



Burmantofts Play Trail Implementation Pack

A process to grow health and wellbeing
benefits with local partners in Burmantofts,
Leeds

WALK IT. RIDE IT.



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

ARUP



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• Introduction

Setting the scene

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This section outlines the main aims of planning, designing and implementing urban trails. It connects the project with local policy and initiatives, and sets the design and practical principles for all three trails.

Setting the scene

Leeds City Council is delivering urban trails in the Burmantofts, Harehills and Richmond Hill (BHR) – Primary Care Network area in East Leeds as part of the Department for Transport's **Active Travel Social Prescribing Pilot**. These pilots, which are being delivered in 11 local authorities across England, are looking to test different methods for improving health and wellbeing through **active travel social prescribing**. Social prescribing is an approach that connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing.* For example, in relation to active travel, a GP could refer members of the community to walking, wheeling and cycling.

The pilot in Leeds is closely connected to the policy ambitions of a range of local, regional and national policies, including:

- **Healthy Leeds Plan** – healthy and caring city for all ages, where people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest.
- **Gear Change Plan** by Department for Transport (DfT) and Active Travel England – half of all journeys in towns and cities should be walked or cycled.
- **Decarbonising Transport Plan** by DfT and Active Travel England – aiming to deliver a world-class cycling and walking network in England by 2040.
- **West Yorkshire 2040 Transport Strategy** – with one of the aims to reach 300% more trips in West Yorkshire to be made by bicycle by 2027.
- **Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy** – for Leeds to be a city where you don't need a car.
- **Child Friendly Leeds** – putting children and young people at the heart of the city.
- **Leeds Vision Zero 2040 Strategy** – by 2040 no one will be killed or suffer serious injuries on roads in Leeds.



• Figure 1. The implementation of three urban trails connects to a range of local policies and initiatives.

* NHS England. Social prescribing. Accessed on 13 November 2023: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/>

As part of the pilot, a comprehensive **Active Travel Social Prescribing Masterplan** was created that sets out a range of ideas for improving the natural and built environment conditions for walking, wheeling and cycling in the BHR Primary Care Network area.

BHR **Primary Care Network** is a network of practices in Leeds with a common goal of improving the health of the local population. Their vision is to collaborate for the benefit of local patients, with the aim of reducing inequalities, supporting practices to be more sustainable, and making a positive difference to patients' lives. Within Burmantofts, Shakespeare Medical Practice is one of the medical practices that is part of the Primary Care Network.



• **Figure 2.** Burmantofts, Harehills and Richmond Hill Primary Care Network.



• **Figure 3.** Active Travel Social Prescribing Masterplan summary document.

The **Active Travel Social Prescribing Masterplan** sets out a range of 38 proposals across BHR to enable walking, wheeling and cycling. The proposals include greenspace changes, safety improvements, placemaking and new cycle links. The proposals are all unique to BHR following engagement, site visits and the broader evidence base for the various interventions.

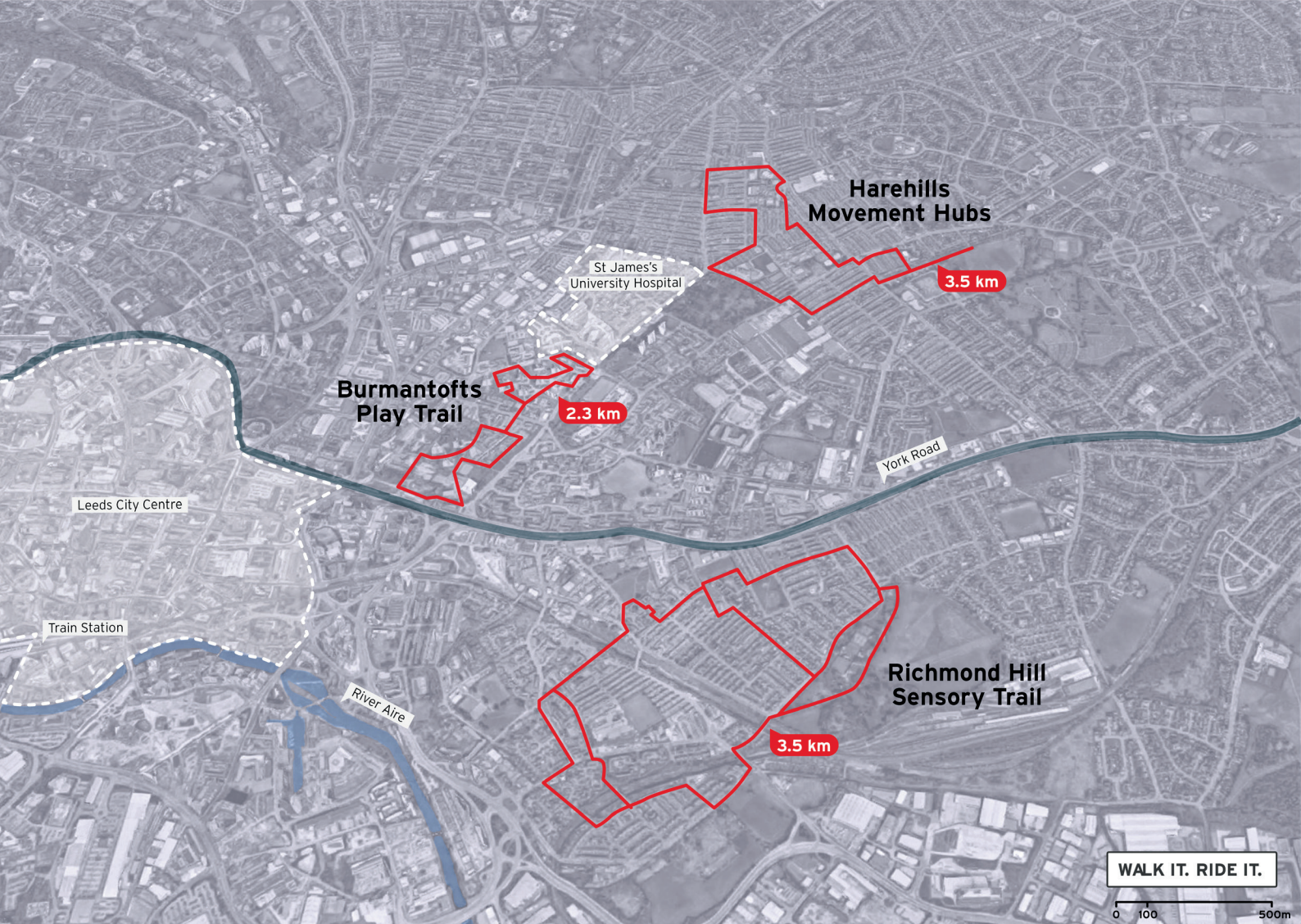
This document presents a framework and plan for the **Burmantofts Play Trail** - an urban trail focused on embedding playful moments within a densely populated community near to St James' Hospital. This is one of the three urban trails that forms the pilot.

The 3 Pillars

The BHR Active Travel Masterplan is based on three pillars:

BHR Active Travel Masterplan		
Everyday journeys by active modes	Group or individuals' activities in parks and greenspace	Complementary improvements
Making routes between neighbourhoods and regular stops (schools, GPs, city centre) safe, direct and attractive, so that daily trips can be made by active and sustainable modes of transport.	Making best use of local parks and greenspace as locations for group or individuals walks, wheels and rides, including 'learn to ride' sessions.	Making improvements to wayfinding, safety, cleanliness, green infrastructure, placemaking, seating and rest locations, parking management, lighting and campaigns to promote active travel.





• Figure 4. The planned location of the three urban trails within the wider Primary Care Network area.

Three urban trails

Urban Trails are signposted, themed routes within an urban setting to enable more everyday walking, wheeling and cycling journeys on peoples' doorsteps, so physical activity and social interaction can integrate better with their everyday life.

The trails aim to:

- encourage people to be **more active** in their immediate surroundings;
- **connect** people with the neighbourhood and the community within it;
- **encourage** residents to use an **active mode of transport** for a short, everyday journeys instead of a car;
- **inspire** and evoke curiosity;
- connect isolated points of interest into a **local narrative**.

Engaging with the trail either in full, or in parts, has the power to provide mental and physical health benefits, support social cohesion of the local communities, improve the perception of safety in the neighbourhood, and increase the sense of local identity and belonging.

The map above shows the three planned urban trails, which allow users to explore different parts of the Primary Care Network area and incorporate different local parks and points of interest in their everyday activities.

Each of the trails is different in terms of location, theme, communities and stakeholders likely to shape and use them. However, there are various design and practical principles that are common across the trails.

Design principles

These principles for design are centred around what the trails seek to achieve, and what was identified as the priority for delivery through various community and stakeholder engagement activities.



Physically active

The primary aim of the trails is to encourage physical activity. The trails incorporate sites of education, employment and social amenity that already result in many journeys. By making the routes to and between these sites more interesting and easier to navigate, they will be more attractive for walking, wheeling and cycling, rather than using private vehicles. Research by Public Health England highlights that even a daily 10-minute steady walk can reduce the risk of premature death by 15%*. Engaging in at least 10 minutes of one of the urban trails will improve mood, and physical fitness by contributing to the recommended 150 minutes of exercise per week.



Intergenerational

The BHR area has a younger demographic than the city average, and is comprised of many new arrivals to the city (and indeed the country) and their young and growing families. The trails will aim to capture the imaginations of the community's children and young people, where they can also encourage their families to join and interact with the trail. All of the trails are in close proximity of local schools, so can be used on the journeys to and from school, as well as to other local points of interest such as GP surgeries, hospitals, shops and parks. The trails will seek to instil healthy and active habits at a young ages as well as promote healthy ageing and encourage older adults to remain mobile, mentally stimulated, and socially connected to their communities.



Biodiverse

All of the urban trails will look to bring people closer to nature, by passing through local greenspace, incorporating educational activities around biodiversity, and even enhancing biodiversity through pockets of planting. Studies have shown that being in a natural environment encourages social interaction, improves attention and mood and reduces psychological distress**.



Educational

Engagement with schools in BHR to date has shown that for many children and young people, their ability to play and be active is restricted by time, particularly related to school work and the study to make up for disruption during the pandemic. With many families in BHR moving to the UK from abroad, there is a significant focus on creating a better life with opportunities to develop skills. Education is therefore a priority for families, and opportunities to learn about the community and built and natural environment in the neighbourhoods will be integrated into the trails. The trails will also facilitate intergenerational knowledge-sharing and lifelong learning.

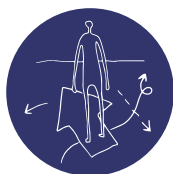
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* Brannan, M. et al. (2017), 10 minutes brisk walking each day in mid-life for health benefits and towards achieving physical activity recommendations. London: Public Health England. Download [here](#).

** Fairbrass, A. and C. Washbourne. Green infrastructure: Health and wellbeing, a factsheet on urban green and blue space. London: UCL. Download [here](#).

Practical principles

As well as the design principles, there are several 'practical principles', which have been devised so that the trails are feasible to deliver and are aligned with the constraints various Council departments need to work within.



Simple wayfinding

The wayfinding on the trail needs to be easy to follow, and include icons rather than a large amount of text, so that it can be understood by all, regardless of language. There are over 50 languages spoken locally. The five most commonly spoken languages are Romanian, Urdu, Tigrinya, Arabic, and Czech. Wayfinding will use distances in the metric system, as the time taken to cover this distance varies by the user. Where possible, distances will also be displayed on the ground in the form of painted markings. Trails may later be added to mobile applications such as [Love Exploring](#). Physical wayfinding elements will be the first priority, so that the community can get involved in the trail without the need for a charged phone, or access to mobile data.



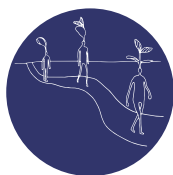
Flexible

All of the trails will have a 'core' route, and opportunities to lengthen or shorten it depending on time available, or levels of fitness and/or ability. Key local services that are nearby the core trail, but not actually on the route, will be marked so that users can easily make a diversion.



Accessible for all

All of the trail areas have undergone an indicative accessibility audit to identify barriers which would restrict access for some users, for example steps and steep gradients. These have been avoided, and any improvements have been marked within the trail plans including: new pedestrian crossings, lighting improvements, pavement resurfacing. Efforts have been made to highlight community centres, pharmacies and other sites where trail users could access water, toilets, changing facilities and first aid. Further development of the trails may expand the maps to include collaborations where trail users could borrow warm/waterproof clothing, or buy food and drink.



Evolving

The trails will be a permanent fixture all year round, but also flexible enough to receive various temporary activities and change with the seasons. Local community groups, gardening initiatives, schools, art groups and the Council can install and create seasonal variations, pop-ups and events throughout the year to keep the trails active.



Resilient

The selection of any physical equipment, painting or installations along the trails will need to be based on value for money, with a focus on choosing materials which are vandalism-resistant, hard-wearing, and suitable for year-round use. Any planting needs to be mindful of climatic changes, hardy, and require little maintenance.



Respectful

The trail routes pass residential buildings and various points of interest such as schools, medical practices and community centres. The trails will be designed in a way that is respectful to others, and therefore no seating will be placed in close proximity to homes where they may be overlooked, and any marginally louder activities will be encouraged at points away from these areas. The trails will also look to encourage respectful behaviours, particularly related to reducing the prevalence of pavement and anti-social parking.



Introduction

- **Burmantofts**

Socio-spatial context

Design process

Why Play

The Burmantofts Play Trail

This section provides the introduction into the Burmantofts area, and presents the play trail design process.

Socio-spatial context

Burmantofts, a suburb east of Leeds City Centre, boasts a rich history rooted in industrial and pottery heritage. The **Burton's site**, a textile manufacturing hub since the 1920s, was once the largest clothing factory globally, employing 10,000 people at its peak. However, with the collapse of the Arcadia Group in 2021, the textiles factory closed, marking the end of an era.

In addition to its industrial legacy, Burmantofts is renowned for its pottery heritage, with **Burmantofts Pottery** producing internationally acclaimed ceramics for almost a century. Glazed bricks, terracotta, and decorative items were crafted until profitability declined in the late 19th century. Notably, Burmantofts tiles grace several iconic buildings, including the University of Leeds Great Hall and County Arcade in central Leeds*.

The area's demographic makeup is characterized by its **multi-ethnic community**, with English as the primary language for 61% of pupils in local schools, compared to 80% across all Leeds schools. Burmantofts' population profile reveals a remarkably **young demographic**, with over 75% under the age of 39. There is also a very high proportion of 0-9 year olds, which is almost twice the city average.

A high proportion of households face **economic challenges**, with 49% of children living in poverty, nearly twice the Leeds average. A high level of deprivation is reflected in a lower life expectancy of 77, compared to the Leeds average of 81.** Severe mental health issues, particularly among migrants, compound the area's health challenges. Migrants have been identified as amongst the most vulnerable and socially excluded. This includes the difficulty in accessing health services and the need to address prejudice, cultural and practical barriers.

A **Health Needs Assessment** conducted by Leeds City Council highlighted concerns raised by residents. Primary issues included **the lack of outdoor play spaces for children at any age** and a **lack of awareness regarding local health and wellbeing**



• Figure 5. Burmantofts Tower.

services. The recommendations arising from the assessment include the need to **increase the number of quality spaces for community gatherings**, utilizing institutions like Shakespeare Primary School. Additionally, **improving and expanding places for young people and adults to play** is seen as crucial for enhancing community well-being.***

Residents appreciate the community's proximity to shops and towns, friendly neighbours, and safety during the day. However, **concerns** include the lack of green spaces, high-rise isolation, air quality, and the small size of housing.

Residents' suggestions for improving health issues include more activities for youths, increased community integration, better access to services and language classes, improved housing conditions, and enhanced access to information in various languages.****

In summary, Burmantofts, with its rich heritage, diverse community, and unique challenges, presents an opportunity for comprehensive urban development and community engagement to address health and well-being issues and improve overall quality of life.

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* Leeds Independent Life. Layers of Leeds: Burmantofts Pottery. Accessed on 1 November 2023: <https://leeds.independentlife.co.uk/entertainment-and-culture/layers-of-leeds-burmantofts-pottery/>

** Public Health Ward Profile. Accessed on 3 November 2023: <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Burmantofts-and-Richmond-Hill-ward-2016.pdf>

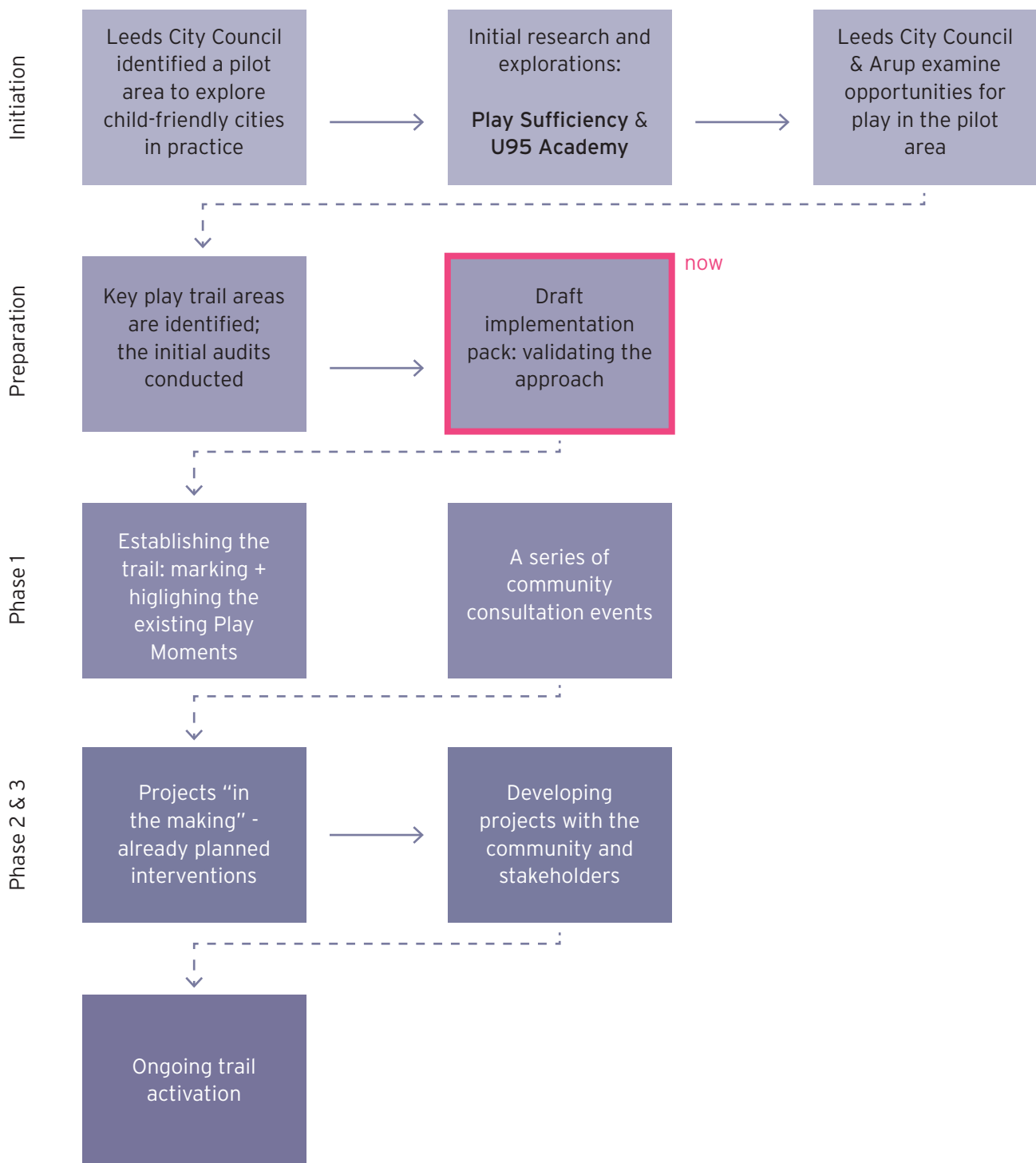
*** Lincoln Green Health Needs Assessment (2018). <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/HNA-Lincoln-Green-Final.pdf>

**** Ibid.

Design process

This document sets out a **framework for the trail** and **practical steps** to support its delivery. It is a result of previous research on play organised by the Leeds City Council, and the collaborative process of identifying and mapping the opportunities for play in the area, with transport, urban design and social value specialists from

Arup. The future steps are divided into Phase 1, 2 and 3, as well as the ongoing play activation framework. Active and continuous **community engagement and participation** in design and implementation activities is the essential part of each of these phases.





Introduction

Burmantofts

- **Why Play**

Play is for everyone

Benefits of play

Play in Burmantofts

The Burmantofts Play Trail

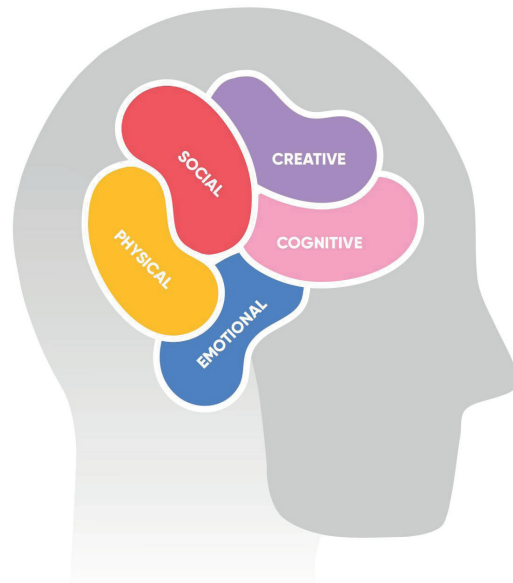
After a short overview of play definitions and benefits, this part looks at play challenges and opportunities in Burmantofts area.

Why play?

A liveable city or neighbourhood is one where people of all ages are active and visible in public spaces and are spending time with each other and in close proximity to nature. A greater sense of place, community and belonging can be fostered through **designing for play***.

Designing for play is about creating environments for **developing and growing relationships** between children and caregivers, between children of different ages, between caregivers, between neighbours, between neighbours and strangers, between people and places, and between people and the environment.

These relationships can develop through play, as playing has the power to trigger the development of a range of skills, in people of all ages.



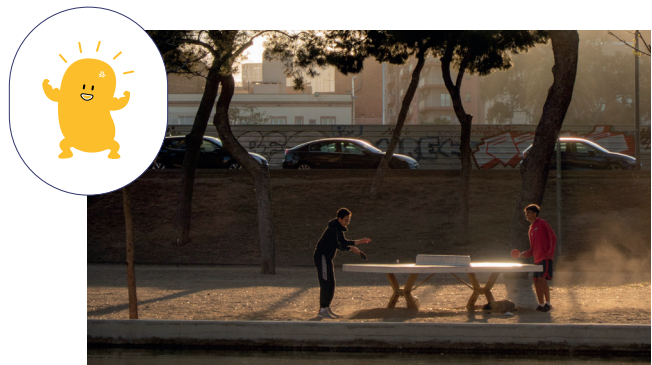
• **Figure 6.** The holistic approach to supporting health and wellbeing of people of all ages takes into account the development of physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skills - throughout the lifespan. Play is ideal for developing these skills, as it supports the ways in which people explore, engage, and learn about the world. (Source: Arup (2023) *Playful Cities Design Guide*)

Physical skills

Play can make people mentally and physically strong, through integrating physical activities such as running, wheeling, jumping, cycling, hopping or throwing. Physical play releases endorphins, and improves mood regardless of age. Balancing blocks, planting flowers or making models from putty are all physical games that build fine motor skills, too. Some design elements that can ignite physical play are: ping-pong table, dance floor, basketball hoops, climbing wall, wheeling path.

Social skills

While playing, people work together, problem solve, listen and negotiate. Playing together builds empathy by helping children think about their teammates. It's an essential skill for grown-up life, too – being able to collaborate is fundamental for our personal and professional development. Some design elements that can ignite social play are: giant seesaw, speaking pipe, seating composition, hole in the wall.



• **Figure 7.** Ping-pong table in public space (Source: Masi, Pexels).



• **Figure 8.** Circular bench (Source: Espacio Ludico, *Sensing the City* project).

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* Candiracci, Sara et al. 2023. *Playful Cities Design Guide: Play for anyone, anywhere*. London: Arup.

Creative skills

Creativity is how we tell the world about ourselves: we write, tell, perform, compose, and craft our stories. But it's also how we draw connections, make sense of abstract ideas, and test things out. Creative play puts children and adults in charge of exploring ideas, relationships, spaces and problems. It sparks confidence, as they learn to trust their natural curiosity.

Some design elements that can ignite creative play are: pretend station, chalk board, interactive mural, artificial lights, sound tiles, shadows.



• Figure 9. Public installation: collaborative drawing (Source: Ajuntament de Barcelona).

Cognitive skills

The joy of play gives the incentive to develop complex reasoning skills, memory, and concentration. This flexible thinking supports us to adapt to whatever new careers and life challenges life has to offer. Cognitive play also supports interactions between caregivers and children that have significant impact for brain development in early childhood years.

Some design elements that can ignite cognitive play are: touch underwater, interactive city map, history murals, counting steps.



• Figure 10. Urban Thinkscapes in Philadelphia's Belmont neighbourhood (Photo by Sahar Coston-Hardy Photography, provided courtesy of Playful Learning Landscapes Acion Network).

Emotional skills

Play helps people spot when playmates are feeling happy, sad or frustrated. Play is also a practice for dealing with the unpredictable or uncertain situations. Children learn to face their frustration when things don't go to plan. It's exactly the practice they need to be level-headed in a crisis, or to experiment their way to designing the next great innovation.

Some design elements that can ignite emotional play are: listening aid, coloured reflections, slide, treasure pole.



• Figure 11. A circular dance platform in Copenhagen (Photo by Dasha Moschonas).

Play is for everyone

Play is not just for children, and the play trail looks to provide benefits for children and adults alike. Individuals engaging in play are better equipped to solve problems, develop resilience, be more creative and open to new experiences. Playful adults are also often more active and better at coping with stressful situations.* In fact, playful adults live approximately 10 years longer, on average, than less playful people.**

Compared to children, adults tend to engage in playful interactions, which involves reframing everyday situations into something more stimulating or enjoyable. Many studies have pointed to the positive health benefits of play for adults. Physical activity that is playful and fun means that adults are more likely to engage in it and derive the subsequent health benefits from it.*** Play is also important for those with high levels of stress, like many of the adults in BHR dealing with financial and chronic health burdens.****



• Figure 12. Adult play (Source: Esran Nuur).

Benefits of play

Designing for play has the potential to act as a unifying theme to navigate complex challenges. Besides significantly improving health and wellbeing, some of the wider benefits that play brings to neighbourhoods are:

- **Thriving local economy:** Parks and public spaces that are child and caregiver-friendly are good for business. Parts of cities where families with young children choose to visit signal that an area is clean, safe and fun. Retail, leisure and business-occupiers increasingly recognise that this is good for business.
- **Increased safety:** When public areas are busy

with children and families enjoying cultural activities, they become cleaner and more secure.

- **Stronger communities:** Social connection is essential to health and wellbeing. Meaningful and positive social interaction between community members of all ages helps to build relationships and foster a sense of community.
- **More nature:** Rewilding urban areas diversifies habitats and positively impacts biodiversity in cities.
- **Improved climate resilience:** Designing for play can also create more resilient spaces, able to adapt to increasing number of climate stresses.*****

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* Magnuson, C. D., & Barnett, L. A. (2013). The playful advantage: How playfulness enhances coping with stress. *Leisure Sciences*, 35(2), 129-144. doi:10.1080/001490400.2013.761905

** Gordon, G. (2014). Well played: the origins and future of playfulness. *Am. J. Play* 6, 234-266.

*** Thiel A. et al. (2016). Have adults lost their sense of play? An observational study of the social dynamics of physical (in)activity in German and Hawaiian leisure settings. *BMC Public Health*, Aug 2;16:689. doi: 10.1186/s12889-016-3392-3.

**** Van Vleet M, Helgeson VS, Berg CA. (2019). The importance of having fun: Daily play among adults with type 1 diabetes. *J Soc Pers Relat*, Nov 1;36 (11-12):3695-3710. doi: 10.1177/0265407519832115.

***** Arup (2017). Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods. Retrieved from: <https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/cities-alive-designing-for-urban-childhoods>

Play in Burmantofts

Council-led community and stakeholder engagement

Leeds City Council's **Child Friendly Leeds** team, has been engaging with communities across Leeds – parents, residents, and young people themselves. They have developed a **Play Sufficiency** programme, looking at the 'sufficiency' of play opportunities within the city and how to address any gaps. This fits into the broader **Child Friendly Leeds** ambition for Leeds to be a child-friendly city. This trail is closely linked to three of the 12 Child Friendly Leeds 'wishes'.*

Council Officers identified Burmantofts as an excellent location for play improvements given the high density of young people, high levels of deprivation, and strong relationship with Shakespeare Primary School, where there is also a cycle hub and enthusiasm to promote healthy, active lifestyles. The Council has already engaged heavily with local stakeholders around Burmantofts, including Shakespeare Primary School.

Results from the workshops in Shakespeare Primary School indicate that there is **deprivation of play** in this area. Play needs to be designed for and facilitated. These are some of the findings from these workshops:

- **1 out of 8 young people** said they never play out;
- **Young people** said that **after school clubs** were great for play – chess, table tennis and swimming were the most popular clubs;
- **40% of young people** identified arts and crafts as something that enables play;
- **"There is glass and litter in parks so sometimes I cannot play";**
- **40% of young people** are allowed to play out on their street without a caregiver but stated they are not able to go to the main road;
- **40% of young people** are not allowed to go and call for a friend without a caregiver;
- **"There is no cycle lane after the playhouse all the way to school, that would help me ride my bike and play."**

These findings, alongside others, confirm the need for play in Burmantofts. The next section looks into what we can do and how.



• **Figure 13. Wish 2:** Children and young people have safe spaces to play, hang out and have fun. **Wish 5:** Everyone takes more action to protect the environment from climate change. **Wish 6:** Children and young people can travel around the city safely and easily. (Leeds City Council, Child Friendly Leeds, "12 Wishes")

* Leeds City Council. "12 wishes." November 7, 2023. <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds/cfl-the-story/12-wishes>



Introduction

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Why Play

- **The Burmantofts Play Trail**

- Findings from the initial audit

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- In the intersection of everyday routes

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*The proposed plan for the Burmantofts
Play Trail.*

Findings from the initial audit

Following the identification of Burmantofts as a suitable location for an urban trail, Leeds City Council Officers and the Active Travel Social Prescribing Pilot team carried out a **series of workshops** to:

- Define the **vision and aims** for the trail;
- Identify **sites of interest** and potential routes.

Following this, a **transect walk and high-level audit** was carried out to:

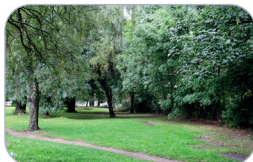
- Check for any **physical barriers** to avoid, such as steps, steep gradients, areas of significant traffic

or pavement parking;

- Get a sense of the **perception of safety** along various parts of the route;
- Mark any **existing Playful Moments** along the trail;
- Map opportunities for **future Playful Moments**;
- Map any **accessibility interventions** which would improve access for all.

The map below summarises findings from workshops and the transect walk around the Burmantofts area.

CONNECTION WITH NATURE.



The existing green spaces do not invite for play; they seem forgotten and disconnected from the neighbourhood.

EMPTY.



Despite the high population in Burmantofts Towers, green areas around them are not used.

UNINVITING.



Pedestrian zones do not ignite imagination, creativity, curiosity, or socialisation.

BORDERS & PASSAGES.



Diverse pathways and crossings could transform into numerous play opportunities.

EXISTING PLAY SPACES.



Boston Towers Playground & Roxby Gardens are great community spaces, and they should become more connected to form "play infrastructure" in the neighbourhood.

CAR-DOMINATED AREA.



Sidewalks, green spaces, and paved pathways are occupied by cars. School drop-off zone, and one-way traffic regulation not practiced by the residents.



PLAY TRACES.



Play traces can be spotted around the neighbourhood, but they seem limited to leftover areas, and not clean and safe enough to invite diverse neighbours to take part.

PRIVATE PLAY.



Play equipment is visible on private properties.

CLUTTERED.



Waste collection infrastructure dominates the communal areas.

POTENTIAL HUBS.

Public space of the local shopping centre could become a vibrant community hub.

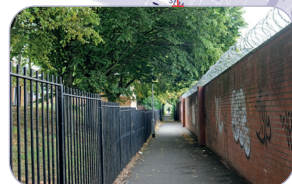
COMMUNICATION.



Traces of formal and informal communication are present in the whole area.

NOT ALWAYS SAFE.

Passage next to St Mary's park seems dark, isolated and unsafe to walk alone.





THE START OF A VISION FOR THE BURMANTOFTS PLAY TRAIL

- » Burmantofts is a place where children are connected to each other: siblings, classmates and neighbours.
- » Burmantofts is a place where adults are connected to children and other adults.
- » We spend a lot of time outdoors: walking, wheeling, cycling, exercising, and playing.
- » Burmantofts is a space of different languages – Arabic, Polish, Romanian, Urdu, Farsi, Kurdish – not all communication is verbal.
- » In Burmantofts, we nurture the connection to our home and place where we live. We are proud of the place in which we live, and we care for it.
- » We are part of nature in our neighbourhood. We learn about biodiversity, pollination, and growing food.



The Burmantofts Play Trail would enable **PREGNANT WOMEN** to be more active in their community and grow a strong support network.

NEW PARENTS do not feel isolated. They can move easily along the trail and use it as a daily walk.

PARENTS feel safe to let their children play.

BABIES can enjoy time outside with parents and siblings, play is incorporated from the very early childhood as the impact of the environment and relationships is the highest during the first 1000 days of life.

YOUNG CHILDREN can comfortably walk with their parents along the trail. The path is not too narrow for two people to walk together.

TODDLERS feel safe to explore the space freely. They move, play and socialise with others more. They connect with nature around them.

CAR DRIVERS are conscious of the play trail when they drive and park in the area.

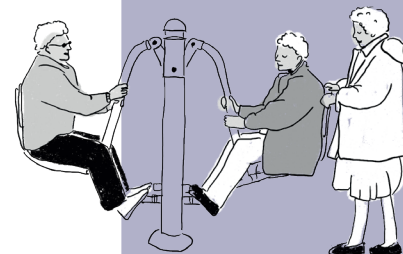
TEENAGERS are present in the outdoor space. They actively use it.

YOUNG PEOPLE feel part of the neighbourhood. They want to contribute to the local plan. They connect with their neighbours.

SENIORS can access all the places; they feel confident to walk and wheel around, there are enough benches and opportunities to take a break. They can meet and see what is going on in the neighbourhood. They take their grandchildren to the trail when they come to visit.

EVERYONE walks, wheels and cycles more. **EVERYONE** can use these spaces free of charge, feeling more connected to the surroundings. The trail helps them see more and perceive more. **The trail is a connection, and a signpost.**

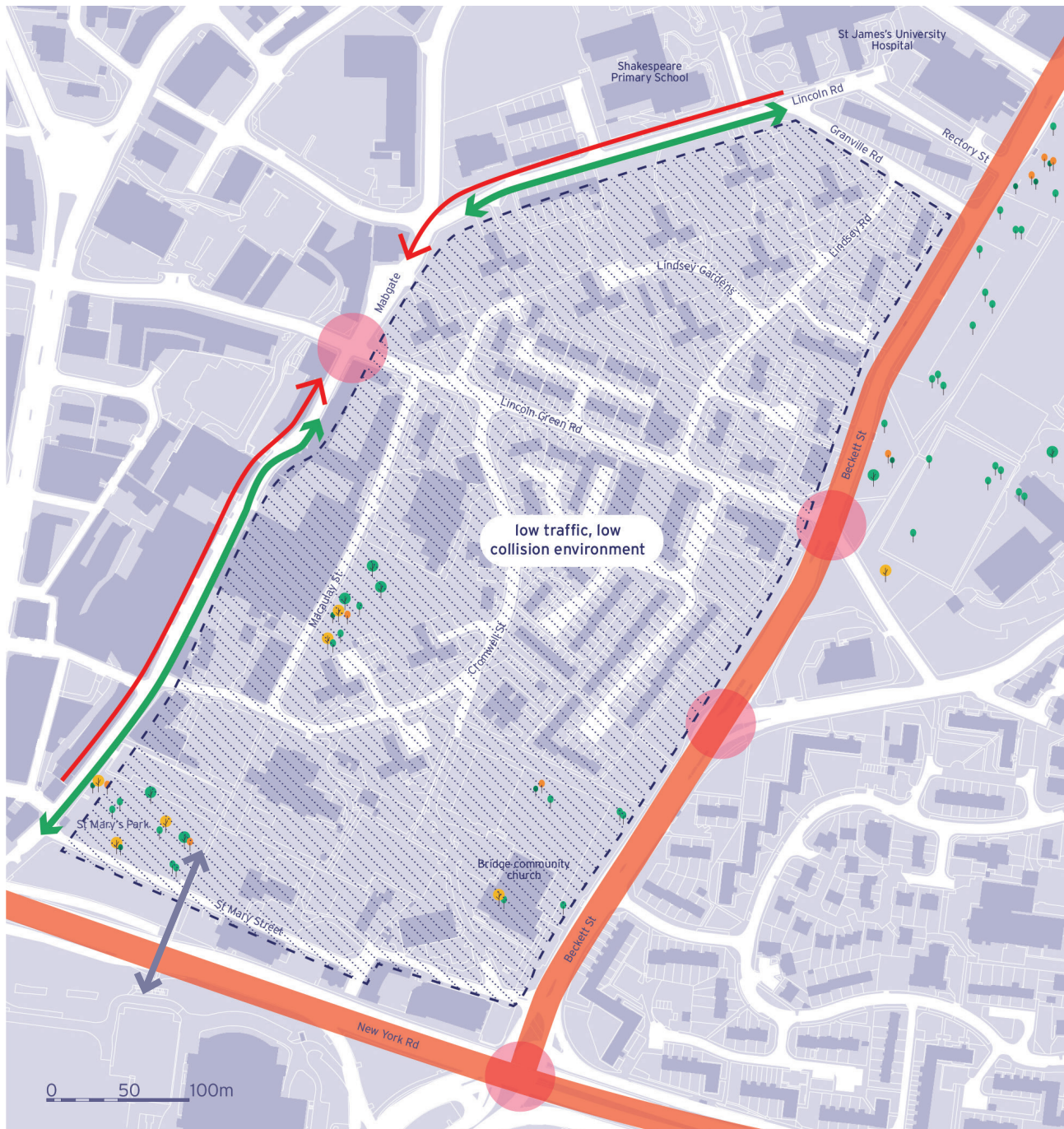
CHILDREN OF ALL AGES feel confident to play and socialise independently.








How to WALK IT. RIDE IT.

Burmantofts is located in the intersection of two high-traffic roads, New York Road and Beckett Street. On the one side, this makes the Burmantofts Play Trail easy to access from any part of the city, but on the other, motorised traffic routes impose a safety and health risk, especially

for young children. This was carefully considered when deciding about the location of the trail. All Playful Moments and the route itself are located in a **low traffic, low collision environment**, and connected to the cycling and pedestrian corridors.



• Figure 14. The main transport corridors in the Burmantofts Play Trail area.

-  collision hotspot
-  high-traffic road & major bus route
-  one-way to traffic
-  bi-direction cycle path – connection to the city centre
-  pedestrian overpass



• Figure 15. The view over the busy New York Rd, bordering the area of Burmantofts Play Trail.

In the intersection of the everyday routes

The Burmantofts Play Trail connects multiple points of interest and key services, as well as the identified opportunities for new Playful Moments. It is a route that residents could take specifically, but also spontaneously, as part of their everyday chores and tasks. For example, children could walk along (part of) the trail to go to **Shakespeare Primary School** or **St Peter's C of E Primary School**. Adults and seniors could walk along the trail to get to **St James's Hospital**, or to the **Lincoln Green Shopping Centre**. Attendees of the **Lincoln Green Mosque** and **Bridge Community Church** could also make the trail part of their journey to these locations.

The map on the next page shows only some of the stakeholders identified in the Play Trail area. Besides being important destinations in the neighbourhood, these stakeholders could also take different roles in the development of the trail and specific Playful Moments. This could be related to physical infrastructure, or occasional and repeated activities. If you are a local group or organisation interested in getting involved with the trail, please reach out to us:

activetravelsocialprescribing@Leeds.gov.uk

The Burmantofts Play Trail is comprised of two parts. The **Seed trail** is a smaller, 1km long loop connecting St James's Hospital, Shakespeare Primary School, Lincoln Green Mosque and Roxby Community Garden. This part would be implemented first. In the following stage of the project implementation, the Seed trail would extend into the **Branch trail**. This part connects Burmantofts to the city centre, through Lincoln Green Shopping Centre, Leeds Refugee Forum, Bridge Community Church, Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People, MAFWA Theatre and East Street Arts.

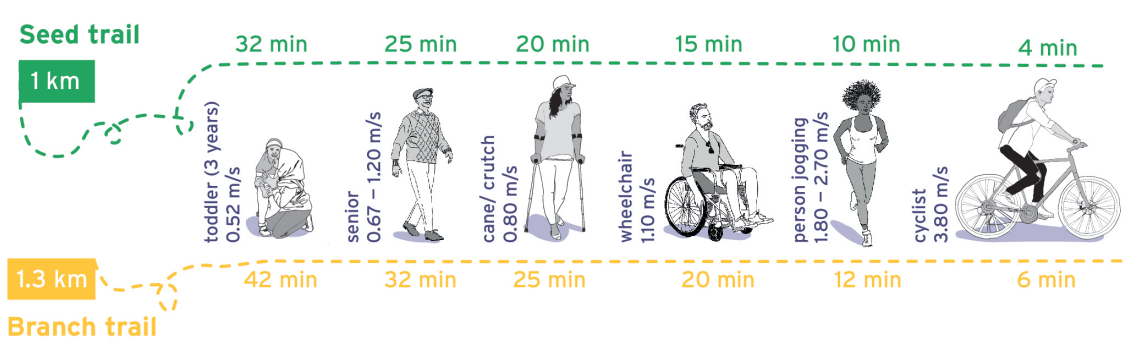
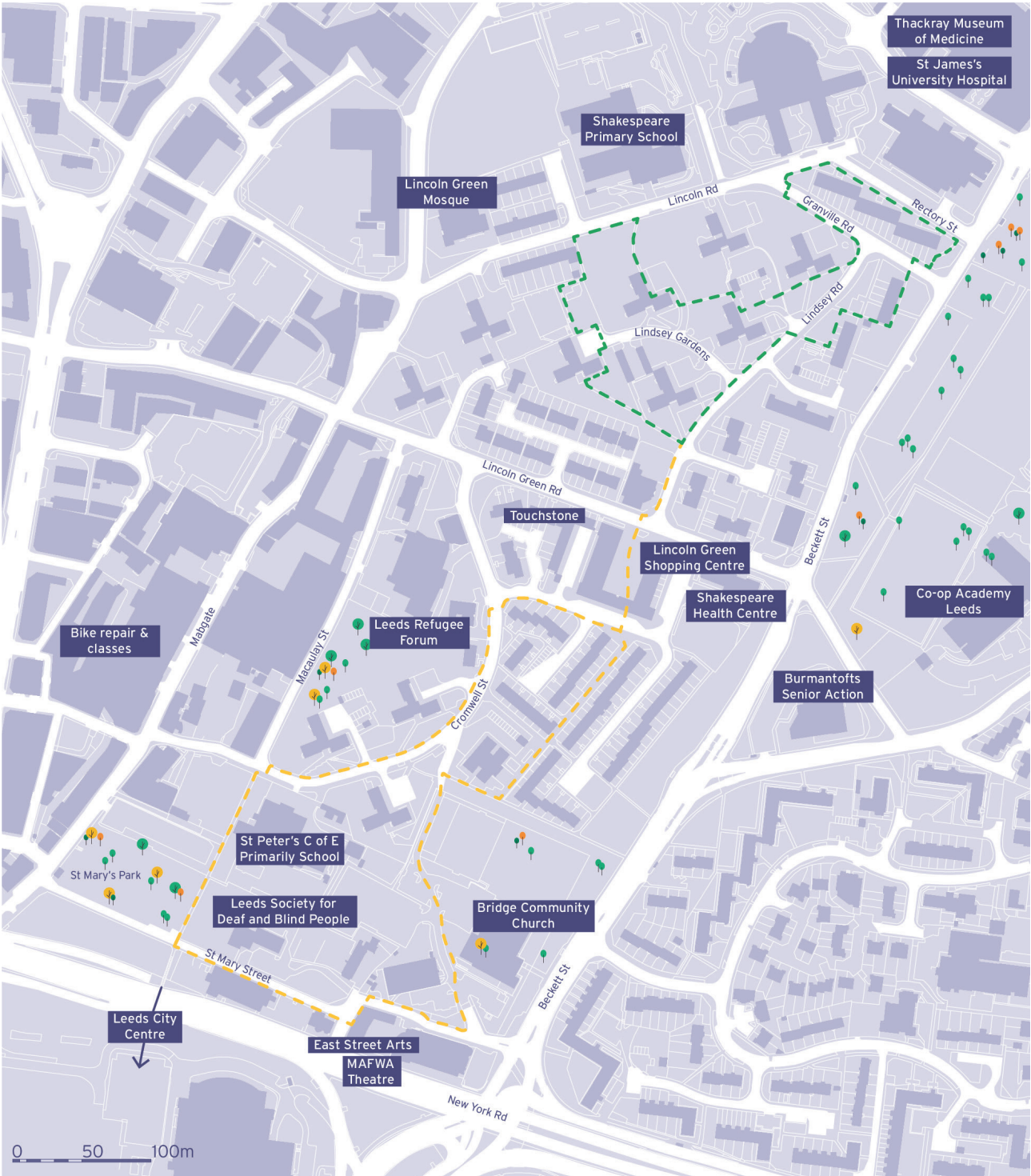
28% of the population across the play trail area are **students**

41% of the population across the play trail area travel **less than 5 km to work**, and **20%** travel less than 2 km to work. This suggests there is a lot of local employment.

49% of households across the play trail area **do not have a car**. This is up to 70% of households immediately around St James's Hospital and Shakespeare Primary School. Pedestrian infrastructure is essential for their everyday life.

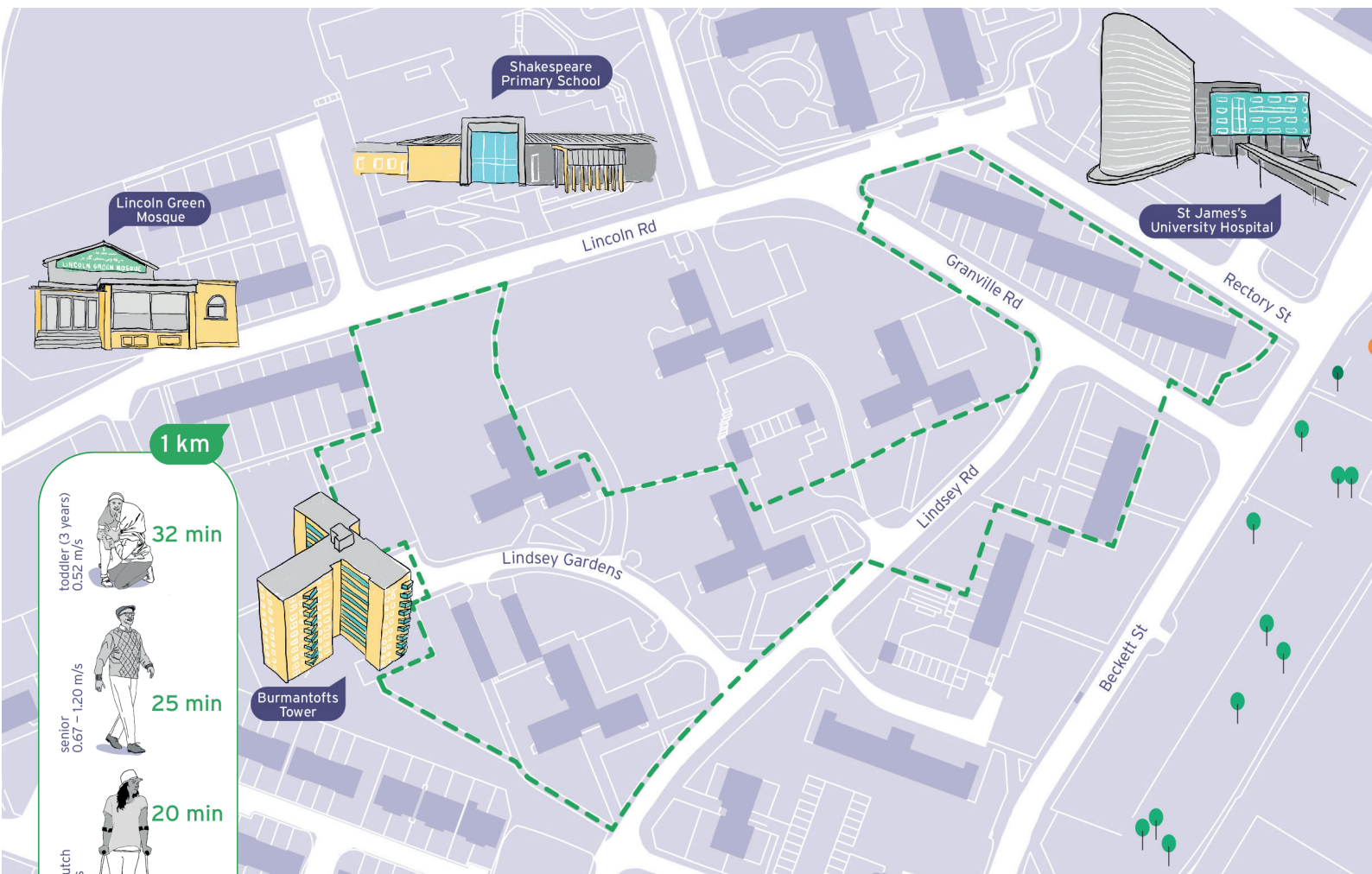
51% of residents across the play trail area were born **outside of the UK**. This is up to 61% in the households immediately around St James's Hospital and Shakespeare Primary School. Spaces for connection and socialisation are essential for their everyday life.

• **Figure 16.** The initial “Seed” and the following “Branch” part of the Burmantofts PlayTrail, connecting stakeholders and parts of the neighbourhood through play infrastructure.



Seed trail

Context



Shakespeare Primary School

Primary school for children aged 2-11, currently has **over 700 pupils**, including the nursery provision. It is a 'Health and Wellbeing Beacon School'. 42% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There is also a **cycle hub** on site where pupils, parents, caregivers and the wider community can loan bicycles and safety equipment. The school works closely with **Cycle North** who run family bike lessons. The staff car park is used for cycle training. Free cycle training is available to family groups of between 2 and 8 people, including adults and children.

Lincoln Green Mosque

Community of **over 500 people**, who regularly come together for community events and worship.

St James's University Hospital

(known locally as **Jimmys'**)

Built in 1858 and has since went through major extensions. The Chapel within the hospital grounds is a Grade II listed building. It is one of the largest teaching hospitals in Europe. The Bexley Wing (an oncology building) opened in 2004 is one of the largest cancer centres in Europe. Jimmys' serves a population of **over 750,000 people** in Leeds, it has over 1,100 in-patient beds, and around **15,000 staff**.

Burmantofts Towers

These towers were built in 1958, as part of Lincoln Green Housing Estate. Each tower is 10 storey high, and has **60 dwellings**.

• **Figure 17.** The proposed route of the Seed trail, and approximate time it would take different users to complete it.




Seed trail

Implementation phases





The implementation of the Seed trail is planned in 3 phases.

Phase 1: Establishing the trail

The main aim in this phase is to gather the community and local stakeholders around the idea of the play trail. It includes:

-  Pathway marks
-  New crossing
-  Wayfinding point

Existing play moments:

-  1 Bike hub @ Shakespeare Primary School
-  3 Boston Towers Playground
-  7 Roxby Community Garden
-  9 Lincoln Greeners garden bed

Phase 2: Projects in the making

This phase considers the implementation of Playful Moments that are already planned to some extent, and for which resources have already been allocated for.

-  12 Scooters' Lane
-  14 Corner Forest
-  15 Play Box

Phase 3: Developing projects with the communities and stakeholders

A meaningful and intensive participatory design process will inform Playful Moments that will be implemented in this phase. The points listed below are play opportunities observed as part of the initial audit, and are only suggestions at this point in the process.

-  2 Meadow Maze
-  4 Garage Wall
-  5 Speaking handrail
-  6 Paved path
-  8 RainPlay ideas
-  10 Central point
-  11 Corner sign
-  13 Green space
-  16 Steps



• **Figure 18.** Play support elements planned as part of all three implementation phases of the Seed trail.

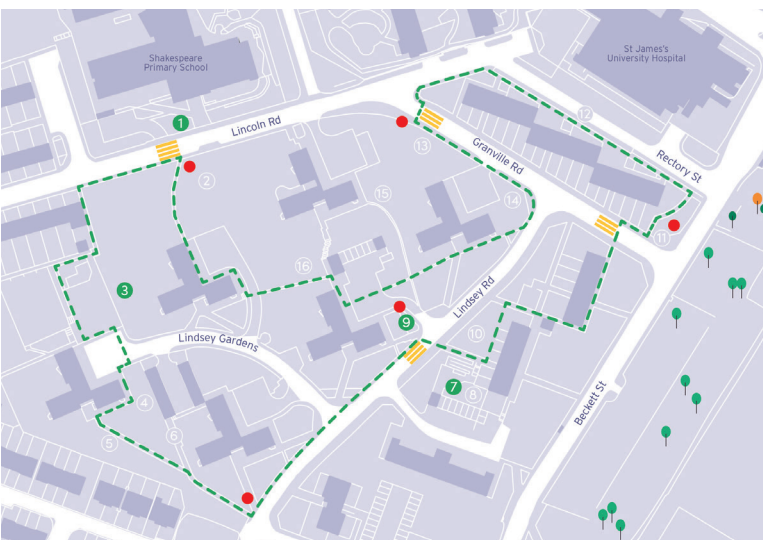
Seed trail

Phase 1: Establishing the trail

Phase 1 starts with a big engagement event, during which the proposed trail is marked with temporary materials such as chalk, and tested with members of the community and local stakeholders.

In the next step, the agreed path is permanently marked, agreed crossings have been installed to increase the safety along the trail, and wayfinding points have been put in the identified locations.

The existing play spaces are highlighted and connected, shaping the initial play infrastructure in the Burmantofts area.



New crossing (to be agreed)

Wayfinding point

1 Bike hub
@Shakespeare School



3 Boston Towers
Playground



7 Roxby Community
Garden



9 Lincoln Greeners
garden bed



IDEA BOARD

1



2



3



4



Wayfinding around urban trails should be simple and illustrative, considering this is a multilingual area. Signs could be integrated in the pavement (1), added to existing infrastructure (2), installed as artistic poles (3), or icon-based (4). (Source: 1 - Angelina Duckett, 2 - fieldworkfacility.com, 3 - arterialdesign.com.au, 4 - Kazinoti & Komenda)

1



2



3



4



The trail could be marked with lines or shapes, such as footsteps. It is important to involve residents in the implementation process (1, 3), make it playful so it inspires other types of play (2), make it flexible so it can be marked on different surfaces around the neighbourhood (4). (Source: 1 - Project for Public Spaces, 2 - PlayableStreets, 3 - orizzontale, 4 - Ajuntament de Barcelona)

Seed trail

Phase 2: Projects in the making

This is the phase of implementing the new series of Playful Moments along the Seed trail. These three projects have already been discussed with the Leeds City Council, the community and local stakeholders. Making them all part of Burmantofts Play Trail will strengthen their ability to motivate people of all age to move, create, socialise, think, feel and do more – to play.

Scooters' Lane is revitalisation of a pedestrian lane along Rectory Street. It could become a "scooter park", with pockets in which neighbours could socialise and rest. **Corner Forest** is an area already scheduled for depaving by Leeds City Council. Planting new trees and adding small chairs could turn this place into a local hub. **Play Box** is an idea by Child Friendly Leeds team, that is a result of the extensive research on play in this area, and collaboration with Urban 95 Academy. Play Box aims to deepen the exploration of play with diverse residents, and activate the trail throughout the year through a series of events. Separate participatory design processes would be organised for the design and implementation of each of these three projects.



12 Scooters' lane



14 Corner forest



7 Play Box



IDEA BOARD

1



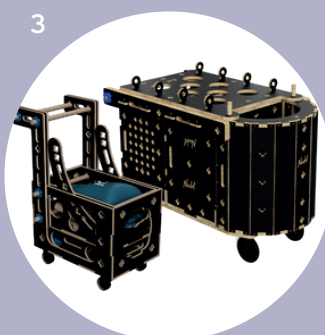
Scooters' Lane: different lines and shapes on the pavement can be used in physical play, following or avoiding them can become part of different creative scenarios and role-play games. The board on the side lists a few rules that riders are invited to change. Flags and wind-catchers make the space more attractive and invite for movement - they could be made locally, and include symbols of communities and families living in Rectory St. They may also include additional lighting, for safety and invitation. Social pockets on the side may have a playful pole for locking cycles.

2



Corner Forest: three different trees are the main "characters" of this forest. They are all different seed trees, such as oak, sycamore, silver birch, horse chestnut and lime. They change through seasons, and produce seeds and nuts that can be used for various play with loose parts. Three bollards around these trees have a little hole through which you can look and find more information about these seeds! Inside the circle of trees is a circular bench with different seating heights - for smaller gatherings or for a "working surface" that can become part of the loose play as well.

3



4

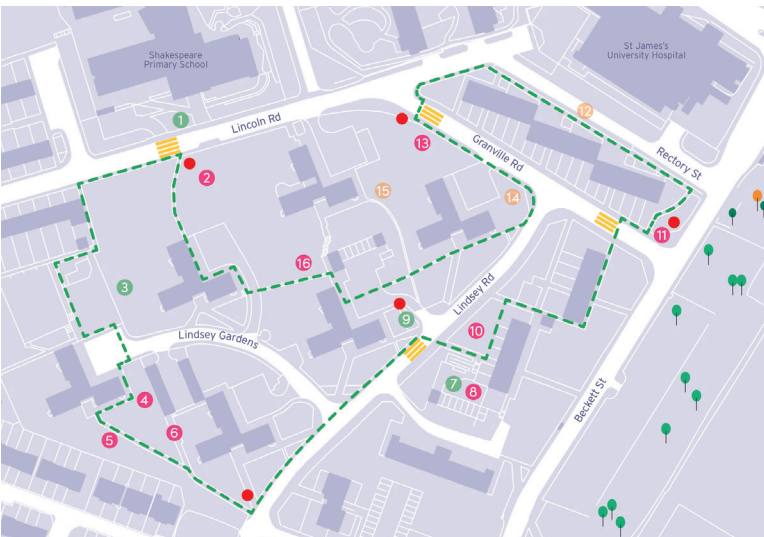


Play Box is play with loose parts. It could be different in size, from a pre-designed mobile cart that can be decomposed so its parts can be used in creative and cognitive play (3 - Source: Nüdel Cart), to a shipping container installed in public space that could contain various materials that ignite play (4 - Source: Cambridge Playlaws).

Seed trail

Phase 3: Developing projects with communities and stakeholders

Phase 3 is a result of stakeholder engagement to identify and co-design new Playful Moments. Below are some of the play opportunities identified during the initial audit.



2 Meadow Maze



5 Speaking Handrail



8 RainPlay ideas



11 Corner sign



16 Steps



4 Garage Wall



6 Paved path



10 Central point



13 Green space



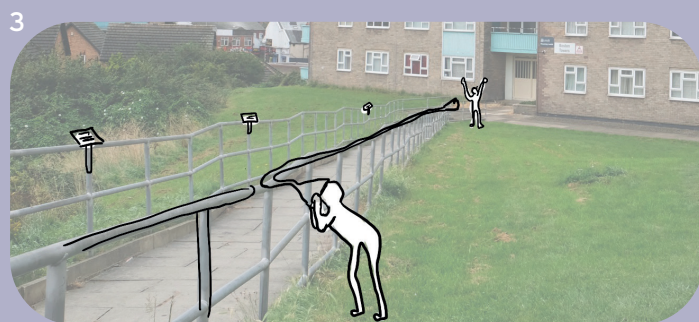
IDEA BOARD



Meadow Maze could be developed in collaboration with Shakespeare Primary School, and maintained by students and local neighbours. It could be designed with soil, stones, and local plants – supporting the development of more diverse habitats in the area. It would support cognitive, social, creative and emotional skills development.



Boulders, tree stumps and grass would extend play areas from the Boston Towers Playground into a more natural environment. The Garage Wall could be transformed into a biodiversity mural.



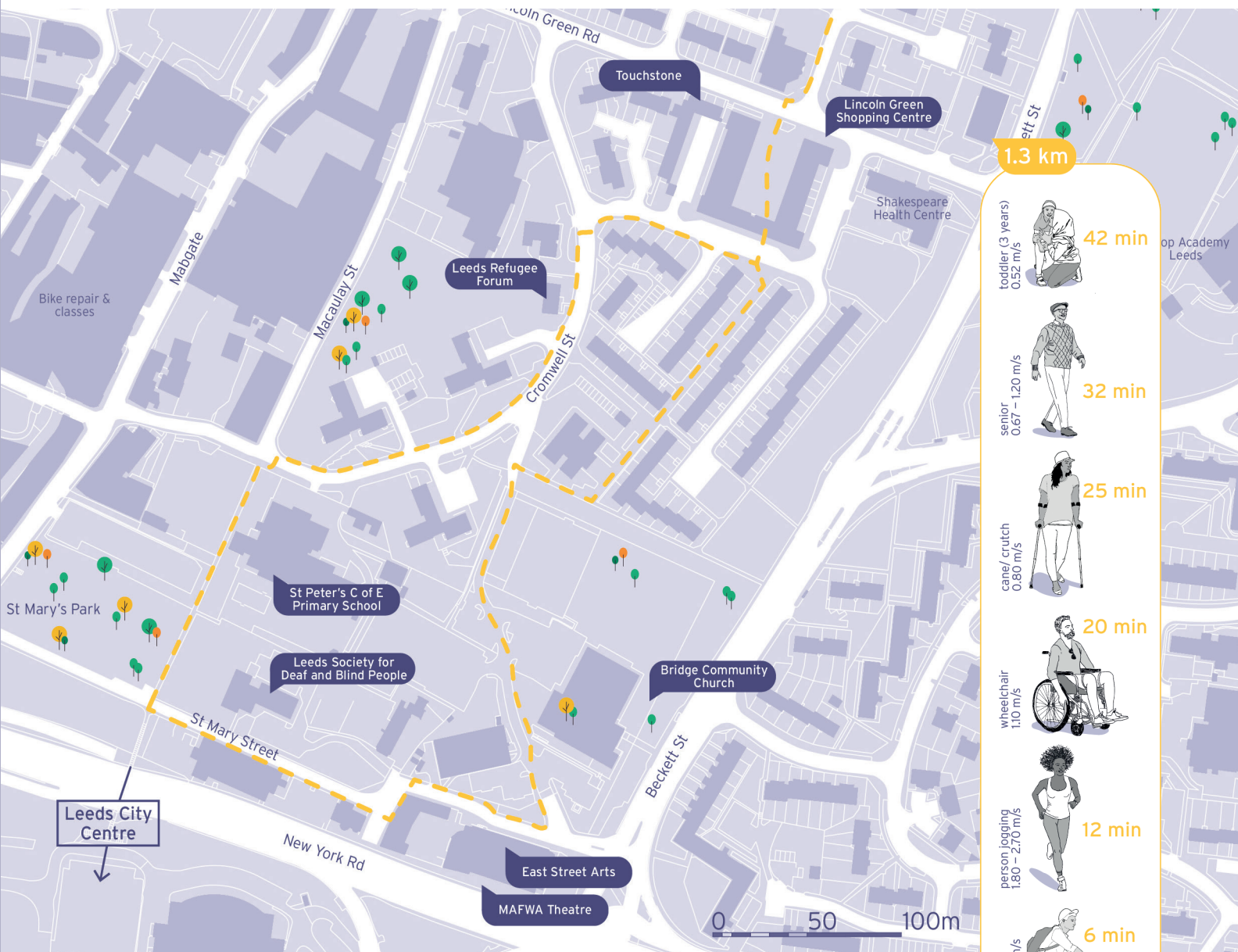
A long handrail could become a speaking pipe, and a place for math riddles about the architecture of tall towers around this place.



Rain play could become more present in some Playful Moments, so the trail is used in all wather conditions.

Branch trail

Context



Touchstone

Sharing resources and knowledge with grassroots organisations since 1982. Organising Harehills Women's Group, Breakfast Club, Men's Group, Mum's Group, Beginner Guitar Lessons, **East Leeds Health for All** Better Together (supporting the Lincoln Green community to address health inequalities, reduce isolation and improve physical health and wellbeing; running a 'Crisis Café', and drug and alcohol support through a community development approach).

Leeds Refugee Forum

A refugee-led charity for people in Leeds, active since 2003, serving a community with refugees and asylum seekers from **over 30 countries**.

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

A school for children aged 3-11 with around **250 pupils**, 55% of whom are eligible for free school meals.

MAFWA Theatre

Brings refugees, asylum seekers and settled communities together to celebrate diversity and campaign for a more welcoming Leeds. They run **Lincoln Greeners** and worked together to co-develop and implement **Roxby Community Garden**.

Lincoln Green Shopping Centre

A group of shops around Lincoln Green Road, including Freshways Supermarket, Mena Foods, a pharmacy, hairdresser, and laundrette.

East Street Arts

Artist-led arts charity that has been supporting artists and the wider community in Leeds and beyond since 1993.

Bridge Community Church

Active church, community centre and café since 2006.

Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People

Existed since 1866 with the objective to respond to the needs and aspirations of deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, blind and partially-sighted people. The society has had a strong partnership with Leeds City Council since the 1950s. The society runs a range of events and activities including a weekly Over 55's Group, a Weekly Leeds Deaf Social Club, and lipreading classes. The society has a sensory garden on-site.

Leeds Bike Mill

A co-operative providing affordable, fully serviced bicycles to the people of Leeds and deliver a range of training courses in bike maintenance.

• **Figure 19.** The proposed route of the Branch trail, and approximate time it would take different users to complete it.




Branch trail

Implementation phases



The implementation of the Branch trail is planned in 2 phases.

Phase 1: Expanding the Seed trail

The main aim in this phase is to amplify the idea of a play trail into the wider neighbourhood, and engage more stakeholders. It includes:


-  Pathway marks
-  New crossing
-  Wayfinding point

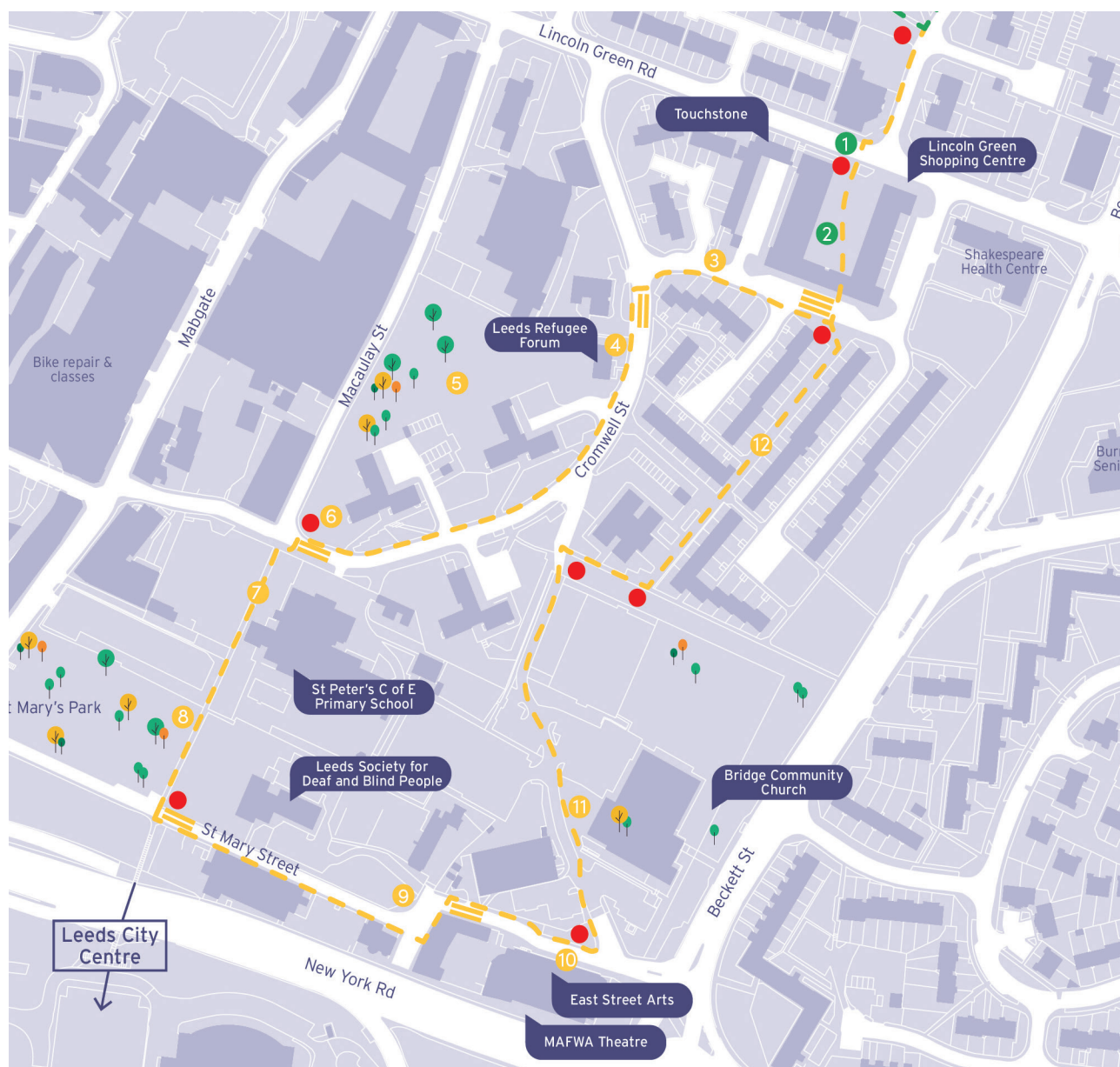
Two initial Playful Moments:

-  Traffic light play
-  Ping-pong table

Phase 2: Developing projects with communities and stakeholders

Meaningful and intensive participatory design process will inform Playful Moments that will be implemented in this phase. The points listed below are play opportunities observed as part of the initial audit, and are only suggestions at this point in the process.

-  Bollard game
-  Whisper
-  Big air
-  Quick jump
-  Portal
-  My senses
-  Signs
-  Exchange
-  Through the gate
-  Honeycomb



• Figure 20. Play support elements planned as part of two implementation phases of the Branch trail.

1 Traffic light play



2 Ping-pong table



3 Bollard game



4 Whisper



5 Big air



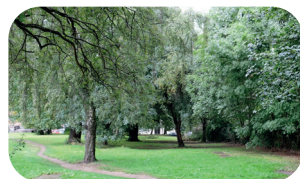
6 Quick jump



7 Portal



8 My senses



9 Signs



10 Exchange



11 Through the gate



12 Honeycomb



IDEA BOARD

1



2



3



4



The pedestrian crossing that connects the Seed and Branch trails could be transformed into a play of colours (1 & 2) or connect more directly with the shopping area and specific businesses (3 & 4). (Source: 1 – Christo Guelov; 2 – Ennis-Flint; 3,4 – IGPDecaux/melabu.it)

1



2



3



4



Table tennis is a great way to bring friends and strangers together, to start a conversation. It could be implemented in the Lincoln Green Shopping Centre and shops could take care of the rackets and balls. Or, the square in the shopping centre could transform into the Bankshot court in the area (basketball for all abilities), or implement a circular bench with varied heights for different games and activities. (Source: 1 – Hengetable, 2 – Sasaki, 3 – ConnecticutPublic, 4 – Atelier Scale)

Implementation timeline

Table below suggests the implementation timeline for the Burmantofts Play Trail. Specific activities will be further developed with Leeds City Council, local communities and stakeholders.

	2023	2024				2025				2026
		Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	
Phase 0 – Preparation										
Initial stakeholder engagement										
Initial route audit										
Preparation for the trail implementation pack										
Phase 1 – Establishing the trail										
Community consultations										
Community event day 1 (mark-out the route)										
Accessibility and safety improvements										
Installation of the trail footprints										
Installation of the wayfinding points (poles/ signs)										
Phase 2 – Playful Moments “in the making”										
Co-design and co-implementation of Scooters’ Lane (#12)										
Co-design and co-implementation of Corner Forest (#14)										
Co-design and co-implementation of Play Box (#15)										
Phase 3 - Developing Playful Moments with communities and stakeholders										
Ongoing trail activation (examples below)										
Autumn / fireworks / bonfire / harvest										
Christmas / New Year										
Spring										
Summer / holidays / East Street Art Camps										

Next steps

This document outlines the vision and implementation framework for Burmantofts Play Trail.

After sharing this information with local communities and stakeholders, the aim is to focus on **Co-developing ideas for Playful Moments**. The community engagement events will serve as a source for inspiration and input into the definition of specific Playful Moments along the Seed, and later Branch Trail. They will incorporate community wishes and cultural nuances; for example, residents could share about playing in other times (in their childhood) or in other locations (in their cultures).

In parallel, the **Ongoing Trail Activation Framework** will also be co-developed with locals. There are a number of events, initiatives and gamification techniques that could be adopted to firstly engage the community in the trail, and keep the trail exciting over time. For example:

- Seasonal challenges (e.g. Easter egg hunt, Halloween pumpkins, Kurdish new Year/Spring Equinox);
- Seasonal planting and harvesting;

- Expanding existing city centre trails and activities to the trail (e.g. Bear Hunt);
- Reward card (such as a coffee card for each time you complete the trail or visit a Playful Moment);
- Virtual Reality games on Love Exploring app;
- Street parties and pop-up gardening events in collaborating with Lincoln Greeners;
- Annual art events to coincide with the East Street Arts summer school to add new art or mosaics to the trail;
- Prizes such as tote bags with the trail artwork on them;
- Den building sessions;
- Advent calendar with play moments;
- Young people's construction;

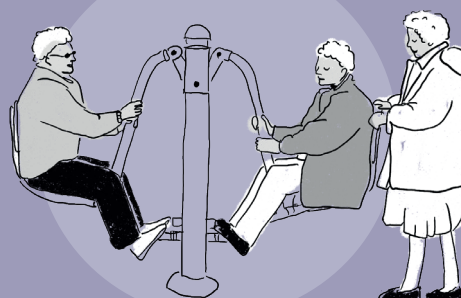
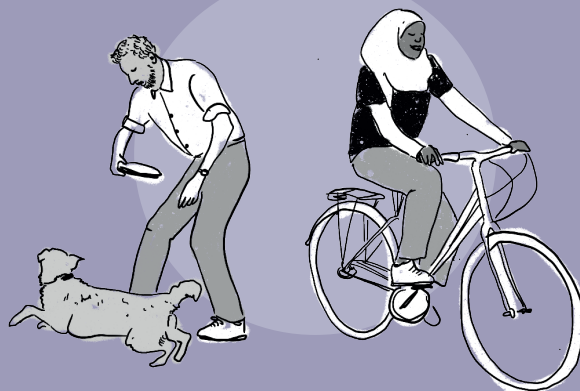
A dedicated project blog could be used to communicate project progress and advertise events.

If you have any comments, suggestions, critique, information, ideas, or would anyhow want to get involved, please get in touch:

activetravelsocialprescribing@Leeds.gov.uk



• Figure 21. The initial Burmantofts Play Trail audit.



WALK IT. RIDE IT.



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

ARUP