Consultation on the questionnaire content of the Scottish Health Survey



September 2016

Introduction

The Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) has been carried out annually since 2008 and prior to this was carried out in 1995, 1998, and 2003. Commissioned by the Scottish Government Health Directorates, the series provides regular information on aspects of the public's health and factors related to health which cannot be obtained from other sources.

The current survey contract runs up to and including 2017, and was awarded to ScotCen Social Research.

The Scottish Government is seeking users' views on the future content of the survey from 2018 onwards (procurement subject to Ministerial approval).

Background

SHeS provides a detailed picture of the health of the Scottish population in private households and is designed to make a major contribution to the monitoring of health in Scotland. It is used by the Scottish Government for forward planning, identifying gaps in health services provision and identifying which groups are at particular risk of future ill-health.

The aims of the survey are:

- to estimate the prevalence of particular health conditions in Scotland
- to estimate the prevalence of certain risk factors associated with these health conditions and to document the pattern of related health behaviours
- to look at differences between regions and between subgroups of the population in the extent of their having these particular health conditions or risk factors, and to make comparisons with other national statistics for Scotland and England
- to monitor trends in the population's health over time
- to make a major contribution to monitoring progress towards health targets, including five National Indicators and contributing to one Purpose Target in the National Performance Framework.¹

Results from previous iterations of the survey are available on the <u>Reports and</u> <u>Publications</u> section of the SHeS website.

The content of the survey was last reviewed in 2011², following a major strategic review as part of the Scottish Government's Long Term Survey Strategy. The key changes to SHeS introduced in 2012 for the 2012-2015 surveys which are discussed in greater detail in Volume 2 of the 2012 technical report were:

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¹ <u>http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms</u>

² http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-

survey/questionnairereviewreport

- Inclusion of a set of harmonised core questions asked across all major Scottish Government household surveys. This has contributed to the publications of results for the <u>Scottish Surveys Core Questions</u>.
- Reduction in the achieved sample size from around 7,000 adults and 2,000 children to around 4,800 adults and 1,800 children per year, including boost samples.
- Discontinuation of a module of questions on Knowledge, Attitudes and Motivations (KAM) to health which were included in the 2008-2011 surveys.
- Introduction of interviewer administered biological samples and measurements to replace the nurse interview.

Current questionnaire content

Each survey in the series includes a set of core questions and measurements (height and weight and, if applicable, blood pressure, waist circumference, urine and saliva samples), plus modules of questions on specific health conditions that vary from year to year. Each year, the core sample has also been augmented by an additional boosted sample for children. Since 2008, NHS Health Boards have also had the opportunity to boost the number of adult interviews carried out in their area.

Annex A outlines the topics included in the SHeS questionnaire in 2013 and 2014. This indicates whether each block of questions currently included in the survey is included in all interviews ('version A' and 'version B' households), only 'version A' interviews or only 'version B' interviews.

Currently, version A households account for around 65% of the core sample, excluding any boosts. At these households, the questionnaire includes all of the core questions and the questions included in the version A rotating module. In 2014, the topics included in the rotating module were: respiratory health, additional questions on asthma, barriers and motivations to exercise and a series of questions on eating habits for adults. In 2013, the topics included were: accidents, dental services; social capital, discrimination and harassment, and stress at work.

Version B households account for the remaining 35% approximately of the core sample. At these addresses, participants were asked all of the core questions during the main interview, with participating adults also eligible to complete the biological module.

Households included as part of health board boosts complete only the core questions.

Scope of the questionnaire review

The SHeS Project Board³ agreed on the following parameters within which the questionnaire review should occur, while maintaining or improving current response rates.

³ <u>http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/contacts</u>

- The review should seek to <u>reduce the overall length of the questionnaire by</u> <u>approximately 20%</u>, since interviews are currently over-running compared to expectations at the beginning of the current contract period by around ten minutes for one adult interview, and to reduce the overall respondent burden and therefore improve response rates. This may involve trimming some modules to remove questions which are not widely used. Similarly, some full blocks of questions may be removed if not widely used. Full details on questionnaire length are provided at the following web address: <u>http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-</u> <u>survey/SurveyDesignContent</u>
- The survey should meet new user requirements, so the review should consider where <u>new questions, topics or modes of data collection</u> should be added to the survey.
- The review should consider whether the survey should follow a more 'modular' structure while continuing to <u>meet local needs</u>. Currently, the sample is designed to produce representative results for NHS health boards every four years. This depends on including the same survey questions every year to ensure sample sizes are sufficient for analysis at board level. Therefore, sample sizes and question frequency for key measures should continue to enable analysis at health board level.
- The review should seek to maintain valuable time series.
- However, it should also demonstrate where it is important that questions are included in the survey every year or asked of the full sample. Likewise, the review should clarify the importance of linking information to other topics covered by the survey.

Consultation responses

The consultation questions are included in Annex D. Instructions on how to respond to the consultation are included in Annex B. The deadline for responses is **Monday 17**th **October 2016.**

All responses will be analysed by the SHeS team to inform decisions taken on the future survey content.

Responses will be considered in relation to their policy relevance, degree of support across users, use for national monitoring of indicators or targets, availability from other sources, length of question, and whether questions have been previously tested. Information on frequency and breakdowns required will inform decisions on how frequently each question is included in the survey, and whether the question is asked of the full survey sample.

Annex E includes a scoring sheet which will be used when deciding whether proposed new questions are included in the survey.

Annex A.1: coverage of current questionnaire

The following table provides links to questions included in the 2013 and/or 2014 survey questionnaires.

Topic (age group)	Coverage*	Link
Household questionnaire	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=8
General Health (0+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=24_
Anxiety (16+)- self completion	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=134
Depression (16+)- self completion	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=136
Self-harm (16+)- self completion	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=138
Social capital (16+)	Version A	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7594/mrdoc/pdf/7594_shes13_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=97
Discrimination and harassment (16+)	Version A	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7594/mrdoc/pdf/7594_shes13_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=99
Stress at work (16+)	Version A	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7594/mrdoc/pdf/7594_shes13_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=104
GHQ-12 (13+)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=145
WEMWBS (13+)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=147
SDQ (4-12)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=190
Respiratory (16+)	Version A	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=29_
Asthma (0+)	All, some version A only	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=39_
Cardiovascular Disease (16+) and Use of Services (0+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=30_
Blood Pressure (16+)	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=122
Prescribed Medicines and Drug Coding (16+)	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=121
Parental history (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=106
Adult physical activity (16+)	All, some version A only	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=41_
Child physical activity (2-15)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=53
Knowledge of child guideline (parents of children aged 4-12)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=192
Knowledge of child guideline (13-15)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=186
Knowledge of guideline (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=153
Eating habits children (2-15) and adults (16+)	All children, version A adults	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=63_
Fruit and vegetables (2+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=68
Vitamins (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=72_
Urine Sample (16+)	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=131
Smoking (18+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=73
Smoking (16-17)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=156

Saliva Sample (16+)	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=128
Drinking (18+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=79
Drinking experiences (18+)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=142
Drinking (16-17)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=158
Height and weight measurements (2+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=112
Waist Circumference (16+)	Version B	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=126
Dental Health (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=97
Dental Services (16+)	Version A	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7594/mrdoc/pdf/7594_shes13_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=95
Accidents (0+)	Version A	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7594/mrdoc/pdf/7594_shes13_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=38
Contraception (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_guestionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=152
Economic activity (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=98
Education (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=102
National Identity, ethnic background and religion (0+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=103
Sexual orientation (16+)	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=153
Gambling (16+)- self completion	All	http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7851/mrdoc/pdf/7851_shes14_questionnaire_documentation.pdf#page=149

* Version A households accounted for approximately two thirds of the core sample. At these households, the questionnaire included the core questions and the 'Version A' rotating module questions. 'Version B' households accounted for the remaining third of the core sample. At these addresses participants were only asked the core questions and, in addition, adult participants were also asked to take part in the biological module. Full details on the methodology for the 2015-2015 Scottish Health Survey is available in the 2012 technical report: http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2013/09/2367/1

Annex A.2: survey questions added in 2015

In 2015, the following questions were added to the survey. Links to these are not available in Annex A.1.

<u>Vitamin D</u> (for adults and children who answered yes to question about taking vitamins) Are you currently taking vitamin d supplements, including as part of a multi-vitamin supplement? **Yes No**

Cosmetic procedures (self-completion booklet)

Q38 We should like to know about certain treatments or procedures you may have had. Please answer ALL the questions by ticking the box below the answer which you think most applies to you. Have you ever had laser eye surgery? Tick ONE box Yes No

Q39 Have you ever had any of the following dental treatments? Please tick one box for each treatment. Yes No Professional tooth whitening Veneers

Veneers Dental implants Tooth straightening (e.g. braces) White or gold fillings Other cosmetic dental treatment (please write below)

Q40 Have you ever had any of the following skin or soft tissue treatments? Please exclude treatments done at home. Please tick one box for each treatment. Yes No Chemical peel Microdermabrasion Laser skin resurfacing Injectable cosmetic treatments such as Botox® Injectable cosmetic treatments such as dermal fillers / soft tissue fillers Other cosmetic skin or soft tissue treatment (please write below)

IF YOU TICKED 'YES' FOR ANY OF THE TREATMENTS AT Q40, PLEASE GO TO Q41, OTHERWISE GO TO Q42.

Q41 Thinking about all occasions you have had any of the treatments mentioned in Q40 above, did you have any of the problems listed on the card as a result of the procedure? Please tick one box for each problem.

Tick ONE box per treatment Yes No Excessive or unexpected bleeding Infection Slow healing Nerve damage Burns Extended pain Other problem (please write below)

Q42 Have you ever had any of the following procedures? Please tick one box for each procedure. Tick ONE box per procedure Yes No Face or neck lift Eye brow lift Nose job Other cosmetic or reconstructive work done to the face or neck (please write below)

Q43 Have you ever had any of the following surgical procedures? Please tick one box for each procedure. Tick ONE box per procedure Yes No Breast enlargement Breast reduction Breast reconstruction

Q44 Have you ever had any of the following procedures? Please tick one box for each procedure. Tick ONE box per procedure Yes No Liposuction Tummy tuck Gastric band Any other surgical procedure to reduce fat or aid weight loss (please write below)

Annex B: Instructions on how to respond

Responding to this Consultation

We are inviting responses to this consultation by 17th October 2016.

Please respond using the Scottish Government's consultation platform, Citizen Space. You can view and respond to this consultation online at <u>https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/population-health/scottish-health-survey</u>. You can save and return to your responses while the consultation is still open. Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date of **17th October 2016.**

If you are unable to respond online, please complete the Consultation Questions (Annex D) and Respondent Information Form (Annex C) (see "Handling your Response" below) and send to: scottishhealthsurvey@gov.scot

Alternatively, responses can be sent by post to:

Scottish Health Survey Team Health and Social Care Analysis Scottish Government B.R. St Andrew's House Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

Handling your response

If you respond using Citizen Space (<u>http://consult.scotland.gov.uk/</u>), you will be directed to the Respondent Information Form. Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to published.

If you are unable to respond via Citizen Space, please complete and return the Respondent Information Form included in this document. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

Next steps in the process

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public, and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material,

responses will be made available to the public at <u>http://consult.scotland.gov.uk</u>. If you use Citizen Space to respond, you will receive a copy of your response via email.

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us finalise the questionnaire content. We will publish a report detailing the recommendations of the review in late 2016/early 2017. Following this, these recommendations will be taken to the SHeS Project Board and Survey Contractors for further consideration before finalising the questionnaire for 2018.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments or complaints about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to the above postal or e-mail address.



Annex C: RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form must be returned with your response.

Consultation on the questionnaire content of the Scottish Health Survey

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Individual

 \Box (

Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

If responding on behalf of your organisation, please specify which team or department:

Phone number

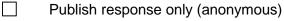
Address

Γ

Postcode	
Email	

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response with name	е
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Do not publish response

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?

🗌 Yes	
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No

Annex D: consultation questions

PLEASE NOTE- THIS ANNEX SHOULD ONLY BE COMPLETED IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO RESPOND USING THE CITIZEN SPACE WEBSITE (DETAILS IN ANNEX B).

Please complete this proforma if you wish to retain or amend any existing questions or modules of questions or propose new questions, referring to Annex A for details of the coverage of the current questionnaire.

You do not need to complete a separate proforma for each topic. In some cases, it will be appropriate to include responses for more than one topic in a single proforma. However, if your requirements in terms of frequency, geography or other breakdowns differ by topic, please complete a separate proforma for each.

Note that questions which do not receive any support for retention will be considered for removal from the survey in 2018. Information provided on your requirements on frequency, geography and other breakdowns for each topic will be used to decide how frequently the question is included and whether it is asked of the full sample.

Please indicate which topics your response relates to. You may select more than one topic. However, if your requirements for each topic are different, you should complete a separate proforma for each.

- □ <u>General health</u>
- □ <u>Anxiety</u> and <u>depression</u>
- □ <u>Self-harm</u>
- □ Social capital
- Discrimination and harassment
- □ <u>Stress at work</u>
- <u>Mental Wellbeing</u> and <u>Symptoms of psychiatric disorder</u>
- □ <u>Strengths and Difficulties (children aged 4-12)</u>
- □ <u>Respiratory health</u> including <u>asthma</u>
- □ <u>Cardiovascular Disease and Use of Services</u>
- Blood Pressure
- Prescribed Medicines
- Parental history
- □ <u>Adult</u> and <u>child</u> physical activity
- \Box Knowledge of physical activity guidelines (ages <u>4-12</u>, <u>13-15</u> and <u>16+</u>)
- □ Fruit and vegetable consumption
- Eating habits
- □ <u>Vitamins</u> including Vitamin D (see Annex A)
- Dietary salt intake (urine sample)
- □ <u>Smoking and e-cigarettes</u>
- □ Cotinine levels (saliva sample)

- □ <u>Alcohol consumption</u> and <u>drinking experiences</u>
- Body Mass Index / Obesity (height and weight measurements)
- <u>Waist Circumference measurements</u>
- Dental Health and Dental Services
- □ <u>Accidents</u>
- □ <u>Contraception</u>
- □ <u>Gambling</u>
- □ Cosmetic procedures (see Annex A)
- □ New topic (please specify)

- 1. Please tick one option. Would you like to:
 - □ Retain the questions in this topic without any changes?
 - □ Retain the questions in this topic with some changes?

If you would like to retain these questions with some changes, please describe the changes you propose. If you propose that new questions are added to the topic, please explain whether the questions have been tested or used in another survey.

2. How frequently do you require information gathered by the survey on this topic? Please circle one option.

Annually / Biennially / 4-yearly

Please explain why you require data at this frequency.

3. What would be the impact on your area of work if this data was not collected in the Scottish Health Survey?

No impact / Some impact / Major impact

Please describe the expected impact. Please also explain how the information is used, e.g. to measure progress against targets or to support key policy initiatives.

4. Do you require data at subnational level?

Yes / No

If Yes, please indicate which geography is required, e.g. NHS Health Board.

5. Is it important to link information on this topic to other questions/topics in SHeS?

Yes / No

If Yes, which questions/topics and how frequently?

	Annually	/ biennia	ally 4-yearly
Age			
Sex			
Household characteristics			
Any other questions/topics, pl	ease s	pecify	y;
(1):			
(2):			
(3):			

(Note: 'household characteristics' include area deprivation, urban/rural classification and household income)

Please explain why you need to be able to link these questions/topics.

6. Is any of this information available from any other source?

Yes / No

If Yes, please state the alternative data sources and explain the benefits of gathering this information as part of the Scottish Health Survey.

7. Please provide any further comments you have on the future design and content of the Scottish Health Survey in the space below.

Annex E: scoring sheet (for information only)

Responses will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The range of possible scores allocated is shown below. New questions will only be introduced after the questionnaire length is reduced by approximately ten minutes for an adult interview.

Max possible Score	Criteria (detailing range of possible score)
20	Relevance0 - no clear relevance to any current or future Scottish Governmentpolicy/target.20 - Clear relevance to a Scottish Government policy, with link topolicy strategy/target which will continue into the future.
20	Support0 - no Scottish Government /NHSScotland/external/academic supportfor bid.20 - Significant Scottish Government/NHSScotland/external/academic support.
10	 <u>Use for local or national measurement</u> 0 - Not used in previous reporting/never been previously analysed/no suggested plans for future use as indicator or measuring progress against a target. 10 - Used as an indicator or target/clear analysis and dissemination strategy proposed.
10	Time-series potential 0 - New question/no trend analysis possible. 10 - Consistent time-series analysis back to 1995 possible.
10	Availability from other sources 0 - Available from other sources/links to other SHeS topics non- essential. 10 - Crucial indicator not available from any other source/links to other SHeS topics essential.
10	 <u>Frequency and geography required</u> 0 - Question in core sample. 5 - Question included in smaller sample every year. 10 - Question included in smaller sample every second year or every fourth year.
10	Tested questions 0- not previously tested/wording not finalised. 10 - previously tested and verified.
10	Length of proposed question 0 - a suite of questions required of full sample. 10 - one short question. (questions which are only required of part of the sample (i.e. women aged 16-44) would receive more points than those which are required of the full sample)

Annex F: THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation is an essential part the policy making process. It gives us the opportunity to get your opinion and expertise on a proposed area of work.

You can find all our consultations online: <u>http://consult.scotland.gov.uk</u>. Each consultation details the issues under consideration, as well as a way for you to give us your views, either online, by email or by post.

Consultations may involve seeking views in a number of different ways, such as public meetings, focus groups, or other online methods such as Dialogue (<u>http://ideas.scotland.gov.uk</u>)

After a consultation is closed we publish all responses where we have been given permission to do so.

Responses will be analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. We will publish a report of this analysis for every consultation. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise, the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.



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