

PROPOSED DOMAINS AND HEADLINE INDICATORS FOR MEASURING NATIONAL WELLBEING

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Please see the Discussion paper for detailed information on domains and measures referred to in this form.

Section A: Proposed domains

1. Do you think the proposed domains present a complete picture of well-being? If not, what would you do differently?

The proposed domains are broadly correct.

2. Do you think the scope of each of the proposed domains is correct? If not, please give details.

The 'Where we live' section needs to more strongly reflect the emphasis on access to green space that emerged from the initial consultation. We believe that a measure on 'access to green spaces with trees' would be the appropriate measure here given the well established evidence base that exists around trees and well being. See our answer to question 8 for more information.

3. Are there any areas where proposed domains should be merged or divided further? If yes, please give details.

No view

4. Are the names chosen for the proposed domains easy to understand? If not, please give details.

Yes

5. Do you think that the proposed domains adequately reflect the responses to the national debate?

No /

At present the measure on 'access to and quality of the local environment' does not reflect the specific emphasis placed on green spaces in the national debate.

Section B: Proposed Measures

6. Should any of the measures be removed? If yes, please give details.

Not removed but amended see question 8.
7. Are there any measures which should be added? If yes, please give details of any alternative measures suggested which would be more appropriate? If yes, please give details.
<p>8. Are there any alternative measures suggested which would be more appropriate? If yes, please give details.</p> <p>There are no alternatives to 'access to and quality of, the local environment' Not added but amended, to reflect a) the public response and b) the growing body of evidence regarding access to and quality of, the local environment.</p> <p><u>Access to and quality of the local environment</u></p>
<p>The measure on 'access to and quality of, the local environment' needs to be developed further. Firstly to reflect the emphasis placed on green spaces close to where they live by the public in the initial consultation and secondly, to reflect the types of green spaces which are most popular and which evidence shows are likely to deliver the most benefits.</p> <p>We believe that the best way government can do this is through the development of a specific indicator on 'access to green spaces with trees.' This is consistent with the Public Health White Paper, <i>Healthy Lives, Healthy People</i> which highlights the Government's campaign to increase tree planting being driven by the fact that 'increased tree cover would help to improve residents' quality of life and reduce the negative effects of deprivation, including health inequalities'.¹</p> <p>Enhancing public health is one of the biggest challenges facing modern society. Easily accessible woods close to where people live provide measurable benefits in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging people to take exercise • Helping reduce the mental stresses of modern society • Improving air quality • Reducing respiratory diseases <p>Each of the above makes a positive contribution to people's quality of life and therefore happiness.</p> <p>Action on this measure can also be guided by existing work on measuring woodland access in the form of the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard. The Standard, which is based on wide ranging research and surveys of public opinion, aspires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size. • That there should be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km roundtrip) of people's homes.

¹ Department of Health (2010), *Healthy Lives, Healthy People* p40

Given the popularity of walking - as shown in other recent surveys of well-being such as that carried out by PruHealth - and the popularity of walking in an attractive environment in particular, the case is further strengthened.

Increasing the number of accessible green spaces with trees will also deliver a wide range of other benefits to society such as increased biodiversity and the creation of more attractive places within which to live, work and spend leisure time.

Evidence also clearly shows that trees play an important role in a number of other key areas impacting on future community well-being such as mitigation of the 'urban heat island effect' through providing shade from direct solar radiation and reducing ambient air temperature through evaporative cooling. Another example is surface water flooding where preliminary results from Manchester University indicate that tree canopies can reduce surface water runoff by as much as 60% compared with asphalt.²

As the Government has noted in promoting its own ['Big Tree Plant'](#) project, the role of trees in improving the quality of life in communities encompasses:

'attracting wildlife, changing colours throughout the seasons, and creating shade and shelter. They shield houses from traffic noise, can help save energy, and reduce the risk of flooding.'

Whilst a range of different types of greenspace is valuable, treed green spaces are of particular value. In addition to the health benefits, in urban areas their visual prominence can create a balance between the built and natural environment. They cost little to maintain, can absorb large numbers of visitors and offer visitors an inspiring experience of contact with nature which reflects the wishes expressed in the initial consultation responses. Indeed, research carried out for the Woodland Trust last year, ['Trees or Turf'](#), found that various types of wooded green space can be considerably cheaper to maintain than all types of grassland.

Extent of Protected Areas

There is a need to elaborate further on the 'extent of protected areas' measure in the natural environment section.

At present this lacks detail and if only confined to those areas which currently enjoy national designations it is unlikely to properly reflect either the breadth of key habitats (for example 85% of our ancient woodland heritage lacks a national designation) or therefore their importance to communities . It would be

² Armson, D., Stringer, P., and Ennos, A. R. (2011) *The Effect of Trees and Grass upon Temperatures and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas*, University of Manchester, Faculty of Life Sciences.

more effective and consistent with the Government's 'Biodiversity 2020'
strategy if the measure adopted was instead 'extent of seminatural habitats' This would sit well with the Government's ongoing work on the condition of priority habitats and take account of the failings of present designations to prioritise the number of measures about right? Please give details.
We do not take a view on the heritage paper domain but believe that 'access to the wild' is the balance between objective and subjective measures and right of semi-natural areas to be the 'natural environment'.
No view

Section C: About you

12. Which sector do you primarily work or study in? (To assist in monitoring the range of users the consultation has reached)			
<i>Public Sector</i>			
Central government department or agency		School or college	
Local or regional government		University	
Financial public corporation		Health	
Non-financial public corporation			
<i>Private Sector</i>			
Financial corporation		Health	
Non-financial corporation		Manufacturing	
School or college		Service industry	
University			
<i>Other sectors</i>			
Non-profit institution	yes	Not in paid employment or education	
Media		Other, such as full-time carer etc	

13. Are you:			
An analyst?		A teacher or lecturer?	
A researcher?		A student?	
A policy maker?		A consultant?	
A journalist?		Not in paid employment or education?	

14. Please respond below with:

Contact Name:	Dr James Cooper
Organisation name (where applicable):	Woodland Trust
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County:	Lincs
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Country:	UK
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15. May we contact you about this consultation? This may be to discuss your response, further consultations on this topic or to send you a link to the results.	Yes
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16. We may make individual responses publicly available, and may refer to the response of specific individuals or organisations in our consultation report. Are you content for your responses to be made public?	Yes
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Thank you for completing the consultation. ONS will publish a response in Spring 2012 to the views expressed during the consultation on the National Well-being pages.

If you have any queries regarding this consultation, please contact Jen Beaumont on (0)1633 651 622 or e-mail nationalwell-being@ons.gov.uk.

Please return your completed form by e-mail to nationalwell-being@ons.gov.uk or by post to
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Confidentiality and data protection

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you would like the information, including personal data, that you submit to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, among other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. Before disclosing any information that is personal to you, we will inform you of this in advance of any disclosure. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Office for National Statistics.

Please ensure that your response is clearly marked on Question 16 if you wish your response and your name to be kept confidential. Confidential responses will be included in any summary of numbers of comments received and views expressed.

Consultation timetable

This consultation will run from 31st October 2011 to 23rd January 2012

After the consultation

We will publish a summary of the comments made approximately eight weeks after the consultation closes.

How to comment on the consultation process

If you would like to make any comments about the consultation process we have followed, please contact:

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