



OUR OUTDOORS

Findings from Community Workshops

Community Workshops

In early 2018 we developed and delivered three participatory workshops with 36 members of the public to:

- **Explore** how shared outdoor spaces affect our health and wellbeing
- **Understand** elements of a space that make people enjoy being in a space or not
- **Identify** if some elements affect you more than others
- **Hear** what would encourage people to become a citizen scientist



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Participants

We recruited participants in partnership with existing community groups to gather a range of views.

Participants were a mix of ages and genders and included those from both affluent areas and areas of deprivation.

We also engaged older adults and people with experiences of poor mental health.



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What we did and what we found out

Participants took part in five activities during the
workshops...



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Activity 1: What are your shared outdoor spaces?

In pairs participants discussed what shared outdoor spaces they spend time in or pass through.

Across all workshops participants reported spending time in green, blue and grey spaces...



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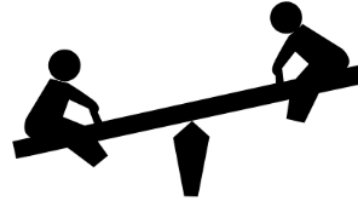


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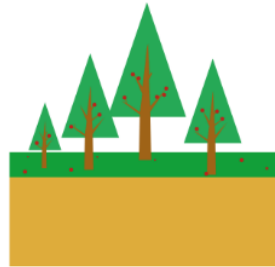
Green spaces



Hills and mountains



Playparks



Forests and woodland



Community gardens
and parks

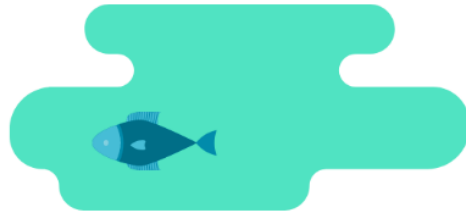


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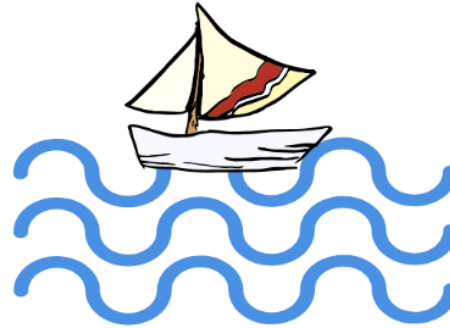


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Blue spaces



Rivers and estuaries



Seas and coastlines



Beaches and promenades



Canals



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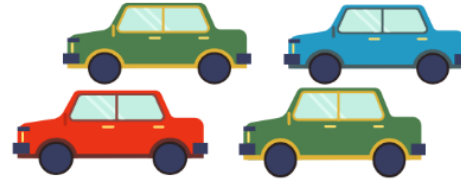


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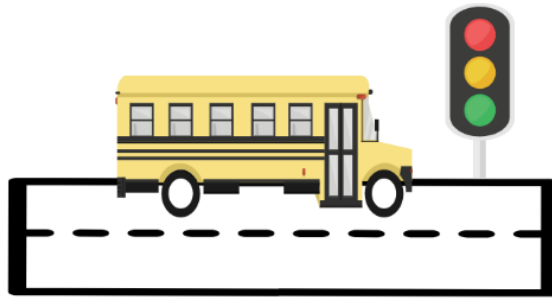
Grey spaces



Town centre and local streets



Car park



Bus stops and train stations



Cycle paths and skate parks



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Activity 2: How shared outdoor spaces make me feel

In small groups participants discussed how they feel when they are in:

- shared outdoor spaces they **enjoy** spending time in and
- shared outdoor spaces that they **avoid** or **don't enjoy** spending time in.

Participants recorded their thoughts on post-its.



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Common words people used to describe **how they feel** when they are in shared outdoor spaces they **enjoy**:



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Common words people used to describe **how they feel** when they are in shared outdoor spaces they **don't enjoy**:



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Activity 3&4: Examining our shared outdoor spaces

In small groups participants discussed the shared outdoor spaces that they **enjoy** or **don't enjoy** spending time in and **identified** what it is about these spaces that makes them feel this way.

Participants recorded their thoughts on post-its and then collectively grouped these into themes which they chose.

Across all three workshops, the following themes were identified...



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What people said they enjoyed about shared outdoor spaces



NATURE

Seeing and hearing birds and wildlife, fresh air



BEING ACTIVE

Cycling, walking, doing activities they enjoy, playing



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Getting away from stress, being alone, relaxing



SOCIAL INTERACTION

Meet new people, connect with friends, family or community



SENSORY

Smells, sounds and feel of nature, water and weather



AMENITIES

Well-looked after spaces that are accessible (e.g. transport, litter disposal)



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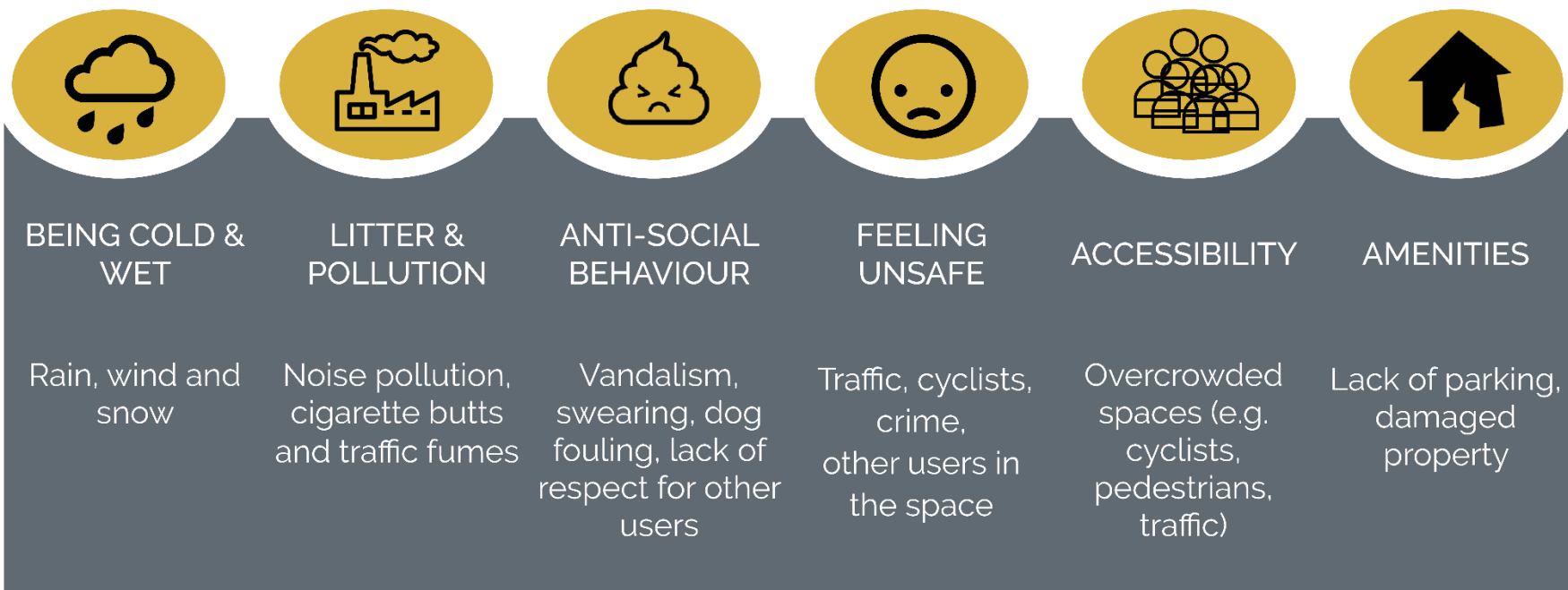


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What people said they don't enjoy about shared outdoor spaces



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Activity 5: Being a Citizen Scientist

We wanted to know how people would like to be involved in the Our Outdoors project.

In small groups participants responded to the following questions about becoming a citizen scientists for Our Outdoors.



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Q: What activities would you like to be involved in for Our Outdoors?

Participants wanted to be involved in a range of activities, including:

- **Questionnaires:** answering them or helping others to
- **“Spreading the word”** about the project
- **Environmental activities:** that give people a sense of responsibility for an environment (e.g. litter picks)
- **Social activities:** to bring people together
- **Engagement activities:** to help people gain confidence to use and access shared outdoor spaces



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Q: What would motivate you to be involved in Our Outdoors?

Motivations to become a citizen scientist included:

- **Make a difference** to the environment or community
- Meeting new people
- **Learn new skills** and gain access to training
- Sense of purpose or achievement
- **Interest** in the topic or activities
- Certificate or something to put on CV
- **Taking part** in research
- Incentives being provided e.g. food, free transport, freebies / competitions



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Q: What might stop you from being involved in Our Outdoors?

Barriers to becoming a citizen scientist included:

- **Cost** (e.g. transport, materials)
- **Access:** if location was far away or hard to access
- **Time:** if they didn't have the time or activities were too time consuming
- **Not feeling valued** or listened to
- **Not having the skills** to take part
- **Lack of interest** in the topic or activity



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Q: What support might you need to be involved in Our Outdoors?

The support participants said they might need to be involved in Our Outdoors included:

- **Transport**
- **Financial support** (for resources, pay for their time, incentives, other expenses)
- **Training** to develop skills to take part
- **Buddies:** someone to support them to be involved
- **“Open day”** to try activities



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Next Steps...



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Information gathered from the workshops will be used alongside information from the Science Festival and other public engagement activities to do the following:

- **Draft questionnaire:** The information gathered from public engagement activities is being used to draft a questionnaire to measure people's health and wellbeing in specific shared outdoor spaces.
- **Validating and testing questionnaire:** Once the questionnaire is complete citizen scientists will be engaged to conduct cognitive testing of the questionnaire items. This will inform a final questionnaire.
- **Questionnaire piloting and public engagement activities** will take place in Edinburgh and the Lothians before being rolled out across the UK.



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