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Welsh Assembly Government

Food and Physical Activity and the Built Environment – a Welsh Assembly perspective

Elaine McNish

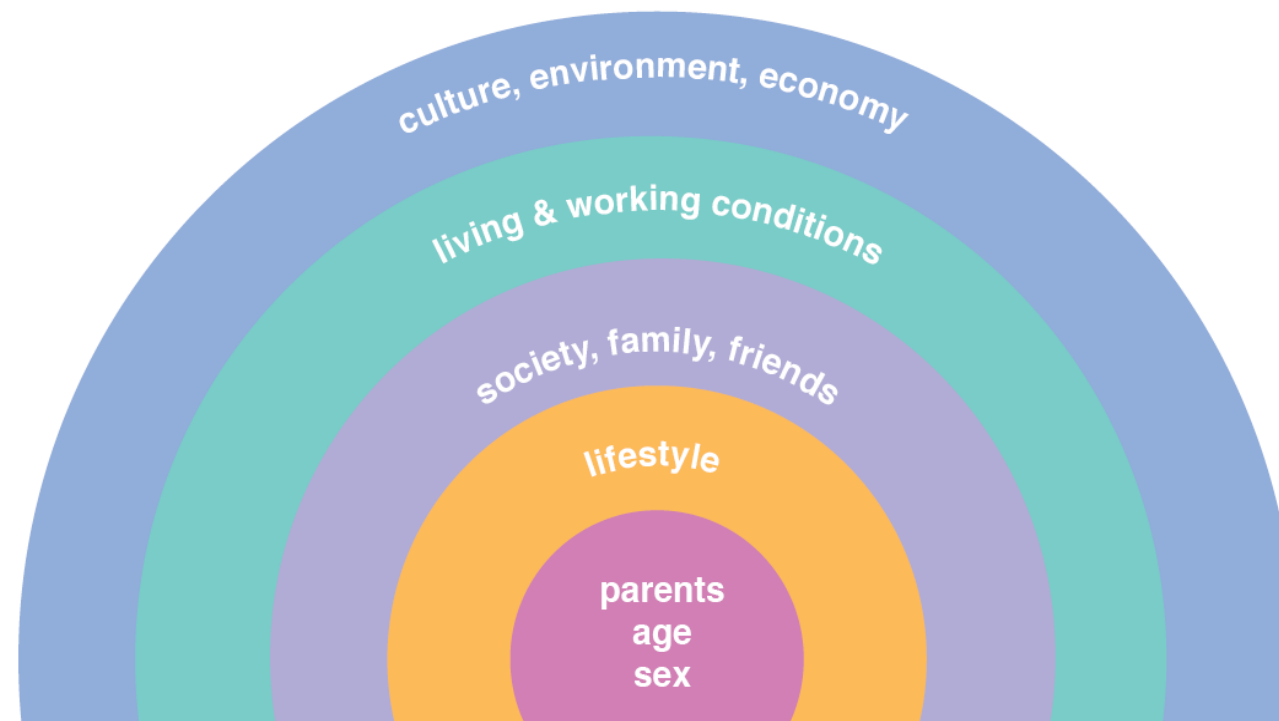
Food and Physical activity Branch

Department for Public Health and Health Professions

Welsh Assembly Government



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Determinants of health – adapted from Dahlgren G and Whitehead M (1991)

Evidence



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- **Foresight (2007) – obesogenic environment**
 - Transport infrastructure
 - Design of built environment
- **NICE guidelines**
 - Obesity guidance on the prevention, identification, assessment and management of overweight and obesity in adults and children
 - Promoting and creating built or natural environments that encourage and support physical activity
 - Transport interventions promoting safe cycling and walking
 - Promoting physical activity for Children and Young People

What do we want to see?



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- Local shops providing affordable 'healthy' food
- Consideration for location of fast food outlets
- Streets where walking and cycling are the attractive option
- Parks – planned for all age groups
- Play areas – variety and designed in consultation with young people
- Workplaces and education buildings with cycle racks, showers and attractive and easily accessible stairwells

Key Principles



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- Behavioural change programmes must be hand in hand with the right environment
- Health choices must be seen as easy, and attractive options



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Designing for physical activity?

Structured verses lifestyle



- Structured
 - Costs
 - Unlikely to appeal to sedentary people
 - May require transport
 - Requires facilities
 - Requires people to deliver
- Lifestyle
 - Free
 - More easy to sell to sedentary people
 - You are the transport
 - Some maintenance for parks or streets
 - Can be done without support and in own time
 - ‘Greener’ option
 - Additional mental health benefits being outdoors

Action



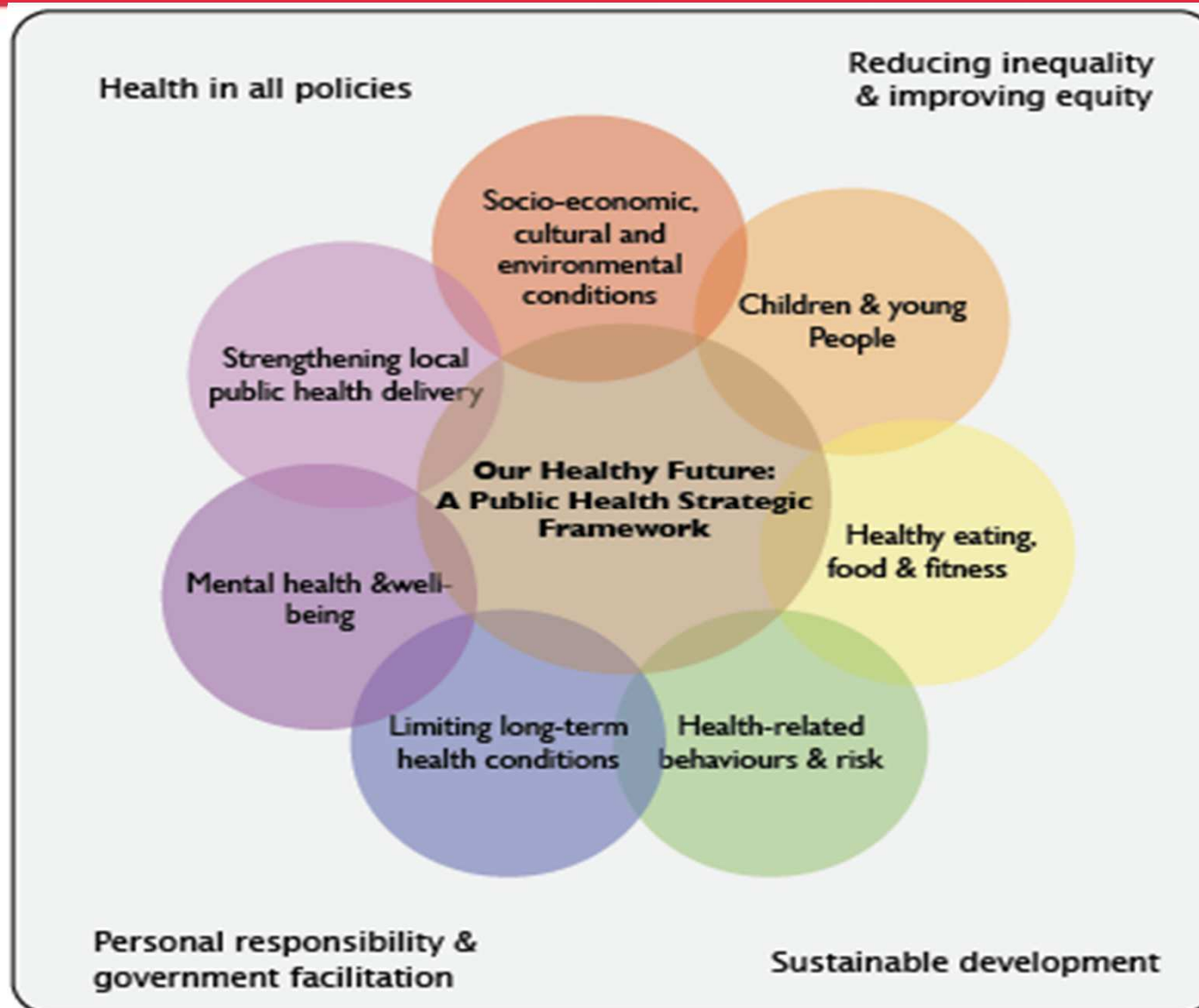
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- Planning guidance issued
- Development of Quality of Food Action Plan and Physical Activity Action plan
- Development of Our Healthy Future

Our Healthy Future



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Action



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- Planning guidance issued
- Development of Quality of Food Action Plan and Physical Activity Action plan
- Development of Our Healthy Future
- Support for infrastructure development
- Planning sub group formed of physical activity and nutrition network
- Conference organised

Working Together to Plan a Healthier Wales – 12 March 2008



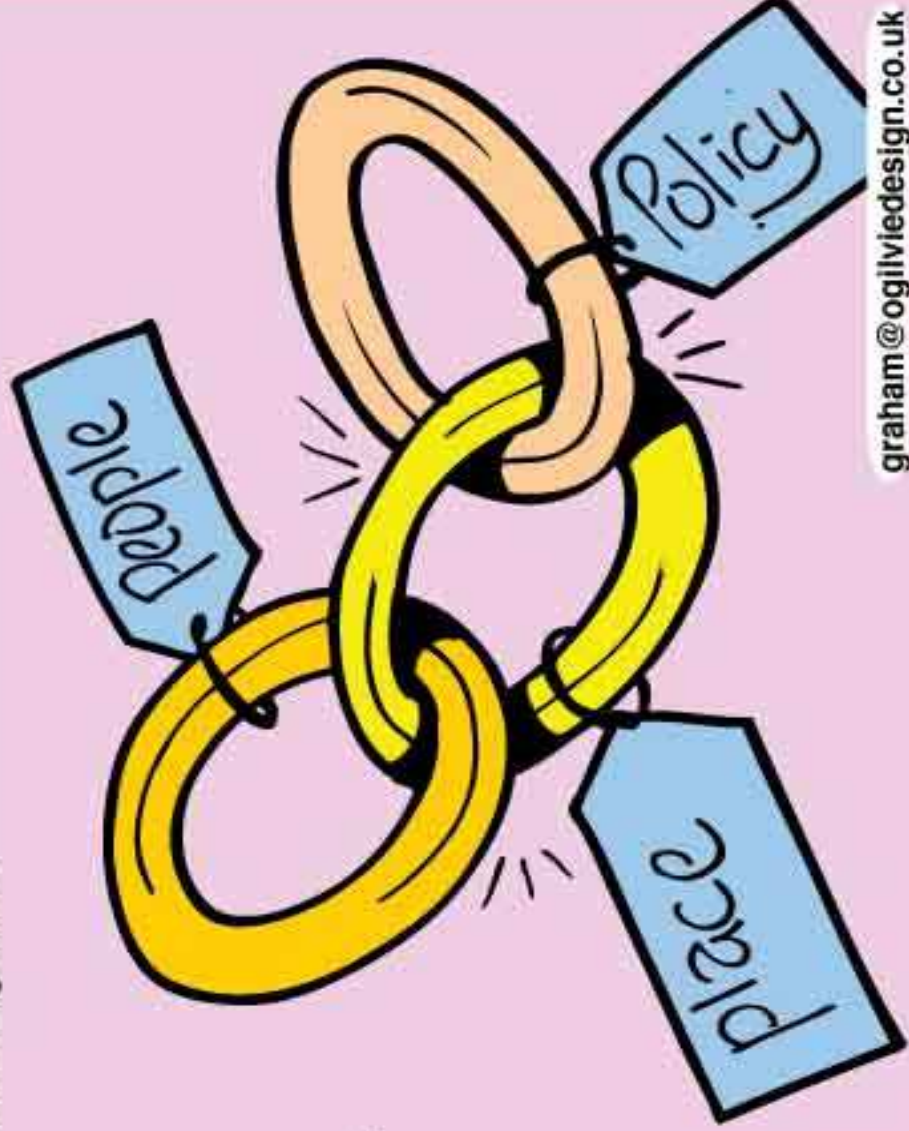
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- To develop the knowledge of professionals on the role of the environment in encouraging physical activity and healthy eating
- To share examples of good practice
- To encourage more schemes that take into account food access and physical activity in their design



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The three big links



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**WHAT is fundamental to
health and well being?**

**The
ENVIRONMENT!**

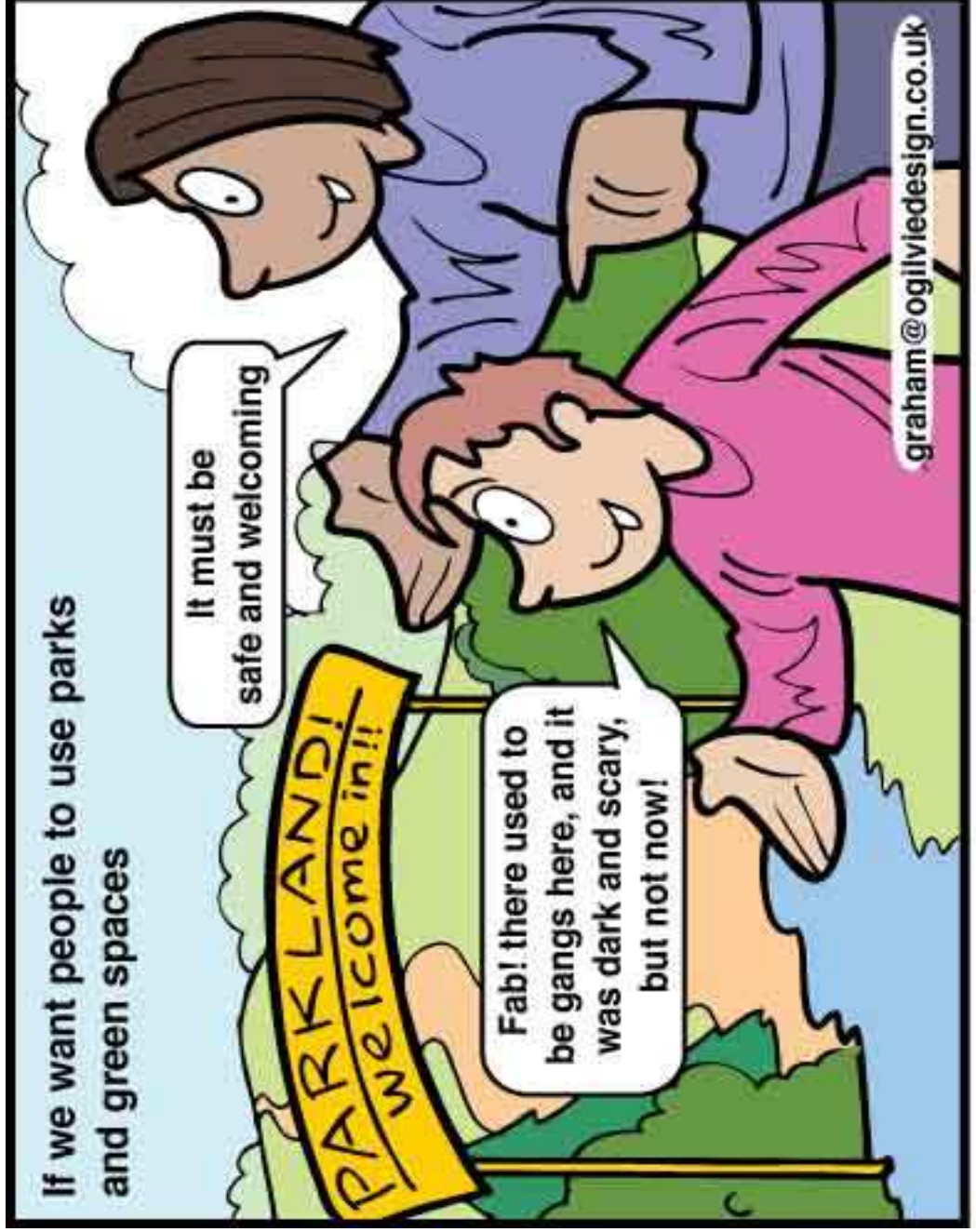
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If we want people to use parks
and green spaces



Challenges



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- Planners, designers, architects and civil and highway engineers recognising they are public health professionals (again)
- Better use of and enforcement of existing planning regulations
- Spreading best practice
- Embedding impact on health into design
- Fear of litigation stifling innovation
- Financial climate

Actions



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- Expand the planning group
- Action plan developed
 - Encourage use of health impact assessment
 - Ministerial planning policy statement on planning and health and well-being
 - Development of web based resource

Web based resource



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- Health benefits
- Relevant planning guidance
- Examples of best practice - interactive

Where next?



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- Recognise this is the start of the process
- Develop more of an understanding of the key barriers to progress
- Make it easier for planners, designers architects, and developers to be innovative

Any suggestions?



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