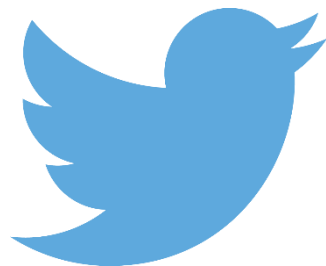


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Allotments, Urban Farming and Re-engaging our children with green spaces



Allotments- the fifth wave

- **1st wave:** 18 & 19th century as common land was enclosed – small patches of land were allocated to fend off starvation of the poor.
- **2nd wave:** increasing urbanisation and associated squalor led to factory owners providing allotments to keep work force healthy and 'occupied'.
- **3rd and 4th waves:** created during first and second world wars as German U-boats impeded importation of food stuffs.

Allotments created during periods of great national upheaval

- **The 5th wave?:** growing awareness of global impact of food growing and its insecurity linked to Brexit, has caused a surge in people looking to grow their own food.

1-in-4 councils are proposing to increase the number of their allotments in the future (APSE Allotments survey 2019)

State of the Market Surveys

- State of the Market Survey 2019
- Local authority service areas
- Similar questions are asked to allow for trend comparisons
- All APSE member authorities across the UK
- Key findings of the survey are expressed
- Use full for benchmarking and performance management
- Used by National Government and in APSE research documents
- National Litter Strategy, HLF, Parks Action Group, School Food Plan, Press and trade and national media to enhance knowledge of local government services.

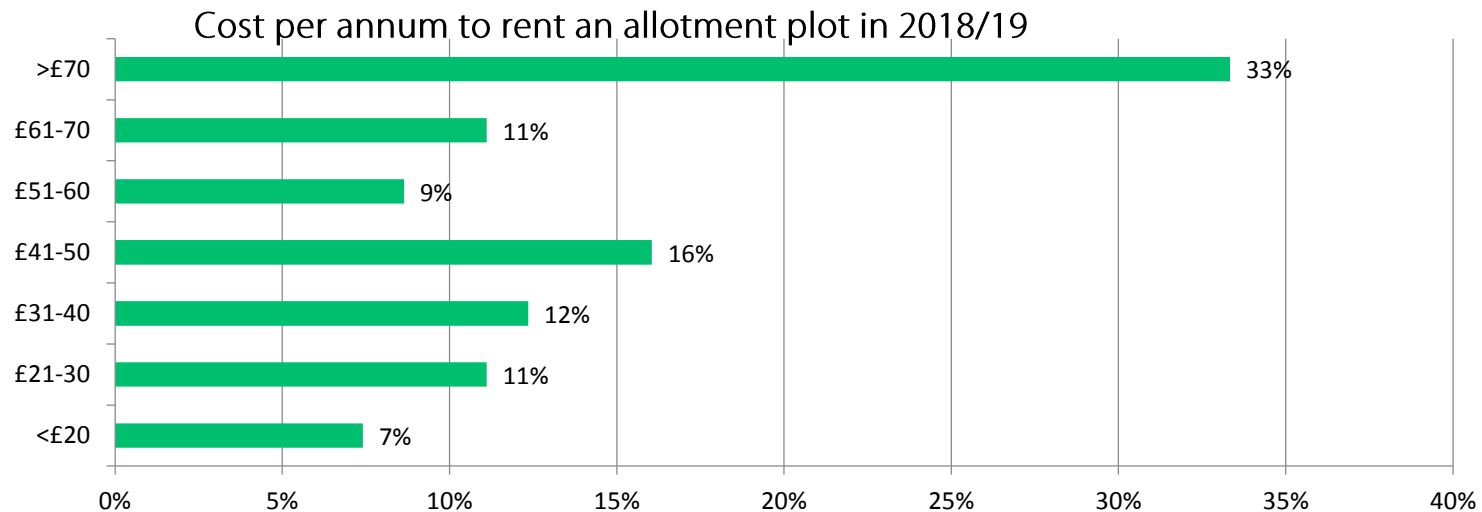
State of the Market Survey 2019

Local Authority Allotment Services



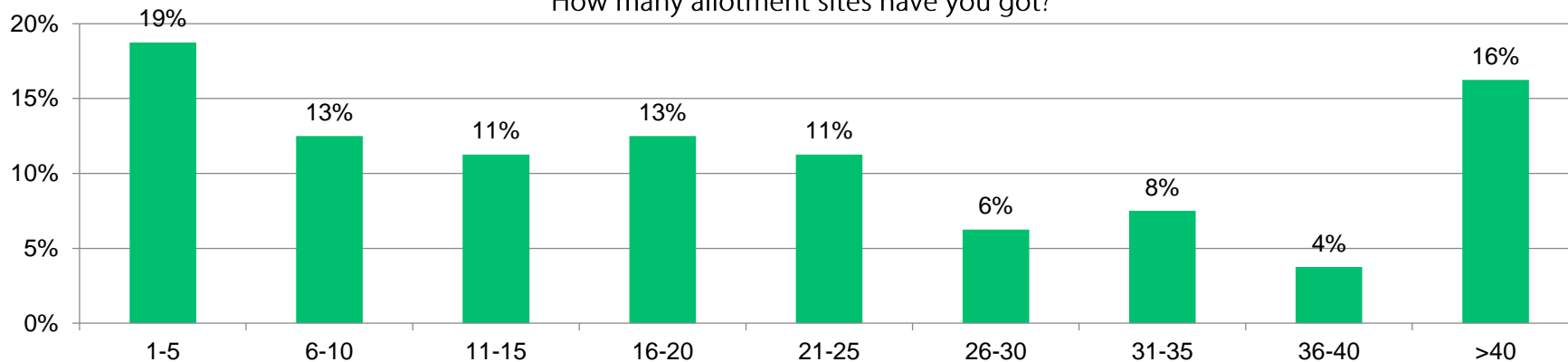
Key findings

- 94% of respondents said their council owned allotments.
- 21% directly managed, 60% mix of council and site committee's, 19% allotment associations.
- Increase in allotment associations now taking on total site management.
- Price for allotment plots ranged from more than £70 – less than £20

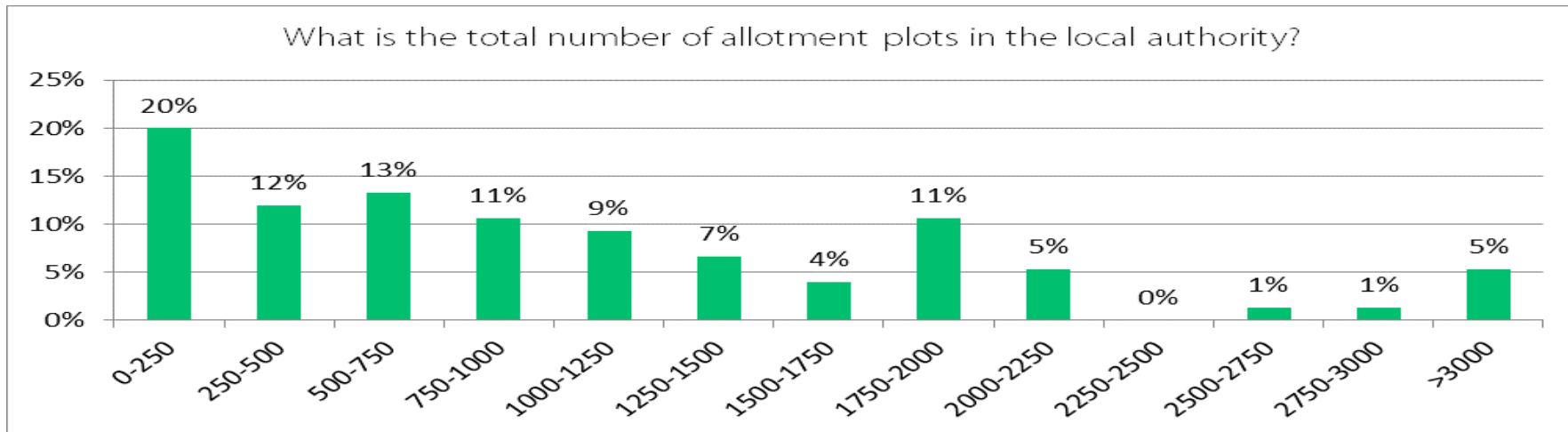


Number of allotments (sites/plots)

How many allotment sites have you got?



What is the total number of allotment plots in the local authority?

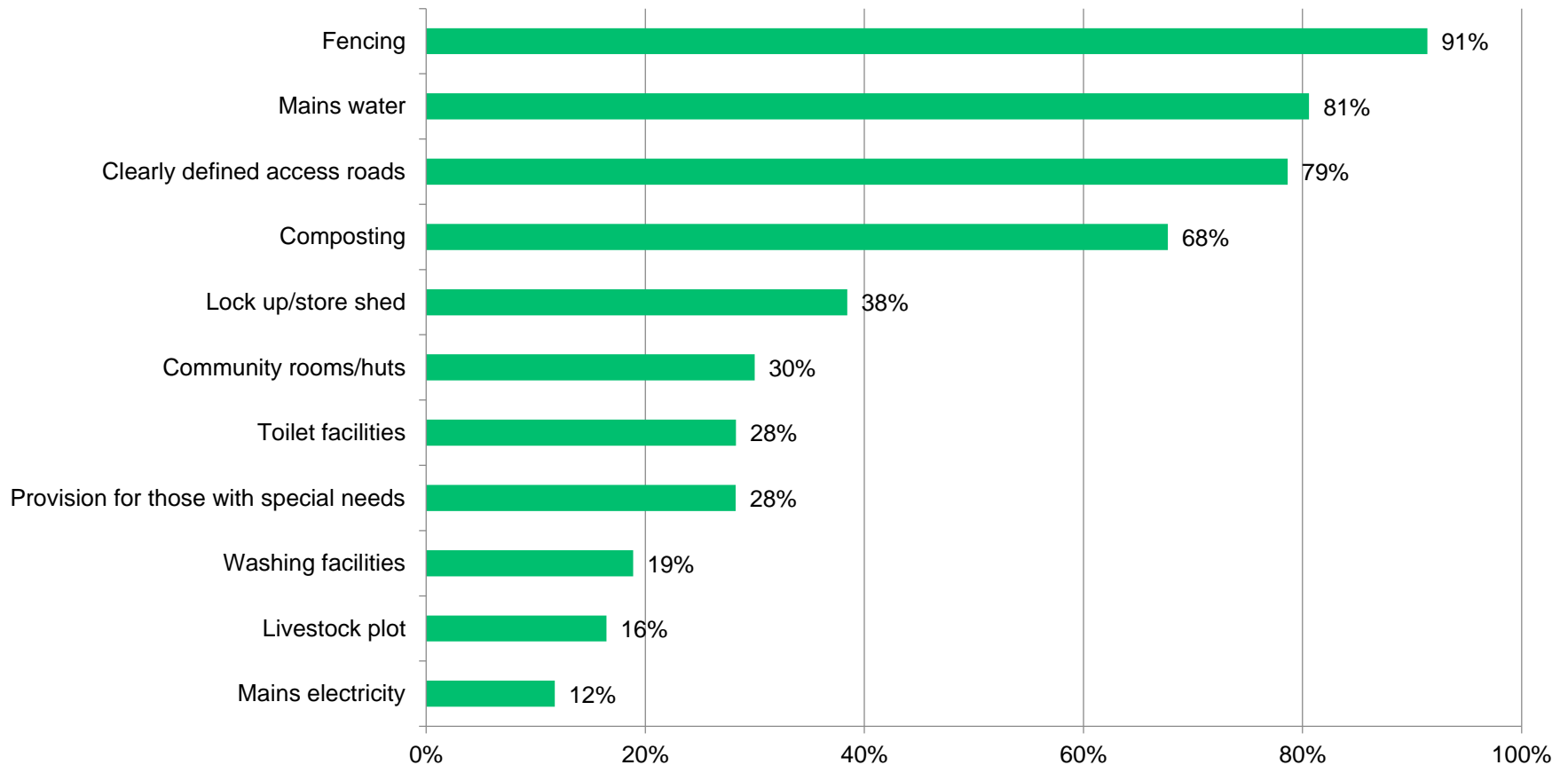


Charging and waiting lists

- Most respondents said they will continue to increase **allotment plot charges** over the next 5 years – 21% said increases would be above rate of inflation.
- Despite increases only 29% said provision of allotments would be cost neutral, 67% would be subsidised and only 5% would make a profit.
- Most providers of allotments offer subsidised rates (40% - 50%) to over 60's, unemployed/income support/disabled and students.
- Demand for **waiting lists** is still high 69% of respondents have waiting lists of between 100-400, with an average **waiting time** of 18 months.

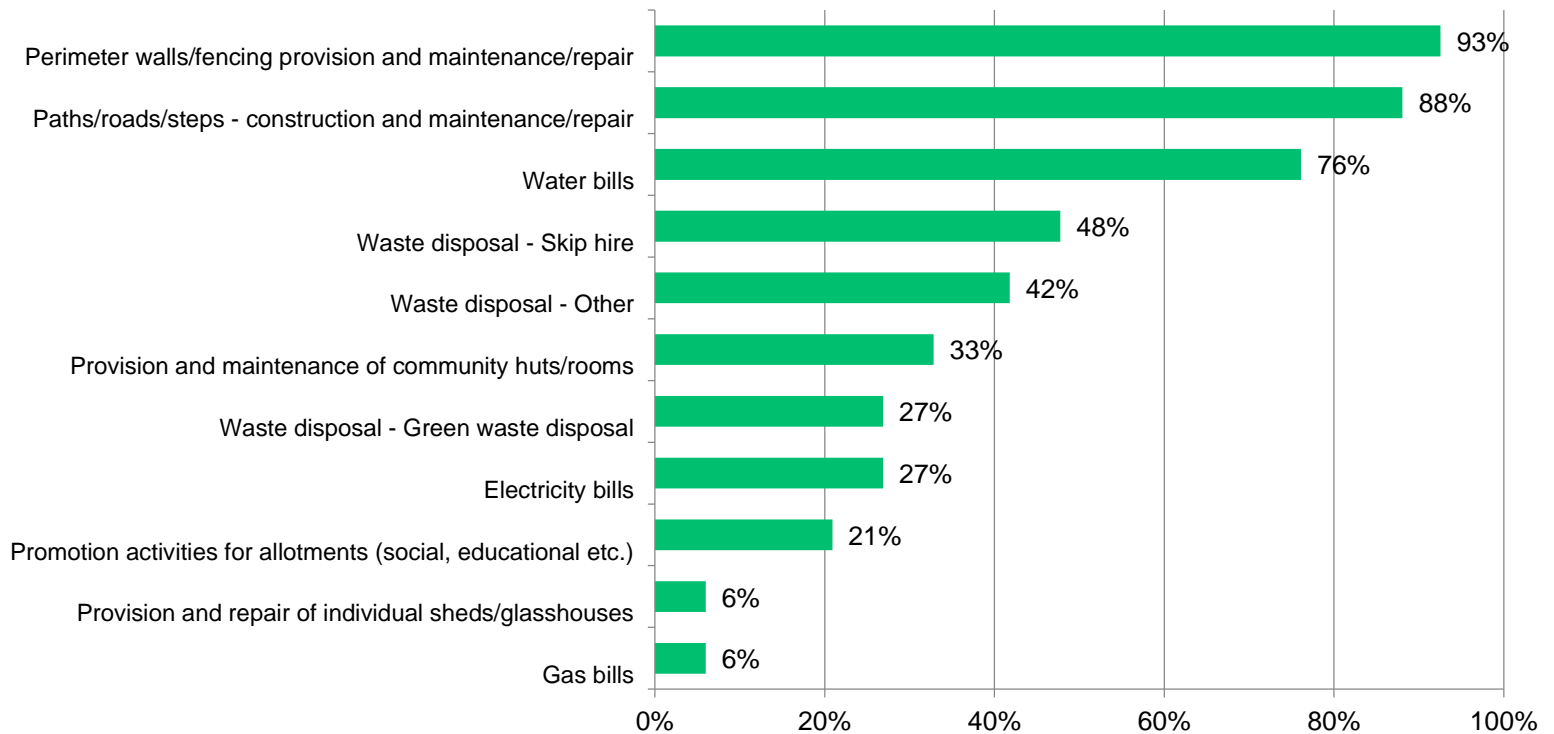
Facilities at allotment sites

What is the approximate percentage of allotment sites with:



Local authority budget responsibilities

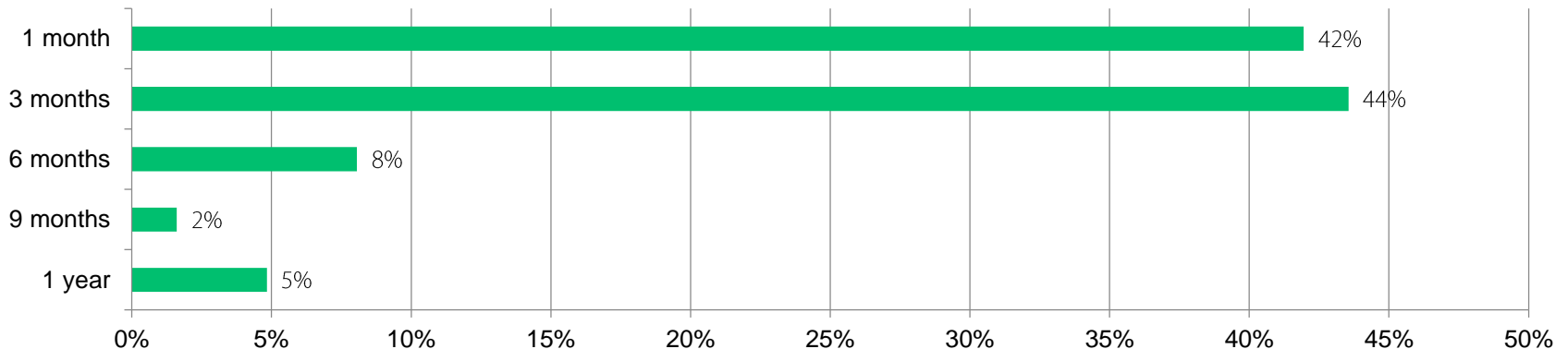
Does the budget include responsibility for:



Site maintenance

As an integral part of grounds maintenance operations/contracts	56%
By the plot holders/site association	12%
By volunteers	28%
By a dedicated allotments team/person	61%
As part of rehabilitation programmes (health, offenders etc.)	19%
No grounds maintenance is carried out on the sites	3%
Other	16%

What length of time do you allow a plot to be uncultivated before you take actions?



Managing the allotment stock

- 73% of respondents said **plots are restricted** to residents living in their local authority area.
- **multiple plots** only if vacant plots, historical ownership or time limited.
- Most plots now restricted to per household, fewer allowing 'passing on' of plots.
- Growing requirement for new plot holders to have probationary period (3-6 months).
- 86% of respondents considering reducing size of plots to increase numbers.
- Half of allotment sites have policies regarding disputes, notices to quit and appeals process.
- Most sites manage their own security.

Other issues

- Almost half of respondents have a formal **Allotments Strategy**.
- 53% of respondents have a formal **Friends Group**
- Most respondents have allotments included in their **Local Plans** and **Health and Well-Being Strategy's**.
- **Biodiversity** is now a significant consideration for allotments:

Areas being set aside for wildlife	77%
Information on how to improve biodiversity	53%
Planting pollinator friendly species	53%
Promoting native crops	17%
Other	32%
- 91% use water butts, 49% cultivate organically, 26% using solar power.



Conclusions

- Allotments sites still largely provided and managed by local authorities
- Self –management is increasing
- Mostly subsidised, but multiple benefits gained.
- Value of allotments now widely recognized – health and well-being, social inclusion, biodiversity, local food production, flood alleviation etc.
- Government’s **25 Year Environment plan** – high quality accessible natural spaces close to where people live and work – encouraging more people to use these areas.
- **Biodiversity net gain** being built into new building developments.
- New housing demands / reducing council budgets still a concern.
- New **partnership** with interested stakeholders may be future for future allotment sites
- Glasgow council considering use of under-used **golf courses** for new allotment sites

From allotments to urban agriculture

- Urban agriculture can be defined as producing as much of a city's food as close as possible to the people who eat it.
- Roughly half the world's population is urbanised and a great distance from their sources of food.
- Climate change, food security, urban poverty and hunger, social inclusion, food miles.
- Particularly important in developing world where loss of arable land due to rapid urbanisation is causing food shortages.
- In developed world often seen as a 'hobby for the privileged'
- But growing in popularity as interest in green issues, authentic, simple and local products, history of gardening and agriculture and inclusive family pastime + genuine food poverty in low income inner-city communities and associated negative health impacts.
- Growth in 'local over global', organic over synthetic, 'small is beautiful'.

How secure is our food supply?

- Food supply chains continue to lengthen
- Impact of and on nature – climate change – petrol price rises – power of global suppliers – food safety concerns.
- Growing support in US for urban farming- Seattle allow urban farms/community gardens in area of City, promote farmers markets and allow residents to sell food grown on their own property.
- UK has preventative laws which provide obstacles to urban farming –sale of food, specified land use, also reducing council budgets mean land has high value.
- Some examples such as **Incredible Edible** have gained some public support but small scale, however powerful messages being spread about the need for change.
- **Allotments** main source of urban agriculture in the UK

Is there a future for urban farming?

- Large scale urban farming is on the rise globally.
- Employing people, regenerating neighbourhoods, providing local produce.
- Technology major driver – aquaponics/hydroponics, polytunnel systems
- Still very much on the small scale but still producing community benefits.
- View is that urban farms will not replace traditional rural farms but complement them and add community value.
- Likely to see more developing in the UK in the future e.g. **Woodbank Farm Stockport.**
- Local authorities have a key role in developing urban farming by:
 - Making underused or vacant land available (permanently or meanwhile)
 - Providing assistance and advice and funding where possible
 - Creating networking links (allotments, urban farms, local producers, outlets)
 - Promoting benefits across council/s and stakeholders



Childrens disconnect with nature

I like to play indoors better 'cause' that's where all the electrical outlets are'

- 12% of children in England didn't visit the natural environment in 2016.
- Frequency of visits linked to ethnicity, socio-economic status and parental visits.
- Mixed messages – woods are wonderful places to spend time, but don't go on your own they're dangerous places.
- 'Nature deficit disorder' – diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, physical and emotional illnesses - social prescribing being trialled.
- Area of unsupervised play has shrunk by 90% since the 1970's.
- HSE advocate a measure of risk-taking in children's lives
- Nature is not the problem, traffic is.
- How do we re-connect children with nature?

50
things to do
before you're
11¾

How many have you done?

We've been working closely with kids just like you to put together this list of the best things to do before you're 11¾. (Although lots of them are still great fun even when you're 81¾.) You'll find fun things to do for every kind of outside place, from mountains to sea, forests to fields. So what are you waiting for? Get out there and see how many you can do!



1. Get to know a tree



2. Roll down a really big hill



3. Camp outdoors



4. Build a den



5. Skim a stone



6. Go welly wandering



7. Fly a kite



8. Spot a fish



9. Eat a picnic in the wild



10. Play conkers



11. Explore on wheels



12. Have fun with sticks



13. Make a mud creation



14. Dam a stream



15. Go on a wintry adventure



16. Wear a wild crown



17. Set up a snail race



18. Create some wild art



19. Play pool sticks



20. Go paddling



21. Forage for wild food



22. Find some funky fungi



23. Get up for the sunrise



24. Go barefoot



25. Join nature's band



26. Hunt for fossils and bones



27. Go stargazing



28. Climb a huge hill



29. Explore a cave



30. Go on a scavenger hunt



31. Make friends with a bug



32. Float in a boat



33. Go cloud watching



34. Discover wild animal clues



35. Discover what's in a pond



36. Make a home for wildlife



37. Explore the wonders of a rock pool



38. Bring up a butterfly



39. Catch a crab



40. Go on a nature walk at night



41. Help a plant grow



42. Surf in the sea



43. Help a wild animal



44. Watch a bird



45. Find your way with a map



46. Clamber over rocks



47. Cook on a camp fire



48. Keep a nature diary



49. Watch the sunset



50. Take a friend on a nature adventure

Pull out the plug!

- RHS Green Plan-IT – designed to encourage 12-14 year olds to learn about plants and the importance of greenspace.
- Offer opportunities for organised events in parks.
- **School allotment plots.**
- Linking digital apps to identifying nature – Pokemon.
- Tree planting – topical at the moment!
- Recording nature in your local area – numerous apps
- Back garden detectives.
- Building nature into school curriculums.
- **Promoting parents to involve children in gardening.**
- Free wildflower seeds for schools – saving bees!
- Photography competitions.
- Nature clubs

COUNTRYSIDE CLASSROOM

Connecting schools with **food,**
farming and the **natural environment**



Allotments - the case is proven



NEW MUNICIPALISM

Delivering for local people and local economies

Contact details

Wayne Priestley, Principal Advisor

Email: wpriestley@apse.org.uk

Association for Public Service Excellence

3rd floor, Trafford House, Chester Road,
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0RS.

telephone: 0161 772 1810

web: www.apse.org.uk



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