p> <p>Stickers and post-its can be used to mark responses on the map</p>
<p>Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank children for taking part • Explain next steps 	<p>5 mins</p>	

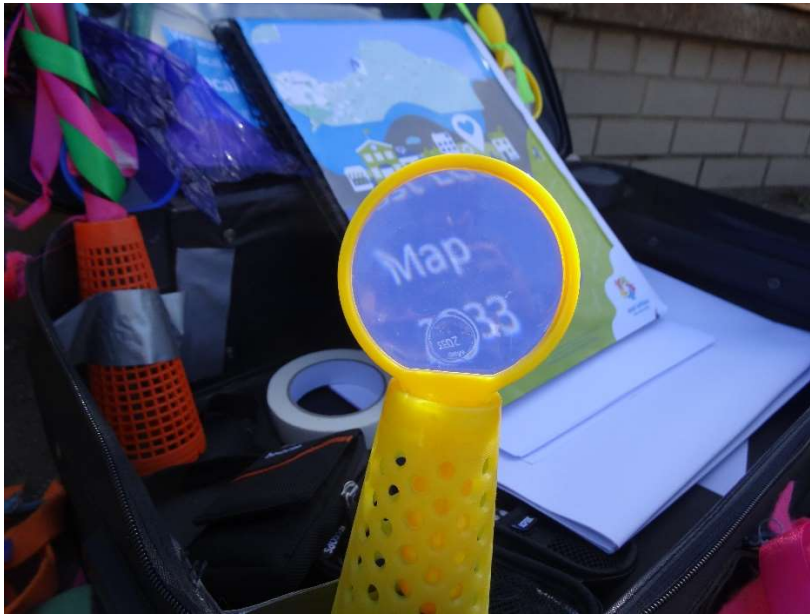


Outdoor engagement session at St Mary's Primary School

Appendix C

Consultation materials

Working collaboratively, ELPA and ELC produced a scribble sheet that was used at all sessions to record children's ideas. This was printed on a large scale as A1 and A0 to allow children to collaborate. For the school sessions, the scribble sheets were folded to be used as the basis for a future map of East Lothian.



Above, engagement materials presented in a suitcase showing props and future map cover.

The places we live

Health

Nature crisis

Climate change

Name

Date

Location

East Lothian Local Development Plan (LDP for short)

East Lothian Council

east lothian
local development plan

Have a think and talk about...

- What matters to you about the place where you live?
- What do you think are the important issues?
- What is important for the next East Lothian Plan?
- How old will you be in 2033?

year old