

## **East Lothian Open Space Strategy 2026**

### **(parks, green spaces, play spaces and other open spaces)**

This is a paper to decide whether or not to do a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment for East Lothian Council's **East Lothian Open Space Strategy 2026**. The Impact Assessment is a tool to help us understand if our plan is going to affect children's rights.

#### **What is the Open Space Strategy about?**

This strategy is to help us to make our parks, green spaces, play spaces and other open spaces better so that everybody can enjoy them, and to help make sure we protect them for the future.

Parks and green open spaces, near to where people live, are really important. They are great places to play and enjoy being outdoors, to walk, wheel, cycle, meet friends and play sports, to see wildlife and get closer to nature, and help us tackle climate change.

**We know that many children and young people value their local parks and outdoor play spaces because we have asked you about them previously, and you have told us how important they are to you.**

Many of you helped us to plan better places for our Local Development Plan (LDP) and many of you told us about your local Play Areas when we worked on them. We have looked again at all of that information you gave us, so we know that:

- Your local parks and green spaces are really important to you and you enjoy being in them
- You told us that parks and green spaces are really important places in your local area (neighbourhood)
- Many of you said you love trees, nature and wildlife
- Some of you said you can't get to or use all of the play equipment in your local play area so we are looking at ways of making them better
- Some of you said that more paths are needed in parks to help you get around and get closer to nature

We made sure these views were listened to when we wrote our Open Space Strategy, so we can help make our parks, open spaces and green spaces better for everyone.

#### **What will the Open Space Strategy do?**

In our strategy we have said that we want to make sure that everyone, of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, can get into, enjoy, and benefit from our parks and green

spaces in our towns and villages, and that we need to make sure that the voices of children and young people are heard when we are deciding what needs to be made better about local parks, green spaces and play spaces.

**This is a 10-year strategy so it only has high-level, overarching proposals for what we need to aim for to make parks and greenspaces better, to tackle climate change, help nature, and benefit people's health and wellbeing. It does not have detailed plans for any particular park but it will have a positive impact.**

We have said in our strategy that to make local parks and green spaces better for everyone, when we come to improving any particular park, it is important to work together with local people including local children and young people, to ask them what they think will make that park better for them and what they would like to see in their local park or green space. So this is the point when we will look in detail to make sure park plans benefit everyone, including all local children and young people.

So these plans will affect children and young people in East Lothian but we think these will be good changes. There will not be a type of children within that group who will be affected unfairly. Our aim is that the changes will make your local parks, green spaces, play spaces and other open spaces better, so that everyone can get to them, enjoy them and spend time in them. We will look in detail at this when we come to do work on particular parks.

The Open Space Strategy does not need an Impact Assessment because it does not have any detail about the plans or projects for particular parks that will affect children, so we can involve local people, including children and young people, to make sure that no one is treated unfairly when those plans or projects are started.

**This is the new Lauderdale Park Play Area in Dunbar**

