

# MAKING SPACE FOR GIRLS

*have girls been designed out of public space?*

LSE  
**Cities**





Margaret Clark

# What is the project?

- + LSE Cities and Make Space for Girls coming together to conduct a researcher-in-residence style peer research programme
- + Involved nine 17-21 year olds who identified as girls and young women
- + Investigated local areas (Crewe and Trowbridge) using various research methods taught through a curriculum across 7 weeks

# What are the aims of the project?

- + To answer the question –‘have girls been designed out of public space?’
- + To investigate, first hand from the perspective of girls, what it is that girls need and want from public spaces
- + To have suggestions for what can be implemented into the transformations of real life parks and public spaces

# What did we do?

Each week was split into 3 sections:

- + Lecture/video
- + Reading
- + Activity

Followed by an hour long meeting at the end of each week.

Each week had a different focus:

1. What is a public space?
2. Why does design matter for thinking about public space?
3. Have girls been designed out?
4. How can we research and analyse public space?
5. How can we design a public space that meets our needs?
6. Why does design matter for us?
7. Reflections



# What did we do?

We also did several site visits with Olivia and Julia from LSE of various sites in Crewe.

- + Crewe town centre (including the Market Hall)
- + McLaren Park
- + Joey the Swan



# What did we find?

*Have girls been designed out of public space?*

- + Unfortunately, yes we have
- + 'Designed by men, for men'
- + Both our age and gender was a barrier to enjoying public spaces
- + Local spaces are exclusionary – they are designed with boys and men in mind
- + We feel unsafe, judged and unwelcome
- + Amenities were insufficient
- + We lack representation and the opportunity to have our voices and opinions heard

# What did we find?

## *Crewe town centre*

- + Heavily dominated male spaces
- + A close police station made us feel safer
- + Lack of shops
- + Uninviting bus station
- + The market centre is a safe space for us





# What did we find?

## *The Market Centre*

- + Open and bright
- + Clean toilets
- + Suitable for EVERYONE to use
- + Variety of options





# What did we find?


## *McLaren Park*

- + MUGA
- + Small children's play area
- + Poor lighting and paths
- + Lack of benches

# What do girls want?

To feel safe

Green, open  
spaces to  
'relax'

- Swings
  - Trampolines
  - Benches that are facing one another
  - Sheltered hangout spots
- 

Equipment and amenities designed for youth, that extend past the usual male dominated ones

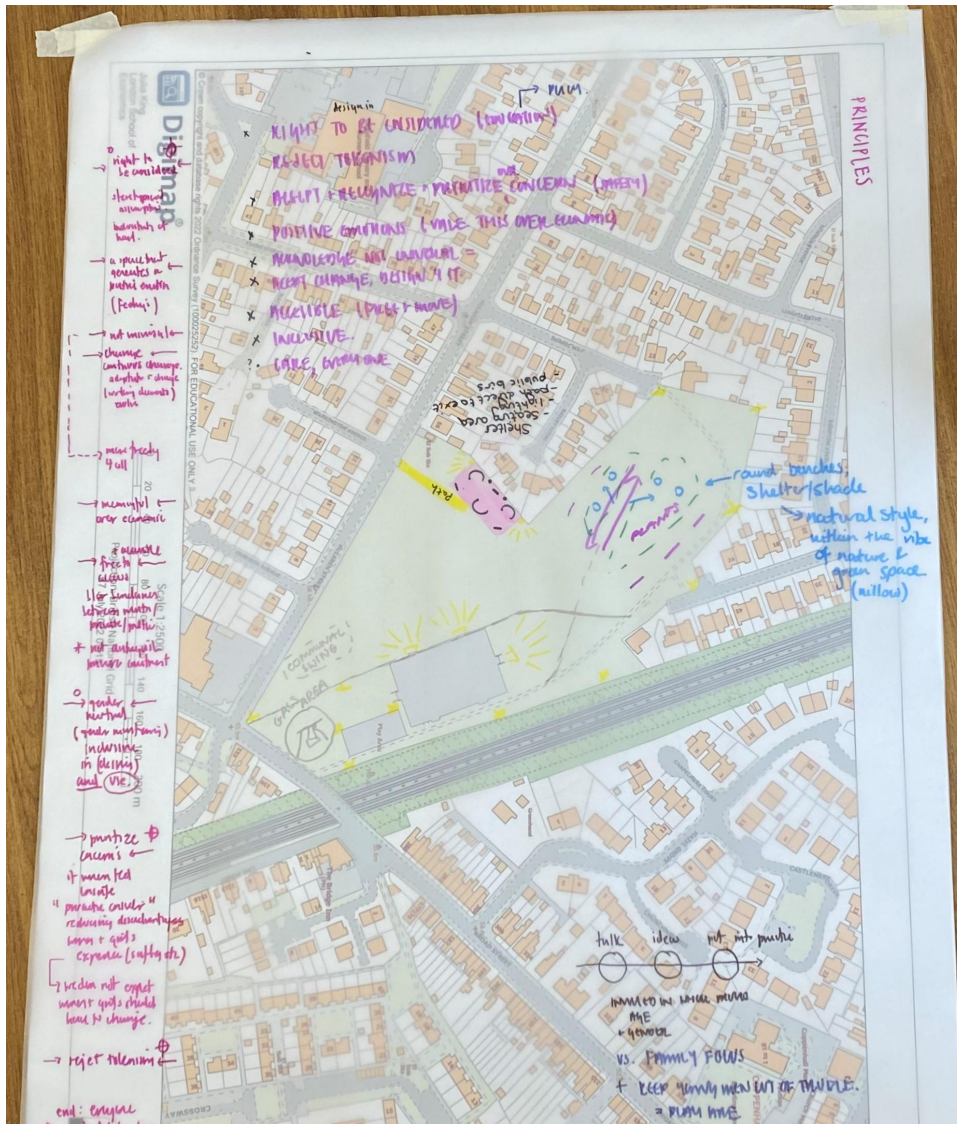
For our voices  
to be heard

For us to enjoy a  
space, we have to feel  
safe, welcomed and  
unjudged

In commercial areas,  
such as town centres,  
social spaces that are  
affordable are the best



# What do girls want? – McLaren Park



# Recommendations – Our top tips



Safety is a top priority

Lighting  
Wide, accessible paths  
No hidden, unlight areas



We value being able to socialise with our friends

Such as on benches that are circular and can include everyone in the conversation



We want to be able to use the space all the time

Lighting  
Shelter



Our voices and opinions need to be heard and represented in the changes implemented into public spaces