



Impact Report

2021-2

Charity number: 1193772

Facilities for teenagers in parks and public spaces are almost entirely designed for and used by teenage boys. Teenage girls are rarely considered.

It's not fair, it affects girls' health and mental wellbeing and it's against the law.

We're here to change that.

This is what we've achieved in our first year.



Make Space for Girls was registered as a charity in March 2021.

Our mission is to use research, consultation, engagement and education to campaign and drive an approach to the planning, commissioning and development of parks and similar public spaces that recognises the different needs of girls and young women and finds ways to meet those needs.

Our initial three-year goals were:

- to generate research on how teenage girls used parks and what facilities they wanted;
- for councils to make changes to some parks to see what worked for teenage girls;
- to co-design and build a park with girls and young women.

To achieve any of these, we first needed to raise awareness of the inequality.

**Most councils
have spent more
on facilities for dog
waste than those
for teenage girls.**



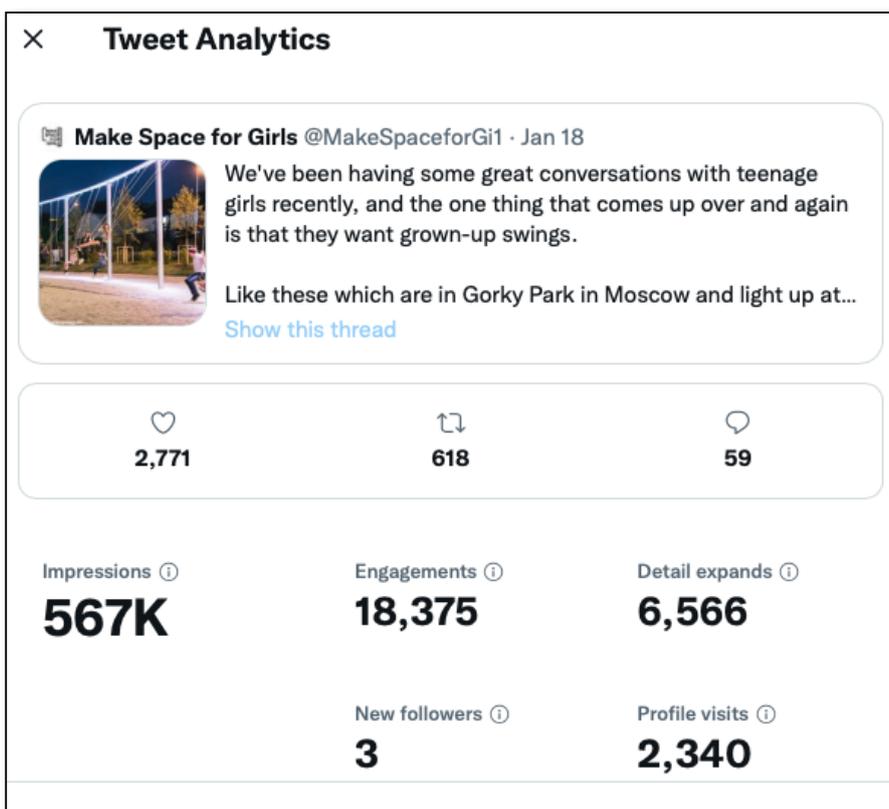
Reach

The number one task for our first year was to get our ideas across to the general public and key decision-makers and stakeholders.

Within six months we had national press coverage, including features in the Times Educational Supplement, the i newspaper and on Bloomberg and Channel 5 News.

Articles about our work also appeared in specialist journals such as Landscape, the Architects' Journal, The Clerk magazine. Imogen and Susannah were interviewed on local radio across the country, on podcasts and in an online discussion with Caroline Criado Perez.

Social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram has promoted our campaign and allowed interested parties to get in touch. Our message now has an international reach and some of our tweets were seen by half a million people.



We have also given 59 presentations to architectural practices, landscape architects, local councils, play equipment manufacturers, developers and students, with over 2,500 attendees.

“Thank you so much to Make Space for Girls for a truly inspiring talk about the need to create social, play, sport, recreational, fun and safe spaces for all, but especially for girls and young women who seem to have been overlooked in the provision of MUGAs and skate parks.”

Urbanistas NW

Although we are a UK based charity, our impact has travelled abroad and we have been contacted by academics, professional bodies and students in Canada, Arizona, Australia, Belgium, Ireland and New Zealand as well as appearing at the international WRLDCTY conference.

“Keep up the great work, I enjoy reading, following and implementing when I can.”

Rachel Scicluna, lecturer, Malta

Over the year we worked with the following organisations in getting our message across through internal information sharing, inputting into strategy documents and projects and appearing at conferences:

- Association of Play Industries
- Association of Public Service Executives
- Belfast University
- Commonplace
- Compton Verney
- The Developer
- Edinburgh University
- FAME (Female Architects of Minority Ethnicity)
- Festival of Place
- Fields In Trust
- Future Parks Accelerator
- Girlguiding
- Greater London Authority
- Greenspace Scotland
- Groundwork
- Historic Coventry Trust
- Homes England
- Join Us Move Play
- Lancaster University
- Living Streets
- Landscape Institute
- Leeds Beckett University
- London Legacy Development Corporation
- London School of Economics
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Midlands Park Forum
- National Trust
- Natural England
- Northumbria PCC
- Plan UK
- Playful Planet
- Playing Out
- Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
- Royal Town Planning Institute
- Scottish Government
- Sport England
- Sustrans
- Transport for London
- Your Park (Bristol and Bath)
- Urbanistas
- Women In Property
- Women in Sport
- Youth Hostels Association

A key metric of our impact in this first year is that our work is being cited as part of projects in which we have not been involved, in particular tenders for new equipment.

“Currently I am refurbishing several play areas and included in the brief for all sites is an instruction to “Make Space for Girls” and a link to your website. The designs are judged on several criteria, one is specifically “Has provision for girls been taken into account?” [...] You are changing the mind-set of the developers.”

Council play specialist

The draft legislation produced by the Scottish government on play sufficiency also included some of our work.

CASE STUDY - TfL

While drafting their new development policies, Lucy Attlee at Transport for London found our website. From this, her team wrote the needs of teenage girls into their Vibrant Places framework. This stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming, the need for consultation and also requires developers to evaluate how spaces are working once they are built.

TfL got all the information they needed from our documentation and only contacted us to use some of our images

The screenshot shows a page from a TfL document with the following content:

- Page Header:** Transport for London Property, Sustainable Development Framework, #1 - Vibrant Places, VP 4 - Playpace for Teenagers
- Section:** How is it calculated?
- Text:** This indicator applies to projects of sufficient size to provide playpace for teenagers. The calculation is process-based. As RIBA Stage 1, the project team should consult with teenagers and specifically teenage girls to find out what sort of space they want and what facilities they would use. This information should be used to form the project brief for architects and landscape architects and assist the teenage playpace design proposal. To achieve good practice, the design should be developed by directly involving young women in the proposal and should also include input from trans and non-binary teenagers.
- Text:** To achieve leading practice, the project team must ensure ongoing inclusivity through the operation and maintenance (O&M) plan, commit to post-occupancy evaluation of the teenage play space at 12-18 months post completion, and carry out any recommended remedial work identified by the evaluation.
- Infographic 1:** TEENAGE GIRLS FEEL TEN TIMES MORE UNSAFE THAN BOYS IN PUBLIC SPACES. Includes the 'MAKE SPACE FOR GIRLS' logo and the text 'Campaign Venue 2022-2024'. Source: www.make-space-for-girls.com
- Infographic 2:** 82% OF GIRLS THINK THEY SHOULD BE MORE INVOLVED IN DESIGNING PUBLIC SPACES. Includes the 'MAKE SPACE FOR GIRLS' logo and the text 'Campaign Venue 2022-2024'. Source: www.make-space-for-girls.com
- Table:** A table with columns: Metric type, Units, Range. It lists 'Provision of PDS and remedial work' with a 'Good Practice' star icon and 'Leading Practice PDS and Remedial Work' with a 'Leading Practice' star icon.
- Page Footer:** 25, Draft Consultation Version

Research

We identified early on that little research had been done in this area, and work to address this is already underway.

Research has been commissioned by Yorkshire Sport, in association with Women in Sport to look at how girls use parks in the county, and similar projects are underway in London and Banbury in Oxfordshire. In addition we are working with Bradford Teaching Hospitals and Join Us Move Play on workshops with girls from low-income areas and from the South Asian community, and with the LSE on apprenticeships to empower girls and young women to engage with public space, and developing further projects with three other universities.

Two sets of placement students have joined us, from the Planning Department at Leeds Beckett University and the Architecture course at Sheffield Hallam, and we are working on a project with graduate Architecture students at Manchester Metropolitan University.



Better Parks

A core ambition is to work with councils and developers to create better parks, designed with teenage girls in mind. We want to make changes to existing parks, and to create designs from scratch, co-designed with teenage girls.

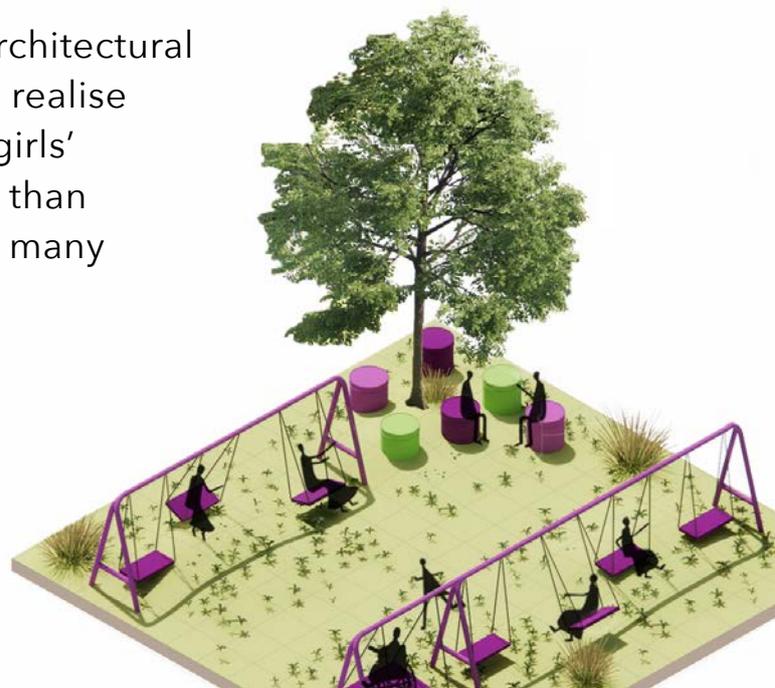
We are already collaborating with Your Park on consultations which will inform the redevelopment of Brickfields Park in Bath, and on smaller-scale work on parks in Bradford.

Work has also begun with three different developers on masterplanning for new sites, to ensure that our principles are embedded in the design from the start.

“The fantastic Make Space for Girls are changing the conversation in development. Both developers and councils have a responsibility in making public spaces accessible for girls to enjoy and feel safe, but the reality is opportunities to do this are often missed.”

Cratus Communications

To further this goal, we worked with architectural students from Newcastle University to realise girls' ideas for better parks, bringing girls' ideas to life. These were viewed more than 400,000 times on Twitter and sparked many conversations.



Consultation

We believe very strongly that the only way to get better parks and public spaces for teenage girls is to talk to them: to find out what they want, and what barriers they currently face.

Consultation is at the core of our own work, so we feel it is important to share good practice.

In July we collaborated with Julia King from LSE Cities to hold a roundtable which brought together experts to discuss best practice in consulting with teenage girls.

We also co-authored a book chapter on consulting with teenage girls with examples from both here and abroad, to be published in a book about interventions for social change.

“Make Space for Girls has some great resources compiling findings and actions taken by councils across the world and what has been learnt from the process of consulting with local girls and designers so far.”

Abigail Gaines, Friends of Rowntree Park

We also share material on our website to help people hold consultations of their own, ranging from ideas for activities, links to resources and documentation of successful consultations, along with practical material like draft questionnaires.

CASE STUDY : Rowntree Park

The Friends group for Rowntree Park in York used our materials to run workshops with teenage girls, and discovered that girls felt uncomfortable there, particularly in the skate park, and wanted different facilities.

They've discussed this on local radio and with their MP and are now fundraising for better provision for teenage girls.

Team

The charity has no paid staff and relies on volunteers. The principal volunteers during the period ending 31 December 2021 were the Trustees, who between them undertook all the core activities of the charity on a voluntary basis, and the majority of the project work. We were also delighted to work with placement students from the Planning Department of Leeds Beckett and the School of Architecture at Sheffield Hallam.

The Trustees would also like to thank the many others who have volunteered their time to support the charity. Without their incredible enthusiasm and support, we would not have been able to achieve so much in our first year. Thank you!

