



COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING WITH CHILDREN



Project Report

March 2015

INDEX

Page 3 Introduction & Aim

Page 4 Methodology & Geography

Page 5 Outcomes 1 & 2

Pages 6, 7 Outputs & Case Studies

Page 8 Have Your Say on Play

Page 9 Findings

Page 10 Activity Workshop

Pages 10, 11 Observations & Comparison with Schools

Pages 13,14 What we Learned & Conclusions

Page 15 Acknowledgements

Page 16 Appendices and Feedback Form



COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING

1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015

"Community Asset Mapping focuses on strengths, rather than on deficiencies; it builds on the capacities and assets of the people and place. It does not imply ignoring problems and needs, rather it is a rallying point for collective action."

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD 1993)

INTRODUCTION:

CALA Directors agreed to fund this work over the course of one year in order to gather children's views about their local communities and share this with interested parties in Highland. The following is a report of the year's work in relation to consulting with and gathering the views of over 150 primary age children in six areas in Highland.

AIM:

To ensure both existing and proposed aspects of community planning within the Highlands have been influenced by the views of children. To promote and share these views with agencies / stakeholders who have responsibility for provision, planning and policy making.

The planned outcomes of the project were:

- Highland Council, Officials and Councillors read and feedback positively on the consultation report
- Children and young people play a part and exercise influence in the provision of local services with input to community planning
- A consultation/ asset mapping approach may be available for use elsewhere in Highland through learning and the production of basic tools and guidance.

The outputs of the project were to produce:

- A child friendly tool kit to support a child based approach to community asset mapping.
- A current 'sampled' audit of children's play across a proportion of urban and rural settings within the Highlands.
- Evidence of well documented and detailed child led consultation, including both pictorial and anecdotal confirmation.

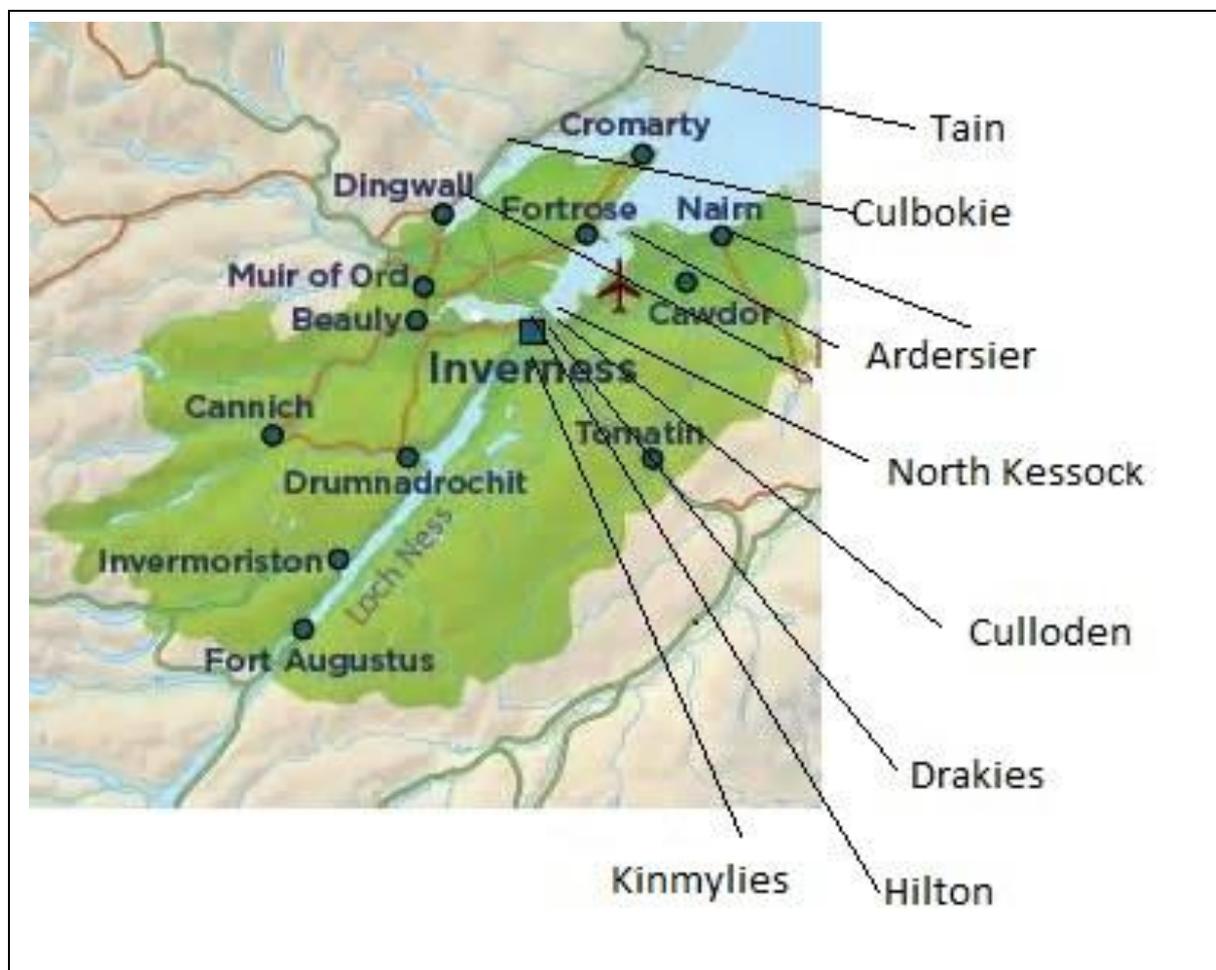
Methodology:

The **Early Years Collaborative Model for Improvement** approach was the best fit for the community asset mapping part of the project; The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) test of change cycle. It was a helpful tool in relation to “planning it, trying it, observing the results, and making changes based on what we learned”.

Getting it Right for Every Child ([scotland.gov.uk/getting it right](http://scotland.gov.uk/getting-it-right)) wellbeing indicators safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included (SHANARRI) were used as a generic, simple way of consulting with children about their wellbeing. Use of the framework enabled us to tailor the questions appropriately; for example “ *I always feel safe when I go out to play where I live*”.

Geography:

Areas were carefully selected to invite views across as wide a sector of children as possible and include children who were ‘looked after’ and those who have additional support needs. Areas included were: Ardersier, Culbokie, Inverness (Culloden, Drakies, Hilton and Kinmylies) Nairn, North Kessock and Tain.



Outcome 1

The consultation report and tool kit will be made available from May 2015. Copies will be issued to all relevant agencies and stakeholders including:

CALA Directors and Senior Management

Highland Council Care and Learning Management

Highland Councillors and Ward Managers

Play Improvement Group

Community Councils

To other interested parties via the CALA Blog, Twitter and Facebook

We will invite comment by feedback form available on the CALA website (careandlearningalliance.co.uk) A review will take place thereafter and form part of follow up activity. The wider impact of the mapping work at this stage is unknown; it will be determined by the uptake of the tool kit, and whether the views of children are considered in making decisions in future.

Outcome 2: What We Did

"Children are enabled to tell us what they think about services and the community in which they live, and improvement is determined with their involvement and by understanding their views, wishes and expectations" For Highland Children's 4: Outcome 12

"Involve children, young people, parents and professionals meaningfully in decision making and planning." Play Improvement Group Improvement Priority 3

We felt that it was important that we secured the engagement of as many children as possible (within the timescales and budget of hours provided). 158 children participated in the overall consultation. As noted below, a range of strategies and activities were utilised to encourage maximum participation.

Date	Activity	Where	No of children	Age Range
June 14	Walk Testing	North Kessock	10	5-12
June 14	Walk Testing	Kinmylies	8	5-12
August 14	Walk Testing	Culbokie	12	5-12
September 14	Walk Testing	TRACC (Tain)	3	8-11
29/11/14	Activity Workshop	Culloden	23	5-12
Sept 14	Play Consultation	4 CALA OSC's	56	4-12
6/02/15	CAM Comparison	Duncan Forbes	25	7-11
26/02/15	CAM Comparison	Ardersier Primary	21	5-11

Walk Testing: Child led walks around their local community which offered the opportunity for children to highlight their favourite and least favourite places, ones which they avoided or were denied access. The children took pictures with a disposable or digital camera. All information was gathered either verbally or pictorially. The children recorded their information in their own words

and pictures in large 'floor books'. The evidence gathered is to be shared with agencies and stakeholders who have responsibility for provision, planning and policy making.



"We would like a bike track!"



"Leave the trees alone"



"This is the best park in Kinmylies"

CASE STUDIES:

Study 1

The first child led "walk testing" in June 2014 was completed in North Kessock on a sunny day with primary children from the Out of School club; as predicted children directed their visits to areas they were familiar with and allowed to go e.g. play parks and beach. Most of the favourite places were close to home, which is understandable for this age group. Whilst this was initially an enjoyable experience for the children, it quickly became a chore with children preferring to take the opportunity to "play". That said, when the photographs were later shown to the children they were keen to comment and highlight what was 'good' and 'wrong' and what facilities and amenities they would like to see in their area.



"It's rubbish, it only has 3 things!"



"We would like a shed with fishing rods and a toilet."



"It's a busy road at the park, cars go too fast"

Study 2

A slightly different approach was adopted when we walk tested with children from **Kinmylies Out of School club**. A club volunteer, a senior pupil at the local secondary school accompanied the children, taking notes and chatting to the children on route. We observed the children as they gravitated towards her, asking question about where she "hung out, "was their really drugs in Kinmylies?" The children were keen to highlight issues and identify the 'good and bad parts' of their area, they preferred **not** to take the photographs, rather using the time to visit places they normally were not allowed to play

without an adult present. The following week when we visited to engage the children in recording their evidence, only one child who had completed the walk was present, others declined (another hot day) and we were mindful of children's right to choose to participate or not.



"We need the grass cut"



"We need more bins"



"Park needs more things to play on, needs a table and chairs"

Study 3

Once again we individualised the approach with **Culbokie Holiday Club**, completing all the mapping tasks in one visit. The children led the walk around their village in the morning, play staff took photographs and notes and in the afternoon the children recorded all their evidence. The children were enthusiastic, they had "instant results" and were keen to create their floor books and record their ideas and suggestions. Though they noted that they were pleased to be able to move on to 'just playing' afterwards! We acknowledged that this method was more successful in retaining children's engagement and interest.



"We need a new one and it's not fair"



"It's too small"



"We would like the toilets open, a café and to take our bikes in"

Study 4

Only 3 out of 19 children present at **TRACC (Tain)** out of school club wished to participate. The children were reluctant to personally record their findings, preferring to verbally share their views and opinions, e.g. "neighbours complain if we climb the trees", "boys in blue move us on", "we have to pay for the astro turf". A further reminder to us of the need to respect children's right to choose to participate or not, which we did!



"Sad"



"Cool"



"Boring"

Children's 'Have Your Say on Play'



We felt that it was useful to find out from children what they thought about their play, how they spent their free time and to verify how often children play outside, where and who with.

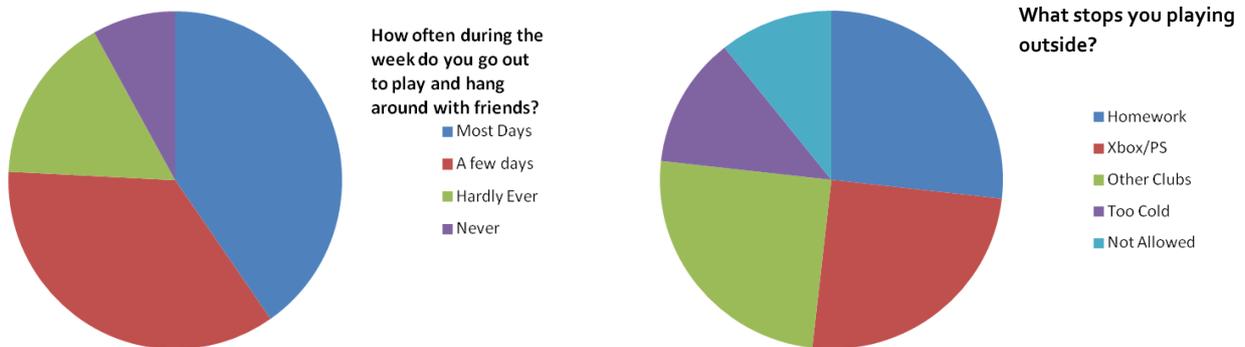
A simple question format was adapted from Play Wales Sample Survey Questions. (playwales.org.uk) The children were asked a number of questions to help find out what they thought about the places where they play or spend time with friends, near where they live, when not at school.

A total of **56** children from **4** CALA managed Out of School Clubs participated in the survey.

GROUPS	Boys	Girls	Totals	Age Range
Drakies	7	9	16	6-11
Hilton	5	3	8	6-11
Junior World	8	10	18	6-11
TRACC	6	8	14	4 -8
OVERALL	26	30	56	(4 -11)

Our Findings:

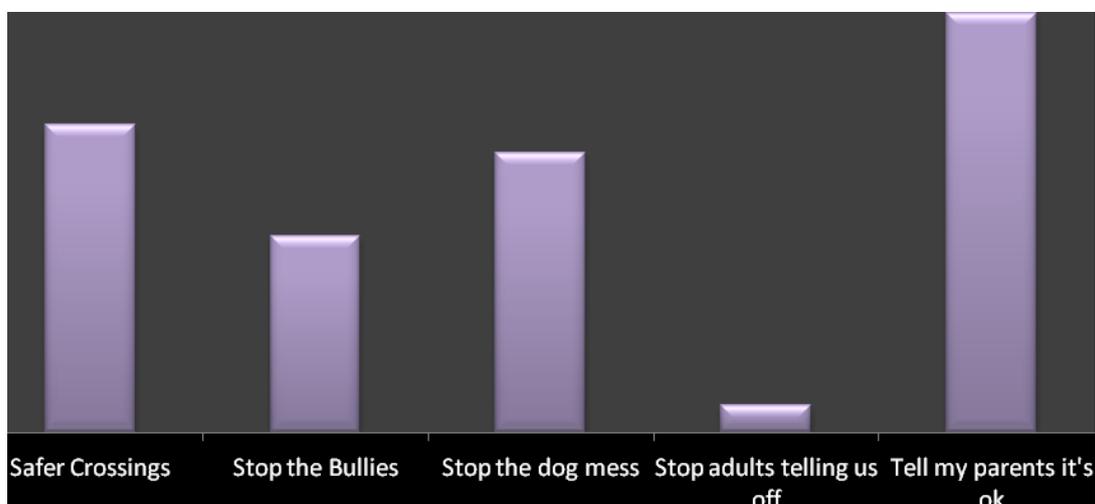
Less than half (40%) of the children played outside most days of the week, mostly after school or at weekends. Just over half (52%) felt they could do their favourite things; which for the most part included riding their bikes and visiting the park. (See full results) The majority of the children identified playing in their garden as their preferred place to “hang out”, although just over a third (35%) felt there were favourite places near where they live. More than half (51%) played with friends, whilst only 1% did not go out at all. Over three quarters (77%) highlighted homework, xbox / playstations and attendance at organised clubs as the main factors which prevented them from playing outside.



How can we help you come out to play and hang around more often?

82 % of the children stated “tell my parents it’s ok”, safer crossings and dog mess as the main ways in which we could improve children’s access to play.

Children’s Responses



(Full results available in appendices)

Activity Workshop 29th November 2014 Culloden Academy

As part of the consultation process and to entice children's participation, children from 4 OSC were invited to an intergroup play opportunity on a Saturday afternoon to share their views on their communities. Having learned from experience, we recognised that to encourage their attendance and participation it was essential that "fun activities" were included as part of the overall programme for the session. A total of 23 children attended.

The afternoon included an interactive consultation with the children using wellbeing indicators linked to the local community of each club represented – (SHANARRI)



The children then had 2 questions to consider:

1. *My Favourite place where I live?*
- and
2. *My Big Wish for where I live?*



1. *"The beach" "My house" "My school" "The park" "After school club"*
2. *"I would like not to go to school" "Near a beach" "To be rich" "A better park in Contin"*

Activity Groups: Drumming, 'Loom bands' and Christmas crafts and games in the gym



Observations:

The children, whilst willing participants, were keen to complete the interactive consultation activity “as soon as” to allow more time on the ‘fun’ activities. The majority of the children attending were of early primary age, and although questions were adapted and simplified from those suggested on the Scottish Government’s ‘Wellbeing Wheel’ staff needed to explain the questions further and assist their designated group with completion; staff support was required to encourage the children to record their answers. Some children were influenced by what peers were saying, some then recording similar answers. The creative play opportunities were very popular, all children engaged well and socialised with children from other clubs.



Comparison with Schools

We recognised that consultation activity within OSC is encroaching on children’s leisure time. As noted previously, staff encouraged children’s participation whilst respecting their right to choose to do so or not. We felt it useful to supplement consultation information with children’s views gathered during the school day, when there might be improved participation. Children likely to be a somewhat “captive audience” in a school classroom environment. We invited two primary schools to participate to compare findings.

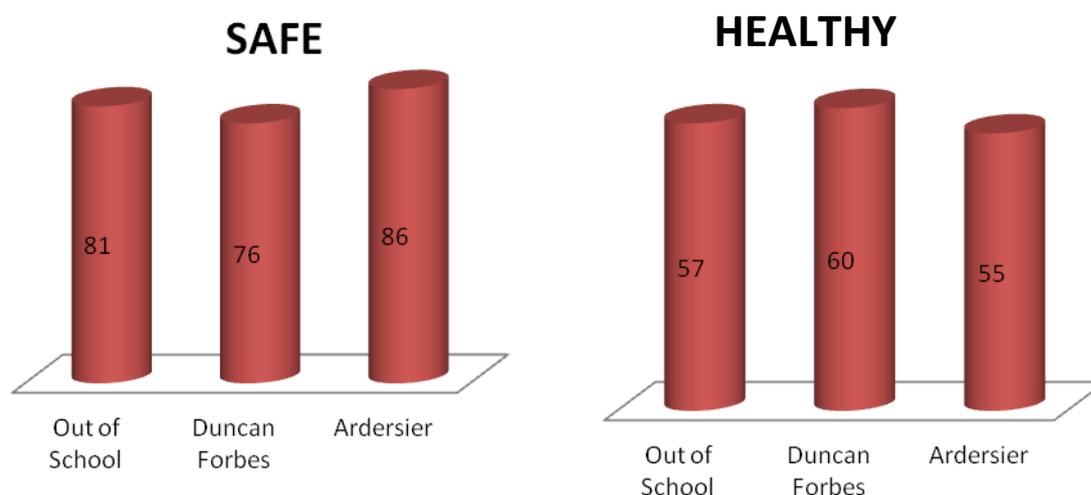
Duncan Forbes a larger sub urban, multi-cultural primary school situated on the outskirts of Inverness, and **Ardersier Primary** a smaller rural village school, 12 miles east of Inverness.

In addition PLAY (Please Love Ardersier Youth) had recently secured substantial lottery funding, to refurbish the play park in the village adjacent to the primary school. Children were highly focused on the improvements to their local play environment which were planned. Local councillor Kate Stephen noted that “these new innovative facilities had encouraged children of all ages to enjoy the benefits of healthier outdoor play.”

OBSERVATIONS:

In **Duncan Forbes** the children were assisted by 3 members of teaching staff, who explained the questions and supported the children to record their responses. In **Ardersier** the head teacher read out each question, assuring that all children understood what was being asked; older children were asked to sit beside younger children to assist. The children stated they felt that questions were not difficult and they thought it was fun. Teachers stated they felt questions were "too wordy" suggesting they be split into shorter statements to support comprehension.

In both schools the process worked very well; some children commented that they had "enjoyed doing it." Interestingly, as is evident from the chart below, the children's views were very similar to those expressed by the children from the less formal setting in OSC.



My BIG WISH for where I live"

In **Duncan Forbes**: "New climbing frame in the park on my street" "For there to be an assault course in Smithton Park" "For them to put a roundabout in the park, "No pot holes and the safety of wildlife and safety of nature"

In **Ardersier** "To have a decent tree to climb" "To keep Ardersier clean with no litter" "To have a sandy beach at the water front."

My Favourite Place where I live"

In **Duncan Forbes** "Woods, because I can make dens", "The back path at the 2 trees, there's lots of fun stuff to do" "Culloden Forest because you can explore build dens and pretend to be ancient" "House because I feel safe"

In **Ardersier** "Park it's cool", "In my den" "On top of my farm in the gorse" "The new park"

TOP 5 BIG WISH COMPARISONS:

	OUT OF SCHOOL	DUNCAN FORBES	ARDERSIER
1	<i>Better Play Parks</i>	<i>Better Play Parks</i>	<i>A nice beach</i>
2	<i>Swimming Pool</i>	<i>Football Pitches</i>	<i>A tree to climb</i>
3	<i>A nice beach</i>	<i>Water slide</i>	<i>No litter</i>
4	<i>Not having to go to school</i>	<i>New House</i>	<i>Decent tree house</i>
5	<i>To be rich</i>	<i>To be rich</i>	<i>Friends nearer</i>

TOP 5 MY FAVOURITE PLACE COMPARISONS

	OUT OF SCHOOL	DUNCAN FORBES	ARDERSIER
1	<i>The park</i>	<i>Home</i>	<i>The park</i>
2	<i>Home</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Home</i>
3	<i>School</i>	<i>Parks</i>	<i>Bedroom</i>
4	<i>Woods</i>	<i>Woods</i>	<i>Garden</i>
5	<i>Beach</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Beach</i>

(Full results available in appendices)

What we Learned:

Methodology:

The results of the “walk testing” suggested this approach was effective in encouraging the majority of children’s participation. To ensure we adopt a flexible style, it is important that the interactive methodology is tailored to the age and stage of children and that adult support is provided if required.

Be mindful of the children’s right and choice to participate or not; avoid implying pressure to join in, even if this is not explicit.

From the Play Survey:

Less than half of the children surveyed (56) played outside during the week, reasons included x box and play station and attending organised clubs and activities. The majority felt safest playing in their garden or close to home with friends. Over 80% wanted us to tell their parents it was ok for them to play outside. It was clear that raising awareness of the benefits of free and independent play is crucial in moving forward.

Feedback from children and staff told us the Play Survey was “far too long”, “too many questions” and we should consider the use of technology e.g. survey monkey, in future.

From the Activity Workshop:

As an exercise in acquiring children's views and opinions on where they live, the responses were slightly disappointing in terms of information or participation. Consultation with children during the school day proved more productive in terms of children's participation but on this occasion did not result in any significantly different views.

The activity workshop proved a highly successful exercise in providing an opportunity for children from several clubs to come together, socialise and engage in a range of creative and energetic play opportunities (as evidenced by the positive children's and parent's evaluation.) There is perhaps potential to develop further opportunities for this type of event with partners e.g. the Play Improvement Group or others.

Further consideration of methodology for consultation with children is required. Anecdotal and verbal feedback received from children indicates a simplified approach e.g. providing choices using pictorial graphics which children vote on, as has been used in the past; however the choice of graphics (adult directed?) may limit children's thinking.

From the comparison of children in school or during their leisure time:

Children in the main shared the same issues and concerns, e.g. environment, litter, wildlife, trees, safe places to play and better parks.

Conclusions:

- Most children had strong opinions on the areas where they live and were confident in sharing their concerns, ideas and views.
- Children were knowledgeable in highlighting and pinpointing their favourite places. Whilst access to well-equipped play parks is fundamental to their play, "other assets" are just as, or even more, important. These include fields, school playgrounds, beaches gardens and trees; areas where 'free, child-directed play' can take place.



"I wish I had a tree to climb"



"We would like a rope swing"



"Please listen to us"

- Play and regular access to the outdoors were an extremely important aspect of their health and wellbeing. What children said indicates that we have to begin to make better use of open spaces in each local area.

- There is a requirement to create and develop more free play spaces either alongside, or in preference to, “fixed play equipment”. Raising officials, planners and developer’s awareness and working closely with children and young people is crucial. We conclude that it is essential to consult with children so that their voices are heard, their views taken into account and that these both influence and impact upon the decision making process, both now and in the future. In essence we have a duty to maximise effective targeting and provision of resources and support children’s well-being in the widest sense possible.



“My favourite place is the field behind my house, because my dog runs through the field and you can see his tail”

Acknowledgments:

We would like to thank the children from the clubs and schools; without their involvement we would have no information or data on which to base the findings and conclusions.

- Ardersier Primary School
- Culbokie Out of School Club
- Drakies Out of School Club
- Duncan Forbes Primary School
- Hilton Out of School Club
- Junior World (Nairn)
- Kinmylies Out of School Club
- North Kessock Out of School Club
- Strathepeffer Out of School Club
- After’s at TRACC (Tain)

Thanks are also due to

Ardersier Play, Highland Council, Highland Early Years Collaborative, Play Improvement Group, CALA Managers, Play Practitioners and Administrative staff.

Appendices:

Literature Review/Background Reading/References

Scottish Government GIRFEC (2015)

Curriculum For Excellence (2010)

Early Years Collaborative Improvement Methodology (2014)

For Highland Children 4 (2014)

Play Highland / Play Scotland / Play Wales (2015)

The Best Start in Life A consultation by the Children's Parliament (2014)

An Equal Place at the Table for Children and Young People (National Participation Forum, (2010)

Loebach and Gilliland, Children, Youth and Environments (2010)

Using an asset approach IRISS and East Dunbartonshire Council Project (2010)

Feedback Form (attached)

The full results of the following are available by contacting our Inverness Office on 01463 703033 or by email inverness@calachildcare.co.uk

Children's Have Your Say on Play

Activity Workshop Report

Activity Workshop SHANARRI Results

Duncan Forbes Primary SHANARRI Results

Ardersier Primary SHANARRI Results

CAM Toolkit

Photo Album/Mindmaps

Community Asset Mapping 2015 Feedback

As a recipient of the report on our recent Community Asset Mapping Project involving primary age children in Out of School Clubs and Primary Schools we would very much appreciate your feedback.

Please take a few moments of your time to complete the questions below and return to us by email to: s.macbean@calachildcare.co.uk or in hard copy for the attention of:

Sandra MacBean, Quality Improvement Officer Out of School Care, Care and Learning Alliance, c/o Highland Council, Dochfour Drive, Inverness IV2 5EQ

Your name:

Your role in Highland:

Did the report provide you with you with useful information you will be able to use?

Yes/No* Please comment:

Was there anything in the report which surprised you?

Yes/No* Please comment:

How do you envisage using the information contained within the report?
(please tick box(es) of those which apply)

- Raising awareness with colleagues/practitioners/parents/carers
- Use children's views to inform future planning of the location of community assets
- Use children's views to inform planning of the type of community assets
- Children's views have influenced my thinking on what constitutes a community asset
- Use children's views to inform policy
- Encouraged me to plan more extensive community asset mapping
- Look at the Toolkit with a view to using this
- Inform training for practitioners

Other (Please state)

**Please circle as appropriate.*

Thank you for your feedback we will use this to evaluate the project outcome.