

Active Design

Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity



Active Design checklist

October 2015

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This checklist provides a useful tool for applying Active Design principles to a specific proposal or measure and assessing the ability to deliver more active and healthier outcomes. The checklist provides an overview of the principles and pointers to best practice found within the guidance.



1. Activity for all

Neighbourhoods, facilities and open spaces should be accessible to all users and should support sport and physical activity across all ages.

Enabling those who want to be active, whilst encouraging those who are inactive to become active.

Are a range and mix of recreation, sports and play facilities and open spaces provided to encourage physical activity across all neighbourhoods?	
Are facilities and open spaces managed to encourage a range of activities to allow all to take part, including activities for all genders, all ages and all cultures?	
Are a range of sport and physical activity opportunities specifically targeted at more deprived areas or areas where there are known to be particular health issues?	
Are varied promotion initiatives and methods directed across peer groups, to seek to reach all members of society and to target hard to reach groups?	
Are all facilities supported as appropriate by public conveniences, water fountains and, where appropriate, changing facilities to further increase their appeal to all?	
Do public spaces and routes have generous levels of seating provided?	
Where shared surfaces occur, are the specific needs of the vulnerable pedestrian taken into account?	



2. Walkable communities

Homes, schools, shops, community facilities, workplaces, open spaces and sports facilities should be within easy reach of each other.

Creating the conditions for active travel between all locations.

Are a diverse mix of land uses such as homes, schools, shops, jobs, relevant community facilities and open space provided within a comfortable (800m) walking distance? Is a broader range of land uses available within 5km cycling distance?	
Are large, single purpose uniform land uses avoided?	
Are walkable communities created, providing opportunities to facilitate initiatives such as walking buses to school, and providing the basic pattern of development to support a network of connected walking and cycling routes (Principle 3)?	



3. Connected walking & cycling routes

All destinations should be connected by a direct, legible and integrated network of walking and cycling routes. Routes must be safe, well lit, overlooked, welcoming, well-maintained, durable and clearly signposted. Active travel (walking and cycling) should be prioritised over other modes of transport.

Prioritising active travel through safe, integrated walking and cycling routes.

Does the proposal promote a legible, integrated, direct, safe and attractive network of walking and cycling routes suitable for all users?	
Does the proposal prioritise pedestrian, cycle and public transport access ahead of the private car?	
Are the routes provided, where feasible, shorter and more direct than vehicular routes?	
Are the walking and cycling routes provided safe, well lit, overlooked, welcoming, and well maintained, durable and clearly signposted? Do they avoid blind corners?	
Do routes support all users including disabled people?	
Are shared pedestrian and cycle ways clearly demarcated, taking the needs of the vulnerable pedestrian into account?	
Do walking and cycling leisure routes integrate with the open space and green infrastructure network of the area?	
Are sporting facilities fully integrated in this walking and cycling network?	
Are informal facilities for physical activity provided, such as Greenline routes?	



4. Co-location of community facilities

The co-location and concentration of retail, community and associated uses to support linked trips should be promoted. A mix of land uses and activities should be promoted that avoid the uniform zoning of large areas to single uses.

Creating multiple reasons to visit a destination, minimising the number and length of trips and increasing the awareness and convenience of opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity.

Does the proposal promote a mix of land uses and the co-location and concentration of key retail, community and associated uses?	
Are sports facilities and recreational opportunities prominently located?	
Are multiple sporting facilities located in one place, to allow choice of activity?	



5. Network of Multifunctional Open Space

A network of multifunctional open space should be created across all communities (existing and proposed) to support a range of activities including sport, recreational and play and other landscape features including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), woodland, wildlife habitat and productive landscapes (allotments, orchards). Facilities for sport, recreation and play should be of an appropriate scale, positioned in prominent locations, co-located with other appropriate uses whilst ensuring appropriate relationships with neighbouring uses.

Providing multifunctional spaces opens up opportunities for sport and physical activity and has numerous wider benefits.

Does the open space provided facilitate a range of uses?	
Are the sports and recreation facilities provided designed in accordance with best practice guidance?	
Are the sports and recreation facilities appropriately designed and located in relation to neighbouring uses?	
Does the open space provide an accessible setting for development?	
Does the open space link to existing networks and walking and cycling routes?	



6. High Quality Streets and Spaces

Flexible and durable high quality streets and public spaces should be promoted, employing high quality durable materials, street furniture and signage.

Well designed streets and spaces support and sustain a broader variety of users and community activities.

Are streets and spaces which are provided of a high quality, with durable materials, street furniture and signage?	
Is appropriate provision made to promote access to, and activity by, all users including providing safe route ways for vulnerable pedestrians?	
Is the new civic space of an appropriate scale and proportion to allow a range of possible functions?	



7. Appropriate Infrastructure

Supporting infrastructure to enable sport and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate all forms of activity.

Providing and facilitating access to facilities and other infrastructure to enable all members of society to take part in sport and physical activity.

Are public toilets, showers and changing facilities provided? Are these accessible and usable by all potential users?	
Are drinking fountains provided?	
Is there a multitude of seating options provided? Is the seating provided accessible to all?	
Is safe and secure cycle parking provided for all types of cycles including adapted cycles and trikes?	
Is Wi-Fi provided in facilities and spaces?	
Is safe and secure pushchair storage provided where appropriate?	



8. Active Buildings

The internal and external layout, design and use of buildings should promote opportunities for physical activity.

Providing opportunities for activity inside and around buildings

Are buildings well located in relation to surrounding walking and cycling routes, with direct access by these modes prioritised over access by vehicular modes?	
Is the use of stairs promoted (over the lift) utilising signage and creating spacious and clean stairwells that are welcoming? (This should be balanced with the need to ensure lifts are easily accessible for those who cannot use the stairs)	
Within the workplace, have methods to promote natural physical activity been explored such as using sit-stand desks?	
Have innovative design features within buildings and surroundings which encourage activity e.g. feature staircases, cycle access ramps or other architectural features been utilised?	
Have buildings been designed to provide appropriate amounts of internal space for rooms along with circulation and external space?	



9. Management, maintenance, monitoring & evaluation

The management, long-term maintenance and viability of sports facilities and public spaces should be considered in their design. Monitoring and evaluation should be used to assess the success of Active Design initiatives and to inform future directions to maximise activity outcomes from design interventions.

A high standard of management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation is essential to ensure the long-term desired functionality of all spaces.

Has the long term management and maintenance of a development or facility been considered to ensure the facility remains sustainable over a long-term?	
Have alternatives to local authority management of public realm, streets, spaces and formal open space been considered?	
Have issues such as the servicing of grass pitches, the impact of noise, floodlighting or vehicular access been considered?	
Do the management of facilities target the broadest possible range of users, with particular emphasis on disadvantaged groups?	
Have programs for monitoring and evaluating the success of initiatives been established?	



10. Activity Promotion & Local Champions

Promoting the importance of participation in sport and physical activity as a means of improving health and wellbeing should be supported. Health promotion measures and local champions should be supported to inspire participation in sport and physical activity across neighbourhoods, workplaces and facilities.

Physical measures need to be matched by community and stakeholder ambition, leadership and engagement.

Has the stakeholders and organisations prioritised the promotion of sport and physical activity across all of their activity?	
Has a broad program of events been established in the area associated with new facilities?	
Has the scope of new technology and social media been explored in terms of promoting activities or encouraging activity?	
Have local champions been identified to help ensure the sport and physical activity benefits of the development will be realised and will the local champions be adequately supported?	



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