Places, people and planning
A consultation on the future of the Scottish Planning System

Introduction
The British Medical Association is a politically neutral registered trade union and professional association representing doctors from all branches of medicine. The BMA has a total membership of over 168,000. In Scotland, the BMA represents over 16,000 members.

Provision of healthcare facilities
BMA Scotland welcomes the understanding in the consultation that the places where we work, live and play can have a significant impact on our health and wellbeing. It is important therefore, that the planning system takes into account provision/expansion of healthcare facilities, both in general practice and the wider NHS, as a consequence of residential and nursing home development.

There has been considerable impact on GP practices where large volumes of patients have been added on to existing practice lists because there is no mechanism that supports the creation of new practices in growing communities. The lack of formal involvement of NHS boards in planning for this influx means that practices end up having to absorb the additional patients without any investment/resource.

Currently it is expected that planning authorities will engage with health providers as part of the process of identifying areas of growth, so that issues of capacity and any requirement for developer contributions towards healthcare facilities are considered in advance of a planning application. Whilst we welcome recognition of the need to engage with healthcare providers, we are concerned that this requirement is not nearly strong enough. We would like to see a legal requirement placed on planners so that they have to ensure adequate availability of both primary and secondary care services for any new developments. The lack of such a legal requirement has led to some practices becoming unsustainable.

Provision of play spaces
The consultation recognises that investing in play and recreation spaces can lead to multiple benefits including improved educational attainment and a healthier society.

BMA Scotland supports the introduction of a requirement for housing developments to include adequate provision of play and informal recreation spaces. Outdoor play impacts significantly on the lives of children and young people and could help remove some of the barriers to accessing physical activity. Ensuring quality play opportunities in all new planning developments would allow children and young people in Scotland to increase their physical activity and improve their health and wellbeing.
Independent Review of Planning

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form must be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

BMA Scotland

Title

Mr ☐ Ms ☐ Mrs ✓ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ Please tick as appropriate

Surname

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual / Group/Organisation

☐ ☑ Please tick as appropriate
(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate
☐ Yes  ☐ No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

☐ Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

☐ Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

☐ Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation will be made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your response to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate
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(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate
☑ Yes