

# Harehills Movement Trail Implementation Pack

A route to better health and wellbeing  
in Harehills, Leeds

WALK IT. RIDE IT.



ARUP





Produced by Arup  
as part of the  
Leeds City Council  
Active Travel Social  
Prescribing Pilot.

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March 2024



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## • **Introduction**

Setting the scene

Three urban trails

Design principles

Practical principles

Harehills

Parks for Everyone

The Harehills Movement Trail

*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

This document has been designed as a framework for Council officers, local partners and professionals in Leeds to use in the ongoing journey to co-design and co-develop a Movement Trail project in Harehills.

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.
- **Best City Ambition** – the overarching city mission to tackle poverty and inequality and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home.
- **Leeds Vision Zero 2040 Strategy** – by 2040 no one will be killed or suffer serious injuries on roads in Leeds.



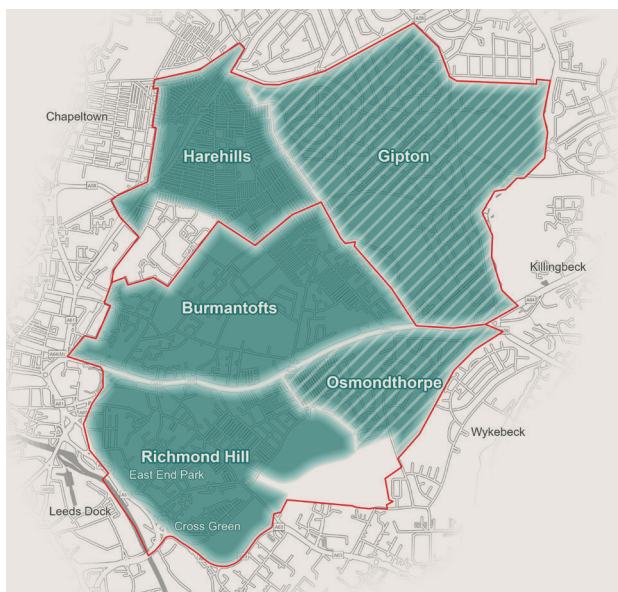
• Figure 1. The implementation of three urban trails connects to a range of local policies and initiatives.

\* 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 Harehills, Bellbrooke Surgery 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 **Harehills Movement Trail** - an urban trail focused on embedding everyday movement and opportunity for exercise and wellbeing within an ex-industrial, residential part of Leeds, north-east of the centre. This is one of the three urban trails that forms the pilot.

## The 3 pillars

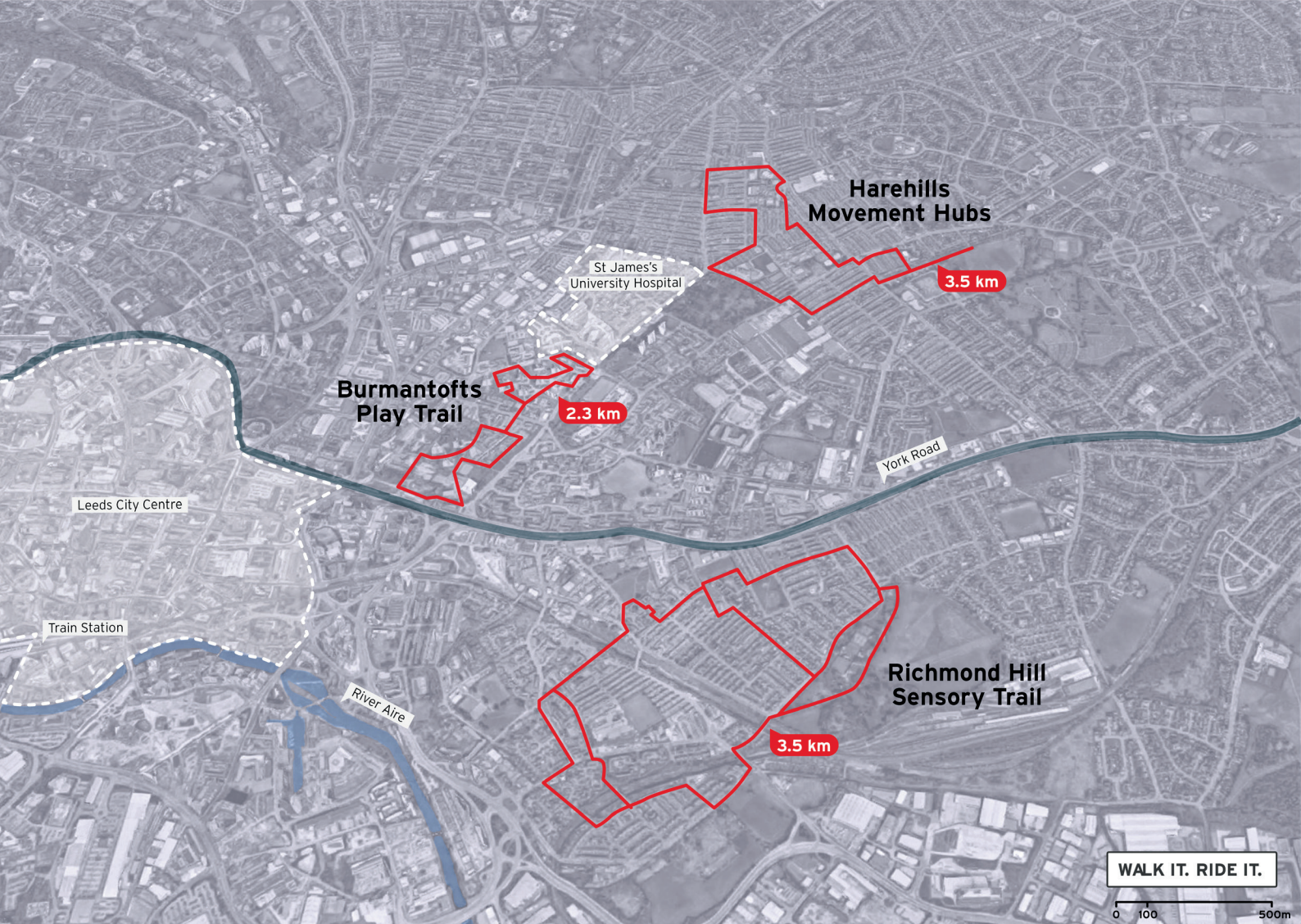
The BHR Active Travel Masterplan is based on 3 pillars:

BHR Active Travel Masterplan		
<b>Everyday journeys by active modes</b>	<b>Group or individuals' activities in parks and greenspace</b>	<b>Complementary improvements</b>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Making best use of local parks and greenspace as locations for group or individual walks, wheels and rides, including 'learn to ride' sessions.</p>	<p>Making improvements to wayfinding, safety, cleanliness, green infrastructure, placemaking, seating and rest locations, parking management, lighting and campaigns to promote active travel.</p>









• 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 short, everyday journeys instead of a car;
- **inspire** and evoke curiosity;
- connect isolated points of interest into a **local narrative**.

The trails are designed to support people to **move more**, and **more often**.

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.

The trails will also offer opportunities for young people and teenagers to spend time. With a national shortage of leisure centres, libraries and other community facilities, it can be difficult to identify free and safe places for teenagers to spend time. The problem is magnified for teen girls who, surveys show\*\*, are less likely to use MUGAs and other sports facilities and skate parks intended for adolescents. The trails will actively involve teenagers in co-design and incorporate diverse play opportunities for all ages.



## 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 local environment 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](#).

\*\* Parkwatch Report (2023), Make Space for Girls. 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.



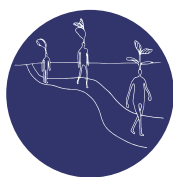
## Flexible

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. Areas have been selected that are accessible for pushchairs, wheelchairs and the variety of mobility aids. Identified mobility barriers have been avoided, and any improvements have been marked within the trail plans including: new pedestrian crossings, lighting improvements, pavement resurfacing. These recommendations for improvements have been shared with colleagues in the relevant LCC departments for further consideration. 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.



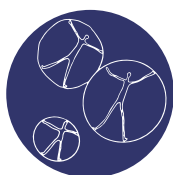
## Evolving

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. Resources are limited for estate management, and proposals will be mindful to reduce the need for maintenance, and designed with the community to encourage residents to be involved in the 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

- **Harehills**

Socio-spatial context  
Design process

Parks for Everyone

The Harehills Movement Trail

*This section provides the introduction into the Harehills area, and presents the movement trail design process.*

# Socio-spatial context

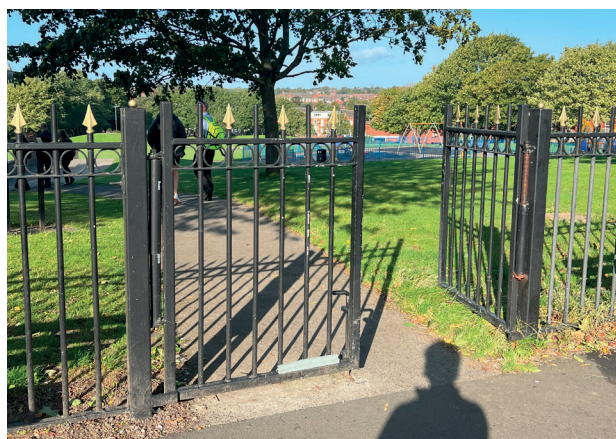
Harehills, an inner-city part of East Leeds within the 'Gipton and Harehills' ward, stands as a vibrant and culturally rich area. Located within walking distance of the city centre, Harehills is an integration of historical significance and modern urban life. The area's history of **immigration**, beginning with Irish immigrants in the 1820s during the Industrial Revolution, laid the foundation for a **diverse community**. Following this, Jewish immigrants fleeing persecution in Russia and Poland arrived towards the end of the 19th century. Post-World War II, Harehills became home to South Asian and Caribbean immigrants, further enriching its cultural tapestry. Today, there are up to **170 different languages spoken in Harehills**, underlining its diverse demographic.\*

The population dynamics in Harehills are distinctive, with a significantly **younger demographic** compared to other parts of Leeds and a majority living within the most deprived decile. Only **22%** of the population are White British, and English is the main language for just 41% of residents, highlighting the area's multiculturalism.\*\*

**Harehills Road** serves as the main artery, connecting residents to essential services, including St James' Hospital and the city centre. The road is lined with food stores, barbers, pharmacies, religious centres, and corner shops, creating a lively and bustling atmosphere. The area's architectural character is marked by back-to-back **terraced housing** and its **industrial heritage**, notably the nearby Burton's site, once the largest clothing factory globally. The area's food scene is renowned, offering a wide range of international cuisines and an extensive shopping experience along **Harehills Lane**.

The community in Harehills is supported by a range of **religious centres and community groups**. Initiatives like overcoming youth crime through sport and support for female ex-offenders showcase the strong community spirit. The **Compton Centre Community Hub**, with its library and employment support services, acts as a key centre for local engagement. Other prominent community hubs include Shantona Women's Centre, Bangladeshi Centre, ECHO centre, Bilal Sports Centre, CATCH Hovingham Hub, and the Shine social enterprise. The sense of community and grassroots spirit is profound, with celebrations for Eid, Christmas, and Diwali taking place with equal dedication and passion.\*\*\*

**Education** in Harehills is primarily at the primary level, with several schools serving the community, but the absence of a secondary school is notable.



• **Figure 5.** Harehills: (top) Banstead Park, one of the three activity hubs in Harehills; (bottom) Compton Road library at the Compton Centre.

**Recreational potential** is very high, with Harehills nestled among three public parks and the Fearnville Leisure Centre providing sports and fitness facilities. Community events and festivals add to the area's vibrant social life. Harehills Park and nearby Roundhay Park offer green spaces for relaxation and leisure, with Roundhay hosting major concerts and events.

In 2014-2015 a **Neighbourhood Improvement Plan** was put in place to improve local health and wellbeing and the local environment. Recently, the **Harehills Neighbourhood Planning Forum** has identified key themes to improve the area.\*\*\*\* As part of the **Active Travel Social Prescribing Pilot**, it was noted that the creation of a movement trail to support **safe environments** and **green spaces**, with routes connecting them could offer additional opportunities for these communities.

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\* Harehills: Suburb Guide. *Welcome to Leeds*. Available [here](#).

\*\* Health profile overview for Gibton and Harehills ward. Available [here](#).

\*\*\* Harehills: Suburb Guide. *Welcome to Leeds*. Available [here](#).

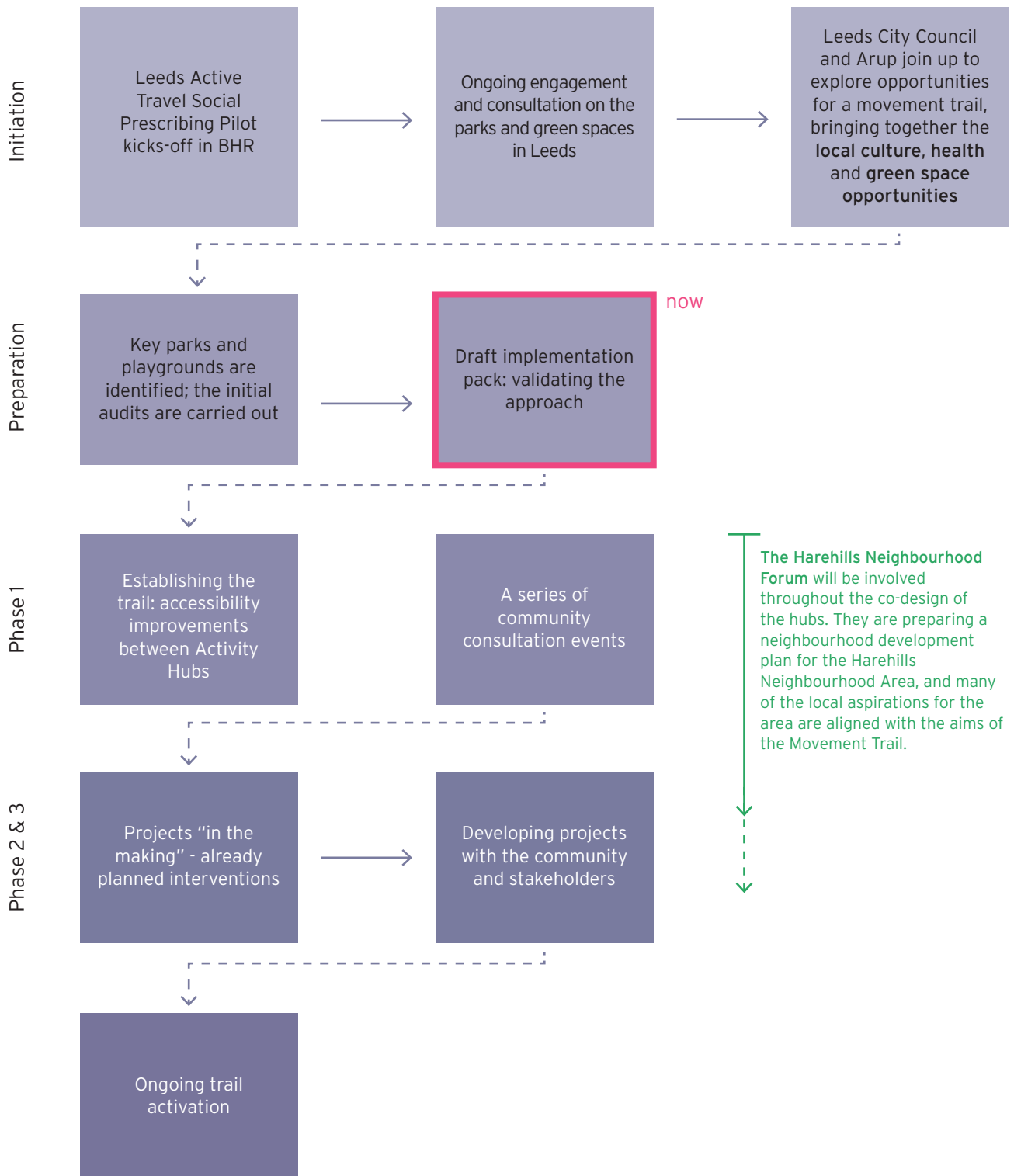
\*\*\*\* Harehills Neighbourhood Forum (2023). Application for the designation of Harehills Neighbourhood Forum and Harehills Neighbourhood Area. Available [here](#).



# 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 recreational experiences organised by Leeds City Council, and the collaborative process of identifying and mapping the opportunities for movement, local culture and outdoor activities 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 trail activation framework. Active and continuous **community engagement and participation** in design and implementation activities is the essential part of each of these phases.







Introduction

Harehills

- **Parks for Everyone**

About Movement

Three Activity Hubs in Harehills

The Harehills Movement Trail

*After a short overview of movement benefits and inclusive open spaces, this part looks at challenges and opportunities of green hubs in Harehills.*

# About movement

Physical activity is any **bodily movement** produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure.\* It can be done at a **variety of intensities**, and accumulated through **work, domestic chores, transportation** or during **leisure time**, or when participating in **sport, walking, wheeling, cycling, active recreation**, and **active play**.

Regular physical activity is proven to help prevent and manage noncommunicable diseases. This has an impact not only on individuals and their families, but also on health services and society as a whole. Those who meet recommended levels of physical activity have a 20-30% reduced risk of premature death.\*\* About 7-8% of all cases of cardiovascular disease, depression and dementia, and about 5% of type-2 diabetes cases, could be prevented if people were more active.\*\*\*

Engaging in physical activity has positive effects on mental health, such as reducing the risk of cognitive decline and alleviating symptoms of depression and anxiety. Additionally, it enhances children's learning and supports the maintenance healthy weight and overall well-being.\*\*\*\*

Having enough physical activity is essential for people of all abilities and at all life stages:

- **For young children** (birth to 5 years old) spending time in green spaces builds relationships and social skills, improves sleep, maintains health and weight, develops muscles and bones, contributes to brain development and learning and encourages coordination. Under 1 year-olds should have 40 minutes of physical activity per day, and children 1-5 years old, 180 minutes per day.
- **For children and young people** (5-18 years old): it builds confidence and social skills, improves concentration and learning, strengthens bones and muscles, improves health and fitness, maintains healthy weight, improves sleep, and makes children feel good. The recommendation is to achieve 60 minutes per day. Disabled children and young people are recommended 20 minutes of physical activity per day.
- **For adults and older adults**, spending time in green spaces improves sleep, maintains healthy weight, manages stress, reduces risk of a range of cardiopulmonary conditions, and improves quality of life. It is recommended these adults have 150 minutes of activity per week.



• **Figure 6.** Physical activity can be different in intensity, from more vigorous like cricket (3), to moderate like walking (4) or gym (2), and low like stretching (1). It can take a form of a specific sport (3) or be part of everyday chores and trips (4).

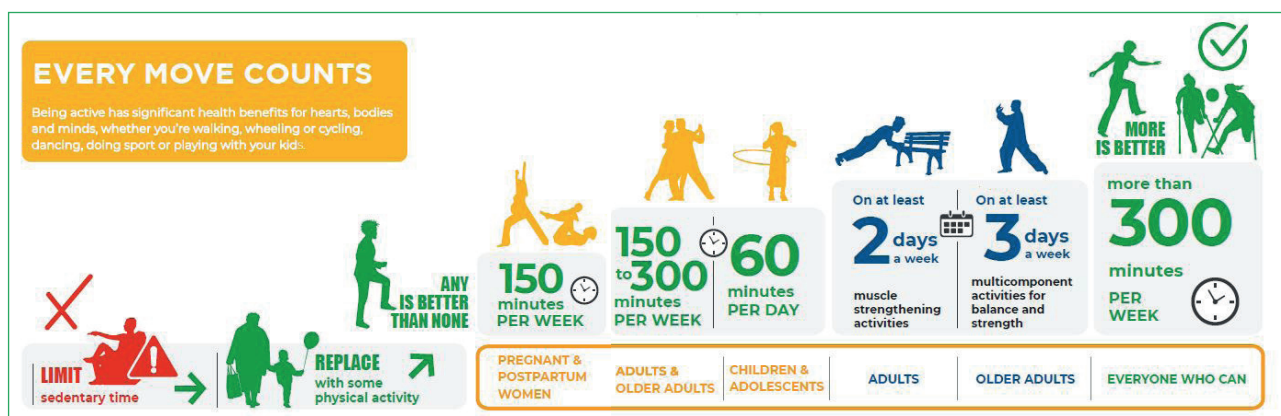
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\* WHO (2022). Physical Activity. Available [here](#).

\*\* WHO (2020). Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Available [here](#).

\*\*\* WHO (2022). Global status report on physical activity 2022. Geneva: World Health Organization; pp. 3.

\*\*\*\* Ibid.





• **Figure 7.** Summary of recommended levels of physical activity. (Source: WHO (2022). Global Status Report on Physical Activity. Available [here](#).)

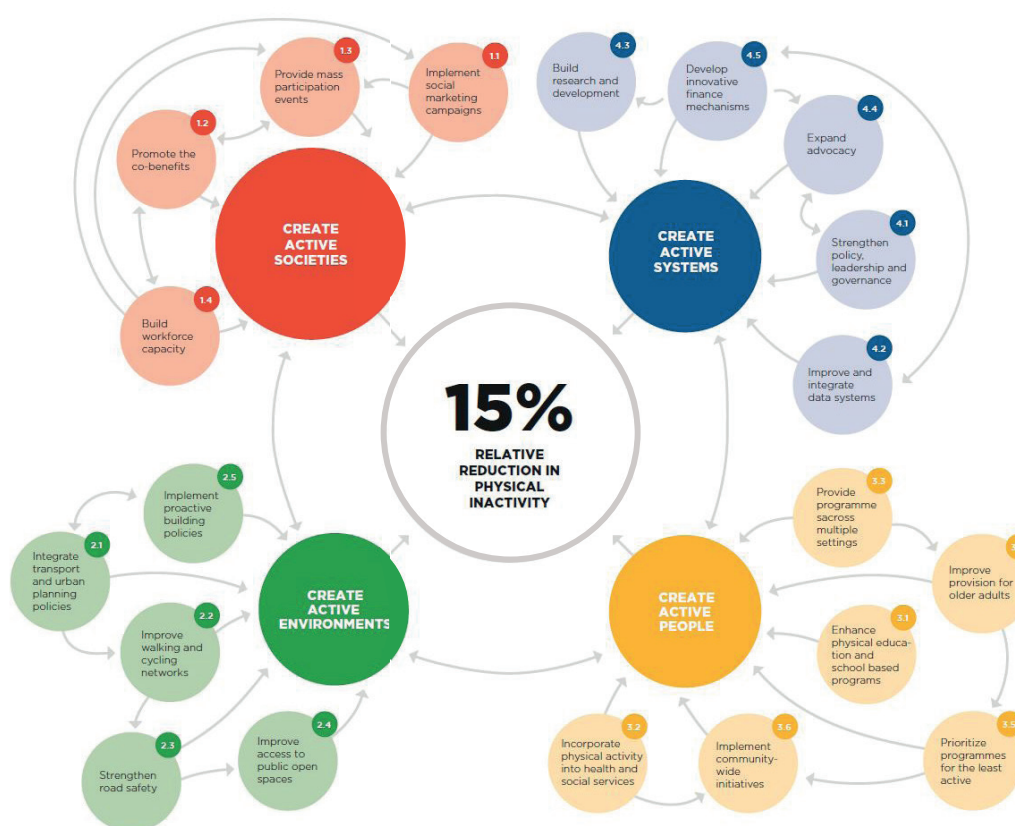
For women after childbirth, spending time in green spaces can help to reduce worry and depression, enhance socialising, improve fitness, control weight, improve mood, improves sleep and improves core strength. It is recommended these adults have 150 minutes of activity per week.\*\*\*\*\*

Making our neighbourhoods more active is a systemic challenge (see Figure 8). One of the areas for improvement is the creation of active environments, such as walking, wheeling and cycling networks and open green spaces. Enabling people to walk, wheel and cycle for everyday journeys and more readily use parks

and greenspaces provides an opportunity to increase physical activity.

The research shows that the attractiveness of urban green areas increases when they become part of a continuous pedestrian network, rather than being isolated islands in the densely built areas.\*\*\*\*\*

Developing these “movement networks” becomes even more important in deprived neighbourhoods. People of lower socio-economic status reap greater benefit from them, especially in terms of reducing stress and improving mental health.\*\*\*\*\*



• **Figure 8.** Global action plan on physical activity 2018-2030: policy recommendations as a systems approach. This project contributes to creating active societies, environments and people. (Source: WHO (2018), Geneva. Available [here](#).)

\*\*\*\*\* UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines (2019).

\*\*\*\*\* Subbotina et al (2022). Green Spaces as an Element of the Urban Environment: Their Functioning and Transformation. Available [here](#).

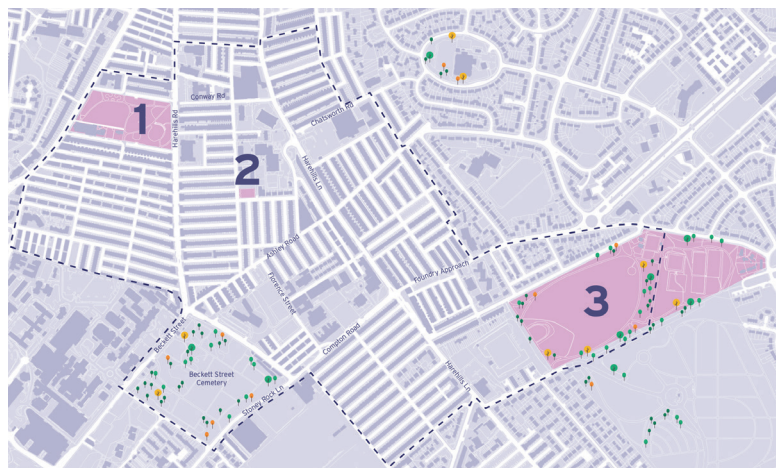
\*\*\*\*\* Marselle et al. (2020). Urban street tree biodiversity and antidepressant prescriptions. Sci Rep 10, 22445.

Ward Thompson et al. (2016). Mitigating Stress and Supporting Health in Deprived Urban Communities: The Importance of Green Space and the Social Environment. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 13, no. 4: 440.

# Three activity hubs in Harehills

Baseline research conducted by Leeds City Council

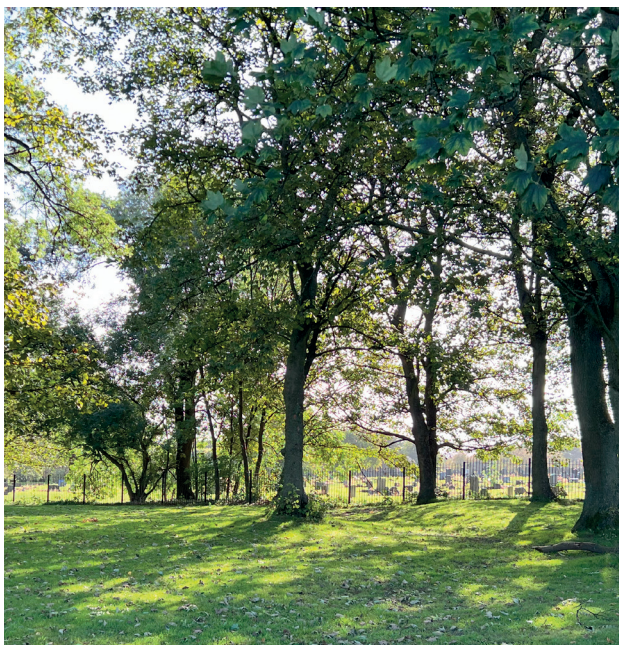
Harehills is a densely populated area, characterised by back-to-back terraced housing and street parking, deprived of on-street trees and greenery. However, on a bigger scale, the community is located between three parks: Banstead Park, Ashton Park and Harehills Park. Data shows that one in five residents living in the vicinity of these parks have **no garden\***. **Over 9,000 residents are within a 5-minute walk** of these core open spaces, and **over 20,000 people are within a 10 minute-walk** of each. These three parks are therefore seen as the essential activity hubs in Harehills. Recent research by Leeds City Council has investigated opportunities and barriers for using these spaces, summarised on the following pages.



• Figure 9. Three Activity Hubs in Harehills: (1) Banstead Park, (2) Ashton Park, (3) Harehills Park.

## Harehills Park











Harehills Park is located in the East of Harehills, not far from Harehills Cemetery. Today, the park sees footfall of approximately **250,000 visitors per year.\*\*** The park has been assessed as being in 'reasonable condition', passing the 2022 Leeds Quality Parks assessment. It provides a link towards Fearnville Leisure Centre - the main site for community sport and cycle training locally, including a 25m swimming pool.



### Opportunities and barriers for being active in Harehills Park\*

Leeds City Council (LCC) has identified Harehills Park as a priority greenspace within their Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. Between July-October 2023 there

#### How can one move in the Harehills Park?

	Walking, wheeling, dog walking, strolling, jogging, running, scooting	Large green space and paths around the park. The 800m paved loop around Harehills Park, explore <a href="#">here</a> .
	Tennis	4 hard-courts that are in reasonable condition and free to access throughout the year.
	Cricket	All-weather cricket pitch.
	Football	One full sized adult grass football pitch with fixed goals.
	Rugby	One full sized senior adult rugby pitch without fixed goals.
	Ball and other sports	A concrete multi-use games area with markings, hoops and goals for football and basketball.
	Bowling	Harehills Park Bowling Club play their games on the bowling green in Harehills Park. A free family-friendly bowls taster sessions is available at events and open days.
	Outdoor gym	There is exercise equipment dotted around the park which makes it an ideal place to combine a workout on your walk around the park: pull-up bars, parallel bars, dip bars, and more.
	Playground	A small child-friendly play area includes a slide, swings, spider web climbing frame, see-saw, and roundabout. No accessible play equipment is currently included.
	Toilets	The nearest public toilets are in the Compton Centre, approximately 8-minute walk from the park.

was a public consultation run by LCC to find out what local residents think about the site and how they would like to see it improved. A combination of verbal, written and digital (Commonplace platform) contributions were provided by around 100 respondents.

\* Love Leeds Parks (2023): A community vision for Harehills Park.

\*\* Ibid.



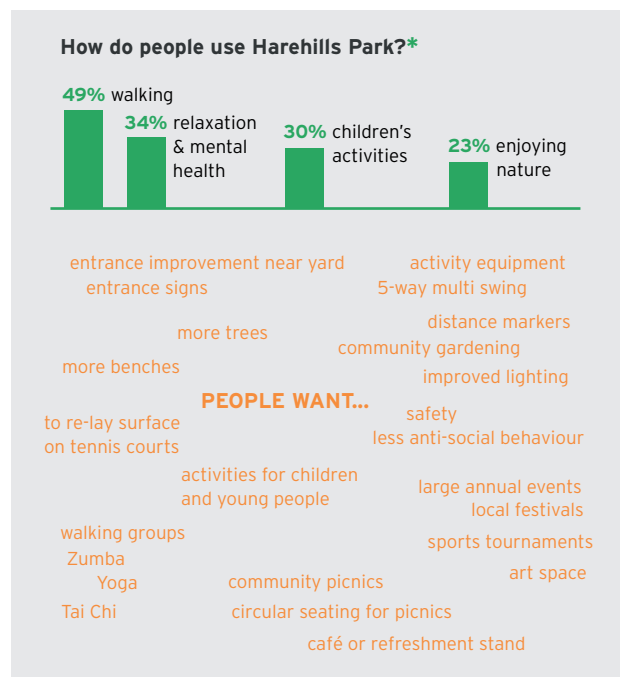
Members of **Harehills Bowling Club** are feeling optimistic about the club's progress after lockdown, seeing it grow nicely. Older residents in the **gardening group** cherish memories of meeting friends while enjoying park activities. Community members love having **picnics together** in the park, finding it a great way to connect through food, and bond outdoors.

**Families**, especially those with **young kids**, love spending time in the park.

But there are some problems:

- Litter and broken glass cause safety concerns.
- Lack of shelter(s) limit use during bad weather.
- Accessibility issues due to entrances not being wheelchair friendly.
- Lack of access to public toilets.
- No facilities to buy food or drinks.
- Limited facilities for children to play. The play park is small for the demand and has no provision for older children.

Addressing these issues could significantly improve the park's appeal, fostering greater community connection and providing a welcoming space for all residents to enjoy and benefit from.\*



\*Data from Love Leeds Parks and Leeds City Council surveys (2023).

## Banstead Park

For those looking for a break from the lively and loud surrounding streets, Banstead Park is ideal for relaxing, quiet time out. It is nestled between two blocks of red brick terraced houses.



### How can one move in the Banstead Park?



Exercise trim trail

Alongside the concrete path around the outer edges of the park is an exercise trim trail. On this route you can walk, jog or run between a variety of equipment that tests your push, pull and pedal strength.



Cricket

All-weather cricket wicket that is suitable for a big game. The green space around it is oval-shaped, forming a cricket boundary.



Multi-use games area

Suitable for a large game of basketball or football. It has extra width and length, and with the 360 fencing, is perfect for a fast-paced game.



Playground

There are two playgrounds - one is suitable for toddlers, located next to Elford Place; and the other more appealing to a child, situated next to Banstead Terrace. The playgrounds are equipped with swings, roundabout, climbing frame and slides.

## Ashton Park

Ashton Park is predominately a play park with playground equipment and multi-use games area. It is accessible for wheelchair and pushchair users, but it is currently unlit. The nearest toilet is a 5-minute walk to the Shine Café on Harehills Road.



### How can one move in the Ashton Park?



Football

The multi-use games area has been developed to host football matches on the concrete surface. An ideal pitch for games during wet weather.



Basketball

Included are markings and hoops for games of basketball.



Playground

In 2023, the playground received a significant development to improve the playground equipment and matting; this includes the new climbing frames and swing sets.





Introduction

Harehills

Parks for Everyone

- **The Harehills Movement Trail**

- Findings from the initial audit

- How to WALK IT. RIDE IT.

- In the intersection of everyday routes

- The trail

- Context

- Implementation phases

- Implementation timeline

- Next steps

*The proposed plan for the Harehills  
Movement Trail.*

# Findings from the initial audit

Following the identification of Harehills 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 points of interest and greenspace** along the trail;
- Map opportunities for **future enhancements**;
- Map any **accessibility interventions** which would improve access for all.

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

## COMMUNITY HUB.



The Compton Centre is a fantastic community hub, accommodating everyday needs such as seating, public toilets and cycle parking, besides its community services programme.

## UNCROSSABLE.



Walking infrastructure is poor across the area. For example, the junction in front of the Compton Centre is comprised of narrow pavements and separate crossings, so it takes multiple minutes to cross.

## GREEN STREETS.



The absence of greenspace along the streets through the area makes the three parks even more important for walking, wheeling and cycling.

## BUS NETWORK.



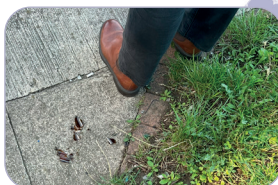
Good bus network makes it easier to navigate long distances and steep hills.

## ON THE WAY.



Local church and a GP surgery are along the route to the Harehills park.

## UNLOVING.



There are signs of neglect and damage around the Banstead Park, such as destroyed signage boards and broken glass that is a regular sight in and around the park.

## ACCESSIBLE.



On the other side, Banstead Park is easily accessible with multiple entries, resting, and meeting points.

## FUN.

Ashton Park is an accessible and well maintained fun hub. Sitting options and multiple games enable different generations to socialise and spend time outdoors.

## CANOPY.



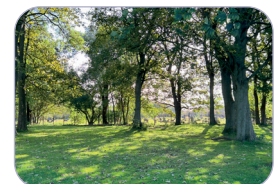
The atmosphere changes from busy and loud to calm and quiet as one walks towards the Harehills Park.

## PEACEFUL.



Beckett Street Cemetery is a place of reflection and contemplation.

## GREEN SPACES.



Harehills Park is a green oasis in the area, with its majestic mature trees. Together with Banstead Park and Ashton Park, it forms the main "activity network" in Harehills.







## THE START OF A VISION FOR THE HAREHILLS MOVEMENT TRAIL

*This vision has been created following the various workshops and walking audits held to date, and will be updated as part of the planned co-design with local communities and stakeholders.*

- » Harehills is a place where people of all ages and abilities spend a lot of time outdoors: walking, wheeling, cycling, exercising, and playing.
- » We are part of nature in our neighbourhood. We learn about biodiversity, pollination, and growing food.
- » Harehills is a place where children and adolescents are connected to each other: siblings, classmates and neighbours.
- » Harehills is a place of different languages - not all communication is verbal.
- » In Harehills, everyone knows about the "three Activity Hubs": Banstead Park, Ashton Park and Harehills Park. It is easy to move between them.
- » Opportunities for movement are everywhere: to move in different ways, at a different time of the day for a few minutes or a larger part of the day.
- » In Harehills, 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.



### THE HAREHILLS MOVEMENT TRAIL WOULD ENABLE:

**SENIORS** to be more active in their community and grow a strong support network.

**TEENAGERS** to be present in the outdoor space and to actively use it.

**BABIES** to 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.

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

**YOUNG PEOPLE** to feel part of the neighbourhood, to actively contribute to the local plan and connect with their neighbours.

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

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

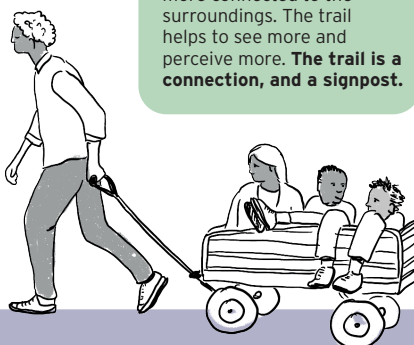
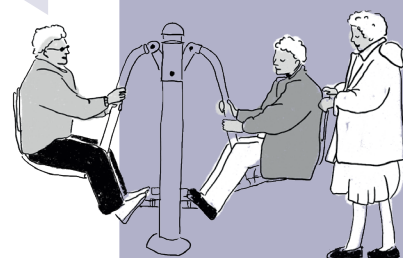
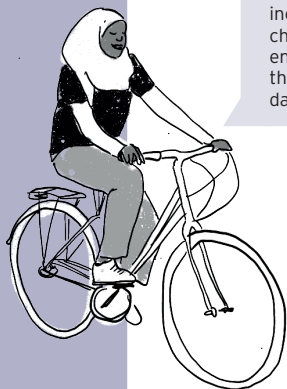
**CAR DRIVERS** to be conscious of the movement trail when they drive and park in the area.

**PEOPLE OF ALL AGES** to enjoy various greening and gardening opportunities along the trail, alone and with others.

**SENIORS** to access all the places; to 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** to walk, wheel and cycle more. **EVERYONE** to be confident to be out and about, feeling more connected to the surroundings. The trail helps to see more and perceive more. **The trail is a connection, and a signpost.**

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



# How to WALK IT. RIDE IT.

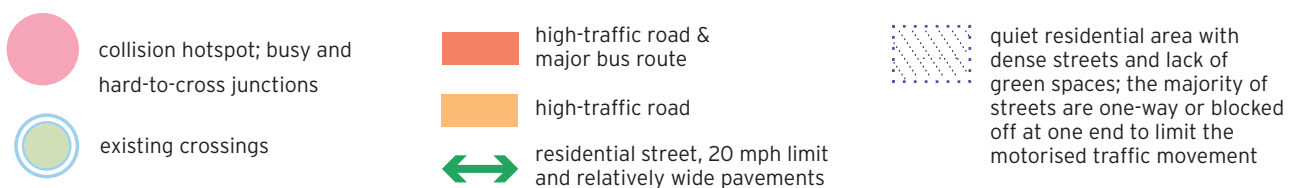
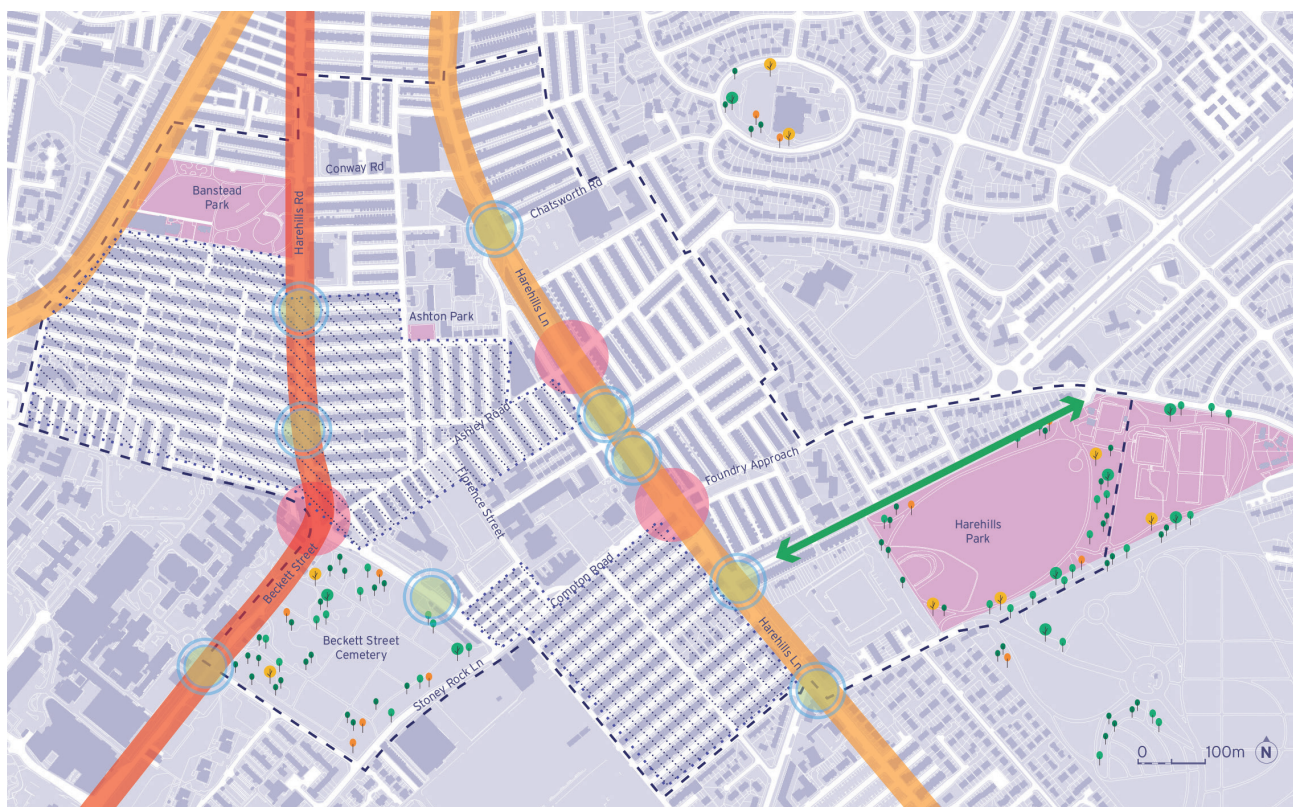
Overall, Harehills is a challenging environment to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling, predominately due to its three major roads running through the area:

- 1) **Roundhay Road** - a key arterial route leading to Leeds' inner ring road that is a significant accident hotspot.
- 2) **Harehills Road** - a highly trafficked street lined with well-used popular businesses, leading to all the residential streets in Harehills.
- 3) **Harehills Lane** - a busy A Road with some challenging junctions.

A few of the junctions in the area have ongoing road safety investigations, including Harehills Lane/ Roundhay Road junction and Compton Road/Harehills Lane Junction.

Between and either side of the three streets are residential roads with back-to-back terraces, many of which are filtered/one-way and 20mph - more amenable to active travel. However, Harehills is on a hill going north out of the city, so topography also influences the active travel decisions.

A lot of traffic in the area is not local - people pass through Harehills when travelling in or out of Leeds City Centre and when going to the St James's University Hospital.



• Figure 10. The main transport corridors in the Harehills Movement Trail area.





• **Figure 11.** Harehills Road is the central spine of the local community, where all the roads converge. Walking, wheeling or cycling experiences could be improved on this bustling street that is filled with parked and moving vehicles. There is also little greenery and crossing can be problematic. Photo by Leeds City Council.

# In the intersection of the everyday routes

The Movement Trail connects multiple points of interest and key services, particularly sites of **green space and physical activity**. The three **Activity Hubs** – Banstead, Ashton and Harehills Park – are the main zones where people walking, wheeling and cycling could engage in a variety of **movement activities**. All activities will be co-designed with the local communities, stakeholders, and Leeds City Council.

The Harehills Movement Trail is **3.5 km** long. It connects residents with the three **Activity Hubs**. 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 school or drop by a local park after school, or on the weekend or holidays. Adults and seniors could walk along the trail to get to the **Compton Centre** or one of several **GP practices**. Visitors to the **Bilal Masjid** or **Shine Centre** could also make the trail part of their journey to these locations. Visitors and employees at the **St James's University Hospital** could also spend time along the trail.

Two parts of the trail that are marked with dashed lines – along the Harehills Road and Harehills Lane – are alternative routes that could be taken if people are coming from these main shopping streets. These two parts of the original route pass through more quiet areas, through the back streets.

The map on the next page shows only some of the stakeholders identified in the Movement Trail area. Besides being important destinations in the neighbourhood, these stakeholders could also take different roles in the development of the new uses and equipment within and between the three Activity Hubs. 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](mailto:activetravelsocialprescribing@leeds.gov.uk)

Over **9,000** people currently live within a 5 minute walk of either Harehills Park, Banstead Park or Ashton Park.

Harehills Park sees over **250,000** visits each year.

**13%** of the Harehills community are **under** the age of **19**.

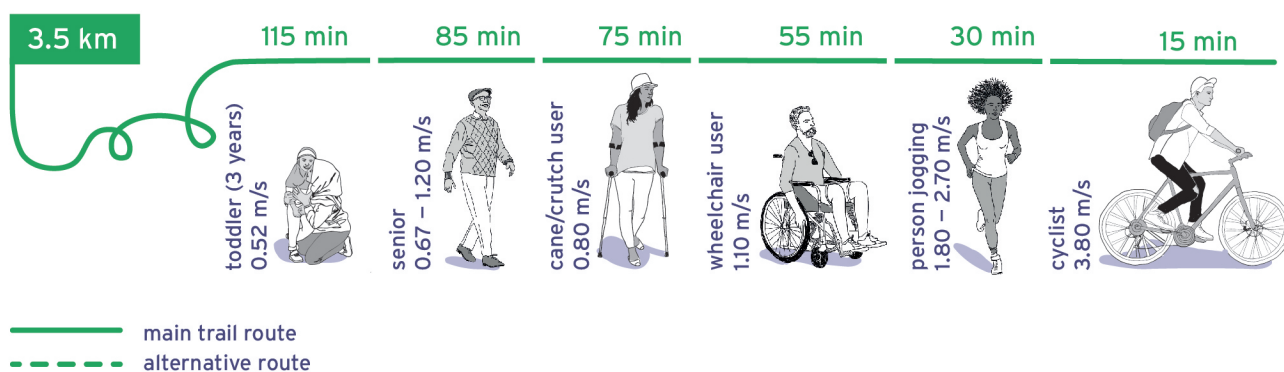
**£18,300** is the average annual income in Harehills – much lower than the national average.

Population density is up to **138 people** per hectare, much higher than the Leeds average of **13.6 people** per hectare.

Harehills is the Leeds ward with the highest number of residents born outside the UK.

Up to **170 different languages** are spoken in Harehills.





• Figure 12. The proposed route of the Harehills Movement Trail, connecting stakeholders and the three main Activity Hubs – Banstead Park, Ashton Park and Harehills Park.



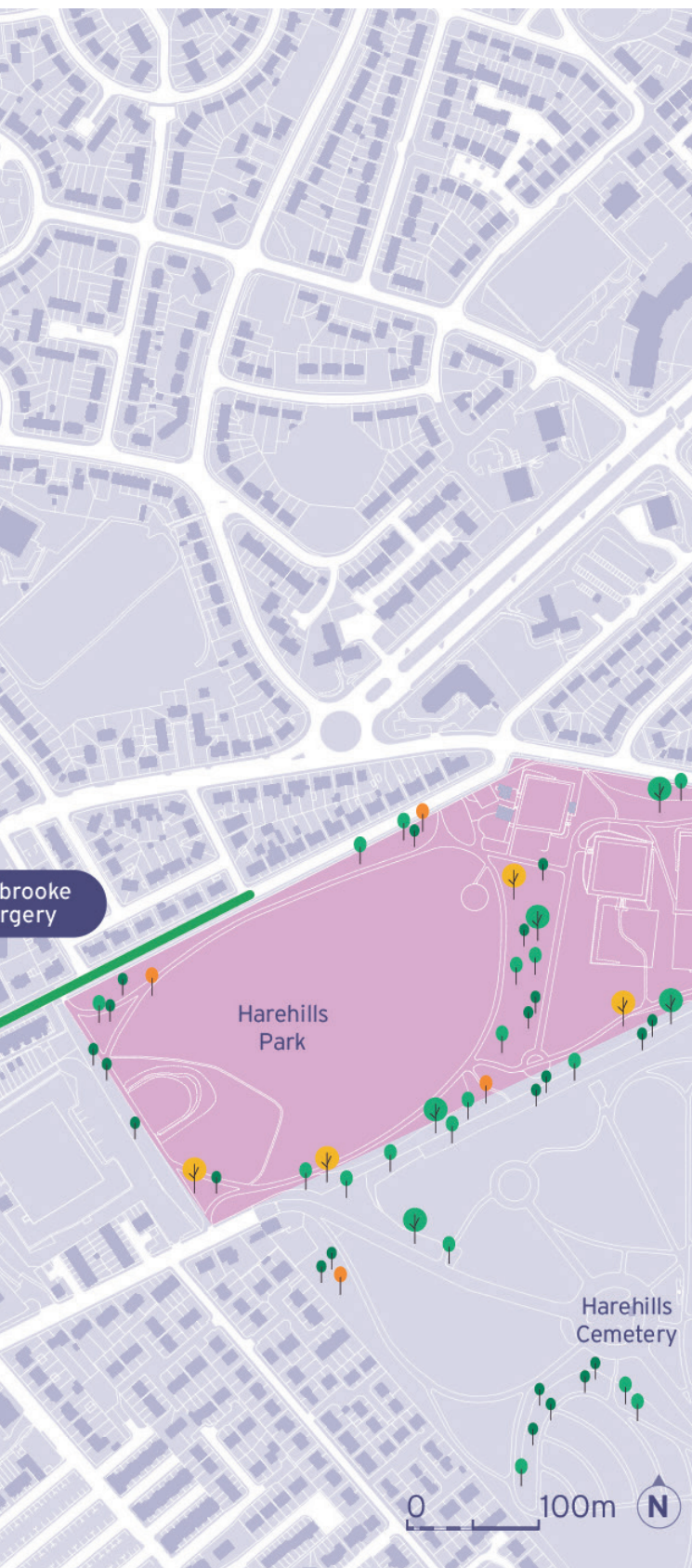
# The trail

## Context



• Figure 13. The proposed route of the Movement Trail, and approximate time it would take different users to complete it.





**Shine Centre** is the home of the Shine Social Enterprise where female ex-offenders reintegrate into society, as well as local entrepreneurs and artists develop local businesses. There is a café, conference facilities, local art and co-working spaces.

**Bellbrooke Surgery** is a GP practice within Harehills offering a wide range of health services. The surgery is part of the BHR primary care network, promoting active travel social prescribing.

**Compton Centre** is a community hub that acts as a key centre with a library and employment support services. There are community facilities such as computers and internet, toilets and changing facilities, water fountains, cycle parking, table tennis, outdoor gym equipment and cycle hire.

**Co-op Academy Nightingale** has 420 pupils and works in close collaboration with the local community. 86% of pupils walk to school, which is above the local and national average.

**Harehills Primary School** is a large primary school for almost 700 pupils. For almost 80% of the pupils English is not their first language. The school is actively involved in the community with Youth Parliament, local events and before and after school clubs.

**Bilal Masjid** came into community in 1982 with the aim of enhancing community cohesion and providing community facilities needed in the area. Its aim is to operate with a simple ethic: promoting the love for the Holy Prophet (pbuh) in the manner that his companions and his saints loved and adored him and the life according to his Sunnah in peace and harmony within the neighbourhood. Following the closure of the Pakistani Centre Hall in 2007, the mosque has opened the 'Bilal Centre' for events, meetings and weddings. The centre can cater for up to 1000 people with dedicated gender and catering facilities. There is also an educational facility within the centre which looks after 21 evening classes.



# The trail

## Implementation phases



The implementation of the Movement 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 Movement Trail. It includes the pathway marks and wayfinding points to connect the three Activity Hubs – Banstead Park, Ashton Park and Harehills Park – with residential areas and other points of interest.

-  Pathway marks
-  Wayfinding point

#### Activity Hubs:




-  1 Banstead Park
-  2 Ashton Park
-  3 Harehills Park

#### Accessibility improvements:

-  4 Entrance to Harehills Park



### Phase 2: Projects in the making

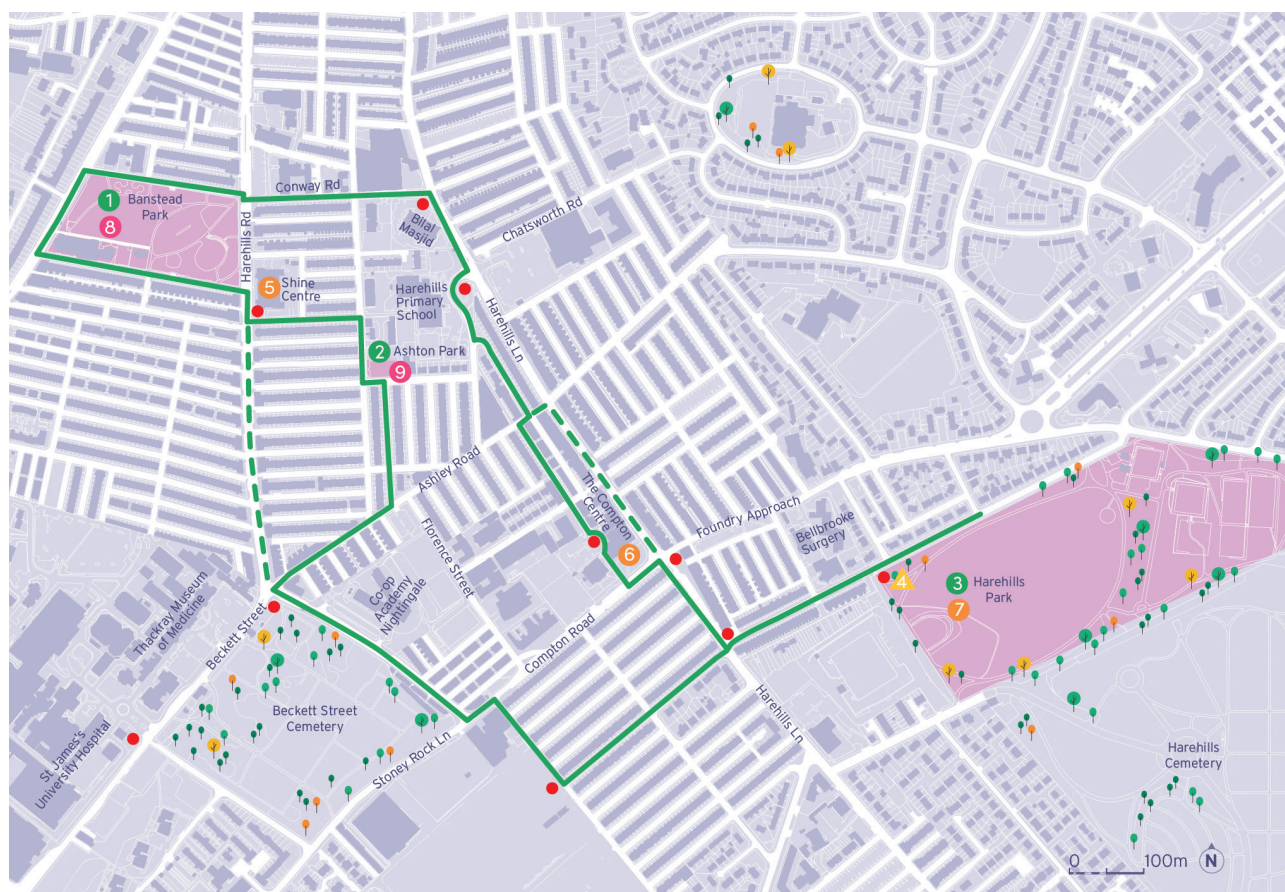
This phase is focused on supporting the Leeds City Council Parks Team in implementing ongoing projects in Harehills. The project team will work with communities to realise aspects of the [Plan on a Page](#) for Harehills Park and bringing to life the ideas from the [Love Leeds Park](#) series of engagement.

-  5 Shine Centre kit
-  6 Compton Centre kit
-  7 Harehills Park interventions

### Phase 3: Developing projects with the communities and stakeholders

A meaningful and intensive participatory design process will inform “movement zones” that will be implemented in this phase. The project team will support Leeds City Council Parks Team with long-term improvements and activation at Banstead and Ashton Park.

-  8 Banstead Park improvements
-  9 Ashton Park improvements



• Figure 14. Activity Hubs and connectivity improvements planned as part of all three implementation phases of the Movement Trail.



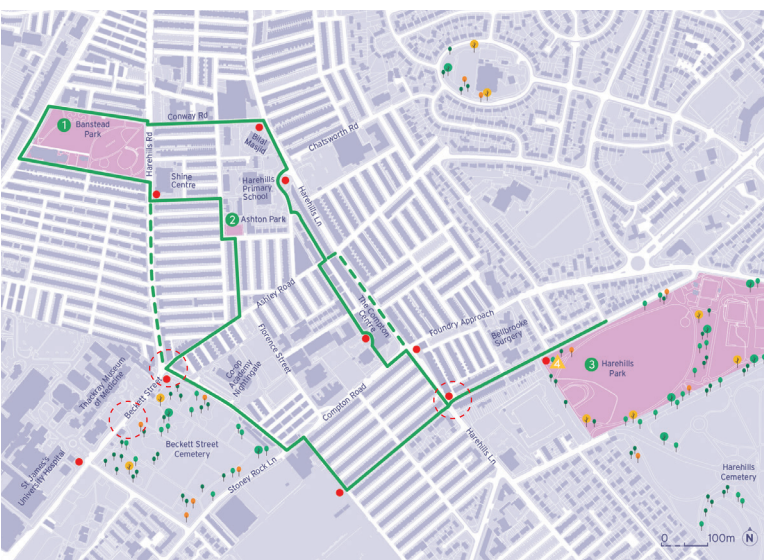
# The trail

## 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, improvements to increase the safety along the trail and accessibility measures have been implemented, and wayfinding points installed in the identified locations.

The existing Activity Hubs are highlighted and connected, shaping the initial Movement Trail in the Harehills area.



● Wayfinding point

Accessibility improvements:

4 Removing A-frame to improve the access to Harehills Park



Larger improvements:

Through the initial audit and site analysis, it has been identified that further safety and accessibility improvements are essential for walking, wheeling and cycling in Harehills. The scale of these improvements is beyond the scope of this pilot project. The insights have been shared with Leeds City Council for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of road safety in the area to support the Vision Zero ambition to eliminate fatal and serious road injuries by 2040.

○ Areas of ongoing work with Leeds City Council to identify opportunities to make these junctions more pedestrian-friendly.

## IDEA BOARD



Wayfinding around urban trails should be simple and illustrative. 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)



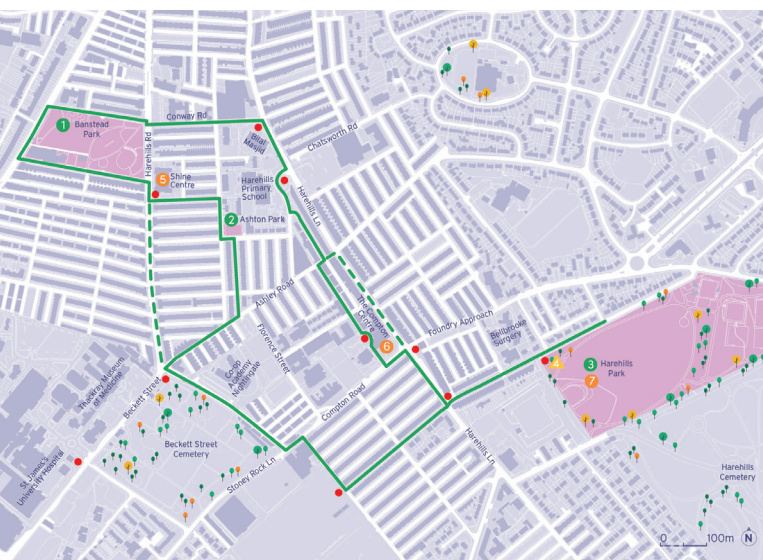
The trail could be marked with lines or shapes, such as footsteps. It is important to involve residents in the implementation process (1, 3), make it related to movement - e.g. parts that are painted as sidewalk games and with distance markers (2,4), make it flexible so it can be marked on different surfaces around the neighbourhood (2,3,4). (Source: 1 - Project for Public Spaces, 2 - Walk Boston, 3 - orizzontale, 4 - Ajuntament de Barcelona)



# The trail

## Phase 2: Projects in the making

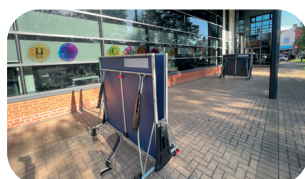
This phase focuses on implementing the improvements in Harehills Park, as well as supporting the usage of the entire trail through better connections with local facilities. The **Shine Centre** and **Compton Centre** (point 5 and 6) will be signposted as places where trail users could use a toilet, refill water bottles, and borrow activity equipment to use in the park. Harehills Park improvements will be co-designed with communities, building from the knowledge gathered in conversations and engagement activities until now. Some possible interventions are highlighted in the idea board on the right.



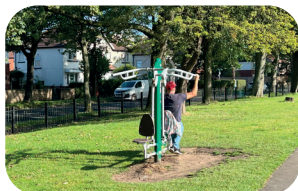
5 Shine Centre



6 Compton Centre



7 Harehills Park interventions



## IDEA BOARD



An inclusive approach to movement means designing for diverse range of ages and abilities, as well as for group and individual activities. The park could include inclusive play equipment for disabled people (1), attractive surfaces for young people (2), smaller pitches for various games (3) and seating options for caregivers (4). (Source: 1 - "Fair Play", Barnet Council, UK; 2 - UKwallball; 3 - ActiveUrbanist; 4 - Bredäng Parkby Niva)



Nature and majestic trees could inspire the upgrade of play elements and furniture in the park. For example, wooden benches and seed sculptures could be used for picnics, as a jumping polygon for children, or as an open amphitheatre seating for public events (5). Tree trunks can become hidout stations and observation points (6). Resting points could mimic the local tree species, and also serve as educational signage (7). (Source: Walmer Castle Play Trail by Studio Hardie, 2019)

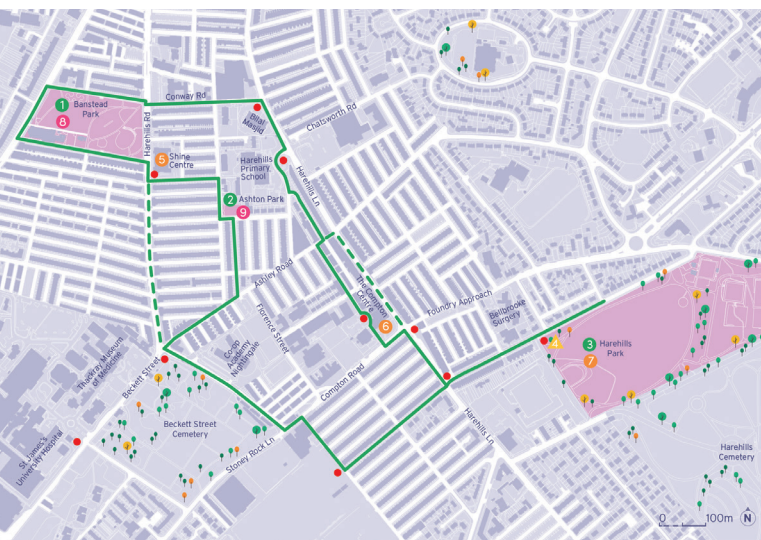


# The trail

## Phase 3: Developing projects with communities and stakeholders

Phase 3 will be a result of stakeholder engagement to identify and co-design new Movement Zones in Banstead and Ashton Park. This page shows some opportunities identified during the initial audit. These are just sketches and possibilities, but co-design will shape what each Movement Zone becomes.

Both Banstead and Ashton Park are accessible for walking, wheeling and cycling. However, opportunities for physical activities of different types, intensities and durations could be better highlighted. The interventions will focus on making these hubs more safe, inclusive and loved - raising the awareness of their significance for Harehills.



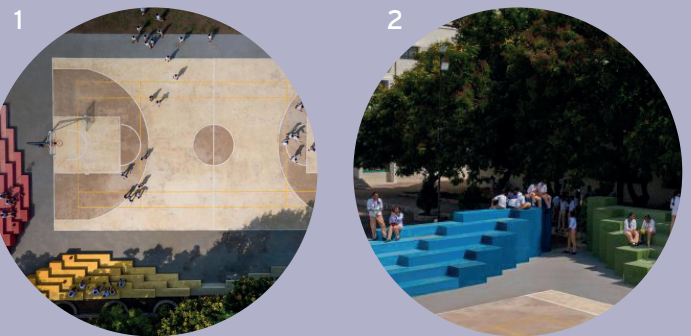
### 8 Banstead Park improvements



### 9 Ashton Park improvements



## IDEA BOARD



Upgrading the areas around pitches could trigger more diverse physical activities and bring more people into the park. For example, the stacked seating (1,2) could accommodate the audience during a match, become a new picnic spot, or a playground in itself, for young children. (Source: 1, 2 - Playball Studio)



Different treatment of vertical and horizontal surfaces would make the park area more attractive, and inspire people to try new activities. (Source: 3 - Alessandra Bello for Mide Architetti)



Highlighting pathways across the park could make the Movement Trail better integrated with the Activity Hubs. At the same time, pathways could define the zones for different activities within a park (4,5). (Source: 4, 5 - Crossboundaries)

# Implementation timeline

Table below suggests the implementation timeline for the Harehills Movement Trail. Specific activities will be further developed by the Leeds City Council Parks Team, local communities and stakeholders.

	2023	2024				2025				2026
		Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	
<b>Phase 0 – Preparation</b>										
Initial stakeholder engagement										
Initial route audit										
Preparation of the trail implementation pack										
<b>Phase 1 – Establishing the trail</b>										
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)										
<b>Phase 2 – Projects “in the making”</b>										
Co-design and co-implementation of <b>Shine Centre</b> kit (#12)										
Co-design and co-implementation of <b>Compton Centre</b> kit (#13)										
Co-design and co-implementation of interventions in <b>Harehills Park</b> (#14)										
<b>Phase 3 - Developing the other Sensory Zones with communities and stakeholders</b>										
Banstead Park improvements										
Ashton Park improvements										
<b>Ongoing trail activation</b>										
Autumn / fireworks / bonfire / harvest										
Christmas / New Year										
Spring										
Summer / holidays										



# Next steps

This document outlines the vision and implementation framework for Harehills Movement Trail.

After sharing this information with local communities and stakeholders, the aim is to focus on **improving the connectivity of residential and community areas with the Activity Hubs**. The implementation will rely on the community and stakeholder engagement activities already conducted by the Leeds City Council Parks Team. Trail testing and activation days will be the main method to validate the approach to the Harehills Movement Trail design.

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 one of the parks);
- Virtual Reality games on Love Exploring app;
- Street parties and pop-up gardening events in collaborating with the Activity Hubs;
- Annual art events;
- Prizes such as tote bags with the trail artwork on them;
- 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 want to get involved, please get in touch:

[activetravelsocialprescribing@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:activetravelsocialprescribing@leeds.gov.uk)



• **Figure 15.** The initial audit in Harehills - working to maximise the potential benefits of living close to the three parks.



# Monitoring and Evaluation

There will be ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Movement Trail throughout the development process and in the post-implementation phase. This is to ensure the Movement Trail is reaching the intended audiences and meeting the pilot's aims. The data collected will be invaluable for informing the development of any future similar trails across the UK.

Monitoring and evaluation will help to determine how much the local communities and stakeholders have taken **ownership** of the trail and are able to organise their own periodic events, or add/maintain features of the Activity Hubs, such as planting. Over time, the ambition is that the trail will be **self-sufficient** and **keep evolving organically** with the communities who use it.

Monitoring and evaluation can occur at all stages and in different forms. The specific data collection timeline and form will be determined in Phase 1, together with all parties involved. Below are some examples:

- **At the trail testing day** – collecting information on who might be interested in using the trail and baseline needs and preferences of potential trail users.
- **At trail launch** – using the multi-modal counter which will be installed on the trail. This will record the numbers of people walking, wheeling or cycling on parts of the trail. Whilst not all of these trips

recorded will be related to the Movement Trail, we can observe likely spikes in activity around trail launch, at activation/seasonal events year-round, and if any groups (e.g. organised walking groups) participate in the trail.

- If **additional elements** such as QR codes, feedback forms (e.g. in community and faith centres) and 'coffee shop' style stamp cards are introduced, these can also be used for monitoring and evaluation.
- **Discussion groups** with diverse residents (different ages, genders, abilities, cultural backgrounds) could be conducted before, during and after the implementation to capture the levels of engagement and community organisation mechanisms for on-going activation and monitoring of the trail.
- **Citizen-science monitoring** could be run after the implementation to inspect the usage of the trail by diverse users.
- Ad-hoc or programmed **visual inspections** of the trail – pilot project members, or other members of LCC working within the area can provide anecdotal evidence around the use of the trail and collect any feedback provided from residents, pupils, teachers, and/or employees in the area.

The Active Travel Social Prescribing Pilot Team will incorporate the urban trails into their Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to monitor impact, and consider a range of opportunities to capture valuable qualitative and quantitative data.



- **Figure 16.** Monitoring and evaluation will take into account various activities along the trail.







