

THE COST OF THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Meeting the needs of low income families during school holidays



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Executive Summary: The Cost of the School Holidays

While many children eagerly anticipate the school holidays, families on low incomes face additional financial pressures over the holiday period and can find it challenging to occupy children on a tight budget and source appropriate childcare when working. The Cost of the School Holidays study was designed to inform a Glasgow Life feasibility study exploring ways in which holiday provision could better meet the needs of families living in poverty and ensure uptake by children and young people from low income households.

1. Background

Cost of the School Holidays aimed to answer the following questions:

1. *What are school holidays like for low-income families in Glasgow and what does this mean for children and young people's holiday activities?* Establishing key costs and pressures for low-income families in Glasgow during holiday periods and the ways in which this affects children and young people's holiday activities
2. *How does current holiday provision fit with the realities of low income families' school holidays?* Identifying how holiday provision in the city is used and perceived by families and barriers which exist to accessing services
3. *How can holiday service providers across the city better meet the needs of low-income families?* Establishing what would exist in Glasgow over the holiday period if services were designed to alleviate costs and pressures experienced by families on low incomes, to fit with their needs and ensure that low income children and young people were using them.

Six focus groups with parents and three focus groups with children were held to explore these questions. Focus groups were complemented by two surveys, one completed by 223 parents living in Glasgow and the other by 59 organisations working with children and families in the city.

2. What are the challenges facing families on low incomes during the school holidays?

- *Cost pressures over the holiday period:* feeding children outwith term time, particularly for those families receiving free school meals, puts considerable strain on budgets. Many parents report falling into debt or borrowing money to pay for heating, eating, summer clothing and uniform for new school terms
- *Difficulties in sourcing and providing childcare:* for working parents, sourcing local, affordable childcare which fits with their working hours is difficult and many have to alternate their annual leave, reduce working hours or rely on family support. Non-working parents receiving Job Seeker's Allowance must continue to actively seek work and sign on at the Job Centre accompanied by their children. Non-working parents can feel emotional pressure providing 24/7 care for their child during a period when support from voluntary sector parent groups is reduced or withdrawn

- *Emotional pressures*: children can expect to have the same holiday experiences, toys, trips and memories as their peers. Parents feel guilty when they are unable to provide this, particularly lone parents or those without the support of friends or family networks. Working parents depending on grandparents for childcare feel a sense of indebtedness and guilt at missing out on spending time with their children. Isolation, intense financial pressure and lack of emotional support are issues which appear to be particularly significant for lone parent families.

3. Barriers to accessing current holiday provision in Glasgow

Financial barriers

- Costs for holiday activities are unmanageable for some families. The need for advance payment and block booking for some activities makes them even more unaffordable, particularly for families with more than one child
- Additional hidden costs for snacks, equipment or clothing and the cost of transport to get to activities further restricts access
- High costs for childcare and oversubscribed Out of School Care services mean that working parents must save well in advance of the school holidays to fund their child's attendance.

Availability and awareness of provision

- Parents lack timely information about free or low cost activities in advance of the school holidays and have limited awareness of what activities are available, where to find out about them and how to engage in them
- Existing holiday service provision appears to be distributed unevenly across the city with fewer facilities in the north of Glasgow
- There are lengthy waiting lists for Out of School Care services and, again, services are not available in all areas of Glasgow.

Type of provision

- Age-appropriate activities are difficult to find for families with teenagers and pre-school children
- Many activities are not appropriate for children with Additional Support Needs (ASNs) to participate in either with other children with ASNs and/or siblings without ASNs
- Timings of holiday activities do not mimic the working day and it can prove impossible for working parents to drop children off or pick them up
- Access to parks, libraries and museums and galleries across the city can be affected by transport costs, perceptions regarding how welcoming the spaces are and whether they are worth going back to more than once.

Personal barriers

- Lack of personal confidence stops some parents from accompanying their child to new activities or taking their children themselves on trips to unfamiliar destinations.

Limited participation in holiday activities means that some children spend holidays online, watching television or playing computer games. Some parents reported concerns that their child had forgotten what they had previously learned upon their return to school after summer holidays.

4. How can holiday service providers across the city better meet the needs of low-income families?

Parents, children and professionals working with families on low incomes suggested ways in which current barriers to accessing holiday provision could be overcome. It is vital that these barriers and solutions help to inform future developments in holiday provision.

Better planning and promotion of services

- Work with a range of professionals across the city to raise the profile of Glasgow Life and its holiday provision
- Improve partnership working between Glasgow Life and local groups and services
- Address lack of local facilities in some areas and consequent transport cost to venues elsewhere through using dormant school facilities.

Supporting parents' childcare needs

- Address unsuitable timings for holiday activities which do not fit with working hours
- Address lack and affordability of childcare and Out of School Care provision across the city.

Improving access and participation

- Address the issue of 'holiday hunger' by offering free, healthy lunches within existing provision. Learning should be taken from existing schemes in other local authority areas
- Address lengthy waiting lists for holiday provision
- Address barriers to participation caused by the requirement for block-booking, advance payment and face-to-face booking
- Ensure holiday provision is promoted far in advance to support family planning and budgeting for holiday activities
- Address the issue of transport costs to access holiday provision through the provision of holiday travel passes.

Adapting content and delivery

- Ensure co-design of services with local people
- Ensure support for parents over holiday periods via provision for children
- Provide day trips and visits for children and young people
- Diversify services and activities to serve all ages, including pre 5s and over 12s
- Diversify content to appeal to different children and young people
- Improve provision for children with ASNs
- Address barriers to use of free libraries, parks and museums and galleries in the city

[Details regarding each of the points listed above are included in the full report.](#)

5. Conclusions

Families on low incomes experience a range of challenges during holiday periods, including financial pressures and difficulties in sourcing childcare or holiday activities which are accessible, affordable and fit with parental employment and the needs of the family. This can lead to practical and emotional difficulties for parents and less likelihood that children and young people from low income households access stimulating, enjoyable and beneficial experiences throughout the holidays.

Parents, children and the organisations working with them have highlighted a range of barriers to the uptake of holiday provision in the city and a range of potential solutions to these problems. If taken on board these could help transform Glasgow's holiday provision to better serve the needs of low income families. Awareness of parents' and children's experiences during holidays, the current factors hindering their participation and the potential solutions they propose must all inform the next stage of Glasgow Life's feasibility study.

1. Introduction

The Cost of the School Holidays was designed to inform a Glasgow Life feasibility study exploring ways in which holiday provision could better meet the needs of families living in poverty and ensure uptake by children and young people from low income households. It aimed to answer the following questions:

1. *What are school holidays like for low-income families in Glasgow and what does this mean for children and young people's holiday activities?* Establishing key costs and pressures for low-income families in Glasgow during holiday periods and their effects on children and young people's holiday activities
2. *How does current holiday provision fit with the realities of low income family school holidays?* Identifying how holiday provision in the city is used and perceived by families and barriers which exist to accessing services
3. *How can holiday service providers across the city better meet the needs of low-income families?* Establishing what would exist in Glasgow over the holiday period if services were designed to alleviate costs and pressures experienced by families on low incomes, to fit with their needs and ensure that low income children and young people were using them.

1 in 3 children in Glasgow are living in poverty and recent welfare reforms look likely to worsen the already significant financial challenges which face low income families. There is increasing recognition that these financial challenges may have a particular impact during the school holiday period with social isolation experienced by families unable to afford to take their child on visits or fund their participation in local holiday activitiesⁱ and increased risk of food poverty and holiday hunger.ⁱⁱ Initiatives designed to tackle these problems are underway across the US and UKⁱⁱⁱ and more locally with activities and meals provided through holiday clubs in East Renfrewshire and North Ayrshire.^{iv}

While national studies have focused primarily on holiday hunger, few have looked at it alongside other interlocking difficulties which face families during school holidays, such as the sourcing of affordable, local childcare and accessible age-appropriate holiday activities for children. Cost of the School Holidays focuses on the range of challenges that school holidays present to families on low incomes in Glasgow and seeks to inform solutions which could improve holiday provision for children and young people from low income households.

2. Context to the report

Holiday hunger

- The Trussell Trust's June 2014 report 'Below the Breadline' pressed for a greater sense of urgency in addressing the food poverty which has triggered rapid increase in the use of food banks in recent years.^v Changes to the social security system (benefit cuts and sanctions) combined with shrinking incomes, low pay, rising food prices and increasing personal debts are having a severe impact on the poorest and most vulnerable families: "More than half a million children in the UK are now living in families who are unable to provide a minimally acceptable diet."
- The Kelloggs 2014 UK report based on a study of almost 600 low and middle income families found that 41% of parents in low income households had skipped a meal during school holidays to feed their child.^{vi}
- The need to address this concern and to put in place adequate provision during the 170 annual non-school days has been identified by an All-Party Parliamentary group's Holiday Hunger Task Group which argues for more government investment in, and assumption of responsibility for, the feeding of children to build upon sporadic local projects developed by charities
- While some Scottish local authorities, including Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and North Ayrshire, have allocated resources to ensure the operation of holiday lunch clubs, national provision is piecemeal.

Childcare

- The Family and Childcare Trust's (FTC) 2015 Holiday Childcare survey identified that childcare costs had increased by almost 40% between 2010-2015 in both the public sector and also in the private and not for profit sectors. The average weekly cost of Out of School Care in Scotland is £121.48.^{vii}
- Additionally, the report found "a lack of accurate and timely consumer information" regarding available childcare, a lack of suitable childcare for children with disabilities and that "little progress has been made to meet the holiday childcare needs of older children, a group who are frequently forgotten in debates about 'childcare.'"^{viii} Many parents resort to relying on facilities such as libraries and museums to provide de facto childcare.

Children's participation during school holidays

- The Cost of a Child 2015 report identifies the minimum cost of raising a child from birth to age 18 to be £149,805 and forecasts the likelihood of a steady increase in this figure in the future and a continued reduction in state support, with negative impact on low income families. The report recognises that a minimal standard of living reflects more than the necessities of food, clothing and shelter but is fundamentally "about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society."^{ix}
- Secondary aged pupils taking part in the 2015 Glasgow City School Health and Wellbeing survey^x identified a wide range of sporting activities which they enjoy. However, evidence suggests that, outside term time, the cost of holiday activities may stop children taking part in them.^{xi}

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- Limited holiday leisure opportunities and the high cost of holiday childcare affects children and young people's opportunities and wellbeing.^{xii} Nearly half of low income parents report that they stay in the home more during the holidays than during term time due to financial pressures.^{xiii}

Summer learning loss

- Although research into summer learning loss has largely been US-based, a recent report produced by the Northern Housing Consortium identified that “children living in poverty dropped further behind their better-off peers when schools closed and they had no access to free school meals” and “were often physically and mentally unprepared for learning when they returned.”^{xiv}

These themes are explored further in the [Cost of the School Holidays Literature Review](#), also commissioned as part of the wider [Glasgow Life feasibility study](#).

3. Methods

9 focus groups with parents and children were held at a range of Glasgow Life and voluntary sector venues across the city. A parent survey and a survey of organisations working with children and families were open for 6 weeks.

Focus groups

6 focus groups were conducted with adults in Dennistoun, Maryhill, Cranhill, Riddrie, Govanhill, Milton and Gallowgate. An average of eight participants took part in each group, with the largest group comprising fifteen participants and the smallest five. Groups contained a mixture of working and non-working parents with differing levels of engagement with Glasgow Life holiday provision.

- 2 focus groups were held without any specific demographic in mind: the first with parents of children attending a breastfeeding support group and toddler tales session and another with parents attending a regular support group
- 2 focus groups were held with lone parents due to their prevalence in the city - 40% of families with children in Glasgow are lone parent families – and the greater likelihood of these families living in poverty and experiencing lower levels of wellbeing.^{xv}
- 1 focus group was held with parents of children with Additional Support Needs (ASN) to understand any specific barriers to accessing holiday provision and local amenities. Parents attending had children with autism, Asperger's syndrome and/or sensory processing issues
- 1 focus group was arranged with parents in an area with little existing provision to identify their specific concerns.

Sessions lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Questions were posed in the third person but participants generally responded in terms of their own experiences, sharing their opinions, suggestions and ideas.

3 focus groups were held with children aged between 6 and 13 in Calton, Govanhill and Riddrie. Sessions lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. Groups were facilitated at existing youth groups and clubs and were supported by staff members known to children. Sessions were interactive, using flipcharts and spider diagrams to support children to contribute their thoughts and ideas. Questions, discussion and length of session varied according to the age of participants, their existing relationships with each other and the extent to which they engaged with the session.

[Further details on topics covered are included in Appendix A.](#)

Survey of parents

The survey of parents in Glasgow received 223 responses. While results are not representative of the opinions and experiences of all families on low incomes across the city, they provide a valuable insight into some concerns related to holiday childcare and family budgets.

The survey was hosted on Survey Monkey and publicised by Glasgow Life, a range of voluntary sector organisations working with children and families and on the CPAG Scotland website, newsletter and social media. Paper copies of the survey were administered by the researcher at a range of summer family events to protect against online bias and several organisations requested paper copies of the

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survey for their service users to complete. Five sets of £50 incentive vouchers were offered to randomly selected parents.

[Further details on demographics and topics covered are provided in Appendix B.](#)

Survey of organisations working with children and families

59 voluntary and public sector organisations working with families on low incomes across the city completed an online survey: these included housing associations, credit unions, nurseries, community and charitable groups and youth groups. Responses are not representative of organisations as often only one individual responded and the selection process for identifying potential organisations to approach focused on the most visible and high-profile organisations. However, responses showed considerable consensus on the challenges facing families on low incomes and the barriers impeding their access to holiday provision.

[Further details on demographics and topics covered are provided in Appendix C.](#)

4. Key findings

4.1 What are the challenges facing families on low incomes during the school holidays?

4.1.1. Financial challenges for low family budgets

- Most parents responding to the survey (92%) said that the family budget is tighter during school holidays. Just under two thirds of parents say that their debts increase during school holidays and two thirds have no savings
- Many organisations working with families (80% of respondents to the organisations survey) agree that increased pressure on family budgets is a major challenge in the school holidays.

“You can’t save money if you are on the brew. You’ve got a good week and a bad week, you’ve got a giro week and a crap week. One week going to clubs and one week staying home.” (Lone father)

Food and food banks

- Just over one third of parents responding to the survey said that they had found it hard to pay for meals in the holidays
- Over a quarter of parents had skipped meals to feed their children during school holidays.



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The loss of free school breakfast and lunch entitlements during holidays alongside demand for lunches out with friends and snacks in between meals can place pressure on budgets and mean that food is limited at home.

“You are waking up each day and feel like you want to go back to sleep again. You think ‘oh God what are they going to eat today, what did they have yesterday?’ and then they will say they don’t want the same things again.”
(Lone mother of five children)

“We’ll probably have mince again for dinner. We get the same meal every night because it’s cheap.”
(Child)

“It’s also the added expense of extra drinks and snacks I wouldn’t normally have had to buy in school term. Buying multipacks of cans and crisps are cheaper than buying them individually but it still adds up to a lot of money over the course of the holidays.” (Mother)

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Many parents reported making personal sacrifices to feed their children. One single father makes meals for his daughters but lives mainly on toast: "I'd rather give it to them as I know what it was like when I was younger and I didn't have anything and I didn't like it." One mother was adamant that "I'll make sure they've got food and I'll starve if I have to." Social networks help, with one group of mothers reporting that they feed their children's friends at dinner-time knowing that the favour will be returned when they are short of food.

In one focus group, a young single mother with limited access to social networks spoke about being referred by the Job Centre to a local food bank, saying that she was scared but that staff were "dead nice and offered you tea and a chat and told you what there was." Others objected to the need to be referred and to sit down and talk about their situation, seeing it as intrusive and embarrassing.

Several parents (7% of those responding to the survey) indicated that they had used foodbanks to feed their children during school holidays.

Clothing

Not wearing uniform every day means that children must wear different clothes appropriate to the season. Sports clothes must also be provided if children participate in any sports related holiday activities. While uniform equalises to some extent, visible differences in income and social background become more difficult to conceal during holidays when children wear their own clothes.

In addition, parents in several groups indicated that 'return to school' expenses, particularly uniform costs, affect budgets during school holidays and their ability to pay for holiday activities.

"August is my worst month with the kids going back to school. The first couple of weeks of the summer it's fine and you go and spend the money you've saved but by the end of the holidays you need to use money to try to get a uniform." (Mother)

Parents spoke about the relatively low clothing grant allowance in Glasgow compared with other local authorities, adding that there can be delays in receiving clothing grants and that it is impossible to manage on the grant alone, with many relying upon parents or family to assist financially.

"£47 doesn't even get them a pair of shoes and then there's the uniform, jacket, shoes, cardigan, skirt, gym kit, school bag, pens, pencils, it's everything they need to go back." (Mother)

Clothing grants, uniform costs and their impact on children and young people are discussed in more detail in The Cost of the School Day report.^{xvi}

Heating and utilities

Some parents completing the survey pointed to higher heating and utilities bills during holiday periods, particularly in winter.

"It's worse at October week and Christmas when it's cold and I have to put more money in my gas to heat my house. When the kids are in school I don't use my heating and I save it for them coming home to a warm house and getting up with heat in the mornings." (Mother)

Not enough money for family holidays, trips and activities

The main challenge of the summer for many families is, as one lone parent put it, “money and not enough of it.” Over half of parents responding to the survey could not afford a family holiday and found even day trips unaffordable. The need to pay for food and other household essentials along with childcare for some families means that there is little left for leisure activities.

“You kind of feel disappointed with yourself because you are not meeting up with their needs. It’s not that we don’t want to go out but when we do all these things it has to come down to money and what are you supposed to sustain a family on? You are living just to survive not to actually live a valued life. The summer’s here the sun is shining we could go and do something but you just have to live through each day and thank god it’s one less. You feel like, what a shame.” (Mother)

Awareness of what other families can afford can create pressure to provide similar activities and can lead to guilt and disappointment for both parents and children when this doesn’t happen.

“Some of their pals are going to Orlando and things like that. When they go back to school after the holidays and everyone’s been here and there and it’s like ‘what did you do?’ and they say ‘oh we went to the library.’” (Mother)

“It’s very stressful and it’s just constantly in your face... I just feel so sorry for my eldest. Her friends were going on a week to France and she asked ‘am I able to go?’... Am I able to afford accommodation and all the activities that are attached to the trip? It’s just not feasible.” (Lone mother)

“The kids are like, why can’t we do that, why can’t we go on holiday and have a car and you have to explain that mum doesn’t have that sort of money to do that sort of thing and that’s where the guilt comes in.” (Mother)

Children can recognise financial pressures on their parents and the impact this has on their holiday experiences. One single mum in the Maryhill focus group remarked, “my kids don’t ask me, they know straight up the answer will be no.” A nine year old, from a family with eight siblings, spoke about holidays:

“We don’t get to go on holiday as all the deals are for families of four. We can take turns at going on holiday each year with our gran. We did go to Ayr beach caravan for two days but now they’ve taken all the fun stuff out and made it into bars. It costs too much money to eat out so we had to eat noodles.”

The costs of travel, snacks and extras are all barriers to participation in even free holiday activities. Many survey respondents agreed that they could not afford transport costs, something expanded upon by focus group participants.

“[It’s] not having enough money to pay for [days out even though I work. By the time I pay rent etcetera, I’m lucky if I have 10 pound left. The Kidz card^{xvii} is great but everything still requires money, lunch and snacks.” (Mother)

“Even for me with just one child, I struggle with the bus fare to get to these places. Okay, I say, let’s do one thing, but sometimes I feel it makes me want to cry, seriously.” (Mother)

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Children gave examples of times when their parents were unable to afford bus fares and highlighted safety issues on public transport, talking about having to walk through areas “where the gangs are” and the fear of it being dangerous on the top deck of buses.

Many parents take packed lunches on trips to free venues in an attempt to cut costs but say that opportunities to buy sweets and extra treats like fairground rides are everywhere and that it can feel that they are letting their children down if they say no to what they ask for.

“You take them to the park and then turn round and the shows [fairground rides] are next to the park, you’re like ‘oh no, this is murder.’” (Lone father)

“The ice cream van is selling cones at Glasgow Green for £2.50 a time. There’s always something and then we need to walk home because I always end up buying them one and then we can’t afford the bus fare home. I’d rather walk home so I can give them what they want.” (Mother)

Another difficulty lies with discounts and offers being removed during school holidays when businesses know that demand will be higher. One mother explained that the cinema is usually cheaper on a Tuesday (£6) but prices increase by £2 during school holidays, making it less affordable.

4.1.2. Personal challenges for some parents on low incomes

For some families cost is not the only barrier to accessing holiday provision. Challenging personal and family circumstances can lead to particular issues when it comes to the school holidays.^{xviii}

Almost one fifth of parent survey respondents said that they do not feel confident going to organised activities or day trips. Mental health problems, depression and low levels of self confidence in navigating the city and its public transport systems or in meeting new people were all highlighted in focus groups, particularly amongst single mothers with experience of domestic abuse.

“To start with I was depressed, it was really difficult for me so I just wanted to stay in the house all the time. Obviously I’ve tried to get out and about for my son’s sake, but I’m still isolated in a way because it’s daunting to get on a train if you’re in the East and you’re going to Pollok and I wouldn’t know what train to get on or where to get off at or anything like that; you’re afraid to get lost.” (Lone mother)

One single mother took her son on a caravan holiday but it took her over an hour and a half to find the site. She said that, “the thought of having to do that again really frightens me.” Another attempted to take her children to Ayr for the day but got on the wrong train. Several parents spoke about pushing themselves to provide or attend activities for their children despite feeling scared and self-conscious. They highlighted the need for support and social networks.

4.1.3. Lack of available and suitable childcare

“Financially, things are very tight for me and to pay for child care this summer holiday I’ve had to ignore some bills and hope I can catch up in August.” (Mother)

- 94% of organisations responding to the survey cited childcare as a challenge for families on low incomes during the holidays

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- Three quarters of parents who responded rely on family for informal childcare during holidays and almost half (45%) rely on friends
- 14% of parents had reduced their working hours and 37% had changed their working hours to manage childcare
- Half of parents felt that affordable childcare would reduce difficulties during the holidays.

Childcare for working parents

“It’s ok for them to encourage parents to get a job but there’s nobody there offering additional support services during the school holidays.” (Mother)

Many working parents don’t have access to affordable consistent holiday childcare which fits with their working hours. Many expressed uncertainty and anxiety about upcoming arrangements: “I don’t even know what I’ll do for childcare over the holidays. I’ll have to turn to friends and hope they don’t let me down”, “I’ve managed to get two weeks off but I don’t know what I’m going to do the rest of the time” and “I worry about who I’m leaving them with.”

Employer flexibility is crucial in helping parents negotiate holiday childcare and challenges are greater when this flexibility is not there. Parents responding to the survey had taken annual leave (64%), unpaid leave (21%), parental leave (14%) and sick leave (11%) due to childcare needs. Two parent families often alternate annual leave to cover the holiday period.

“Having no external family here can be very hard and I had to give up a full-time job because it was very demanding. I took annual leave, got a part-time job with reduced hours. Some training I needed to go for I go couldn’t go because my friends were either at work or doing some other things and could not baby sit.” (Mother)



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Childcare for non-working parents

The need for holiday childcare can affect parents' employment and employability. Some survey respondents (11%) said that they had given up work because of difficulties caused by childcare and others (14%) said that caring for children during holidays either reduced or stopped job seeking activities, such as attending interviews and completing applications. Many parents agreed that expectations around active job seeking during school holidays should be reduced in recognition of the demands of full time caring for children.

Non-working parents said that attending the Job Centre accompanied by their children during school holidays was awkward and potentially humiliating. They reported considerable variation in the attitude and flexibility of advisors during the summer months with one mother told "Don't bring the kids with you cos it's a business environment."

"See my boy turned 5 last August and I've had to sign on from November. ^{xix} I've got to go down there and they make you feel like dirt. Now during the holidays I've to sign on every fortnight at 3.30pm and it's an extra stress." (Mother)

"I'm dreading during the holidays going down to the Job Centre and proving what you've done. They make you feel small and treat single parents differently, they pin point certain people. I applied for sixty jobs and no one got back to me." (Mother)

Some non-working parents expressed resentment at the types of minimum wage, zero hours contracts that they were pushed to seek and recognised their disadvantages both financially and for their families.

"They are asking us to go and do jobs for a very low rate of pay and just to fill in all the rubbish that other people won't and to neglect our kids to do it." (Mother)

Informal childcare

Inadequate support networks can mean additional pressure for working parents juggling work and childcare with nobody to call on in an emergency. However, limited support can also affect non-working parents who are solely responsible for 24/7 care and responsibility of their children.

"The isolation is so huge on our part because we don't have family. So it's really hard, I've got just one friend and maybe my church fellowship. I've no one to depend upon to do this and this for me – if I'm not there that's it." (Lone mother)

For many parents, support from family and friends is invaluable. However, even for those lucky enough to be able to depend upon supportive family, there was guilt about not spending enough time with children and guilt about burdening ageing family members with regular childcare requests. Only 44% of parents responding to the survey agreed that they were able to spend quality time with their child during school holidays.

Holidays can create increased stress and emotional strain for families. While support and signposting from school and nursery is unavailable during the holidays, regular support groups and services are also often withdrawn or reduced during summer months. For some parents this removes important networks of practical and emotional support.

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“If families are not being supported over a period of time (especially if they are facing stressful challenging times) this can affect their mental health and wellbeing which in turn impacts on their children.” (Organisation working with families and children)

Going without childcare

Organisations working with families say that some children across the city are going unsupervised during school holidays due to unaffordable or unavailable childcare.

“[There are] kids sitting on a doorstep or locked in the house with a packed lunch and left to fend for themselves” (Out of School Care provider)

Some children spoke about neighbours and family friends who “nip in and out” in lieu of childcare and of making their own way to holiday activities when parents have to go straight to work. They said that being left alone might mean that they “end up home alone and scared if their parents are working late.”

4.1.4. Lack of available and suitable Out of School Care services

Shortages of provision by availability, age, timing and location

The Glasgow West Childcare Forum’s 2014 audit identified the clear need for more local authority After and Out of School Care services city-wide.^{xx} Just over half (55%) of survey respondents said that they weren’t able to make use of Out of School Care and this was also a recurring theme in focus groups with parents talking about over-subscribed services with no availability, limited availability which doesn’t fit with working hours and limited services for over 12s and under 5s with the majority of services focusing on primary school aged children.

“If they are in high school they are literally left to their own devices, there’s nothing.” (Mother)

“We’ve not got Out of School Care right now as there’s no room. I haven’t got a clue about any other services and don’t know where to turn.” (Mother)

Content and quality of provision

Although there were positive comments made about Out of School Care provision, parents also spoke about a variability in quality of Out of School provision and the problems involved when children didn’t like it and didn’t want to go. Some parents and organisations lamented the apparent reduction in more informal and flexible community play-schemes.

“After school care in theory sounds very nice and person-centred but what happens if there’s been some kind of experience and the wean doesn’t want to go to that one? You don’t really have a choice.” (Mother)

“You get a hot dog to eat and if you don’t like it then you get a piece of fruit instead and that’s your dinner. I think they should let you choose more foods. It usually starts at 3pm in the summer holidays. It costs £500 for a year and you do games and things, there are loads of kids there but I got in trouble for doing stuff. There’s no freedom and you can’t play video games for long and only get five minutes on electronics and there’s not enough time.” (Child)

However, respondents to the organisations survey pointed out that Out of School Care providers “do provide trips that are reasonably priced” and that significant daily costs for Out of School Care costs can be offset through tax credits or childcare vouchers, something which it is important for parents to know about.

4.1.5. Impact of holidays on children and young people

Two thirds of parents responding to the survey agreed that the 6 week summer holiday is too long. Some parents spoke about the risk of isolation, boredom and less physical activity for their children over holidays.

“You have to wonder what the six week holiday is about. It’s certainly not benefitting the child so who is it benefitting? It’s not doing families any favours and a lot of kids need that structure and routine of school. If they’ve got classes and play time and know where they are it helps them.” (Mother)

“[The challenge is to keep] children active, playing with friends, learning social skills, having fun and building memories.” (Organisation working with families and children)

Although some parents were relaxed about their children finding ways to entertain themselves with tablets and computers others were worried that their children spent too much time on these solitary indoor activities and weren’t doing things they remembered from their childhoods like climbing trees.

One respondent to the organisations survey identified as a serious issue the “risk taking behaviour” that young people “inevitably experience over the summer” such as alcohol, tobacco or substance misuse and estimated that the resulting harm “is higher in families on low incomes because they lack the resilience, contacts, finances and affluence that ‘cushion’ danger, as well as access to housing, health care and education that higher earners have.”

No amenities in local neighbourhoods

Playing outside in the holidays is difficult for families in flats where younger children need to go downstairs to access the shared garden. Many spoke about being scared to let their older children go out on their own and “dog waste, broken glass and rubbish” stopping children running free. One third of parent survey respondents disagreed that their neighbourhood is safe for their child to play in. Some organisations responding to the survey pointed to the need for parents to understand more about the importance of play and stimulation to children’s learning and development.

Lack of amenities within walking distance of home means that transport costs must be considered when going anywhere. Parents from Milton spoke about the north of the city being neglected in terms of amenities and investment with only one youth club in the area and a lack of council support for community organisations keen to develop new services on derelict land.

“There’s no facilities, no café, there’s 2 sets of shops and that’s it. The council aren’t interested at all in provision or in any way supporting organisations that are wanting to even just use derelict lands and I mean there’s loads of space. It does feel like that and a lot of the poorest families, it’s kind of like you’re just being ignored and forgotten about and you can’t do this or that.” (Mother)

Summer learning loss

Parents disagreed about the extent to which their child loses learning over the summer and the extent to which they are concerned about this. Just over half of parents responding to the survey agreed that their child feels s/he has forgotten what they had previously learned when they return to school and 38% of respondents from organisations working with families identified learning loss during school holidays as 'very important.'

"I do the alphabet at home and different animal types so he doesn't fall behind." (Mother)

In focus groups, some parents spoke about the potential for Glasgow Life holiday programmes to include literacy and numeracy elements to avoid loss of learning and some children also voiced a desire for holiday activities which would help with their learning.

- "They could put on a club in the library where they teach things and do like a maths challenge so you're learning." (Child, 9)
- "I like maths and I'd like to do maths stuff over the summer, like times tables." (Child, 10)
- "The government could try harder to think outside the box to give not what kids want but what they need like sports and fitness, transport and education clubs once a week, reinforcing what's done in schools." (Child, 11)
- "I think learning trips would be good to the hospital or the vets. Yesterday, I went to the Victorian School at the Scotland Street School Museum and it's good cos you see what they used to do and find out that the children did the cooking and cleaning." (Child, 8)

However, other parents attending focus groups were sceptical that learning loss over the summer was a serious concern saying that children get back into the swing of things when term gets underway again.

A small minority of parents were scathing towards parents who they saw as too lazy to try to improve their children's holiday experiences. These parents – on low incomes themselves - characterised others as sitting around on benefits or spending money unwisely.

"Some of the parents just want to sit on their bums and let their kids run riot. I know some don't have the money but you don't need money to go into the country side, we're 10 minutes from the countryside and 10 minutes from the city. It's a shame for some of the kids round here, cos the mothers are sitting around on benefits doing nothing and aren't willing to take the kids out. They'd rather be sitting around on benefits and spending their money on fags and drink." (Mother)

"Families don't prioritise. If parents spent less on drink and cigarettes for themselves then families would have more money to save up for additional expenses during school holidays." (Mother)

4.2. Views on suitability of current holiday provision in Glasgow

This section of the report explores awareness of current holiday activity programmes and the extent to which they meet the needs of financially vulnerable families in Glasgow.

Parents on low incomes understand that holiday provision can cost money and are keen to pay where they can for reasonably priced, enjoyable activities which fits their needs. However, parents identified a range of issues with holiday provision currently available in the city.

“I think I would pay for a drama group leading to a performance. Sometimes there’s drama classes in the town which take children from 8.30am to 3.30pm and it works out about £20 a day and suits mums who have to go to work as they know the kids are in a safe place and don’t have the stress and guilt of asking everyone to take on their work while they are out earning money.” (Mother)

4.2.1 Awareness of and satisfaction with Glasgow Life holiday provision

- 25% of respondents to the parent survey agreed that ‘I don’t know who Glasgow Life are and what they do’
- 41% don’t know what free or low cost activities are offered by Glasgow Life
- Just under half of parents agreed that they would recommend Glasgow Life holiday activities to other parents, a level linked to general lack of awareness about what is offered
- 69% of parents reported that their children had not participated in any Glasgow Life holiday activities and 76% that their child had not taken part in the Glasgow Life Sports Programme.

“I don’t know much about Glasgow Life” was a frequent remark during focus groups and in the parent survey. This may not matter if families knew about and accessed services anyway but low levels of awareness regarding holiday provision means that this lack of organisational awareness may be an issue.

“One barrier really is that you see Glasgow Life everywhere but I don’t think really that Glasgow Life has their message put across – I don’t know what Glasgow Life’s aims and visions are. I don’t personally get the feeling that I’m part of Glasgow Life. I feel that Glasgow Life are a unit and if I can afford to use their facilities that’s what I’ll do. I would love for Glasgow Life to be promoting confidence in young people, for the next generation coming up, that would be wonderful.” (Mother)

When asked how satisfied they were with the holiday activities Glasgow Life currently provide, 26% of parents selected ‘don’t know or haven’t used’ whilst 34% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. As a result, levels of explicit dissatisfaction are fairly low at 11%.

Aspects of current holiday provision offered by Glasgow Life are highly valued by some: “Glasgow Life is doing an incredible job. [It is difficult] trying to imagine what more they could do as it all comes down to funding.” (Mother).

“There are so many attractions in Glasgow compared with Poland. In my home country everything is so expensive and there are no free activities and most of the people are very poor so we are glad for everything we can do here.” (Mother)

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Provision which had varied activities, welcoming atmospheres and a good balance of activities for boys and girls was praised. In addition, partnership working with local organisations may enhance quality provision. One youth project indicated that joint working on local drama projects had proved highly beneficial to local children.

Advertising and promotion of holiday activities

Parents responding to the survey found out about Glasgow Life holiday activities in a range of ways.

47% through word of mouth	38% from school	25% online search
25% social media	22% at the library	17% leaflet through door
Other: friends, church, Primary Times and carers meeting		

Others in focus groups had received leaflets from their school, the Poverty Leadership Panel or along with their application for the Kidz or Young Scot Card. Children named numerous ways they found out about summer activities organised by Glasgow Life – many relied on youth workers to tell them, some looked on the Internet and some found out via their school.

Most parents attending focus groups agreed about the need for improved advertising of holiday provision but differed on how this might be achieved. Suggestions included little that isn't done already but low levels of awareness suggest that these messages may not be reaching the right people:

- Through Health Visitors for pre-school children
- Facebook and other social media platforms: "Facebook would be amazing because every young person is on Facebook or if you could use images and get on Snapchat this could work as then it's not just reading material." (Mother)
- Posters and leaflets in a range of local settings, not only the place in which the holiday activities are held
- Through schools and nurseries

"If they gave the info to the schools to go out as a flyer in the last week or terms so people knew what was available or if they needed them earlier for booking put them out earlier in the last few weeks so you can plan what's available." (Mother)

"They don't tell you what's going to be on [at nursery], there are posters and things but and they've a family worker but even at that I'm not aware of any of the Glasgow Life stuff that's on." (Mother)

Other considerations raised by parents included literacy levels amongst some parents and the need for non-written advertising materials and the need to publish holiday programmes as early as possible: one mother said that other providers publish earlier and it is then risky waiting for Glasgow Life programmes to come out as these other programmes fill up quickly.

Both online and non-online routes are required given differing levels of IT literacy and access to computers and the internet. When online methods are used they should be done well. One survey respondent described the Glasgow Life website as:

"Appalling - search function v poor, often find out of date info on there, difficult to work out what's going on nearby, when, etc. It seems to have been designed by aliens who want to make the user experience as difficult and frustrating as possible."

Awareness of Kidz Club and Young Scot cards

Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents to the parent survey stated that their child(ren) had a Kidz card and 37% a Young Scot Card, reflecting that those completing the survey were more likely to have children aged between 6-11.

Additional survey comments show that some parents are unsure if their child was entitled to a card and didn't know about its benefits. Parents in focus groups agreed that people may not know about discounted bus travel, free access to swimming and free perks such as burgers at some outlets. One mother highlighted the role of her local library staff in consistently "promoting it and asking 'Have you got your Kidz Card?' and 'You're moving on to secondary now have you got the Young Scot card?'"

4.2.2. Barriers to accessing holiday provision

a. Open access venues in the city

Libraries

22% of respondents to the parent survey report that their children regularly spend time at the library and almost half (46%) said that their child sometimes spends time there. A third of respondents never use these venues.

In focus groups, both parents and children identified a range of positive features about the libraries they used and spoke positively about library staff. Children enjoy the Summer Reading Challenge, arts clubs and museum visits. Activities such as the visits from 'the animal man', working with papier mache and using computers are popular, as were youth groups like Wacky Wednesday at Riddrie Library.

"You can choose any books but I try not to pick baby books. I read some of it here and then I take it home. The librarian ticks it off when I've done a book [Summer Reading Challenge]. Last year it took the whole summer but this year I'm reading bigger books and harder ones."
(Girl, 9)

Some parents valued their local library for the learning they facilitate during holidays.

"[They] make learning fun and give a lot to the children. One particular thing that comes to mind is the planets – they are educated on a particular topic and didn't just get to read about what they want but would be drawing things and then they'd get them put up on the wall. Then they'd come home and chat about it and now my daughter can rhyme off the planets."
(Mother)

"I go to [the arts and crafts club] every Tuesday from 2-4pm. Last week we did a poster where we picked an animal and wrote lots of facts about it. I enjoyed it but there were only three of us there."
(Girl, 11)

Issues or difficulties identified were as follows:

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- Some children believe that they receive library fines for late or lost books and that this prevents them from taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge (in fact, items borrowed on children's cards are exempt from overdue fines in Glasgow libraries):

"It's embarrassing sometimes if you've lost a book or have fines. Then if you want to do the Reading Challenge you have to go to the counter and tell them what happened to the book. It's ok if it's only one book but if it's a DVD it can be expensive."

- Activities are not always age-appropriate: "[sometimes we're] doing baby stuff and kiddish things, like we colouring in pictures"
- There can be low attendance at scheduled holiday activities; parents wondered whether this was because people didn't know they were happening
- Some parents use the library as a safe public space in which to send their children which can lead to noise and disruption for other library users and presents challenges for library staff
- In one library, parents objected to the lack of enclosed children's area and spoke about the stress and mess caused by their children running around in an unsuitable adult space

"My boy would run and pull all the books and DVDs off the shelves and when I was leaving I'd have to try to get them back into the pram and go and pick all the books up. I know he shouldn't do it but I don't know how you'd stop a 2 year old. It'd be good if someone came and said 'don't worry about it I'll come and clear the books up and help you to get out of the library!'" (Mother)

Children and parents who regularly engaged with library services suggest that raising the library profile and widening participation all year round would help uptake during holidays. Their ideas included:

- Quiet reading corners in the children's area to avoid noisy toddlers
- Increase the number of dedicated children's PCs and allowing access for longer than an hour and provide use of "Wiis, TVs and Xboxes in the library
- Open on Sundays and provide activities so that families can go together
- Increase library use and local support networks by establishing groups for parents of teenage children offering practical and emotional support:

"So mothers can say 'oh my kid's not the only one that does that, or why do they do that?' They will feel better because mothers often feel guilty about having to go to work and the children go out and they know that. They could have a coffee and a chat and a comfortable place to sit and talk with other mums without feeling guilty." (Mother)



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Parks

Parks are well used with 70% of respondents to the parent survey reporting regular use and 26% reporting use 'sometimes'. However, parents and children are often travelling to bigger and more central parks rather than using their local parks due to concerns about safety and vandalism.

"The local parks aren't safe. My mum was attacked in the park. Last week I took the kids to Rutherglen Park and it took one hour on the bus." (Mother)

"See in the park in Calton there was a good thing, it was like you climbed up and you got to the top and it was like a chute but it was plastic and somebody burnt it down. So now you can't use it and, see the other side of the park, something else got burnt, it was like a plastic see saw thing. I don't like the Calton Park so I go to Glasgow Green." (Child)

Museums and galleries

Scotland Street School Museum, the Science Museum and the Transport Museum were spoken about most often in focus groups. Other favourite attractions included the Bugs and Insects section at Kelvingrove Art Galleries and the Scottish Mask and Puppet Centre. Parents had also taken their children further afield to museums outwith Glasgow such as Summerlee Industrial Museum, Loch Lomond Shores and New Lanark Heritage Centre.

The parent survey suggests that museums and galleries are visited regularly by few families but that two thirds of respondents 'sometimes' visit. One respondent to the organisations survey thought that some families on low incomes have a "sense that a building or place is not for them such as Kelvingrove Art Gallery" but this wasn't mentioned in focus groups with other reasons given by parents for non-regular attendance including:

- Difficulties attending with children who have ASN: "my boy has attention difficulties so a museum might be free but we're out in five minutes."
- The feeling that after you've seen it once – even if it's good - there's nothing more to see: "They've been to the museums once already and it's no longer exciting for them."
- Lack of child-friendly or non-interactive features: "You used to be able to go and sit in the buses at the Transport museum but they've tied them all up and stopped that now and there's a big road thing that they used to be able to run up and down."

Improvements suggested included:

- Frequently updated arts and crafts activities in museums and libraries to extend and enhance visits
- Interactive hands on games and activities
- Coordinated local trips for groups of children: "if it was done almost like a trip so they gathered up the kids from Southside and all went together they might actually have more fun, with someone explaining what the things were that they were seeing."

b. Glasgow Life holiday programmes and activities

“I feel the holiday programme needs a total overhaul, while it looks good on the surface when you get to booking times, dates, location and prices aren't suitable.” (Mother)

Various barriers to accessing Glasgow Life services were identified in focus group discussions and via the parent survey. The need to block book and pre-pay for activities, costs and hidden costs (e.g. snacks, transport etc.) and the dearth of facilities in certain communities all limit the affordability and accessibility of Glasgow Life holiday provision.

Unaffordable upfront and hidden costs

- “Glasgow Life summer club was £20.00 and that included a packed lunch but now it’s £35.00 per week with no packed lunch.”
- “I stay local to the Emirates and it’s far too expensive for me to afford the sports. Although there’s a Kidz card discount it adds up in the school holidays, more so when you’ve more than one child.”
- “Providing the right clothing, packed lunches and travel to where the events are held is hard for a single mother of four children.”

Pre-booking, advanced and face-to-face booking

Just over half of respondents (57%) to the parent survey agreed that pre-booking or advanced payment for activities rendered them unaffordable and therefore inaccessible. Parent at focus groups spoke about the impossibility of paying in advance for 6 week blocks for two children and the money lost if children are ill and don’t go.

Alternatives were suggested. Many parents thought that it would be best if they were able to simply turn up on the day. Others wanted to be able to pre-book single days at all-week kid’s camps which fit with their part-time working hours. The ability to pre-book yet with built in flexibility, enabling parents to turn up as and when they can afford it, would ease access for parents with differing needs.

Being unable to book activities online is seen as inconvenient and can result in transport costs to reach the venues parents are trying to book activities in

Oversubscription and no spaces

“We tried to get swimming lessons and each time were told it was full, to wait for next intake. This was over a period of 2 years. We couldn't book online and was told it was first come first served. In the end we went to another local authority and had no problem getting started and it was cheaper.” (Mother)

Location of activity

Living in some areas of the city means higher transport costs and lengthier journeys to access activities. Family train fare deals aren’t helpful for families living long distances from train stations: one mother of two explained that the lack of local amenities mean hour-long bus journeys to the city centre. Mothers in Milton spoke about limited local facilities - such as a swimming pool or local clubs - derelict land and the need for lengthy and costly bus journeys for parents without their own transport.

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Timing and length of activities

59% of respondents to the parent survey agreed that if Glasgow Life changed the hours of organised holiday activities to better suit the needs of working parents this would make life easier for parents.

Parents feel that activities start too late, finish too early or don't last long enough to fit with standard working hours. This means that they are often only suitable for non-working parents available to escort children there and pick them back up again

Lack of provision for under-5s and over-12s and for families of mixed ages

Families with children of different ages have challenges in finding appropriate activities during the holidays.

"I've a six year old girl and she doesn't want to do the same as a fourteen year old boy. I feel the stress doubles after the first day and feel the fear of them being around at home increases because everyone wants to do different things. It also increases the problems of them all getting in each other's way. It's really frustrating because you are not really able to meet their needs." (Mother)

"I have a 3 and a 5 year old and it's too awkward to take my eldest to a club the youngest can't go to, especially if there is not a club for him to do as well." (Mother)

Parents and organisations working with families agree that there is little provision for under 5s apart from Bounce and Rhyme and Toddler Time which are short sessions. Having to pay for under 5 access to leisure services is a barrier to affording and accessing sporting activities.

Parents spoke about it being difficult to find suitable activities for teenagers who aren't "happy just to go to the park" and said that there is the risk, in areas with few amenities and services, of young people hanging around shops and potentially causing trouble out of boredom.

"My child is 13 and many of these activities do not appeal to him. I know that's a difficult age but feel that he's too isolated during the holidays. He does not go to the local high school and he finds it difficult to just turn up at events." (Mother)

Lack of provision for children with additional support needs (ASN)

Parents^{xxi} say that structured activities are particularly important for some children with ASNs who can experience anxiety outside of term time due to changes in routine.

"When nursery stops he gets angry and stressed and then the bed wetting starts. When he's at nursery he gets up and the whole day is planned out, he's got classes and playtime and he knows where he is and that helps him." (Mother)

Particular issues restrict some children with ASNs in accessing mainstream Glasgow Life Activities. Swimming pools can be too busy or loud and going to parks and museums "even for ten minutes can be super stressful so I only take the kids when my husband is off." (Mother) Participation in mainstream activities can be stressful and fraught for some children and parents fear that their children will have difficulties communicating and will be judged for their behaviour.

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“For me personally, I’m concerned about how my child is going to behave in a group of kids she doesn’t normally mix with. Is she going to cope? For me I’d probably not put my kid into stuff, I’d just rely on family because I’d rather not risk it and at least they know what like she is. A lot of people don’t realise the difficulties she has and assume she’s just badly behaved.” (Mother)

Some parents find it impossible to access specialist provision for children where they live in the city and it is rarely provided free due to the additional staffing and expertise required.

Parents spoke about the need for these specialist holiday programmes, with appropriately trained staff, to provide exercise, sports, arts and therapeutic experiences for their children. One group said that there should be more provision like the unstructured ASN soft play session at the Cranhill Beacon, staffed by supportive Glasgow Life workers, which allows children to run free and provides the opportunity to “chat to other parents in the same boat.”



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Other parents reported difficulties in finding activities simultaneously suitable for their children with ASNs and their siblings. Lack of specialist provision within mainstream services means that either the child(ren) with ASN or their siblings end up missing out on holiday activities.

“There’s nothing for the kids to do as groups don’t cater for children with autism... it would be good to have groups not just for ASN but for mixed so it’s accessible and I can also bring along my children who don’t have additional support needs.” (Mother of autistic child and two pre-school siblings)

“[My] youngest has SEN so can only attend [paid for] specialist provision... I cannot afford to send the older child to holiday schemes as its too expensive and awkward trying to get them to different clubs before I start work.” (Mother)

Example 1: Swimming

Children enjoyed recounting their visits to swimming pools during the holidays, speaking about their favourite venues, the varying cleanliness of different pools and special features like flumes, inflatables, music and wave machines. Parents saw it as an activity that could be enjoyed together and as exercise which was good for their children.

In terms of accessing lessons, difficulties identified related to pre-paying for blocks of lessons, the fact that classes were often over-subscribed with no spaces and the fact that lessons are booked face to face and can't be done online.

"Whenever I've phoned up about swimming lessons it's always fully booked. There's some classes at Bearsden but then you've got your bus fare out." (Mother)

"How are you supposed to pay for a 6 week block up front with 2 kids? I just hope my boys don't ask me to go." (Mother)

Parents understood that swimming lessons cost money but wondered whether there could be a discount for families on low incomes. For informal leisure visits to the pool, parents valued the free entry offered through Kidz Cards. However, for parents with children under five, costs of taking pre-school children could prove prohibitive. Parents also identified difficulties around travel costs to pools when facilities don't exist nearby.

"If it's sunny you don't want to walk ages to the swimming and you get there you're hot and sweaty but if it's raining you don't want to come out and walk home and get wet again." (Child)

"When Tollcross swimming centre is closed for events my son and his pal go to the Gorbals. When the travel and event expenses are taken into account, I cannot afford to do this more than twice a week." (Mother)

Example 2: Football

Football is a popular activity but costs can be prohibitive.

"My boys love to play football but it is £5 a time for them to play. We don't have any money and most of what we have goes on food and the basics. The kids have part-time jobs but even at that there's the travel in so they're always looking for me to fund it." (Mother)

"The cost has risen significantly and it has become unaffordable for families to send their children to football holiday camps. This activity was really good and inexpensive just 2 years ago and my son and my nephew would attend regularly. This year I cannot afford to send my child to a football club for £50 per week, or £10 per day." (Mother)

The use of dormant school pitches and arenas at off-peak times was suggested repeatedly by parents as a way of offering free or affordable football to a larger number of children.

c. Non-Glasgow Life holiday programmes and activities

Parents named a diverse range of different services and facilities used in the holidays, provided largely by the voluntary sector. These ranged from activities in local community centres to paid classes to support and respite services. [A full list of the organisations named by parents and children is included in Appendix C.](#)

The services valued by parents offer a range of activities for a range of ages and are suitable for both parents and children to spend time in with, for example, reasonably priced cafes. Long and flexible opening hours were valued by parents and one service allowing children over eight years to attend unaccompanied by an adult was especially valued.

However, cost remains important regardless of who is providing activities. Parents value free activities in their communities as any cost can prove prohibitive. Upfront information about costs is important. One group of parents spoke about an organisation that looked great online but, when they went to sign up, were actually charging money for activities which was unaffordable.

“There’s a few that charge 50p for kids, which doesn’t seem like a lot but it adds up if you’ve four kids, or even at that you might only have one but at the end of the week after five days it adds up.” (Mother)

Parents spoke about a potential lack of sustainability for groups run by volunteers. One parent spoke about the loss of a thriving local mother and toddler group which had been dependent on mothers to organise and run it; when their children moved on to nursery or school, the group stopped running regularly.

Similarly, parents spoke about a lack of capacity in organisations with limited funding and stretched part time staff. One woman spoke about the support she receives from a domestic abuse organisation who take her five children out in the holidays:

“It’s really, really stressful for the woman [staff member], I know, because it’s hard for her to fit everybody in and she’s only got one day for them so at the end of the day sometimes the children don’t all want to do the same thing but I’m like ‘ok let’s keep it in’ and I don’t want to ask. They have only one person and she might be voluntary for all we know so I tell them ‘whatever she is able to do just accept it and leave it at that.’” (Mother)

d. Other comments about content of holiday provision

- *Outdoor activities:* Many parents in focus groups were vocal in their support for outdoor activities during summer and children in all three groups agreed: one thirteen year old girl said she would ideally “love to do outdoor adventures, nature trails, mountain biking, camping and abseiling.” Trips to Blair Drummond Safari Park and various zoos were often amongst the first ideas advanced when children were asked which activities they would prefer during the holidays.
- *Sports are popular amongst children and parents.* Parents attending focus groups spoke about the importance of children remaining fit and healthy during holidays. The most popular sporting activities identified by children include athletics, gymnastics and dance, football and swimming.
- *Arts as well as sports:* a handful of parents indicated that it seemed easier to find sports activities than music or arts activities, suggesting that both are needed

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- *Gender:* Most parents agreed that there was “a good balance of activities for boys and girls.” However, gender distinctions still remain for some activities. One eleven year old boy remarked that “I’d like to do netball but there’s not netball in Glasgow for boys.” Some girls in another group indicated that they would welcome the opportunity to try “boy’s things” like boxing or martial arts.
- *Activities which involve parents:* non-working parents with younger children spoke favourably about services which ran activities for both parents and children but there was recognition that older children would not “want the mums there.” Some community groups provide activities for children alongside facilities for parents to “sit and have a coffee and a chat while they are busy.”



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4.2.3. Summary of issues affecting holiday provision for low income families

- Lack of awareness as to what Glasgow Life offers, where and how to find out about free/low cost activities and how to engage with existing provision
- Activities offered at unsuitable times which do not fit with parents’ working hours
- The need to pre-pay and block-book sporting lessons
- Lack of online booking facilities and under-developed website facilities
- Lengthy waiting lists for popular activities such as swimming and football
- Limited provision of:
 - non-sporting, arts and crafts related activities
 - activities for under 5s and over 12s
 - activities suitable for children with ASNs and suitable for children with ASNs to attend along with siblings
 - learning activities designed to address the issue of ‘learning loss’

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- Perception that galleries or museums are places to visit only once
- Local parks perceived as unsafe and unpleasant
- Some public libraries perceived as unwelcoming and/or unsuitably designed for those with very young children
- Lack of local amenities in the north of Glasgow and vast areas of derelict land leading to the perception that the area has been neglected or overlooked
- Lack of services designed to support parents emotionally during school holidays
- Services not offering free or low cost, nutritious food to the child and failing to address holiday hunger
- High costs of Out of School Care and oversubscribed services in some areas and unevenness in provision of Out of School Care across the city
- Voluntary sector organisations struggling to secure enough funding to meet the cost of delivering services for children and parents.

4.3. How can holiday service providers across the city better meet the needs of low-income families? Recommendations and areas to explore

This section presents key recommendations from parents, children and organisations which could contribute towards reducing costs and pressures, increasing access to holiday activities for children and ensuring that the needs of families on low incomes are better met.

4.3.1. Better planning and promotion of services

Raising the profile of Glasgow Life and its services

There is a need to raise awareness of Glasgow Life across the city as some parents were unsure of its remit and/or perceived its primary focus as commercial. Additionally, there is the need to promote the Glasgow Life holiday programme in a way that works, working with voluntary and public sector organisations to promote activities amongst their client groups. Equipping respite workers, health care workers and health visitors with the knowledge of local holiday provision would also be useful in reaching parents with very young children. There is a place for paper-based advertising through leaflets and posters but also the need to utilise social media and improve the Glasgow Life website to showcase available activities as widely as possible.

Ensuring co-design of services with local people

Several responses to the survey of organisations indicated that “families on low incomes should be involved in the planning and delivery of services to help overcome many of the barriers which they face” and ensure that they adequately meet the varied needs of local communities.

Improved partnership working with local groups and services

Many respondents to the organisations survey felt that Glasgow Life should develop better communication and working relationships with local groups. They felt that this would help to pool resources, reduce costs and better embed Glasgow Life within existing communities where it lacks a decisive presence. They suggest that Glasgow Life could support community groups to run programmes for local communities during the holidays by offering free or subsidised lets. Many respondents indicated that charitable organisations delivering free activities during the holiday period need to be provided with “appropriate funding in order to continue to deliver a quality service to ensure the needs of children and their families are being met.”

Addressing lack of local facilities and consequent transport cost to venues elsewhere

Potential use of dormant school facilities was a recurring suggestion in all focus groups and surveys. Using local schools would allow activities to run in the neighbourhoods in need of them and would remove transport costs. The use of vacant schools by Glasgow Life or any other organisation would enable local children to benefit from facilities such as school kitchens, gym halls and playing fields and school buses might additionally be used to transport children to day trips or visits. Some participants suggested that local volunteers could have the skills to develop and deliver these services, building confidence and skills and increasing employability.

“Why are the schools not opened up and summer schools started? We pay for education through our council tax so why are these resources sitting on our doorstep not being utilised properly?” (Organisations survey)

Investment in services for the north of the city is required to address the apparent lack of Glasgow Life presence in this area. Local residents suggest working alongside community organisations to help them regenerate derelict land and establish local services.

4.3.2. Supporting parents' childcare needs

Addressing unsuitable timings for holiday activities

Holiday provision timings should mimic school and working hours with all-day activities, full morning and full afternoon provision in a variety of venues city-wide. This would enable parents to work and to have sufficient time to drop off and collect their child, with the potential that Glasgow Life could offer a much needed alternative to childcare for working parents.

Addressing lack of Out of School Care provision

There is a need to increase the number and spread of these services to enable parents to work. It was suggested that subsidised lets would help Out of School Care providers to keep prices affordable. It was also suggested that there should be more consultation directly with After School Care providers not currently offering Out of School Care to establish what additional support they might need to run an Out of School Care service.

4.3.3 Improved access and participation

Addressing the issue of 'holiday hunger'

One recurring suggestion from organisations working with children and families was the provision of a free, healthy lunch included in organised activities or, alternatively, offering children low cost nutritious snacks. It was felt that this would encourage more families to utilise holiday activities and address the persistent issue of holiday hunger. Learning should be taken from existing schemes in other local authority areas.

Addressing issues with open access venues in the city

- Addressing vandalism, safety and litter is central to ensuring that parks are child-friendly. Specific suggestions included the introduction of cameras and/or wardens and replacing damaged play facilities
- In museums and galleries, the provision of tours and regularly updated exciting activities alongside the organisation of trips from local communities could enhance uptake. It was suggested that libraries could work in closer partnership with museums to organise programmes of themed activities jointly delivered. Museums and galleries must promote themselves as places where children can regularly go and be excited each time
- All libraries should ensure that children's areas are enclosed and distinct from adult areas, both to contain noise and enable a space for children to play and express themselves.

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Increasing the number of dedicated children's PCs, introducing a fine/lost stock fine amnesty prior to the summer holidays, and raising awareness that the late return of items borrowed on a child's card do not incur fines may all encourage more children to participate in the Summer Reading Challenge and increase overall library usage.

Ensuring holiday provision is promoted far in advance

Working with local schools and nurseries to publicise what is offered far in advance of the school holidays would support families in planning and budgeting for holiday activities and ensure that they get a place. Distributing a brochure or leaflet specifically detailing free activities well in advance of the holidays would be particularly useful, given that the services offered by other organisations often fill up quickly. One respondent to the parent survey identified the biggest challenge of the school holidays as "finding out about activities and community events that don't cost anything or little money which are safe for children to attend and disabled friendly."

Addressing barriers to participation caused by block-booking, advance payment and face-to-face booking

Removing the need to block book and pre-pay for holiday provision and enabling parents to pay as they go would enhance flexibility of access and greatly assist parents on low incomes. Providing the facility for parents to book classes or lessons online rather than in person at the leisure centre would save an additional pre-emptive visit to the leisure centre in order to secure a place.

Addressing lengthy waiting lists for holiday provision

There is the need to schedule more activities where they are required to ensure that all children are able to benefit from holiday provision.

Addressing the issue of transport costs to access holiday provision

In the absence of local activities, parents suggested extending the provision of free or low cost travel passes for families during the summer – particularly for those residing in areas with few amenities – which would enable families to take advantage of free or low cost activities outwith their immediate vicinity: "there should be free travel on buses, trains and underground within Glasgow for Children with Kidz Card/ Young Scot cards during the holidays to get to activities." (Parent)

4.3.4. Adapting content and delivery

Diversifying services and activities to serve all ages

- Address lack of provision for mixed age ranges by providing "activities that children across age groups can attend - even if tasks are differentiated on site."
- Focus on involving teenagers through employing outreach workers and involving young people in the design and delivery of activities
- There is the need to develop activities for pre-school children – particularly for the under 3s. A programme of activities running parallel to provision aimed at school-aged children would facilitate ease of use for families.

Diversifying content to appeal to different children and young people

- Provide activities linked to the curriculum (such as maths challenges), more outdoor activities (e.g. nature trails, gardening and adventure activities) and more arts, crafts and musical activities
- Provide non-sporting activities: cooking clubs, dressmaking, sewing, knitting, photography, painting and “beauty” were cited by some children as skills they would like to learn
- Show family movies at community venues for a very low cost
- Some respondents to surveys suggested that “all sporting facilities for children under the age of 18 should be free, from golf to football, from gym to fun parks.” If this is unfeasible offering some free taster sessions for children using tennis courts, football pitches and gyms could engage more children in physical activities.

Improved provision for children with ASNs

Parents spoke about the need for more varied provision for children with ASNs and the need to provide specialist training to Glasgow Life staff which would equip them with the skills necessary to run engaging and safe sessions. Offering parents the choice of both ‘mixed’ and ‘ASN only’ groups would meet more families’ needs. Parents suggested that voluntary sector organisations attempting to provide these services should be supported with the additional costs incurred and that Disability Living Allowance be increased for child recipients during holiday periods.

Addressing barriers to affording day trips and visits

Many parents and organisations working with children and families spoke about the potential for organising trips for parents and children unlikely to otherwise afford it: “away day excursions would be a welcome addition to children and family fun and offer exciting opportunities for learning and development.”

Ensuring support for parents over holiday periods

Keeping parent groups operational during the holidays was suggested as one way of combatting social isolation and holiday stress. Incorporating money-saving and welfare advice services into existing parent support was also suggested. Supporting parents who are anxious about using holiday provision will help to benefit their children; suggestions included befriending services.

Parents suggested the need for informal support groups at local libraries and venues where these do not already exist, offering the opportunity to discuss difficulties and share solutions to commonly-experienced parenting difficulties. Other suggestions included courses and activities for parents at the same venues being used for children’s holiday activities.

5. Conclusion

Families on low incomes experience a range of challenges during holiday periods, including financial pressures and difficulties in sourcing childcare or holiday activities which are accessible, affordable and fit with parental employment and the needs of the family. This can lead to practical and emotional difficulties for parents and less likelihood that children and young people from low income households access stimulating, enjoyable and beneficial experiences throughout the holidays.

Parents, children and the organisations working with them have highlighted a range of barriers to the uptake of holiday provision in the city by low income families, ranging from awareness, cost and content to availability, timings and distance to travel. They have also suggested a range of potential solutions to these problems. If taken on board these could help transform Glasgow's holiday provision to better serve the needs of low income families. Awareness of parents' and children's experiences during holidays, the current factors hindering their participation and the potential solutions they propose must all inform the next stage of Glasgow Life's feasibility study.

References and notes

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- ^{xiii} Quoted in Fitzgerald, T. (2015), 'Struggling parents skipping meals so children can eat during school summer holidays', *Manchester Evening News*, 17 July
- ^{xiv} Rai, S.(March 2015), *Food poverty: school holidays and wider impact*, Sunderland: Northern Housing Consortium, p.6
- ^{xv} Egan, J., (2015). The barriers and opportunities facing lone parents moving into paid work, briefing paper 46, Glasgow: Glasgow Centre for Population Health. Lone parents in work are more likely to experience underemployment and in-work poverty since their median earnings equivalent to a third of the earnings of couples with children.
- ^{xvi} Spencer, S. (2015). *The Cost of the School Day*. Glasgow: Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland. www.cpag.org.uk/content/cost-school-day-report-and-executive-summary
- ^{xvii} Card for 5-11 year olds offering discounts at venues and holiday programmes across the city and free access to swimming pools. The Young Scot card offers similar benefits for 12-16 year olds.
- ^{xviii} One circumstance identified by a respondent to the organisations survey was "the added household pressure of having a loved one in prison." Stigma means that families may have told no-one about the imprisonment and consequently lack access to information about relevant support services. Having to visit prison at set times limits children's attendance at holiday activities. Additionally, remaining at home on Home Detention Curfew (electronic tag) makes it difficult for parents to collect children from activities finishing later in the day. Additional costs of transport to and from the prison and stresses associated with the visit may also limit children's engagement with holiday provision.
- ^{xix} Parents receiving Income Support (IS) must transition to Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) when their youngest child has turned five, regardless of whether the child is attending school yet.
- ^{xx} Glasgow West Childcare Forum (2014), *Childcare in the West of Glasgow: Service Audit and Strategic Framework 2014*, Glasgow: Glasgow City Council
- ^{xxi} Parents participating in focus groups had children with autism, Asperger's syndrome and/or sensory processing issues and dyslexia.

Appendices

Appendix A: focus groups

Groups were arranged in collaboration with community based organisations (Barnardos, Riddrie Breastfeeding Mother's Support Group, Govanhill Youth Project, Milton Community Garden, PEEK, One Parent Families Scotland [OPFS] and Glasgow Life).

Focus group locations were identified with reference to the 2012 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) as areas experiencing deprivation in relation to income, housing, health, education, skills and training, access to geographic services or crime. As focus groups were dependent on the goodwill of organisations working in communities, ideal locations were balanced with time available and practical logistics. Two focus groups were arranged solely with lone parents via One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS). Both were co-moderated with the Lone Parent Project Development Advisor (Glasgow City Council Lone Parent Project) based at OPFS.

8 participants per group and a mix of gender and ethnicities was anticipated when advertising and recruiting but not always achieved given unpredictable attendance levels.

Adult focus groups

Participants were given £15 vouchers in recognition of time spent at the focus group, along with an explanation of how their contributions would be used to inform the development of holiday services in the city.

The focus groups addressed the following topics with prompts to draw out more information and/or to keep discussions on topic:

- What are the school holidays like for you?
- Thinking of a typical day during the holidays, what do you think are the key challenges of the holidays for parents?
- What services can parents use to cope with these challenges?
- What do you think the holidays are like for local children? Do they get to do the things they would like to and if not why?
- Do you know which activities and services are available for children across the city?
- Which holiday activities has your child taken part in? Which Glasgow Life services do they use during the holidays? How did you find out about these and what was their experience of them? If they haven't taken part, why?
- How might the holiday provision currently offered by Glasgow Life be improved or made more accessible to families? Are there any supports that don't currently exist that could be put into place or any services that could be tweaked to make them better adapted to the needs of families?

Children's focus groups

The groups varied in length from 30 to 90 minutes, and children were asked about the following topics:

- What kind of things do you usually do during the summer? What do you do on a typical day and where do you spend most of your time?
- What are some things you like about the holidays? What do you dislike?

- Do you get to do the things that you would really like to do? If not, why and what stops you?
- Do you use local libraries, parks, museums, sports centres? If not, why?
- They were then given lists of sporting, arts and crafts and other activities and asked to categorise these as 'definitely', 'maybe' or 'no way' according to what they would like to do
- They were asked also to think hypothetically about a boy from a single parent family whose mother had been forced to give up work to care for his younger sister and to consider what the school holidays would be like for him. This was a starting point to exploring in a detached way some of the issues they might be experiencing over the summer
- Name one thing you'd love to do during the school holidays, if you could do anything?

Appendix B: Parent survey

Of the 223 respondents to the parents' survey:

- 78% were female, 20% male and 2% preferred not to say
- 68% self-identified as White Scottish, 22% White British, 2% White Irish, 1% White Polish, 1% Other White ethnic group (German), 1% Mixed or Multiple ethnic background (Romanian Irish and Scottish Mauritian), 1% Other Asian, 1% Black Scottish or Black British and 3% preferred not to say
- 33% of respondents stated they were lone parents
- 50% of respondents had children aged 6-11, 22% had children aged 12-15 years, 12% from 4-5 years, 8% had young adults aged 16-18, 7% had children aged between 19 months and 3 years and 1% had children under 18 months
- 48% of respondents work full-time, 32% part-time, 5% were self-employed, 6% described their situation as looking after home and family, 4% were permanently sick or disabled, 1% had short term injury or illness, 1% were in higher or further education and 2% were unemployed and seeking work whilst 2% selected 'other'
- Of those disclosing total annual household income, 4% indicated their annual income was below £5200, 13% below £10399, 11% below £15,559, 11% below £20799, 16% below £25999. 12% indicated that their income was under £36,399 and 20% less than £51,999. 13% indicated their income was over £52,000.
- 36% indicated they had over £30 of weekly disposable income after paying for necessities, 15% had £20 to £29.99, 20% had £10 to £19.99, 13% had £5 to £9.99, 9% had less than £5.00 and 8% had nothing. 65% of respondents stated they had no savings.
- 3% of respondents indicated their child was blind or partially sighted, 2% that their child experienced deafness or partial hearing loss, 18% that their child had a learning difficulty such as dyslexia, 3% had a learning disability such as downs syndrome, 19% that their child had a development disorder such as autism, 15% said their child had spectrum disorder (e.g. Asperger's syndrome), 3% had a physical disability, 3% stated their child had a mental health issue, 4% indicated their child had a long term illness, disease or condition and 1% that their child had a drug or alcohol condition. 24% said their child had no condition and 1% preferred not to say. An additional 3% indicated their child had other conditions and specified eczema, heart problems, asthma and that their child had been affected by the parent's drug or alcohol misuse.

Financial challenges

- 92% strongly agreed/agreed that the family budget was tighter during holidays. 83% strongly agreed/agreed that they had no or less spare money to spend on themselves during holidays. 20% claimed new or additional benefits during the holidays. 58% strongly agreed/agreed that debts increase
- Limited finances affect family activities. 56% of responding parents say that they cannot afford holidays and 58% that they cannot afford day trips.

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- 36% find it hard to pay for meals for their child. 28% had skipped meals to feed their children. 7% of parents said they had used a food bank to feed their child.

Childcare costs and access

- 86% agreed that childcare is too expensive to afford
- 57% agreed that childcare does not suit their working hours and just over three quarters agreed that wrap around childcare should be available. 55% have been unable to make use of Out of School Care - 26% indicated that local childcare was oversubscribed and their child had been unable to obtain a place.
- 57% strongly agreed/agreed that there is insufficient childcare for those over the age of twelve.
- The most popular means of holiday childcare was the reliance on family (74%). Almost half of parents stated they relied on friends for childcare.
- 64% indicated they had taken annual leave, 21% unpaid leave, 15% parental leave and 11% sick leave to attend to childcare
- 15% had reduced their working hours and 36% had changed working hours for the purposes of childcare. 15% indicated they had turned down a job offer because of childcare issues and 15% indicated that lack of childcare had impacted their job seeking activities.

Impact of holidays on children

- 44% agree/strongly agree their child had forgotten what they had previously learned upon return to school but 40% disagreed
- 67% agreed that their child got sufficient physical exercise during the holidays. 64% stated that their child finds it difficult to spend time with friends during holidays. 59% indicated that the holidays were too long.
- 65% felt they were able to enjoy quality time with their child during the holidays, whilst 32% disagreed.
- 51% agreed that their neighbourhood was safe for their child to play in whilst 35% disagreed.
- 18% strongly agreed or agreed that they did not feel confident to accompany their child to organised activities and the same percentage agreeing that their child's behaviour or disability acted as a barrier to them accessing organised activity

Glasgow Life provision

- 64% of respondents indicated their child had a Kidz card, 35% that they didn't and 2% were unsure. 37% stated that their child had a Young Scot card, 63% that they didn't and 1% did not know.
- 82% had never participated in Glasgow Kids Club activities, and 69% had never taken part in Glasgow Life Holiday Programme and 76% had never participated in Glasgow Life Sports Programme. This suggests roughly three quarters of respondents had not participated in any of these activities.
- Local parks were the most used amenity with 71% making regular use of them; 30% regularly, and 52% sometimes. 22% regularly made use of the local library and 46% sometimes visited, with 33% never using this facility; 19% regularly used local clubs, 35% sometimes and 47% never; 66% sometimes visited museums, 14% regularly visited them and 20% never visited.
- The majority of parents indicated that their child had not been involved in Glasgow Life sporting activities: 90% stated their child had never been involved in Activ8, 89% had never attended Club511, 77% had never taken part in pre-5 activities (e.g. Mini Kickers, Balanceability, Play Gym etc.)

Lack of awareness about Glasgow Life

- Just over half of parents found out about Glasgow Life activities via Glasgow Life, 50% discovered them through word of mouth, 38% were informed by their school. Around a quarter found out via social media, internet search, or their local library and just under a fifth by postal leaflet.
- 25% strongly agreed/agreed that they are unsure who Glasgow Life are and what they do
- 47% strongly agreed/agreed that they would recommend Glasgow Life holiday activities to others
- 31% were unsure how to book activities and 41% disagreed that they know what free or low cost activities were offered. Almost a third disagreed that they know where to find out about available activities

Costs of activities

- 43% strongly agreed/agreed that the cost of activities was too high for them to afford.
- 57% felt that pre-payment and block booking makes activities too expensive
- 30% of respondents agreed that they could not afford for their child to travel to activities, and 29% felt that paying for associated clothing, snacks or equipment was unaffordable

Convenience and satisfaction

- Almost a third of parents agreed that waiting lists for activities were too long, 26% that activities were unappealing to their children and 42% that dates and times of activities were unsuitable. Large proportions of respondents selected 'don't know' indicating lack of awareness of what is offered, where and how to book
- 5% were very satisfied with Glasgow Life services, 22% were satisfied, 34% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 10% were dissatisfied and 2% were very dissatisfied. 28% indicated that they did not know or had not used these services.

Suggested improvements

- 59% of respondents suggested changing the hours of activities to suit the needs of working parents, 55% suggested providing more or better information about activities, 54% greater promotional outreach within schools, 52% providing affordable childcare, 50% remove the need to pre-pay or block book activities, 45% providing services or activities at a wider range of venues, 44% providing more information about how to engage in activities, 41% organising trips for children, 35% providing a wider range of activities and 33% subsidising the cost of transport to and from activities.

Appendix C: survey of organisations working with children and families

Respondents were asked about their organisation and role within it, what they perceived as the key pressures on service users during school holidays and what more could be done to make holiday services suit the needs of families on low incomes.

Of the 59 organisations responding;

- 68% were managers or coordinators of their organisation, 8% CEO, Chair or Director and 11% Youth Leaders. Others described their role as Head of the Centre, Liaison Worker, Children and Families Worker, Welfare Rights Officer, Early Years Officer or Housing Officer

- Respondents were asked to indicate the key purpose or objective of their organisation, and many selected more than one answer. 69% selected 'Children and Families', 29% 'Health and Social Care', 31% 'Community, Society and Economic Development.'
- 90% indicated that their core client group was children and families, 59% local people and residents, 31% the general public, 33% disabled people, 41% vulnerable groups in general, 31% migrants, 53% the poor, homeless or disadvantaged, 31% BMEs, 45% the unemployed, 18% the elderly, 35% those with mental health issues and 16% faith groups. The survey targeted respondents with direct experience of families and communities, but also with those working closely with specific groups
- 28% of respondents indicated that their organisation operated citywide, 26% in the North West, 23% in the North East, 21% in the South and 4% at neighbourhood level. 39% of participating organisations worked with 101-500 clients, 23% with 51-100, 21% with 1000+, 11% with 501-1000 and 5% with less than 50
- 91% of respondents said that Glasgow Life does not currently meet the needs of families on low incomes during school holidays. However, some respondents qualified their responses to this question, and elsewhere highlighted what was currently working well
- Barriers identified to accessing holiday provision: 94% of respondents identified the costs of activities as a significant barrier, 79% the location of/travel costs to activities, 69% the need for advanced payment, 64% lack of awareness, 48% the need to book activities, 45% a parent or child disability, 34% cultural or language barriers, 34% lack of age appropriate activities, 31% unsuitable dates and times and 24% child disinterest.

Appendix D: list of non-Glasgow Life organisations providing holiday programmes or activities named by parents and children

- Wynford Hub - driving simulator, free computer classes and a cheap café.
- Buzz Club at Maryhill Greater Outreach Project (now closed) – the parents café allowed parents to “spend time having a blether” while their children are kept busy
- The Ark - soft play, pool tables and PlayStations, open all day
- Maryhill Hub – children over eight can attend unaccompanied by an adult
- Molendinar Community Centre – activities for children
- PEEK in Gallowgate and in Calton
- Lambhill Stables – parent and toddler group (closed) and storytelling and open days
- Church clubs
- Geeza Break, Parkhead – a family support and respite service
- Women’s Aid Children’s Support Group
- A&M Scotland
- The Happy Club for children with autism and disabilities
- Townhead Micro-Adventure club
- The Pitz at Townhead
- Tollcross YMCA playscheme,
- NG Sports Legacy (NG Homes)
- Platform Arts
- Toonspeak,
- Capability Scotland Playscheme,
- REACH Lanarkshire,
- Quarriers
- Giffnock North Athletics
- Bridging the Gap in the Gorbals,

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- SiMY Townhead
- Colour Strings music class at Partick Burgh Halls
- Summer in the City
- Uddingston Hockey Club
- Rugby Tots at the West of Scotland Rugby Club.