Combatting Social Exclusion Through Public Space Design

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Abstract

Changes in school architecture and design can improve educational outcomes (Sahlberg, 2011). Changes in hospital architecture and design can reduce patient violence in psychiatric wards (Ulrich et al., 2008). Can the design of public places help prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion? This research compares public parks in the UK and the US. Near the turn of the 21st century, both countries had parallel political movements, similar design philosophies, and growing social polarisation. However, addressing social exclusion and cohesion were policy priorities in the UK, but not in the US. Textual analysis found that national political discourses influenced design recommendations for public parks in each country. Urban planners in the UK proposed design features aimed at preventing social exclusion. In eight case study parks, systematic observation suggests UK parks designed in this context attracted users more representative of the surrounding community than their correlate parks in the US. Where the design features were implemented, user interviews suggest they facilitated positive social interactions among park users. However, fieldwork revealed that implementation varied in both the UK and the US. Elite interviews underscore the role of park designers and urban planners as 'street-level bureaucrats' who influence how social policies come to fruition. The findings also suggest urban design can be a powerful tool in tackling social policy agendas.

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Combatting Social Exclusion Through Public Space Design

There is no doubt whatever about the influence of architecture and structure upon human character and action. We make our buildings and afterwards they make us. They regulate the course of our lives.

-Winston Churchill, Address to the English Architectural Association in 1924

Chapter 1: Introduction

More than two millennia ago, Plato did some calculations. He was trying to determine the largest possible state that could still maintain a cohesive society. His answer: 5,040 people (Plato, 360 BCE). Plato selected '5,040 citizens because that was the maximum number of persons one could know sufficiently and interact with often enough to maintain the required civic dialogue' (Munson and Warren, 1997: xi). Aristotle similarly asserted the importance of face-to-face interactions in creating an engaged and inclusive state (350 BCE). He argued that 'it is necessary for the citizens to know each other's personal characters' (Aristotle, 350 BCE: 1326b).

Political theorists going back to ancient Greece highlight the importance of knowing one's fellow citizen, touching on issues at the heart of social exclusion and social cohesion. A few millennia later, policymakers and social policy scholars grapple with the same issues.

When Tony Blair's Labour government came to power in the United Kingdom (UK) a few years before the turn of the 21st century, it highlighted social exclusion and social cohesion as major topics of concern. As Byrne wrote, 'the expression "social exclusion" is everywhere in contemporary UK social policy; not only in the processes of policy development but also at the sharp end of policy implementation' (2005: 1). The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) was created in December of 1997, and it soon began releasing reports on everything from teenage pregnancy to rough sleeping and neighbourhood renewal. The SEU was imbued with political importance: 'To many government insiders, the SEU is the jewel in Labour's policy crown, the favoured administrative son' (Benn, 2000: 309).

At the same time, a lack of cohesion became a central policy concern. 'Community Cohesion has been described as one of the most significant policy interventions since the Labour government was formed in 1997' (Beider, 2011: 21). The concept of community

cohesion – also commonly referred to as social cohesion – gained prominence following social unrest in several northern English towns in 2001. The goal was to cultivate a society with shared values and a shared identity (Home Office, 2001).

In the UK context, social exclusion and social cohesion can be understood to be complementary and related concepts. Whereas social exclusion efforts often focused on individuals at the 'bottom' of society, social cohesion is more expansive. It highlights the 'importance of supporting networks and reciprocity' between individuals from across society (Bertotti et al., 2012: 224).

> While continuing to emphasise the need to tackle inequalities, community cohesion programmes also attempted to build understanding between different groups and to build mutual trust and respect (Cantle, 2016: no pagination).

It is well established that having a society with social exclusion and without social cohesion has manifestly negative effects. As the SEU explained in *Preventing Social Exclusion*:

> One of the reasons the Government has made tackling social exclusion a priority is because of the huge costs – both human and financial – it imposes both on people directly affected and on the economy and society at large (2001a: 22).

The report goes on to list one of the major society-wide costs as a reduction in social cohesion. At an individual level, the report says social exclusion can cause everything from stress and a lack of hope to health problems and financial losses (ibid.). Scholarly research supports these conclusions, associating exclusion with poverty and deprivation as well as suggesting it can trigger physical and psychological problems (Williams, 2009; Kerr and Levine, 2008; Lister, 2004). Social exclusion can also affect the community at large. The SEU argues it is a 'key driver' in causing 'higher crime and fear of crime' and it is reflected in a reduction in cohesion (2001a: 23). Research suggests addressing exclusion and facilitating cohesion is beneficial, stemming urban deterioration and improving a city's safety, security, and economic viability (Davis, 2012; Sampson, 2012).

Given the social importance of preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion, what can be done to improve a community's status? Several seminal studies across research disciplines suggest Plato and Aristotle might have been right. Small, positive interactions among diverse community members can build cohesion by strengthening social networks, stimulating civic engagement, and encouraging tolerance (Putnam, 2000; Granovetter, 1983; Allport, 1954; Maloutas and Malouta, 2004). Importantly, small interactions include both verbal and non-verbal contact. For instance, eye contact between strangers can subconsciously enhance a person's sense of connectedness (Wesselmann et al., 2012). In Granovetter's landmark work, *The Strength of Weak Ties,* he argues that 'small-scale interaction becomes translated into large-scale patterns' (1973: 1360).

Positive interaction seems to be important, but it is not immediately evident how to foster such interaction. The literature on social exclusion and cohesion suggest the physical environment may play an important role. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) argue one of the key 'building blocks' for cohesion is 'shared spaces for interaction' (2008a: 45). However, even in shared public spaces, the exclusion literature points out that there are persistent challenges. For example, 'the Social Exclusion Unit's programmes on Mental Health and Young Adults with Troubled Lives, have been aimed at removing barriers to the social inclusion of some groups often considered "undesirable" users of public spaces' and their programme on Excluded Older People found that older individuals are often 'invisible' in public spaces (Holland et al., 2007: 3). Further, the Home Office's seminal report on community cohesion notes that people from different parts of society can lead 'parallel lives': 'These lives often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges' (2001: 9).

Addressing physical separation has been proposed as part of the UK's policy effort to promote social cohesion. One of the goals in the Home Office's report is for people to

'occupy a common sense of place' (2001: 70). Although some scholars are sceptical about whether public spaces can be more than a place for sociability and tolerance (Amin and Thrift, 2002), others argue that public spaces can serve a key role in creating that common sense of place and identity (Smets and Watt, 2013). As Holland et al. write:

> The public visibility of different kinds of people is underpinned by their presence in public spaces, and people's understanding of their community is in part formed by who and what they see in the public domain (2007: ix).

Similarly, Staeheli and Mitchell argue:

> Being present in public space – making claims to and becoming visible in the streets, sidewalks, squares and parks of the city – is a vital, necessary step in making claims on the public and as part of the public (2008: xiv).

However, it is not always clear exactly how to create a public space that achieves such goals.

This thesis engages the scholarly debate over social exclusion and social cohesion dating back to Ancient Greece. It examines the UK's policies under Prime Minister Tony Blair as well as contemporaneous policies in the United States (US) to understand how the design of public space can contribute to efforts aimed at preventing social exclusion and building social cohesion. In particular, it examines how policy and urban design in the UK sought to promote social cohesion, and it questions whether these social policy efforts achieved their objectives. The rest of this chapter provides an overview of the thesis, (1) outlining the research questions, (2) summarising the research design, (3) previewing the findings, and (4) delineating the contributions to social policy theory and social policy more broadly.

1.1 Research Questions

This work looks at social exclusion and social cohesion through the lens of the built environment. In particular, it focuses on urban parks, which are often carefully designed public spaces. It has long been recognised that the physical design of a space can affect

human behaviour and social dynamics. After all, the Parisian boulevard system was 'constructed in part for social control' (Talen, 2002: 165).

Academic research has investigated the potential of design to impact behaviour. Hospital design is the quintessential example (Gesler et al., 2004). 'Evidence shows that changes in the architecture, design, and décor of health care facilities can improve patient care and in the long run reduce expenses' (Sadler et al., 2011: 13). Design has been shown to decrease the length of medical stays and limit the number of medical errors, but it has also influenced patient conduct. In psychiatric wards, design elements, such as moveable seating and abundant natural light, can diminish patient stress, aggression, and violence (Ulrich et al., 2008). School design is another common example (Jetsonen et al., 2011). Carefully designed schools can encourage certain student movement and circulation patterns that reduce bullying and improve student test scores (Tanner, 2009). Further, environmental psychologists have shown that design can influence behaviour in prisons, offices spaces, and houses, among countless other settings (Bechtel and Churchman, 2002).

Public spaces are no exception. Various studies have examined the benefits and pitfalls of public space design, particularly of urban green spaces. Research has explored the health benefits of certain park designs and highlighted the rare role of parks as a free space accessible to all people in a society (Brookfield et al., 2017; Ward Thompson et al., 2016; Frumkin, 2003; Low et al., 2005). Indeed, both policy documents and academic research acknowledge that public spaces could play an important role in preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. As the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) wrote:

> Neglected parks seem to attract anti-social behaviour and have the potential to undermine regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods. In growth areas, good quality parks and open spaces are one of the best ways to ensure new communities blend harmoniously with old (2006: 1).

It goes on to say that 'green spaces enhance the quality and diversity of the environment and promote social inclusion' (ODPM, 2006: 64). Similarly, Kazmierczak and James argue that 'urban green spaces can improve social inclusion and social cohesion' (2007: 361).

Several scholars highlight the importance of design in creating these public spaces. In studying contested cities, such as Jerusalem, Belfast, and Nicosia, Gaffikin et al. assert the 'efficacy of deliberately deploying urban design as an instrument for the creation of public amenity as shared space across the divide' (2010: 493). Similarly, Madanipour suggests that 'socially concerned urban design' can '[promote] accessible and inclusive environments' (2006: 186).

Scholars recognise that the design of the physical environment can play a role in preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion, but the specific design requirements and their effects have not been fully explored or widely researched. For example, when the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) undertook a large research programme between 1999 and 2004 called *Cities: Competitiveness and Cohesion* which helped shape policy initiatives, 'urban design was noticeable by its absence from that research programme' (Punter, 2010: xv). As Francis et al. write, '[although] researchers have studied indicators of high quality public space, fewer empirical studies have examined the design of public space for social interaction' (2012: 402; also see Frumkin, 2003; Williams and Green, 2001). Wessel concurs, arguing that theories of social exclusion 'rarely consider the contributory impact of particular settings upon contact, tolerance and integration' (2009, 14-15). Simple proximity and social mixing do not lead directly to social cohesion; rather it is 'dependent on subtle qualities of the landscape' (ibid.).

This thesis – through interviews and detailed case studies of public parks – aims to help address this gap in the literature. It explores the potential role of urban design in tackling social exclusion and a promoting cohesion. The core research question is:

> To what extent have urban design initiatives contributed to the prevention of social exclusion and the promotion of social cohesion in public parks?

Nested within this overarching research question are four areas of inquiry. Each area considers one of four parts of the policy process: ideology behind the policy, formation of the policy, implementation of the policy, and the public's experience of the policy. Each area of inquiry is the subject of a chapter.

(1) **Urban doctrine:** To what extent did the prominence of social exclusion and cohesion as political concepts in the UK influence the principles undergirding urban policy? (Chapter 4)

(2) **Policy design**: What – if any – were the differences in design recommendations for public parks in the UK and the US? How – if at all – did UK design recommendation address social exclusion and cohesion? (Chapter 5)

(3) **Policy implementation:** How – if at all – were the design recommendations intended to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion incorporated into new public parks? What explains the similarities and differences in implementation? (Chapter 6)

(4) **User experience**: To what extent did the design features intended to prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion in public parks influence who uses the parks and how they use them? (Chapter 7)

1.2 Methodology and Research Design

In order to answer these questions, this thesis adopts a cross-disciplinary perspective. It draws on academic and policy work in social policy, sociology, urban studies, urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture. Approaches to social exclusion in these literatures have largely been siloed, limiting interdisciplinary collaboration. As Byrne explains, 'the academic debate on social exclusion provides an excellent illustration of the problems posed by the reification of disciplinary boundaries within the contemporary academy' (2005: 3). The result is that the field 'remains at best only partially coherent' and a degree of creativity and nuance is lost without the cross-fertilisation of ideas (Byrne, 2005: 4). This research aims to counter that trend by drawing on work from various fields.

This research is comparative, juxtaposing case studies of public parks in the UK and the US at the turn of the 21st century. Both countries grappled with rising social inequality, polarisation, and exclusion especially in their urban centres (Cole, 2011; Loury et al., 2005). Both countries experienced largely parallel architectural movements and urban regeneration philosophies (Shaw and Porter, 2009; Punter, 2007 and 2011; Song and Knaap, 2003). Yet the UK explicitly endeavoured to address social exclusion and create social cohesion through government initiatives, while the US largely dealt with social exclusion through 'avoidance' (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010: 6). Although, of course, there are plenty of differences between the countries, this scenario offers an opportunity to compare the urban design policies and the public spaces they created.

This thesis looks at where socially-focused urban design principles and recommendations vary between the UK and the US, considering whether any variation is a result of the social exclusion discourse in the UK. There are eight case studies: four urban parks in the UK and four in the US. All of them were created or redesigned in the late 1990s and early 2000s while the UK's Labour Government was focused on preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. During this time, the US government was not focused on these issues. In each country, two of the four parks are city parks and the other two are smaller neighbourhood parks. In urban geography and sociology, parks are considered one of the few remaining places where both the marginalised and the mainstream are in the same location and there is not a pre-existing power structure (Low et al., 2005).

This research employs multiple methodologies to help understand the issue from different perspectives, including a comprehensive review of policy documents, elite interviews, detailed descriptive mapping, systematic social observations, and user interviews. Both elite interviews – with architects, landscape architects, planners, and park employees – as well as user interviews – with park goers – were semi-structured and followed an approach

pioneered by Dexter (1970). The detailed descriptive mapping and the systematic social observation are methodologies that have previously been used to analyse urban parks. Developed by the early Chicago School of Urban Sociology and advanced by Reiss (1971), these techniques can be used to understand the subtle features of an environment as well as how people act and interact in a given space (Mastrofski et al., 2011). This is important because research about physical spaces must not only consider the policymakers' and designers' intentions, but also how the spaces are actually used and experienced.

1.3 Hypotheses and Findings

The research is organised to examine how public spaces in the UK and the US differ in their intentions, design, and user experience. Given that the countries had comparable social issues and comparable urban design movements, but a different policy focus on preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion, it is possible – although not guaranteed – that differences between the parks are attributable to the policy priorities around social exclusion and cohesion in the UK. This research hypothesises that the UK case study parks are more likely than the US parks to include recommended design features and promote a user experience that prevents social exclusion and promotes social cohesion. Further, the hypothesis is that these features successfully bring different parts of society into the same space and successfully encourage positive interactions. The empirical chapters test this hypothesis at each stage of the policy process.

Chapter 4 examines how the social exclusion discourse – or the lack of it – influenced the urban design movements in each country. In particular, the chapter considers the social goals undergirding each country's design movement. The hypothesis is that the UK's Urban Renaissance (UR) attempted to address social exclusion, whereas the US's New Urbanism (NU) did not strive to understand or prevent social exclusion nor did it aim to create social

cohesion. Through a close review of policy documents and urban literature as well as elite interviews, this analysis finds evidence to support the hypothesis. There are subtle but significant differences in how the design movements prioritise social well-being, how they conceptualise their fragmented societies, and what they mean by community. These differences seem to reflect the national attention paid to social exclusion and social cohesion in the UK and the lack of attention paid to these issues in the US. This chapter also uncovers friction within UK policy. It finds a disconnect between how policymakers from a design background think about social exclusion and how policymakers from a social exclusion background think about design. It is possible this could be attribute to the fact that theses are different disciplines. However, through policy evaluation and elite interviews suggest three other possible explanations: lack of data, lack of central authority, and lack of public esteem for parks.

Chapter 5 sets out to identify the design features that were recommended to help prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion in public parks. The hypothesis is that there were different recommendations in the UK's urban design movement compared to the US and that those differences reflect divergent approaches toward social exclusion and cohesion. From consideration of both governmental and non-government sources as well as the elite interviews conducted, there is evidence to support this hypothesis. Chapter 5 organises the design recommendations that are associated with preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. The various recommendations are sorted into three categories based on the logic behind them: (1) some recommendations are intended to attract a broad array of people into the park; (2) some are intended to make park users comfortable such that they stay for a long time and return regularly; (3) other recommendations are intended to cultivate interaction between users. The result is what this thesis calls the Presence-Comfort-Interaction (PCI) Framework.

Chapter 6 looks at whether the design recommendations were incorporated into new parks in each country. In other words, were the recommendations implemented? This evaluation is undertaken through detailed descriptive mapping of the eight case studies. The hypothesis is that the design recommendations identified as ways to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion in the UK literature were more common in the selected UK parks than in the US parks. The analysis did not find evidence to support this hypothesis. Instead, there was a large degree of variability between the parks. The two parks that most consistently incorporated design recommendations from the PCI Framework are in the UK. However, several of the US parks also incorporated design elements of the PCI Framework. Drawing on elite interviews, this chapter considers why this might be the case. It finds that ambiguity in the recommendations as well as significant discretion on the part of front-line agents tasked with designing the parks contributed to the variation found in UK parks. Further, economic motivations in US parks appear to have led US parks to incorporate design techniques from the PCI Framework even though they did not intend to prevent social exclusion or promote cohesion.

Chapter 7 considers the experience of park users. It asks who uses the park, how they use the park, and – most importantly – whether the users interact with one another. The hypothesis is that parks that incorporated the design recommendations were more successful at preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. They do this, hypothetically, by attracting a representative set of users, making them all feel comfortable, and facilitating interaction between them. Systematic social observation was conducted in all eight case study parks as were user interviews. By and large, the data supports the hypothesis. Given that the recommended features were implemented in some UK parks and in some US parks, this means the parks that are best equipped to help prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion are not solely in the UK. However, the data did indicate that the successful UK

parks were more effective than the successful US parks at providing a user experience that promotes social cohesion. For example, the UK case study parks attracted more users from underrepresented minority communities compared to the US parks. The data presented in this chapter serve as a critique of the design recommendations gleaned from experts and policy documents in Chapter 5.

Taken together, this research finds that some policymakers endeavoured to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion through the design of public parks, impacting policies and generating design recommendations. This was most evident when policymakers with a background in urban planning and urban design decided to incorporate social exclusion into their work. In contrast, policymakers who were primarily focused on social exclusion were less likely to integrate design into their strategies.

The uneven policy implementation in public spaces is noteworthy. While design recommendations in the UK literature focused on preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion, only some UK parks incorporated the recommendations. Understanding the heterogeneity of park design and user experience in the UK contributes to several areas of social policy theory, including research on policy conversion and the role of 'street-level bureaucrats' (Hacker et al., 2013; Lipsky, 1980).

1.4 Contribution to Social Policy Theory and Social Policy

This thesis contributes to both academic and policy debates. Academically, this work fills a gap in existing research between studies of social exclusion and cohesion, and research on the design of public places. The hope is that this type of work facilitates further interdisciplinary research between these fields. Importantly, it provides empirical data on public parks and contributes to the theoretical understanding of policy implementation.

There is very little data on urban green spaces. When the House of Common's Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs issued their report *Town and Country Parks* in 1999, they lamented the 'basic lack of information' which meant their work 'largely took place in a statistical vacuum' (Para. 23). While some work has been done to help address this statistical vacuum, including the Department for Communities and Local Government's efforts to map out what research has been done and what the next priorities should be, more empirical study is needed (DCLG, 2006a). This thesis helps by providing not only detailed information about the physical features of select parks and their condition but also information about who uses the park and how. Further, this thesis relates design features with user behaviour, considering what might make a park successful or unsuccessful. While observational research has been used for urban parks before, it is rare. This is partly because the method 'require[s] a very substantial time commitment by the researcher' (Gobster, 1992: 215).

This thesis contributes to social policy theory by tracing a policy from philosophy through implementation and evaluation. In considering the entire process, the research identified a high degree of variability in how policy and policy recommendations were implemented. This is particularly interesting in light of the theoretical research on policy conversion, which examines how the same policy can be implemented very differently in different contexts. 'Conversion thus feeds off of rule ambiguity and the multiplicity of political arenas in which ambiguous rules can be reinterpreted' (Hacker et al., 2013: 2). Throughout the empirical chapters – and particularly in Chapter 6 – this thesis found that, consistent with the policy conversion literature, three factors contributed to implementation variability: (1) the policies were ambiguous, (2) there was a lack of political will and a high degree of bureaucratic discretion, and (3) there was limited accountability. Beland suggests that studies of policy conversion and other mechanisms for policy change require more

empirical evidence (2007b: 20). This thesis provides detailed evidence from public parks on how a policy can come to mean different things in different places. This work also contributes to the literature on 'street-level bureaucrats' (Lipsky, 1980). The theory argues that those on the front-lines – such as teachers and police officers – have significant sway in how a policy is implemented. Currently, the category of front-line agents includes those who have direct contact with the public. This research suggests that group should be expanded to include architects, landscape architects, and planners who create the spaces where important social interactions occur.

From a policy perspective, this work enumerates specific design techniques that could help prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion. More broadly, this thesis highlights architecture and design as potentially powerful forces in advancing social goals and welfare state agendas.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

When researching a relatively new area of scientific inquiry, it is imperative that the research questions are situated within the broader academic literature and policy context. Grounding new research in the existing field helps prevent inconsistencies in definitions and measures. It helps ensure the investigation is useful and relevant to social policy debates.

This chapter endeavours to bridge several different but interrelated areas of research. It first explores the relevant social policy discourses around social exclusion and cohesion, including how these concepts developed historically as well as how they are defined and measured. Approaching exclusion and cohesion through the lens of prevention, this thesis explores initiatives to avoid exclusion, rather than to remedy it. Understanding prevention has important implications for how exclusion and cohesion are related. Finally, the chapter explores two features relevant to both social exclusion and cohesion: the importance of positive social contact between individuals with different backgrounds; and the importance of the physical environment when preventing exclusion and facilitating cohesion.

2.1 Social Exclusion and Social Cohesion

The term ‘social exclusion’ is a relatively new addition to the field of social policy. While the concept is evident in Aristotelian philosophy and the term can be traced to sociology theories at the turn of the 20th century, it only became a policy concept in the 1970s (Sen, 2000). In the last four decades, the concept has become closely associated with welfare state policies in the EU (Daly, 2010).

Social exclusion’s aspirational foil, social cohesion, has followed a similar trajectory. The term has a long history, but it was only ‘in the 1990s that social policy analysts found an expression for the big picture framing of their discourse – social cohesion’ (Maxwell, 2002:

i). The term surfaced prominently in welfare state policies, and the concept knitted together various social challenges into a single paradigm.

Both terms have been adopted in social policy debates and both concepts have been adapted by various countries and international bodies to address specific challenges. While social exclusion has 'come to occupy a central place' in the political discourse in Europe, the concept's meaning remains elusive and contested (Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000: 427). Similarly, social cohesion remains largely undefined. In the literature, the term 'is used in such a way that its meaning is nebulous but at the same time the impression is given that everyone knows what is being referred to' (Kearns and Forrest, 2000: 996).

These terms are best understood as 'quasi-concepts' (Chan et al., 2006: 274). That is, these concepts are hybrids, operating in both the academic and the policy realm. The academic dimension gives the concepts 'the aura of legitimacy conferred by the scientific method,' whereas the political dimension requires that the terms be 'adaptable to various situations, flexible enough to follow the meanderings and necessities of political action from day to day' (Bernard, 1999: 2).

Given the ambiguity and flexibility of these concepts, the following sections explore the literature on social exclusion and social cohesion, clarifying the definitions of the terms as well as the measures that are employed in this thesis. This is particularly important in internationally comparative work given that each country and context uses the words slightly differently. It also explores how social exclusion and cohesion are related to one another, highlighting the importance of social interaction and the physical environment in both bodies of work.

2.1.1 Social Exclusion

Since 'social exclusion' as a concept can be political more than sociological or academic, it is important to understand the historical setting in which it developed (Daly and

Saraceno, 2002). Social exclusion first entered the policy lexicon in the 1970s in France.[1] Two different connotations emerged: initially, the concept referred to specific categories of people excluded from the welfare state's insurance system. Later, it came to refer to unemployed people who were excluded from the labour market. The former definition referred to a wide-ranging list of marginalised people, including people with mental disabilities, substance abusers, single parents, abused children, and other 'misfits' (Atkinson and Hills, 1998: 18; also see Silver, 1995). The second connotation emerged in the 1980s as France entered a period of economic crisis and restructuring. Exclusion became associated with 'new social problems,' particularly 'new poverty,' or those who became poor and unemployment despite being 'ready and able to work' (Martin and Leaper, 1996: 384; also see Cannan, 1997). These two definitions represent a transition from the excluded being defined by relatively unchanging characteristics to an emphasis on changeable characteristics, such as employment status or social network. Thus, people can move in and out of social exclusion. It is this second conceptualisation – social exclusion as an experience that can be temporary – that is now most common and utilised in this thesis.

Common to both concepts is the French emphasis on creating social solidarity, or 'ensuring that all individuals are integrated into, and participating in, a national social and moral order' (Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000: 434; also see Hills et al., 2002). In this philosophy, the government is responsible for ensuring social solidarity (Silver, 1996). State-facilitated social cohesion transcends 'individual, class, ethnic, and regional' groups to create a national social order (Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000: 434). This perspective positions integration and cohesion as the opposites of exclusion (Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000).

[1] However, some scholars argue it can be traced much further back. For example, Room links social exclusion to Social Catholicism, which can be traced back over a century (1995).

In the 1980s, use of the term social exclusion began to spread. The European Union (EU) adopted the language of social exclusion – and its positive counterpart, social inclusion – for two purposes: first, it was used as a proxy for poverty; and second, it justified the EU's involvement in social policy debates. Some member states, most notably the British Conservative government and the German Christian Democrats, saw poverty as a thing of the past, believing that poverty was a 'residual state of affairs which would disappear with progress and growth' (Commission of the European Community, 1992: 7; also see Silver and Miller, 2003). In order to appease those countries, the EU adopted the language of social exclusion, allowing issues related to poverty to be discussed without alienating the countries that denied the existence of – or saw the inevitable end of – poverty (Atkinson, 1998). 'The term's ambiguity facilitated continued collaboration but it also began to 'eclipse' or obscure discussions of poverty' (Lister, 2004: 74).

Invoking the concept of social exclusion also justified the EU's 'activist' phase and its participation in social policy debates under the Presidency of Jacques Delors (Evans, 1998: 42). Emphasising the link between unemployment and social exclusion, the EU attributed these interrelated phenomena to the impact of globalisation on 'national and regional economic structure[s]' (Hills et al., 2002: 2). There was a need, they asserted, to balance the development of a single market with efforts at social integration. As a result, the concept of social integration evolved in the 1990s when the EU championed the idea that full citizenship could combat social exclusion by limiting the power wielded by the 'included' (Silver, 1996: 539). By linking economic policies to social exclusion, the EU expanded its social policy initiatives to include 'social rights,' as is evident in the development of an EU 'Bill of Rights' in 1996 (Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000: 439).

At the Lisbon Summit in 2000, the EU placed social exclusion 'at the heart of its social policy' and 'greater social cohesion' became a major strategic goal (Levitas et al.,

2007: 13; also see European Council, 2000). Requiring all member states to create a strategy for achieving social inclusion, the Lisbon Summit stimulated the dissemination of the term and concept across Europe. Indeed, under New Labour, the British government 'made social exclusion a key policy issue' (Levitas et al., 2007: 13; also see Levitas, 2005). And while most Western European states created institutions devoted to combating social exclusion, the term is far less common in the rest of the world, including in the US (Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000).[2]

2.1.1a Defining Social Exclusion. Various definitions of social exclusion have emerged in the academic and policy literature. Table 1.1 compiles some of the definitions and underscores the range of meanings associated with the term.[3] For example, some definitions, such as the one used by the Economic and Social Research Council, refer to characteristics and processes that occur at the level of an entire society. These structural features have figured prominently in the academic literature (Levitas et al., 2007; for example: Brown and Crompton, 1994; Byrne, 1999, 2005; Levitas, 1998, 2005). However, other definitions, such as the one employed by the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU, 1997) in the UK, emphasise the individual's experience.

Source	Definition
Duffy (1995)	Social exclusion is a broader concept than poverty, encompassing not only low material means but the inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life and in some characterisations alienation and distance from mainstream society.
Room (1995)	Inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power.
SEU (1997)	[Social Exclusion is] a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown.

[2] However, there have been preliminary efforts to examine policies in developing countries that 'operate with similar understandings' of social exclusion (De Haan, 2001: 23). This includes work by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative.

[3] This compilation of definitions expands on the list provided in Levitas et al. (2007: 21).

Walker and Walker (1997: 8)	The dynamic process of being shut out from any of the social, economic, political and cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society.
Howarth et al. (1998)	Where people lack many of the opportunities that are available to the average citizen.
UK's DSS (1999: 23)	Social exclusion occurs where different factors combine to trap individuals and areas in a spiral of disadvantage.
Gordon et al. (2000: 73)	A lack or denial of access to the kinds of social relations, social customs and activities in which the great majority of people in British society engage. In current usage, social exclusion is often regarded as a 'process' rather than a 'state' and this helps in being constructively precise in deciding its relationship to poverty.
De Haan (2001: 25–6)	[Social exclusion is] the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live.
Burchardt et al. (2002: 30, 32)	An individual is socially excluded if (a) he or she is geographically resident in a society but (b) for reasons beyond his or her control, he or she cannot participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society, and (c) he or she would like to so participate.
Estivill (2003: 19)	An accumulation of confluent processes with successive ruptures arising from the heart of the economy, politics and society, which gradually distances and places persons, groups, communities and territories in a position of inferiority in relation to centres of power, resources and prevailing values.
ESRC (2004)	The processes by which individuals and their communities become polarised, socially differentiated and unequal.
Levitas et al. (2007: 9)	Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole.

Figure 2.1: Various definitions of social exclusion.

Since this thesis approaches social exclusion as a problem for policy to address, it aimed to use the definition employed by policymakers. As a result, the findings could be measured against the same metric that policymakers use. However, policymakers in the UK have employed several different approaches. For example, the SEU's 1997 definition 'fails to identify what it is that happens' in social exclusion and instead lists several social problems (Levitas, 2006: 126). Then by 1999, the SEU was relying on an annual independent report produced by the New Policy Institute, which used a different definition entirely. And later

that year the Department for Social Security came out with a report, *Opportunity for All: Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion* (1999), which used yet another definition. As departments and groups across the government sought to address social exclusion, they used various definitions and measurements of the concept. Indeed, 'in none of these reports is there a clear definition of social exclusion' (Levitas, 2006: 128).

Without one clear definition rising to the top and with an acknowledgement that a definition is 'a political as well as a social scientific act' (Lister, 2004: 12), this thesis chose its own definition:

> Social exclusion is the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the normal relationships and activities of the society in which they live. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the cohesion of society as a whole.

The definition emerged from two often-cited approaches: De Haan (2001) and Levitas et al. (2007). Specific words and phrases in this definition allude to essential components of the term's meaning.

First, *process*. This word highlights the dynamic nature of social exclusion. The act of including or excluding implies action and change (Nolan and Whelan, 1996). Unlike what Lenoir suggested, social exclusion is not a 'timeless state'; instead, it can be understood as an 'on-going process' (Byrne, 2005: 1). It requires a perspective that considers an individual's past experiences, their current consequences, and their future options. As Atkinson explains, 'people are excluded not just because they are currently without a job or income but because they have little prospects for the future' (1998: 8). One key part of the individual's process is the phase before a person is actually excluded and prevention is still possible.

Second, *full participation*. Participation describes an individual's involvement with, and embeddedness in, a larger society. Indeed, social exclusion cannot exist in isolation, and mainstream society often plays a crucial role dictating who is accepted or rejected from society (Lister, 2004). Thus, the term 'participation' underscores the *relational nature* of

social exclusion as individuals and society engage with one another (ibid.). Emphasising participation also recalls Townsend's insight that relative deprivation is not just about questions of survival and a lack of money; it is also about how being in a low-income bracket inhibits a person from partaking in society (1979; for a more recent perspective see Ferragina et al., 2013). 'Full' participation is required because a person can technically participate in society through employment or consumption activities but may still feel a 'lack of power' (Room, 1995: 5; Room, 1999: 169). As Lister says, 'lack of power in many ways goes to the heart of social exclusion' even if it is hard to quantify empirically (2004: 89). While 'full participation' can be a tricky concept, partly because it involves an individual's variable desires, it is important in emphasising the role of personal experience in social exclusion.

Third, *wholly or partially*. Recognising that an individual can be 'partially' excluded from participation illustrates that there are multiple ways in which a person can be excluded. This may include employment opportunities, housing options, educational pursuits, welfare programmes, or social interactions (Silver, 1995). Unlike poverty, which often focuses on material deprivation, social exclusion has a 'more comprehensive formulation' that can include 'the denial of the civil, political and social rights' (Walker and Walker, 1997: 8).

Fourth, *normal*. This word emphasises that norms vary based on time and place. Echoing debates about relative poverty, social exclusion requires a context-specific analysis that determines what it means to participate in a specific society.

Fifth, *relationships and activities*. This phrase captures the *interactional nature* of social exclusion. Social exclusion is not just relational – as individuals relate to something larger than themselves, as mentioned above – it is also interactive – as two individuals interact with one another. The importance of this is that while social exclusion can be a society-wide problem with a national response, the definition doesn't lose track of the

essential role of individuals engaging with one another, forming relationships, and participating in activities.

Sixth, *society in which they live*. The individuals or groups that are being excluded must be physically present in the society that is excluding them. The traditional logic for incorporating this phrase into the definition is that it limits the scope to one society. This ensures that social exclusion does not become conflated with immigration restrictions or global dynamics (Burchardt et al., 1999).

Seventh, *quality of life of individuals and the cohesion of society*. Analysis of social exclusion often focuses on the individual as the unit of analysis. This portion of the definition, taken from Levitas et al. (2007), links the individual to the society. In addition, this phrase does not state that social exclusion harms 'excluded individuals'. Instead, it simply says individuals, which can be understood to encompass both the excluded and the included. This underscores the universal importance of social exclusion not just to the health of society 'as a whole' but also to the wellbeing of included individuals (Levitas et al., 2007: 9).

2.1.1b Operationalising Social Exclusion. The EU and UK have proposed various indicators and measurements of social exclusion to understand how a country's level of exclusion changes over time. Many of these efforts have been criticised for (1) selecting indicators solely because they use existing data; (2) insufficiently detailing the relative importance of the indicators and how the indicators interact with one another; and (3) not adequately incorporating the social aspect of social exclusion (Levitas, 2006). This last concern is often explained by 'genuine difficulties in quantifying … less tangible aspects of social exclusion' (Robinson and Oppenheim, 1998: 26; Burchardt, 2000; Hills et al., 2002).

It is worth considering two different approaches to operationalising social exclusion. The first draws on the work of Burchardt et al., which has been corroborated by others (1999;

Berghman, 1995; Commins, 1993; Oppenheim, 1998; Paugam, 1996; Walker, 1997). As captured in Figure 2.2, Burchardt and colleagues used the British Household Panel Study to delineate five different dimensions of social exclusion that 'represent the activities in which it is important that individuals participate' (Burchardt et al., 1999: 231).

Dimension	Exclusion	Inclusion entails…
Consumption activity	Low income	Using at least a minimum level of goods and services. This is similar to traditional measures of poverty and deprivation.
Savings activity	Low wealth	Obtaining a degree of security through accumulating savings, which could entail owning property or pension entitlements. Home-ownership is often a 'symbol of social inclusion' (Burchardt et al., 1999: 231).
Production activity	Lacks production activity	Engaging in an activity that is of either economic or social value. This includes paid work, education, or caring for family members. This is important for self-respect and for not being perceived as a 'drain on resources' (ibid.).
Political activity	Politically unengaged	Participating in a collective political effort aimed at the improvement of wider society. This involves voting or membership in campaign groups and political parties. The importance of this dimension is captured by Barry (1998).
Social activity	Social isolation	Engaging in social interactions with family, friends, and the larger community. This entails identifying with the community and broader society.

Figure 2.2: Five dimensions of social exclusion developed by Burchardt et al., 1999.

These indicators capture the breadth of activities entailed in exclusion, and they incorporate the social dimension of social exclusion. However, they are limited by the data available in the British Household Panel Survey. These indicators also fail to address the second critique: detailing the relationship between the dimensions of exclusion.

For Burchardt et al., one type of exclusion can affect another type of exclusion (1999). For instance, unemployment would limit production activity and could, in turn, inhibit consumption activity. Yet unemployment could simultaneously enable a person to

devote more time and energy to political activities or social activities. It is also possible that an individual is excluded in one dimension and not in another. For example, unemployment would limit production activity, but the same individual may have inherited wealth and thus not be excluded from saving or consumption activities (ibid.).

Yet Burchardt et al. fail to sufficiently elaborate on how the dimensions relate. They say that the data used to identify these dimensions confirm that exclusion on one given dimension tends to be positive and significantly correlated with exclusion on another dimension. However, the correlation in their data is not particularly strong, and a 'high proportion' of the excluded were excluded in only one dimension (Burchardt et al., 1999: 232). Thus, the researchers suggest that, based on the current theorisation, there is 'no clear-cut multidimensional category of socially excluded people' (ibid.). They conclude, therefore, that 'the dimensions of exclusion are best treated separately rather than amalgamated into a single category of the "socially excluded" ' (ibid.; also see Lister, 2004; Hills, 2002; Gore and Figueiredo, 1997). This is consistent with the approach taken by the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion.[4] Under their definition of social exclusion, a person only needs to experience one dimension to be considered 'socially excluded'. However, the concern is that this might be a narrow understanding of social exclusion, both in terms of the experience and in terms of the policy approach.

The second approach presents a broader definition of exclusion. It comes from the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain (PSE), which was primarily conducted by academics at the University of Bristol on behalf of the Office for National Statistics in 1999. While their work – like Burchardt et al.'s work – is arguably dated, it was applicable at the time period considered in this thesis. Writing in 2007, Levitas et al. says '[PSE] was, and still

[4] Tania Burchardt works for CASE.

is, the only survey undertaken to measure social exclusion in Britain' (55). Ultimately, the PSE described four dimensions of social exclusion, captured in Figure 2.3:

Dimension	
Impoverishment	Poverty or exclusion from inadequate income or resources. This includes considering income and subjective poverty. However, it particularly emphasises the lack of items or activities perceived as necessary by a person's society.
Labour market inactivity	Not participating in paid employment: this could be because of unemployment or because a person is old or sick. Research emphasises the non-economic benefits of work, such as sociability. However, the suggestion is to view this as a risk factor rather than a direct indicator, since a high proportion of the population is inactive in the labour market.
Service exclusion	Lack of access to public services – such as transportation, libraries, and communal spaces – and private services – such as shops and banks. Participants were asked about whether they had access to these services and, if not, whether that was a product of the 'inadequacy, unavailability or unaffordability' of the services (Levitas et al. 2007: 59).
Exclusion from social relations	Limited participation in normal social activities. This can be understood in several ways: 'non-participation in common social activities; isolation; lack of support; disengagement; and confinement' (Gordon et al., 2000: 59).

Figure 2.3: Four dimensions of social exclusion developed by PSE in 1999.

These dimensions largely parallel those described by Burchardt et al. (1999). Both approaches capture the social aspect of social exclusion:

> By putting considerable emphasis on social relations and social participation, the [PSE] survey differs from most analyses, which have focused on low income, lack of work and area deprivation. This has largely been necessitated by a lack of data on social relations (Gordon et al., 2000: 11-12).

A main difference between the two approaches is that Burchardt et al.'s dimensions are more broadly defined (1999). For example, the category for 'production activity' includes both paid and unpaid work, as long as it is endowed with social value. In the PSE approach, this same category is more narrowly defined as participation in the labour market or paid work.

The PSE's approach also contrasts with CASE by arguing that exclusion requires deprivation on multiple dimensions. The PSE work considers the dimensions together, treating them as highly interrelated. For example, participation in 'the labour market is

increasingly held to be important not just because it is a route to an adequate income, but because paid work is seen as an important arena of social contact and social interaction' (Gordon et al., 2000: 54). This relationship flows both ways. Social participation cultivates stronger social networks, which, Gordon et al. argue, facilitate labour market participation (2000).

Social exclusion, as defined in this thesis, draws on both major approaches. From Burchardt et al., it adopts a broad understanding of the dimensions (1999). So-called 'social activities' include more than 'social relations.' For example, this might involve an individual being present in a particular space even if they are not relating to other people.

From PSE and Gordon et al. (2000), this thesis adopts the stance that the dimensions must be considered in concert with one another, even if describing exactly how the dimensions relate is not easy. Importantly, this aligns with how the UK under New Labour understood social exclusion – as cumulative disadvantage. Government reports emphasise the 'joined-up' nature of problems and argue that 'only when these links are properly understood and addressed will policies really be effective' (SEU, 2001a: 5).

Following both approaches, this thesis emphasises the social aspect of social exclusion. Burchardt el al. highlight its importance: 'the opportunity to feel and be part of a broader community [is] considered [a] basic human need' (1999: 232). Indeed, this dimension is seen as one of the key 'links' in preventing various dimensions of exclusion.

It would be incomplete to consider social exclusion without also defining and analysing social cohesion. Indeed, a lack of cohesion is considered both a cause and a consequence of exclusion. As the SEU's *Preventing Social Exclusion* report explains, exclusion can be triggered by 'reduced social cohesion as different areas, generations and minority ethnic communities are divided' (2001a: 23). However, 'social cohesion and social

exclusion are not necessarily opposites,' and it is worth exploring how the concept of social cohesion emerged and what is meant by it in this thesis (Forrest and Kearns, 1999: 9).

2.1.2 Social Cohesion

Cohesion has become a significant part of both the academic agenda and the policy lexicon. While the term is often casually referred to as 'the "glue" and "bond" that keeps societies integrated,' it is rarely defined (Larsen, 2014: 2; Kearns and Forrest, 2000). For example, even as the Council of Europe (CoE) set social cohesion as a goal, it 'does not define social cohesion' (2001: 3). Just like social exclusion, the term remains contested with a 'proliferation of meanings' (Novy et al., 2012: 1877). Importantly, 'not only policy-makers, but also scientists are struggling with the conceptualisation of social cohesion' (Miciukiewicz et al., 2012: 1856).

During the 19th century and the first part of the 20th century, social cohesion was a central focus of social policy and sociology. This was partly driven by urbanisation. As people moved, *en masse*, from rural villages to dense urban areas, there was concern about the deterioration of social cohesion and what policymakers should do about it:

> The rampant urbanisation of this period was seen to be producing a social order in which the traditional ties of community – shared space, close kinship links, shared religious and moral values – were being replaced by anonymity, individualism and competition (Forrest and Kearns, 2001: 2125).[5]

Scholars worried that people had been kept together because they were similar – they worked in the same place, they lived in a shared place, they held the same beliefs (Larsen, 2014). Now, they argued, modern society had to find a different source of unity. They labelled this '*conscience collective*, which is the academic origin of the term "social cohesion," ' and

[5] This aligns with one of the main theories – industrialisation – advanced to explain the origins of welfare states (Wilensky, 1975; Curtright, 1965). Industrialisation, closely linked to urbanisation, is often presented as an economic argument. However, when taken in concert with the social cohesion literature, important spatial and social factors emerge that complement the economic perspective.

believed that interdependence could develop into a type of 'organic solidarity' (Larsen, 2014: 3).

In the past decade or so, social cohesion has become strongly associated with counterterrorism initiatives in the UK, and regional disparities in the EU more broadly (Pickering et al., 2008). However, this thesis focuses on a slightly earlier period – from the late 1990s to the early 2000s – when the term social cohesion was more closely linked to social exclusion. Indeed, 'it is almost impossible to conceive of a cohesive society that has one section that is so deprived and alienated that it has no effective stake in it' (Cantle, 2016: no pagination). As social cohesion and community cohesion re-emerged as 'buzzwords' in social policy (Maxwell, 2002: i), researchers took note, saying, 'we are it seems at another peak of interest' (Forrest and Kearns, 2001: 2126). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the terms – especially community cohesion in the UK[6] – grew in prominence after unrest in several towns (Cantle, 2016). Scholars and policymakers found these quasi-concepts particularly good at 'integrating' different challenges into a single framework (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002: vi). Jeannotte found that the OECD, CoE, and EU 'view unemployment, poverty, income inequality, social exclusion and exclusion from the Information Society as threats to social cohesion' (2000: 2).

The social cohesion literature that resulted from this renewed interest largely falls into two categories. The first works from the premise that social cohesion is 'threatened by external economic factors, such as globalization' and new technologies (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002: iv). The second approach examines a society's diversity and suggests this can have either a negative or a positive effect on cohesion (CoE, 2000; Hempel, 1999; Etzioni, 2001). One of the results of this second approach is that social cohesion is understood not only as a

[6] Some scholars have used the terms social cohesion and community cohesion as synonyms but others draw a distinction between the two, arguing that social cohesion focuses on economic divisions whereas community cohesion includes divisions along other lines, including race and religion (Cantle, 2016).

characteristic of a whole society or community but also and simultaneously as an individual experience.

Often social cohesion is presented as something that 'concerns society as a whole' (CoE, 2001: 10). However, during the term's 'dramatic comeback' in the mid-1990s and 2000s, a new emphasis emerged that rejected the notion that cohesion was about a monolithic or homogeneous society, instead treating 'social cohesion as social inclusion' (Jenson, 2010: 4).[7] This makes an explicit link between an individual's experience of feeling included and the societal characteristic of being cohesive. While the CoE does not define social cohesion, it emphasises the importance of the individual to the concept:

> Social cohesion refers to any kind of action which ensures that every citizen, every individual, can have within their community, the opportunity of access:
> - To the means to secure their basic needs;
> - To progress;
> - To protection and legal rights;
> - To dignity and social confidence.
>
> Any insufficiency of access to any of these fields operates against social cohesion (CoE, 2001: 5).

2.1.2a Defining Social Cohesion. As the body of research grew, significant definitional ambiguity remained. 'There are still many definitions of social cohesion' (Maxwell, 2002: i). However, Maxwell contends that having multiple definitions is 'not necessarily a weakness … [since it] helps us to think more clearly about how different elements in our economic and social lives are related to each other' (ibid.: i). Kearns and Forrest go further, arguing that the different definitions are different dimensions of the same phenomenon. They see social cohesion as a multidimensional concept, where all the dimensions 'are clearly interlinked' (2000: 996–997). Forrest and Kearns surveyed the literature, ultimately delineating five different definitions – or dimensions – as summarised in Figure 2.4.

[7] As Walker and Wigfield point out it is important that these terms should not be treated as 'inter-changeable terms' but instead as related terms (2004: 8).

Dimension	
Common values	Shared aims, principles and codes of behaviour
Social order	Minimal threats or conflict; sense of tolerance
Social solidarity	Understanding of social duties; readiness to help others; redistribution of resources
Social networks and social capital	Significant amount of social interaction and community engagement
Place attachment and identity	Cares about and feels connected to the place; the place is part of their identity

Figure 2.4: Five dimensions of social cohesion proposed by Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2129).

These dimensions touch on many different elements of a society as well as a person's life and their interaction with society. The 'common values' dimension emphasises the values of a society whereas the 'social networks' dimension entails subtle routines of an individual. Baumgartner demonstrates the need to consider all these dimensions simultaneously by considering a prototypical suburb (1988). The 'social order' dimension may deem suburbs to be an ideal, safe setting with minimal conflicts, it is argued, but according to the 'social networks' dimension, where face-to-face interactions are key, the opposite conclusion may be reached on quiet suburban streets without pavements.

> People in the suburbs live in a world characterised by non-violence and non-confrontation, in which civility prevails and disturbances of peace are uncommon. In this sense, suburbia is the model of social order. The order is not born, however, of conditions widely perceived to generate social harmony. It does not arise from intimacy and connectedness, but rather from some of the very things more often presumed to bring about conflict and violence – transiency, fragmentation, isolation, atomisation and indifference among people (Baumgartner, 1988: 134).

In the UK, several definitions of cohesion emerge. The first comes from the Local Government Association's report *Guidance on Community Cohesion* where cohesion is defined by enumerating four components:

- There is common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods (LGA, 2002: 6).

Later, the Commission for Integration and Cohesion (CIC) and the Department of Communities and Local Government argued that trust was an important component of cohesion (DCLG, 2007b: 42; DCLG, 2008a: 14). DCLG identifies one of the 'foundations' of cohesion as 'people trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly' (2008a: 14).

This thesis considers social cohesion based on the LGA's definition of cohesion, along with the notion of trust from the CIC and the DCLG. This definition of cohesion has a lot in common with the definition of exclusion above: it is dynamic and changes over time. It involves both individuals and society at large. It is relational and experiential. The goal is to have 'a sense of belonging' (LGA, 2002: 6). And, of course, it is multi-dimensional.

Additionally, social cohesion in this definition can function as a dependent or an independent variable. This is important because in the literature 'there is no unanimous position on whether social cohesion is a cause or a consequence of other aspects of social, economic and political life' (Beauvais and Jenson, 2002: iii). This dual role is evident in the social exclusion literature too (for example see SEU, 2004a).

2.1.2b Operationalising Cohesion. The social cohesion scholarship zeroes in on social relations, and particularly social interactions, as a key element in cohesion. This is evident simply from the titles of a few DCLG reports on cohesion: *Face to Face and Side by Side* (2008a) and *Guidance on Meaningful Interaction: How Encouraging Positive Relationships Between People Can Help Build Community Cohesion* (2008b). Scholars agree: 'There is a long-standing belief that a cohesive society contains a high degree of social interaction within communities' (Kearns and Forrest, 2000: 999). Face-to-face interactions are considered the basis for building trust, maintaining social order, cultivating social capital, and, ultimately, generating cohesion. When scholars and policymakers worry about declining

cohesion they often attribute it to an increase in isolation and a decrease in interactions and relationships. This is evident in the DCLG report where they mention ‘isolated lives’:

> The human need to connect with others is as important to our wellbeing as it ever was. Yet we all lead busy lives … we don’t always have time to get to know the people next door – let alone people living further afield. And where people are living individual, isolated lives, problems can arise. In the worst cases, people can become suspicious and hostile (2008b: 3).

Cantle offers a solution to such concerns: ‘Encouraging interaction is one of the simplest, most straightforward ways in which we can overcome these barriers’ (2016: no pagination). A DCLG report on cohesion reiterates this:

> Interaction between people from different backgrounds can help address negative attitudes, not only in terms of feelings towards the specific member of the group that they come into contact with, but towards the group as a whole (2008a: 16; also see Hewstone, 2006).

And it is not limited to this report. The link between cohesion and interaction surfaces regularly. ‘There is consensus that cohesion relates to encouraging positive relationships between different groups … [where] meaningful interaction (rather than mixing per se) is seen as key’ (DCLG, 2007: 5). In this thesis, positive social interactions – both transient and meaningful – are used as the primary indicator of social cohesion.

Not only can interaction ease tension between groups, research describes it as central to preventing and addressing social exclusion. Indeed, a lack of interaction – or social isolation – is closely associated with exclusion. This association can be traced back to France where the terms ‘les exclus’ and ‘les isolés’ were initially used interchangeably (Burchardt et al., 1999). Positive interactions can provide a person with information about, or access to, job opportunities, thus preventing exclusion from production activities; they can also support the development of shared values and principles, thus facilitating social cohesion (Putnam, 2000; Buck, 2001; Montgomery, 1991). Further, ‘increasing the number of meaningful social interactions between people who are different leads to increased levels of trust’ (SIC, 2014b: 28).

'Most of the existing research on integration has focused on where different groups of people live, rather than on how they interact' (SIC, 2014a: 6). This thesis considers those interactions and, while this has not been the primary focus of past research, the literature does suggest there are several ways to think about interactions: positive and negative; transient and meaningful. All of these types of interactions require people to be present in the same physical space. However, 'incidental mixing' – where two people are present in the same space but not necessarily interacting – is seen as insufficient; there must be some form of exchange (DCLG, 2007: 25).[8] Policies on cohesion often focus on promoting positive, meaningful exchanges. While negative interactions are viewed as problematic and much of the literature suggests avoiding them, there is evidence that transient exchanges can play a role in preventing exclusion and promoting cohesion.

Transient interactions are short, often subtle, interactions where there is no substantive information conveyed. This type of interaction does not even need to include verbal communication. Psychology research has found that eye contact between strangers can influence whether a person feels like they are connected to the rest of society (Wesselmann et al., 2012). In a study that measured how a person feels after they are visually acknowledged or not acknowledged by a passing stranger, experimental data confirmed that:

> Because social connections are fundamental to survival … humans evolved systems to detect the slightest cues of inclusion or exclusion…. Simple eye contact is sufficient to convey inclusion. In contrast, withholding eye contact can signal exclusion (Wesselmann et al., 2012: 166).

Others have found that such transient interactions – also called 'light' and 'superficial' – can be particularly valuable in preventing exclusion and in the early stages of creating cohesion, as transient interactions can beget more substantive interactions.

> Research has shown that it is difficult to promote the formation of relationships across boundaries of class and ethnicity. It may therefore be more fruitful to focus on

[8] While a subfield has explored how virtual interactions in the technology and information age influence social cohesion – and virtual spaces are referenced in the DCLG reports on cohesion (2008a; DCLG, 2008b) – this is not a main part of the interaction literature (Castells, 1998; Fukuyama, 1999).

> facilitating more superficial or "light" social interaction in public space. Through short but repeated interactions with others in public spaces, "public familiarity" can emerge.... Public familiarity can contribute to a sense of social identity and safety (van Eijk and Engbersen, 2011: 35-36).

While these researchers acknowledge additional research is needed on transient interactions, the literature on cohesion does delineate some of the elements of positive, meaningful interactions.[9] The DCLG suggests that there are three components:

- conversations go beyond surface friendliness; in which people exchange personal information or talk about each other's differences and identities
- people share a common goal or share an interest
- contact is sustained long-term (DCLG, 2008a: 16).

There is also a suggestion that contact should be part of a person's 'everyday' life:

> The focus has been on the practical ways people can integrate as part of their daily routine rather than largescale events or festivals – a 'small steps' approach that perhaps aids longer-term progress and changes attitudes more fully. Interaction, and enabling it to take place as part of people's normal routines, was seen as very successful (DCLG, 2007: 74).

The social contact that the social cohesion literature describes has two purposes. The first is to resolve social problems, and the second is to prevent them (Ramiah and Hewstone, 2013). The focus in this thesis is prevention.

2.1.3 Prevention Framework

In the 1990s, Prime Minister Blair launched the SEU because the UK 'was distinguished from its EU competitors by high levels of social exclusion' (SEU, 2001a: 5). The SEU proposed three explanations for how social exclusion had become such a problem: poor efforts at reintegration, lack of basic services, and a lack of prevention.

> Policy was poor at preventing social exclusion – despite clear evidence of groups at risk and events that can trigger exclusion, and the likelihood that investment in prevention would save money in the long term (SEU, 2001a: 6).

[9] Several official reports on cohesion reference research on intergroup contact pioneered by Gordon Allport (for example DCLG, 2007; DCLG, 2008a). This work is examined in more depth later in this chapter.

Although the policies addressing existing exclusion have received the bulk of the attention, there was ‘a renewed profile for prevention in the discourses of New Labour’ (Morris and Barnes, 2008: 1195). This included an emphasis on how policies might achieve prevention by addressing the risk factors that predispose someone to exclusion.

Prevention is at the heart of many social policies as they aim to create a safety net for members of society and help individuals and families avoid social and economic hardship. Hardiker et al. argue that prevention is evident in all welfare regimes, but the emphasis varies (1989, 1991). In the Beveridgean model of social policy, for example, ‘the main objective is poverty prevention’ (Bonoli and Palier, 1997: 242). In Esping-Andersen’s liberal regime (1990), where benefits are ‘exclusively focused on a select group unable to provide for themselves through the market,’ the ultimate goal is still to prevent utter destitution, and the services are targeted at a particular part of the population (Venter, 2010: 130).

A key component of a prevention framework is that small interventions can have large, long-term implications. For example, influenza vaccinations are aimed at reducing the likelihood of sickness and the nation’s health-care cost. However, the vaccine can also prevent subsequent economic losses because the individual does not need to miss work because of having the flu (Mullooly et al., 1994). Similarly, in education policy, many argue that quality public education, and early childhood education in particular, can function as a preventative policy against social problems such as crime and the inter-generational transfer of poverty (Meghir et al., 2012; Lochner, 2010; Yoshikawa, 1995). Indeed, one type of prevention policy can have implications for many different realms of social policy.

While preventative policies have received less attention than reactive policies, they are worth considering for three reasons. First, preventive policies illuminate what triggers a social problem because they often rely on a causal model. As explored above, there is not a universally-accepted definition of social exclusion. A close look at prevention strategy could

help elucidate the mechanisms that cause exclusion. Further, there is debate about exactly who is excluded and who is included. With the lens of prevention, those categorisations are less pertinent because all members of society have the potential to be excluded and are, thus, relevant to the research. Second, understanding the period before problems are fully manifested might uncover how the different dimensions of a social challenge are related to one another. For social exclusion, since there is a considerable lack of clarity about the relationship between the dimensions, this perspective may be helpful (Burchardt et al., 1999). Third, instead of striving for a lack of social exclusion, preventative policies have the potential to clearly articulate a positive vision for social policy. This was evident at the EU's Lisbon Summit and Nice Summit, both in 2000. One of the four objectives presented at these events was to prevent the risk of exclusion and create 'a society with more social cohesion' (European Council, 2000; Levitas, 2006). They established social cohesion as an aspirational goal.

Indeed, prevention is the bridge that connects the two main concepts in this thesis: exclusion and cohesion. The theory is that policies that promote social cohesion can help prevent social exclusion. The opposite is also true. Factors that contribute to social exclusion can inhibit social cohesion. But how exactly can social policies contribute to social cohesion? The literature on cohesion and exclusion suggest an answer: strengthening social capital and social networks by encouraging social interaction.

2.2 Social Capital and Social Interaction

Enhancing an individual's social capital is broadly recognised as a way of building cohesion and preventing exclusion. The concept of social capital was developed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1979), expanded by Coleman, an American sociologist, (1988) and popularised by Putnam et al. (1993; also see Portes and Vickstrom, 2011). Putnam et al.

expanded the definition from one that centred on an individual's relationships and networks to encompass much larger social units, such as regions and states (1993). While some scholars lament that 'overuse and imprecision' have rendered social capital a less useful concept (Forrest and Kearns, 2001: 2137), Putnam et al.'s definition has been broadly accepted:

> By analogy with notions of physical capital and human capital … social capital refers to features of social organisation such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit (1993: 35; also see Putnam, 1995a).

Three types of social capital are relevant to this thesis: bonding capital, bridging capital, and linking capital. Bonding capital denotes the strong personal bonds among members of a local community. It tends to be present among members of a homogeneous group (Leonard and Onyx, 2003). These relationships are often referred to as 'strong ties.' In contrast, bridging capital is made up of 'weak ties' that span different networks and link heterogeneous groups (ibid.). Bridging capital can provide individuals with information about the rest of society, including the availability of job opportunities (Putnam, 2000). Linking capital is a 'relatively recent addition to the framework' (Poortinga, 2012: 287). Instead of focusing on how people interact with one another and form networks, linking capital captures how communities relate to institutions or groups with more power than the communities have, including political organisations. Thus, linking capital looks at vertical networks rather than horizontal networks (Szreter and Woolcock, 2004; Warran et al., 2001). Granovetter's seminal work suggests that the strength of a social tie can be measured by the amount of time dedicated to the relationship, as well as the emotional intensity, intimacy, and reciprocity of the interactions (1973).

Bridging capital is generally seen as the type of capital that can prevent social exclusion and lead to social cohesion (Williams, 2009). However, mixing across social groups is not universally accepted as a good thing. The scholarship is dominated by two

opposing theories. Conflict theory asserts that the mixing of social groups can generate tension and entrenches stereotypes (Blalock, 1967). In contrast, contact theory posits that such mixing can reduce prejudices and stereotypes, creating social cohesion (Allport, 1954). The theories emerging from this debate have been tested around the world (Pettigrew, 1997).

In addition to exploring both theories, this section seeks to explain how there could be such strong empirical evidence for two theories that seem contradictory. Recent research suggests the answer is that proximity alone is insufficient. Instead, there must be actual contact – and the physical environment may play an important role in facilitating such contact (Hewstone, 2009).

2.2.1 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory, which is often traced back to Karl Marx, asserts that socially diverse environments increase distrust between social groups (Marx and Engels, 1948). The logic is that diversity triggers people to feel anxious or threatened and, thus, heightens their sense of minority and majority groups. According to this theory, 'the more we are brought into physical proximity with people of another race or ethnic background, the more we stick to "our own" and the less we trust the "other" ' (Putnam, 2007: 142; also see Blumer 1958, Quillian, 1995; Bobo and Tuan, 2006). The literature suggests that this unease could be the result of real or perceived competition over limited resources, opposing social identities, or jockeying for a higher rank in the social hierarchy (Tajfel, 1982; Sherif, 1966; LeVine and Campbell, 1972). This tension ultimately results in entrenched stereotypes and discriminatory treatment of the excluded individuals or groups (Sturgis et al., 2014).

Research has found a negative correlation between heterogeneity and solidarity. In places with more ethnic diversity there tend to be lower levels of social trust (Newton and Delhey, 2005; Anderson and Paskeviciute, 2006). For example, one study found that where there is a high level of racial diversity there is a lower rate of car-pooling, which the

researchers used as a proxy for mutual trust (Charles and Kline, 2002). This correlation is not limited to ethnic diversity. In the workplace, increased heterogeneity, measured as age, tenure, and professional background, is associated with lower cohesion among workers and lower job satisfaction (Cohen and Bailey, 1997; Keller, 2001; Webber and Donahue, 2001). One conclusion from the conflict theory literature might be that diverse settings can trigger social conflict, entrenching exclusion and reducing cohesion. Yet the evidence is mixed.

2.2.2 Contact Theory

Contact theory, also known as Intergroup Contact Theory or ICT, is one of the most researched hypotheses in sociology and psychology (Dovidio et al., 2003). ICT developed in the years after World War II as the US began pursuing an agenda of racial desegregation and integration. This prompted social scientists, researchers, and practitioners to investigate what conditions facilitated a positive change in racial attitudes (Amir, 1976). Soon, they were theorising about how interaction across group boundaries could catalyse inclusion and eventually create cohesion (Watson, 1947; Williams, 1947). Initially, these efforts produced mixed results. Sometimes proximity between different social groups stimulated understanding, supporting the contact theory, and sometimes it perpetuated hostilities, supporting the conflict theory (Wessel, 2009). This confusion prompted researchers to transport their work to more controlled settings, moving from the natural environment into laboratories. It was in this context that Gordon Allport produced his landmark study on the nature of prejudice (1954).

Allport's work on ICT, also known as the Contact Hypothesis, asserts that contact, under appropriate conditions, prompts a reduction in prejudice and prevents social isolation. It can also contribute to building social cohesion. The theory is that negative stereotypes are replaced by information from actual experiences. These experiences emphasise the 'heterogeneity that exists within as well as between ethnic groups' (Sturgis et al., 2014:

1289). Further, this hypothesis suggests that positive interactions with an individual can reduce negative stereotypes not only about the individual's group but about all stereotyped out-groups (ibid.).

There is supportive evidence for ICT from studies examining a wide range of ethnicities and races, including with interracial labourers in South Africa (Bornman and Mynhardt, 1991) and Chinese students in the United States (Chang, 1973). Additionally, it has been extended to various other groups that may experience exclusion, including homosexuals (Eskilson, 1995; Herek and Capitanio, 1996), people with disabilities (Anderson, 1995), people with mental illness (Desforges et al., 1991), individuals with AIDS (Werth and Lord, 1992), and older people (Caspi, 1984).

2.2.3 Making Competing Theories Compatible

Conflict theory and contact theory have long been at odds. Some research suggests diversity generates trust, inclusion, and pro-social attitudes (for example, Pendakur and Mata, 2012; Marschall and Stolle, 2004). Other research has found no association (for example, Sturgis et al., 2011; Soroka et al., 2007; Leigh, 2006; Aizlewood and Pendakur, 2005). And the vast majority of studies have found a negative association between social diversity and social cohesion (for example, Becares et al., 2011; Lancee and Dronkers, 2011; Fieldhouse and Cutts, 2010; Letki, 2008; Putnam, 2007; Pennant, 2005; Knack and Keefer, 1997). Putnam's survey of the field concludes that 'the contact theory is alluring, but I think it is fair to say that most (though not all) empirical studies have tended to support the so-called "conflict theory", which suggests that … diversity fosters outgroup distrust' (2007: 142).

However, instead of embracing the implications of conflict theory, Hewstone proposes another explanation that has gained traction (2009). He argues that most studies use a problematic research design that fails to distinguish between *potential* intergroup contact and *real* intergroup contact. Hewstone directly challenges Putnam's conclusion:

> Putnam's main pessimistic finding … largely neglects to measure actual face-to-face contacts between members of different groups, as opposed to merely living in the same neighbourhood. This is a conflation of *opportunity for contact* and *actual contact*…. Living in a street or neighbourhood peopled by members of different ethnic groups does not constitute contact until and unless there is actual face-to-face interaction between them…. Merely co-existing with outgroup members, without contact, is associated with more negative attitudes, whereas the experience of contact is associated with more positive attitudes (2009: 32).

This means that a diverse social environment could lead to either feeling threatened or feeling trusting. The mediating factor is whether there is actual contact between social groups. Studies that sought to measure social contact found a positive relationship between diversity, contact, and cohesion (Stolle et al., 2008; Sturgis et al., 2011; also see Hooghe et al., 2009). As Sturgis et al. explain, 'a crucial determinant of whether diversity will result in positive or negative attitudes towards ethnic out-groups is the degree of meaningful social contact and interaction between residents' (2014: 1290).

The evidence suggests that instead of contradicting one another, there can be evidence both for the contact theory and the conflict theory in a given space. Indeed, Sturgis and co-authors argue that individuals in the same space can have different experiences with diversity: 'for some individuals living in an ethnically diverse area will lead to feelings of threat and the development or exacerbation of prejudicial attitudes, while for others the opposite will be the case' (ibid.). Whether or not such proximity leads to positive or negative feelings seems to be determined by four factors enumerated by Allport.

When Allport first proposed the contact theory, he insisted that actual contact was necessary. In addition, he insisted that contact should occur under certain conditions to have a positive impact:

> [Exclusion is] reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority individuals in pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional support (i.e. by law, custom or local atmosphere), and provided it is of a sort that leads to the appropriation of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups (Allport, 1954: 281).

Allport's four conditions for successful intergroup contact are equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and support of authorities. While subsequent research has also emphasised the importance of these conditions, some scholars assert that they 'have been shown to be facilitating rather than necessary conditions' (Sturgis et al., 2014: 1289; also see Pettigrew, 1998). As Sturgis et al. explain, 'contact appears to "work," ' but it works better under certain conditions (2014: 1289).

How do the four conditions play out? First, groups that come into contact should have equal social status. While it can be difficult to determine both groups' perception of status, it is important that there are not entrenched hierarchies or obvious power dynamics.[10] Several urban theorists have suggested that public spaces are ideal for cultivating equal status, since such settings are 'ostensibly neutral ground' (Holland et al., 2007: ix). The public realm permits strangers from different backgrounds to meet with a degree of 'anonymity and impersonality [that] provide[s] a milieu for more individual development' (Sennett, 2010: 261).

Second, Allport emphasises the importance of a common goal or task that both groups work on together. The classic example is interracial athletic teams (Chu and Griffey, 1985; Miracle, 1981; Patchen, 1982). Some architects and urban designers have begun to incorporate this idea into their work, developing pieces of outdoor furniture that encourage strangers to work together. For example, Neulhae Cho designed 'swinger' chairs that function as two seats connected by a u-shape, creating an adult seesaw. These chairs were explicitly intended to facilitate interaction and collaboration between strangers in public spaces (Medina, 2012).

[10] Since this criterion was developed by Allport, various other researchers have investigated it, including Cagle, 1973; Cohen and Lotan, 1995; Cohen, 1982; Riordan, 1978; Riordan and Ruggiero, 1980; Robinson and Preston, 1976.

Third, the contact should spur intergroup cooperation, rather than competition (Bettencourt et al., 1992). This has been most commonly applied in schools, where classroom tasks are structured around cooperation. Such activities have produced positive results in a variety of international contexts (Araragi, 1983; Aronson and Patnoe, 1997). Compared to a common goal, this criterion requires active collaboration and engagement.

And finally, it can be important to have support for the interaction from an authority that both groups recognise. The authority, which could be law or custom, should provide explicit approval and encouragement of such contact, such as military units, businesses, and religious institutions are able to provide (Landis et al., 1984; Morrison and Herlihy, 1992; Parker, 1968). The implication is that local and national governmental policies could play a critical role in facilitating interaction and reducing exclusion.

Other researchers have added additional criteria, including the need for a common language, the importance of contact being voluntary, the ideal of a balanced ratio, and the necessity of recurring contact (Dixon et al., 2005; Wagner and Machleit, 1986). However, fieldwork, national surveys, archival studies, laboratory experiments, and comprehensive meta-analyses have, over the years, generated evidence to support Allport's core assertions. Most recently, Pettigrew and Tropp conducted a meta-analysis that confirmed the inverse relationship between positive actual interaction and exclusion, finding that it had the potential to work across all the tested countries and contexts (2006; Wessel, 2009). Even when these criteria were relaxed or only some of them were fulfilled, there was the potential to reduce prejudices and prevent exclusion (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006).

However, it is important to understand that even the most ardent supporters of contact theory do *not* argue that face-to-face interaction is a singular solution. As Hewstone writes, 'neither I nor my many collaborators have ever been so naïve as to argue that contact is *the* solution' (2008: 36). Instead, it is part of the solution, for 'it is difficult to imagine successful

reduction of prejudice or intergroup conflict *without* sustained, positive contact between members of the two previously antipathetic groups' (ibid.).

It is also worth noting that while the criteria for ICT do not consider what role the local environment plays in creating opportunities for contact, some researchers have pointed out that spatial considerations are important. This can be seen in the literature in both implicit and explicit ways. Implicitly, research often acknowledges that space matters:

> An ethnically diverse area can be either highly integrated or highly segregated and it is in the latter rather than the former case that we should expect to find a negative effect on cohesion and trust. This is because segregated areas provide fewer opportunities for meaningful social contact between groups and tend to reinforce in-group identities and social networks (Sturgis et al., 2014: 1290; also see Rothwell, 2012).

Talen addresses the issue more explicitly, arguing that the physical environment can facilitate contact and build social networks:

> The provision of public spaces for casual and spontaneous interaction does not create deep social bonds, but instead promotes "weak" social ties, which are not only necessary and important, but are believed to be especially sensitive to environmental design (2008: 149; also see Skjaeveland and Garling, 1997).

The following section offers an overview of how the literature understands the role of the physical environment in influencing both social exclusion and cohesion.

2.3 The Physical Environment

The importance of physical space is evident in both the social exclusion and social cohesion literature. Social exclusion is about a person being excluded from the 'society in which they live'. An excluded individual or group must physically live in the same space as the society that excludes them. This underscores the importance of physical proximity and, in a subtle way, acknowledges the importance of the physical environment. Small design features are seen as particularly important. In her exploration of the *terms* of inclusion for the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, Witcher found that the built environment mediates a

person's interactions and their access to society: 'on a micro-level, the design of buildings may render them inaccessible to [certain] people … providing a serious impediment to inclusion' (2003: 23).

For social cohesion, relationships 'within neighbourhoods' are necessary and so is a 'sense of belonging' (LGA, 2002: 6). Both elements emphasise the importance of spatial proximity. As Forrest and Kearns explain, belonging is tied to place: a cohesive society 'cares about and feels connected to the place, the place is part of their identity' (2001: 2129). Further, one of DCLG's four 'building blocks' for cohesion is 'shared spaces for interaction and social action' (2008a: 45).

> The Commission on Integration and Cohesion identified that shared spaces – including parks, leisure centres, and shops, as well as transport networks – that are safe and well managed are important in encouraging interaction and in creating opportunities for people to pursue shared activities (DCLG, 2008a: 45).

Talen's work reiterates this conclusion: 'empirical research has demonstrated that physical factors can affect certain aspects of social interaction' (2002: 179).

Despite the relevance of physical proximity to both concepts, research on the role of physical space in social exclusion is limited. Papers on issues of social exclusion and cohesion – and on social interaction – sometime include a line suggesting more exploration of the physical environment is necessary. For example, 'studies tend to neglect the exact spaces and places of contact' (Wessel, 2009: 11). Wessel goes on to argue that 'research[ers] have confirmed that urban space may act as a catalyst for tolerant attitudes…. Future research should combine an open-ended approach to casual contact with a diversified conception of diversity and a richer conception of urban space' (2009: 5) Similarly, writing about transient exchanges, Wesselmann et al. suggest that 'future research should investigate the influence of [visual] acknowledgment on social connection in different locations' (2012: 167). Other scholars declare that more research is needed in 'thinking about how to facilitate social mix, and for the design and management of public spaces' (van Eijk and Engbersen, 2011: 35).

However, there is some research on the topic, which can be divided into three different categories. First, Kearns and Forrest have examined how social cohesion 'arise[s] at different spatial scales' (2000: 1002). Since cohesion concerns 'society as a whole and all its members' (CoE, 2001: 10) this can involve everything from an entire country to a single city block. They emphasise the block level, worrying that 'theorisations of social change derived from observed macro processes of disorder, dislocation and social and economic transformation may underestimate the importance of everyday life' (Kearns and Forrest, 2001: 2127). They argue that, depending on the spatial level of analysis, different characteristics emerge. For example, it is hard to build social capital with personal interactions at the national level. However, it can easily occur at the neighbourhood level. Figure 2.5 displays which of Kearns and Forrest's five dimensions are pertinent at each level.

Dimension	National	City	Neighbourhood
Common values	X	X	X
Social order		X	X
Social solidarity	X	X	
Social networks and social capital		X	X
Place attachment and identity	X	X	X

Figure 2.5: Social cohesion by spatial scales (Kearns and Forrest, 2000: 1003).

Second, despite the general lack of inquiry into the spatial dimension of ICT, there are three prominent studies that examine how ICT plays out in specific environments. All three studies selected spaces used by heterogeneous groups yet two studies found minimal, if any, intergroup contact.

In the first study, Durrheim and Dixon studied beaches in South Africa, exploring inter-racial contact (2005). Despite proximity between the groups, they found patterns of group clustering and segregation. The distinct groups fanned out to create separate 'umbrella spaces' where they socialised without much interaction (Durrheim and Dixon, 2005: 59). In addition to spatial boundaries, there were temporal variations as different racial groups visited the beach on different days and at different times of the day (ibid.).

In the second study, researchers examined a university cafeteria, hypothesising that since eating is a social activity, it may offer opportunity for contact (Clack et al., 2005). They found that the cafeteria was divided into territories and people sat largely in conversation groups exclusively consisting of people from their own background (ibid.).

The third study identified a physical environment that was highly successful at combating social exclusion: community gardens or allotments. Calling allotments 'unique participatory landscapes,' they found that having a shared interest in a project facilitated communication, mutual learning, and regular contact (Saldivar-Tanaka and Krasny, 2004: 399). While juxtaposing these three studies does not illuminate which spaces best facilitate contact, it consistently appears that proximity is not sufficient to create positive intergroup contact. Instead, actual interaction in a physical space is necessary and the design and use of the space may play a role in encouraging positive interactions rather than negative interactions or proximity without interactions.

Finally, there is a body of research that underscores the importance of *public* spaces in facilitating interactions, particularly unplanned contact with people from different backgrounds. 'Public space provides a venue for chance encounters, which serves to strengthen community bonds' (Talen, 1999b: 1364). Gaffikin et al. agree: 'Public space holds the potential for chance encounters among people of diverse traditions, and in such serendipities rests the opportunity for exchange and learning that can help break barriers' (2010: 497). Importantly, they argue that the dynamics that are evident within public spaces both reflect and affect broader societal trends (Gaffikin et al., 2010). The assumption is that a cohesive society is associated with safe, predictable, and active public spaces (Sampson and Grove, 1989). And when 'people socialise and interact in their local environment' they create the social ties and shared goals that are at the heart of social cohesion (Castells, 1997: 60; also see Johnston, 1991). The importance of public spaces and place attachment is seen in

measures of social cohesion. For example, one five-point scale used to measure cohesion includes three attitude items, two of which capture a person's perception of space:

- 'People in this area can be trusted'
- 'People act with courtesy to each other in public space in this area'
- 'You can see from the public space here in the area that people take pride in their environment' (Sturgis et al., 2014: 1293).

Some research has also argued that public green space can subconsciously affect individuals and their sense of belonging and inclusion. Maas et al. found that less public green space in people's living environments coincided with feelings of loneliness and a perceived shortage of social support (2009). Conversely, the availability of open space and natural settings seemed to enhance a person's sense of inclusion in the broader society (ibid.). Still other studies have found that contact with green space is associated with reduced stress levels (Roe et al., 2013).

2.4 Conclusion

While both social exclusion and cohesion are contested and complicated concepts, there are certain areas of agreement. The literature identifies the role of interaction in preventing social exclusion and facilitating cohesion as critical. However, not just any interaction and contact can have this impact. Instead, the policy literature and the scholarly literature suggest there are specific types of positive, meaningful contact that yield the best results. And there is a risk that proximity among diverse groups without positive interactions can entrench negative stereotypes, further dividing society. Importantly, governmental policy can play a role in facilitating such interactions and helping create public spaces where positive contact naturally and comfortably occurs.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter introduces and justifies the use of comparative case studies and systematic social observation – among other qualitative methods – to explore the interplay between the policies shaping public spaces and social exclusion and cohesion. The chapter proceeds in four parts. The first defends the use of the comparative method and the case studies approach. The second explains the US and UK comparison. The third selects case studies of public spaces within each country. The fourth and final section details and defends the methods of data collection within each park.

3.1 Comparative Case Studies

This research primarily uses qualitative case studies to examine how policies and design decisions related to public spaces in the UK have affected social interactions and cohesion among diverse user groups. Although there are many public spaces in the UK, only a small number of spaces have been designed within the right time period in which social exclusion was a prominent policy initiative, and the data on interactions in these spaces is resource-intensive to collect. This research not only examines whether social interactions in public spaces occur; it also studies the context surrounding the interactions. Thus, this research has chosen to focus on a smaller number of case studies at the park level using systematic social observation and interviews to collect data. The alternative would be to gather data on a larger number of parks and conduct a statistical analysis. However, there are neither enough relevant public spaces nor the available data to take such a quantitative approach. After all, ‘as the number of relevant observations decreases, the possibility of subjecting arguments to rigorous statistical testing diminishes’ (Ragin, 1987: 12). Thus, in research where there is only a limited number of cases – and when the research questions

focus on the mechanism connecting a treatment and an outcome – researchers often turn to the comparative method and the case study approach in order to draw out meaningful insights (Goertz and Mahoney, 2012).

3.1.1 Comparative Method

The comparative method is a 'method of testing hypothesised empirical relationships among variables on the basis of the same logic that guides the statistical method, but in which cases are selected in such a way as to maximise the variance of the independent variables and to minimise the variance of the control variables' (Lijphart, 1975: 164). This strategy enables researchers to focus on the variables that may explain the differences between cases. Such an approach is particularly valuable when concepts and theories are being developed as well as when hypotheses are being formed and tested (Lijphart, 1971). When conducted with sufficient rigour, 'the intensive comparative analysis of a few cases may be more promising than a more superficial statistical analysis of many cases' (Lijphart, 1971: 685). Such comparisons help 'sharpen our power of description' (Collier, 1993: 105).

3.1.2 Case Studies

The *case study approach* or *within-case method* aims to 'illuminate and explicate' through a detailed examination of specific examples that are representative of a broader phenomenon (Thomas, 2011: 511-13). This approach is considered 'one of the principal means by which inquiry is conducted in the social sciences' (ibid.). Gerring argues that:

> Sometimes, in-depth knowledge of an individual example is more helpful than fleeting knowledge about a larger number of examples. We gain better understanding of the whole by focusing on a key part (2007: 1).

This approach retains the texture and detail of processes that can be lost in large-N analyses. As Simons says: case studies are 'an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a "real life" context' (2009: 21).

However, there are plenty of critics that question the rigour of case study research. Maoz says:

> There is a nearly complete lack of documentation of the approach to data collection, data management, and data analysis and inference in case study research … one often gets the impression that the use of case studies [sic] absolves the author from any kind of methodological considerations (2002:164-5).

Gerring points out that such a maligned status creates a paradox, where the method is not taken seriously yet 'much of what we know about the empirical world has been generated by case studies' (2007: 8). He argues that this is largely because the case study method has not been properly understood and explained.

The lesson from these debates is that the case study approach is suitable in some research contexts but not all. And, when used, it needs to be applied carefully, for the right reasons, and documented thoroughly. The comparative case study approach was selected for this research for two reasons.

First, case studies are valuable in emerging research areas – such as preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion through urban design. 'Case studies enjoy a natural advantage in research of an exploratory nature' (Gerring, 2007: 39). For example, Darwin's work on evolution came from a close study of only a few locations. Piaget's insights into human cognition came from careful observation of a couple of children. The list goes on: Freud's work in psychology, Levi-Strauss's theory of human cultures (see Patton, 2002). Deep knowledge of specific cases can facilitate theory development with implications for further research in emerging fields. Thus, where large-N studies are better at testing existing hypotheses, case studies are ideal for generating a hypothesis and exploring a relatively new field. As Ragin explains:

> [Case studies allow researchers to] pinpoint the most important features of cases…. [Furthermore, they permit] an assessment of the adequacy of current theories which in turn would lead the researcher either to press on with his or her initial theoretical formulations or adopt a new one (2000: 75).

Second, case studies are well suited to investigate *causal mechanisms*. This method is often juxtaposed with efforts to estimate *causal effects,* which are best done through large-N studies. While a causal effect explains how much a change in X has an effect on Y, causal mechanisms identify the causal pathways that link X and Y. Gerring captures the power and importance of such an understanding:

> Without a clear understanding of the causal pathway(s) at work in a causal relationship, it is impossible to specify the model accurately, to identify possible instruments for the regressor of interest, or to interpret the results…. Case studies, if well constructed, may allow one to peer into the box of causality to locate the intermediate factors laying between some structural cause and its purported effect. Ideally, they allow one to "see" X and Y interact (2007: 44-45).

It has also been suggested that case studies are particularly good in instances of *causal complexity* when it is necessary to consider multiple complex factors of causation, as is the case with social exclusion and cohesion.

As with all research methods, there are limitations to the comparative case study approach. Three relevant limitations emerge. First, it is 'by no means easy to identify comparable cases' (Lijphart, 1975: 163). The number of potential variables and time periods that differentiate places limit a researcher's ability to find sufficiently similar cases. This criticism underscores the crucial role of case selection.

Second, it can be challenging to determine which variables to emphasise in a given research project. However, 'restricting the analysis to the key variables and omitting those of only marginal importance' is a necessary component of the comparative case studies method (Lijphart, 1975: 159). Skocpol suggests that analysing the relevant literature – as was done in Chapter 2 – will help narrow the variables of interest in making case comparisons.

> It is always a problem in social science to know whether all of the possibly relevant variables have been examined. This problem is never solved once and for all in any given study. All an analyst can be asked to do is to give a fair hearing to the arguments available in the existing literature (1986: 190).

Third, it is challenging to generalise from the conclusions of small-N case study research. There is a trade-off between reliability and generalisability. While in-depth knowledge of a case provides a large degree of reliability, the findings may not be applicable to other contexts. However, Flyvbjerg suggests that results can be generalised from case studies under the right circumstances (2006). Further, Ragin suggests that the value of case studies lies in their ability to inform the development of general theories (2000). Pairing the case studies approach with the comparative approach is particularly valuable here, as the juxtaposition of cases allows for a broader understanding of the range of possible scenarios and outcomes.

3.2 Comparing the UK and the US

This research sought to find comparable cases that are representative of the broader phenomena being examined. This helps enhance the generalisability of the findings. Additionally, in observational research, it can be helpful to use *approximate matching*, which is 'based on an extension of experimental logic' (Gerring, 2007: 134). The goal is to identify relevant variables that must be controlled for and ensure that these variables are constant across the case studies.

Following a well-established precedent, this research compares cases in the UK and the US. While it is important that these countries share a welfare regime type, there are numerous other pairs of countries within a given regime and thus there are several other key matching criteria and one key difference that make the UK and the US well suited for this comparison. The similarities – comparable social dynamics and parallel architectural movements – represent an effort to 'minimise the variance of the control variables' (Lijphart, 1975: 164). The difference – divergent approaches to social exclusion and cohesion – is key

to 'maximis[ing] the variance of the independent variables' (ibid.). It is important to recall that in both the UK and the US this research is focused on the 1990s and the 2000s.

3.2.1 Welfare Regimes

In social policy discourse, 'focusing the analysis on comparable cases' often entails juxtaposing jurisdictions with similar welfare state traditions (Lijphart, 1975: 159). Within a given regime, countries operate under broadly similar political philosophies and assumptions about market primacy. The UK and the US are both associated with the *liberal* or *residual* welfare state regime theorised by Titmuss (1963), Esping-Andersen (1990), and others. Low levels of decommodification characterise liberal welfare states, as they emphasise market forces and self-reliance.[11] In this model, welfare state 'benefits cater mainly to a clientele of low-income, usually working-class, state dependents' and, with strict entitlement rules and means-testing, benefits are 'often associated with stigma' (Esping-Andersen, 1990: 26).

These classifications represent a prototypical ideal. They do not imply that the countries in a given regime have indistinguishable systems (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Indeed, the UK and the US are not identical. For example, 'Britain has generally been characterised by a broader scope of state intervention … while the United States has had a stronger and more intrusive set of civil rights laws and protections' (Loury et al., 2005: 6). Despite differences, the liberal regime type indicates that the UK and the US share a broad philosophy about state obligations and citizens' well-being. This offers a useful backdrop against which to consider the two cases.

Further parallels emerge. During the 1990s and 2000s, the UK's New Labour and the US's New Democrats – initially called New Progressives – adopted similar welfare philosophies. Some have argued that New Labour, under the leadership of Tony Blair, drew

[11] Decommodification, or 'the degree to which a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market,' is a key dimension of Esping-Andersen's typology (Arts and Gelissen, 2002: 141; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

many of its ideas from New Democrats and Bill Clinton's administration. 'The Blair administration looked to America for ideas for welfare reform, and … the language in which these policies were presented and justified drew heavily on that of American politicians and commentators' (Welshman, 2013: 191). This was not just seen as a turn toward the US, but as a turn away from Europe. 'The Blair government looks across the Atlantic for inspiration, not across the Channel' (Marquand, 1996: 20).

The welfare approach adopted in both the UK under Blair and the US under Clinton is often referred to as The Third Way, or at times, The Radical Centre. The theory was that the political right-wing and left-wing were obsolete and, instead, this movement claimed to synthesise right-wing economic policies with a left-wing approach to social policies (Giddens, 2000).

However, some policymakers and scholars have asserted that this close link between Blair and Clinton's approach to welfare policies 'is not wholly true' (Giddens, 1998: viii). Indeed, Giddens, who advised Blair and wrote extensively on The Third Way, argues that animated debate about Third Way parallels between the UK and the US 'has been carried on largely in ignorance of comparable discussions' on the other side of the Channel (ibid.). This can be seen when tracing the concepts of social exclusion and cohesion. New Labour adopted these terms from other European welfare states, not from the US. So, while there are large and significant parallels between UK and US welfare regimes – making it a valid comparison – it is still important to be cognisant of differences between the two countries as well as other potentially relevant comparisons.

3.2.2 Comparable Social Dynamics

Esping-Andersen's welfare regimes capture a state's degree of decommodification. Esping-Andersen asserts that different types of welfare states create different social structures (1990). Liberal regimes, in theory, promote social dualism. The argument is that the stigma

associated with means testing creates a bifurcated society that separates those on public benefits from everyone else. Policies associated with the liberal regime 'lead[s] to division in the population: on the one hand, a minority of low-income state dependents and, on the other hand, a majority of people able to afford private social insurance plans' (Arts and Gelissen, 2002: 141).

Esping-Andersen captures the 'ideal-type' of regimes with a degree of 'simplification and aloofness from detail', thus it is important to consider how the social structure works in practice (Arts and Gelissen, 2002: 139). There are two dimensions to consider in comparing the UK and the US: inequality and polarisation. Ultimately, although the US is far larger and more ethnically diverse than the UK, similar social patterns emerge (Loury et al., 2005).

First, this research uses the Gini coefficient to gauge each country's level of inequality (Cribb et al., 2012). The Gini coefficient is the most common measure of income inequality.[12] As seen in Figure 3.1, charting the Gini coefficient over the past few decades demonstrates a similar upward trend in the UK and the US when compared to other industrialised countries (OECD, 2012). Cribb et al. opine that 'the scale of this rise in inequality has been shown … to be unparalleled in recent British history and compared with the changes taking place at the same time in most other developed countries, though the US did see a similarly sharp increase in inequality' (2012: 37). However, it must be noted that the US started its increase from a higher baseline (OECD, 2012).

Second, research on social exclusion and cohesion demonstrates that monetary measures of well-being must be complemented by other dimensions of the social structure (Lister, 2004). Thus, this section examines social polarisation in both contexts.

[12] The coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating higher levels of inequality (Cribb et al., 2012).

In the UK, concerns about polarisation were most openly discussed in 2001 in the wake of race riots and social disturbances in Bradford, Burnley, and Oldham. These events as well as a growing concern about non-white populations prompted the government to commission a report examining social dynamics in the UK. The resulting report from the Home Office, often called the Cantle Report, found unexpectedly high levels of social stratification (2001: 9). The authors were 'particularly struck by the depth of polarisation' and noted that different racial groups often don't interact with one another (ibid.). The report triggered the push for cohesion and highlighted the need for new social bonding 'based upon a greater knowledge of, contact between, and respect for, the various cultures' (Home Office, 2001: 10).

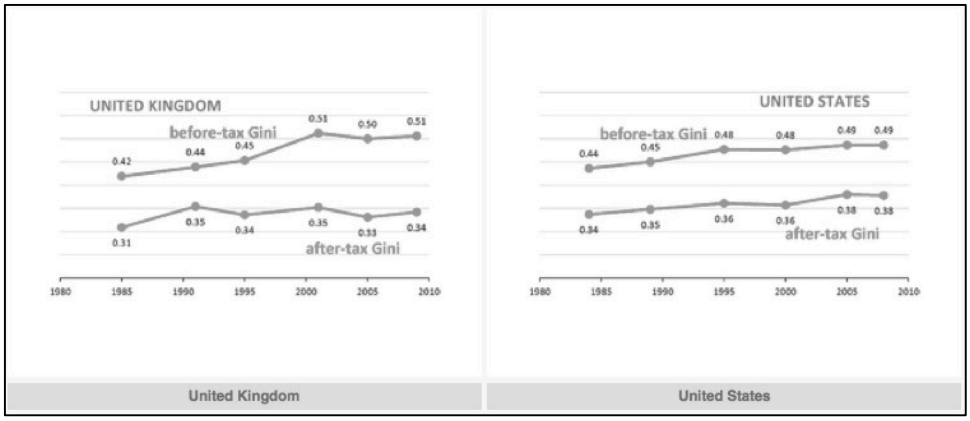


Figure 3.1: Gini index before and after taxes in the UK and the US (OECD, 2012).

Similarly, in the US, 'inequality worsened along with isolation and separation' at the beginning of the 21st century (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010: 1). Contradicting the classic American notion of the melting pot, where people of different backgrounds fused into a unified society, there was increasing 'marginalisation and invisibility of the poor' (Cole, 2011: 472). Indeed, some asserted that the melting pot was happening in reverse: 'it is a process of freezing whereby water gradually solidified into discrete blocks of ice, separated from the remaining fluid of mainstream society' (Cole, 2011: 471). Researchers believed this

persistent separation resulted from social segmentation, economic division, and political isolation (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010).

Both countries have struggled with social polarisation, but there is a widely-held belief that social hierarchies in the US are a product of race relations whereas in the UK they are a result of engrained class dynamics. However, race seems to play an important role in modern day social dynamics in the UK. In 2005, when Trevor Phillips, the British Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, gave a speech declaring that the UK was 'sleepwalking its way to US-style ghettos', it prompted a heated debate (quoted in Phillips, 2007: 1154).

Two important lessons emerge from Phillips's controversial comment. First, placing social dynamics within their proper historical context is vital (Burgess et al., 2005). The US legacy of slavery and racism is still evident within American society and is reflected in the intensity and persistence of African-American segregation (Peach, 2009). Although counterintuitive, some argue there are certain benefits to such segregation: 'political decentralization combined with population concentration has given ethnic and racial minorities access to power' (Loury et al., 2005: 10). In the UK, immigration of ethnic minorities is often a legacy of imperialism and immigrants are significantly less numerous than in the US (Loury et al., 2005).

Secondly, while Phillips's statements dramatised the situation, there is evidence suggesting that racial segregation is present in Britain, particularly for people of Bangladeshi or Pakistani origins (Burgess et al., 2005). Gillborn and Mirza found that race not only affects housing location but also educational attainment, which is comparably low for African-Caribbean, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi students (2000). Furthermore, research confirms the presence of an 'ethnic penalty' in the UK, as well as prejudice against Muslims, that can be seen in hiring practices (Clark and Drinkwater, 2007; Abrams and Houston, 2006).

While historical differences and size distinguish the US from the UK, similarities emerge as both countries grapple with rising income inequality, social polarisation, and racial prejudices. Despite social disparities, it is important to note that both countries experienced strong economic growth during the late 1990s (OECD, 2016). Further, scholars have noted that the economic situation of a country often shapes urban and architectural trends. At this time, there were significant design movements in both the UK and the US.

3.2.3 Parallel Urban Movements

Over the past two decades, urban regeneration has become 'a defining feature of contemporary urban policy' (Shaw and Porter, 2009: 1) and has been hailed as 'the most significant movement in urban planning and architecture' of its time (Song and Knaap, 2003). This is true in both the UK, with the Urban Renaissance (UR), and in the US, with New Urbanism (NU). While some scholars debate whether UR and NU are 'two sides of the same transatlantic coin' (Hall, 2000: 359), they tend to agree that when it comes to the philosophies underpinning the movements 'there has been considerable consensus developed about key Anglo-American urban design principles' (Punter, 2007: 182). Indeed, ideas and techniques were 'imported' from the US to the UK and vice versa (Punter, 2011: 9).[13]

Importantly, these movements are defined by a shared philosophy and set of goals. However, they are by no means 'monolithic' movements since 'the principles can be achieved in many different ways' (Ellis, 2002: 262). Both movements are part of a much longer historical legacy of urban regeneration. Inspired by activists – including Jacobs (1961), Whyte (1980), and Gehl (2011, original published 1987) – they endeavoured to respond to the growth of industrialism and revitalise urban centres by creating high-density, mixed-use environments that stimulated human interaction and eschewed auto-dependence

[13] It is worth noting that while many scholars acknowledge philosophical similarities and 'design parallels,' some argue that the implementation varies significantly, particularly with NU building on greenfield land and the UR emphasizing brownfield land (Hall, 2000: 359).

(Ellis, 2002). These movements 'seek, through architectural design, to create residential communities with a high degree of both neighbouring and street life' (Gottdiener and Hutchison, 2011: 331). Through the UR and NU, design moved 'from the margins of architecture and planning into the mainstream' (Madanipour, 2006: 174).

Since the UR and NU are not defined movements, their vision has been adopted and championed among different groups. In the UK, the UR was infused with activity and vigour under New Labour with the establishment of the Urban Task Force (UTF) in 1998. The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, appointed the prominent architect, Sir Richard Rogers, to oversee the UTF. In short order, an influential 313-page report was issued, *Towards an Urban Renaissance* (1999), which 'helped to reshape British planning, housing, and regeneration policies over subsequent years, placing a particular importance on the role of urban design' (Punter, 2010: xiv). Other governmental departments worked to reinforce the vision laid out in the report (Punter, 2011; Tarbatt, 2012). Further, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) was established. Scholars have highlighted CABE as an 'exceptional initiative' in 'its scope and ambition' and a demonstration of the government's commitment to urban design (Carmona et al., 2017: 1).

While there is no direct equivalent to the UTF or CABE in the US, the US Housing and Urban Development programme famously adopted NU's philosophy in 1997 (Bohl, 2000; Sohmer and Lang, 2000; Deitrick and Ellis, 2004; Elliot et al., 2004). Further, the non-governmental Congress of New Urbanism (CNU) formed in 1993 in the US to help champion the vision. CNU codified their guiding principles in the *Charter of the New Urbanism* (2000a), which stressed their various social goals (Talen, 2002).

It should be noted that both the UR and NU have faced criticism. Some argue that the movements have an inflated sense of what they can accomplish and they fail to understand the complexity of social dynamics, privatisation, and urban tensions (Amin et al., 2000;

Cochrane, 2000; Lees, 2003; Jayne, 2006; Cuthbert, 2004; Evans, 2003; Julier, 2005; Crookston, 2000). Others worry that this type of urban regeneration can actually catalyse exclusion through spurring gentrification:

> Regeneration has a dark side. All the jobs and activity and improvements to the built and natural environments brought by successful regeneration bring, in turn, increases in land values, which can cause displacement or exclusion of lower income users of that place. The effects of regeneration reinforce themselves: the greater the increases in land value, the greater the potential for social exclusion. The negative consequences of urban regeneration strategies – intended or unintended – are relatively unexplored (Shaw and Porter, 2009: 1).

These critics worry that the line between regeneration and gentrification can and has become blurred (Marshall, 1996; Clarke, 2005; Grant, 2007; Knox, 2008). Some have worried that this has happened by letting economic growth trump social philosophies, as urban design focuses on iconic architecture and avant-garde projects rather than the lived experience and sense of community in a place (Gospodini, 2002; Lees, 2003; Miles and Miles, 2003; Hannigan, 1998).

However, others have disputed these criticisms as lacking empirical support. 'It is not always clear what evidence authors draw upon to make claims about NU's exclusivity' (Trudeau and Malloy, 2011: 428; also see Ellis, 2002). Despite the spirited debate, two things remain true. First, both the Urban Renaissance in the UK and New Urbanism in the US have been influential on the country's respective urban design movements. Second, these movements are similar in substance, sharing many of the same guiding principles.

3.2.4 Differences in How the UK and the US Addressed Social Exclusion and Cohesion

The UK and the US differed greatly on their acknowledgment of, and policy responses to, social exclusion. In the UK, under the New Labour government, social exclusion became a key component of its policy agenda and public rhetoric. Similarly, cohesion became an aspirational goal. In stark contrast, the notions of social exclusion and

cohesion did not surface as part of the social policy agenda in the US. The US has not perceived exclusion as a principal social problem nor cohesion as a primary goal.

As explained in Chapter 2, social exclusion was introduced in 1997 into the UK political discourse with the Blair administration's creation of the interdepartmental Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) (Hills, 2002; Atkinson and Da Voudi, 2000).[14] Social exclusion quickly became a common phrase and a core piece of the administration's agenda (Benn, 2000). However, Beland argues that adequate resources did not back up the strong rhetoric, as only 'modest resources [were] allocated to social inclusion programmes' (2007a: 133).

Unlike in France, where the concept of social exclusion had been widely debated and had emerged as a shared paradigm, in the UK the concept entered the political arena so rapidly that academics and policymakers had yet to seriously grapple with the concept's meaning (Cameron, 2005). Thus, 'conceptual work took a back seat to political compromise' (Silver and Miller, 2003: 7; also see Beland, 2007a). This meant that it was not immediately clear how to operationalise or measure social exclusion in the UK (Howarth et al., 1998).

However, the general contours of the term's meaning did emerge. New Labour's approach to social exclusion saw participation in the economic and social life of a nation as a better measurement 'of social justice than income inequality alone' (Davies, 2005: 13). The first annual report on tackling poverty and social exclusion, *Opportunity for All*, claims:

> Our strategy is based in the principle that everybody has the right to participate in society, and the opportunity to achieve their full potential (DSS, 1999: 30).

The report, by the Department of Social Security, laid out the 'policy priorities,' including to 'promote employment and social and economic cohesion' (DSS, 1999: 144).

[14] Since poverty and social exclusion are 'devolved responsibilities' in the UK, the Social Exclusion Unit only served England. In Scotland there was the Scottish Social Inclusion Strategy. In Wales there was the Building an Inclusive Wales initiative. And, finally, in Northern Ireland the equivalent was the Targeting Social Need in Northern Ireland (Percy-Smith, 2000: 2).

Social exclusion, as a term and concept, was not common in the US. In the US Census Bureau report, *Poverty in the United States 2000*, the term is absent (Micklewright, 2002). Similarly, in Ellwood's widely acclaimed survey of US welfare programmes and reforms, the term is never used (2000). And while racial disparities are acknowledged, social exclusion is not explored or addressed.

The notion of social exclusion runs counter to the US's inclusionary self-image. It celebrates multiculturalism rather than cohesion. Indeed, the US views itself as inherently diverse and inclusive – regardless of whether this is the case and despite the periodic rise of small but vocal groups supporting white supremacy. The US is, theoretically, a place where the world's poor are offered a chance at prosperity (Talen, 2008). This is etched into the Statue of Liberty (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010):

> Give me your tired, your poor
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free
> The wretched refuse of your teeming shore
> Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me…

Not only does the US have a self-image as a highly inclusive society, several key features of the social exclusion paradigm are at odds with US values and systems. First, European conceptualisations of social exclusion imply that 'insiders are the agents of exclusion' (Silver and Miller, 2003: 14). This idea clashes with the American philosophy of self-reliance and personal responsibility by placing some of the onus on mainstream society (Micklewright, 2002). Second, social exclusion highlights the multidimensionality of deprivation and, thus, would require policies to 'transcend traditional bureaucratic domains' (Silver and Miller, 2003: 14). This type of coordination and collaboration is challenging to accomplish in a system that values local solutions and the rights of individual states (Micklewright, 2002). Instead of using Europe's multidimensional and relativistic approach to assessing disadvantage, the US simply measures absolute poverty (Lister, 2004). This

measure only 'identifies people living in the direst material circumstances' and does 'not consider dynamic measures of income poverty' (Silver and Miller, 2003: 2).

This lack of measurement and acknowledgement does not mean that social exclusion does not exist within the US – it does (McCarthy, 1999). As Silver and Miller report, 'the great divides of American society are not only economic but also based on racial-ethnic, gender, cultural, educational, and political status lines' (2003: 14-5). Goldsmith and Blakely agree, suggesting that social 'mixing is superficial' (2010: 24) and that 'Americans have long dealt with this inconsistency between democratic theory and unequal reality by avoidance, as they hide behind the isolating divisions that organise their lives in metropolitan areas' (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010: 6). These issues relate to social exclusion but are often referred to as 'marginalization,' 'ghettoization,' and the 'underclass' within the US (Hills et al., 2002: 2; also see Wilson, 1996). Silver and Miller suggest that the US has a lot to learn from the UK and Europe's approach to poverty, social exclusion, and cohesion:

> The United States is falling further behind the European Union in its conceptualisation of poverty and its understanding of those living at the margins of society…. The United States can learn much from the European fight against social exclusion (2003: 1-2).

3.2.5 Interplay between Urban Policies and Social Exclusion and Cohesion

In the UK, the emphasis on urban regeneration arose at the same time as the emphasis on social exclusion and cohesion. These parallel policy foci interacted with one another. New Labour had a philosophy of 'joined-up policies for joined-up problems', which meant that there was a need for interdepartmental coordination to address multidimensional phenomena (Silver and Miller, 2003: 14). Thus, social goals affected urban policies – and vice versa. Some saw urban regeneration efforts as a means to prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion:

> Labour's [urban] regeneration aspirations were driven by a desire to address widening inequalities through programmes of social inclusion…. New Labour's first urban policy moves were to counter social exclusion (Punter, 2011: 2-3).

Imrie and Raco argue that documents that came out under the Labour Government show the administration believed architecture and urban design have the ability to influence both individual lives and community dynamics.

> There is a genuine willingness in parts of the Labour government to tackle urban problems such as poverty and poor housing, a willingness that is reflected in a renewed political emphasis in pursuing an urban renaissance … The Urban Task Force Report and the Urban White Paper note that the key to urban regeneration is not to be found by recourse to lay viewpoints per se; rather, it is to draw on the knowledge of architects, designers and planners to enhance urban spaces and the lives of communities (2003: 26).

While research has demonstrated the potential of design to influence people's behaviour and policymakers have begun to use design to achieve certain social goals, several important caveats remain.

First, design does not always combat social challenges – it often exacerbates them. Punter postulates that 'one of the strongest criticisms of urban design initiatives is that they frequently result in social exclusion' (2007: 176). This can be seen in gentrified neighbourhoods and city plans that tacitly foster social homogeneity (Lees, 2003; Smith, 2002; Talen, 2002).

Second, any effort to design a physical environment with the intention of encouraging particular behaviours must address concerns about determinism. 'This approach assumes the people's behaviour can be controlled or channelled into desirable forms through the manipulation of physical design' (Gottdiener and Hutchison, 2011: 330). This assumes designers are trying to engineer a certain reality rather than responding to the desires and requirements of the residents. Many critics have argued that planners who operate under this philosophy exaggerate the power of the physical environment and neglect the power of human agency and social dynamics (see Gans, 1968).

The reality is that the physical environment is just one factor among many that help shape behaviour. As Lund explains, 'designing a neighbourhood in a particular way is not

going to force people into a behaviour or lifestyle they do not wish to partake in' (2002: 310). Thus, it is unhelpful to view architecture and design as the panacea. However, it is also unhelpful to assume design has no impact on individuals and social processes. Thus, there is a 'continuous two-way process in which people create and modify spaces while at the same time being influenced in various ways by those spaces' (Carmona et al., 2010: 133). As Talen explains, a 'distinction … must be made between addressing social goals and solving social problems' (2002: 167). Reports during the Blair Administration seemed to understand this balance:

> Like most aspects of community life, cohesion is something that people themselves generate but which government and its partners can facilitate (LGA, 2002: 5)

Finally, privatisation is another concern. While public parks are rarely sold to private organisations, private money and management can influence public spaces (Low et al., 2005). There is a concern that private interests may pursue economic returns at the expense of social returns, potentially creating spaces where only those with economic resources feel included. Kohn summarises the concern:

> The privatization of public space gradually undermines the feeling that people of different classes and cultures live in the same world. It separates citizens from each other and decreases the opportunities for recognizing commonalities and accepting difference (2004: 8).

In parks that were built as part of a public-private partnership, it is worth being particularly vigilant to determine whether this concern is borne out.

3.3 Case Study Selection Process

Given that public spaces in the UK and the US provide a good opportunity for case comparisons, the appropriate unit of analysis for the last two sets of research questions about

design implementation and user experience is not the country but the public space.[15] The challenge then is to select which public spaces within the UK and the US to compare. First, it is necessary to explain why urban parks are the best public spaces in which to examine the interplay between social exclusion, cohesion, and the physical environment. Second, it is important to select specific parks in the UK and the US. Given that each urban public park is a potential case study, the process of case selection requires taking cross-case characteristics into consideration (Gerring, 2007). This involves initially selecting comparable cities and, then, specific cases.

3.3.1 Why Public Parks?

As Lipton wrote in a CABE report, public spaces are often considered society's 'open-air living room' (2002: Forward). They have long been seen as a place where people from all walks of life encounter one another and build a common identity:

> The trust of a city street is formed over time from many, many little public sidewalk contacts … Most of it is ostensibly utterly trivial but the sum is not trivial at all. The sum of such casual public contact at a local level … is a feeling for the public identity of people, a web of public respect and trust, and a resource in time of personal or neighborhood need (Jacobs, 1961: 73).

Many urbanists argue that urban parks fill a unique role, relative to other public spaces, and they may be particularly well suited to help prevent social exclusion and encourage cohesion (Low et al., 2005; Holland et al., 2007; Gaffikin et al., 2010; Francis et al., 2012).

> Public parks have been described as places for "the meeting of strangers." Indeed, it has been argued that there are few other places in modern society where there is a possibility for strangers to interact, regardless of background, financial status, ethnicity, etc (Ward Thompson, 2002: 66; also see Ward Thompson, 1998).

[15] The last two sets of questions are: First, how – if at all – were the design recommendations intended to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion incorporated into new public parks? What explains the similarities and differences in implementation? Second, to what extent did the design features intended to prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion in public parks influence who uses the parks and how they use them?

There are three main reasons why parks are particularly well-suited among public spaces for studying social cohesion. First, public parks are often a destination (Chiesura, 2004). One critique levelled at using public spaces to promote social cohesion is that most public spaces, such as streetscapes, are 'spaces of transit with very little contact between strangers' (Amin, 2002: 12; also see Amin and Thrift, 2002). However, people are often not in a hurry in a park. Thus, there are more opportunities for contact than in some other public spaces. While some have worried that parks can be places of crime and fear, others say the potential mental, physical, and social benefits outweigh the concerns. 'Far larger is the empirical evidence of the positive functions of green areas' than the negative functions (Chiesura, 2004: 130)

Second, as physical places where different social and demographic groups mingle become more rare, public parks remain the exception. As residential patterns, school enrolment, and work routines show, societies can be highly segregated such that people from different groups rarely find themselves in the same space (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010; Goonewardena, 2004). However, parks, particularly city parks, still draw a wide and heterogeneous audience. City or regional parks are seen as 'the last remaining spaces for democratic practices, places where a wide variety of people of different gender, class, culture, nationality, and ethnicity intermingle peacefully' (Low et al., 2005: 4). There is some evidence that neighbourhood parks can serve a similar function. Scholars have debated whether local parks are connectors or barriers, 'green walls' or 'green magnets' (Gobster, 1998). Importantly, Gobster found that – when placed on the boundary between different groups – 'parks can be designed and managed to be *active* agents in counteracting boundary effects' (1998: 54; emphasis original; also see Solecki and Welch, 1995). Others concur: 'findings suggest that greenways might facilitate racial comingling in urban public space' (Coutts and Miles, 2011:317). Interestingly, when gang activity is endemic in a local park, research suggests some residents 'chose to travel to other neighbourhoods for leisure to

ensure their safety' and, thus, neighbourhood parks may draw a more diverse cross-section of society than the local demographics would suggest (Stodolska et al., 2009: 474).

Third, parks are widely used. While there is a dearth of data about urban green spaces, evidence suggest parks are used by many people and many different groups in society.

> Almost half of responding local authorities did at least try to estimate the number of people using the parks and found that the figure was very much higher than that for leisure centres, museums, and paying attractions (Jenkins, 2000; 101).

It is surmised that this is because 'public parks are open free of charge' and 'appeal to people of all ages' (ibid.).

3.3.2 City Selection

Cities can serve as 'bellwethers,' capturing social problems and serving as 'laboratories' for social change (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010: 7). With the potential to mirror national changes, a close study of certain cities can illuminate generalisable findings. However, not all cities are microcosms of their nation. The aim of the selection process is to identify cities that (1) reflect their respective country and (2) are comparable to one another.

London and Birmingham, in the UK, and Chicago and Washington, DC, in the US, emerge as four cities that satisfy both criteria. When considering the factors enumerated earlier, these cities mirror their country's trends. First, they all have high racial diversity and struggle with polarisation and social divisions (for London, see Brimicombe, 2007; for Chicago, see McCarthy, 1999). London is 'possibly the most ethnically diverse conurbation on the planet' and faces serious social divisions that fall along economic, racial, and class lines (Sturgis et al., 2014: 1286). Indeed, even as poverty rates fell in the late 1990s, segregation remained a concern. 'Poverty has an important spatial dimension, too. And, on this count, Britain's performance is more lacklustre. Its households continue to experience significant levels of economic segregation' (Berube, 2005: 6). Birmingham is a municipality with an 'important immigrant population' and at points minority groups were treated with

'indifference' and at other points they were seen as a helpful political ally (Blech, 2007: 157; Garbaye, 2005). In line with those findings, researchers found that in Birmingham there are 'some highly segregated wards and schools' but also some 'mixed ones' (Burgess et al., 2005: 1050).

Similarly, Chicago has struggled with segregation since industrialisation in the 19th century (Massey and Denton, 1993; Talen, 2008). As 'one of the most spatially segregated cities in the USA', Chicago has long had 'social polarisation, exclusion and segregation' (McCarthy, 1999: 325). Recently, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning acknowledged this problem in their 2010 comprehensive regional plan, stating 'there are serious, systematic inequalities … by income and race and ethnicity' (CMAP, 2010; 169). Washington, DC is also a diverse city that has struggled with segregation. While segregation in many American cities has declined slightly, 'there are exceptions to this rule; one of those is the nation's capital. In the District of Columbia there remains a stark, persistent, white-black racial divide' (Butler and Grabinsky, 2015: 1). Because of this, the city has attracted researchers who study mapping to measure such segregation. 'Blacks are heavily concentrated in the eastern part of the city while whites are mostly found in the northwest' (Wong, 2002: 94).

Second, these four cities were at the forefront of their urban regeneration movements. Both UK cities are highlighted by Edwards et al.: 'Urban policy work in particular has concentrated on larger urban areas and conurbations … such as London, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow, and Birmingham' (2003: 181). London has been a pioneer in urban regeneration efforts, 'possess[ing] many of the qualities aspired to by … the urban renaissance' (Roberts and Lloyd Jones, 2010: 169). Rogers, who set up the UTF, has been particularly vocal about his UR vision for London, even publishing a book, *A New London*, on the topic (Rogers and Fisher, 1992). Birmingham has also embraced urban regeneration

efforts. It has been widely recognised as a 'success story' for how the city financed urban regeneration: 'the City of Birmingham lobbied hard to be declared an assisted area in order to qualify for the European Regional Development Fund' (Noon et al., 2008: 77). The city has also been commended for having invested in 'new visions for urban areas' that focus on new parts of the economy, such as the information economy. This is 'exemplified by recent and proposed large regeneration projects such as … Millennium Point, Birmingham' (Jeffrey and Pounder, 2008: 106).

While the Congress of New Urbanism (CNU) has many local chapters, it only has two official offices: Chicago, IL and Washington, DC. Chicago has long been at the vanguard of architectural movements (Pridmore and Larson, 2005), and the city is often used as a case study for NU research (Talen, 2008; 2010a). Local newspapers and magazines in Chicago have trumpeted NU. One article in the *Chicago Magazine* wrote that 'New Urbanism … is resurging in the metro area' although it's 'been around for decades' (Spula, 2015). A *Chicago Tribune* article also explored this resurgence and, citing Patrick Coveny, then president of the Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago, explained that:

> It's all part of a trend that's been growing within the last decade called New Urbanism, which is geared toward more sidewalk space, more common areas, a denser population of housing and more opportunities within real estate for people to connect (Braff, 2015).

In fact, Chicago was not only the recipient of NU design, it was also the inspiration: 'Background research for New Urbanist plans and projects have involved studying urban design patterns and buildings found in local historic neighborhoods [such as] Hyde Park and Gold Coast in Chicago' (Bohl: 2000, 763). Just like in Chicago, local papers and publications in Washington, DC announced that the city and surrounding area have decided to 'embrace a new urbanism' (Bednar, 2014). In *The Washington Times*, Bednar explained that over the past few decades architects and planners have been 'implementing design plans that embrace more density and mixed-use' (ibid.). Further, CNU's report – *What is New Urbanism* –

highlights Washington, DC, particularly when it comes to public space, including pictures of the city's Columbia Heights neighbourhood (2015).

Third, these four cities reflect their countries' broader approach to social exclusion and cohesion. London has been vocal about addressing social exclusion, labelling it one of the city's major goals. This was evident in Livingstone's work; he was the Leader of the Greater London Council and then elected London's first mayor. 'Mayor Livingstone was equally committed to the reduction of social exclusion as to growth' (Roberts and Lloyd Jones, 2010: 171). Birmingham's leaders also committed their city to address social exclusion and facilitate cohesion. The city even went beyond focusing on its own efforts to create a network of cities, towns and boroughs across the country who would commit to addressing social exclusion. The city's effort culminated in the signing of the *Birmingham Declaration on Social Inclusion*, which was championed by City Councillor John Cotton and the Bishop of Birmingham David Urquhart (2014).

The story is a very different in Chicago and Washington, DC. While academics in Chicago have studied and explored their city's social dynamics, as part of the Chicago School, the local government – and particularly the mayor's office – has long avoided directly addressing social exclusion and acknowledging its multidimensional reality (McCarthy, 1999). Indeed, in the city 'residential segregation was explained as "voluntary" … [which] served primarily to distract attention from evidence of racial discrimination' (McCarthy, 1999: 326). In DC, it is a similar story where policy has not necessarily addressed the problem of social exclusion.

> The city is slightly more diverse than the average big city in America … but its census tracts are the 22nd least diverse in the country. Put those numbers together, and you have one of the most segregated cities in America…. The city's political leaders may pay lip service to increasing unity, there's not much evidence that it's actually happening (Wiener, 2015).

The cities are also comparable to one another. All four are large metropolitan areas. Two are capital cities and all are engines of economic growth for their regions and countries (Goldsmith and Blakely, 2010; Beaverstock et al., 1999). According to the 2011 census, London proper was home to more than eight million people and Birmingham had just over one million people (Office for National Statistics, 2011). In both cities, just under half the population is non-white, topping the UK's list of diverse urban areas (ibid.; see Figure 3.2).

Ethnic Group	London	Birmingham
All categories: Ethnic group	8,173,941	1,073,045
White	4,887,435	621,636
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	3,669,284	570,217
Irish	175,974	22,021
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	8,196	408
Other White	1,033,981	28,990
Mixed/multiple ethnic group	405,279	47,605
White and Black Caribbean	119,425	24,720
White and Black African	65,479	3,223
White and Asian	101,500	11,186
Other Mixed	118,875	8,476
Asian/Asian British	1,511,546	285,640
Indian	542,857	64,621
Pakistani	223,797	144,627
Bangladeshi	222,127	32,532
Chinese	124,250	12,712
Other Asian	398,515	31,148
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1,088,640	96,360
African	573,931	29,991
Caribbean	344,597	47,641
Other Black	170,112	18,728
Other ethnic group	281,041	21,804
Arab	106,020	10,910
Any other ethnic group	175,021	10,894

Figure 3.2: Numbers drawn from the UK's Office for National Statistics 2011 census.

While the population of Chicago's metropolitan area is more than nine million, the city itself had a population of roughly 2.7 million according to the 2010 census. Washington, DC has a population of 600,000 although its geographic area is noteworthy for how much smaller it is than the metropolitan area. DC's metropolitan population is around six million.

According to the 2010 census, both cities are also ethnically diverse (US Census Bureau, see Figure 3.3).

Race	Chicago	DC
Total population	2,695,598	601,723
One race	2,622,450	584,407
White	1,212,835	231,471
Black or African American	887,608	305,125
American Indian and Alaska Native	13,337	2,079
American Indian, specified [1]	4,950	815
Alaska Native, specified [1]	47	11
American Indian or Alaska Native, not specified	8,340	1,253
Asian	147,164	21,056
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1,013	302
Some Other Race	360,493	24,374
Two or More Races	73,148	17,316
Two races with Some Other Race	31,798	3,913
Two races without Some Other Race	36,164	11,360
Three or more races with Some Other Race	1,571	334
Three or more races without Some Other Race	3,615	1,709
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	2,695,598	601,723
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	778,862	54,749
Mexican	578,100	8,507
Puerto Rican	102,703	3,129
Cuban	8,331	1,789
Other Hispanic or Latino [2]	89,728	41,324
Not Hispanic or Latino	1,916,736	546,974

Figure 3.3: Numbers drawn from the US Census Bureau's 2010 census.

There are still noteworthy differences between the four cities. For one, the UK cities are much older than the US cities. For example, London has over 2,000 years of history (see Inwood, 2000) whereas modern Chicago has less than 200 years (see Pierce, 2008). While both these cities experienced devastating fires, London's fire predated Chicago's by two centuries. Among other things, these legacies affect the city's design and layout. However, this research largely sidesteps issues associated with the age discrepancy by considering relatively new spaces that were built or designed in the decade leading up to the 21st century.

3.3.4 Park Selection

Within each city, it is the aim of this research to study public parks that have comparable features. In the US, there are tens of thousands of urban public parks, covering over one and a half million acres (Rogers, 2011). In the UK, there are over three hundred and fifty thousand acres of urban parkland (Wheater et al., 2007). The eight parks in this research were selected based on three principal criteria.

Type of Park	UK City	UK Park	US City	US Park
City	Birmingham	Eastside City	Chicago	Millennium
City	London	Thames Barrier	Washington	Yards
Neighbourhood	London	Mile End	Washington	Canal
Neighbourhood	London	Greenwich Millennium	Chicago	Seward

Figure 3.4: The eight case studies are sorted into four pairs based on their features.

First, the case study parks were selected because their conception and development occurred within a narrow window between the late 1990s and in the 2000s. This time period overlaps with the urban regeneration efforts and there is evidence to suggest that the urban movements influenced the development of parks. For example, NU documents mention Millennium Park (for example, see Talen, 2008) and CABE featured Mile End Park as an example of an inclusive space (CABE, 2011a).

Second, the case studies were chosen to match other parks in the comparison country. One park in the UK roughly matches in size, nature, and function a park in the US. The limited time frame severely curtails the case study options. Thus, the matches are not perfect, but they have substantial similarities.

Third, to cover a variety of park types, this research selected some parks that served a city-wide group of users, whereas others were designed to serve a particular neighbourhood. Eight parks – four pairs – were selected.

3.3.4a Birmingham's Eastside City Park and Chicago's Millennium Park. Eastside City Park in Birmingham and Millennium Park in Chicago were both large and well-documented new park construction projects that sought to revitalise urban centres in an effort

to mark the millennium. They took centrally-located but dilapidated plots of land and sought to transform them into vibrant public spaces. As city parks, both spaces are perceived to be vital to the entire city, attracting users from across multiple neighbourhoods. These parks were determined to be city parks because in both instances the city government played a prominent role in shaping and designing the spaces. The parks were discussed in documents and by high level officials not just in terms of the areas of the city where they were located, but also in relation to the entire city. The Birmingham City Council called Eastside City park 'a green oasis in the heart of the city' (1998). In Chicago, then-Mayor Daley regularly thought of Millennium Park as 'Chicago's "front yard" ' (Gilfoyle, 2006: xii-xiii). The designation of a public space as a city park represented the intentions of the policymakers and planners, not necessarily the reality of the user population.

Expectations were high for Birmingham's Eastside City Park. In the 1990s, the Eastside 'became the centre of Birmingham City Council's regeneration attention' (Porter and Shaw, 2009: 140). In the early stages of planning the new area, Birmingham City Council described the area as having an 'essentially industrial character' where 'dereliction is evident in places … [and] the general environment is cramped and congested' (Birmingham City Council, 1996: 5). When City Council Leader Albert Bore officially launched the initiative, he laid out his vision:

> At the heart of Birmingham's continuing renaissance is the phoenix of Eastside … it will be home to a thriving community and it will be a bustling, vibrant location where families will also choose to spend their leisure time (Bore in 1999 quoted in Miles and Hall, 2003: 84).

When Eastside City Park opened, it was the first new park in the city since 1876 (ibid.). It was scheduled to be opened in 2002, but the 3.4 hectare park did not end up opening until 2012-2013. It was envisioned as 'both the focal point and the principal route in to the district' (ArchDaily, 2015). It was referenced in the city's Green Paper, *Making Birmingham An*

Inclusive City, with its call to 'develop more open spaces and community assets to bring people together' (Birmingham Social Inclusion Process, 2012: 33).

Millennium Park in Chicago was also built on what was considered underutilised land in the heart of downtown. It was built on a rail yard and parking lot that was considered 'a public eyesore' (Mikulenka, 2011: 1). Although ideas of covering the lot with a park can be dated back to 1977, the conception of Millennium Park is usually dated to 1997 when then Mayor Richard M. Daley went to see his dentist (Gilfoyle, 2006). From the dentist chair, he looked out over Michigan Avenue and saw hundreds of parked cars. It was then, as Daley regularly tells the story, that he decided to create the park (ibid.). Like Birmingham's Eastside City Park, this park was seen as something that would transform Chicago's downtown East Loop neighbourhood, something that would 'mature into a new symbol of Chicago' (Gilfoyle, 2006: xii-xiii). Although the park's opening was delayed, significantly over budget, and burdened by negative media, the nearly 10 hectare park has generally been considered a success. The park opened in 2004, instead of the originally planned 2000 opening. In the subsequent years, it did improve the desirability and economic vitality of the surrounding area, with the number of nearby housing units increasing and the prices rising (Hangley, 2006). 'The park has increased the desire of people to live in the East Loop' (Mikulenka, 2011: 18).

Both parks were lofty projects that sought to remake a neighbourhood and improve the entire city's image. Further, these parks are architecturally comparable. Both cities brought in renowned architects to design the parks. Both parks sought to create distinct areas within the public space as a whole. At Eastside City Park the goal was to create 'a sequence of places' with each place being 'full of people, movement and activities' (Birmingham City Council, 2011). At Millennium Park the spaces were thought of as 'rooms' with a designated nature area, public art area, performance area, and activity area (Reiss, 2014).

3.3.4b London's Thames Barrier Park and Washington's Yards Park. Thames Barrier Park in London and The Yards Park in Washington, DC are parks that combine elements of a city park and elements of a neighbourhood park. Both parks sit on prime riverfront land and are at the heart of plans to redevelop neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city. They were both intended to be hubs for the newly refurbished neighbourhoods as well as a way to attract residents from elsewhere in the city to visit the area. This dual goal was confirmed in interviews with park employees. 2E-THA worked at the café in Thames Barrier Park and pointed to the internationally-renowned architecture firm selected for the park, saying that the goal was to have a park with a high enough profile and which attracted users from far away (2015). Yards Park's development team recruited an ice cream parlour to locate next to the park, and the individual who helped open the parlour – 2E-YAR – said she thought the goal was to attract users from elsewhere in the city and turn them into local residents. 'The park-goers are potential renters and buyers' (2016).

Thames Barrier Park is a 14 hectare park in London's burgeoning Royal Docks area. It stands on a brownfield site that used to be a chemical factory (Villella et al., 2006). It is part of a regeneration effort to convert the area into a newly desirable residential neighbourhood.

> It was to be an area of multifunctional greenspace for the local population amongst new apartments and commercial developments. It was to improve surrounding land and house prices so that the area would be seen as a pleasant place to live, work and invest in, and it was to be an integral part of a projected wider tourist development plan (Villella et al., 2006: 154).

The park is situated in the London Borough of Newham which is a 'an ethnically diverse borough due to its proximity to the old docklands and has a number of migrant communities'. One of the main goals was to address 'ethnic exclusion' (Villella et al., 2006: 154, 160).

It is worth nothing that Thames Barrier Park is partially designed by the same architectural practice and landscape architect as Eastside City Park: the prominent Patel

Taylor and Allain Provost collaborated. While the design team was larger, the influence of Provost and Taylor is evident, particularly in the park's emphasis on linear patterns and its preening of shrubs into geometric shapes. They were awarded the contract in 1995, clearing the land started in 1997, and the park construction started in 1998. It was completed in 2000 (Villella et al., 2006). It is considered to be 'the first new park to be built in London for 50 years' (Marchant, 2012: no pagination).

The Yards Park in Washington, DC was also built on what was seen as an undesirable plot of land in an undesirable part of the city. The area was 'home to concrete plants, car repair shops, waste transfer stations … [and] was considered dirty and dangerous' explained Michael Stevens, who oversaw the Capitol Riverfront Business Improvement District (2011: 132). The park, which is 17 hectares and located on the banks of the Anacostia River, was at the centre of an effort to redevelop the area by bringing in new businesses and residents. However, unlike the Thames Barrier Park, which was focused on the ethnically diverse neighbourhood and drawing people from different backgrounds to the same place, Stevens' writings about the area do not mention the area's diversity and instead refers to people living in 'outdated public housing projects' (ibid.). The area started changing when the city first opened the Navy Yards Metro station in 1991 and The Yards Park opened in 2010.

Similar to Thames Barrier Park, Yards Park is located on the river with an overlook framing the riverfront vantage point and a walkway following the river's banks. Both parks have a prominent sunken feature at the centre of the design – in the London park, this is a heavily planted Green Dock. In the Washington, DC park, this is a waterfall and water basin.

3.3.4c London's Mile End Park and Washington's Canal Park. Mile End Park in London and Canal Park in Washington, DC were built on plots of land that were considered underutilised in neighbourhoods that needed an economic boost. Both are narrow parks that stitch together pieces of land segmented by streets. Further, both parks are well served by

public transportation, with bus stops and train stops within a block of their perimeters. However, Mile End Park is a much longer and larger park than Canal Park.

These two parks were built as neighbourhood parks for the local community. Mile End Park was not a city-wide initiative, instead Tower Hamlets spearheaded the effort to create the park in their borough. The Mile End Park Partnership (MEPP) was formed when the Tower Hamlets Council, the East London Partnership and the Environment Trust came together (CABE, 2011a). The intent was to create a park that knit together various communities in the East End and not a park that brought together all of London (ibid.). The creation of Canal Park was overseen by the same group as Yards Park: The Capitol Riverfront BID. Whereas Yards Park was intended to attract users from across the entire city, Capitol Riverfront's materials describe Canal Park as 'neighborhood-centric' (2013).

Before the construction of Mile End Park started, CABE described the space as a 'bleak, fragmented, under-used open space' (CABE, 2011a: MEP Description). Mile End Park is in the Tower Hamlets area of London which, at the beginning of the 1990s, was considered a deprived area (Tower Hamlets, 2011). The park planning process started in 1996-97, and the park was open and fully functional by 2003 (ibid.). Ultimately, the linear park is 32 hectares and it is credited with creating an inclusionary place for different communities to share and improving the surrounding area (CABE, 2005a).

> Some of the recent changes around Mile End Park would have been unthinkable a few years ago. Derelict plots and crumbling warehouses now boast high quality apartment complexes. Vacant shop units have been colonised by cafés, estate agents and solicitors' practices (CABE, 2005b: 50; also see Jenkins, 2000).

Canal Park in Washington, DC is just a few city blocks away from The Yards Park, in the same area that was considered 'dirty and dangerous' (Stevens, 2011). The 1.2 hectare park stands on a site that was formerly a school bus parking lot. Long before that, it was the Washington City Canal connecting the Anacostia River and the Potomac River. In the early 1900s, it was paved over. And when this three-acre plot went from parking lot to park in

2012, it was the first new urban park in Washington, D.C. in 20 years, alongside Yards Park (Hlavenka, 2012). Similar to Yards Park, the goal was never explicitly to prevent exclusion or facilitate cohesion across society. Stevens, director of the BID, suggests this park would be used by those already in public housing. In addition to a complex water management strategy 'it will also help create community for residents, especially those in the Arthur Capper Carrollsburge HOPE VI housing' (2011: 142).

3.3.4d London's Millennium Village Park and Chicago's Seward Park. The final two paired parks are Greenwich Millennium Village Park in London and Seward Park in Chicago. Both parks are in areas that are rapidly changing and being reconceptualised as mixed-income areas. These are neighbourhood parks focused narrowly on serving nearby residents. Greenwich Millennium Village (GMV) park is at the centre of an entirely new residential development and is presented as the residents' backyard. Seward Park is also in a primarily residential area abutting several large new residential developments. It is among the Chicago Park District's inventory of playgrounds and neighbourhood parks. Both parks had less formal and less documented design processes but have a staffed clubhouse located on the premises. Further, both parks are relatively small: the Greenwich Millennium Village Park is 5.6 hectares, two of which are the Ecology Park, and Chicago's Seward Park is almost 3 hectares.

Greenwich Millennium Village (GMV) is located in South East London and is part of the Greenwich Peninsula. It is bound by a turn in the Thames. The area was heavily industrialised in the 19th century and was home to Europe's largest gas works site, but – by the end of the 20th century – the peninsula was derelict and contaminated (Silverman, 2005). In 1997, the English Partnership purchased much of the land and held a competition for an

innovative, mixed-income development.[16] The GMV was the result. It is part of the Thames Gateway, which is 'one of Europe's largest regeneration projects' (GMV, 2014). GMV's construction started in 1999 and the first residents moved in two years later (Brindley, 2003). Construction is ongoing, but it is already considered prime city real estate, near historic Greenwich and Canary Wharf. The goal is to have 40% of the units be affordable housing (Silverman, 2005).

> GMV goes further … in exploring the implications of social mix, by proposing that a wide variety of tenure choices should be available within the same housing stock – what they call 'mixed integration'. This is intended to create a situation where the tenure (and therefore the cost) of a dwelling should be effectively 'invisible', with the idea of reducing the potential stigma of living in low-cost housing (Brindley, 2003: 56).

In addition to being socially mixed, the development has emphasised sustainability, ecology, and open spaces. This is seen as key to attracting higher-income families. 'The quality of the parks and open spaces at Greenwich Millennium Village, especially the Ecology Park, made a substantial and clear contribution to the positive views of families in the market-rate housing' (Silverman, 2005: 49). In turn, open spaces have become a place of social mixing: 'the internal courtyards, as well as the public open space and the cross-tenure residents' associations, are sites of informal mixing' (Silverman, 2005: 46). Heinz Richardson, director of the architectural firm Jestico + Whiles, which led the GMV development, said: 'Our aim was to encourage the development of a real community' (GMV, 2017: The Vision).

This research focuses on the park at the centre of this model urban village. Advertisements for the village boast of an 'inclusive society' with 'the unique benefit of its own parkland' (GMV, 2017). In the development's brochures, the GMV has adopted the taglines of 'rural London' and 'the countryside in your back yard' (ibid.) Further, most of the

[16] The English Partnership was the national regeneration agency. It was later renamed Homes and Communities Agency.

brochures feature the parks on the cover and in most internal images. The park has both open fields as well as a more natural ecology park with a boardwalk.

Seward Park is located in Chicago's Near North neighbourhood, which captures the extremes of Chicago. Part of the area is a highly sought-after urban area between Old Town, the Gold Coast, and Lincoln Park neighbourhoods. But the area formerly featured one of the most notorious public housing projects in the US: Cabrini-Green. It was 'sometimes called the worst in America' (Gottdiener and Hutchison, 2011: 328). Yet there were a couple of things that set this spot apart from other public housing developments:

> Cabrini-Green presents a unique opportunity to address this concern because the City of Chicago owns much of the land surrounding the development. Cabrini-Green is unique in a second way: It is located in a neighbourhood with a strong local real estate market. These two factors allowed the City of Chicago and CHA to join in ensuring that mixed-income housing is developed in a much larger planning area (Salama, 1999: 109).

Under the Near North Redevelopment Initiative (NNRI), a Plan for Transformation was developed. The vision was to create an urban village with a town centre and parks throughout the area (Bennett, 1998). While things did not proceed as planned due to litigation, by 2003 there were 11 mixed-income developments in the neighbourhood with the stated goal to have 30% public housing and an additional 20% workforce affordable housing (Salama, 1999; Miller, 2008).

At the heart of this area is Seward Park. The park has existed for a little over a century. Opened on 4 July 1908, Seward Park was the first park in Chicago's 'Playground Movement' which sought to address the problems plaguing the city (McArthur, 1975). 'Playgrounds, it was hoped, by preserving the health and morals of the children, solidifying the home, and inculcating a democratic ethos, would help ensure an orderly society' (McArthur, 1975: 375). And, historically, Seward Park 'became an immediate success' (McArthur, 1975: 383). Starting in 1998, the park was redesigned and expanded to include land that had previously been part of Cabrini-Green. The newly refurbished park includes a

lawn as well as a playground and sport fields. Like the GMV Park, there is a clubhouse as part of the park. Both the building and its surrounding space host events for local residents with an emphasis on children.

Unlike the other case studies in this research, Seward Park has a long history that predates the 1990s. It is the only park in the research that was redeveloped rather than created from a site that was not previously a public park. Most of the other case studies started as either a brownfield area, a parking lot, an industrial location, or an unused derelict space. There are three reasons Seward Park was considered a valuable case study and worth including in the research despite its different origin. First, the list of possible case studies was very limited. The number of neighbourhood parks in a mixed-income area in Chicago that were built or redesigned in the late 1990s or early 2000s was small. When the Chicago Park District was contacted in 2013, they recommended Seward Park as the best fit for the criteria. Even in the past decade, where there have been several prominent new urban parks – including Maggie Daley Park, The 606, Northerly Island, and The Chicago Riverwalk – the number of new neighbourhood parks have been limited. Second, the redesign in the 1990s was not simply a partial upgrade, renovation, or rehabilitation. It was a complete redevelopment. While the clubhouse at the centre of the park was not refurbished, the park's redevelopment entirely recreated the outdoor portions of the park. This meant that, similar to the other case study parks, Seward Park underwent a thorough redesign effort, presumably influenced by the architectural movements of the time. Third, the area surrounding the park also experienced substantial changes during the relevant time period. While the entire neighbourhood was not new construction, as was the case with Greenwich Millennium Village, the area had a high proportion of large new residential buildings (Miller, 2008). This helps reduce the likelihood that the park users already had established use patterns that predate the redevelopment of the park. As with all comparative social science fieldwork, the

case studies are never perfect comparisons. The texture of real places make variation inevitable. In this research, Seward Park's existence as a park before it was redeveloped did not disqualify it from serving as a case study, although findings must be interpreted in light of this history.

It is worth noting that many of the case study parks have won awards for their design, particularly the larger ones. To list just a few: Mile End Park received the Green Flag Award (CABE, 2011a); Millennium Park received the American Public Works Association Project of the Year Award as well as the American Society of Landscape Architect's General Design Award of Excellence in 2008 (Millennium Park Inc., 2013); Thames Barrier Park was awarded the Millennium Marque 2000, the RIBA Award 2001, and Times Travel Green Spaces Awards 2008, to name but a few (Landscape Institute, 2017).

3.4 Methodology Selection and Data Collection

This research explores the intersection of urban design and social exclusion and cohesion. While there has been substantial research into social exclusion and social cohesion and recent research into design and open spaces, the intersection of the two research areas is new. Since there has been little formal analysis, there is no single methodology to use as a template. Song and Knaap identify one of the challenges to studying this area: it 'is difficult to quantify and thus poorly suited for applying formal analytical tools' (Song and Knaap, 2003: 219). Ultimately, this research draws on three well-established methodological approaches from different disciplines: (1) comprehensive literature and archival assessment, (2) interviews, and (3) systematic observation.

3.4.1 Literature Assessment and Archival Review

This research examines reports, publications, guidelines, and policy documents relating to social exclusion, social cohesion, urban regeneration movements, and the park

case studies. This process is guided by the methodology for comprehensive archival review and literature assessments (Cooper, 1998). Such textual review, or 'research synthesis' as it is sometimes known, is an 'extremely important but often ignored area of research' (Oakley, 2011: vii). It is the 'art and science of collecting and pooling information from primary research' (ibid.). The aim is to 'exhaustively' understand 'a precisely defined subject' through a close examination of written documents (Herman et al., 2008: 52).

Both CABE and CNU retain publicly-accessible archives containing publications and research. The CABE database includes over 300 publications and over 400 case studies (The National Archives, 2013). The CNU database comprises publications, reports, and other documents from the various NU organisations, including more than 100 resources (CNU, 2013). There are also archives of reports from the Social Exclusion Unit, the Social Exclusion Task Force, the Urban Task Force, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, as well as the House of Commons on issues of social exclusion, social cohesion, and urban green space. Further, local libraries hold documents on the creation of the local parks. In these various places and databases, document titles and summaries were assessed to determine whether they were pertinent to the research topic. Additionally, this research reviewed major design documents published by other departments and organisations. The research focused on documents that discussed the overarching principles and social goals of the urban design movements as well as the detailed design suggestions. These documents were reviewed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the field and the case studies.

3.4.2 Interviews

Two types of interviews inform this research: elite interviews and user interviews. Elite interviews follow the approach pioneered by Dexter (1970). Arguing against a standardised approach to interviews, Dexter emphasised the importance of interviewing people with specialised knowledge or involvement in an issue and adapting the interview to

fit their expertise. This approach is particularly valuable for two reasons. First, it offers a level of professional intimacy that enables a unique and in-depth perspective into the research area (Clark, 1998). This allows the researcher to gather new information and understand detailed dynamics and decisions. A more standardised or generic approach to interviews may have overlooked valuable nuances, which are particularly important in new research areas (ibid.). Second, elite interviewing allows access to people and perspectives that would likely not have been captured by other research methods, such as focus groups and questionnaires (Harvey, 2010). Having access to these perspectives and insights is particularly valuable for understanding specific case studies.

In addition to detailing *who* should be interviewed, Dexter's elite interviewing approach stipulated *how* the interviews should be formatted. He recommended semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions that allow the expert to teach the interviewer about the situation. As Dexter explained, 'in elite interviewing … the investigator is willing, and often eager, to let the interviewee teach him what the problem, the question, [and] the situation is' (1970: 19).

In this research, two different categories of specialised interviewees emerge. First: academics, designers, architects, and landscape architects who are experts in UR, NU, social exclusion, social cohesion, and the social implications of the built environment. The intention was for these interviews to elucidate the different priorities that guide the design process: were there conscious design choices aimed at preventing social exclusion and facilitating social cohesion? Which design elements were employed? How were these design elements selected? What was the dynamic between different policy stakeholders who participated in setting priorities? The goal was to contact a wide array of individuals in order to develop a comprehensive understanding. The interviewees were identified through the literature as experts on the topic, authors of governmental documents, or individuals in relevant

department directories. In some instances, interviewees suggested other individuals knowledgeable on the topic.

The second category includes city planners, architects, landscape architects, site managers, park employees, and other individuals who were specifically involved with one of the eight case study parks. They provided insight into the development of these spaces, the goals and priorities, the design decisions, the park usage, as well as the perceived effect of the parks on social exclusion and social cohesion. These individuals were largely identified through the official park websites, architectural practices, landscape firms, and park visits.

Interviewees were contacted, informed about the research topic, and asked about their willingness to participate. Once permission was given, interviews were conducted over the phone or in person. The interviews were semi-structured and tailored to fit the specific interviewee. All interviewees were granted anonymity. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded. The records were stored securely, consistent with the University of Oxford's policies on data storage.

In addition to elite interviews, this research undertook user interviews with park goers. These were conducted to complement the park's detailed descriptive mapping and systematic social observation, which are described in detail below. This is part of the research design because 'the key disadvantage of observational methods in neighbourhood research, of course, is that they cannot capture the theoretical constructions that require resident perspectives' (Raudenbush and Sampson, 1999: 11). Observation research, in which spaces and users are systematically observed, is not well suited to determining individuals' perceptions of exclusion or cohesion. And, if observation is the sole means of gathering information, researchers risk misinterpreting the data. Thus, user interviews were conducted.

When conducting these interviews, every third person to pass a designated point was asked to participate in a brief interview. The specific location where user interviews were

conducted was the same location where systematic social observations were collected. In each park, the interviewer stood at the busiest point of entry, which was selected in consultation with park designers or park employees. No single point to conduct interviews is perfect but the goal of selecting the busiest point was to capture as large and diverse a user base as possible. For example, in London's Thames Barrier Park, if the interviewer stood nearest the playground entry instead of near the main entry by the main road, she may have interviewed only a small subsection of the user population who were using the park with young children. This follows the logic laid out by Mastrofski et al. (2011) and Gehl and Svarre (2013), where they recommend focusing on the epicentre of activity. After the research was explained and verbal consent was given, the interviewees were asked a few basic questions, including but not limited to:

- What brought you to the park?
- What do you like and dislike about the space?
- What would you want to change?
- Have you been before? Do you plan to return?
- What parts of the park have you used most? Why?
- With whom did you interact on this visit?
- What was the nature of the interaction?
- What other spaces do you frequent?
- Where do you come into contact with a similar range of people?

In addition, basic information about the interviewee was gathered, including sex, age, race, and who they were with in the park.

These interviews generally lasted a few minutes and were semi-structured. However, some interviews turned into full conversations. These interviews were either recorded and transcribed or contemporaneous notes were taken; they were then coded in order to detect patterns. The goal of these interviews was to understand the user's experience, especially in light of data gathered about park features and park usage.

3.4.3 Systematic Social Observation

In addition to archival research and qualitative interviews, this research employs systematic social observation, sometimes referred to as SSO. This follows the logic that 'direct observation is fundamental to the advancement of science' (Raudenbush and Sampson, 1999: 10). SSO is a field method where a researcher or team of researchers observe the subject in its naturally occurring environment (Mastrofski et al., 1998). The researchers situate themselves in a location where they can unobtrusively observe the behaviour and systematically record the information. This methodology is particularly valuable because the researchers are independent of the subject being observed and 'do not rely on others to describe or interrupt events' (Mastrofski et al., 1998: vii).

SSO has been used in various different fields, including sociology, education, early childhood psychology, criminology, retail environments, health delivery, and anthropology. In the 1960s, when Jane Jacobs and others criticised urban planning for neglecting the lived experience of cities, they recommended that planners become better observers. As Jacobs wrote: 'please look closely at real cities. While you are looking, you might as well also listen, linger and think about what you see' (1961: xxiv).

While SSO has been around for a long time, it is not used particularly often, partly because it is time-consuming (Mastrofski et al., 2011). 'Most published research on neighbourhoods relies on data collected by administrative agencies for other purposes' (Raudenbush and Sampson, 1999: 2). However, there are instances of observational studies in parks (for example Gobster, 1998; 1992; Place, 2000). Its use is perhaps most famously linked to the early Chicago school of urban sociology (Park and Burgess, 1921; Whyte, 1988).

> One of the hallmarks of the Chicago school was its concern with observing public places – not just abstract variables, but the sights, sounds, and feel of the streets …. [It] advocated systematic social observation as a key measurement strategy for natural social phenomena (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999: 606).

A man named Albert Reiss Jr. championed efforts to increase the usage of SSO by standardising the methodology (1971). He emphasised the importance of having 'quantifiable, objective, and replicable measures' (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999: 11). According to Reiss, *systematic* meant that observations had to follow explicit rules such that they could be replicated. He also felt that the observer – a person or technology – needed to be independent of the situation being observed. Gehl and Svarre expound this idea, suggesting that the observer should be 'neutral' and almost 'an invisible non-participant who takes in the big picture without taking part in the event' (2013: 5). The observer should watch natural social phenomena or 'events and their consequences … [that] can be observed more or less as they occur' (Reiss, 1971: 4).

However, there are disadvantages. In addition to being time-consuming and benefiting from complementary user interviews, there can be errors in classification.

> There is a potential for error in classifying individuals on social and demographic variables. There may also be problems in interpreting observed behaviour and making judgements about what a trail user might actually be doing. These problems can be minimized with training and by developing clear operational definitions for recording behaviour (Gobster, 1992: 215).

This research sought to address this by establishing clear guidelines for the relevant variables. Additionally, it is helpful that the research was not solely focused on demographics. As discussed in Chapter 2, experience and perception are important elements of exclusion and cohesion. Thus, there is still something to be gained from knowing what a user's age, race, sex, or other demographic characteristic appears to be – and how it is observed by others – even if it is not entirely accurate.

Mastrofski et al. write: 'the power of SSO derives from its direct connection to the behaviors of empirical interest' (2011: 226). However, this direct connection requires the appropriate instruments. Constructing the instruments required three steps.

First, the appropriate unit of analysis had to be determined. Traditionally, there are three approaches: time, behaviour, and event (McCall, 1984). When time is the unit of analysis, the observer documents everything that happens in a defined amount of time. For example, the researcher may record all of a police officer's actions for 15 minutes (Frank et al., 1997).

When a behaviour or act is the unit of analysis, the researcher is 'tracking the sequencing of different behaviors over time' (Mastrofski et al., 2011: 229). For example, a researcher may systematically observe the interaction between a police officer and a citizen, recording and classifying each person's actions (Sykes and Whitney, 1969).

Finally, the third approach is to study a social event as the unit of analysis. Examples include a physician meeting or a regularly scheduled event at a prison. In an ideal situation, there is a discrete beginning and end to the encounter. For example, Skogan used public meetings between the police officers and individuals from the neighbourhood as the unit of analysis (2006).

The first two options – time and behaviours – are the approaches best suited to this research. Time is relevant because the research seeks to get a broad sense of who is in the park in a given time period. Social interactions are studied because they are important for building social cohesion. In theory, the third approach could have been used. An event could be defined as an encounter or an interaction. However, research suggests tiny interactions can make a big difference. For example, as mentioned earlier, 'simple eye contact is sufficient to convey inclusion' (Wesselmann et al., 2012: 1). This would be hard to capture in a live SSO.

However, this research does add to the classic SSO approach. In addition to focusing on social behaviour, this research systematically observes the immediate physical environment. This dual social-physical approach is informed by criminology scholarship (for example see Weisburd et al., 2006). The field has established a standard list of observable

characteristics, including both social behaviours and physical conditions, to gauge the degree of disorder in a neighbourhood. For example, a criminology SSO may entail recording verbal harassment and public intoxication as well as graffiti, broken windows, and abandoned cars. Such evidence of disorder has then been linked to crime rates and safety statistics (Skogan, 2012; Kelling and Wilson, 1982). While the same dual approach was used here, this research did not aim to measure disorder in public spaces. Disorder has been shown to undermine the stability of a community (Skogan, 2012); however, some researchers have persuasively argued that the level of disorder and the level of social cohesion are not necessarily linked (for example see de Leon et al., 2009; Caspi et al., 2013). Instead, this SSO considers physical features identified in the urban design literature.

For this research, the unit of analysis is all individual behaviours and interaction behaviours observed within a defined amount of time and with careful attention paid to characteristics of the proximate physical environment.

The sampling frame – the whole population from which the sample is drawn – in this research is the entirety of each park that was selected in the case study selection process. Any part of the parks and any of the park users could hypothetically be studied. However, given that some of these spaces are large and cannot be systematically observed by one researcher, there needs to be a process for selecting both the specific physical space and the users to observe.

'When the object of study is the geographic entity itself, an independent sampling plan is required' (Mastrofski et al., 2011: 229). By saying this Mastrofski et al. are arguing that the classic random selection approach is often not suited to geographic areas. Instead, researchers have developed other techniques. One approach to studying a geographic area is to drive through streets at slow speeds, videotaping whatever is visible from a vehicle (Taylor et al., 1985; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999). Recently, some researchers have even

experimented with using Google's Street View function to perform SSO (for example see Kronkvist, 2013). This enables researchers to systematically observe large swathes of the city. However, this neglects the areas that are not car-accessible. Plus, it is often too resource-intensive to be feasible.

Another approach is for the researcher to conduct observations at the 'epicentre' or the 'best location to observe the most activity' (Mastrofski et al., 2011: 230; Gehl and Svarre, 2013). This approach makes sense for this research because the goal is to observe sites that have the potential to be centres of community activity. Information from elite interviews with architects and designers as well as information from planning documents was used to identify the optimal observation site within each park. It was often the entrance and park space abutting the busiest street.

The next question is how to select the users to observe. Here the research follows the two traditional SSO approaches used when a person is the subject of interest: counting and systematic selection. Counting entails observing and recording basic characteristics of all the users in a designated area (Gehl and Svarre, 2013). Selection involves picking a user to observe in a 'systematically arbitrary' manner. When observing individual users, the third user or group of users to pass the observer was observed and tracked. If this happens to be a group or a pair of people, the observer tracks the person who passes closest to the researcher, following the approach outlined by Gehl and Svarre (2013). The researcher has pre-selected a time to conduct the observation and waited until the third user passed the point of entry. This helps ensure the researcher does not simply select a user who appears approachable or interesting to observe.

Another question that arises for both the physical observation and the social observation is the question of when to observe. Hypothetically these spaces could be observed at any time of day and any time of the year. This SSO was conducted in the spring

and summer time, when the climates in London and Birmingham are, traditionally, most similar to Washington, DC and Chicago. It was also conducted during the daytime, since some of the spaces are technically not open at night. Times were selected systematically between morning (8am-11am), midday (11am-2pm), afternoon (2pm-5pm), and evening (5pm to 8pm) and between weekdays and weekends – but not holidays. The observation dates were selected in advance, regardless of weather. The plan was to observe each site at least a dozen times in an effort to reduce the impact of an outlier.

Third, a document or series of documents – called the 'instrument' – was developed to record all the observations in the SSO. The goal was that it (1) focused the observer's attention to what the research was trying to assess and (2) provided enough structure and guidance so that there was consistency between observations and observation sites.

The document can take the form of 'a tally sheet or log for recording the frequency at which phenomena were observed … or the timing and duration of events' (Mastrofski et al., 2011: 231). Another alternative is to have a survey, filled out by the observer, about observed behaviours. This can include both close-ended and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions often elaborate on what has been tallied and coded, usually explaining unusual events.

Several researchers have emphasised the importance of not making the instrument and its accompanying coding system too complex; according to Gehl and Svarre, 'precisely because the interaction between life and space is so complex and difficult to pin down, it can be useful to ask basic questions' (2013: 11). Further, McCall argues that the more complex the categorising and coding, the more risk there is for introducing errors (1984: 272).

The instruments used in this research aimed to capture the environment as well as the population and the nature of social interactions. When observing individuals, Gehl and

Svarre's suggested 'activities in public space can be divided fundamentally into those that are transitory and those that are stationary' (2013: 84). The result was a four-step approach:

(1) **Detailed Descriptive Mapping** – This wass done once per site at the beginning of the SSO. The observer walked through the entire space – not just the epicentre – with a site plan carefully noting physical features. This entailed both close-ended questions about what design and landscape features were present as well as open-ended descriptions of the space. It is focused on features that have been emphasised in the literature and in elite interviews. Ultimately, information from this document was combined with information on where people linger and interact. This provided helpful information about which physical features may catalyse social interaction.

(2) **Mobile Mapping** – In this 'behavioural mapping' portion of the SSO, the observer was positioned on a path at the epicentre of activity and recorded everyone who passed by during a 10-minute period. This was performed at least a dozen times at each site. The instrument was a tally system of close-ended queries aimed at capturing the ambient environment, the activity density in the space, as well as the behaviour of mobile users, such as whether the user was part of a group, their primary and secondary activities, and the weather conditions. Because this instrument only documented individuals who pass the observer, it effectively captured the mobile population.

(3) **Stationary Mapping** – This second 'behavioural mapping' instrument was designed to capture the stationary population. At the conclusion of each 'Mobile Mapping' observation, the observer reviewed the space and documented the whereabouts and behaviours of the stationary population, revealing where people congregated and what they were doing. This data, also conducted at least a dozen

times, used the same instrument or set of variables as used in the Mobile Mapping.

(4) **Case Tracking** – Here the observer tracked a single user, following them visually or at a distance as they moved through the park. This provided a sense of movement in the space and information on how they space was used and for how long. The observer completed an instrument of both closed-ended and open-ended questions detailing the individual's activities and interactions as well as where they happen.

The observer also described each park and activities within it more generally; these constitute the 'research notes.'

This four-step approach is closely modelled on Gehl's studies of public life (Gehl and Svarre, 2013). Further, the matrices used in the instruments to record user behaviours draw heavily on previous observational studies of parks, particularly Gobster's study of Warren Park on Chicago's Far North Side (1993; 1998). In addition to designing the instruments, there are two other important considerations: how the observation is recorded and the ethics of the observation itself.

First, the method for completing the SSO instrument is significant. There are a few common approaches. One approach, briefly referenced above, is to video record the observations, which gives 'a permanent visual record [which makes the data] amenable to later coding and reinterpretation based on emergent insights' (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999: 605). This method raises practical considerations. Researchers suggest that video recording may increase the likelihood of being denied access to a space. There are also behavioural considerations, as researchers wonder how the presence of a video camera may alter people's conduct (Mastrofski et al., 2011). Further, some find that video recording does not capture the same level of detail as a live observer would. 'Video recordings cannot

exactly replicate what all of the available senses would communicate to an observer who was there "in the moment" ' (Mastrofski et al., 2011: 233).

Another approach is the so-called contemporaneous recording approach, where the observer notes their observations while present in the field. The main concern here is that the subjects notice they are being observed and alter their behaviour (Mastrofski et al., 2011). This is of particular concern in places where note taking would be out of place, such as in a nightclub (Macintyre and Homel, 1997). This concern led to another approach: completing the instrument immediately following the observation. This is common, although it does raise concerns about recall error or other biases, such as later events influencing how an earlier event is categorised (Mastrofski et al., 2011).

This research largely employed the second approach of contemporaneous recording, in an effort to minimise error and because writing in a notebook would not be likely to be seen as a suspect activity in parks. Where necessary, further elaboration was added immediately following the observation, especially in the 'Case Tracking' instrument.

Second, it is necessary to think through the ethical considerations. SSO is a case where researchers rely on 'implied consent'. While researchers should fully inform participants and obtain consent, in some instances consent is not possible or not required. That is the case here, because SSO involves observing people going about their normal routines in public spaces. This work fulfils CUREC's three primary criteria for implied consent: (1) 'researchers have no direct contact with participants', (2) 'no participant personal details are obtained', and (3) 'the topic of research is low risk and not seeking out sensitive data'.[17]

[17] CUREC approval was secured for this research; documentation is included in Appendix C.

3.5 Conclusion

This research combines comparative and case study methods with systematic social observation to generate data about how urban design and social policy can shape social interaction – and thus social exclusion and cohesion – in public spaces. The combinations of methods aim to follow the policy process from a philosophical and conceptual stage to the creation of public space to the use of those places. This chapter sought to explain and justify the methodology such that the research can be replicated and built upon. This is perhaps most important for the systematic social observation which provides detailed observations about specific places to learn about the complex processes of social interactions. The results will not generate conclusions about general patterns of interactions across many spaces. However, the theories that emerge from these detailed observations have the potential to inform what data to collect for analysis in large-N studies. The following chapters present the data collected and the associated analysis.

Chapter 4: The Philosophy Driving Urban Policy

On a chilly December Monday in 1997, Tony Blair left 10 Downing Street and made his way to a 'rundown' area in the borough of Lambeth, in south London (Hoge, 1997). Standing in one of London's poorest neighbourhoods, at a school tucked away on a residential street, Blair officially announced the creation of the Social Exclusion Unit:

> We are here today in the Stockwell Park School in Lambeth to launch one of the most important new initiatives of this administration. It is an experiment in policy-making that is vital to the country's future (Blair, 1997: no pagination).

He goes on to say this 'experiment' is about having 'Britain re-built as one nation'. The nation had splintered, he explained, with some families experiencing 'a third generation of unemployment' and living 'on crime-ridden housing estates [where they] are afraid to go out'. Other families, not depicted in his speech, were living in safety and comfort. 'We make it, once again, our national purpose to tackle social division and inequality' (ibid.).

Blair envisioned a massive 're-building' initiative that would stand 'at the heart of all our work' and touch every realm of government. He argued that 'getting government to act more coherently is the key' and that 'every department has a role to play, every business, charity, school, and every community needs to help' (ibid.).

The vision laid out that December day was a sweeping one, touching all of society and every aspect of government. However, the reality proved more complex. This chapter focuses on whether and how the initiative affected one realm of government: urban planning. How did Blair's efforts to prevent and combat social exclusion and promote cohesion in the UK influence the social doctrine underpinning urban policy?

The important outcome here – social doctrine – is an example of 'second-order design'. As R. Varkki George explains, second-order design is not directly responsible for shaping the look and feel of a building or space; instead, it shapes 'the decision environment

within which others make decisions to add to or alter the built environment' (1997: 143). This decision environment is made up of principles, politics, and philosophies, which are considered here.

Based on a close analysis of policy documents, academic texts, and elite interviews, this chapter finds that an emphasis on social exclusion and cohesion from politicians and policymakers had a significant influence on the principles guiding urban policy in the UK. In particular, it finds that the social doctrine for urban policy in the UK reflected the core tenets of the social exclusion and cohesion concepts. In contrast, the social doctrine in the US, otherwise similar, did not incorporate the principles associated with preventing social exclusion or creating cohesion. This demonstrates how a policy idea – social exclusion and cohesion – can influence seemingly disparate policy initiatives associated with urban design. However, the evidence shows that the influence is not necessarily reciprocal: social exclusion initiatives did not incorporate the potential contributions of urban design.

In the UK and the US, there were parallel urban policy movements known as Urban Renaissance (UR) in the UK and New Urbanism (NU) in the US. Both movements considered their social doctrines pivotal to their identities. These doctrines set the tone for the urban policies and design guidelines they supported. Although not all scholars of these movements have agreed on a standard set of social principles for urban policy, this chapter identifies and examines three relevant principles: (1) the primacy of social well-being, (2) the mending of a fragmented society, and (3) the goal of creating community.[18] Researchers debate whether the UR and NU implemented their principles differently, but there is a consensus that the principles are, largely, shared (Hall, 2000; Porter and Shaw, 2009; Punter, 2010; Katz, 1994).

[18] Environmental sustainability is occasionally included as an additional core principle in the social doctrine. Others identify it as a separate environmental doctrine. This research only explores the role of the environmental philosophy as it related to the other core tenants of the social doctrine.

The focus of this analysis is on where UK and US social doctrines diverged on these three principles. The analysis found differences that were subtle but important. For example, the UR and NU used the same terms with different meanings. The differences in meaning support the hypothesis that the doctrine in the UK reflected the national attention paid to social exclusion and cohesion whereas the doctrine in the US reflected its own context and did not incorporate elements of the exclusion or cohesion discourse.

Two types of differences are significant. First, there are differences between urban doctrines in the UK and the US. Policy documents show an association between the social exclusion and cohesion discourse and urban policy. Second, the analysis reveals differences in how groups within the UK understood the role of urban policy in addressing social exclusion. In particular, government documents from urban planning departments emphasised their ability to address social exclusion and create cohesion; however, government documents from departments focused on social exclusion did not identify a role for urban design.

4.1 Three Sources of Evidence

Three sources of evidence guide the analysis in this chapter: (1) policy documents and transcripts of political speeches and debates from the UK and the US, (2) non-governmental documents in both countries that outline the urban doctrine, and (3) elite interviews with policymakers and urban planners.

There are three reasons why it is important to incorporate multiple methodologies in answering this question. First, where government documents might be vague or broad, experts and non-governmental documents can clarify the wide-ranging policies and programmes created by the urban movements. Scholars acknowledge ‘a bewildering array of overlapping urban policy initiatives; frequent changes in programmes, departmental names

and responsibility; and national and local schemes funded by a multiplicity of agencies' (Punter, 2010: 3-4). In the wake of both social exclusion and cohesion initiatives, as well as the UR and NU movements, there was a complex and disorderly trail of policy documents. Thus, elite interviews and academic work by the social policy scholars and leaders of the urban movements help identify the important principles undergirding the policy documents.

Second, many UR and NU reports describe design guidelines. The reports include maps detailing the optimal distance from a city's centre to its edge, as well as charts depicting the ideal height of the kerb. Such details can be found in governmental and non-governmental reports. While 'urban policy is unselfconsciously "practical" ' (Cochrane, 2004: 224), the reports have been criticised for being overly detailed. In the introduction to *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, Rogers predicted such criticism and sought to address it, writing 'the complexity of the report and its recommendations reflect the complexity of the urban condition' (1999: 8). This disclaimer was followed by hundreds of pages containing detailed suggestions. Similarly, NU justified its bulky best practices guide by saying, 'New Urbanism calls for a different approach to just about every aspect of land planning and real estate' (CNU, 2001: ix). Given the magnitude of the guidelines, it is important to consider the full range of documents and consult a range of experts to clarify the doctrines that have grounded the movements.

Third, while some UR and NU principles are reflected in government policy, others exist only in the movements' documents. UR and NU originated as urban planning movements that were later adopted by policymakers. Within each movement there is a debate about whether to focus on design principles or engage in the world of policy decision-making. Some argue that design has the potential to 'become an integral component of public policy' while others worry that policy work may hurt the movement's ability to 'remain a socially progressive' force (Punter, 2010: xv). Katz, a co-founder of New Urbanism,

acknowledged this tension at a conference of The New Urbanist, saying ‘over the years we’ve veered between design and policy’ (2011: 4:20). Katz goes on to note that some designers decided to opt out of the policy process. The methodology of this thesis endeavours to include their perspective on the core principles by considering academic work and conducting elite interviews.

The academic literature decries the myriad government agencies tasked with urban design and their ever-changing missions. Reports expound on the importance of sidewalks and front porches, communal spaces and trees. Practitioners debate how deeply to wade into the policy fray. Despite these controversies and caveats, there are still three core social principles that steer the urban movements and seek to shape ‘our collective urban experience’ (UTF, 1999: 50). With these three sources of information and documentation, this chapter explores those principles in the UK and the US, examining where they align and where they diverge.

4.2 Historical Narratives as a Lens for Self-Conception

This analysis begins with the historical narratives put forward by the UR and NU. Seminal texts for both movements offer a curated version of their history. This section takes a close look at which historical moments the movements highlight and how they are presented. This brief history illuminates how the movements view themselves and which core principles they hold dear. Importantly, the similarities and differences in the historical narratives of UR and NU align with the patterns found in policy documents and other texts.

Both urban policy movements highlight three historical moments: industrialisation, the Victorian Era, and the modernist period. The UR and NU leaders knit these moments together as part of a historical arc that ends with a rallying cry for their respective urban

regeneration scheme. The purpose of these histories is to explain the current position of each movement.

In the UK, *Towards an Urban Renaissance* opens with the UR's account of history. It starts with a short homage to ancient cities – classical Rome and renaissance Florence – and quickly presents an argument that the Industrial Revolution marked the downfall of English cities. This leads to the Victorian Period, which was defined by harsh living conditions and the emergence of derelict urban areas. The hardship of the Victorian Period is attributed to industrialisation. While there were efforts to address these challenges – including Le Corbusier's modernist attempts 'to provide us with an escape from the city' – the efforts ultimately failed (UTF, 1999: 26). The Urban Renaissance is presented as the solution to the persistent problems of the Victorian Period, suggesting that 'the beginning of the 21st century is a moment of change' (Rogers, 1999: 8). Through urban design, UR sought to create a lasting national community.

The NU narrative highlights similar historical moments but tells a slightly different story. It glorifies America's oldest urban centres – Boston's historic downtown with its cobblestone streets and Philadelphia's city centre with its walkability. These old cities serve as 'inspiration' for a new movement (Bressi, 1994: xxv). Then, like the UR, NU's narrative blames the Industrial Revolution for ruining the glory of these cities. However, where the UR emphasised the First Industrial Revolution of coal and factories, NU stresses the Second Industrial Revolution, characterised by the automobile and Fordist production (Mokyr, 1990). NU laments that cars have emptied out city centres and fuelled the growth of suburbs. According to NU, suburbs grew as people chased a 'Victorian-era mythology' of a home 'insulating women and children from the industrial city's evils' (Bressi, 1994: xxvi). Far from the mythology these families sought, NU argues that suburbs drove segregation, isolation, and social breakdown in communities (Bressi, 1994).

Just as with the UR, NU's historical narrative then examines modernist attempts to address the challenges of the suburbs. Both movements single out Le Corbusier as a key example of dividing cities into functional areas with efficient connections between them (ibid.). Le Corbusier's plans failed, and NU arrived at its own solution: 'the deceptively simple responses the New Urbanists propose to these problems are based on one, equally simple principle: community planning and design' (Bressi, 1994: xxx).

These two historical narratives set a backdrop for the three core principles that both social movements espouse today. While the main events in each history are similar, key differences also emerge. Most notably, they both place an emphasis on social well-being. However, the UR and NU focus on different challenges – slums versus suburbs – and they have different visions of the ideal community.

4.3 Core Principle #1: The Primacy of Social Well-Being

Soon after that December day in 1997, when Blair announced the creation of the Social Exclusion Unit, the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, asked Sir Richard Rogers to lead an Urban Task Force. It was 1998, and Rogers was a prominent architect. He was known as a functionalist designer and was serving as a Labour peer in the House of Lords. Rogers assembled a team tasked with 'establishing a new vision for urban regeneration founded on the principles of design excellence, social well-being and environmental responsibility' (UTF, 1999: 1). 'Social well-being' quickly became a key principle guiding the UR.

A few years earlier, across the Atlantic, the Clinton Administration was busy preparing its first National Urban Policy Report. When, in the summer of 1996, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Henry Cisneros, presented the final report to the president, he wrote in an attached letter: 'The polarisation of urban communities – isolating the poor from the well-off, the unemployed from those who work, and minorities from

whites—frays the fabric of our civic culture' (HUD, 1996: no pagination). A draft of the report elaborates: 'If these problems continue to go unaddressed, America's future could be severely compromised, both economically and socially' (HUD, 1995: 2). While this report focused heavily on economic prosperity, it consistently coupled economic well-being with social well-being, as it sought to 'maximize the economic and social potential of our great metropolitan regions' (HUD, 1995: 6).

In the US, the emphasis on social well-being is considerably more explicit in NU. After enumerating its architectural and environmental principles, the Center for New Urbanism declares: 'Taken together these add up to a high quality of life well worth living, and create places that enrich, uplift, and inspire the human spirit' (2016: Principles).

The UR and NU were largely aligned in their emphasis on social well-being. They both posit a new way to balance the demand for overall economic growth with the welfare of the population. Documents suggest that both the UR and NU reject an approach privileging economic growth over concerns about society-wide well-being.

Both movements suggest that the Industrial Revolution was so focused on economic profit that its negative social and design consequences were ignored. In the UK, Rogers wrote in his introduction to *Towards an Urban Renaissance*:

> Since the industrial revolution we have lost ownership of our towns and cities, allowing them to become spoilt by poor design, economic dispersal and social polarisation (Rogers, 1999: 8).

The report itself opened with a similar declaration:

> The industrial city, with its pollution, its slums and its short term vision, destroyed our confidence in the ability of the city to provide a framework for humane civic life (UTF, 1999: 26).

In the US, NU adopted a similar tone. The opening lines of the *Charter of the New Urbanism* lay out the impact of the Second Industrial Revolution, claiming cars lead to a litany of problems:

> Disinvestment in central cities, the spread of placeless sprawl, increasing separation by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural lands and wilderness, and the erosion of society's built heritage (2000a: Introduction).

Peter Katz, a co-founder of NU, started his book with the same observation:

> The advent of the automobile and a host of other factors provided an opportunity to disperse – to go beyond the limits of one's own walking range or that of a streetcar line…. The costs of suburban sprawl are all around us – they're visible in the creeping deterioration of once proud neighborhoods, the increasing alienation of large segments of society, a constantly rising crime rate and widespread environmental degradation (Katz, 1994: ix).

Pollution and environmental degradation. Economic dispersal and placeless sprawl. Social polarisation and separation by race and income. The UR and NU identify many of the same challenges that were born of industrialisation and undermine social well-being. According to historical narratives of both the UR and NU, these realities were the result of a 'decision environment' that overemphasised economic factors. In the industrial city, low wages, a bad labour environment, and poor urban conditions corresponded with consumerism that values the 'industrial accumulation' of things (Grant, 2006: 5).

Yet, both urban policy movements have been careful not to position themselves entirely against economic expansion and technological advancements. Instead, they have favoured economic policies that also contribute to social well-being.

> New Urbanists acknowledge that many realities of modern life must be dealt with: automobiles and "big-box" stores, to mention just a few. Far from suggesting we turn our backs on the benefits of modern living, the return to community that they advocate may, in fact, be *empowered* by new technology (Katz, 1994: x; emphasis original).

For example, Katz suggests telecommuting technology could enable people to spend less time in their cars and more time in public spaces, amongst their community.

Both movements suggest the design of the urban environment could help strike the right balance between economic needs and social well-being. This includes creating public spaces that facilitate social interactions and social well-being.

The UR emphasises that 'the city is, first and foremost, a meeting place for people' and that focus was lost in the Industrial Revolution (UTF, 1999: 26). Similarly, NU laments how cars undermined these meeting spaces by 'separating us from friends and relatives and breaking down the bonds of community that had served our nation so well in earlier times' (Katz, 1994: ix). Both NU and UR suggest public spaces can help rekindle what was lost. This is evident in a House of Commons report on country parks, which cites Don Ritson:

> Economists and politicians are increasingly puzzled by the fact that increased material wealth no longer automatically produces an increased sense of well-being.... In the search for new values, based less on material wealth and more on the quality of personal and social relationships and community, together with a restored relationship to the natural world, then the urban park could once again come into its own as a site for social renewal (1999: Para. 55).

Towards an Urban Renaissance reflects a similar sentiment, highlighting open spaces as a key element that made pre-industrial towns vibrant.

> Before the industrial revolution we created urban areas of great beauty and lasting quality. Today, the cities and towns of Bath, Edinburgh, Harrogate and Oxford provide models of urban excellence with elegant buildings surrounded by generous open spaces (UTF, 1999: 50).

The NU literature also described urban public space as important. Bressi writes that 'design must assert the importance of public over private values' (1994: xxx). The NU Charter suggests that cities need defined hubs of activity. Public spaces are uniquely important in this strategy:

> Public gathering places require important sites to reinforce community identity and the culture of democracy (CNU, 2000a: The Block).

This is also reflected in NU's Best Practices Guide:

> Simply put, new urbanists place a major emphasis on designing and building a quality public realm (CNU, 2001: 3-4).

While improving the physical environment is a central part of both UR and NU, it is important to note that the movements distance themselves from environmental determinism, which argues that the physical environment can singlehandedly transform behaviour (Grant,

2006). The Chief Executive of the British Urban Regeneration Association explained that 'merely dealing with the built environment, and not the people involved, would simply be rearranging the deckchairs on the *Titanic'* (Fitzpatrick, 2000: xii). The Charter of the New Urbanism states: 'we recognize that physical solutions by themselves will not solve social and economic problems' (CNU, 2000a: Introduction). Bressi, an early New Urbanist, reiterates this sentiment, writing, 'the types of communities the New Urbanists envision are unlikely to emerge from design initiatives alone' (1994: xliii).

Taken together, the UR and NU approach social well-being in parallel ways. Both movements argue that the desire for growth must be secondary to concerns of social welfare. Moreover, they assert that public spaces could help create some of the social well-being that was lost in the Industrial Revolution. However, both movements acknowledge that changing the physical environment is not enough to reshape social relations. Despite these similarities, differences emerge in how UR and NU plan to mend a fragmented society and create a community.

4.4 Core Principle #2: Mending a Fragmented Society

A primary difference between the UR and NU emerges when they describe how society has fragmented, and who has been isolated or left behind as a result. In the UK, the UR discourse emphasises the plight of people in poverty and the urban areas in which they live. In the US, NU zeroes in on the struggles of the middle class and the decline in their well-being. Both movements draw on social history – and their historical narratives – to make their claims.

In the UR historical primer, the Victorian Era is presented as a time of great harshness and inequality. *Towards an Urban Renaissance* even includes a rare historical image of hunched people carrying heavy loads on an urban street. It is captioned: 'The realities of

Victorian urban life' (UTF, 1999: 26). Prominent proponents of the UR, including Peter Hall and Peter Roberts,[19] have argued that 'urban regeneration had its origins' in looking at 'the Victorian slum "city of dreadful night" [which] was the product of a society that paid insufficient attention to the living conditions of the majority of urban residents' (Roberts, 2008: 11-12 citing Hall, 1988: 14).

In NU's references to the Victorian Era, concerns about poverty or destitution are replaced by concerns about the growing isolation of the middle class. Instead of dealing with the historical period of Victorian England, NU texts allude to American's romanticised vision of England's Victorian Era. The historical introduction to one of the early NU texts, *The New Urbanism*, describes it like this:

> The most powerful icon of the middle class, the single-family detached house surrounded by ample yards, has roots in Victorian-era mythology: The house was seen as a cradle, nurturing (and cultivating) the emerging independent nuclear family, and as a bulwark, insulating women and children from the industrial city's evils (Bressi, 1994: xxvi).

The text goes on to explain this mythology as 'the Victorian notion that a neighbourhood was a protective domestic enclave requiring insulation from commerce, work and traffic' (Bressi, 1994: xxvii). Both narratives of Victorian England – although strikingly different – contain elements of truth. One can 'envisage Victorian cities as both improved and decayed, full of new sewers, avenues, railway stations, hotel, stores and public buildings ... juxtaposed with rickety and labyrinthine slums, degrading workhouses and exploitative sweat-shops' (Dennis, 2008: 31).

The UK draws on its history of the Victorian Era for examples of the problems facing those living in poverty, such as social exclusion. The US uses examples from the same period in history to lament the challenges that suburbanisation has wrought on the middle class. The

[19] Hall was a member of the Urban Task Force. Roberts was the Chair of the Best Practice Committee of the British Urban Regeneration Association and also Chair of the Academy for Sustainable Communities, an agency of the UK central government.

two movements have read history in very different ways, and they use their versions of history to affirm their principles.

However, the Victorian Era is not just a story of large inequalities and stark contrasts. Particularly toward the end of the period, there were real efforts to address the inequality and the destitution, including the 'tentative origins' of welfare state policies and urban regeneration efforts (Dennis, 2008: 32). While 'the late nineteenth century in both North America and Britain was full of "progressive" movements,' neither UR nor NU literature of the late 20th century reference this (Dennis, 2008: 29).

4.4.1 The UR's Victorian History Justifies Supporting People in Poverty

At the turn of the 20th century in the UK, the work of the London County Council emphasised housing reform and improving urban blight (Porter, 1998). Similarly, in Birmingham in the 1870s, Joseph Chamberlain saw urban regeneration as part of the so-called 'civic gospel' (Browne, 1974: 7). From this perspective, the physical environment played such a significant role that it was thought to determine personality traits and interaction styles. Reflecting the era, Chamberlain's philosophy held that 'it is no more the fault of these people that they are vicious and intemperate than it is their fault that they are stunted, deformed, debilitated and diseased' (Browne, 1974: 30). Instead, it is the fault of the environment. This philosophy motivated the municipality to assist in regeneration. The UK's Public Health



Image 4.2: Gustave Doré's 1872 depiction of regeneration efforts in London's Devil's Acre.

Act of 1875, which sought to improve sanitation and access to clean water in derelict area, is a classic example. Creating and improving public spaces is another. 'The supply of pure water and the creation of open space were early priorities and these areas of activities proved to be enduring necessities' (Roberts, 2008: 12).

Regenerative works were not limited to governmental initiatives. Private citizens also undertook such work. It was the 'age of "scientific philanthropy" where emphasis was placed on reforming the environment in which the poor lived' (Dennis, 2008: 29). For example, George Peabody and the Peabody Trust did this on both sides of the Atlantic. Peabody took a particular interest in regenerating an area in London near Westminster, which Charles Dickens had called Devil's Acre. Writings about this notorious area helped popularise the term 'slum'. Peabody sought to turn the area around, building some of the first social housing (Parker, 1995). Gustave Dore captures this in his 1872 illustration of Old Pye Street. With the Palace of Westminster in the background, the drawing's foreground shows the Devil's Acre a few years after slum improvement efforts had begun (see Dennis, 2008). Previously, Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman, the Archbishop of Westminster,[20] had described the area as having 'dark corners, which no lighting board can brighten' (see quote in Ward, 2008: 568). Dore's illustration captures the improvements by showing open space bathed in light.

From both a governmental and a philanthropic perspective, there was a clear recognition in the UK of a link between physical living conditions and social deprivation. Although the UR later distanced itself from environmental determinism, there are strong parallels between the Victorian Era philosophy of regeneration and the philosophy promoted by the UR, including the emphasis on communal open spaces. However, the opening of the UR's seminal text only references the inequality, the harshness, and the destitution of the Victorian Era. The era's prosperity and efforts to address poverty are absent. This selective

[20] Wiseman was the first Archbishop of Westminster after the Catholic hierarchy was reestablished in 1850.

focus underscores two important, if understated, elements of the UR philosophical and political position. First, the UR is aligning itself with the contemporary social exclusion discourse. Second, it is distancing the movement from Margaret Thatcher's approach to social division.

4.4.1a Linking Victorian Realities and Social Exclusion Discourse. The UR's portrayal of Victorian 'realities' ties the historical discussion to contemporary narratives around social exclusion and cohesion. Indeed, the UR presents an image of the Victorian Era similar to literary depictions: Benjamin Disraeli's *The Two Nations* (1845), Charles Masterman's *From the Abyss* (1902), and Jack London's *The People of the Abyss* (1903) all capture poverty in England and suggest a significant divide within England between the prosperous and the poor. The following excerpt, from Disraeli's novel, is strikingly similar to passages a century and a half later in the social exclusion and cohesion literature:

> "Well, society may be in its infancy," said Egremont slightly smiling; "but, say what you like, our Queen reigns over the greatest nation that ever existed."
> "Which nation?" asked the younger stranger, "for she reigns over two."
> The stranger paused; Egremont was silent, but looked inquiringly.
> "Yes," resumed the younger stranger after a moment's interval. "Two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws."
> "You speak of ----" said Egremont, hesitatingly.
> "THE RICH AND THE POOR" (Disraeli, 1845: 149-150; capitalisation original).

Published in 2001, the UK Home Office's report on the lack of cohesion described a similar reality:

> Whilst the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas came as no surprise, the team was particularly struck by the depth of polarisation.... Separate education arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives (9).

This depiction of polarisation and social exclusion is exactly what the UR set out to remedy. By linking itself to the troubles of the Victorian Era, the UR underscores the themes of social exclusion and limited cohesion, implying the problems have yet to be successfully addressed.

4.4.1b Distinguishing the UR from Thatcherism. References to the problems of the Victorian Era may also be an understated way to distance the UR from Margaret Thatcher. In the 1980s, as prime minster, Thatcher called for a return to 'Victorian values' which became a rhetorical trope of many in her administration (Samuel, 1992). Thatcher explained what she meant by Victorian values when she told an *Evening Standard* reporter, 'I was brought up by a Victorian grandmother' (1983). She explained:

> We were taught to work jolly hard. We were taught to prove yourself; we were taught self-reliance; we were taught to live within our income. You were taught that cleanliness is next to godliness. You were taught self-respect. You were taught always to give a hand to your neighbour. You were taught tremendous pride in your country. All of these things are Victorian values. (Evening Standard, 1983: no pagination).

The then leader of the Labour Party, Neil Kinnock, has been widely cited as countering Thatcher's interpretation, arguing that Victorian values are ones of 'cruelty, misery, drudgery, squalor and ignorance' (Gardiner, 2002: 85; also see Krueger, 2002; Dennis, 2008). The UR representation of the Victorian Era aligns closely with Kinnock's version. In reflecting Kinnock's account, the UR subtly distances itself from Thatcher's narrative.

4.4.2 NU's History Justifies Supporting the Middle Class

For NU in the US, references to England's Victorian Era accomplish something very different. Its narrative suggests Americans have chased the Victorian lore in the hopes of escaping the 'evils' of industrialisation and creating an 'insulated' sanctuary of domesticity (Bressi, 1994: xxvi). The NU rejects this lore suggesting that the Victorian Era actually created suburbs where people eventually become isolated in their own homes and cars, away from friends and family. Further, 'the Victorian-era legacies leave few of the well-defined neighbourhood gathering places that can be found throughout traditional towns and cities'

(Bressi, 1994: xxxv). The NU roundly rejects America's fantasy of the English Victorian Era. By including this as a key part of its historical narrative, the movement achieves two things.

First, it orients NU toward the middle class. Even though NU rejects sprawl, simply by focusing on suburbia – instead of impoverished urban neighbourhoods – NU is establishing the middle segment of society as its target population. While this focus differs from that of UR, it has a similar outcome: aligning NU along political lines. The middle class, specifically the 'forgotten middle class,' was Bill Clinton's prime audience and catchphrase. This is evident from the very beginning of Clinton's political rise:

> That is why today I am declaring my candidacy for President of the United States. Together I believe we can provide leadership that will restore the American Dream, that will fight for the forgotten middle class, that will provide opportunity, insist on more responsibly and create a great sense of community for this great country (Clinton cited in Greenberg, 1995: 182).

The middle-class focus continued through Clinton's presidency. For example, he proposed The Middle Class Bill of Rights (Clinton, 1994). While there is a sense in the US that everyone thinks of themselves as part of the middle class, at the time Clinton was president, this focus set him apart from other politicians: 'The forgotten middle class – the phrase seems almost trite in retrospect, but at the time no Democrat in decades had so directly linked his political life to the lives of ordinary Americans' (Greenberg, 1995: 181). Similarly, this focus set NU apart from other architectural movements and linked its movement with Clinton's New Democrats and the Third Way.

Second, NU sets itself up as the movement that offers something real. The NU suggests the American middle class was sold on a Victorian 'mythology' that lured them into the suburbs and into a 'fragmented society' (Bressi, 1994: xxvi; Katz, 1994: ix). By debunking this myth but acknowledging that people are seeking something valid – human connection and protection – NU offers a solution: community. Not only does it again reflect

Clinton's rhetoric, it also demonstrates how these architectural movements are strongly entrenched within the larger political context of their country.

4.4.3 Different Histories, Different Conclusions

The UR and NU each have an explanation of what went wrong and how society became fragmented. For UR, the Victorian Era was a story of urban decline and unspeakable poverty. This reading of Victorian history strongly paralleled the UR's contemporary discourse of social exclusion and cohesion in the UK, with its focus on combating poverty and social divisions partly by increasing social interaction across groups and in common spaces. NU agreed that society had become fragmented. However, it argued this problem was one born of suburbanisation. It focused on restoring a middle class that had become isolated and forgotten. This narrative paralleled the rhetoric that Bill Clinton employed as he became the president of the US.

4.5 Core Principle #3: The Solution is Community

In announcing the creation of the Social Exclusion Unit, Prime Minister Blair declared: 'My political philosophy is simple. Individuals prosper in a strong and active community of citizens' (1997). In the US, the National Urban Policy Report opened with a quote from President Clinton: 'I believe in a government ... [that] understands it has a role to play in order for us to build strong communities that are the bedrock of this Nation' (HUD; 1995: 1). On both sides of the Atlantic, 'community' was a popular trope for politicians.

In the UR and NU literature, the movements' historical narratives culminated in a claim that their approach would create urban communities, remedying the 'evils' of industrialisation and undoing lingering social divisions. In the UK, *Towards an Urban Renaissance* declared, 'the cohesion of our communities depends upon an urban form which supports core institutions' (UTF, 1999: 29). The UK's Urban White Paper set out 'to build the

capacity of communities to help themselves and bring about social cohesion right across the country' (ODPM, 2000: 132). In the US, NU had a similar focus on communities. The opening sentence of their Charter suggests a strong 'community-building' strategy would correct a myriad of urban challenges. Later in the introduction, it elaborates: 'We are committed to re-establishing the relationship between the art of building and the making of community' (CNU, 2000a).

The centrality of community – and to some extent communitarianism – to urban initiatives has not been lost on scholars in either the UK or US (Pierson and Smith, 2001; Atkinson and Helms, 2007). 'Regeneration initiatives are particularly prevalent in the United Kingdom and the United States, where the "discourse of community" in urban revitalization has had considerable purchase' (Porter and Shaw, 2009: 249). In the UK context, Imrie and Raco explain that 'discourses of community are pivotal in framing the policy agenda for cities, and the core of Labour's approach to the revitalisation of cities is the revival of citizenship and the activation of communities' (2003: 4). In the US context, 'The essence of new urbanist design theory is the creation of a sense of community' (Talen, 1999b: 1393). Clarke agrees, stating that: 'A favoured exaltation in the texts of New Urbanism is the word *community'* (2005: 44; emphasis original). Perhaps, the most succinct indication of this is the titles of two books. Peter Neal, a champion of UR who worked for CABE, edited *Urban Villages and the Making of Communities* in the UK (2003). Peter Katz, a founder of NU in the US, edited *The New Urbanism: Towards an Architecture of Community* (1994).

However, a close examination of how the UR and NU have engaged with the idea of community reveals differences in how community is conceptualised. Two important differences are apparent. First, the movements envision different types of communities. The UR idealises an inclusive and cohesive community whereas NU describes a diverse community. Second, the movements strive to create community through different means.

Both movements emphasise housing strategies whereas the UR spends more energy on emphasising strategies that focus on public spaces, like parks. These differences are consistent with the policy discourses in the UK and the US. The following considers each movement's approach to community.

4.5.1 NU's Vision of Community

NU's Charter presents 'community-building' as the solution to a myriad of urban problems, including 'increasing separation by race and income' (CNU, 2000a: Introduction). It argues that diversity is the key attribute of that community. The ideal community is 'diverse in use and population' and 'universally accessible' (ibid.). As Kelbaugh explains, 'New Urbanism … aspires to a social ethic that builds new and repairs old communities in ways that equitably mix people of different income, ethnicity, race, and age' (2002: 170). The assumption is that when people from different social backgrounds work, live, and shop in the same local area, community will naturally form. Ultimately, proximity of heterogeneous groups is the fundamental feature necessary for creating the community NU envisions.

NU strives to achieve this diverse community largely by altering housing patterns, such that a neighbourhood is accessible to various social and economic groups. As the Charter explains, 'a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction' (CNU, 2000a: Section 13). Punter suggests that social housing is one of 'the most obvious' mechanisms for creating a diverse community, mirroring the philosophy that guides social mixing policy (2007: 177).

NU's vision of community building reflects its US context in three ways. First, multiple scholars refer to community as a prominent motif in American culture. Talen writes, 'community is a cherished American icon which can be regenerated by rebuilding cities according to new design principles' (1999b: 1361). And Katz writes that NU 'addresses many of the ills of our current sprawl development pattern, while returning to a cherished American

icon: that of a compact, close-knit community' (1994: ix). The idea is that an emphasis on community aligns with core American principles.

Second, the importance of diversity is quintessentially American; after all, the US refers to itself as a heterogeneous 'nation of immigrants'. This common phrase denotes a country made up of people from all different national and racial backgrounds. However, Martin and others point out that while the US venerates the idea of diversity, it often fails to treat people from different backgrounds with the same reverence (2011). Even in NU, a diverse and heterogeneous community is romanticised. Partially quoted above, Section 13 of the Charter of New Urbanism articulates this vision:

> Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal civic bonds essential to an authentic community (CNU, 2000a).

However, critics who study specific NU developments have found fault with them for creating communities that fail to generate social diversity (Marshall, 1996; Clarke, 2005; Grant, 2007; Knox, 2008).[21] Some scholars found that NU generated certain types of diversity but not others. In considering 70 NU developments, Trudeau and Kaplan found, 'NU neighborhoods have lower racial diversity, but may have higher income diversity' (2016: 458).

Third, the strategy of primarily targeting housing echoes the US approach to poverty. The US employs an absolute measure of poverty that focuses on material deprivation rather than employing a multidimensional gauge of deprivation (Silver and Miller, 2003). While housing can be a symbolic statement of one's social status, it is fundamentally a material need. Further, housing is a distinctly American measure of deprivation and success. It is a key part of the fabled 'American Dream' since having 'a home has long been presented as a

[21] Punter suggests that NU 'focused almost entirely on visual appearance ... [rather than] social and environmental dimension of design' (2007: 182). Despite this criticism, when NU is compared to other urban architectural movements in the US, 'New Urbanism is doing a decent job of using urban design strategies to break down barriers between social groups' (Ellis, 2002: 281).

crucial part of the "stake in society" expected of full-fledged members in many American communities' (Rohe and Watson, 2007: vii). In the US, having a house 'is equated with other strongly held cultural values such as freedom, industriousness, and individualism' (Rohe and Watson, 2007: 3). While Right to Buy was a flagship programme under Thatcher in the UK, the US has had a timeless focus on housing (Jones and Murie, 2006).

4.5.2 The UR's Vision of Community

When the UR references community, it invokes a word rooted in history. Prime Minister Blair's declaration that his goal was simply a community of citizens stood in contrast to governmental policies under Thatcher. Her urban policy diagnosed cities as needing more corporate capital investment. Pronouncing the importance of individualism and entrepreneurship, this approach meant reducing regulations and offering subsidies to corporations (Thornley, 1993).

> The removal of supply-side constraints to investment in cities, including the minimisation of local government and community involvement in planning for regeneration and its implementation, was the mantra of Margaret Thatcher (Imrie and Raco, 2003: 3).

Breaking with Thatcher's notion of individualism, Blair's New Labour administration refocused government on the idea of community. Scholars argue Blair's rhetoric had strong communitarian overtones.

> Labour's policy agenda is closely aligned to the values and view of communitarianism. Communitarian views are premised on overcoming social fragmentation and the (alleged) breakdown of core aspects of communities (Imrie and Raco, 2003: 7-8; also see Etzioni, 1996).

Labour saw its work as mending those fraying social structures. While there is scepticism about whether the Blair government actually took community input seriously (for example, see Monbiot, 2001; Weaver, 2002), it was using community to distance its policies from those of its predecessor. This stands in stark contrast to the US, which was using community to invoke nostalgia.

How these movements position themselves in reference to history results in two very different conceptualisations of community. One big distinction is in scale: small in the US, large in the UK. Community as the 'cherished American icon' reflects US's romanticism of decentralised power and small, independent localities. As a result, references to 'communities' – plural – abound. When HUD Secretary Cisneros presented the first National Urban Policy Report to President Clinton, he said: 'Your Administration's National Urban Policy is about building communities that work for people and for America' (HUD: 1996). Here, 'communities' is plural and the goal is not one national community but many local communities. NU's Charter includes similar language, arguing that a well-designed neighbourhood would 'enable neighbors to know each other and protect their communities' (2000a: no pagination). Even here, where there is a reference to interaction, 'communities' is plural and what is important is that *their* community needs *protection* from the outside.

In the UK, Blair's notion of community was flexible. It could refer to a small, neighbourhood community, or to a large, national community. As Blair claimed, 'a community of citizens' was his primary goal (1997). Shared space was not to stop at the nearby park. It, theoretically, extends to all people who share national borders. This is reflected in the Home Office's *Community Cohesion* report, which argues that polarised groups 'should occupy a common sense of place' on a small scale and a national scale (2001, 70). In addition to this historical difference and the disparity in scale, the UR vision of community also differs from NU in its ultimate goal.

Both the UR and NU underscore the need for diversity. For example, the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions' *By Design* lists diversity as a key feature of a successful place (DETR and CABE, 2000) and the UK's National Planning Policy Framework encourages local authorities to create community by:

> [Implementing] policies which promote opportunities for meetings with members of the community which might not otherwise come into contact with each other (DCLG, 2012: 17).

However, the UR's approach seeks more than a community defined by diversity and access – it strives for 'community cohesion' (CABE, 2009a: 3). Much of the UR rhetoric suggests a desire to alter the social structure to achieve this new-found sense of cohesion. Three main distinctions emerge between the UR and NU's understanding of community: an emphasis on inclusion in addition to accessibility, the need for interaction in addition to diversity, and the goal of reducing prejudices. These differences reflect their different contexts and national discourses on social exclusion and cohesion.

First, in contrast to the NU focus on universal accessibility, the UR argues that the emphasis must shift 'from access to inclusion' (CABE, 2008: 4). Thus, where NU stresses physical accessibility – for example, promoting 'curb cuts' such that spaces can be reached by those with limited mobility (CNU, 2000b: 29) – the UR suggests a broader understanding of access is necessary:

> Discussion about equality and the built environment focused on physical access – or lack of it. As physical access has improved, the discussion has widened to address cultural and economic access, recognising that design plays a vital role in including, and often excluding, communities (CABE, 2008: 28).

Adopting this approach to access means ensuring that there is 'access with dignity' and considering 'what an inhospitable built environment looks and feels like, and the unintended social, cultural and economic inequalities that follow' (CABE, 2008: 12; 4). Ultimately, the UR's goal is to create a hospitable environment in which every member of society feels included.

Second, the UR underscores the need for interaction in addition to diversity. While NU did suggest that proximity leads to interaction (see CNU, 2000a: Section 13), contact is not a main focus. As Clarke explains, 'community is an arena of participation that evolves through discourse, a constituent missing within the philosophy and constructed developments

of New Urbanism' (2005: 43). In the UR, contact is the foundation on which community is built. 'Regular encounters with different people can be seen as the beginnings of a community' (CABE, 2010a: 15). As implied by this quotation, interaction is not the end goal. Instead, it is simply a key element in achieving the larger objective of community cohesion. This is reminiscent of Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (see Chapter 2).

Third, the UR's vision of a cohesive community involves intervening to alter the social dynamic. This means aiming to reduce individuals' prejudices and biases by designing 'places where we meet different people, share experiences, and learn to trust one another' (CABE, 2004a: Section 1-2). In addition, the UR endeavours to level social hierarchies, lessening the gap between society's poor and rich. Couch et al. summarise the UR's approach by saying it sought 'to enhance quality of life ... by reducing the gap between deprived and other areas, and between different groups' (2011: 3).

Importantly, these are not simply different notions of community. Instead, these visions necessitate different approaches. The US's NU focuses on housing patterns and bringing distinct social groups into closer proximity to one another. The UK's UR agrees and goes further. In terms of housing, its perspective emphasises the importance not just of diverse relationships, but also of long-lasting relationships. 'For households, a mix of tenures provides options to change their tenure to meet changing circumstances, without necessarily having to leave the neighbourhood – a factor favouring community stability' (UTF, 1999: 65).

Most importantly for this research, the UR also asserts the value of public spaces in building community. While NU endorses the importance of shared sidewalks and public spaces – as seen earlier in this chapter – the UR advocates for these spaces more forcefully. The UTF asserts 'the importance of density, mix of uses, architecture and, crucially, the layout of public spaces, in making successful urban neighbourhoods' (1999: 49). In

emphasising the 'crucial' nature of public spaces, the authors of *Towards an Urban Renaissance* argue that the right public spaces can lead to interaction and integration:

> Well-designed and maintained public spaces should be at the heart of any community. They are the foundation of public interaction and social integration, and provide the sense of place essential to engender civic pride (UTF, 1999: 5).[22]

Further, 'safe, well maintained, attractive and uncluttered public spaces provide the vital "glue" between buildings, and play a crucial role in strengthening communities' (UTF, 1999: 57). The report suggests that even 'a small urban park or open space' can unite the community (UTF, 1999: 65).

This can also be seen through the UK's Department for Communities and Local Government's work where 'there has been an increasing concern to improve the design and management of urban spaces and various initiatives aimed at fostering social inclusion have considered the strategic role of public space' (Dines et al, 2006: 1). This belief that public spaces offer 'opportunities for cultural cohesion [and] social integration' is also evident in the creation of CABE Space, which promoted design excellence in public spaces (CABE, 2010a: 15; also see CABE, 2004a).

The UR explicitly acknowledges its aim to combat social exclusion. In the UTF's *Towards an Urban Renaissance,* the preface declares, 'we have launched a comprehensive package to revive our urban areas and tackle social exclusion' (1999: 3). Moreover, the influence of social exclusion and cohesion presents itself subtly in the UR's conceptualisation of and strategy for community building. First, the UR recognises that social exclusion is a function of social dynamics, which evolve over time. Unlike NU, which did not necessarily strive to change social processes, the UR aims to reduce exclusion, acknowledging that

[22] It should be noted that public spaces are essential to several different objectives set out by the UR. Simmons, the former Chief Executive of CABE, underscores 'the fundamental role that green infrastructure plays in helping us address climate change, public health, biodiversity and community cohesion' (CABE, 2009a: 3).

addressing social exclusion requires the social interactions between individuals and between groups to be influenced.

Second, the UR places an emphasis on intangible elements of well-being like dignity, trust, and feelings rather than focusing solely on material or physical needs such as housing. The UR approach highlights the need for a broader sense of well-being and welfare. This echoes the social exclusion literature's call for full participation in society, as explored in Chapter 2.

Third, the UR espouses a public spaces strategy that recognises that social exclusion is relational rather than individual. Just as mainstream society is an important part of the exclusionary dynamic – the group that tends to exclude marginalised groups – the mainstream also makes up an important demographic of those who use and value public spaces. The UR policies seek to consider both the mainstream and the marginalised in how public spaces are designed. UR even works for the social levelling that Marshall has referred to as 'converting a skyscraper into a bungalow' (1963: 100-1). Thus, it appears the UR's approach to community building reflects the UK's social exclusion and cohesion initiatives.

Even while UR reflects the Social Exclusion Unit's philosophy, an important internal distinction emerges. The SEU largely views community as a policy *instrument*, seeing it as 'the means by which policies become devised and activated' (Imrie and Raco, 2003: 6). For example, in the SEU's strategy, 'the most effective interventions are often where communities are actively involved in their design and delivery, and, where possible, in the driving seat' (SEU, 2000: Para 1.19). In contrast, the UR sees community as a policy *objective*, as it endeavoured to create the communities within which the SEU ultimately seeks to work. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister declares: 'We intend to build the capacity of communities to help themselves and bring about social cohesion' (ODPM, 2000: 6).

4.6 Differences among UK Policymakers

While this thesis primarily explores similarities and differences between the UK and the US, a divide *among* UK policymakers also emerges as significant. This chapter has established that UK policymakers focused on social exclusion influenced the thinking of policymakers focused on urban design. However, the UR policymakers did not influence social exclusion policymakers. The following two sections examine (1) the tensions between the UR and the social exclusion camps, and (2) why the UK's social exclusion initiatives did not emphasise green spaces. Understanding that social exclusion policymakers were largely unconcerned with urban design is important because it highlights that the urban design literature is more relevant to this thesis than the social exclusion literature.

4.6.1 Different Policy Camps

Reports and interviews suggest that the UR policymakers felt that their urban design work could play an important role in combating social exclusion. However, they worried that SEU policies did not adequately incorporate the UR's approaches to urban design. Indeed, social exclusion publications suggest that policymakers focused on social exclusion generally discounted or overlooked the potential role of urban planning and design in their work.

At the centre of the policy discussion around social exclusion and urban policy was SEU's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU), a cross-departmental, area-based initiative of DTLR.[23] The NRU focused on improving 'poor neighbourhoods and issues of social cohesion and social capital' (Wallace, 2001: 2163).[24] An interviewee who had worked with the SEU recalled: '[they] approached social exclusion from many different angles but you only need to look at the neighbourhood renewal work to see commitment to urban regeneration' (3SE-UK, 2013). Examining these policies – and the debate that ensued –

[23] Department of Transportation, Local Government and Regions (DTLR).
[24] Wallace worked in the Social Exclusion Unit and published this peer-reviewed article at the conclusion of the NRU's creation of a national strategy.

highlights how the rise of social exclusion discourse made its way into urban policy doctrine and documents, but not vice versa.

A key document of the NRU was the National Strategy Action Plan, which aimed to 'complement the vision of an urban renaissance and measures set out in the Urban White Paper' (SEU, 2001b: 10). The Urban White Paper 'staked out the shape of urban policy at an early point in the Labour administration' (Jones and Evans, 2008: 14). However, while the Urban White Paper argued that urban design had a role to play in preventing social exclusion, the NRU did not emphasise design. Instead, it suggested that urban design and public spaces assume a rather superficial and minimal role in improving social dynamics.

The NRU's National Strategy Action Plan did list 'housing and the physical environment' as one of its five key areas. Yet, the document did not elaborate on this goal in a way that suggested its agenda was aligned with that of UR. In terms of housing, the NRU focused on the most troubled housing estates and on increasing the amount of 'decent' urban housing available (SEU, 2001b: 10). It did not emphasise mixed communities nor efforts at integration. In terms of the physical environment, the emphasis was on the need for clean air and a better way to deal with waste, sports facilities, and mixed communities. While shared sports facilities and mixed-income housing complexes have the potential to create interaction between different groups, these initiatives were not the focus of NRU.

The NRU also promoted Home Zones that 'aim to improve quality of life in residential streets – by making them places for people' (SEU, 2001b: 42). The only specific recommendations that were provided included 'areas for children to play' and 'facilities such as seats for older residents and parents to meet' (ibid.). These can be important elements of public space design. While Home Zones was promoted and funded by the Department for Transportation (DfT) for three years, it was not included as one of the '105 departmental commitments' (SEU, 2001b: 8).

Further, scholars from the UR perspective point out that there are passages where the role of public space is conspicuously absent. For example, the plan suggested that a 'sense of community [is] generated around centres such as schools, shops or transport links' (SEU, 2001b: 13). It did not mention that urban green spaces, such as public parks, may serve a similar role.

These frustrations were made explicit in other official publications, including those from DTLR's Urban Green Spaces Taskforce. For example, one of their reports, *Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Open Spaces*, praised the Urban White Paper in the same paragraph as it dismissed the NRU's commitment to the principles of the UR, specifically the importance of communal public spaces.

> The Urban White Paper specifically refers to urban parks, play areas and public spaces having an important role in the urban fabric.... There has however been very little, if any, serious consideration of urban green spaces as core elements of urban renewal, contributing more than just an attractive setting for other activities. For example, the Social Exclusion Unit's 2001 Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan makes no explicit link between urban parks and green spaces and areas for priority action (DTLR, 2002: 181).

This taskforce argued that because 'parks and green spaces are seen as 'soft' issues' and 'as backdrops' by the SEU, any 'verbal political commitment is not necessarily backed up by financial resources' (DTLR, 2002: 184). This taskforce positioned itself counter to the SEU, arguing that 'green spaces can contribute to social and economic regeneration' (DTLR, 2002: 181).

Other documents take a more muted tone but express similar sentiments. The *Twentieth Report by the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee* adopts an urging tone rather than a reprimanding one (House of Commons, 1999). The report cites the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management in arguing 'the provision of public parks helps to reduce the inequalities, poor health and social exclusion in deprived areas and reduces the inherent tension between the many social and ethnic groups' (House of Commons, 1999:

Para. 32).[25] The report concludes that 'parks are key features in the renaissance of our urban areas... [and] the Social Exclusion Unit should give a high priority to making parks attractive places where all the community can enjoy themselves' (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 56).

The Cantle Report asserts that while the SEU's area-based initiatives were 'well intentioned and sometimes inspirational,' they 'seemed to be clinging on to the margins of anything that resembled a long term strategy' (Home Office, 2001: 10). The report found that the strategy of narrowly targeting areas of deprivation 'reinforced the separation of communities' and the limited 'budgets have created tensions and unhealthy competition between disadvantaged groups' (Home Office, 2001: 10, 57). The report identified the 'urgent need' for communal spaces where people feel safe and 'are not restricted in their use of public space by fear' (Home Office, 2001: 10, 74). It suggested that such spaces could facilitate contact across social divides. This led to the conclusion that, perhaps, social cohesion was not an outcome prioritised by the SEU: 'cross-cultural contact and the promotion of community cohesion was not valued as an end in itself' (Home Office, 2001: 10).

An interviewee connected to UR, although not involved in policymaking, said, 'people say we jumped on the bandwagon – the social exclusion wagon – but it's not that way' (7UR-UK, 2013). The implication is that because addressing social exclusion became a key agenda item for New Labour, other agencies and movements started incorporating the term into their work solely in an effort to raise their own profile. This interviewee argued this was not the case, suggesting their knowledge and commitment to combating social challenges is deeper than a transient and convenient political term. Later chapters test this argument by examining how fully the UR literature appears to understand the conceptualisation of social

[25] This refers to the House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee hearing and report.

exclusion. It is worth noting that similar arguments can be made about the US's NU and its adoption of middle-class rhetoric popular under the Clinton Administration.

The debate between SEU policymakers and UR urban planners reveals obstacles in the policymaking process when integrating principles of 'community' and 'social cohesion' into new public spaces. Urban design advocates incorporated social exclusion principles into their work, but the policymakers concerned with social exclusion were less likely to examine and incorporate the UR approach. This evidence supports the hypothesis that the social exclusion discourse influenced the social principles of UR – but it suggests that UR probably did not influence the SEU's approach.

4.6.2 Why Social Exclusion Initiatives Did Not Emphasise Green Spaces

A close analysis of governmental documents suggests there could be three reasons why social exclusion policymakers were not focused on using public spaces as part of their efforts to prevent social exclusion: a lack of data, a lack of a central authority, and a lack of public esteem for parks.

First, at the time when the case study parks were created, there were very little data on parks. While there is considerably more data now, the data scarcity made it hard to implement programmes that targeted parks or gather user information as an indicator of social exclusion. This 'basic lack of information' started at the most fundamental level: what constitutes an urban park (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 23)? There was little consensus. Does a churchyard maintained by the local authority count as a public park? What about the green areas in housing estates (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 24)? There was no centralised information about what features a given park offers let alone who visited a given park, how they used it, and what they wanted. Given this lack of information, it is perhaps not surprising that there was a 'statistical vacuum' (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 23). CABE acknowledged that 'there have been very few studies that look at how green space, ethnicity

or deprivation, and health are related' and sought to begin addressing this 'significant information gap' with their *Community Green* investigation (CABE, 2010a: 5).

Policy documents suggest the absence of reliable information about parks made it hard to incorporate them into large evidence-based initiatives. Indeed, without concrete information about public parks, it was challenging to know how work on parks would interact with other strategies and approaches. The Urban White Paper called for this to change: 'we must improve information on the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces, and the way in which they are used and maintained' (ODPM, 2000: 92). Academics seconded this call, lamenting the 'extraordinary dearth of information about public open spaces of all kinds' (Jenkins, 2000: 101). They worried this was 'symptomatic of official indifference to the contribution that well-maintained parks can make' (Jenkins, 2000: 102).

Second, there was – and still is – no single national authority overseeing parks. This is one explanation for why there was minimal reliable information on parks. But it also meant there was no governmental body championing the importance of parks, and there was no department to produce specific design recommendations related to social exclusion. As the Landscape Institute told the House of Commons: 'There is no Government Minister, no department unit, and no national body directly responsible for urban parks and open space' (1999: Para. 169). This made it hard to generate 'new initiatives, create strategic partnerships or influence government policy towards public parks' (ibid.). The absence of coherent leadership was particularly significant given that New Labour, in general, and the SEU, in particular, emphasised joined-up government and cross-departmental partnerships (see Clark, 2002). Without a department or an official supporter, it was hard for parks to become part of a cross-departmental collaboration.[26]

[26] It is worth noting that in January 1996, the Heritage Lottery Fund did launch a programme called Urban Parks Programme to invest in neglected heritage parks. As Harding explains, 'Urban parks have fallen between the remits of two government departments, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR). Consequently, and by default, HLF became

Originally, a sense of civic pride drove local authorities to care for parks (House of Commons, 1999). They found permission in the Open Space Act of 1906 and, even earlier, they pointed to the Public Health Act of 1875, which stated:

> Any [local authority] may purchase or take on lease lay out plant improve and maintain lands for the purpose of being used as public walks or pleasure grounds, and may support or contribute to the support of public walks or pleasure grounds provided by any person whomsoever (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 164).

However, with The Countryside Act of 1968, the Countryside Commission (now the Countryside Agency) took control of rural parks. This created a new distinction between rural parks and urban parks. However, no equivalent agency for urban parks emerged. 'It seems extraordinary that in a society as urbanised as the UK, there is no equivalent body to the Countryside Commission to fight in the corner for public parks' (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 171).[27] Indeed, the 'responsibility for parks fell between the DETR (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) and the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport), but was not adequately covered by either' (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 169).[28]

At both the local and the central level, there were calls for a new agency dedicated to urban parks. The House of Commons report concluded:

> We believe that there is a good case for the establishment of a new Agency, which should be known as "The Urban Parks and Greenspaces Agency." We believe the Government should make a commitment to such an Agency in its forthcoming Urban White Paper (1999: Para. 175).

Ultimately, instead of creating a new agency, the Urban White Paper proposed the DETR Minister become 'directly responsible' for parks and urban green spaces (ODPM, 2000: 92). Yet, two years later, a DTLR report indicated that there was still a desire, at the local level, for more organisation at the central level:

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the lead agency in promoting a renaissance in parks, a role that sits uneasily with its principal remit to distribute lottery income' (1999: 16).

[27] The House of Commons is quoting the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield.

[28] It is worth noting that while parks were rather orphaned, museums were not. They were supervised by the Area Museum Services and the Museums and Galleries Commission.

> There is undoubtedly a demand at the grass roots level for some form of central agency to promote the cause of urban green space – virtually every local authority involved in the research mentioned this when asked if there were any matters they would like to raise through the research project. Such an agency is seen to be vital: to promoting the cause of urban green space; to sharing experience and providing guidance on good practice; and to developing experimental, innovative approaches to tackling the issues (2002: 206).

At the turn of the 21st century, there appeared to be an awareness in policy and political circles of the need for park oversight and coordination as well as a park champion. However, this did not lead to immediate changes. During the period this research considers, advocates for parks did not have a proverbial seat at the SEU table. Further, the fact that there was no governing body primarily focused on overseeing parks may explain the disorganised nature of design recommendations.

Third and finally, parks may not have played a prominent role in SEU strategy because urban parks 'suffer[ed] a loss of status and esteem' (House of Commons, 1999: Introduction). The Urban White Paper suggested that this loss of esteem had led to a decline in the quality of parks. 'Over the last few decades a lot of public open space within urban areas has been lost to encroaching development and too much of what is left has been neglected and poorly maintained' (ODPM, 2000: 90). *Towards an Urban Renaissance* also acknowledges that little attention or care was paid to public spaces created during the 20th century.

> [Most new urban spaces are] simply "SLOAP" (Space Left Over After Planning) – soulless, undefined places, poorly landscaped, with no relationship to surrounding buildings. A key task in these areas is to re-configure public space so that all parts of the public realm contribute towards achieving a high quality environment (UTF, 1999: 57).

At one time 'municipal benevolence' drove local authorities to invest in elegant horticultural exhibits (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 58). 'In the nineteenth century, it was Britain which showed the world how urban parks could provide for the recreation and refreshment of the citizens of the rapidly growing industrial cities' (Jenkins, 2000: 103-104).

That changed partially because of tightening budgets and partially because family car ownership made countryside parks more accessible – and, suddenly, urban parks seemed less necessary. By the 1970s, there was a general consensus that urban English parks have fallen into disrepair, becoming 'unsightly, even dangerous, places' (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 58).

In addition to using country parks instead of urban ones, the UK saw an increase in the number of private urban gardens.

> Increasingly, private gardens in towns are oases of lovingly tended mini-landscapes. In contrast, street and communal landscaped areas often have the air of being looked after as cheaply as possible, and too many urban parks are shunned, neglected and vandalised.... Nothing can be a more stark picture of private affluence and public squalor (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 59).

The scene here is similar to the story told by the UR about the Victorian Era. It is a modern-day story of inequality and social polarisation – reminiscent of the very same concerns that motivated the SEU.

The idea that the decline of urban parks might mirror the challenges of social exclusion bolsters the UR's argument that urban parks may be useful as a way to help measure social exclusion (DTLR, 2002: 202). The UR suggests that the SEU would benefit from knowing which segments of the population are using the public parks and private parks. The implication is also that high-quality public parks could help prevent social exclusion. Derelict parks can lead to the privatisation of park space and, thus, further polarisation of society. Well-kept and well-designed parks could mitigate this social trend. A DTLR report explains how 'design often lies at the heart of what makes a successful urban green space' and can be a key component of 'solving problems' (2002: 18). The report laments:

> [Parks are] sadly neglected ... [as] policymakers have underestimated the role that urban green spaces can play.... Many still think of parks and other urban green spaces as just "greenery" or "landscaping" and far removed from what they perceive to be the real problems of urban communities (DTLR, 2002: 200).

These three explanations are complementary. Together, they explain why the SEU may not have included public parks and urban design as major tenets of their work. However, the UR did make preventing social exclusion a major part of their work and, in doing so, proposed various design strategies to that end. From the perspective of social policy theory, this underscores how social policy does not necessarily reflect a consensus political view of the policymaking community.

4.7 The UR's Emphasis on Urban Green Spaces

While the UR emphasised public spaces generally, this thesis focuses on urban public parks specifically. It does so because the UR literature highlights public parks as useful venues for addressing social challenges. A close reading of how UR policy documents approach social exclusion unveils a case for why 'urban green spaces have a unique and underpublicized role' to play (DTLR, 2002: 184). In particular, there are three ways UR sees urban parks as uniquely suited to prevent exclusion and facilitate cohesion.

First, UR documents suggest parks are well positioned to draw a diverse and representative population. The House of Commons proceedings on the *Twentieth Report* explain that what is unique about 'parks is that they do not have what is called the threshold factor of other cultural institutions and everybody does feel free to walk into a park' (1999: Para. 45).[29] This is the idea that – more than other public institutions – parks are communal spaces, where 'all ages, gender, race and religions' feel comfortable being present (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 43). Unlike museums, parks do not have someone monitoring who enters and who exits. Unlike libraries, there is no assumption about the ability to speak or read English. Unlike shopping centres, there is no monetary cost involved. 'The special role

[29] Here the House of Commons cite Ken Worpole. Worpole was an adviser to the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and he served on the Urban Green Spaces Task Force.

of parks' is that they 'offer free and open access all day, every day, non discriminatory access' (DTLR, 2002: 199). This inclusiveness is key to facilitating contact and a sense of shared space.

Second, a few of the UR documents suggest parks can help gauge the severity of social exclusion. This is because 'social exclusion in society is mirrored by the underrepresentation of some groups of people among users of urban green spaces' (DTLR, 2002: 202). As CABE's *Community Green* report points out, access to urban green varies greatly by ethnicity: 'in areas where more than 40 per cent of residents are black or minority ethnic there is 11 times less green space than in areas where residents are largely white' (2010a: 4). The idea presented by DTLR is that looking at who uses and who doesn't use the park could indicate which groups are excluded, potentially excluded, or in need of attention. This 'visual representation' could show change over time, capturing the success or failure of neighbourhood renewal strategies or prevention strategies (DTLR, 2002: 199). This claim is particularly significant in light of the debate about how to measure social exclusion (see Chapter 3).

Third, UR documents went even further, claiming that parks could play a role in combating the economic dimension of social exclusion. 'Urban green spaces can, uniquely, be the catalysts for [the] wider community and economic spin-offs in a way that other neighbourhood facilities or buildings are unable to achieve' (DTLR, 2002: 199). Examining several case studies, the DTLR found that interaction at the parks generated economic opportunities for some and business partnerships for others. They concluded that this 'would not have happened if action had not centred around an individual park in the first place' (ibid.).

Those espousing the UR approach clearly believed its principles and methods could be helpful in preventing social exclusion and supporting social cohesion. The focus on parks

as a vehicle to combat social exclusion is a specific manifestation of the UR principles aimed at fixing the fragmentation of society and facilitating the building of a cohesive community. However, the UR literature did not simply assert this in principle; it set out specific design recommendations that could help achieve the goal of a more cohesive society.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has revealed how one area of policy can be influenced by the broader political discourse. In the UK, the policy discourse around social exclusion shaped the UR principles and guided its urban policy. In the US, where there was not a large political focus on social exclusion, the NU urban policy doctrine reflected different principles. The analysis in this chapter with evidence from policy documents, political speeches, urban literature, and interviews supports the hypothesis that the UK's emphasis on social exclusion shaped the principles guiding the UK's urban policy.

This chapter identified several subtle but significant differences between urban policy and urban movements in the US and the UK that were, otherwise, largely parallel. For example, the two movements focused their efforts on different segments of the population, with the US's NU emphasising the middle class and the UK's UR stressing the needs of those at the bottom of society's economic structure. Similarly, each movement had different visions of the ideal community they were hoping to create. NU sought to create dense and diverse communities whereas the UR envisioned an inclusive and cohesive community.

Importantly, these differences reflect differences in the political rhetoric of the US and the UK as well as different focuses of social policy. This supports a theoretical claim about social policy: that when a prominent politician emphasises a policy area or a social group it can have far reaching implications, including shaping a policy area that may seem distinct. For instance, Bill Clinton's decision to emphasise the 'forgotten middle class' may have

driven the NU choice to focus its initiatives on the middle class. Similarly, Blair's emphasis on social exclusion seems to have resulted in elements of that concept being incorporated into the UR principles. It is possible that policymakers incorporated the rhetoric of social exclusion because it was politically expedient without having to adopt initiatives to prevent social exclusion in practice. Chapter 5 has helped to clarify this possibility by considering specific design recommendations, the logic behind them, and whether they display a meaningful understanding of the concept of social exclusion. Chapter 6 will consider whether these recommendations were actually implemented.

Chapter 5: Design Recommendations to Prevent Social Exclusion and Promote Cohesion

'My job is about dreaming.'

Sitting in a sleek office, where much of the furniture has been laser-cut from recycled objects, this architect – 4UR-UK[30] – describes the earliest phases of designing a public space. If it is possible, he says, he often goes to the site to walk around and imagine what it could become. He says he walks the perimeter, explores the neighbourhood, and sits in the space with his eyes closed. 'I ignore what is there and try to see something else' (4UR-UK, 2013).

He takes whatever he's dreamt up back to his modernist office in the Fitzrovia district of London. On a narrow street dotted with architecture firms and design studios, he scribbles down his thoughts. He says that it is there – often far from the site itself – where he spends the rest of his time. That's where the process of making his vision into reality happens. He admits 'the fun part is the dreaming' when he's on site, but, he says, each design is also guided by 'the stipulations of the project and, of course, the policies of the place' (ibid.).

While each planner, architect, and landscape architect interviewed for this thesis had their own process for developing and refining a design, they all acknowledged that the process is a balance of their own creativity and local policies. Almost all of the design processes took place far from the site but surrounded by the documents outlining best practices, guidelines, and design recommendations. This chapter examines those 'policies of the place,' focusing on features that are linked to preventing social exclusion.

Even a cursory look at urban planning documents, best practice guidelines, and official architectural reports expose a jumble of design recommendations. Similar to the

[30] Interviewees were granted anonymity so they could speak freely. Coding for elite interviews is described in Appendix B.

critiques levelled at the conceptualisation of social exclusion and social cohesion as well as the social doctrines of the UK's Urban Renaissance (UR) and the US's New Urbanism (NU), the practical planning documents are strikingly disorganised. Writing in the UK context, Punter explains: 'New legislation has no sooner been digested than new White or Green papers have proposed more reforms' (2010: 4). In both the UK and the US, there are also multiple levels of policy and guidelines. For example, the UK's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) issued reports and influenced design at a national level from its conception in 1999 to its dissolution 11 years later. Simultaneously, local authorities and city councils set out their own specifications and design principles. Each department and each publication offered different, overlapping suggestions. As is particularly evident in the US, with the Congress of New Urbanism (CNU), there are also non-governmental groups publishing design guidelines and making recommendations.

This chapter strives to identify the design features that are consistently recommended to help prevent social exclusion and organise them into a single coherent framework. The thesis proposes that the results are best understood by a three-tiered schema: The Presence-Comfort-Interaction Framework or, more simply, the PCI Framework. This chapter is devoted to explaining this Framework and its theory of change. The chapter explores how the Framework was constructed, the logic behind each tier, and the design recommendations within each tier.

5.1 Two Sources of Evidence

The analysis in this chapter relies on two types of information. First, the foundation of the analysis draws on information from government reports, planning guidelines, and other official publications that incorporate design recommendations. These documents come from

all levels of government as well as non-governmental sources, such as the Congress of New Urbanism.

Chapter 4 established that the UK's UR emphasised the prevention of social exclusion and the promotion of cohesion as part of its social doctrine, whereas the US's NU did not. Thus, many of the following design recommendations are drawn from UK sources, with the US literature serving as a comparative reference. The differences between UK and US recommendations highlight which design elements were intended specifically to prevent social exclusion. The overlap between the two highlight design principles common to urban regeneration movements more broadly.

The second source of information – elite interviews – provides valuable insight into the logic behind the design recommendations as well as the recommendations' relationship to one another. These interviews were conducted with architects and designers in both the UK and the US, as well as policymakers in both countries who contributed to writing the design guidelines. They enable the analysis to move from a list of design features to a framework, where a 'theory of change' describes how design features are expected to influence users and how design features might prevent social exclusion.

5.2 Overview of the PCI Framework

The UR and NU publications contain many design recommendations along with the rationale for why a design choice is preferred and what it is intended to accomplish. However, these recommendations are scattered throughout myriad documents. Not only does this limit the ability to evaluate the comprehensive list of design recommendations aimed at preventing social exclusion and facilitating cohesion, it also makes it harder to understand the movement's theory of change. This thesis aims to address this gap by compiling and organising the recommendations as they relate to social exclusion.

The thesis proposes the PCI Framework as the best way to organise and understand the design recommendations intended to prevent social exclusion. The Framework has three tiers: (1) Presence, (2) Comfort, and (3) Interaction. The included and the excluded must be *present* in the same location in order for there to be an opportunity for inclusion. Both parties must be physically and socially *comfortable* enough in the environment to engage with a stranger who is not necessarily part of their community. And finally, there must be something that catalyses positive *interaction*, enabling both groups to overcome the initial barrier to engagement. Each of these steps contributes to preventing social exclusion. Figure 5.1 captures a simplified schema of the three tiers. Presence, the first tier, is at the bottom because it is the foundation and must be established before moving up to the second tier, comfort. The same is true moving from the second tier to the third tier. Indeed, interaction is at the pinnacle of the figure since it is the goal and most effective at preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. The arrow captures this process of building upon each previous layer.

Within each of the three tiers are two layers. The first layer includes conditions required to achieve the tier's objective. For example, a sense of *safety* is necessary for people to be *present* in a space. The second layer lists specific design features that can create such an environment. For example, well-designed lighting helps people feel safe. The schema at the end of the chapter presents these layers in more detail.

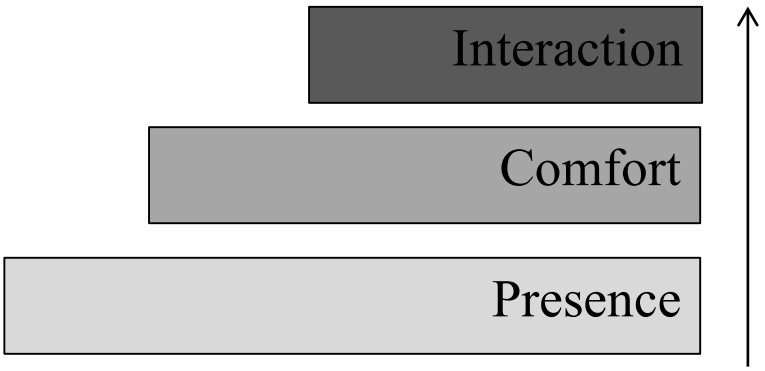


Figure 5.1: Schema of the PCI Framework.

5.2.1 The Human Experience

The PCI Framework focuses on the human experience. Interviewees and policy documents both

evaluated a park's effectiveness by how humans interacted with the space and their sentiments in response to the space. As one interviewee, 9UR-UK, put it:

> There is one measure of success: people.... [W]e think about materials and angles and other things, but the last question you ask is not: "does it look good on our website?" It is: "do people use it?" ... I want to know that it's become a place where people gather and ... where community happens (2014).

Others echoed this sentiment. 'Sometimes we get stuck in the details, but when you go home at night, you imagine the people who will use it and appreciate it' (4UR-UK, 2013). One UK architect was concerned that others – including many in the US, he said – forget about this goal: '[To them,] it's about history books or getting into a guidebook, not about the elderly woman who needs a seat where she can lean back' (8UR-UK, 2014). The UR attention to human experience seems important for four reasons.

First, social exclusion as a concept is focused on how individuals relate to one another. It aims to move policy efforts away from a singular emphasis on material deprivation to consider the various social dimensions of the exclusionary experience (Lister, 2004). Scholars have argued that, although this was the professed philosophy, it was not fully achieved.

> Despite the potentially multidimensional nature of social exclusion as a concept, a textual analysis of British government social exclusion discourse indicated prioritisation of "economic" dimensions of social exclusion over other forms of cultural exclusion (Morrison, 2003a: 142-143; also see Levitas, 2005; Stepney et al., 1999).

However, this research found that planners and architects did seek to address those 'other forms of cultural exclusion' by addressing the emotional and social experience in parks.

Second, both UR and NU principles emphasise the human experience. These urban regeneration movements assert that quality design derives its value from the human experience it creates. 'Good design of the urban fabric is not an end in itself, but a means to engendering feelings of wellbeing' (Shaftoe, 2008: 71; also see Sennett, 2010). Similarly, the

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions [DETR] writes that 'if [CABE] succeeds it will help to improve the quality of people's lives' (DETR and CABE, 2000: 5).

Third, centring the Framework on the human experience addresses criticism voiced against the socio-spatial exclusion literature. Their research was criticised for focussing too narrowly on spatial integration and neglecting the ultimate goal of integrating people (Cassiers and Kesteloot, 2012). This Framework keeps the focus on the people.

The implication of focusing on the human experience is that the recommendations are relevant to parks with different terrains and different users because they share the same objective: a positive experience for users. By contrast, if UR focused strictly on recommending design features, it would limit the generalisability of its work. As 1UR-UK warned, 'it is not easy to make one prescription for all sorts of situations' (2013). The importance of a specific context is also noted in a joint report by DETR and CABE, which states that:

> No two places are identical and there is no such thing as a blueprint for good design. Good design arises from a thorough and caring understanding of place and context (2000: 5).

By prioritising elements of the human experience relevant to most times and places, this Framework enables comparisons that are more broadly relevant.

5.2.2 Sequencing Presence, Comfort, and Interaction

Another key feature of the PCI Framework is that the tiers are ordered. Each tier builds upon the foundation provided by the previous level. Amin's research (2002) illustrates the importance of the sequence.[31] After the 2001 riots in the UK, the government asked Amin to examine 'intolerance and conflict in urban contexts where mixture had failed to produce social cohesion and cultural interchange' (Amin, 2002: 1). He identified problematic trends of

[31] It is Amin's work that is most often cited in cautionary warnings against using public spaces to facilitate social cohesion (for example see CABE, 2010a).

ongoing 'fear and antagonism,' concluding 'the depressing reality… [that] spaces tend to be territorialised by particular groups' (Amin, 2002: 2, 11; also see Amin and Thrift, 2002). He concluded that interactions in such spaces could lead to further antagonism. Thus, he warned against social integration in public areas. His work is reminiscent of conflict theory, explored in Chapter 2, and his findings demonstrate that positive interactions have preconditions. Comfort is important to establish before interaction. Without proper progression between the tiers, there is a danger of facilitating negative interactions marked by prejudice and antagonism and, thus, perpetuating exclusion.[32]

One interviewee expressed this concern, echoing the debate between conflict theory and contact theory. 'I have seen plenty of arguments break out in public places.... I think we [architects] are partly responsible' (9UR-UK, 2014). This interviewee argued that if a space was created carefully, confrontations could be minimised. Part of that involves creating a comfortable environment before encouraging interaction.

Despite the step-like ordering, the literature suggests design elements in each tier of the Framework have the ability to help prevent social exclusion. The lower two tiers – presence and comfort – generate passive contact between park users, which has the potential to facilitate a sense of belonging and inclusion. As discussed in Chapter 2, 'simple eye contact is sufficient to convey inclusion' (Wesselmann et al., 2012: 166). From the architectural perspective, Gehl labels such contact 'low intensity' and underscores its value (2011).

> Compared with the other contact forms, [low intensity] contacts appear insignificant, yet they are valuable both as independent contact forms and as prerequisites for other, more complex interactions (Gehl, 2011: 15).[33]

[32] A space is not helpful for combating social exclusion if people feel comfortable in an environment, but there is not a representative group of people present there. Otherwise, comfort only strengthens the existing homogeneous community. This example underscores the importance of the tier ordering.

[33] Granovetter's study of social networks goes even further, suggesting that weak ties are the most valuable form of relationship for 'diffusion' across social networks (1973: 1376). He explains that 'weak ties are more likely to link members of *different* small groups than are strong ones, which tend to be concentrated within particular groups' (ibid.; emphasis original). Weak ties are not explicitly linked to

Passive contact is the mechanism through which design elements that build presence and comfort can also prevent social exclusion.

5.3 The First Tier: Presence

Presence is the Framework's foundational tier. Both the potentially excluded and the potentially included must be physically present in the same location – at the same time.

Presence can be easily confused with proximity. However, this research reveals that presence means sharing a small geographic space, such as the same section of a park. Individuals can be proximate to one another, but in different spaces – one on a street and another in a shop, for example, or on two separate sides of the park. The residential mixing literature underscores the importance of presence over proximity. While some warn that social proximity might generate 'unrealistic expectations,' the potential benefits of policies such as pepper-potting, where there is a mix of tenants on each block and not just within a large neighbourhood, are generally acknowledged (Van Kempen and Bolt, 2009: 492; also see Wood, 2003; Jupp, 1999; Kleinhans, 2004). Presence, similar to pepper-potting, is the integration of diverse individuals at a micro level.

A question immediately surfaces: *who among the excluded and the included must be present?* The answer seems clear: everyone. Those at risk of exclusion must participate in one of society's 'key activities' – using public green space – at the same time as the broader population does (Burchardt et al., 2002). As Lister explains, 'the notion of social exclusion necessarily involves a relationship with the wider society' (2004: 88; also see Page, 2000). And this concept of 'everyone' repeatedly surfaces in policy documents and in the public's

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passive contact; however, the significance of the seemingly minor and trivial action or relation is core to both weak ties and passive contact.

conception of what it means to prevent social exclusion. For example, Birmingham's Social Inclusion Commission's report asked citizens what they thought inclusion was focused on:

> Recognising that Birmingham is a diverse place and asking the question "how do we make sure *everyone* is involved in shaping the future of the city?" (Mike Royal, The Lighthouse Group).
>
> Ensuring "that *all people* in Birmingham have the same opportunities to be full citizens of Birmingham (Lynne Wilson, Steering Group).
>
> Making sure that *all the citizens* of Birmingham have access to all the opportunities that *everyone* should have to live a good life (Brian Carr, BVSC).
>
> *Everybody*, whatever their background or whatever their interest, getting involved as much as they want to so that *everyone* in our society has a say, has a stake and has a future (Debbie Pippard, Barrow Cadbury Trust)' (2012: 5; emphasis added).

However, given the difficulty of attracting all members of all groups to public spaces at once, interviews and a close reading of urban design recommendations suggest another approach. Design documents highlight that members of certain groups may be better at preventing social exclusion and cultivating cohesion than other people. Women, for example, are often presented as a desirable group for promoting social cohesion. CABE's Community Green does a literature review which finds that women, who might become excluded, are particularly effective at using parks as a place to start forming connections and community (2010a). CABE's review suggests this may be the case for first-generation immigrant women, who can use parks as a way to make a bridge between their past and their new community.

> Nostalgia and opportunities to reminisce formed a strong theme.... [P]articular factors that trigger nostalgia are specific plants and the opportunities (especially for Asian women) in parks for social gatherings.... [One researcher] highlights gardening as particularly important in connecting first–generation Asian women with the past. The ability of landscape to trigger memories of something familiar helps facilitate a sense of belonging ... [and] regular encounters with different people can be seen as the beginnings of a community (2010a: 15; parentheticals original, brackets added for understanding; citing Topia-Kelly, 2004; Burgess et al., 1988).

CABE also found that when women from potentially excluded groups are present in a space, they can have a multiplier effect. Their inclusion can translate into the inclusion of their whole personal networks: 'engaging with black and minority ethnic women was an effective

way to also engage men and young people' (CABE, 2010a: 16).[34] In this way, women are seen as social connectors, who can help introduce parks to a broader community.

An interviewee also mentioned the importance of female users. Despite recognising that the ultimate goal is to attract *everyone* and not a specific group, the interviewee proposed that women could help achieve that goal:

> We say we want to create spaces for the whole community. But part of that is making sure one group does not come to dominate and define the place. We don't want the park to be seen as a teenage hangout or only a kid's playground.... In order to attract the whole range of people, we first attract women. They're often the ones deciding where their family goes and what they do ... and maybe where a community event will be hosted (8UR-UK, 2014).

The idea is that specific groups, in this case women, can help bring 'everyone' else into the same physical space. But the question still remains: how can the design of a park help create such presence? In the literature, two primary strategies – safety and edges – surface as important in ensuring the presence of both the potentially excluded and the included.

5.3.1 Safety

Safety concerns have featured prominently in both UR and NU. CABE writes that 'the main mechanism known to influence people's usage of open space, across all ethnic groups … is perceptions of personal safety' (2010a: 13). Similarly, the NU Charter states that 'the revitalization of urban places depends on safety and security' (2000a: Section 21).

Whereas the NU Charter discusses 'safety,' UR also addresses 'perceptions' of safety. Researchers are careful to acknowledge that the perceptions and reality of safety should be treated separately. The House of Common's *Twentieth Report* suggests that these two factors are equally important: 'Making parks safe, and making them feel safe, must be a priority for local authorities' (1999, Para. 97). Local authorities seem to understand this directive. For

[34] Black and minority ethnic communities are identified as groups that have struggled with exclusion in the UK. While such social divisions do not necessarily align with exclusion-inclusion divisions, discrimination and prejudice can prevent people from full participation and thus it is one way to identify where inclusionary efforts are needed (Witcher, 2003).

example, Birmingham found that when interviewing citizens and park users, ‘a conversation about crime was never far from the surface [...] fear of crime, as is the case in national studies, outweighs actual crime’ (Social Inclusion Commission, 2012: 15).

Several studies show that perceptions of safety are correlated with recreational use of parks (Stodolska et al., 2009; Gobster, 2010). If users feel that a park is unsafe, they will be less likely to use the park. Further, criminology research has found that ‘some crime and disorder incidents matter more than others to people in terms of shaping their risk perceptions’ (Innes, 2004: 336). A classic example is that a spate of spousal murders might not inspire widespread fear, whereas one abduction of a schoolgirl might generate pervasive safety concerns (Bottoms, 2007). This means that there can be a disconnect between safety, as measured by official crime rates, and a sense of safety. Qualitative research has found that certain environments or crimes made people feel particularly unsafe (Innes, 2004). The resounding conclusion was that ‘disorderly events occurring in public space’ are powerful ‘signals’ to residents that an area is dangerous (Bottoms, 2007: 551). Innes found that litter, graffiti, damage, public drinking, and ‘youths hanging around’ topped the list, whereas incidents such as local burglary are not regularly mentioned (2004). Some argue that this effect is exaggerated in parks, because – as the *Twentieth Report* explains – ‘in the past, parks were usually seen as safe places’ (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 93). As Thompson explains:

> The symbolism of the park as refuge or paradise is deeply embedded in our cultural histories and our psyche, and thus, crimes which take place in parks assume a shock value out of all proportion to the likelihood of such crimes on adjacent streets (Ward Thompson, 2002: 66; also see Ward Thompson, 1998)

This suggests that relatively small features are particularly important for perceptions of security.

Two approaches have emerged to address safety issues. On the one hand, authorities have increased monitoring and decreased freedoms within public spaces. In the UK, this has meant everything 'from legal controls, such as alcohol bans and dispersal orders, to increased surveillance through CCTV and police' (Shaftoe, 2008: 20). In the US, security concerns have 'been a centrepiece of the post-industrial American city, expressed in its fenced-off, policed, and privatised spaces' (Low et al., 2005: 2). Many in the UR and NU communities viewed such security approaches with a large degree of scepticism, calling them 'a series of exclusionary initiatives' (Shaftoe, 2008: 20).

On the other hand, the more inclusive response argues for natural surveillance, where park users observe the space around them, and their presence deters criminals. Both the UR and NU favour this approach. They argue that their philosophy of compact, mixed spaces inherently addresses security issues by creating community and accountability (Saville and Cleveland, 2003a, b). The NU Charter explicitly prefers this approach, stating that designs 'should reinforce safe environments, but not at the expense of accessibility and openness' (2000a: Section 21). The companion guide to the UK's Planning Policy Statement 1 explained that the 'Government's planning objectives has at its heart the need to plan for safe and sustainable communities' (Home Office, 2004: 7). The guide 'emphasises the importance of design' and highlights natural surveillance, offering case studies of parks that are 'naturally self-policing' (Home Office, 2004: 108; 55). CABE also suggests that natural surveillance can come when many people are present: 'a factor which contributes highly to a sense of safety is a visible presence of other people using a space, even the sound of people talking, laughing … confers a sense of safety' (CABE, 2011b: Section 8).

However, the challenge is that presence makes a place feel safer, but people are only present when they already feel safe. Thus, design features are required to create the initial sense of safety that attracts diverse populations. NU has been criticised for asserting 'the

importance of safety and security without specific advice on how this might be achieved' (Cozens, 2008: 432).[35] In contrast, UR champions the adoption of 'a positive approach to crime prevention through investment in good design' (CABE, 2004a: Section 9). In *Safer Places*, the UK's Home Office outlines 'seven attributes ... that are particularly relevant to crime prevention' (2004: 13). These include broad principles like 'places that are structured so that different uses do not cause conflict' and 'places that include necessary, well-designed security features' as well as case studies with specific implementations (ibid.). The UK Police have put forward dozens of guidelines in their 'Secured By Design' initiative aimed at Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Their work has had a significant impact on the UK's design guidelines and policies (Cozens, 2008: 437). Taking all the case studies and documents together, there are many important design features. However, two features emerge as absolutely necessary to create a sense of safety and, thus, presence.

The first important feature is lighting (DETR and CABE, 2000). CABE argues that 'well-lit spaces will deter anti-social behaviour' and enable natural surveillance (CABE, 2011b: Section 8). Not only does CABE recommend paths and structures be completely lit, but they also suggest that light can be used as an artistic feature, such as up-lit trees. Using light for artistic statements, CABE argues, has the psychological benefit of making a place feel even safer since lighting does not appear to be an explicit security policy (2011b). Updating the lighting can also help users perceive a place differently. 'Imaginative lighting, including from the buildings themselves, can be critical ingredients of strategies to reanimate previously inhospitable areas' (Home Office, 2004: 28).

However, the Home Office' report also advises caution, warning that 'lighting can also sometimes aid those committing offences' (2004: 28). And, similarly, Secured By Design

[35] Schneider and Kitchen, who provide one of the few reviews on this topic, agree, stating that NU's 'rhetoric and aesthetically pleasing results have not, to date, demonstrated much crime prevention substance based on evidence' (2007: 52).

believes that 'there may be circumstances, such as the lighting of remote foot paths across open spaces for instance, where lighting may encourage the undesirable use of the path' (ACPO, 2011: 8).[36] Despite these warnings, the consensus is that 'well-lit spaces are crucial in reducing the fear of crime' (Home Office, 2004: 28). However, in order to make sure it does not enable criminal behaviour, the reports suggest the lighting be well maintained and uniform, such that it does not create lighter and darker areas. 'The shabby appearance of lighting street furniture can send the wrong signal to the community and contribute to a cycle of grime, crime and decline' (ACPO, 2011: 12).

Second, clear sightlines are helpful in creating a sense of security. 'How a space is defined and divided will affect the site security' (CABE, 2011b: Section 8). Avoiding blind corners and improving directional coding – such as tactile paving and path railings – gives users the ability to predict path progression and adjust to any upcoming changes. Clear sightlines require that shrubs and trees are orderly. CABE strives for 'better maintenance of clear sightlines by cutting back overgrowth without affecting the natural character of the space' (ibid.). Elsewhere, CABE underscores the need for sightline maintenance by quoting a local resident:

> These park improvements have improved our quality of life. Where we were scared to walk in the park in fear of being robbed due to overgrown trees and hedges, we can now sit on comfortable seats and enjoy the open space and the flowers without being in fear (CABE, 2010a: 16).

Both NU and UR practitioners mentioned the importance of clean and clear sightlines for safety. However, the logic behind the design recommendations differed somewhat. 1NU-US explained that this approach draws on the design and maintenance philosophy that guides the Broken Windows Theory: 'small details make all the difference ... places that feel unkempt almost encourage problems' (2013; also see Kelling and Coles, 1996). When 9UR-

[36] ACPO is the Association of Chief Police Officers.

UK described the thinking guiding his use of clear sightlines, he emphasised the importance of natural surveillance as well as design. He used the analogy of navigating a human-sized maze. 'What do you want? Either to cut down the walls, so you can see what's happening. Or you want someone to be with you.... It's the same thing here, you want to know other people are there and watching' (2014).

In addition to facilitating a sense of safety through natural surveillance, clear sightlines and path coding has the added value of reducing the exclusion that visually-impaired individuals feel. Often people with no or low vision feel unsafe in public spaces. Clear path indicators make it easier for them to independently navigate parks, offering them 'equal ease and dignity' (CABE, 2010b: 2).

5.3.2 Park Edges

The edges – or the perimeter – of a park are another key determinant of whether the excluded and the included are present in the same place. Jane Jacobs – one of the people who inspired NU – first highlighted the role of 'edges' (1961). And while both UR and NU acknowledged the importance of edges, the two movements seem to have stood at the same point on the perimeter and looked in different directions. NU looks outward, focusing on parks' surroundings. UR also looks outward but the focus is inward, concentrating on the park's design elements along the perimeter. Indeed, both perspectives are important.

NU emphasises the importance of the having 'diverse' uses surrounding parks: businesses, shops, services, and residences. The implication is that mixed uses outside the park will translate into a diversity of users. As Jacobs explains, 'the mixture of uses of buildings directly produces for the park a mixture of users who enter and leave the park' (1961: 125). More recently, Talen has suggested that parks should be located where 'diverse populations cross paths', so that 'parks sit at the juncture of high diversity and high density'

(2008: 152, 162). 4NU-US says diversity of uses is ideal, but it is rare that an architect can influence this:

> More likely than not, we get a plot of land – like a parking lot – and convert it into a park. It'd be fantastic to control the surrounding area, but that's almost unheard of unless you are redeveloping a whole neighbourhood or building a new area (2016).

The UR emphasises how park design can entice both the included and those at risk of exclusion to enter the park. The UR and literature on convivial spaces identifies three design characteristics necessary for a successful park perimeter. All three features reflect Gehl's work on soft and hard edges: he argues in favour of soft edges where 'there is much to see and touch, providing many good reasons to slow down or even stop' (2010: 79).

First, the entrance is critical. The UTF and CABE approach park entrances slightly differently. The UTF seeks a smooth flow between city and park (1999), and CABE suggests creating 'a sense of arrival' (2005a: 17). Despite this difference, both approaches endeavour to generate what Whyte calls 'visual accessibility' (1988: 128) and what Gehl calls 'transparent' edges (2010: 78). The goal is that passers-by can 'see what is going on inside' (ibid.). The recommendations are to avoid high walls, narrow slit entrances, and steep stairs. A CABE focus group found that features that prevent 'views in and out' are a barrier to use (CABE, 2010a: 36).

Second, it is necessary for the park entrance to generate a sense of intrigue. UR recommends placing something interesting near an entrance. As Shaftoe explains:

> One of the psychological attractions of a good public space is the promise that it will satisfy our innate curiosity. We like to be intrigued by the possibility that there is more to a space than initially meets the eye and that if we move through it there may be further intriguing discoveries (2008: 55).

Jacobs advocates something similar, saying that 'if the whole thing can be absorbed in a glance' then people will neither enter nor return to the park (1961: 135). However, such intrigue does not need to be dramatic or complicated. It can take the form of planted beds, public art, or varying elevations and colours (Kelly, 2012). It can also include an interesting

auditory and olfactory experience (Shaftoe, 2008). Emphasising that 'the experience of the public realm is enriched by details,' DETR and CABE suggest that distinctive features should be placed near 'a point of entry' to attract the attention of pedestrians (2000: 26). These intriguing features must appeal to people of various different backgrounds and ages.

Finally, people attract people. 'People are spontaneously inspired and attracted by activity and the presence of other people' (Gehl, 2010: 65). 4UR-UK said he'd seen this in his work: 'People are social creatures.... You see a group gathered around a musician, you want to join for the music but partly just to be among the people. You want to be in the park partly for the nature and [partly] for the other people' (2013). Thus, the design of park perimeters should emphasise human presence. CABE research suggests that the visible presence of other people who feel familiar is perhaps most important to people who are socially excluded and at risk of exclusion.

> The ambience of a place – a combination of its design, management, and use – is more likely to have an impact on groups that experience exclusion in other walks of life, such as lesbians and gay men, women, disabled people, people from minority religions and cultures and from deprived social backgrounds.... [They will ask]: are there other people like me here? (CABE, 2008: 7).

This means that street furniture, particularly benches and tables, should be placed such that they are visible from the perimeter and onlookers can see people congregating (DETR and CABE, 2000).[37] DETR also advocates combining furniture placement with the intrigue element, suggesting that 'every item of street furniture is a potential work of art' (DETR and CABE, 2000: 26). The placement of activity spaces near park edges is also important for emphasising that other people are present. In an effort to include excluded groups, CABE underscores the need to support activities that are favoured by groups that may not always be considered or included. For example, focus groups found that 'young Pakistani[s] ...

[37] From the user's perspective, seating placed along an edge or near a 'pivotal point' is preferred because it feels more secure (Skjaeveland and Garling, 1997: 182-183). Gehl's work confirms this: 'the most popular places to sit can be found at the edges of open spaces' (2011: 156).

particularly wanted more sport facilities appropriate to their culture, asking for cricket and football as opposed to skateboarding' (CABE, 2010a: 37).

People not only attract other people to be present in the park, they also create a sense of safety through natural surveillance. Once people are present, the next task for designers and architects is to make sure they have a positive and comfortable experience.

5.4 The Second Tier: Comfort

The second tier of the Framework is comfort. Both the excluded and the included must feel comfortable – physically, socially, psychologically. The hope is that users who are comfortable spend a longer time in the park, return to the park and, during their time there, are open to contact that crosses social boundaries. Carr et al. argue that 'comfort, including psychological comfort, is a basic human need' (1992: 154). However, they worry that 'meeting the public need for comfort has not been a priority in public design' (Carr et al., 1992: 97). Before examining how UR designs for comfort, this section explores four broad issues that arise in this tier.

First, compared to the other two tiers, the notion of comfort is the least defined in the urban regeneration literature. The design and planning discourses do not have a particularly developed or precise vocabulary to describe the psychological state users might inhabit in a space (Shaftoe, 2008). Thus, different terms have been used to capture the goal of creating a comfortable environment that facilitates openness. For example, in UR, the terms 'belonging' and 'welcoming' are common. One of CABE's inclusionary objectives was to 'contribute to a more widespread sense of belonging [that] can foster good relations between, and within, communities' (CABE, 2008: 11). Another CABE report argued that 'when areas feel more welcoming ... people can engage with their surroundings and other people more comfortably' (CABE, 2011c: Background). A House of Commons report suggests green space should

generate a sense of 'harmony' (1999, Para. 43). In the literature on preventing crime through design, the goal is often to have users feel a sense of 'ownership' or 'pride' in their public spaces (Reynald, 2015). After working at CABE for five years, Sir John Sorrell wrote about how he wanted parks to offer 'a moment of delight' and be the 'kinds of places which will lift our spirits in a time of anxiety' (2009: i; 6). More recently, the Rethinking Parks initiative saw parks as 'a place for rest and recreation' (Rethinking Parks, 2016: 10). All of these words suggest users should be at ease and comfortable in the space.

Second, the comfort of individual users helps create the conditions mentioned in Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (1954; see Chapter 2). In particular, comfort helps fulfil the requirement of equal status between those at risk of exclusion and the included. When people are comfortable, they are able to enter a situation with confidence and engage with one another on a level playing field. Amin uses the term 'belonging' to explain this; he suggests that a sense of 'belonging in a multiethnic society ... influence[s] the capacity of individuals and groups to interact fruitfully as equals' (2002: 2).

Third, both the UR and NU have sought to facilitate comfort in a public space by involving users in the design process of that space. The NU Charter advocates 'reestablishing the relationship between the art of building and the making of community, through citizen-based participatory planning and design' (CNU, 2000a: Introduction).[38] Charrettes, or intensive community design and planning meetings, are a common strategy employed by NU (Kelbaugh, 1997). In the UK, the Urban White Paper suggests that the community should play a big role (ODPM, 2000) and the House of Commons put forward a similar philosophy: 'Greenspace issues are capable of uniting the whole community and can be the focus of

[38] This type of public participation is rare in the planning and design field. 'New Urbanism has advocated far more openness to public participation than is typical in the conventional, developer-managed land development process' (Ellis, 2002: 282).

community development and local regeneration fostering a sense of community pride' (1999: Para. 43).

However, just as the UR and NU conceptions of community differ, the UR approach to public input emphasises inclusion and cohesion, in addition to community involvement. In the UR, 'inclusive design places people at the heart of the design process' (CABE, 2006: 6). They believe that this method helps 'foster community *cohesion* through greater resident participation in decision making and an enhanced role for community groups' (CABE, 2007: 4; emphasis added). With this in mind, CABE developed 'Spaceshaper' as a method to help designers 'gain a better understanding of how [a public space] works for different people' (CABE, 2007: 1). In addition to public forums and surveys, this approach involves specific groups of users moving through a space and capturing how comfortable they feel. This strategy grew out of CABE's acknowledgement that:

> People experience the built environment differently according to who they are (CABE, 2011c: Background).

In particular, this method has been used to understand what enables individuals at risk of being excluded to feel comfortable in an environment. For example, in Burgess Park, CABE worked with a group of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals to 'explore the links between sexuality and public space' and determine how a space could be designed to make the excluded users feel more comfortable (ibid.).

Fourth, it is important to note that both UR and NU have, at times, suggested the need for exclusionary spaces in order to facilitate inclusion. This approach originates from the belief that the presence of others can at times make a person feel uncomfortable. As 1UR-UK said:

> Public parks are places where sometimes different groups keep each other out. It is not some hidden hand of some authority that does that. It is, for example, in a place where a group of street drinkers congregate, they basically keep everybody out (2013).

It is this type of scenario that led the movements to recommend exclusive spaces for certain excluded groups, such that they feel comfortable being in the public sphere. In the US, one architect suggested that it is best to 'give everyone their own territory with an area to mix [such as] walkways or roadways' (3NU-US, 2013). The goal is to offer 'lots of space for different cultural groups or different ethnic groups' to call their own, so there was not any competition (ibid.). In the UK, CABE focus group research found some people argued that there was 'the need for young Muslim women to socialise away from men' and, thus, wanted female-only spaces in parks (CABE, 2010a: 59). Similarly, they found that 'fear of dogs, particularly among African-Caribbean and Asian groups', was a major inhibitor to user comfort (CABE, 2010a: 14).

These scenarios are reminiscent of research discussed in Chapter 2 by Durrheim and Dixon on beaches in South Africa (2005) and Clack et al. on university cafeterias (2005). Their research found that territorialised environments failed to cultivate positive interactions, prevent exclusion, or facilitate cohesion. This suggests that the strategy of creating exclusive spaces to enhance comfort would counteract efforts to create social cohesion. Indeed, one UR interviewee expressed confusion and disapproval at such an approach. 'The whole point is that people from different backgrounds learn to share a space. To intentionally create separate spaces for them is profoundly counterproductive' (4UR-UK, 2013). This serves as another reminder of the step-like progression of the PCI Framework. There must be diverse presence in order for comfort to be the next step toward combating social exclusion. The sub-sections that follow introduce three particular design techniques aimed at creating a comfortable environment that have emerged out of urban design publications in the UK.

5.4.1 Nature

For NU, cultivating nature has been primarily linked to environmental goals, which is referenced in its Charter as 'the conservation of natural environments' (CNU, 2000a: Introduction). However, for UR, the benefits of a natural green space 'are not just aesthetic, they are economic, social and environmental, with complex interrelations between these issues' (CABE, 2005b: 6). CABE emphasises 'the social benefits of trees' (CABE, 2011d: Introduction). Contact with the natural environment has been shown to improve one's mood (Barton and Pretty, 2010; Roe and Aspinall, 2011) and reduce one's stress and anxiety regardless of age, sex, or socio-economic status (Ward Thompson et al., 2012; Grahn and Stigsdotter, 2003; Hartig et al., 2003). It has even been shown that more time spent in a green space is linked to longer lifespans, indicating reduced health inequalities between income levels (Mitchell and Popham, 2008). Further, in Chicago's low-income neighbourhoods, spending time in a natural environment has been shown to mitigate crime and aggression (Kuo and Sullivan, 2001a, b) as well as improve self-discipline (Faber Taylor et al., 2002). Some studies suggest that being present in green spaces might alter physical systems, having a positive effect on things like heart rate and the secretion of hormones linked to stress (Ulrich et al., 1991; Roe et al., 2013).

CABE's design recommendation is for park landscapes to create 'tranquil' and 'serene' 'places of relaxation, recreation, refreshment, and relief' (CABE, 2005b: 5). A House of Commons report extols 'the benefits [of] daily contact with plants and animals,' concluding that plants can be 'effective relievers of stress' (House of Commons, 1999: Para. 36, Para. 38). DTLR's *Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Open Spaces* report recommends including natural elements in a park:

> Vegetation is clearly vitally important to people, being repeatedly discussed across all type of focus groups and in all ten locations.... Water was the second most frequently mentioned element after vegetation that people wanted in their "ideal" space (2002: 69).

5.4.2 Symbolic Statements

Second, symbolic statements are an important vehicle for making the included and the potentially excluded feel at ease in an environment. As Low et al. explain, 'symbolic ways of communicating cultural meaning are an important dimension of place attachment that can be fostered to promote cultural diversity' (2005: 200). CABE acknowledges the subjective nature of comfort, advocating for park designs that 'remove real or imagined barriers' (2008: 3). Symbolic statements are particularly relevant in public art installations, including statues and monuments, that can be a powerful force in acknowledging or further alienating certain groups (CABE, 2008; Sharp et al., 2005). CABE suggests that symbolic statements can include less permanent park features. For example, CABE suggests 'signs of inclusion such as the rainbow flag' should be used to demonstrate openness to people of all sexual orientations (CABE, 2011c: Background). Seemingly mundane design features can also function as signs of inclusion. Regular seating – with armrests and backrests – as well as adequate provision of public toilets help people who are younger and people who are older, as well as people who are disabled feel welcomed and comfortable (Carr et al., 1992; Greed, 2003; Holland et al., 2007; Gehl, 2011). Further, different sports facilities help make users feel comfortable and welcome, especially if they cater to groups that are at risk of feeling excluded (CABE, 2010a). Ultimately, CABE hopes that a park will itself 'act as a symbol of regeneration and community cohesion' (CABE, 2005b: 38).

5.4.3 Social Comfort

Finally, in addition to physical comfort and a personal sense of comfort, it is also important to have a comfortable social environment. Indeed, Whyte emphasises the social dimension in his discussion of seat design, saying, 'ideally, sitting should be physically comfortable ... it's more important, however, that it be *socially* comfortable' (1980: 28). Spacing is a key design feature in generating social comfort. The distance between two

people not only reflects how comfortable they feel, but can also help create comfort and interaction. The significance of distance in social relationships is evident in English idioms and phrases: close friendships, distant relatives, pulling away, or keeping someone at arm's length. Usually, the more comfortable someone feels, the closer they are willing to be to the other person (Gehl, 2010). Hall studied cultural concepts of space and developed a scale for communication distances, captured in Figure 5.2, which has been used by architects and planners (1990; also see Gehl, 2010).

Distance	Social Dynamic	Type of Interaction
0 – 45 cm	Intimate distance	Strong emotions are expressed
45cm – 1.2m	Personal distance	Contact between good friends and family members
1.2 m – 3.7m	Social distance	Engage with acquaintances
Above 3.7 m	Public distance	Formal or one-way contact

Figure 5.2: Distances for different types of social interactions (Gehl, 1990).

Scholars have acknowledged that the comfortable interpersonal distance can vary based on characteristics such as gender and age (Aiello, 1987; Ozdemir, 2008). Further, Hall asserts that cultural norms are the most significant factor in determining a comfortable social distance (1990). He divides the world into two broad groups: contact cultures and noncontact cultures. These groups are largely defined by geography, with North America and Northern Europe both being noncontact cultures. While there are likely differences among immigrant populations, research has largely focused on difference between countries rather than between populations within the country (Sorokowska et al., 2017).

In parks, the goal is to create spaces at the 'Social Distance,' allowing the space necessary to feel safe but also to enable contact (Shaftoe, 2008). When there is fixed seating, people tend to be more accepting of proximity because it is established as the convention. Whyte suggests that theatre layouts demonstrate the power of design to make individuals feel comfortable despite having less personal space. 'In theatres, strangers sit next to each other without qualm.... [C]onvention makes it quite tolerable' (Whyte, 1980: 36). CABE

incorporates such considerations into a park's 'spatial strategy' suggesting the same logic can help put park users at ease (CABE, 2009c). UTF also explores proximity in public spaces and the 'pyramids of intensification' as people comfortably occupy more intimate spaces (1999: 64).

5.5 The Third Tier: Interaction

The third and final tier is interaction. This tier is the pinnacle of the PCI Framework. In both the policy literature and in the academic literature, facilitating interaction between the potentially excluded and the included is a key milestone in preventing social exclusion. When Commins explored what it meant to belong in a society, he concluded there were four systems of integration that were equally important: (1) civic integration, being equal and engaged in the democratic system, (2) economic integration, having monetary resources and having your contribution valued, (3) social integration, partaking in the social services offered by the state, and (4) interpersonal integration, having a network of support and interactions that cross boundaries (1993). This tier focuses on the fourth type of integration: interpersonal.

The notion that interpersonal interactions, between the included and those at risk of exclusion, can break down social barriers and prevent social exclusion also underpins Intergroup Contract Theory, or ICT (see Chapter 2). Specifically, two of the requirements for successful ICT interactions can be present within this tier: (1) that contact should be focused around a common goal or interest, and (2) that contact should inspire cooperation, not competition. These conditions for ICT help ensure that the interactions are positive and, thus,

counter social exclusion. If the interactions become combative, they might entrench prejudices and generate a feeling of social isolation (Allport, 1954; Wessel, 2009).[39]

While passive or low-intensity interactions can happen within the first two tiers, the final tier includes active, positive interactions. These are primarily verbal exchanges, but they can also include shared experiences or collaborative work, such as athletic games or communal gardening projects. The UR literature emphasises the importance of interpersonal interaction. The House of Commons' *Twentieth Report* states:

> Urban Parks and Green Spaces are ... important for enabling social interaction and fostering community…. [T]he provision of public parks helps to reduce the inequalities, poor health and social exclusion in deprived areas and reduces the inherent tension between the many social and ethnic groups (1999: Para. 32).

DTLR writes about the 'benefits' of urban green space, arguing that first and foremost it:

> Contributes significantly to social inclusion, ... provides neutral ground available to all sectors of society and can becomes the focus of community spirit through the many and varied opportunities provided for social interaction (2002: 12-13).

CABE argues that green spaces offer the 'opportunity for small, personal interactions' and they are particularly focused on 'greater interaction between different ethnic groups within the community' (2003: 11-13).

When the UR literature discusses social interaction it often references two types of interactions in public parks: unorganised and organised encounters. DTLR's work suggests that both types of interactions are important:

> Meeting people, either causally bumping into them – perhaps when walking a dog – or specifically meeting friends, was mentioned across all types of focus groups but was especially important for young people and women from ethnic minority backgrounds (2002: 41).

'Bumping into them' constitutes unorganised encounters that are usually informal, unplanned social interactions. Although these interactions are often unanticipated, Dines et al. report that

[39] A large literature explores positive intergroup contact compared to negative intergroup contact. Negative contact strengthens prejudice even more than positive contact reduces it (Aberson, 2015; Barlow et al., 2012).

users can find these interactions particularly 'salient' (2006: 15). Their findings in East London also suggests that such interactions are often positively perceived and can be used to facilitate both bridging capital and community cohesion.

> The opportunity for informal interaction was one of the most valued aspects of public open spaces.... These encounters often helped to maintain loose ties between neighbours and familiar strangers but could also provide the first step towards friendships (ibid.).

'Specifically meeting friends' matches the second type of interaction: organised events. These can be both institutionally organised or self-organised. Events have the potential to draw people to an environment who may not otherwise frequent public spaces. Thus, if targeted correctly, organised events can bring the included and those at risk of exclusion into the same environment. Dines et al. suggest that self-organised events, such as sports activities and walking groups, have 'far greater social significance' than events organised at an institutional level (2006: 16). CABE argues that park design can facilitate self-organised events, through creating spaces for various purposes. For example:

> Community gardens and city farms bring people together from different ages and cultures, and thus help to create a real sense of neighbourhood. Once again, however, quality counts: the better the design of the space in question, the better the quality of the social experience. In this regard, it has been found that big, bland spaces on housing estates fail to offer the same opportunities for social cohesion as more personal spaces (2003: 13).

5.5.1 Triangulation

Regardless of whether the interaction is spontaneous or planned, unorganised or organised, the primary design mechanism to encourage active interaction is triangulation. Triangulation is a 'process by which some external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk to each other as though they were not' (Whyte, 1980: 94). The idea is that, once the included and the excluded are present and comfortable, there is something in the environment that provides a shared experience as well as an appropriate conversation starter. The stimulus can be anything from a physical object to a compelling

view, or from a sporting event to a performance in the park. Since Whyte's initial research, the concept of triangulation has been adopted in the design and planning communities (Tarbatt, 2012; Talen, 2008; Low et al., 2005).

In the UR literature, three categories of design-based triangulation have emerged. First, 'sculptures can have a strong social effect ... particularly the kind that people like to touch' (Whyte, 1980: 95-96). Indeed, public art installations have figured prominently in urban regeneration initiatives aim at community cohesion:

> In the UK ... public art appears to [be] ... a keystone in their regeneration schemes.... Key to the creation of social cohesion is the belief that public art, or the processes through which it is produced, is able to create a sense of inclusion (Sharp et al., 2005: 1003-1004).

In enumerating ways that 'public space generates community cohesion', CABE suggests that public art facilitates contact particularly well when it is designed and placed such that it 'is fun to look at and interact with, appealing to adults and children alike' (2003: 13).

Second, parks can be designed to highlight breathtaking views or interesting perspectives (Whyte, 1980). The plants and benches might be arranged such that the sunset is framed or the city skyline is visible.[40] A UK architect echoed this sentiment: 'If there is something unique about the site, you want to emphasise it. And you want to do that in such a way that it draws people to the place and it gives them a chance to talk about it' (4UR-UK, 2013).

Third, spaces that specifically facilitate shared activities can be designed into a park. Shared activities include sports, games, playgrounds, and performances. As noted above, CABE highlights the ability of activities like urban farming to 'draw in the local community' and act as a 'key method of engagement' (2010a: 16). The idea is that as potentially excluded and included community members share advice and tools, they might form bonds that help

[40] While sharing a scenic site with fellow park users provides an opportunity for interaction, it should be noted that this design strategy can serve multiple purposes and is not only used for triangulation (Shaftoe, 2008).

prevent social exclusion. CABE also found through a literature review that athletic areas can be critical to facilitating social cohesion and avoiding tensions:

> Green space plays a role in easing racial tensions and bringing diverse groups together, for instance to play football or cricket, and promoting integration by providing space for organised and causal encounters with neighbours and different ethnic groups (2010a: 17).

As mentioned earlier, it is important that various types of sports are included, especially sports popular among marginalised groups. CABE highlights the role of sport in a quotation from a local resident:

> One thing that got us together was football. We grew up playing together, it brought us together. No type of racial tension here, it was simply because of that football pitch. Several years ago it got demolished for flats. It's a real shame. Now there's lots of tension between whites and Asians (2010a: 42).

CABE's recommendations align with ICT research that suggests intergroup sports teams and community gardens are uniquely effective at combating prejudice (Saldivar-Tanka and Krasny, 2004; Chu and Griffey, 1985; Miracle, 1981; Patchen, 1982; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006).

The presence of children is also a mechanism for generating shared activities and stimulating sustained interactions among both children and parents. For two reasons, this strategy is particularly well suited for combating social exclusion. First, a single interaction can lead to future 'play dates', offering the opportunity for repeated contact (Gleeson and Sipe, 2006). Second, children are at a key developmental stage where prejudices are especially malleable and, thus, contact may help prevent stereotypes and exclusion in future generations (ibid.). Talen argues that it is important for 'collective space [to] specifically target children ... since children have been found to be an essential ingredient in forming social connections' (2008: 160). CABE found that in some public places 'more than 30 per cent of activity was due to the presence of children' (2003: 15). CABE underscores the value of this approach, stating that minority populations, who may not otherwise use parks, use

playgrounds (2010c). Further, DTLR suggests providing green spaces for children may be particularly good at attracting marginalised groups – even those without children. A telephone questionnaire showed that 'if a children's play area, presumably of good quality, was provided then it would encourage all the groups of non- and infrequent users to use urban green spaces more frequently' (DTLR, 2002: 71).

5.5.2 Park Furniture

A final design feature – separate from, but complementary to, triangulation – is the use of park seating to position people to encourage interaction. 'The existence of good opportunities for sitting paves the way for the numerous activities that are the prime attraction in public spaces' (Gehl, 2011: 155). However, benches and seats are often arranged in a linear formation. Design experts – including individuals with a NU background – suggest that this is counterproductive in facilitating interaction (3NU-US, 2013). Instead, a semi-circular bench or seating that forms a 90-degree angle is ideal; it allows individuals to look at one another during an interaction:

> It's very difficult to have a conversation on a linear bench with more than two people. And so, as a result, you have to create a space where people can establish that eye contact but also that might make it easier for them to converse back and forth. So you might take a look at creating a space that has, what I would call, a U or C shaped space and that people can sit across from each other (ibid.).

It is also helpful if the seats, and thus users, 'face the action' since that enables triangulation (Whyte, 1980: 35). UR architects also enthusiastically discussed ways of rethinking seating in public spaces:

> We took the park bench as a given for a very long time. Just in the past two decades we've realised we can be creative – really creative ... rethinking what is comfortable to sit on and how to make people stay a while and chat with anyone else who is around (6UR-UK, 2013).

5.6 Conclusion

Chapter 4 raised questions about whether urban policy experts and practitioners in the 1990s were truly committed to preventing social exclusion, or whether they were opportunistically using the term because of its political power. While the PCI Framework cannot definitively determine the extent to which experts grasped social exclusion theory, it does demonstrate that these experts clearly considered the issue of social exclusion and offered a series of design recommendations aimed at preventing it.

However, their approach has not been succinctly presented in one place. Instead, it is sprinkled throughout various reports and documents: several case studies filed in one paper, a few design principles outlined in another. Further, much of the information has survived solely in the heads of architects and designers. This chapter has synthesized the design recommendations into a coherent framework that articulates the logic and the strategies employed to prevent social exclusion. The PCI Framework is summarised in Figure 5.3.

Tier	Strategies	Design Features
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity

Figure 5.3: Summary of the PCI Framework.

The Framework starts from the premise that the UK is facing a divided society and argues that 'parks and green spaces provide a unique focus for local community ... and in so

doing generate the sort of community contacts and cohesiveness that are considered an integral part of success' (DTLR, 2002: 180).

In several ways, the PCI Framework reflects the social exclusion literature. For example, the Framework emphasises the human experience as an integral part of design and public spaces. This echoes efforts to move away from measuring material deprivation toward an acknowledgment of the experiential dimension of deprivation. Further, the multiple tiers of the PCI Framework reflect the literature's emphasis on the multidimensionality of social exclusion. The elements of social exclusion are distinct but related, and they build on one another.

It is still an open question whether the planning and design experts' propositions were implemented. And, if they were, did they have any effect on preventing social exclusion and facilitating social cohesion? The following two chapters explore urban, public parks in an effort determine the impact of the design on these social dynamics.

Chapter 6: Implementation

Among the first steps in designing a space: a site visit.

The last step: it varies, but it is almost never a site visit.

'I rarely see the final product,' said architect 4UR-UK from his bright office in London surrounded by building plans (2013). 'Projects are often completed long after I've done my [part of the] work.' While 4UR-UK acknowledged that, ideally, he would visit the parks and buildings he designed, he said it is often unrealistic. 'If I'm not part of the inaugural event, it's hard [to visit]' (ibid.).

Architects and planners on both sides of the Atlantic conceded that they rarely visit the places they design, let alone participate in the implementation or a post-implementation evaluation. One of the planners who helped create Canal Park in Washington, DC is based in Philadelphia. She said visiting the final product is often infeasible: 'we work on all continents so it's impractical to spend time at the site' (3E-CAN, 2016). She acknowledged this can make it challenging to learn which features worked, and which did not. When thinking about 'lessons learned,' she said, her firm is forced to rely on 'anecdotal evidence' and 'the knowledge of our veteran designers' (ibid.). She articulated a flaw in this approach:

> It's a big problem because there are always surprises…. Some items might be used in unexpected ways. And things we thought would be popular aren't … But we are not there to see the surprises (ibid.).

She attributed the lack of a final visit or assessment to resource constraints. On the rare occasion where designers do conduct a post-implementation evaluation, she said: 'I shudder to think about the cost' (ibid.).

This issue is not unique to architects and planners; it can also be true of policymakers. The focus is often on the policy process and planning. It is rarely on post-mortem evaluation. However, in 2005, members of the Urban Task Force reconvened to do something rare. Six

years after releasing their pivotal, design-led plan – *Toward an Urban Renaissance* – the group conducted an independent evaluation of how their report had been implemented. They produced *Toward a Strong Urban Renaissance*. The evaluation was noteworthy partly because it was so atypical and partly because it was 'a strongly critical report on the implementation of their recommendations' (Punter, 2010: xiv; also see Rogers, 2005). However, this report largely focused on policy progress, and the team decided 'they did not have the time or space to explore the particularities of urban design' (Punter, 2010: xiv).

This chapter will do what architects, planners, and policymakers acknowledge is important, but do not consistently have the resources, time, or space to do: examine whether the philosophy guiding, and the recommendations underpinning, the Presence-Comfort-Interaction or PCI Framework are evident when urban regeneration projects come to fruition. The PCI Framework – developed in Chapter 5 – compiled design recommendations from policy documents and design experts that were focused on preventing social exclusion and facilitating cohesion. Did these recommendations stay on the paper where they were written, or were they incorporated into park designs? Did the rhetoric of the policymakers, architects, and urban designers translate into substantively different physical spaces?

The hypothesis is that UK park designers and landscape architects were more aware of a park's potential role in preventing social exclusion and facilitating cohesion. Thus, the prediction is that parks in the UK have incorporated more of the recommended design features from the PCI Framework than park designers in the US. Testing this hypothesis requires examining the design of the eight case study parks selected in Chapter 3.

Contrary to the hypothesis, this chapter finds a large degree of heterogeneity among the UK parks. Although these parks were all designed in a political context that emphasised combating social exclusion, the design recommendations to facilitate that goal were present in some parks but not in others. In the US, there was not the same emphasis on social

exclusion. However, some of the PCI Framework recommendations were still observed in the US park designs. Despite variation among parks on both sides of the Atlantic, the UK parks still aligned more closely with the PCI Framework. Of all eight case studies, the two parks that most closely adhered to the recommendations – Birmingham's Eastside Park and London's Mile End Park – are both in the UK.

This chapter considers each of the eight parks, evaluating where the PCI design recommendations were incorporated and where they were not. In many of the parks, some features matched the recommendations, while other features in the same park did not.

This chapter evaluates the tiers of the PCI Framework for each park. At the outset, the goal was to determine which – if any – features recommended by the PCI Framework were found in the park. At the conclusion of the analysis of design features for each park, a table broadly summarises the park's consistency with the PCI Framework. In the table, a plus sign (+) denotes the park largely incorporated the recommended features. A minus sign (-) indicates the park generally did not have the recommended features. Finally, a slash (/) is used when the park had some recommended elements but other features were missing.

In order to evaluate each park, this chapter primarily relies on the information gathered in Detailed Descriptive Mapping (DDM). As explained fully in Chapter 3, the researcher moved through the park noting physical features with a particular focus on elements emphasised by the PCI Framework. The resulting notated maps and written descriptions highlight relevant features of each park. The DDMs were supplemented by architectural plans and site maps.

The fact that the findings are contrary to the hypothesis provides an opportunity for investigation. Elite interviews with designers, landscape architects, and park employees shed light on why some parks adhered to many of the PCI recommendations and others did not. This analysis yields two contributions to social policy theory.

First, considering the high degree of variability and the different explanations offered in interviews, this chapter's findings contribute to research on *policy conversion*. The study of conversion explores how places that adopt the same policy on paper can execute the policy very differently in practice.

> Conversion describes changes in implementation that occur without formal policy revision. It is, in short, change driven by the deployment of existing policy levers in new ways, rather than the revision of those policies through normal procedures of collective political decisionmaking (Hacker, 2005: 46; also see Thelen, 2003).

Findings from the UK parks suggest that there are three primary ways to explain the implementation variability. First, the PCI Framework and policies to prevent social exclusion were highly susceptible to conversion because of their ambiguity. Second, there was a large degree of bureaucratic discretion and a large degree of variability in political will among front-line agents. Finally, there was a limited degree of accountability among those tasked with implementing the PCI Framework.

Second, this chapter finds that some parks in the US incorporated features of the PCI Framework that would have been expected in UK parks – and were found in some UK parks. While certain UK and US parks included the same features, the reasons they were included seem to differ. Some scholars refer to this phenomenon as *equifinality*, where the same outcome emerges from multiple different causes. 'Perhaps three different independent variables (X1, X2, and X3) all cause Y, but they do so independently of each other and in different ways' (Seawright and Gerring, 2008: 300).[41] This chapter determines that some of the PCI Framework features found in US parks came about due to economic motivations rather than the social considerations exhibited in UK parks.

This chapter starts by considering each of the eight parks and whether the PCI recommendations were incorporated. Drawing on elite interviews, it explores why each park

[41] 'Equifinality' is often discussed in the context of comparative case study methodology.

followed the path that it did. Finally, the chapter considers the parks collectively, seeking to understand and explain the variability in a way that is useful for social policy scholars and policymakers. It is important to note that this chapter does not consider whether the relevant design features had the intended impact on users. Instead, Chapter 7 considers how park users interacted with the PCI features and with each other.



6.1 London's Mile End Park

Before the redesign process in the 1990s, the area of London that would soon become Mile End Park included various 'disparate and fragmented parcels of land' (CABE, 2011a: MEP Design Process). The recreated park succeeded in, 'for the first time, uniting the spaces in one continuous whole' (ibid.). The hope was to achieve the same objective in the surrounding community: unify the different segments of society into 'one whole community' (ibid.). However, according to the PCI Framework, in order for the park to achieve this, users must be present, comfortable, and interacting with one another.



Image 6.1: At most entrances, green structures welcome and orient users (map courtesy of Gardner Stewart Architects).

6.1.1 Mile End Park: Presence

According to the PCI Framework, the first element in creating presence is ensuring park edges are inviting. Since Mile End Park is long and narrow, the perimeter is large, and the DDM for Mile End Park found significant

variation along the edges (2015).[42] However, the majority of the edges matched the PCI Framework prescription: they were visually transparent, accessible, and intriguing.

Many of the activity facilities are located near the street, and passers-by can see what is happening. This is perhaps most evident at Revolution Karting, which offers outdoor electric carts, as well as at the basketball court, outdoor exercise facilities, and a children's play area set just to the north of Mile End Park Leisure Centre.

Near the park entrances, there are large green signs welcoming and orienting users, as well as reminding them to 'be kind to other users' (see Image 6.1). This seems to reflect CABE's suggestion that it is important to create a 'sense of arrival' (2005a: 17). Additionally, The Green Bridge, which crosses over a busy road, was envisioned as 'deliberately (and successfully) making a statement' to drivers and pedestrians below, almost like an invitation to visit (CABE, 2011a: MEP Evaluation). The bridge's design is such that a park user may not even realise they are on a bridge over traffic. Instead, it looks like a narrow hill, with thick trees and foliage continuing on either side of the path. In one design element, the park has achieved two PCI recommendations: it is intriguing and could entice users into the park, while also creating a sense of tranquillity and comfort for users.

While many of the park edges align with PCI recommendations, some edge design features run counter to the PCI Framework. The DDM notes that two sections of the park's edge have tall fences and in one section 'there are few – if any – activities visible from the sidewalk'. The less permeable edges seem to be concentrated in residential areas on the north and south of the park, while the stretches of the park near commercial establishments and the Tube stop are highly permeable.

[42] DDM notes are cited throughout Chapter 6. They were collected at each park as discussed in Chapter 3. DDM notes, similar to research notes and interviews, are not included among the references because they are not publicly available. Elite interviews are summarised in Appendix B.

The second component of presence is safety, often created through clear sightlines and good lighting. Throughout Mile End Park there are clear, well-lit paths. While the undulating elevations make it hard to see too far ahead, the sloping ground is generally gradual. The DDM did not identify any blind corners or unexpected hills (2015). There are also maps and signs placed throughout the park. The primary exceptions to the clear sightlines are tunnels that connect sections of the long, thin park across roads and under rail tracks. However, these tunnels are brightly lit and either tiled (see Image 6.2) or filled with colourful graffiti, images that are encouraged and maintained by the park management (CABE, 2011a).



Image 6.2: The tunnels in Mile End Park are well-lit and well-maintained.

6.1.2 Mile End Park: Comfort

Mile End Park generally provides for the physical comfort of its users according to the PCI Framework, which emphasises features such as the availability of public toilets and the ease of using paths. The only exception is that some sections of the park do not have an abundance of seating. In one section, tree trunks are provided as seating. While these are good for social comfort, allowing user discretion in how close to sit to other users, they offer limited physical comfort. The DDM notes ‘the stumps are low and lack armrests’ which could make it hard for some users, notably people who are older or disabled (2015).

Symbolic statements of comfort are often evident through items such as sculptures, monuments, plaques, and flags. The DDM identified art scattered throughout the park that did not seem to target any specific user group: a stone boulder cut at a sharp angle or iron cut-outs of farmers and a horse placed in a field (2015; see Image 6.3). There are also plaques

commemorating and celebrating local history, recalling what the park looked like in the mid-1800s.

However, not all of the symbolic statements in London's Mile End Park were generic. The DDM identified two design elements that may be particularly appealing to specific user groups (2015). Two 'artistic graffiti' walls and a small track for Revolution Karting seem geared toward teenagers and young adults. Other features – such solar and wind powered lights and earth-sheltered buildings with natural cooling systems – might appeal to environmentally-conscious users (see Image 6.3).

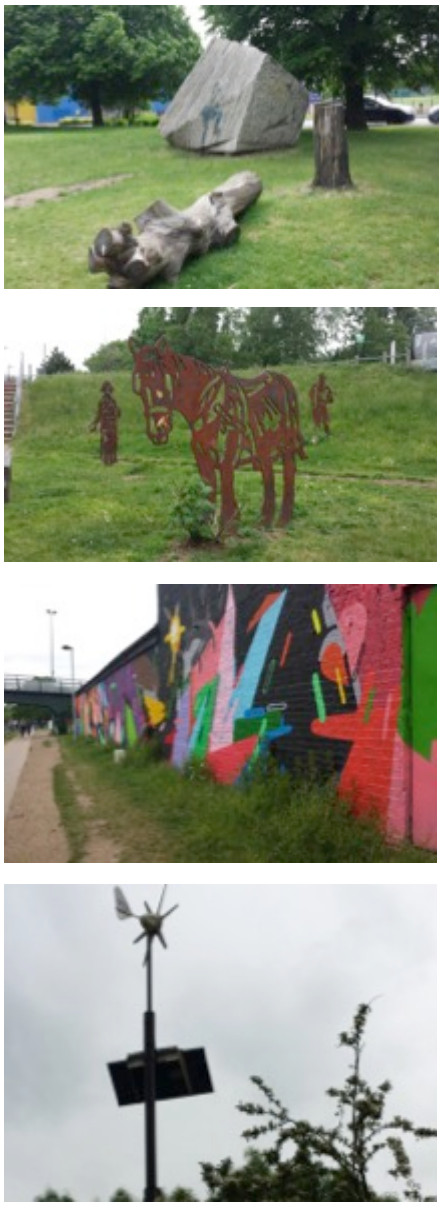


Image 6.3: Mile End Park has both generic art as well as symbolic statements that may be targeted to attract certain groups of users.

In terms of nature-inspired comfort, the DDM documents greenery throughout the park (2015). In addition to the river that runs along the western side of the park, there are a few contemplative water features including a fountain with circular paths around it just south of Mile End Road, a pond north of Mile End Road with banks suited for sitting, and an ecology park with a marsh-like pond. Much of the greenery is well-tended, with closely mowed lawns. However, the DDM noted a few sections of the park that appeared less tended (ibid.).

6.1.3 Mile End Park: Interaction

The final tier of the PCI Framework focuses on user interactions. Seating is seen as an important element in allowing sustained interactions. Traditional benches, with all the sitters lined up in a straight row, are not viewed as conducive

to conversation. Instead, as Chapter 5 explored, movable seats, benches facing one another, and semi-circular benches are preferable for facilitating interaction. While there are traditional benches in Mile End Park, the majority of the seating options noted in the DDM are shaped such that users can face one another (2015). There are semi-circular benches, picnic benches, and benches that form a square. Where there are the traditional benches, they are positioned such that the users are facing an activity – whether it is a children's area or a sports area. This fits with the PCI theory that benches facing action allow for triangulation, where users can interact about whatever they are observing.

Triangulation is highly desirable in the PCI Framework. Indeed, throughout much of London's Mile End Park there are spaces designed for group activities or shared experiences that facilitate triangulation: spaces for sports facilities, places to do graffiti, areas for dogs, and several children's play areas. In or around most of these areas, there are benches such that observers can interact with each other near the action.

6.1.4 Mile End Park: Overview

As Table 6.1 shows, Mile End Park's design largely incorporated recommendations from the PCI Framework. Indeed, CABE holds up Mile End Park as a success story, highlighting the park administration's effort to target specific groups to help prevent social exclusion. 'Use of the park, especially by young people, has increased enormously. Best of all is its greater use by families and single women, especially elderly folk' (CABE, 2005a: 16). It also highlights Mile End Park's safety strategy focused on lighting and foliage maintenance, saying the park 'has the feeling of being well cared for' (CABE, 2011a: MEP Evaluation). These 'improvement[s] ha[ve] enabled pedestrians to enjoy twenty-four hour access with lighting throughout the main part of the park' (CABE, 2005a: 15).

A review of the park's Management Plan suggests many PCI features were purposefully included in the park design (Tower Hamlets, 2016). For example, the plan

emphasises the importance of having activity spaces near points of entry. 'Facilities such as playground, wildlife area, picnic and church are close to main gates and paths' (Tower Hamlets, 2016: 25). Further, the park director, Mike Rowan, writes that efforts to include individuals on the fringes of society are not limited to design techniques. He highlights the importance of Community Rangers who function as 'ambassadors' and 'encourage more and wider populations to use the park' (Rowan, 2010: 43). The idea is that their 'visual presence' helps to create a safe and comfortable environment and the various programmes they run help to generate interaction (ibid.). 'Community rangers are able to interact with all park users' and facilitate 'interaction between different users' (ibid.). Rowan acknowledged that 'this is very much a long-term strategy that depends on building a positive relationship over a long time' (ibid.).

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	+
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	+
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	+
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	+
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	_
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	+
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	/

Table 6.1: Scoring how well the design of London's Mile End Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

An interview with a park employee who focuses on 'community engagement' further underscored the park's commitment to a social mission (1E-MEP, 2015). He noted that the

park's Management Plan referenced the borough's Community Plan and sought to advance efforts 'to reduce inequalities, foster strong community cohesion and provide strong leadership' (Tower Hamlets, 2016: 56). 1E-MEP said, 'a good number of people talk [about the mission] … but here it's happening' (2015). He attributed this commitment to members of the Mile End Park Partnership, who set the initial vision and approach. 'Nobody forced them to do this' (ibid.). In his experience, an outside body had neither insisted they take up this mantel, nor checked retrospectively to see if they had followed through. He acknowledged that certain features, like community forums during the design process, were standard. However, he insisted the borough had done more than required, attracting hundreds of people to offer input, and training staff on facilitating interactions. He ascribed the commitment to a social mission to those working on the ground: the front-line agents. While a single source is insufficient to substantiate this claim, 1E-MEP's experience is consistent with other expert interviews and invites further inquiry.

6.2 Birmingham's Eastside City Park

In Birmingham's Big City Plan, the city presented its vision for redeveloping a large section of its city centre: Eastside. The plan argued that 'the heart of Eastside's regeneration is Eastside City Park' (Birmingham City Council, 2011: 21). They envisioned 'a world class space for local people' (Birmingham City Council, 2011: 3). The analysis in this section found that the design of Eastside City Park's mostly reflects the principles in the PCI Framework.



Image 6.4: Eastside City Park curves through city blocks, combining several different plots of land (map courtesy of Patel Taylor, an architectural practice).

6.2.1 Eastside City Park: Presence

While Eastside City Park is smaller than Mile End Park, it has a similar composition. Combining discrete parcels of land, the park is long and thin (see Image 6.4). Similar to Mile End Park, this allows for a large degree of variability along the edges. Some of the abutting roads are busy – notably, Park Street has active bus stops and a high-rise hotel on the west side – and other streets are quiet – such as Curzon Street on the southeast side. One consistent edge feature in Eastside City Park is the high level of visual transparency. The pavement flows smoothly into the park and the park's narrowness ensures activities are visible from the edges. As the DDM for Eastside City Park notes, the park's entrance near Park Street is 'distinguished only by a change in the pavement from cement to stone and by slim posts that prevent vehicles from entering the park' (2015).

One feature makes this park's edges highly distinctive: the main entrance to a large building – Millennium Point – is inside the park. Although it is commonplace to have small buildings inside a park's confines – whether a café, a gym, or a community building – Eastside City Park has a very large structure along its edge. Millennium Point houses facilities for Birmingham City University and Birmingham Metropolitan College, Birmingham Science Museum, a cinema, and several other businesses. This building does not simply abut the park; its main entrance requires building users to walk through the park, becoming park users. The architectural plans call this "The North Promenade," and the DDM notes: 'the shortest possible path from the pavement to the [Millennium Point] entrance requires users to walk nearly 50 meters through the park' (2015).

In addition to transparent and engaging edges, parks must create a sense of safety in order to ensure users are present. Eastside City Park does this: it has straight, wide, and well-lit paths. Even where the landscape design create distinctive spaces, they do so without blocking a user's ability to see other parts of the park. For example, the DDM says, 'the canal

feature (with 21 jet streams) divides a shady sitting area from the grassy opening; however, it is low enough that it does not interrupt the visual field' (2015).

6.2.2 Eastside City Park: Comfort

For physical and social comfort in Eastside City Park, there are public toilets, shaded areas, as well as a lot of seating. There is significant variability in the seating options. Some benches having armrests and others have backrests; one bench forms a whimsical curlicue, and another is long enough to allow discretion in determining the social distance that is most comfortable for seated users. However, the park does not have moveable chairs, which offer the highest degree of discretion.



Image 6.5: The main piece of public art in Eastside City Park is made up of four illuminated pillars with a leaf pattern cut into the metal, depicted in the top photo (photo courtesy of Patel Taylor). In several locations in the park, there are bushes and trees pruned into geometric shapes (photo courtesy of Timothy Soar) and there are traditional benches that face each other, allowing for conversations.

In terms of symbolic statements, there is one prominent art installation in the park: four large metal rectangular-section structures with an intricate leaf vein pattern (see Image 6.5). The columns embody a CABE-supported strategy of providing creative lighting that improves visibility without highlighting the need for lighting (CABE, 2011b). Other elements throughout the park, including the children's play area and tables for ping-pong or table tennis, encourage young and active users.

Eastside City Park uses water and greenery to create a relaxing and comfortable environment. Both the fountain near the pub and the narrow canal along the entrance to Millennium Point make audible water sounds. The greenery in the park is lush, although it is

also manicured. Some trees are sculpted into perfect, equally spaced rectangles (see Image 6.5).

6.2.3 Eastside City Park: Interaction

Many of Eastside City Park's benches face the park's hubs of activity, enabling triangulation. Outside the Millennium Point building, there are benches with backrests that encourage users to sit opposite one another. There are also semi-circular benches. Many of the traditional linear benches are arranged such that users can face each other (see Image 6.5).

Distinctive views and public art are not focal points of the park. However, there are several areas for shared activities: the fountain, the table tennis area, and the children's play area are spaces designed for people to be communally active or interact with other spectators.

6.2.4 Eastside City Park: Overview

The design of Birmingham's Eastside City Park generally aligns with recommendations from the PCI Framework (see Table 6.2). A review of city planning documents as well as interviews with park employees suggest that the city pursued both economic and social goals in creating the park. In Vescovi's book, *Designing the Urban Renaissance*, he references these dual motives:

> [Eastside City Park] is one of the few projects promoted by a Core City to plan a park of a certain consistence in the central area, conceived as the main spine of the new settlement … [the park was] justified by the city council not in ecological terms but rather for its economic and social return' (2013: 149).

An interview with the official at the Information Desk inside the Millennium Point building confirmed these economic and social goals. 'The city invested quite a bit in making this a hub …. [M]y sense is it's trying to showcase Birmingham as a contemporary – modern – place … but it's also working to make it into gathering place [for the local community]' (1E-EAS, 2015). The park sought to attract the local community by offering free exercise classes, the interviewee said, as well as through its design decisions. Most notably, 1E-EAS said that

incorporating Millennium Point's main entrance into the park design has appealed to business leaders and attracted a whole new group of park users (2015).

However, Birmingham's Social Inclusion Process stressed the need for more parks and more open space across Birmingham (see the Green Paper's Commitment Four: Connecting People and Places, recommendation 4.3; Social Inclusion Process, 2012). On their digital platform, leaders of the Social Inclusion Process expressed concern that while the design of Eastside City Park may help prevent exclusion, the location does not facilitate that goal:

> Splendid though it sounds, how effective will it be in addressing the above Social Inclusion recommendations? Our research revealed that many residents were looking for more local green spaces. We know that many people don't come into the city centre very often as travel costs, especially bus fares, are an obstacle. So, will this new park fill the stated need for more community space? (Fairbrum, 2013: Will it fit the bill?)

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	/
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	+
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	+
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	+
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	-
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	+
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	+

Table 6.2: Scoring how well the design of Birmingham's Eastside City Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

This dilemma highlights how broad goals and general guidelines can lead to disagreements about where and how to implement new initiatives. Programmes that allow for discretion are more susceptible to this than highly prescriptive policies (Hacker, 2005).

6.3 London's Greenwich Millennium Village (GMV) Park

While GMV boasts of offering an 'inclusive society' and a 'real community' (GMV, 2014: The Vision), the park at the centre of the development does not incorporate many of the tenets of the PCI Framework.

6.3.1 GMV: Presence

The park is centrally located in the neighbourhood, but its edges do not follow the recommendations for generating user presence. They are neither transparent nor intriguing. On the west side, the park's entrance is near a commercial hub, yet it is not visible from the shops. Instead, users must pass through a narrow walkway between two tall buildings to access the park. Residential buildings overlook the park, yet a lake makes it challenging for residents to enter the park directly. On the southern side, the park is visible from a busy road and accessible from the pavement. However, there is nothing intriguing about the park from that perspective. Users simply see a large open field. The DDM notes: 'there is no perimeter activity and no noteworthy landscape design besides a smattering of dandelions' (2015). Along the northern and eastern side of the park is the River Thames. A paved pedestrian path follows the river bank. However, the path is not part of the park; a tall wall and thick brush prevent users from moving between the path and the park. Instead, users must pass through the Ecology Park building to enter the wetlands or across a nearby boardwalk to access the park.

Once a user is in the park, most of the paths are clear and straight. There is good lighting and tactile paving, making it accessible to individuals with visual impairments.

However, on some of the internal, wooded paths the plant life along the paths is thick and not maintained. Per the DDM, 'creeping plants extend into the path, encroaching slightly' (2015).





Image 6.6: Three benches, located at the star on the map, have their backs to the path and look out at an open field (map courtesy of GMV.

6.3.2 GMV: Comfort

The DDM found few places for park users to pause and sit (ibid.). While there are some traditional benches – with backrests but without armrests – there are not many of them. There are no monuments, flags, or art pieces making symbolic statements. The primary exception is the Ecology Park, which is at the centre of the broader park. It has plaques informing users about its wildlife and ecosystem. This section of the park highlights the importance of environmental issues and likely appeals to environmentally-conscious users.

The greenery in Greenwich Millennium Village's park appears to be left largely untended, offering a natural appearance. Besides a large mown field, the DDM found no evidence of regular maintenance (2015). This contrasts with the greenery near the commercial areas of GMV, which has planted flowerbeds and pruned trees. In terms of water features, the park's design does not incorporate the River Thames. However, two other bodies of water – a lake and a marshland – are incorporated into the park, and boardwalks skirt the lake.

6.3.3 GMV: Interaction

There is neither public art, nor a children's play area, nor areas specifically designed for shared activities or social gatherings. There are no notable vistas from the park, despite its location on a bend in the River Thames (DMM, 2015). GMV's park is noteworthy for not

having opportunities for interaction. For instance, there are three benches positioned near a path. However, instead of facing the pathway, they face a grassy area. The DDM notes: 'this is a surprising choice since there is no clear action in the field and the benches are so close to the path' (2015; see Image 6.6).

The main exception is the Ecology Park building. When open, there are activities facilitated by the staff and volunteers. These events can be pre-arranged or spontaneous, but this space is indoors and not integrated into the park's outdoor space.

6.3.4 GMV: Overview

The park at the centre of GMV is unique among UK case studies in the extent to which its design does not correspond to the PCI Framework recommendations (see Table 6.3). Interviews with multiple employees of the Ecology Park and a sales representative at

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	_
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	_
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	/
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	/
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	_
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	/
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	_

Table 6.3: Scoring how the design of GMV's park incorporated PCI Framework recommendations.

GMV suggest a lack of political will and differing motivations may explain the limited design focus on preventing social exclusion and encouraging cohesion. Interviews with Ecology Park employees indicate that 'environmental conservation' and 'regenerating the bio-diversity of these wetlands' – along with environmental education – were the primary goals (2E-GRE, 2015). With construction cranes in the background, they expressed concern about the surrounding development, as well as a lack of knowledge about the building plans: 'we just hope they don't encroach too much' (4E-GRE, 2015). In contrast, the sales representative knew little about the park or future plans for it. 'I can't tell you what is in store for it' (1E-GRE, 2015). Instead, she was well-versed in the neighbourhood's development plans and 'rare' opportunities for new growth so close to central London (ibid.). This suggests that while advertising for the development emphasised the cohesive community and the focus on inclusion, the main stakeholders and front-line agents were focused on either economic or environmental goals rather than social goals.

6.4 London's Thames Barrier Park

Thames Barrier Park is in London's burgeoning Royal Docks area. A rectangular, nearly square plot of land, this park has a different design from the other UK case studies. Although several of its features align with the PCI Framework, its overall record is mixed.

6.4.1 Thames Barrier Park: Presence

Sandwiched between the River Thames, two large housing complexes, and a busy street with a rail station, Thames Barrier Park is not located in a pedestrian-friendly area. To get from the DLR (Docklands Light Railway) stop to the park, a user must pass through a car park and go up a steep flight of stairs (see Image 6.7).



Image 6.7: The park entrance from the Docklands Light Railway stop.

The residential complexes that flank the park are six or seven storeys tall and, in both developments, the apartments are oriented around a courtyard or side garden. While many of the units overlook the park and their proximity to the park is highlighted in advertising materials, it is not easy to travel from the apartments to the park. Indeed, the majority of the park's perimeter is lined with thick bushes that are three or more metres tall. In the corners, there are narrow breaks in the green wall for users to enter the park. The park has neither transparent edges nor visual accessibility (Gehl 2010; Whyte 1988).

Once inside the park, there are two types of paths (DDM, 2015). There are straight, paved paths: four run along the perimeter of the park, and two bisect the park diagonally. These are all well-lit and easy to navigate. A second type of path is defined by a difference in grass lengths. Some grass is left un-mown and has grown tall, while other strips of grass are closely cropped to clear a green path. These grass paths run parallel to the diagonal, paved paths. Most of the trees in the park are young and relatively small. Thus, almost all the sightlines are clear within the park, although hedges prevent users within the park from seeing the world beyond it (ibid.).

The one exception to the generally clear sightlines is the Green Dock, which is a sunken garden of carved hedges that runs diagonally across the park. The garden is sunken; thus, sightlines are limited. In addition, the hedges are carved into waveforms that rise and fall, meaning that sometimes a user's peripheral vision is blocked. This sunken garden is unlit and is generally closed at nights (ibid.).

6.4.2 Thames Barrier Park: Comfort

While there are large portions of the park without benches, a short wall along the perimeter paths serves as seating for park users. However, the wall does not have backrests or armrests for users who need or prefer such assistance. Another limitation is that the park design provides limited opportunities to sit in the shade. According to the DDM, this may be

because ‘many of the trees are young and small’ (2015). However, there are two structures that provide shade: the overhang outside the café and a structure by the River Thames. In the outdoor portion of the café there are moveable seats, allowing users to determine their own social distance.

The Green Dock garden and the outlook to the Thames Barrier are the two main symbolic statements in the park. Both celebrate the country’s relationship to water and the area’s shipbuilding history. This symbolic statement does not seem targeted towards a particular group. However, a children’s area and a basketball court cater to a younger audience.

6.4.3 Thames Barrier Park: Interaction

The namesake of the park, the Thames Barrier, is easily visible from the park. The hulking metal structures do not move most days, but they are a spectacle. Most of the benches near the barrier are facing ‘the action’ and, thus, encourage triangulation. The café also has movable chairs which facilitate interaction. However, as noted above, the seating at Thames Barrier Park is limited. For example, there is no seating in the children’s play area (DDM, 2015). And, with the exception of the café chairs, the park design does not facilitate triangulation through seating or park furniture.

The various activity spaces – the children’s area, the café, the basketball court, the Green Dock, the Thames Barrier viewing – are spread throughout the park. With little proximity, there are few opportunities for interaction between the different groups. Even within a given activity space, triangulation may be challenging. For example, the Green Dock allows users to walk up and down its length, observing the ever-changing hedge patterns. However, the narrow paths mean users cannot easily pause for a conversation. The DDM found the café and surrounding grass most suited to triangulation, with moveable chairs and

shade (2015). However, near the café, 'there is no obvious shared activity to observe for triangulation,' it noted (ibid.).

6.4.4 Thames Barrier Park: Overview

London's Thames Barrier Park succeeds at incorporating some PCI recommendations – particularly comfort features – while falling short in providing features that support presence and interaction (see Table 6.4). An interview with one of the gardeners and groundskeepers suggests that this may reflect internal tension between two different priorities. 1E-THA said that it was 'remarkable' that the park was built at all, given the contaminated soil that had to be cleaned up (2015). He appreciated that the park was constructed amidst housing complexes, saying that it has proved a popular gathering spot for people from all parts of the neighbourhood. According to this expert, it has exceeded

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	_
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	-
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	+
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	+
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	/
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	+
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	_

Table 6.4: Scoring how well the design of London's Thames Barrier Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

expectations: ‘This park was not built for this many people’ (ibid.) Yet, he predicted the Greater London Authority would not keep it as a park and instead bow to the need for new housing:

> Someone has to buy it eventually. It’s very valuable. We heard whispers maybe another three, three to four years – I don’t know…. Who is going to force them to keep it open when they need housing? It’s a shame (ibid.).

This implies that a desire to serve to social needs of the neighbourhood is in conflict with the housing needs of the city – and that no authority or formal body has sought to preserve the park as a space that can potentially prevent social exclusion.

6.5 Chicago’s Millennium Park

First among the US parks in this chapter is Millennium Park. It is nestled in downtown Chicago on land that was formerly a rail yard. Now a lush park, it is made up of various distinct spaces or ‘rooms’. Most of the ‘rooms’ in Millennium Park have a structure or a piece of art by a prominent artist at the centre. The architectural style varies greatly from a French Renaissance style near Michigan Avenue to a contemporary design in the Lurie Garden room.

6.5.1 Millennium Park: Presence

As a Chicago Architecture Foundation docent explains, ‘in a city of thousands of intersections, Millennium Park is the ultimate intersection and the best place in Chicago to people-watch’ (Tanz, 2017). Millennium Park is a rectangular plot located between busy intersections with edges constantly bustling with activity.

On one of the four sides, Michigan Avenue, the park design has transparent edges with significant perimeter activity. Pedestrians can easily veer off the pavement and up a few wide steps to Crown Fountain in the park. Just a few metres down, the park features an ice skating rink and restaurant. Above the street, but visible from it, is the Cloud Gate sculpture. However, according to the DDM for the park, the edges of the other three sides of the park are less transparent (2015). Their entrances lead users up a set of stairs. The DDM noted that entrances seem to correspond to the type of street: Michigan Avenue has 'a significant amount of pedestrian traffic'. The other abutting streets 'are dominated by car traffic' (ibid.)



Image 6.8: On many of the paths in Millennium Park there are ledges along the side that double as benches and dividers.

Once inside the park, the paths are wide, well-lit, and accessible. There are some high hedges used largely to distinguish between the park's rooms, but they do not interfere with the sightlines. Many of the paths have low walls on either side that can function as benches (see Image 6.8). The result is a clear separation between the walkways and the greenery.

6.5.2 Millennium Park: Comfort

Millennium Park has public toilets, smooth paths, and plenty of seating. Much of the seating is concentrated in the 'rooms' and facing the activity. For example, the plaza surrounding Cloud Gate has a line of picnic benches, scattered tables and stools, and a perimeter of traditional benches.

In terms of symbolic statements, three types of symbols emerge from the park design that seem to be aimed at building the park's prestige. First, the prevalence of world-renowned architects and designers – such as Frank Gehry and Anish Kapoor – appears to be a statement about the relevance of Chicago as a global attraction. Second, the park has elements of classical design reminiscent of Roman and Greek architecture. This is perhaps most evident

in the Wrigley Square room where Doric columns are arranged in a semi-circle (DDM, 2015). As park signs acknowledge, this is a replica of a monument that stood on the site in the early to mid 1900s. This draws a connection to ancient times, suggesting the park is of historic importance. The third set of symbols highlight the City of Chicago. This is evident in both Cloud Gate, where the city's skyline is reflected and turned into art, and the Crown Fountain, where faces of typical Chicagoans light up the glass-covered towers. All of these symbols are locally focused but not targeting a specific user group(ibid.).

The park has plenty of greenery. Thick grass spreads out on the Great Lawn, orderly trees line many open spaces in the park, and richly planted beds run down the middle of wide paths. The Lurie Garden offers a densely-planted sea of wildflowers and grasses. The DDM notes that 'there is a sense that a user can escape the city in this corner of Millennium Park' (2015).

6.5.3 Millennium Park: Interaction

With the exception of picnic benches and a few stool-and-table pieces, the park's seating does not facilitate eye contact and conversation between users. However, much of the seating is positioned such that users can observe park activities. For example, a ledge surrounding Crown Fountain functions as seating and has the potential to facilitate triangulation (DDM, 2015).

Millennium Park also has several interactive features that are well-suited to enable conversation. At Crown Fountain and Cloud Gate, users can either play in the water or watch their changing reflections. Since Crown Fountain is suitable for all ages, it provides the opportunity for interaction across demographic categories.

Finally, the DDM notes that the park's design frames impressive vistas of the city that may facilitate interaction (ibid.). If the Chicago skyline were a performance, the entire park would be front row seating. The park designers have made one space – just a few metres long

and directly beyond the Cloud Gate sculpture – the best location to view the skyline. There, users are elevated and congregate to see the panoramic view.

6.5.4 Millennium Park: Overview

Although Millennium Park's design was not guided by the policies and guidelines underlying the PCI Framework, its design features align with some of the recommendations (see Table 6.5). However, archival research and interviews suggest this is not because there was a subtle social mission driving the park's design. Instead, there were two primary motivations: economic and political. From an economic perspective, the goal of Millennium Park was to revitalise a key segment of downtown that had been used primarily for parking. 'The hope was that it would bring tourists and businesses and redefine the city's image – and it has,' said 4E-MIL, who helps oversee the park (2017). He pointed out that the park recently received the distinction of being the most-visited tourist attraction in the Midwest and among

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	+
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	/
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	+
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	+
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	_
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	+
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	/

Table 6.5: Scoring how well the design of Chicago's Millennium Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

the top 10 in the US (see Johnson, 2017). When the park opened, a Chicago Tribune article implied that then-Mayor Daley had hoped for this: ‘ “This park,” Daley says, “is destined to have a huge impact” ’ (Jones, 2004). Both 4E-MIL and one of the main architects, 1E-MIL (2013), emphasised how important the park was to Mayor Daley. ‘He saw this as a gift to the city…. [I]t was something that wouldn’t get buried, like in a history book’ (4E-MIL, 2017). It would become part of his political legacy. Both 1E-MIL and 4E-MIL mentioned that the appeal to the philanthropists, who helped fund the park’s construction, underscored the potential economic and political boon of a grand park in the heart of Chicago (2013; 2017).

6.6 Chicago’s Seward Park

Seward Park is located in a densely populated and rapidly changing neighbourhood of the city. Unlike most of the other case studies, Seward Park is an old park that was redesigned. This section considers features of its redesign.

6.6.1 Seward Park: Presence

Two edges of Seward Park abut busy streets with substantial foot traffic. The other sides of Seward Park are on quiet side streets or directly border either a residential building or a school. Surrounding the entire park is a visually permeable fence. Passers-by can see into the park, but they must enter through a designated entrance. The DDM found that, ‘the park design seems to be focused around the two busy streets’ (2015). At the back of the park there is a chain-link fence. Near the busy streets, the fence becomes more elegant steel railings, with a circular pattern (see Image 6.9). The entrances near the well-trafficked



Image 6.9: The fence around Seward Park is a simple chain-link fence in the back of the park but by the main streets it is a more formal fence, as seen in this picture.

streets are framed by brick columns on either side and there is a large fountain near the busiest corner, creating a sense of arrival.

The activity in Seward Park is not concentrated along the perimeter. To the contrary, there is a large mown lawn as the focal point of the park. The children's play area is in a shaded section on the far west side and the sports facilities – basketball, tennis, baseball, and multi-purpose fields – are behind a park building, away from the main roads (ibid.).

6.6.2 Seward Park: Comfort

There is seating distributed throughout the park. Around the main lawn are traditional benches with armrests and backrests. The benches are located in the shade, and the design of the seating prevents individuals from lying down but helps those who need assistance sitting and standing (DDM, 2015; see Image 6.10). Along the building – owned by the Chicago Park District, which offers users water and public toilets when it is open – there is also a line of seats built into the wall.

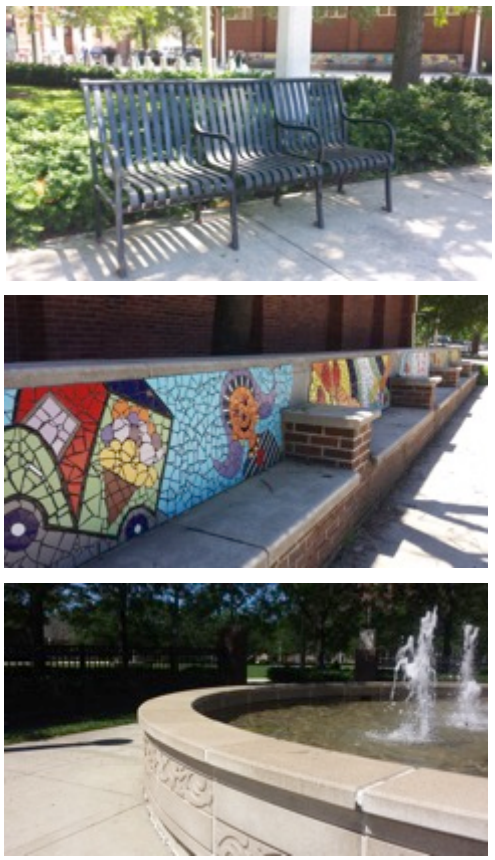


Image 6.10: Top: The park benches have armrests that prevent users from lying down. Middle: Colourful mosaics offer largely generic imagery. Bottom: The fountain is located at a busy intersection and is not designed in such a way that children can play in the water.

On the wall seating, the back is a colourful mosaic. This is perhaps the most figurative art in the park however the mosaic's imagery does not target a specific user group: flowers, an ice cream truck, and cheery, multi-cultural faces. None of the images relate specifically to the neighbourhood or the city (see Image 6.10). The sports facilities target users who tend to be younger and active. The playground is inviting to children and families (ibid.).

In terms of nature, trees line the perimeter of the park near the main streets, the sports facilities, and the playground. These trees act as a buffer, offering the users a degree of protection from the surrounding traffic. The corner fountain, mentioned above, is surrounded by a low wall making it impossible for users to interact with the water (ibid.; see Image 6.10). Located at the busy intersection, the fountain highlights the park's presence to passers-by but it does not serve as source of tranquillity to park users.

6.6.3 Seward Park: Interaction

A large oblong lawn, surrounded by wide paths and seating, is at the heart of the park. This lawn offers the community a space to host special events. However, the design itself does not encourage interaction among the users. The benches do not face one another and, unless there is a sports game among park users, the design does not facilitate triangulation.

The park's peripheral spaces – such as the playground and the sports facilities – are better positioned to encourage interaction between users. Users who participate in any kind of play – on the fields or in the jungle gym – can interact. However, there are no benches around these spaces that would allow spectators to discuss the activities or for others to participate passively (DDM, 2015). The Park District's Fieldhouse at the core of the park offers organised interactions for community members, but the building has limited hours and is best viewed as supplemental to other triangulation opportunities designed into the park.

6.6.4 Seward Park: Overview

Since Seward Park is at the centre of a changing neighbourhood, it is well-positioned to facilitate contact between different groups. Elements of the design suggest the park could play this role, but an examination of the overall design suggests that the majority of recommendations in the PCI Framework are not part of the park (see Table 6.6). One of the individuals who works in the Fieldhouse suggested the redesign process was neither focused

on the specific neighbourhood nor the social dynamics it could influence. ‘This park hasn’t gotten much attention…. It was just a standard process [for updating and redesigning it]’ (1E-SEW, 2015).

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children’s areas	/
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	_
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	/
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	/
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	_
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	/
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	_

Table 6.6: Scoring how well the design of Chicago’s Seward Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

6.7 Washington’s Canal Park

Similar to Seward Park, Canal Park is a small neighbourhood park in a rapidly changing area. Located in the southeast section of Washington, DC, the narrow park has a modern design.

6.7.1 Canal Park: Presence

Two residential roads intersect this long, thin park, dividing it into three equally sized sections. The narrow southern side abuts a busy boulevard, while the other sides and the intersecting streets are all quiet and residential. Similar to Seward Park, Canal Park’s design is oriented around the busiest street: M Street. Along M Street, the pavement flows smoothly

into the park with no designated entrances. Indeed, the edges are so transparent, it is hard to identify them (DDM, 2016). Once inside, the user faces a spouting fountain that doubles as an ice skating rink in the winter. There is seating around the fountain, and a café with outdoor seating and a rooftop garden. The design of the M Street section gives passers-by a sense of intrigue as well as the ability to see other people present in the park.

The other two sections of the park have planted flowerbeds along most of the exterior roadways. These beds are filled with low shrubs and thin trees that create a sense of separation, but do not form a visual barrier. In the centre of these two sections are open lawns (ibid.). Thus, any intrigue that's a result of the landscape design is limited to the edges and the activity in the centre can be observed with a single glance. Throughout the park there are clear, well-lit paths that provide users with a sense of their surroundings. The one exception is the rain garden – a densely planted depression with tall thick plants that absorb rainwater runoff.

6.7.2 Canal Park: Comfort

In terms of physical comfort, the majority of the relevant features – drinking fountain, public toilets, seating, and shade – are in the southern section of the park, near the busy street. In terms of social comfort and user control, Canal Park's design generally does not allow for users to move around or alter the space. For example, the seating – which includes a ribbon bench, wall benches and traditional benches – is fixed in place. An exception is the seating at the café and near the fountain, where the DDM found 15 moveable tables and four chairs per table (2016). This allows users to adjust the social spacing according to their needs. The DDM highlights two seating design choices: first, throughout the park, the seating does not have armrests. This could pose a challenge for those in need of a stabilising mechanism when sitting or standing. However, it does allow users to sit as close to or as far away from other

users as they like. Second, almost all the fixed seating is exposed directly to the elements – whether sunlight, rain, or snow (ibid.).

In terms of symbolic statements, Canal Park seems to make two primary statements. First, the park positions itself to appeal to environmentally-conscious users. By the rain garden, rooftop garden, and wading pool, there are signs explaining how the features are environmentally friendly. Second, the park's design references the area's history. According to the designers and the planners, the three-pavilion layout 'recall[s] floating barges that were once common in the canal' (Capitol Riverfront, 2013). While this is now a paved part of the city and not a canal – and there are no signs noting this history – water does play a prominent role in the park. With the fountain and wading pool, the sound of water is present during the summer months.



Image 6.11: Top: the 'ribbon' bench which is a large semi-circle. Bottom: one of Hess's sculptures in Canal Park (courtesy of Capitol Riverfront).

However, Canal Park does not offer users an escape into nature. Instead, its version of water is distinctly urban. The wading pool is a stone tub, not a pond. The same is true of the greenery. The beds are manicured; the grass is mown; the trees are in cement containers.

6.7.3 Canal Park: Interaction

Throughout the park, the seating is positioned such that it faces the action – whether looking onto a green space where children might be playing or overlooking the fountain. This design could encourage triangulation as users interact around the activity. However, the distinctive ribbon seating around the fountain rises and falls such that it does not allow people to sit near one another and it is too large a semi-circle to facilitate eye contact and conversation (see Image 6.11). The moveable chairs are the most likely option for users

hoping to face one another. The DDM found that these seats were clustered under the small trees – savouring the shade, facing one another and the fountain (2016).

Beyond seating, Canal Park's design creates three opportunities for triangulation: the wading pool and fountain, David Hess's abstract sculptures, and the café building. The park's fountain is a 'dancing fountain' in the summer with illuminated spouts of water that vary in colour and height. In the winter, the fountain area becomes an ice rink. Regardless of the season, this feature is the social hub of the park, as kids can play together in the water or everyone can skate together. Hess's sculptures are in the quieter sections of the park and made of large coiled tubes (see Image 6.11). According to an interview with one of the park's landscape architects, the hope was for these structures to function as modern, artistic equivalents to jungle gyms. The vision was that children could climb on the art (3E-CAN, 2016). Finally, the café building also has a skate rental area, a rooftop garden, and a large Light Cube. The Light Cube is elevated and projectors allow it to change colour or become the backdrop for outdoor cinema events. This structure and the facilities built into it have the potential to facilitate triangulation, although this would be heavily dependent on the activities planned by the Park Association.

6.7.4 Canal Park: Overview

From canal to school bus parking lot to family-friendly neighbourhood park, this 3-acre plot of land has changed significantly. The park's design generally aligns more with the interaction and presence tenets of the PCI Framework than the comfort tenet (see Table 6.7). Interviews with a member of the park's landscape architecture team (3E-CAN, 2016) and a member of the redevelopment organisation (2E-CAN, 2016) overseeing the Business Improvement District (BID) indicated that economic objectives were important for the park's design. For 2E-CAN, the environmental benefits of the park are a personal interest, but she said from the redevelopment organisation's perspective the park was a means to changing the

reputation and economic profile of the area: 'It was a really rough area, we had to fix that reputation' (2E-CAN, 2016). She acknowledged a large part of the park's appeal was that it could be mentioned in sales pitches and photographed for promotional materials.

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	+
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	/
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	/
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	/
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	/
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	+
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	+

Table 6.7: Scoring how well the design of Washington's Canal Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

3E-CAN said that when her firm was hired to design Canal Park, the social dynamics in the park were not a focus (2106). However, she said, the team decided to select this as an area of particular interest: 'It was up to the design team to focus on social sustainability; that was not a focus from the outset' (ibid.). She said this was motivated because the team was hoping to obtain a Sustainable Sites Certification, and social sustainability was one of the possible categories. 3E-CAN said this was such a rare focus that the design team spent time in other parks examining what worked and what did not. She said this influenced their decision to create a highly interactive area around the fountain, noted in the interaction tier.

6.8 Washington's Yards Park

Just a few blocks from Canal Park is The Yards Park – sometimes called Yards Park or The Yards. While Canal Park is a neighbourhood park, Yards Park aspires to be a city park. Located on the banks of the Anacostia River in southeast Washington, DC, this site was originally a manufacturing hub. Used by Washington Navy Yards as an annexe, it functioned as a shipyard for the U.S. Navy. Now the park stands next to administrative buildings for the U.S. Navy, near the Nationals Stadium baseball park, and in a rapidly changing neighbourhood dubbed the Capitol Riverfront. The American Society of Landscape Architects has called it 'the green jewel in the new Capitol Riverfront redevelopment neighborhood' (Honeyman, 2017).

6.8.1 Yards Park: Presence

The Yards is shaped like an elongated triangle, with the river running along its longest edge. The edges of the triangle are raised and the centre – the site of the park's wading pool – is sunken. There are no streets that abut the park (DDM, 2016). Instead, users have two primary points of entry. First, they can enter through a walking and biking path that follows the river: the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. The path enters the park at either end, where the path goes from a narrow boardwalk to a wider and windier corridor. Benches that resemble waves mark the beginning of the park (see Images 6.12). Users can see a large pedestrian bridge made from sculptural metal, offering a sense



Image 6.12: From the west, the park is accessible by a pedestrian bridge. Unique benches mark the beginning of Y



Image 6.13: The entrance viewed from 3rd Street SE. The iconic pedestrian bridge is visible in the background and the stone pattern in the pavement is visible in the foreground (courtesy of Honeyman).

of intrigue, but cannot see the sunken wading pool. Second, park users can enter at Water Street SE, which ends in the park. Here, too, users can see the distinctive pedestrian bridge but not the pool. On the path leading from the street to the park, the pavement is made of stones with two contrasting colours creating a pattern and additional visual intrigue (ibid.; see Image 6.13). Honeyman says the paving 'effectively draws visitors to the park entrance' (2017). All of the entrances to Yards Park allow the users to view parts of the park – like the bridge – while keeping the most active element of the park – the sunken pool – out of sight. This coheres with the notion of creating intrigue, but contradicts the philosophy of perimeter activity.

When considering the park's paths, some offer wide, clear sightlines while others are purposefully designed to create secluded spaces protected by foliage and winding routes (see Images 6.14). Once again, this design adheres to some elements of PCI Framework while diverging from other features.



Image 6.14: Users who approach the park from the east side can either take the wide path along the water or, slightly inland, the winding path with small sitting areas and plenty of landscape design (courtesy of Honeyman).

6.8.2 Yards Park: Comfort

Yards Park has a wider variety of seating than in any other case study: reclining wooden deck chairs, moveable chairs and tables, benches that curve and slope and undulate, and chairs



Image 6.15: The Yards Park had a large number of unconventional seating options.

hidden in unexpected nooks (DDM, 2016). Image 6.15 shows some of the seating options. However, although none of the seats are U- or C-shaped, many allow the users to determine the social distance that is most appropriate to them.

In terms of user comfort, one striking oversight in the design is the lack of toilets. The retroactive solution is that during much of the year the park has set up temporary bathrooms, and a nearby building has also made their toilet public.

Similar to Canal Park, the symbolism relates to the history of the particular site. It too was the site of the canal that ran between the Anacostia River and the U.S. Capitol before becoming a shipyard. Thus, water and ships are a main motif. Many of the benches have a wave-like pattern, while other seating options simulate beach seating. The wading pool was formerly the mouth of the canal. The outlook has triangular canvas canopies that – in addition to offering shade – can be opened and closed like sails on a tall ship (see Image 6.16).

Yards Park offers four different nature experiences (DDM, 2016). First, the Great Lawn is an open space with thick grass and a few trees. Second, there are more secluded spaces along the boardwalk, with dense plants offering privacy. While carefully designed, the vegetation feels unplanned and wild. The third and fourth experiences in Yards Park are based around water. The wading pool and water fountain offer users of all ages the chance to splash around, and users who don't get wet are surrounded by the sound of water. The other way to experience the water is visually, walking along the trail or the boardwalk that hug the riverfront (ibid.).



Image 6.16: The outlook has canvas awnings reminiscent of boat sails.

6.8.3 Yards Park: Interaction

With the exception of special events, the main action in Yards Park is around the wading pool. The pool concentrates users in the sunken centre of the park. Moveable chairs and a grassy hill surround the pool for parents and others who don't want to go in. However, given the number of benches, it is noteworthy that none of the permanent seating is near the pool (DDM, 2016). This suggests that the PCI principle of having seating facing the action was not incorporated into the design strategy at Yards Park.

While the seating is not concentrated around the wading pool, much of it does face the river. This provides an opportunity for triangulation, as users can watch the passing boats and observe the landscape. Besides the moveable chairs, the seating does not seem designed to be either C- or U-shaped, but it is in small clusters that could facilitate interaction.

In terms of public art, there is a sculpture by Jamie Carpenter called Light Tower. It is a hollow rectangular tower – tall and thin – that stretches 60 feet into the air and is illuminated at night, similar to a lighthouse (ibid.). While this does provide an artistic form of light – rather than surveillance spotlights – this art is not especially interactive.

The pedestrian bridge is the closest thing the park has to interactive public art. Its large white circles are reminiscent of a whale's ribs. While users cannot influence the design, they can walk under and through it while taking pictures. This bridge concentrates users interested in the vista at one point in the park.

Yards Park does not have a jungle gym or a designated children's area. Instead, the wading pool and a toddler-friendly fountain function as play areas. The shallow water, lily-pad-like surfaces in the pool, and the wall of water cater for children and provide ample opportunities for triangulation. Without a separate children's area, the kids may be more integrated with the other park users who would not have reason to enter a playground, but may be interested in the wading pool.

6.8.4 Yards Park: Overview

From the perspective of the PCI Framework, Yards Park contains the extremes. In some ways, it closely adheres to the Framework. For example, the iconic bridge is visible from all the edges, creating a sense of intrigue and drawing users into the park. Yet in other ways, the park seems not to incorporate the Framework's recommendations at all. For example, the main activity space is not visible from the edges (see Table 6.8). An individual who helped open the nearby ice cream parlour suggested the park was carefully designed and curated to draw a new group of people to the neighbourhood. '[The redevelopment organisation] came to us. We were just at farmers' markets back then and didn't have a storefront…. [T]hey thought long and hard about the type of space they wanted and what they wanted in the space' (2E-YAR, 2016). The store committed to setting up a stand in the park when the weather permits. 'They had their vision, right down to where [the stand would] be positioned' (ibid.). 2E-YAR surmised that the goals were to attract people to the park from

Tier	Strategies	Design Features	PCI Score
Interaction	Triangulation	Public art New views Shared activity spaces Children's areas	/
	Furniture	U- or C-shaped seating Facing action	_
Comfort	Nature	Trees Banks Water	+
	Symbolic Statements	Monuments Flags Comfort details	/
	Social & Physical Comfort	Social distance	+
Presence	Safety	Lighting Sightlines	+
	Park Edges	Transparent entrances Landscape intrigue Perimeter activity	/

Table 6.8: Scoring how well the design of Washington's Yards Park incorporated the PCI Framework recommendations.

elsewhere in the city and sell them on the neighbourhood. ‘This isn’t where [the redevelopment organisation] makes money […] the park-goers are potential renters and buyers’ (ibid.). This implies the park was designed under the influence of strong economic motivators – increasing local property values – and not necessarily out of concern for social dynamics and social cohesion, which could be an unanticipated consequence.

6.9 Explaining Unexpected Design Differences and Similarities

This chapter has found a large degree of variability in how well the park designs incorporated PCI Framework recommendations aimed at preventing social exclusion and facilitating cohesion. Some parks implemented the vast majority of the recommendations, while others implemented very few. There was significant variation within the same country – and even within the same park.

These findings do not support the hypothesis above that UK park designs align with the PCI Framework more readily than US parks do. Only a few of the UK case studies have consistently implemented the recommendations. At the same time, certain US case studies adhered fairly closely to the recommendations. Given this pattern, there are two puzzles to explain. The first is why there was such variability in the design features of UK parks. Based on planning documents as well as interviews with park experts, one explanation surfaces: the design recommendations in the UK left designers room for discretion, which allowed other considerations to supplant the goals of preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. The second puzzle is why some US parks implemented core PCI recommendations. Here, the designs of parks that incorporated the features in the UK and the US appear to have different motivations. Interviews and documents suggest the same design features were used to try to achieve different objectives.

6.9.1 Policy Conversion: Explaining Variation within UK Park Design

The UK parks featured in the case studies were designed at roughly the same time and in the same political context. This was a political environment that emphasised the importance of addressing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion (see Chapter 2). There were specific design recommendations for urban parks that could, theoretically, help them fulfil these social goals (see Chapter 5). However, only certain UK parks appear to have implemented these recommendations – most notably Birmingham's Eastside City Park and London's Mile End Park. Other case studies generally did not incorporate the recommendations – London's Greenwich Millennium Village Park largely ignored them and, to a lesser extent, so did London's Thames Barrier Park.

Research on policy conversion is helpful in explaining why this is the case. Policy conversion occurs where there is no significant difference in the formal policy between places, but the policy's 'ground-level operation,' or implementation, varies across settings (see Hacker, 2005: 70). The UK case studies suggest there may be three reasons these recommendations were vulnerable to conversion or variable implementation: policy ambiguity, significant bureaucratic discretion, and limited accountability.

First, the recommendations were created in a context with significant ambiguity. There was ambiguity in both the meaning of social exclusion and in the design recommendations. As mentioned in Chapter 2, social exclusion's 'ambiguity facilitated continued collaboration but it also began to "eclipse" or obscure discussions of poverty' (Lister, 2004: 74). Focusing policy discussions around a flexible and ambiguous term allowed policymakers to temporarily set aside debates about absolute versus relative poverty. Lister acknowledges this approach had drawbacks, including undermining efforts to 'discuss' poverty. The case studies explored in this chapter suggest such ambiguity might also have

had concrete ramifications, enabling park designers to ignore certain recommendations and, thus, contributing to variations in implementation.

This ambiguity can also be seen in the design recommendations. As Chapter 5 found, the guidelines were intentionally general so they could be adapted to particular contexts. The DETR and CABE write that there is 'no such thing as a blueprint for good design' (2000: 5). Of course, design decisions can be mandated by law. This is evident in rules regarding wheelchair accessibility. These requirements were regularly mentioned during interviews with US architects and designers as they described their design processes. 1E-MIL, a lead architect and designer of Chicago's Millennium Park, mentioned this among his first goals (2013). 'The original design was by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill [SOM] - a fairly large Chicago firm. They failed to make all areas of their design accessible to people with disabilities' (ibid.). 1E-MIL said the city was 'very concerned' about being sued and, thus, brought him in to redo the design (ibid.). 'We gave it to SOM and told them these were the changes we were going to make' (ibid.).

This anecdote demonstrates that certain design policies can be unambiguous. However, that was not the case with the recommendation geared toward preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion. To the contrary, these recommendations were framed as flexible and general. This coheres with one of the primary theoretical explanations for what causes policy conversion. 'Conversion […] feeds off of rule ambiguity' (Hacker et al., 2013: 2).

Second, implementation of design recommendations relied on front-line agents whose commitment to preventing or combating social exclusion was not guaranteed. If these 'street-level bureaucrats' had a high level of political will, then they would be more likely to follow the recommendations (Lipsky, 1980). However, they have full discretion not to follow the recommendations too. Implementing design recommendations comes down to a political

choice. In Birmingham, where Eastside City Park largely followed the recommendations, the city had made a political commitment to addressing social exclusion. As mentioned in Chapter 3 and 5, this is evident in their multi-year Social Inclusion Process and the Birmingham Declaration on Social Inclusion. Similarly, the Community Plan of the London borough of Tower Hamlets – mentioned by 1E-MEP (2015) earlier in this chapter – laid out a commitment to 'focus on tackling poverty and social exclusion in Tower Hamlets ... [and] it also continues to prioritise equality, cohesion and community leadership' (Tower Hamlets, 2015: Summary). Perhaps it is not a coincidence that the park in Birmingham and the park in Tower Hamlets were the parks that most closely adhered to the recommendations. There was local political pressure to take up efforts to address social exclusion and promote cohesion. In contrast, interviews regarding the other two parks – Greenwich Millennium Village and Thames Barrier Park – suggest other motivations took precedence, including competing economic and environmental concerns. For example, 1E-THA, a gardener at Thames Barrier Park, thought that the local authorities would determine that local housing needs were more important than the community's need for a park (2015).

These findings align with one of the reasons Hacker et al. cite for policy conversion: 'the multiplicity of political arenas' can lead to policy principles being 'reinterpreted' by those implementing policies and initiatives (2013: 2). These case studies suggest local political will and local political initiatives may play a key role in determining whether and how national initiatives are implemented. This coheres with Lipsky's seminal study in 1980 on 'street-level bureaucrats'. He argues that 'public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in executing their work' are influential in the policy implementation process (Lipsky, 1980: 3). He suggests that teachers, police officers, social workers, and safety inspectors wield considerable power in the implementation of public policies and programmes. These case studies suggest, perhaps,

that architects and planners should be added to that list. Even though architects and planners do not necessarily have daily interaction with citizens, the places they create are subject to daily use and interaction.

Third, parks were able to follow such different paths partly because there was limited national accountability. No national office was following up with local authorities to inquire as to whether recommendations had been understood or followed. As found in Chapter 4, there was no central authority overseeing urban parks and the central authority overseeing efforts to address social exclusion had not taken on the mantel of urban design playing a role in preventing exclusion. This created an environment in which there was limited oversight, such that front-line agents or street-level bureaucrats were not compelled to adhere to the recommendations and there were no consequences for not incorporating them. This is evident in the interview with 1E-MEP, a park employee at Mile End Park (2015). As quoted above, he said, 'nobody forced them to' incorporate efforts to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion (ibid.). Local officials knew that there was no higher authority monitoring whether recommendations were implemented. Although one interview does not confirm a theory, the evidence supports the pre-existing theoretical stance that 'conversion often takes place in venues that are harder to monitor' (Hacker et al., 2013: 4). One surprising finding from this chapter is that even in a setting like the UK where both social exclusion policy and urban design initiatives were organised at the national level, local politics played a key role in shaping the design of parks in practice.

6.9.2 Same Ends, Different Objectives: Explaining Similarities in UK and US Designs

Given that preventing social exclusion was not a key policy goal for US park designers, why is it that many of the PCI Framework's recommendations were evident in US parks? One explanation, supported by archival research and elite interviews, is that the PCI

design features were incorporated into the US park designs in the hopes of achieving a different objective: economic development.

The US parks that incorporated the PCI features were, largely, built in an effort to fuel economic activity in their city or neighbourhood. As noted earlier, Yards Park was seen as 'the green jewel in the new Capitol Riverfront redevelopment neighborhood' (Honeyman, 2017). By beautifying the area, developers hoped the park would attract investors (ibid.). Similarly, when 2E-CAN listed the goals for Canal Park in Washington, DC, 'environmental sustainability' and 'economic stimulation' were top priorities (2016). It is worth noting that some UK documents and planners also referenced economic motivations when discussing park design, including Birmingham's Big City Plan (Birmingham City Council, 2011).

In Chicago, Mayor Richard M. Daley called Millennium Park the city's 'front yard' (Daley quoted in Gilfoyle, 2006: xiii). It is not just a place where locals have fun, it is how the rest of the world views the city and how the city catalyses economic activity. By all accounts, the park succeeded. 'Millennium Park is a case study in how to create demand for downtown services and real estate…. [It] encourages the right mix of commercial and residential development' (Hangley, 2006: 24). This is also reflected in Chicago's Central Area Plan where parks are most closely linked to environmental and economic goals rather than community-building objectives (CAP, 2003). As one CAP consultant said about creating Millennium Park, 'we really had an economic motivation from the get-go' (DeVaries quoted in Hangley, 2006: 24). This fact was not lost on Chicagoans. The cartoon in Image 6.17 demonstrates that some city residents felt the parks was only for those with financial means.



Image 6.17: A cartoon from the Chicago Reader published on the 18th of February 2005. It depicts Cloud Gate and suggests that park users – visitors and tourists – must pay $325 to be let into the plaza.

With economic – instead of social – goals, why is it that the recommendations of the PCI Framework are present in the parks? Some of the same features included in the PCI Framework to prevent exclusion and promote cohesion also appear to be strategies for stimulating economic activity. Take the example of public art in Millennium Park. The park's DDM found that both Crown Fountain and Cloud Gate could facilitate interaction: 'The ever-changing faces in the fountain and the ever-changing reflection in Cloud Gate's polished surface make these pieces of art prime triangulation tools' (2015). These art installations seem to be excellent examples of the Framework's final tier – interaction – but that was not necessarily the intent. Mayor Daley specifically sought renowned artists to design the installations as a way to raise the stature of the city and attract tourists for generations to come. 'Politicians come and go; business leaders come and go,' he declared, 'but artists really define a city' (Daley quoted in Gilfoyle, 2006: xii). When Daley called upon the CEO of Sara Lee to lead the park's fundraising efforts, he invoked Daniel Burnham, quipping, 'make no small plans' (Daley quoted in Gilfoyle, 2006: xiii). And, by all accounts, these two pieces of public art have become iconic, attracting tourists and positioning the city as an attractive place for corporations considering relocation (Gilfoyle, 2006; Johnson, 2017; O'Connell, 2017). However, they have also stimulated interaction among users who might not otherwise interact. In an interview with a lead architect and designer of the park, 1E-MIL said he was lucky to live in the same city as the park he had designed and, thus, he has visited the final product many times. He acknowledged that he was surprised by the art's ability to bridge social gaps.

> You see all kinds of races in the park and people are just very happy when they are there, seeing other people and hearing people speak different languages. The park is very levelling…. There are parents of all ages and all races who would normally never be interacting and having fun together. It wasn't necessarily planned to do that but as it turned out it was a huge success (1E-MIL, 2013).

While this is only one individual's perspective and should not be considered definitive, it is noteworthy that 1E-MIL's statement goes above and beyond New Urbanism's goals of creating diversity. The diversity objective was also reflected in an interview with one of the individuals who oversees Chicago's Millennium Park on an ongoing basis, 4E-MIL. 'First and foremost, what we do and present is free and open to the public.... There is something for everyone' (4E-MIL, 2017). The interviewee did not suggest the goal was to get diverse park users to interact, even if that is what happened. Instead, he said, they strive to cater to a whole spectrum of people, although not necessarily with the same features of the park or with the same park events. Different groups of people may be in the same park but at different times or in different spaces within the park.

This phenomenon, where parks with different goals reach the same design outcomes, is similar to what social scientists call equifinality (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). Equifinality poses a challenge because even though some of the parks in the UK and the US look the same (i.e. they incorporate the same features), they were designed for different purposes and with different factors in mind. It is unclear whether this thesis should treat the parks the same based on their similar design features, or differently based on their different motivations. Investigating how the parks are used and whether they seem to achieve their respective goals is one way of resolving this dilemma.

Indeed, this thesis is not interested simply in how a space looks but, more importantly, in how it is used. It's an open question whether the design process and the design motivations that factor into how a park looks matter in how park-goers use and experience the space. For example, Millennium Park in Chicago has been designed consistent with principles that encourage interaction among users, but do the economic or political factors behind the park's design somehow mean the park caters more to users with economic means than users who are at risk of being excluded from society? One hypothesis is that parks, such as Millennium

Park, designed with economic motivations – although they look the same as parks, such as Mile End park in London, designed with social exclusion in mind – will draw a different audience which will use the park for different purposes than parks designed with social motivations. The following chapter will present evidence that sheds light on this hypothesis.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter set out to do what architects, planners, and policymakers rarely have the resources to do: evaluate the implementation of a policy or initiative. Here, the research sought to understand whether design recommendations set forth in policy documents came to fruition. The findings were not as predicted. The chapter's analysis found some parks incorporated the recommendations while others did not. It also found that other parks, on an entirely different continent and in a context where the recommendations were not explicitly made, had implemented some recommendations and not others.

The obvious next question is: why? Why did some park designs incorporate the features that were identified to help prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion, while others parks did not? Two explanations emerged from field research.

First, in the UK, the variation in implementation seemed to be a result of three different factors relevant to social policy: pervasive ambiguity, a high degree of discretion for front-line agents, and limited accountability. This analysis draws on the theoretical literature regarding policy conversion, which examines situations where there are divergent implementations of a single policy. Presenting both the Detailed Descriptive Mapping of the field work as well as the elite interviews is valuable because, as Beland writes, 'the empirical evidence backing these models [of policy conversion] remains limited, [and] there is ample room for empirical studies that could provide more ground to (or challenge) these models' (2007b: 20).

Second, in the US, the similarities appear to emerge from different goals achieved by the same means. This raises questions about whether the different processes and motivations matter in terms of how the park is used. Indeed, Chapter 8 examines who uses the eight case study parks and how they use them.

Chapter 7: The User Experience

In Birmingham's Eastside City Park, buildings fade into the distance as the grass stretches out before the picnicking families and the couples meandering down the planted path. Children squeal with excitement as they race around the playground, protected by a curving hedge. It is a moment of sunny bliss in the big city. According to the design renderings of Eastside City Park, that is.

Millennium Park is sandwiched between two of Chicago's most famous thoroughfares – Lake Shore Drive and Michigan Avenue. Yet, standing under Cloud Gate, the three-story sculpture of smooth, reflective steel, it is hard to hear the honks and screeching of traffic. Instead, it is the shouts of children playing tag and friends coordinating a group photograph that punctuate the air. At least, that is what the renderings of Millennium Park imply.

The designers of the parks considered in this thesis produced illustrations that present the park as a desirable place: birds in the blue sky, the

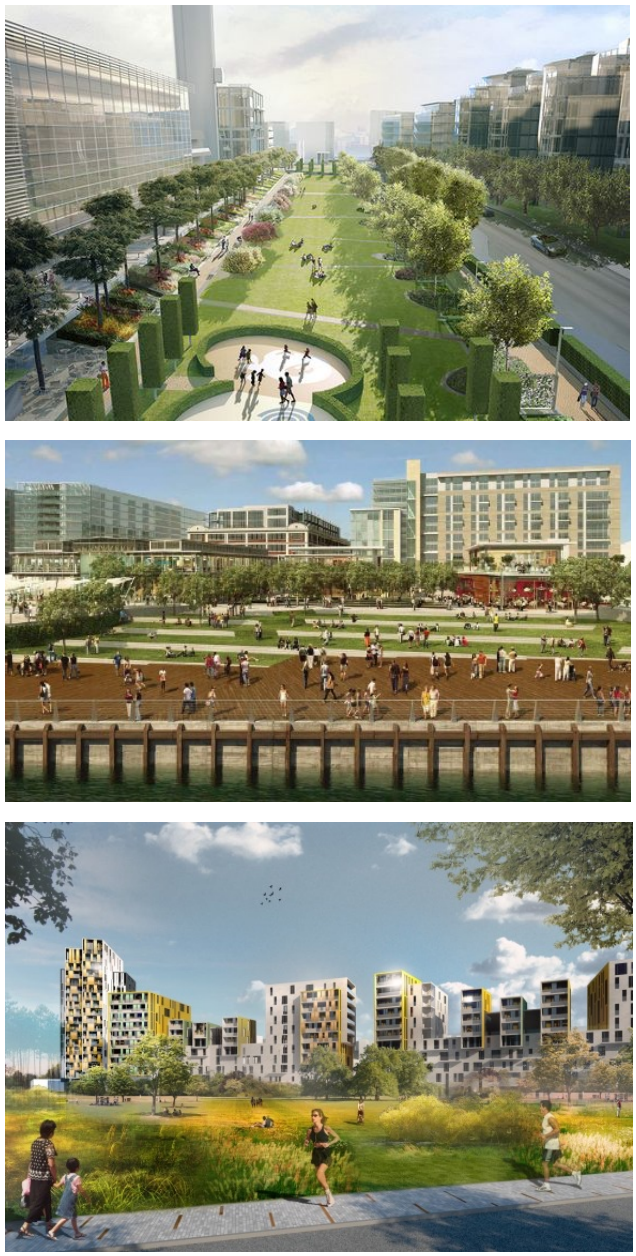


Image 7.2: From top, renderings of Eastside City Park in Birmingham (Taylor, 2011), Yards Park in Washington, DC (MPFP, 2010), and Greenwich Millennium Village in London (GMV, 2003).

ground covered in lush green grass, and, most of all, people – people enjoying the park and the outdoors. Image 7.1 offers a sample of these perpetually sunny scenes filled with healthy, happy users.

In this chapter, those colourful scenes meet reality. The policymaker's objectives and the architect's aspirations are put to the test: users. Do people actually use the park? In some case, the answer is no. When the answer is yes, there are more questions: who are these people? Do they feel comfortable in the park? Where do people sit? Systematic observations of park users as well as interviews with park users help answer these questions.

This chapter seeks to determine whether the features designed to attract people and the sculptures devised to generate a sense of tranquillity and facilitate interactions actually do what they were intended to do. Are the parks that incorporated the recommended features positioned to prevent social exclusion and encourage cohesion? These findings offer the opportunity to evaluate the design features that the Presence-Comfort-Interaction, or PCI, Framework recommends, and refine them based on user data.

The chapter proceeds in three parts: the first reviews the process of data collection relating to park users and the nature of the data itself. The second section presents in-depth case studies of users in two UK parks: one – Greenwich Millennium Village – that failed to attract users, and another – Eastside City Park – that succeeded at facilitating interaction among users. The third section explores how the usage of parks aligns with the predictions of the PCI Framework, evaluating the Framework tier by tier.

7.1 The PCI Framework and the Data Used to Test It

The Framework, which was derived from policy documents and elite interviews, stipulates that public spaces must have three attributes to help prevent social exclusion and create cohesion. First: presence. The park has to draw individuals from across society into the

same physical space. The eventual goal is to draw a cross-section of the area's population. However, early in the park's tenure, planners often target specific segments of the population that are seen as likely to attract the rest of the community to the area.

Second, the people who are present in the space must feel comfortable. This tier of the Framework is important for two reasons. First, it creates repeat users – people who come to the public space regularly and invest in it. Second, it creates an environment where users will eventually feel able to interact with one another in a positive way.

Interaction is the third tier of the Framework. While passive exchanges can happen in the first two tiers, this tier involves active interactions. These interactions can be organised or unorganised, planned or unplanned. In all cases, the architects, planners, and event programmers who hope to prevent social exclusion aim to facilitate positive and collaborative contact between users.

These three tiers build on one another. For example, a user must feel comfortable before they are able to interact positively with another user. If comfort is not established, then there is the possibility that there could be negative interactions across social groups, spurring conflict and, potentially, creating a sense of social exclusion. Thus, the Framework stipulates that these tiers must progress in order so that they can, collectively, contribute to preventing social exclusion and creating cohesion.

This research accepts that presence, comfort, and interaction as concepts are logically important for preventing exclusion and promoting cohesion. However, it is unclear whether the design features that the PCI Framework proposes have the intended effects on user experience. The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the effectiveness of those design features through observational data on how the case study parks are used.

After considering two cases in depth, this chapter evaluates the design recommendations in each tier. First, each section has a pre-analysis plan that asks: based on

the PCI Framework developed in Chapter 5 and the design features found in Chapter 6, what would the data be expected to show? Next, each section presents and explains user data pertinent to the tier. Finally, each section discusses how this data coheres with and contributes to the existing literature and theory.

As described in Chapter 3, there are two main types of data: quantitative and qualitative. In examining the first tier – presence – quantitative data help illuminate the demographic characteristics of park users and qualitative data helps explain the findings. The second tier – comfort – emphasises qualitative data. Interviews are used to gauge users' feelings within the park and capture the nuances of their reaction to the park design. In the final tier – interaction – both qualitative and quantitative data indicate which parks and features facilitate positive interactions.

7.1.1 Collecting Quantitative Data

This research incorporates quantitative data from the mapping of mobile and stationary users of the case study parks. It treats mobile and stationary users separately, consistent with the approach in Gehl and Svarre (2013). The distinction is important because experts speculate that when users view the park as a destination – rather than a place to simply pass through – the substance and impact of interactions can be different. A place that draws stationary users, people who linger and pause to use the space, has a greater ability – in theory – to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion.

Both stationary and mobile mapping gather data about park users, including demographic information, such as age and race, as well as information about what users are doing in the park. Examples of user activities include talking to another user, exercising, and playing with a pet. The data collected also note whether users were alone or in a group. The data collection process involved answering a series of closed-ended queries for each unique user.

The main distinction between these two forms of mapping is time. Each mobile mapping session considered everyone who passed through a specific spot during a ten-minute period. It captured the ambulatory environment and the flow of users. These observations were taken at the busiest point of entry in a given park. Interviews with park planners and landscape architects helped identify these locations. In contrast, stationary mapping is a snapshot of who is using a particular area of the park at one given moment. It not only gathers all the demographic and behavioural information collected in mobile mapping, but it can also capture the whereabouts of the user population. In stationary mapping, symbols on a map indicate where people are in the park and what they are doing at that specific moment.

The statistical tests in this chapter assume that the users observed in the park are a random sample of the overall population of park users. Multiple parts of the data collection process focused on generating a systematically arbitrary sample. All parks were observed in the spring and summer during daylight hours. The observations were made at different times of day – morning, midday, afternoon, and evening. Observations included weekdays and weekends, but not holidays. Data was collected irrespective of the weather. However, there were logistical challenges given the need to travel between different cities and countries to conduct the fieldwork. Thus, UK observations generally happened in the spring and early summer of 2015, whereas US observations occurred in the mid-summer 2015 and spring 2016. While the samples were not strictly random, the user data represent a wide cross-section of users across times and days. The statistical tests should not be treated as definitive, but they do suggest patterns of park behaviour that future research can explore in greater depth.

Figure 7.1 captures the sample size. This is the total number of observations broken down by park and by type of mapping. The total number of quantitative observations of park users is 4,939.

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
# of Mobile Mapping Sessions	16	17	16	17	16	16	6	18
# of Stationary Mapping Sessions	7	10	8	10	8	8	6	10

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
# of Mobile Observations	377	319	236	388	807	776	6	268
# of Stationary Observations	216	176	140	386	194	558	0	92
Total # of Observations (Sample Size)	593	495	376	774	1001	1334	6	360

Table 7.1: These charts summarise the quantitative data gathered in this research. The lower chart captures the sample size (N) broken down by type of mapping and park.

This type of data on parks' usage is rare, although there are several examples in the literature, including: Gobster's work in Chicago in the 1990s systematically observed park characteristics and the users' behaviour (1992; 1998); Hutchison has documented the daily routines of park users during the same time period (1993); and several observational studies have examined physical activity in parks (for example, see Temple et al., 2011; Joseph and Maddock, 2016). The method of systematically observing park users is acknowledged to 'require a very substantial time commitment,' which might explain why the method is relatively uncommon (Gobster, 1992: 215). In the UK, the English Tourist Board's Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions gathers some visitor data on parks, but the vast majority are rural country parks or theme parks. None of the sites considered in this research are included in their sample (VisitEngland, 2015).

7.1.2 Collecting Qualitative Data

Three sources of qualitative data accompany the quantitative data. First, semi-structured interviews conducted with park patrons explain why they were at the park, how

they used the park, how they felt about the park, and what they would change about the park design – among other things. Second, semi-structured interviews with employees of the parks and their associated services provided information about possible trends in park usage over time. The third source of qualitative data is the researcher's field notes. These direct observations describe how and where people spend time when in the park. In particular, the researcher conducted 'case trackings' where systematically selected users were observed for the duration of their time in the park, transcribing their path through the park and interactions in the park. Table 7.2 captures the number of interviews and case trackings in each park.

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
Abbreviation	EP	CAN	THA	YAR	EAS	MIL	GRE	SEW
Employee Interviews	3	3	2	3	2	4	6	1
User Interviews	7	11	7	8	11	10	3*	7
Total # of Interviews	10	14	9	11	13	14	9	8

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
Case Trackings	6	5	6	6	5	5	1	7

Table 7.2: Two charts summarising the qualitative data gathered in this research. * The Greenwich Millennium Village user interviews were conducted on the outskirts of the park because there were not many users in the park.

7.1.3 Presenting the Data

Throughout this chapter, data that is best displayed graphically is presented in barplots. For a given variable, barplots characterise individual parks and allow comparisons between parks. In these diagrams, each bar represents a park. As described in Chapter 3, the case studies in the UK and the US are paired. Thus, in many of the barplots, the paired parks are presented next to one another. Often the plots are standardised, meaning that the bar represents the proportion of park users with a certain characteristic rather than the raw number of users. Standardisation allows for a comparison between parks imagining the sample sizes were the same.

Interpreting barplots requires understanding the null hypotheses. A null hypothesis in this research is the assumption that there is no significant difference between two populations or two variables specified by the research. If the researcher rejects the null hypothesis, that means the difference between two populations or variables is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance. The data below consider two types of null hypotheses.

The first null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between the characteristics of the population at large and the characteristics of park users. For example, if the general population is equally divided between men and women, then the null hypothesis is that the park user population is also equally male and female. As mentioned in Chapter 5, some academics, architects, and planners argue that when there are fewer women in a park, it is a sign that the park is not seen as safe. Some say parks should specifically seek to attract women because they are more likely to bring the rest of their community to the space. If the data show that there are significantly more men than women – or vice versa – then the null hypothesis will have been rejected. In the barplots below, a horizontal dotted line represents the null hypothesis. If the vertical 'confidence interval,' which is explained below, crosses that dotted line then the null hypothesis stands and there is no statistically significant relationship that differentiates the park population from the general population.

The second null hypothesis is that characteristics of the UK parks and their paired parks in the US are the same. Despite different policy contexts, the null hypothesis posits that there is no significant quantitative difference between how users experience aspects of similar parks in one country versus another. If we can reject the null hypothesis, the conclusion is that it is highly unlikely that the differences between the parks happened due to chance. On a barplot, each park has a 'confidence interval,' a vertical line that is superimposed on the barplot and protrudes from each bar based on the size and distribution of the user data from the park. The line indicates that, were the research to be replicated, 95 per cent of the time the

new samples from the population would contain the 'true value'[43] for the park's population. If two parks' 95 per cent confidence intervals overlap, then the null hypothesis stands and there is not a statistically significant difference between the two parks on the given variable. If the confidence intervals do not overlap, then there is a statistically significant difference between the two parks on the given variable.

The data presented in this chapter demonstrate a high degree of variability between parks. That is true in each of the tiers and in both countries. Corroborating the variation found in Chapter 6, UK parks – which were created in the same political environment and with similar objectives – exhibited very different outcomes. While one UK park attracted a diverse set of users who were comfortable in the park and actively interacting with other users, another park failed to attract almost any users at all. This means that although there was suggestive evidence that Blair-era initiatives to prevent social exclusion and cultivate cohesion might have worked in some parks where usage was high, it is clear that these policies were not a blanket success.

The variation among UK parks provides a valuable opportunity to explore what conditions led to success and what conditions were evident in failure. Examining these two extremes can refine the PCI Framework. Although these are only individual case studies, determining what was present and lacking in success and failure is useful, if only to generate hypotheses about plausible explanations. Thus, the next section introduces two case studies from UK parks that capture the extremes.

[43] Each park has a total user population that would be implausible to measure. Thus, research estimates the characteristics of the total population – the true value – based on a sample. Ninety-five per cent of the time the confidence interval of the sample includes the true value.

7.2 A Case Study of Failure: A Dearth of Users

Minding the gap, step off the Jubilee Tube Line at North Greenwich in London. Past the parking lot and the O2 Arena, with the iconic Millennium Dome, head toward the construction cranes. The population quickly thins and individuals in neon vests and hard hats become the norm. Beyond the half-built high rises, a small commercial district – The Village Square – emerges. A pharmacy and dry cleaners populate the ground floor of completed apartment blocks. From there, pass between two of those stores and the pavement turns into a short wooden bridge. That bridge, with lily pads and bulrushes on either side, marks an entrance to the central park at Greenwich Millennium Village.

The bustle of tourists and the hum of construction has been replaced with quiet. The path stretches out before the bridge, lined with densely packed trees and thick brush, industrial streetlamps and the periodic bench. To one side is a boardwalk through marshland, ending with the entrance to the Ecology Park where more paths and brambles await. On the other side of those industrial streetlamps, there is an open field, where tall grasses line the edges and the expanse is full of trimmed grass (DDM, 2015).

When Greenwich Millennium Village (GMV) was proposed as part of a Thames Gateway regeneration project, it was presented as dense mixed-use, mixed-tenure development. Such density and activity may be the case for the residential and commercial developments, but multiple site visits proved it was not the case for the park at the centre of GMV. During the site visits, there were almost no users. The paths were largely quiet, the field empty, and the benches unused (Research notes, 2015).

Over the course of three site visits, two on a weekday and one on a weekend, a total of six mobile mappings and six stationary mappings were conducted at various times during the day. In total, only six users were observed. Two were solo runners, heading to the Riverside Walk. The other four were walking along the wooded paths: an adult couple and a

pair of young adults. Every other park included in this research had a far higher density of users. Interviews with park employees confirmed that this was not an anomaly. The dearth of users was consistently the case. At this point, data collection ended, and GMV became a case used to elucidate why and how a park can fail to attract users.

Quantitative data confirm the relative scarcity of users, and qualitative data offer explanations as to why this might be the case. Six elite interviews with employees were conducted in 2015: four with employees and volunteers of the Ecology Park, one with a representative at the storefront set up to market, sell, and rent the available apartments, and one with an employee at the corner store. Three user interviews were also conducted in 2015, although the interview subjects were individuals sitting in the commercial area that abuts the park.

All the interviewees independently confirmed that there were typically few users in the park.[44] For example, interviewee 4E-GRE (2015) and 5E-GRE (2015), both of whom volunteer at the Ecology Park, respectively said, 'we don't get many visitors here' and 'most days, nobody comes by.' An employee of the Ecology Park, 2E-GRE, acknowledged that 'it's dead quiet, even on the weekend' (2015). The sales and marketing representative, 1E-GRE, said three times in the interview: 'It's quiet, but it's a community' (2015). One of the users, 1U-GRE, who was sitting with her infant outside the commercial area – just a few metres from the park's entrance – said, 'I've been in there once' (2015). She'd moved to the area nearly six months ago.[45] Analysing the interview transcripts revealed three explanations for this phenomenon.

[44] One exception was noted. On special event days, there were often multiple users, interviewees said. As 2E-GRE explained, 'we get a good number [of users] on event days' (2015). Sometimes these are residents, such as the annual Big Lunches, which is an initiative across the UK to get neighbors having lunch with one another. But she said, more regularly, they come from other parts of the city and come for events like Urban Ranger days. 'They often come from all over to help' (ibid.).

[45] Despite the consensus that the park was rarely used, the limited sample size suggests the findings should be taken with a degree of caution.

First, the lack of users could be a consequence of the entire neighbourhood being under construction, and – at the time the data was gathered – under its capacity of potential residents. While one side of the park did have occupied apartments and stores, high-rise construction sites touched two other sides of the park. Thus, the future population of the neighbourhood is projected to be significantly higher than the actual population when the fieldwork was conducted. Independent research around the time of the fieldwork determined that the current population of the neighbourhood was around 2,300 individuals, and population density was 120 persons per hectare (Foletta, 2014). The projected density was 180 persons per hectare (ibid.). Thus, this explanation posits that the lack of park users was the result of the entire neighbourhood having a smaller population than anticipated when the park was designed.

This hypothesis was primarily put forward by 1E-GRE, the sales and marketing representative. ‘We are in process ... and you have to remember nothing, really nothing was here pretty recently’ (2015). She emphasised that, unlike most other construction sites in London, this southern tip of the Greenwich Peninsula was being built from scratch. Thus, almost the entire residential population will be new arrivals. ‘You have to look at it with that in your mind’ (ibid.). She predicted that, in a few years, the area will feel like a vibrant urban hub, and the park will be busy.

While the data from Foletta confirms that the neighbourhood was under capacity, it was far from empty (2014). Indeed, in The Village Square, just a few steps from the park, there were regularly people sitting on the benches. Since 1E-GRE is a salesperson, her explanation invites a degree of caution. However, it may make sense in light of the PCI Framework. The Framework suggests park edges are important and, ideally, they are high-density and high-diversity. This suggests that a high-density area surrounding the park is

important. Even more so, it suggests that a mature urban space, one that is fully developed and fully inhabited, is necessary.

A second explanation for the relative lack of users is that the symbolic statements in the park and the ambient feeling around the park did not match the desires and sentiments of the local population. Thus, it is possible the neighbourhood's residents did not feel comfortable in the park and chose not to use it. This explanation emerges from differences between employee interviews, particularly with those who work in the Ecology Park, and the users who reside in the neighbourhood. These two groups spoke about the feeling the park generates in very different terms.

As the name – Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park – suggests, the employees envisioned a place where ecology and environmental conservation are core values. Their pamphlets discuss their attempts to establish a 'bio-diverse urban wetland' that 'supports a wide range of bird and insect species.' The focus on creating a natural environment was evident throughout the interviews. 'We're trying to return this land to what it once was,' said 2E-GRE, who acknowledged that would never be fully accomplished but said the park can 'make a big difference' (2015). 'You come here and sit on that bench and listen and you'd never think you were in London,' explained 3E-GRE (2015).

The elite interviews at the Ecology Park's Gatehouse confirmed that the ecological mission dates back over a decade to when the area first opened in 2002. However, the park has always had an educational mission, too. For example, they run Young Urban Ranger sessions, where 8 to 16 year olds 'go foraging for wild foods,' explains a poster advertising a session. And signs around the park identify different species of birds and insects, explaining the importance of 'allowing wildlife to thrive'.

However, what looks to employees and volunteers as 'thriving' appears to some of the residents as overgrown. 1U-GRE said the one time she went in the park 'it didn't look like

anyone took care of it' (2015). Another resident, 2U-GRE, explained that, when she gets home in the evenings, she doesn't want to enter the park because it looks 'a bit scary' (2015; see Image 7.2). When asked, she said that the environment is important to her, but she'd prefer looking at the treetops from her apartment's balcony than spend time on the boardwalks. Although there were only a small number of interview subjects, the differences in their responses could reflect divisions between park staff and potential users in how to approach the environment.[46] While none of the interviewed users spoke explicitly about environmentalism alienating them, two employees alluded to a possible cultural divide between those who work in the Ecology Park and those who live in the residence buildings. 2E-GRE, who works at Ecology Park, referred to the local residents as 'city folk' despite acknowledging that she had also lived in the city most of her own life (2015).



Image 7.2: Wooded paths in Greenwich Millennium Village's park. Some see the paths as natural and 'thriving' whereas others see them as overgrown and, potentially, 'scary.'

> The residents really don't come down ... I guess there's really not that much interest [among residents]. They're mostly city folk, and when they get home, I guess, they don't want to come out (ibid.).

An employee at the corner store, 6E-GRE, also suggested there might be a latent division. In speaking of the people who run the Ecology Park, he said: 'I don't think they're from here' (2015).

[46] In the US, there is a rich literature exploring how the environmental considerations have been swept up into a binary political system. 'Republicans cannot touch the term "environmentalism" as long as people assume that protection of the environment hurts the economy, or associate environmental regulation with a broader liberal agenda' (Fortenbery, 2016: ii). As environmentalism becomes tied to other politicised issues, stereotypes emerge and environmentalism becomes a symbol of social groups.

There is also some research that suggests children from the inner city prefer less natural settings. Indeed, a study conducted with children from Chicago Housing Authority's residences found 'that low levels of naturalness were most preferred, but that for some ecosystem types higher levels of naturalness could be maintained without significantly decreasing preferences' (Gobster, 1993: 67). Gobster's research found that 'wetlands' were the least desired type of natural environment because city users find them foreign and uncomfortable (ibid.; also see Metro et al., 1981). Similarly, Ward Thompson et al., found that 'many people prefer open woodland' as opposed to forested woodlands, although there are exceptions (2004: 3).

This issue fits into the second tier, where comfort is – theoretically – established partially through symbolic statements. The GMV case study suggests this may be a particularly important dimension of the PCI Framework. It serves as a reminder that symbolism is not just a matter of branding and signage, but can also be conveyed through how a space is maintained.

Further, this explanation implies the relationship between the tiers may be more complex than the PCI Framework has indicated. Chapter 5 suggested the tiers have an ordered relationship, where presence is established first, then comfort, and then interactions. Evidence from this first case study implies perceived comfort may have the ability to influence presence, indicating a bi-directional relationship between presence and comfort. For example, the three residents who were interviewed had all been to the park previously but chosen not to return regularly.

The third explanation for the lack of users is an overabundance of outdoor space. The park considered in this thesis is at the centre of GMV and, in the official site plan, it is described as 'a large central park' (GMV, 2003; see Image 7.3). However, it also shows



Image 7.3: The official siteplan for Greenwich Millennium Village. In additional to the 'central park,' there are courtyards within each residential block (GMV).

outdoor green spaces located inside each residential block. The GMV website describes these as 'landscaped courtyards' (2017).

All the users interviewed said they spent time in these internal courtyards. 2U-GRE said she liked the courtyard space because 'I recognise most of the people' who live in the apartments surrounding the courtyard (2015). 1U-GRE also felt a sense of safety and comfort knowing the space was confined. 'There are walls on all sides so you know the children can't wander too far' (1U-GRE, 2015). And 3U-GRE, who has an apartment on the ground floor, said it was the ease of access that was particularly appealing: 'I open my door, [then] I open my gate [in the yard], and there you are [in the courtyard]' (2015). The interest in and knowledge of the courtyards stood in stark contrast to the residents' awareness of and use of the 'central park.' Three factors might explain residents' preference for courtyards.

First, there is too much green space. While this seems counter-intuitive and it is hard to imagine park advocates arguing against green space, an abundance of outdoor spaces may lead to less presence in one shared space. In the PCI Framework, the presence tier suggests parks located near high-density and high-diversity areas are best equipped to prevent social exclusion. This case study suggests it may also be important to consider the location of other parks, and perhaps locate the park in a place without too many competing green spaces. This may be particularly salient when considering efforts to prevent social exclusion where some

of the parks are associated with residences. In GMV, some of the green spaces are linked to apartment buildings and because homes are often a proxy for economic status this could result in segregated parks. This also plays into the concerns, explained in Chapter 2, regarding park privatisation.

Second, the central park lacks intriguing features. With an abundance of green space, it seems plausible that users might distribute themselves across the space in courtyards and in the central park. However, residents preferred the courtyards. This could be the result of the PCI Framework's assertion that people attract people. Or, it could be a result of the central park not offering features that are particularly unique, intriguing, or attractive to users. While the wetlands in the Ecology Park are rare – as 4E-GRE explained, 'it's hard to find this type of place [elsewhere in London]' (2015) – they are accessed only through the Gatehouse and users cannot see it before passing through the building. In contrast, the large field borders West Parkway Street and has no barrier to entry. However, the field is wide open, and there is little that could be characterised as intriguing to someone standing at the edge. There are no artistic sculptures. There are no colourful flowers. There are no picnic benches (see Image 7.4). It appears there has not been comprehensive landscape design initiative. Further, throughout the park there are no features obviously geared toward target audiences. For example, there is not a play area for children that could draw families into the park. This explanation suggests that what is visible from a park's edges could be very important for creating presence.



Image 7.4: The open field in Greenwich Millennium Village, as viewed from West Parkview street, does not offer anything particularly unique or visually intriguing to potential users standing on the park's edge.

Finally, the courtyards are positioned at almost every residential building in GMV and easy to access for residents. While the park is

centrally located in the development, access is logistically complicated in a way that could, potentially, deter users. As discussed in Chapter 6, to use the Ecology Park users must enter through the Gatehouse. This requires users to pass through the building, which has specific hours and is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. Users expressed confusion about this: 'I think there's a park inside a park but I'm not that sure' and 'I don't know the hours' (1U-GRE, 2015; 3U-GRE, 2015). In addition, many of the apartment blocks open directly onto the courtyards. Yet, to enter the centre park from The Village Square, a user must go through a relatively narrow opening between two stores. There are two completed residential buildings that do not have courtyards and, instead, directly border the park. However, these apartments do not have easy access to the park because of a manmade lake (DDM, 2015; see Image 7.5). This means residents – in those buildings and in all the other buildings – must walk to The Village Square to enter the park. While this is not a huge burden, it does require more activation energy to use the shared park compared to the courtyards.



Image 7.5: At Greenwich Millennium Village, the residential buildings that abut the central park do not have direct access into the park because of a manmade lake.

Ultimately, after completing multiple site visits and multiple employee and user interviews, GMV's central park failed to generate sufficient presence to be included in the data set. Thus, it is unlikely the park was able to contribute to preventing social exclusion or creating cohesion. However, analysing the interviews and evaluating the site did offer valuable insights into which elements of the PCI Framework might have helped the park to attract users. For example, intriguing features visible from the edges of the park might have been helpful. Other dimensions – not included in the Framework – may also be relevant,

including the location of other nearby green spaces. Finally, this case study suggests that the PCI Framework, which was designed to progress hierarchically from one tier to another, may actually have more complex interactions between the tiers. For example, the second tier (comfort) may be able to influence the first tier (presence) in the form of generating – or not generating – repeat users. So, while the GMV's park did not succeed in preventing social exclusion or promoting cohesion, it did generate valuable lessons for the PCI Framework.

7.3 A Case Study of Success: 'A Hub for Everyone'

About 200 kilometres northwest of GMV's park is Birmingham's Eastside City Park. At Birmingham's New Street Station, similar to the tube stop at North Greenwich, arrows point to the O2 entertainment venue – called the O2 Institute Birmingham – and tourists look skyward at the twisting, shiny steel of the new train station and shopping centre. Head east to see Birmingham's ambitious efforts to expand the city centre. Similar to GMV, Birmingham's efforts include the conversion of brownfield land. One such effort is the Eastside City Park.

The streets curve such that the park is protected from buses exhaling exhaust fumes. One side of Eastside is lined by new, glassy buildings. The other side, by the railway, is still largely undeveloped. A wall – with a patchwork of covered-up graffiti – lines the side near the tracks. The setting in Birmingham is similar to GMV – a park in the midst of a redevelopment effort in one of the country's largest cities – yet the user experience in each park was very different.

Whereas the park at GMV saw few users during data collection, the Eastside City Park was bustling with activity. The users were of all ages and races. They lingered for conversations by the café and sat by the fountain watching children splash through an interactive water feature. Some users found the perfect patch of grass for a picnic. Others sought out the best cement bench for practising skateboarding tricks.

London's GMV park offers insight into what is missing – yet necessary – for attracting park users. Birmingham's Eastside City Park illustrates the features that help a park succeed at creating presence, comfort, and interaction. Interviews with eleven users and two experts – one at the Information Desk inside the Millennium Point building and one at the mobile café in the park – point to three explanations for the park's success.[47]

First, the location of Eastside City Park, in relation to the rest of the city, is key to the park's success. As the Birmingham Post trumpeted, Eastside is 'the first new park in Birmingham for more than a century' (2012a; 2012b). It is located in a city where there are few other large parks. While there is a string of parks on the far southern side of the city, the city centre has few. The main exception is the green space surrounding Birmingham Cathedral, and green areas on the campus of Aston University. Unlike GMV, where there was an abundance of green space in the residential blocks, Birmingham's green space is at a premium (see Image 7.6). The lack of communal green space was noted as a concern in the *Green Paper: Making Birmingham an Inclusive City* (Social Inclusion Process, 2012).



Image 7.6: A map of Birmingham's city centre. The green space near the centre left is the cathedral. The green space at the top right is part of Aston University's campus. And the green space to the far right is the new Eastside City Park (VisitBirmingham, 2016).

It is worth noting that GMV's park is a neighbourhood park, and the Eastside City Park is, as the name implies, a city park. The target user population is very different for each space, and there are potentially more users for a city park than a neighbourhood park.

[47] Given the lack of quantitative data for Greenwich, it was deemed necessary to eliminate the park from the quantitative analysis. The short case study incorporated all of the qualitative analysis that would not be used in the later tier-based analysis. Eastside City Park is a different scenario. Since the quantitative and qualitative data collected there is integrated with the other parks and contributes to the analysis below, this case study examines possible explanations for success but it is not exhaustive.

Although Eastside City Park is located near the city centre, the park had the task of convincing potential users to travel farther than a neighbourhood park. As mentioned in Chapter 6, Birmingham's Social Inclusion Process worried such travel could be a deterrent, since some people do not travel into city centre particularly often (Fairbrum, 2013). However, a lack of neighbourhood parks may motivate people to use city parks. Indeed, many of Eastside's users who were interviewed had come from other parts of the city because they wanted to spend time in a park.

These users viewed the park as a destination with resources that the rest of the city did not readily offer: a free place to sit, a beautiful place, or an escape from technology. 10U-EAS explained that he had time between two meetings in town. 'I came over to see what this was about ... sitting on this bench costs less than sitting in a restaurant' (10U-EAS, 2015). Another user biked 20 minutes from her home to visit the park and be outside. She said:

> I've got no reason to be here. I could be at home now. But I've got a book and it's a beautiful place and I just thought: Well, why not? I've got an hour reading a book in the sunshine in this piece of space (1U-EAS, 2015).

A local college student, who studies computer science, said the park was a rare place without computers and not dominated by technology (5U-EAS, 2015). He spoke for him and his friend, who sat beside him: 'We both use our computers a lot – we're into technology and stuff. I like parks to just get rid of it for a while. It's hard to find that. It's really nice' (5U-EAS, 2015).

Interview data from Eastside affirm that a park's broader location – in addition to the immediate surroundings – is important in determining who is present. It suggests that parks may compete for users. Being located near the downtown area and away from other parks could be valuable, especially given that the Eastside City Park site is not perfect. The area was not fully developed at the time of the research. Users noticed, but it did not seem to deter

them. 1U-EAS spoke of the undeveloped area bordering the park: ‘That could use a bit of work, but it will be developed eventually’ (2015).

A second explanation for the success of Eastside is that the buildings immediately surrounding the park are critical to attracting users. While some users came specifically to explore the park, many of the users came to use the nearby buildings and ended up using the park. As mentioned in Chapter 6, one side of the park abuts the Millennium Point building, which is a large complex housing the Birmingham Science Museum, a large screen cinema, the Birmingham School of Acting, and, among other things, part of Birmingham City University. The varied nature of the organisations and companies in Millennium Point yield a diverse park user population. There were college students and administrators in the park between classes. Families came to the Science Museum, called the Thinktank. Couples and groups of friends of all ages came to the cinema.

These users, who were in the park because of its proximity to Millennium Point, said convenience was the primary factor for their presence in the park. However, most of them also listed a variety of secondary things that made the park particularly appealing. In the middle of the day, two students sat on a bench together; one of them explained that it was nice to see people, particularly children, who were not college-aged: ‘Our college is over there, so it’s a convenient place to hang out. It’s a nice place to chill. And I saw a family having a picnic just there and it’s just nice to see children’ (3U-EAS, 2015). A mother, who came to visit the Science Museum with her young son and her own mother, did not realise the park was there. But she reported that by the end of the day, she had spent more time in the park than in the museum: ‘We came here because we’re going to that [museum]. I think so many open parks you just stumble across, you don’t necessarily know they’re there until you walk past’ (6U-EAS, 2015). She said they would not have stopped in the park if it had not felt

clean. ‘It has to be clean, that’s the main thing’ (ibid.). An administrator at Birmingham City University, 11U-EAS, said, ‘I wouldn’t come if it wasn’t relaxing’ (2015).

These users underscore the role of a park’s edges in the PCI Framework. It seems that the way Eastside and the Millennium Point building interact may be especially helpful. The main entrance to the building is through the park. Even if someone walked the shortest possible distance inside the park, they would have to pass benches and a canal feature. And, most likely, they would pass the mobile café and the children’s play area, too. This means that almost everyone who goes into the building knows about the park and has passed through it.

However, the park does not feel like a front garden to the building. Near the main doors there is a strip of raised ground, such that the soil and plants obscure the doors (see Image 7.7). This means that the park does not feel like a so-called processional landscape leading to an entryway. Instead, the park feels like a destination in its own right. When user 11U-EAS was asked, what made this park different from the green space around the Birmingham Cathedral – both spaces that lead to the front door of a building – he said, ‘here it’s less hectic ... you don’t feel the building, even though it’s quite large’ (2015). However, the woman who works at the Information Desk in Millennium Point, acknowledged that the building and park share a user population. She implied that people choose between spending time in the park and spending time in the building.



Image 7.7: The building at left, with green-tinted glass, is the Millennium Point. The retaining wall - which has water jets on one side and is planted on the other – protects park users from feeling like they are in the path of people entering the building.

> This used to be one big parking lot. This is way, way better. It's a hub for families going to the museum and for students going to college here. It's like a hub of everyone. Lots of people use the park. When it's not raining, people prefer to be out there [in the park and not in the building's atrium] (1E-EAS, 2015).

Third, specific features in the park seem to target specific user populations. The variety of features mean different populations congregated in a shared space. Parents and young children found the playground particularly appealing. One mother, 8U-EAS, said she liked that there were low walls around the children's area: 'I'm not as nervous about watching them [her children] every single second' (2015). Slightly older children enjoyed the water feature with its unpredictable spurts of water. As 1U-EAS watched children run through it, she said: 'I'm thinking I need to bring my daughter here on a sunny day. She could mess about in that' (2015). The skateboarding crowd appreciated the rounded benches. They also liked being welcomed into the park. 4U-EAS said: 'Some parks don't like us being around. But here, it's been good so far' (2015). The queue for the mobile café as well as the outdoor tables, suggest the food was popular among many users. Research notes from Eastside read: 'As soon as a table opens up, somebody is there to take it. Many of the tables have multiple groups sharing them. And when a new group sits down, a short conversation sometimes ensues – asking permission to join the table and exchanging pleasantries' (2015).[48]

The PCI Framework recommends using design to attract specific target populations and facilitate interaction. In particular, attracting children and parents is mentioned as a possible strategy. It seems that Eastside has succeeded at doing this with the children's play area and fountains. However, the PCI Framework did not mention the potential role of food in attracting users and making them feel comfortable. Yet, at Eastside the café was very busy, and one woman working there, 2E-EAS, confirmed its popularity: 'Whenever the sun is out,

[48] Research notes are cited throughout Chapter 7. They were collected at each park as discussed in Chapter 3. Similar to the DDM notes and the interviews, research notes are not included among the references because they are not publicly available. However, the year in which they were gathered is indicated.

it seems there's a line' (2015). Researchers have found that, in other contexts such as the judiciary system, food makes people more understanding and amicable. For example, judges offer more lenient sentences after having eaten lunch, and less lenient sentences just before lunch when they are likely to be hungry (Danziger et al., 2011). While this was not mentioned explicitly in policy documents or elite interviews, it appears to be a relevant part of the PCI Framework.

When the PCI Framework is examined in light of these two case studies – London's unsuccessful GMV park and Birmingham's successful Eastside City Park – a coherent picture emerges. The very features that GMV's park struggled with, Eastside excelled at. In this way, juxtaposing these cases highlights the design features of parks that appear critical to success. First, a good location – near a densely-populated area, but not near other parks – is important. Second, the flow between the park and bordering buildings is highlighted as a significant driver in park usage. Third, these case studies demonstrate the value of having particular features that attract particular users, especially attractions for parents and children. The Eastside case also illustrates how other features, such as food and drink, can attract users and promote interaction. Taken together, these case studies offer suggestive evidence of which features in the PCI Framework appear to be most relevant, and where the Framework should be amended. The next section expands the scope of analysis to all case study parks, focusing on each tier of the Framework in turn.

7.4 Testing the First Tier – Presence – with User Data

The first and most fundamental step of the PCI Framework is ensuring that the park in question attracts people, but not just any people. It must attract users who advance the goals of preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion. This means that the ultimate goal in UK parks is to attract users who are representative of the broader population.

The PCI Framework suggests that focusing on specific target populations can be a helpful initial step. As explained in Chapter 5 and referenced earlier in this chapter, these target populations are seen as key avenues to attracting the whole community, including those at risk of exclusion. For example, women are one target population: once they start using a park, the idea is that they draw the rest of their community to the space. Others have suggested parks should attract stationary users who view the park as a destination and spend more time there, as opposed to mobile users who are just passing through.

7.4.1 Pre-Analysis Plan for Presence

In order to assess whether the UK parks succeeded in generating presence, comfort, and interaction according to the PCI Framework, it is necessary to determine exactly what success would look like. A pre-analysis plan for each tier of the Framework will define success in two ways. First, the plan outlines what the Framework would predict based on policy documents and elite interviews. Second, it describes based on the design of the park what the anticipated results would be.

The pre-analysis plan predicts that UK parks, designed to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion, would attract users who are representative of the broader population. In particular, they would be racially representative. At a minimum, UK parks would be more representative than their US counterparts, which were not designed to address social exclusion. However, the UK parks – since they are all relatively new parks – would not be representative when it came to gender. Instead, the theory predicted that they would draw a higher number of female users than the general population, and more female users than the US parks. Further, the theory predicts the UK parks would have more stationary users than mobile users and more stationary users than the comparable parks in the US.

According to Chapter 6, only some UK parks have successfully incorporated the PCI recommendations aimed at attracting user presence. The prediction is that the parks that

implemented more of the features – such as clear sightlines, good lighting, and visually intriguing features visible from the edges – were more likely to achieve the desired user population compared to the parks that implemented fewer of the design prescriptions. In the UK, London's Mile End Park and Birmingham's Eastside City Park were more successful at implementing the PCI Framework features than London's Thames Barrier Park. As explained in the previous chapter, some US parks included these design features – not for the purpose of preventing social exclusion, but for entirely separate reasons. This means Chicago's Millennium Park and Washington's Yards Park are predicted to be better at generating the desired user presence compared to Chicago's Seward Park and Washington's Canal Park.

7.4.2 Analysing User Findings

Before examining the specific targets set out in the pre-analysis plan, it is worth noting that the number of users observed in each park varied greatly. Even with GMV's park removed from the data set, there is a lot of variability. Figure 7.1 shows the total number of observed users divided by the number of observations conducted in a given park.[49] This accounts for a slight inconsistency in the number of observations per park. The number of observed users includes all individuals in the mobile mapping as well as the stationary mapping. As described in Section 3.4.3, mobile mapping records everyone who passed by the researcher in a 10-minute period. This was conducted at least a dozen times in each case study park. Stationary mapping was also done at least a dozen times, however it recorded everyone using a given space at a specific moment in time. The area that is observed in stationary mapping is a limited section of the park. The section was selected in consultation with park designers and park employees with the intent of following natural boundaries and

[49] All figures presented in this chapter have been made available online. The link is included in Appendix B.

incorporating the busiest area in the park. In Figure 7.1, the parks are arranged such that the UK-US pairs are next to one another.[50]

As Figure 7.1 shows, Birmingham's Eastside City Park and Chicago's Millennium Park attracted the most users. This makes sense given that both parks are city parks. As explained in Chapter 3, these parks are designed to serve the entire metropolitan area. However, when the city population is taken into account, Eastside draws far more users proportionally than Millennium. This is because Birmingham is a significantly smaller city, by population, than Chicago.

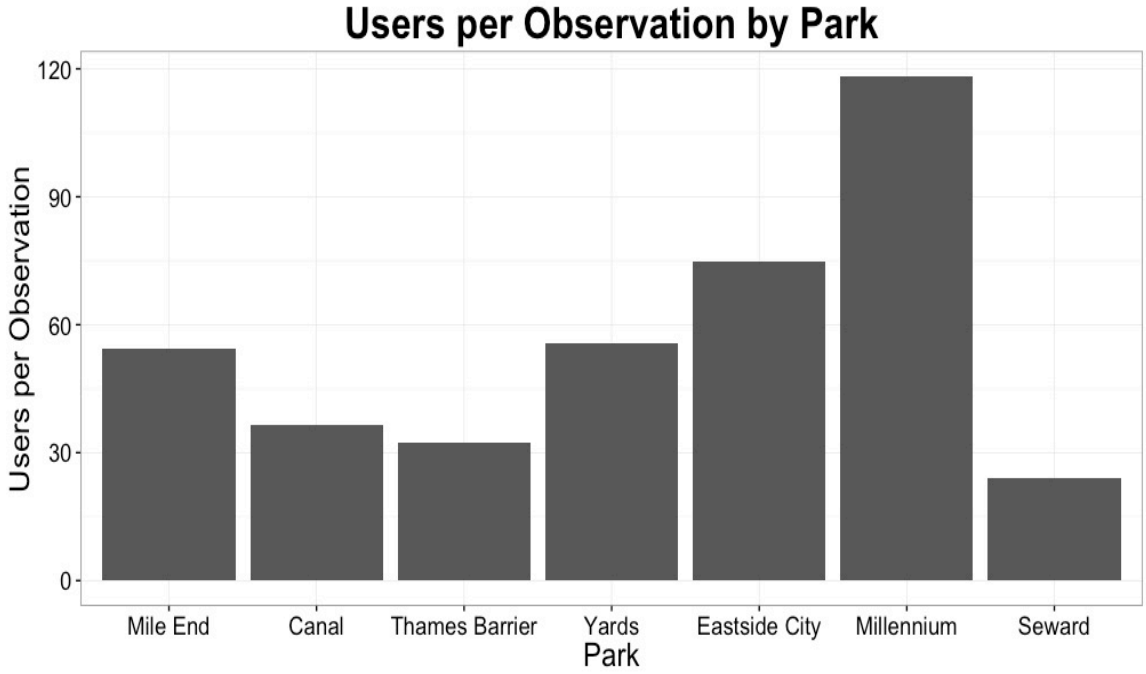


Figure 7.1: Users per observation by park. In the UK, Eastside City Park had the highest number of users and Thames Barrier Park had the lowest number. In the US, Millennium Park had the highest number of users and Seward Park had the lowest. From left to right: London's Mile End Park, Chicago's Canal Park, London's Thames Barrier Park, Washington's Yards Park, Birmingham's Eastside City Park, Chicago's Millennium Park, and Chicago's Seward Park.

[50] The figures in this chapter were prepared using R, a statistical software. While all the data was gathered during fieldwork without any outside assistance, R requires coding and, thus, a colleague helped prepare the figures that were requested. All the figures are available in Appendix B and, where appropriate, there are additional figures that show the same variable at each of the case study sites.

A close look at Millennium Park's user data suggests that the user population varied based on the weather. When it was raining, the number of users dropped precipitously (see Figure 7.2 on the following page). However, stationary mapping during one particular rainstorm shows the remaining users were concentrated underneath the Cloud Gate sculpture, where they were protected from the rain and in close quarters with one another, which could have enabled triangulation.

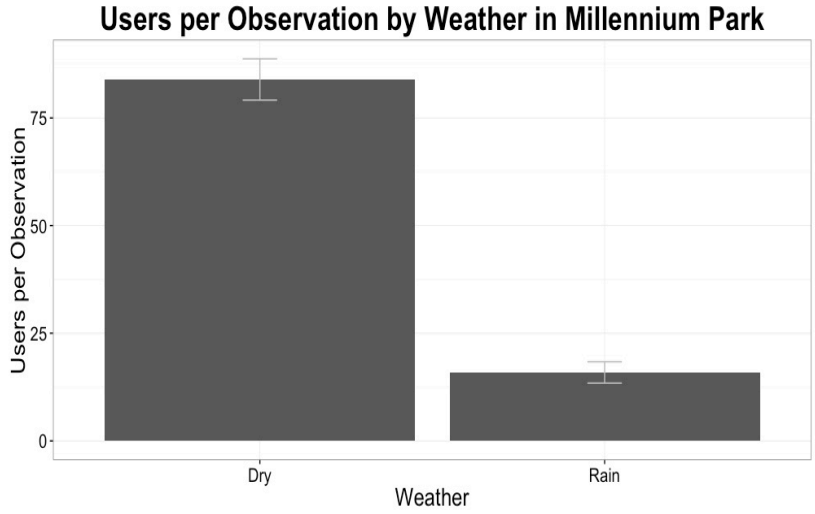


Figure 7.2: Users per observation when it was dry (left) and raining (right) in Chicago's Millennium Park. There were far more park users when it was dry than when it was raining.

At the other end of the spectrum, London's Thames Barrier Park and Chicago's Seward Park attracted far fewer users than the other parks in their respective countries. While they both had a relatively low number of users, the user patterns in these two parks were different. In Thames Barrier Park, the users per observation on the

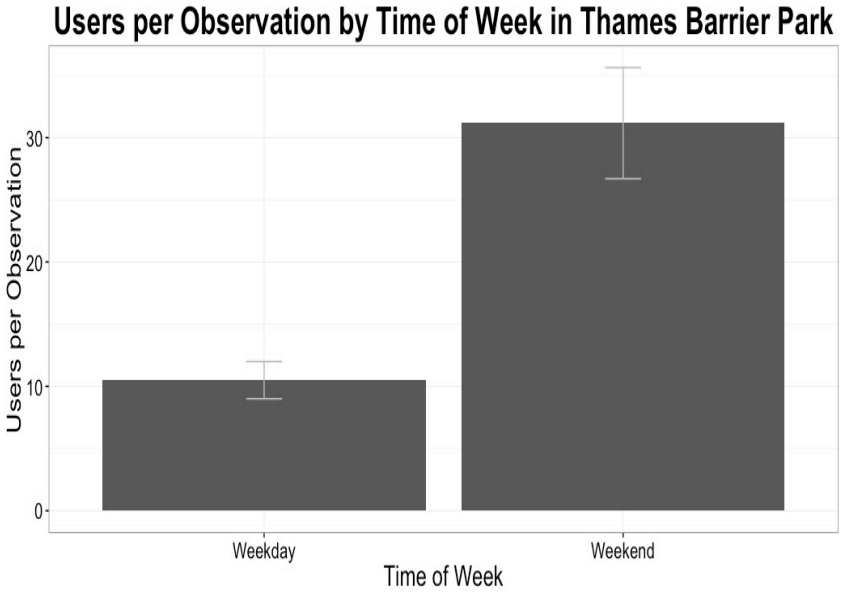


Figure 7.3: Users per observation during a weekday (left) and during a weekend (right) in London's Thames Barrier Park. There were approximately three times as many users on the weekends than on the weekdays.

weekends is approximately triple the number of users per observation on the weekdays (see Figure 7.3). In Seward Park, there were more weekend users than weekday users, but the gap is far narrower. Seward had approximately fifty per cent more users at the weekend.

The increase in users during the weekends suggests the park design may still attract users, but the population it caters to is occupied during the working week. In addition, user interviews suggest that, in Thames Barrier Park, many users come from elsewhere in London and, given the travel distance, could only visit the park at the weekend. One user, 1U-THA, who came to visit the park with her partner, said, 'we're from North London ... we just thought this would be a nice weekend trip' (2015). They said they picked the park because they wanted to see the Thames Barrier, which are ten steel gates designed to prevent water from flooding London (see Image 7.8). 'It has a great view of the Thames Barriers, which is the main reason we're here' (ibid.). Another user, 3U-THA, a teenage male, said he had chosen to travel to the park and that required coming at the weekend. 'There are parks closer to me but they are not nearly as nice' (3U-THA, 2015). A groundskeeper and gardener confirmed that the weekends are busier than weekdays and many of the users come from elsewhere in the city:



Image 7.8: The Thames Barrier Park attracts users from all over because it has 'a great view' of the Thames Barrier, which helps prevent London from being flooded.

> I'd say ninety per cent of dog walkers are local, but everyone else – they come from everywhere to see The Barrier...They don't care for it [the cleanliness of the park] because they're not from here. I'm a gardener but I'll come in on Monday and spend two hours just cleaning up. It's not entirely their fault because there aren't enough bins (1E-THA, 2015).

In contrast, all the user interviews in Seward Park said they lived or worked in the area, implying that they used the park partially because it was conveniently located. One

grandmother, who was at the park to pick up two of her grandchildren who had spent much of the morning in the park, pointed out her living room window: 'I can sit there [in the window] and see everything that's happening here' (5U-SEW, 2015).

These data on the user population and how it varies based on the day of the week and the weather have implications for the PCI Framework. It seems that sculptures or artistic features may play a significant role in attracting users. For Thames Barrier Park, the sculpted metal barriers were cited as reasons for increasing the user base. In the PCI Framework, elements such as sculptures and views are mentioned in the final tier, as a way to spur interaction. However, these findings suggest unique sculptures may be a valuable way to draw users to the park and, thus, could potentially belong in the first tier of the Framework, too.

7.4.3 Drawing a Cross-Section of Society to the Park

One of the fundamental tenets of using parks to prevent social exclusion is the idea that parks can draw people from across society to a shared space. In particular, the hope is that a park can attract people who are at risk of exclusion to participate in a shared social space. There is very little data available on who – which racial, socioeconomic, religious, and other demographic groups – actually uses urban parks. This research gathered demographic data – including racial data – on those using the parks. The researcher visually assessed the race of users, which is of course an imperfect method. However, there is precedent for this method in other research using systematic social observation (see Gobster 1992; 1998; see Chapter 3 for further discussion of technique).

The demographic data gathered from park observations of users were compared with data from the area surrounding the park (see Figure 7.4). For city parks, where the target

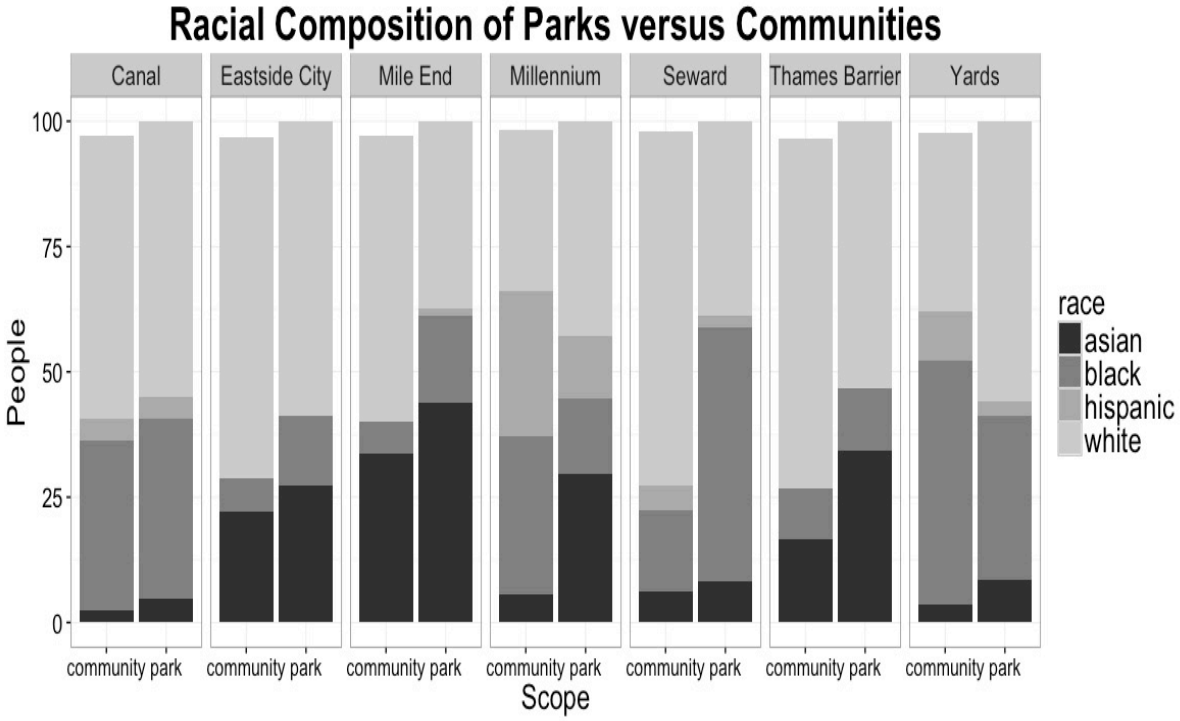


Figure 7.4: Racial composition of parks (right bar) versus racial composition of surrounding community (left bar). City parks are compared with the city's racial composition. Neighbourhood parks are compared with the racial composition of the neighbourhood. From left to right: London's Mile End Park, Chicago's Canal Park, London's Thames Barrier Park, Washington's Yards Park, Birmingham's Eastside City Park, Chicago's Millennium Park, and Chicago's Seward Park.

audience is the entire city, the park data was compared with the racial composition of the city. This was the case for London's Thames Barrier Park, Birmingham's Eastside City Park, Chicago's Millennium Park, and Washington's Yards Park. For the neighbourhood parks, the park data was compared with the racial makeup of the surrounding neighbourhood. Racial data from Mile End Park were compared with racial data from the Tower Hamlets Borough of London. Data from Canal Park in Washington, DC were compared with data from the surrounding zip code, 20003. And Seward Park in Chicago was compared with data from its surrounding zip code, 60610. All of the UK data for cities and neighbourhoods came from the Office for National Statistics. All of the US city and neighbourhood data came from US

Census Data. Note the city or neighbourhood data add up to slightly less than one hundred per cent because other racial categories or mixed race groups are not included in the data.

Although not every park's demographics perfectly match the demographics of the surrounding community, the differences between the park users and community members are informative. In some cases – where the parks appear to over-represent groups that are racial minorities in the area, the composition of users could be a positive sign for preventing social exclusion.

In the three UK parks, user data suggests that minority populations could be overrepresented in parks. In Thames Barrier Park, the Asian population in the observed sample is higher than the Asian population in London. In Mile End Park, the Asian and Black populations are higher than they are in the surrounding borough. One of the park employees at Mile End Park, who is himself South Asian, said that the park is popular among minority groups. He hypothesised that their outreach to schools was an important factor:

> I think a lot of [South Asian] families first find the park because their children come here on a school outing. And then it just becomes a place for walking for moms or barbeques on the weekend.... And [soon] the community just knows about it (1E-MEP, 2015).

In Eastside City Park, Black and Asian users were also overrepresented in the sample. Together, they constitute about forty per cent of the park users. This may be the result of the decision to have part of Birmingham City University located in the Millennium Point building, which is accessed through the park. According to the university, forty-five per cent of the student body report being 'Black or Minority Ethnic' (BCU, 2013-14). This provides further suggestive evidence that the edges of a park are important in determining who is present in the park. This also suggests these parks have effectively appealed to demographic groups that may feel marginalised by the broader society.

In the US parks, the racial data seems to be a result of existing demographic trends in the areas surrounding the parks – which are not counterbalanced by the parks themselves. In

Chicago's Seward Park the overrepresentation of the Black population might be a result of the park's location. While the zip code includes a diverse population, the park is located in the part of the zip code with a concentrated Black population: 620 of the Seward Park Block Group's 943 residents identify as African-American. A Block Group is a geographic area that is smaller than a zip code, but which is too small to capture the neighbourhood to which the park theoretically caters. One interpretation of the demographic variation between the community – defined by the zip code – and the park's users is that a neighbourhood park actually draws its population from a smaller geographic area than a zip code.

In Chicago's Millennium Park, Asian users were overrepresented. The research notes provide an indication as to why this might be: 'Another bus arrives full of tourists, they appear to be from an East Asian country' (2015). However, the underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic users is not explained by the presence of tourists. Instead, it may be indicative of a trend where minority populations are moving away from the downtown area. Further, the park – which is not designed to prevent social exclusion – did not explicitly try to target or engage these minority communities.

Finally, in Washington's Yards Park the white population appears to be overrepresented compared to the population in the surrounding area. One elite interview, 3E-YAR, who works at a store that borders the park, sees this as symptomatic of rapid gentrification. 'This area is changing really fast. Like, I mean really fast. It is becoming whiter and wealthier' (2016). Users were also aware of these demographic changes. 4U-YAR said, 'I'm torn. The area clearly needed investment ... but what does that mean for the people who used to live here?' (2016). The overrepresentation of white users might be exactly what the planners and architects intended, as explained in Chapter 6, as they sought to draw a new demographic to the area.

This demographic analysis suggests that UK parks – excluding GMV's park – succeed at attracting a diverse user population, including minority users who might be at risk of marginalisation. While the PCI Framework emphasises the need for drawing a representative user base, it also emphasised the importance of attracting groups that could be excluded. In the US, it seems that the parks have simply reflected demographic trends that include segregation and gentrification.

7.4.4 Attracting Women to the Parks

The PCI Framework suggests that parks may want to target female users for two reasons. First, experts theorise that a large number of female park users is an indication that the park is considered safe. A lack of female users may indicate that the park is perceived to be unsafe. As explained in Chapter 5, experts take this further, hypothesising that when

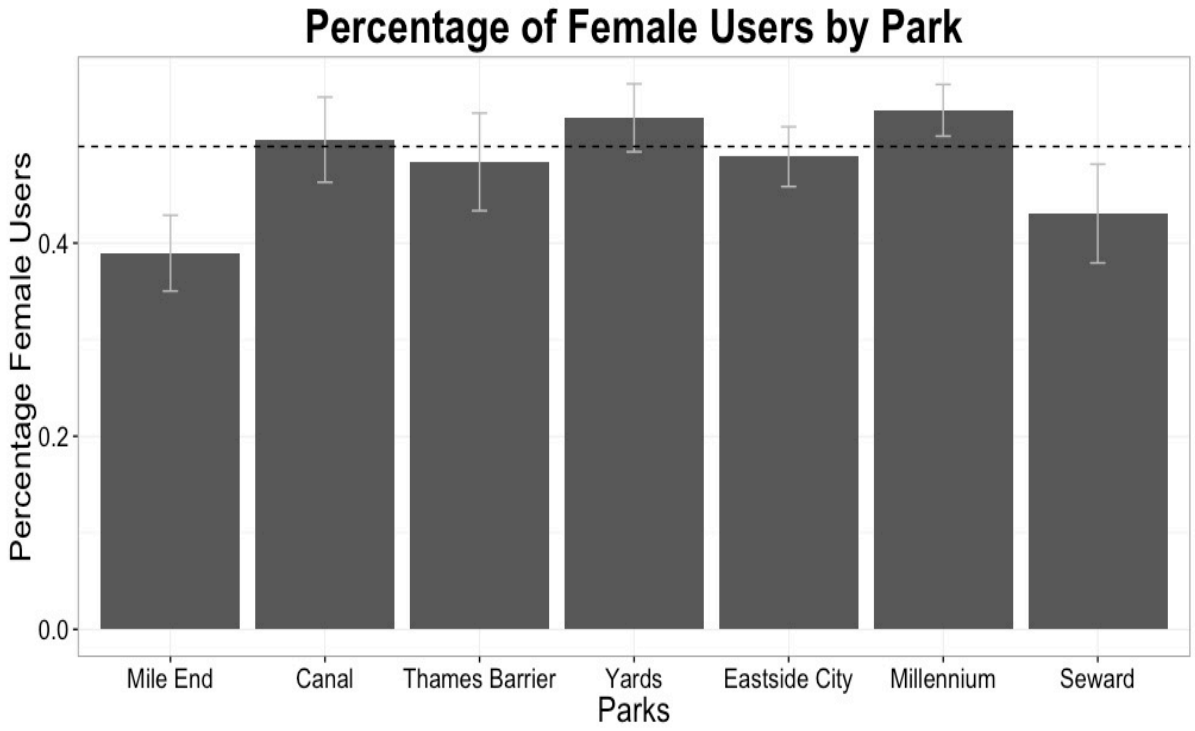


Figure 7.5: Percentage of female users by park. This histogram shows that London's Mile End Park and Chicago's Seward Park attract more men than women and Chicago's Millennium Park attracts more women than men. From left to right: London's Mile End Park, Chicago's Canal Park, London's Thames Barrier Park, Washington's Yards Park, Birmingham's Eastside City Park, Chicago's Millennium Park, and Chicago's Seward Park.

women are in a park *alone*, it is a particularly strong indication that a park is considered safe. Second, policymakers and planners hope to attract women because they are seen as a conduit to attract the rest of their community. Thus, the theory is that women can have a multiplier effect, drawing others into the park – for play dates, family outings, or date nights. Based on the user data presented in Figure 7. 5, the UK parks have not succeeded in attracting more women than men. The total number of users sampled in each park is summarised earlier in the chapter in Table 7.1.

Census data suggest that there are roughly equal numbers of men and women in the general population. The horizontal line at the fifty per cent mark on the y-axis represents this as the null hypothesis. This barplot shows that Chicago's Millennium Park attracted more women than men, whereas Chicago's Seward Park and London's Mile End Park attract more

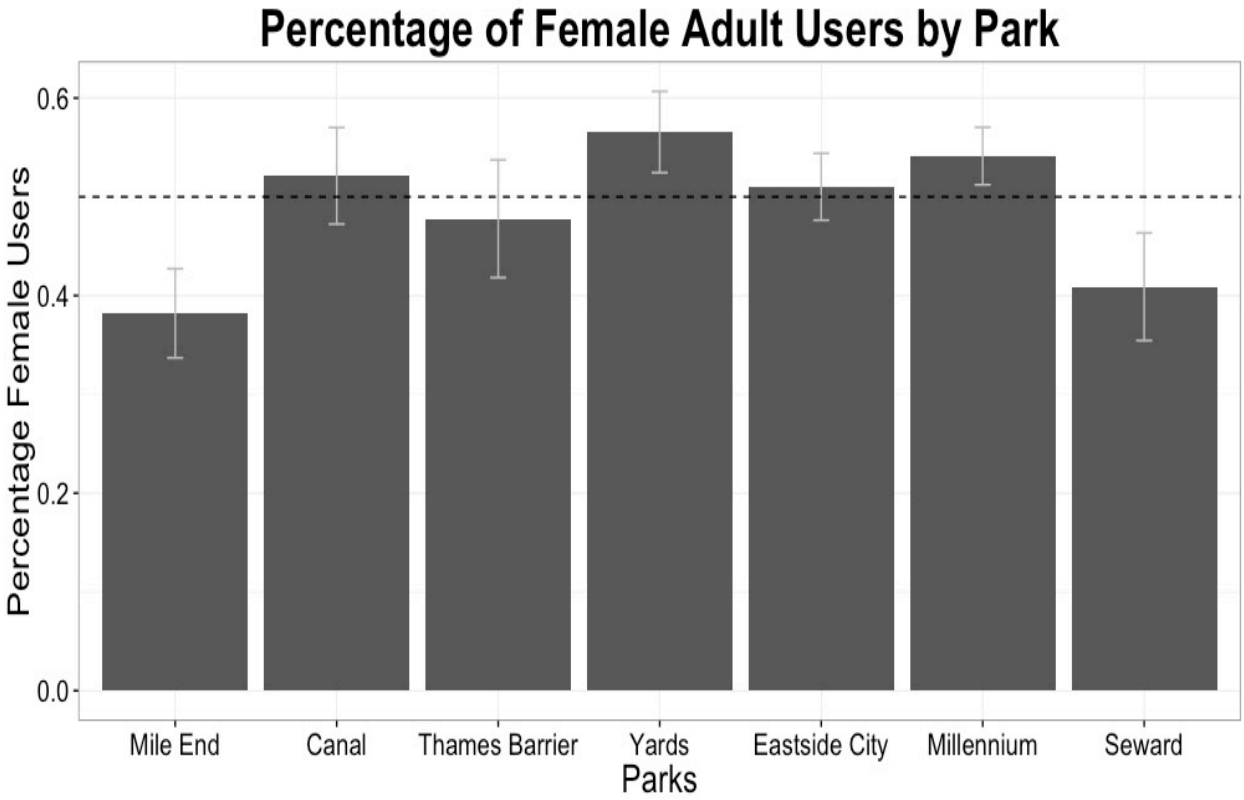


Figure 7.6: Percentage of female adult users by park. When only adult users are considered, Washington's Yards Park joins Chicago's Millennium Park in having more females than males. From left to right: London's Mile End Park, Chicago's Canal Park, London's Thames Barrier Park, Washington's Yards Park, Birmingham's Eastside City Park, Chicago's Millennium Park, and Chicago's Seward Park.

men than women. The observational data from other parks indicate that they attracted users that mirror the fifty-fifty divide seen in the general population, as indicated by confidence intervals that overlap the fifty percent line. However, limiting the data to adult users reveals a stronger gender imbalances in certain parks (see Figure 7.6). Considering adults only, Washington's Yards Park is similar to Millennium Park in that there are more women than men present. A closer look at each of these parks helps identify the factors that may contribute to the gender imbalances.

In Mile End Park the gender imbalance is most readily explained by considering the mobile data and the stationary data separately. As is evident in Figure 7.7, the additional male presence is exaggerated in the mobile users and the imbalance disappears when considering stationary users or those who use Mile End Park as a destination.

One explanation for the difference between Mile End's mobile and stationary data is the athletic gym adjacent to the portion of Mile End Park that was observed in the fieldwork. Research notes from the park suggest that many of the people entering and leaving the gym walk through the park, which surrounds the gym on three sides: 'Many of the people walking through the parking lot and on the path between the basketball courts and the open green are carrying

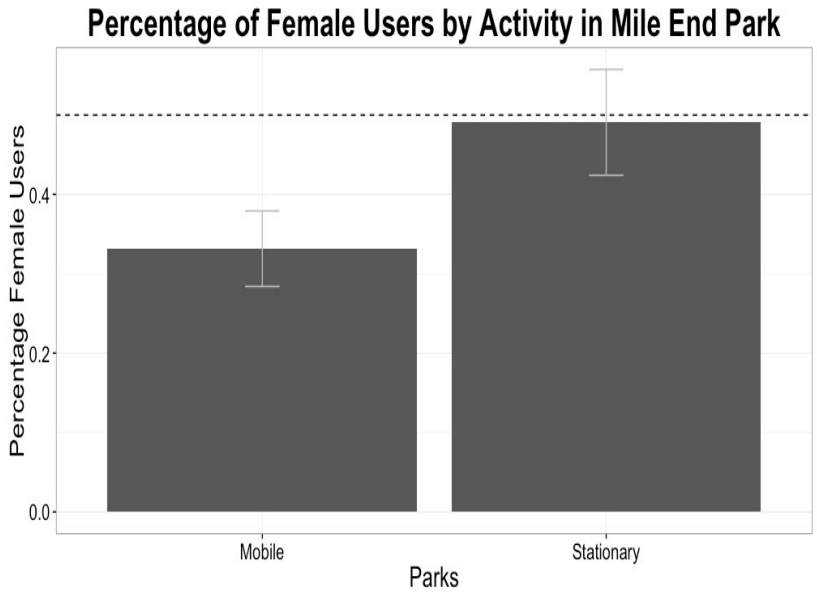


Figure 7.7: Percentage of user who were mobile who were female (left) and percent of users who were stationary who were female (right) in London's Mile End Park. The stationary user population was evenly divided between males and females. The mobile user population was dominated by males.

athletic bags or rackets' (2015). Further, an interview with a gym employee confirmed that the vast majority of the gym members are male. He explained that in an effort to attract more female members, and in deference to the local Muslim population, the gym had recently designated hours when only women could use the main room. They had also created a workout room designated 'just for women ... it is smaller, but there are always free machines' (3E-MEP, 2015).

In Yards Park, it appears exercise may have also caused the gender imbalance – but in the opposite direction. In this park, fieldwork observed more female adult users than male adult users. While the imbalance is not nearly as extreme as in Mile End Park, a close look at the young adult population provides a hypothesis for what caused the gender discrepancy. If the young adult population is broken down by which users were exercising and which users were participating in all other activities, then it becomes clear that females were overrepresented in the exercising population observed in Yards Park (see Figure 7.8). It should be noted that while this finding is statistically significant, the sample size is small and, thus, merits caution.

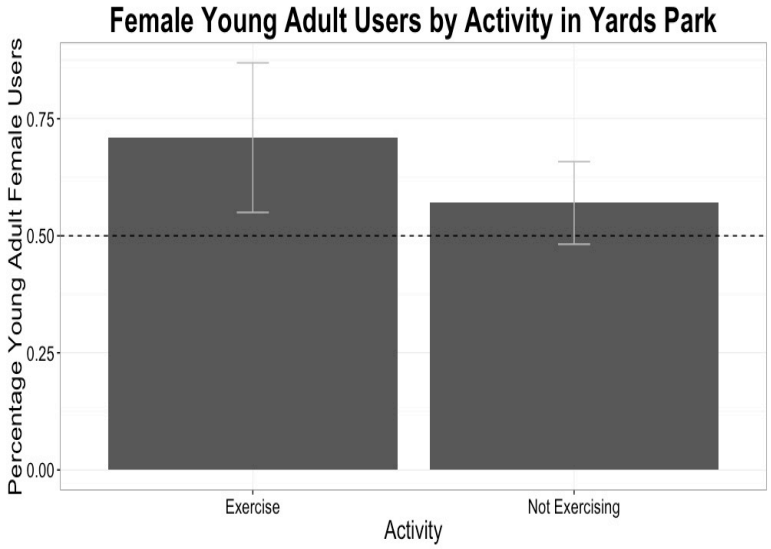


Figure 7.8: Percentage of young adult users who were exercising who were female (left) and percent of users who were not exercising who were female (right) in Washington's Yards Park. Of the young adults in the park, more women were exercising than men.

Unlike in Mile End Park, where the gym is primarily an indoor facility, at Yards Park the exercise classes were offered outdoors in the park. During the fieldwork, a local gym was offering free exercise classes in Yards Park. These included yoga, zumba, boot camp sessions,

and, periodically, a family exercise class. The data suggest that it was predominantly women who attended these classes. An interview with one of the park programmers supports this claim. This interviewee 'came in at the ground floor' of Yards Parks' development and helped craft the exercise class schedule as a way to attract users (1E-YAR, 2016).

> We know you can't develop when the area is – well, really trashy. And it has a terrible reputation. So, we built this nice park and the whole area is changing, but people's perceptions take a few years to catch up.... So, we knew that people won't come down here just for the park. We had to offer things – like programming – that made them want to come. And we wanted the park to feel young. We had a beer festival and a rock concert, but yoga and zumba are the best. One [of the classes] happens almost every day in the summer. It just works really well.... Lots of young women come after work (ibid.).

While Yards Park was not trying to draw a representative user base – indeed, 3E-YAR explained they were focused on young adults – the exercise classes seemed to be an explicit strategy for generating presence in a place that was otherwise seen as undesirable. One user interview, 4U-YAR, said that these free classes were how she initially found the park: 'The first time I came here, it was with a friend from my office. I think it was Sunset Yoga we went to' (2016). This user confirmed that she came back regularly, after her friend had introduced her to the park.

Findings from London's Mile End Park and Washington's Yards Park suggest park planners or programmers can influence the user population, in particular through offering exercise opportunities. It seems the location of a gym in a park and the exercise programmes offered by a park are not only successful at attracting users, but they can also be a valuable tool when targeting a very specific type of user. Indeed, yoga and zumba in Yards Park seemed to appeal to young women, and the large workout facility in Mile End Park appealed more to men.

Offering opportunities to exercise may also attract specific age groups. Although this sample suggests exercise activities attract young adult users, they may also be able to attract older users. Parks in other parts of the world might be instructive. While 'public space in

Southeast Asia ... is rarely discussed in the world's urban design agenda,' that part of the world may hold valuable examples of older people exercising in public spaces (Oranratmanee and Sachakul, 2014: 211). For example, 'Tai Chi is an ancient Chinese practice of disciplined exercise that is publicly practised by older people in and around the parks and open spaces of Hong Kong, as well as in mainland China and other Asian countries' (Jones et al., 2005: 619-620). This is an instance of a type of exercise that is particular to a culture, underscoring that park programmers could use exercise to draw not only a specific age or sex to the park, but also a particular ethnicity. This means programming meant to increase presence in a space might also make a symbolic statement, suggesting that exercise should be incorporated into both the presence and comfort tiers of the PCI Framework.

While exercise might explain the gender imbalance in Mile End Park and Yards Park, something else appears to explain the imbalance in Millennium Park and Seward Park, both in Chicago. In observations at Millennium Park, there were more women than men. In Seward Park, there were more men than women. The data suggest this could be a question of safety and comfort.

There are two possible quantitative ways to gauge the perception of safety among female users. First, it could be displayed in the gender divide between mobile users compared to stationary users. If women feel unsafe, then they will – theoretically – be more likely to pass straight through the park, rather than stop and linger in the park. Second, examining whether female users are in the park alone or in the park with another person can highlight concerns about safety. The PCI Framework suggests that if women do not feel safe, then they will opt to be with another person, or not enter the park at all. If there is a large gender discrepancy between either of the two categories, then it would be suggestive evidence that the park may not be perceived as safe.

In Chicago's Seward Park, there were more mobile users than stationary users. However, there was not a large gender divide within the mobile population. This suggests that the park is not used as a destination but it is hard to tell whether that is because the features are not appealing, because the park is not perceived as safe, or for another reason entirely. Analysing the gender composition of park users in groups and alone provides a clearer picture. As is seen in Figure 7.9, lone users are far less likely to be women. Like the old adage 'safety in numbers,' women in Seward Park appeared more likely to move in groups rather than as individuals. The evidence is indicative of a park that is seen as not particularly safe.

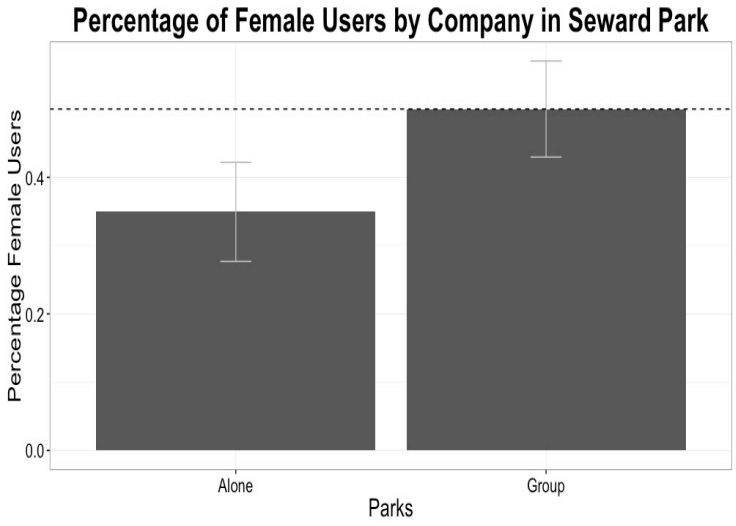


Figure 7.9: Percentage of lone users who were female (left) and percent of users in a group who were female (right) in Chicago's Seward Park.

User interviews also touched on this concern. A female user, who said she sometimes takes a shortcut through the park to get to the nearby shopping complex, expressed concern about two homeless individuals, who were sleeping under a tree. She said they were often in the park. 'I don't like that there are homeless people right next to the children's jungle gym ... I am sure nothing will happen, but it doesn't give me the best feeling' (1U-SEW, 2015). Another female user, who was at the park with her daughter as well as a friend and her young daughter, said that she does use the park without a friend, but prefers to go with a friend. She said that sometimes there are teenagers lingering around and, 'I think I'd prefer [it] if there were more park staff around' (2U-SEW, 2015). Yet another female user, who lives next door

and walks her dog in the park regularly, expressed less concern, but did acknowledge, ‘we don’t come here at night’ (7U-SEW, 2015).

The story is very different in Chicago’s Millennium Park, less than four kilometres away. In this park, the sample included more females than males. The whole population was far more likely to be in groups than alone. As Figure 7.10 shows, there is no statistically significant difference between the proportion of females in groups and those alone. Similarly, as Figure 7.11 depicts, there is no statistically significant difference between the proportion of women who were stationary andthose who were mobile. Taken together, this is suggestive evidence that women feel like the park is relatively safe.

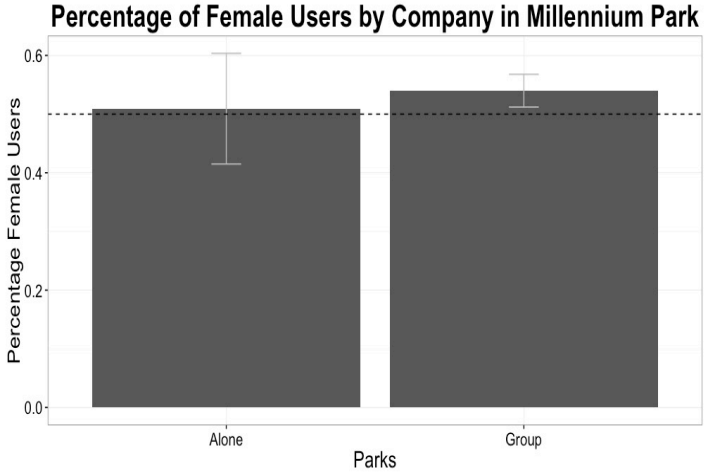


Figure 7.10: Percentage of lone users who were female (left) and percentage of users in a group who were female (right) in Chicago’s Millennium Park. There is no statistical difference between whether women were alone or in a group in this park.

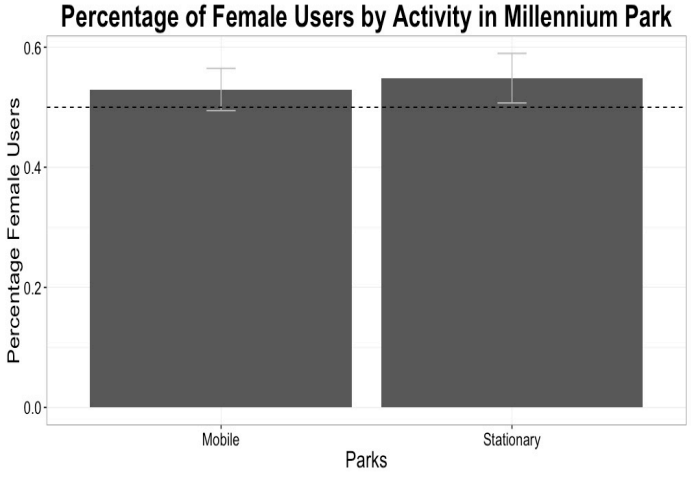


Figure 7.11: Percentage of mobile users who were female (left) and percentage of stationary users who were female (right) in Chicago’s Millennium Park. There is no statistical difference between whether women were mobile or stationary in this park.

Two users in Millennium Park brought up questions of safety. However, they were both questions of children’s safety. One mother said that having her children in the large crowd of park goers was unnerving. ‘I feel on edge with my kids running

around' (3U-MIL, 2015). Another parent said they wanted to make sure their children did not get hurt playing in the water feature. 'They're going crazy in there. Having so much fun. But then one kid falls over, hits his head, and all our fun is over' (6U-MIL, 2015). A security guard, who was standing by the water feature, also said that his single goal was to 'make sure the children are safe' (2E-MIL, 2015). While questions about how to design a park that is safe for children are valid, these concerns suggest Millennium Park users were not concerned about threats from other users, and they did not feel like the park's environment and surrounding areas were unsafe.

This analysis of quantitative and qualitative data suggests that gender imbalances could be a valuable way to gauge perceptions of safety. Indeed, it appears there may have been fewer females in Chicago's Seward Park than would be expected because of concerns about safety. And there were more females than males in Chicago's Millennium Park partially because it was seen as a safe environment. While the goal in Seward Park was not to prevent social exclusion, the user interviews suggest that the park might reinforce social exclusion. The safety concerns focused on disliking other park users, particularly groups traditionally seen as at risk of social exclusion: 1U-SEW was apprehensive about the homeless park users (2015) and the teenagers in the park worried 2U-SEW (2015). This suggests that even if these representative users were present in the same physical location, they were not eager to have positive interactions.

While examining gender as a variable can be useful, this analysis indicates it must be considered in concert with other variables, such as whether users are stationary or mobile and whether they are exercising or not. The PCI Framework begins to acknowledge these complexities when it recommends looking at whether women are alone.

7.4.5 Stationary or Mobile Users

The PCI Framework postulates that stationary users are more desirable than mobile users for preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion. This is, theoretically, because stationary users view the park as a destination, meaning they spend more time in the park. Staying stationary is a sign that the user feels comfortable, and remaining in the park offers more opportunities for interactions between users. Figure 7.12 shows the number of stationary and mobile users in each park. There is a large degree of variation between the parks. Both Birmingham's Eastside City Park and Chicago's Seward Park had significantly more mobile users than stationary users. And both Washington's Yards Park and Chicago's Millennium Park had significantly more stationary users than mobile users.

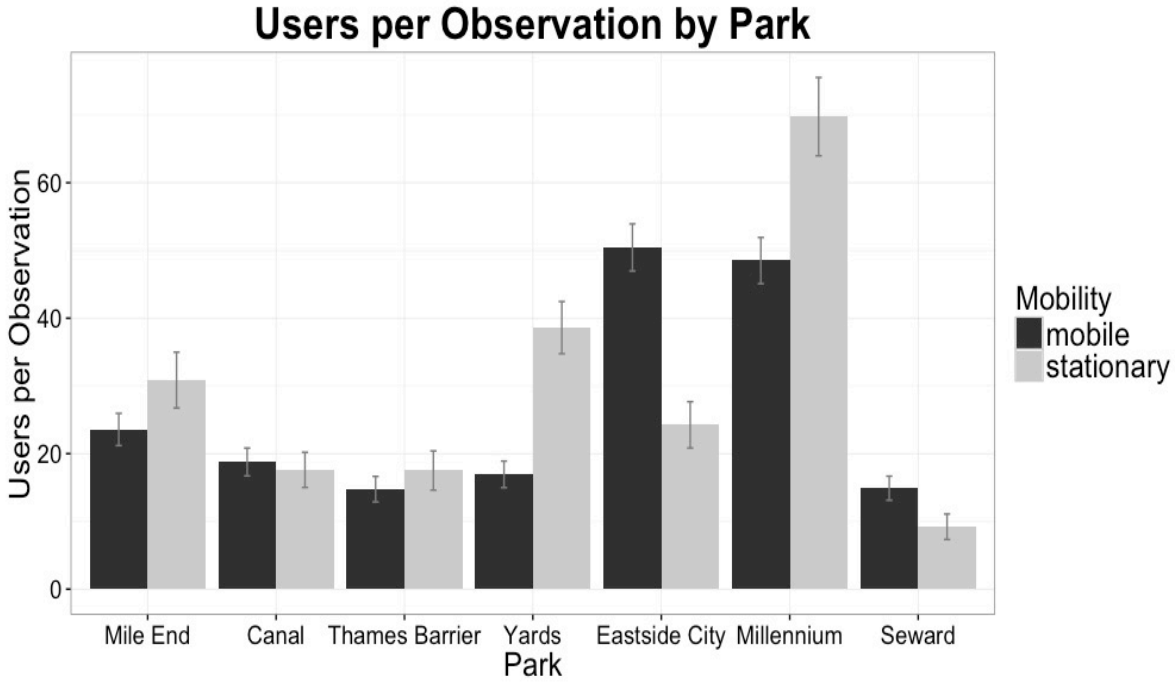


Figure 7.12: Users per observation by park. Some parks attracted more mobile users (bar on right) than stationary users (bar on left), whereas other parks attracted the reverse. From left to right: London's Mile End Park, Chicago's Canal Park, London's Thames Barrier Park, Washington's Yards Park, Birmingham's Eastside City Park, Chicago's Millennium Park, and Chicago's Seward Park.

The mix of users in each of these four parks was explored earlier in the chapter, and the explanations vary considerably. In the case study of Eastside, the interaction between the Millennium Point building and the park was examined. Many of the park users were there solely because of the park's proximity to their destination, whether it was the Science

Museum or the university departments in Millennium Point. The building's main entrance is through the park, and user interviews suggest this case study is a strong example of how the edges of a park can attract users. This implies the high number of mobile users may be a result of people using the building and not a sign that the park's design failed to attract stationary users.

In contrast, Seward Park's high proportion of mobile users is consistent with the gender analysis, where several users indicated there were concerns about safety in the park and, thus, they were less likely to use the park as a destination. The balance between stationary and mobile users was indicative of a problem in this park's ability to generate presence.

In both Yards Park and Millennium Park, interviews suggest the high number of stationary users was the result of design strategies intended to make the park a destination. In Yards Park, the exercise classes brought individuals into the park for a sustained amount of time. Interviews suggest the family wading pool also proved to be a popular attraction for families. 'My kids ask to come here just about every weekend' (7U-YAR, 2016). A father hypothesised that his children liked this pool better than other pools because of its depth. It is about half a meter deep – such that children can rest in the water and be submerged but they don't have to swim. 'And, frankly, I like it too. I can stand in there with them without having to change into swim trunks' (ibid.). He said their family comes to the park just for the wading pool.

In Millennium Park, several users said specific features of the park's design had attracted them. Here, too, the water feature was popular. However, the public art was referenced more regularly in user interviews. 'We came to see Frank Gehry's work,' said 7U-MIL, referencing the band shell and pedestrian bridge designed by the renowned architect (2015). 7U-MIL was from Ireland and visiting the park with his wife on vacation. 'I've never

seen anything like it in my life,' 1U-MIL said of the reflective Cloud Gate sculpture (2015). 1U-MIL was a young man from Milwaukee, who was visiting Chicago for the first time. 10U-MIL also said the Cloud Gate was what had attracted her. 'Every time we have guests in town, we bring them here' (2015). While the art and architecture of Millennium Park seemed to generate stationary presence in the park, it also appeared to draw a large number of tourists and others who were in Chicago only temporarily. While preventing social exclusion was not a goal in designing Millennium Park, this type of user is not the kind of stationary presence envisioned in the PCI Framework, as interactions with tourists may not be as effective a means of preventing social exclusion as interactions among residents.

These four examples indicate that comparing stationary and mobile users may be too blunt of a measure to gauge which parks have succeeded at attracting users in accordance with the PCI Framework. In one park, a high proportion of mobile users is a sign of a well-designed park edge that draws park users who might not otherwise be present. In another park, a high proportion of mobile users is a result of user perceptions that the park is unsafe. In one park, a high proportion of stationary users is a sign that the park has carefully thought about the programmes and amenities that attract users to the space. In another park, a high proportion of stationary users is attributable to visitors from outside the area, attracted to the park by iconic architecture. Again, data on stationary and mobile users are most valuable when used in concert with other variables – such as the gender breakdown of the users – or a careful understanding of the park surroundings – such as whether there is a large building or, perhaps, a gym attracting mobile users to the park.

7.5 Testing the Second Tier – Comfort – with User Data

Once people are present in a space, the PCI Framework emphasises that it is important for them to feel comfortable. When users are at ease in a space, they are more

likely to return, and they are more likely to have positive interactions with other users. Comfort is critical to preventing social exclusion, but it is also very hard to measure objectively. Unlike the presence tier, which, at its core, is a simple binary question – are you in the park or not – comfort is a far more nebulous question: do you feel comfortable? This could be interpreted in myriad different ways: is the park bench comfortable to sit on? Do you feel welcome in the park? Do you feel a sense of belonging? Qualitative data based on interviews and observations are critical for gauging a user's level of comfort in each park.

7.5.1 Pre-Analysis Plan for Comfort

While the PCI Framework acknowledges the challenging nature of defining comfort, it does operationalise the concept, identifying three key ways a park can help ensure users are comfortable. First, elements of the natural environment – such as plants and water features – can create a sense of calm, allowing users to experience the park as an oasis. Second, symbols can be explicit ways of communicating support for potentially excluded groups and generating diversity, or – in the case of Confederate statues in US – sowing divisions within the community (Bidgood et al., 2017). Third, features of parks that cater to the full spectrum of individual needs – handrails, bathrooms, dropped kerbs, and tactile paving, as well as moveable and comfortable seating – can be important for comfort (Brookfield et al., 2017; Newton et al., 2010).

Chapter 6 assessed whether the parks have integrated these recommended design elements – and, if so, to what extent. However, even if the features were incorporated into the park, it does not necessarily mean the users would find the environment comfortable. It is also possible that if the features were not incorporated, users could still have felt comfortable for some other reason. Thus, it is important to understand the users' experience as a way of evaluating whether these features are indeed important for comfort. There are two ways of gauging what people find comfortable. First and foremost, user interviews provide insight

into how comfortable users feel. Second, stationary maps capture the geographic distribution of the population within a park at a given time. User maps are a rather rough tool, but they expose patterns of where people choose to congregate. The assumption is that users choose the most comfortable, available spot in a park.[51]

The Framework predicts that in UK parks designed to prevent social exclusion, users would report being more comfortable than users in the parallel US parks. In terms of design, the prediction is that the users in parks implementing more of the design recommendations from the PCI Framework would report being more comfortable. Additionally, users concentrated around the recommended features would report the highest levels of comfort.

Previous sections in this chapter have already begun to explore this tier. For example, the case study of London's GMV considered how symbolic statements about environmentalism might have made some people comfortable and other people less comfortable. In examining female presence and perceptions of safety, the presence tier touched on certain dimensions of comfort. This is a testament to how much interplay there is between the two tiers, and how comfort may play a role in generating presence.

7.5.2 Nature and Water Offer Relaxation

The PCI Framework recommends creating a natural environment that can help people decompress and de-stress (see Roe et al., 2013). For example, experts discuss the positive social and psychological impact trees can have on a person's wellbeing and mood. The Framework postulates that there are two ways to create such a natural environment. The first is through greenery, and the second is through water.

Greenery can include anything from wetlands to planted beds. The breadth of this category means that users might respond well to one type of greenery and poorly to another type (see Gobster, 1993). As seen in the case study of London's GMV park, some local

[51] User maps are available in the appendices.

residents saw untended greenery as ‘scary’ instead of relaxing (2U-GRE, 2015). However, at other parks, the residents specifically commented on liking the greenery. For example, in Birmingham’s Eastside City Park, a man sitting on a bench, who used to work in a factory that once stood nearby, said he was in the park because he enjoyed the sunshine and ‘I really like these alpine plants – they’re just nice’ (9U-EAS, 2015). The pattern across multiple parks was that users generally liked plants that were carefully tended and clearly intentional, whereas users were less interested in, or even disliked, plants that were allowed to grow without regular pruning or other maintenance.

This phenomenon is perhaps most evident in Washington’s Canal Park, where there are both types of greenery. The park includes manicured green spaces –an open field with plants around the perimeter and a rooftop garden – as well as more natural green spaces – including a small rain garden with branches blocking some of the light and reaching over the benches. The stationary maps suggest the rain garden benches were almost never used, which is a stark contrast to other, more exposed, benches which were used regularly. And users – both those who said they were seeking quiet and those who were actively social – preferred the more manicured areas. One user, 1U-CAN, who had come to the park with her lunch and a book, explained, ‘I always sit on this bench. I like that it’s shady’ (2016). When asked why she hadn’t chosen another bench, including the ones in the shaded rain garden, she said, ‘I guess it’s because I like seeing everything, even if I’m reading’ (ibid.). Another user, a father who had come to play catch with his two children on the mown field, said they used the rain garden for games of hide-and-go-seek, ‘but not much else’ (3U-CAN, 2016).

When considering water features there was also a divide. Decorative fountains did not appear to be important for generating comfort, whereas interactive water features seemed to have universal appeal. In particular, water features that allowed users – often children – to get wet were extremely popular. Indeed, the three parks that drew the most users all had

interactive water features. Washington's Yards Park has a wading pool and waterfall, Chicago's Millennium Park has water pouring over giant blocks, and Birmingham's Eastside City Park has spigots in the ground that shoot streams of water up into the air.

By contrast, the parks with the lowest user observations had water features that were non-interactive. Seward Park in Chicago has a decorative fountain just outside the park. Washington's Canal Park has both: an artificial canal that runs along one side of a park segment and, similar to Birmingham's Eastside City Park, spigots in the ground. However, the spigots were not working during several of the site visits.

In the parks that had interactive water features, the water was often the place with the highest concentration of activity during stationary mapping. In Yards Park and Canal Park, the stationary maps show clearly that the water features were the centre of activity, and users fanned out from that hub. Both Eastside City Park and Millennium Park are arranged such that there are distinct 'rooms' of activity. Thus, it is hard to compare user concentration across rooms. However, the water features in both parks were always popular, both among children splashing and adults watching. In all four parks, users who were not specifically using the water feature still chose to sit near it. Researcher notes from Yards Park read:

> It's almost as if the wading pool is a stage, and everyone's picked a seat such that they can see the outdoor performance. People are sitting on the steps watching the splashing crowds. On the other side, a grassy slope is filled with onlookers (2015).

At these parks, the water features were among the most-mentioned topics in the user interviews. Parents analysed what made the water feature particularly nice. At Yards Park, a parent liked that there was an area of the pool designed exclusively for toddlers (3U-YAR, 2015); a parent at Canal Park, 9U-CAN, liked that there were benches around the water spigots, providing a natural barrier between the children and the street (2015). Others spoke about how the water feature defined the park. 'If the park didn't have [the spigots], it'd be like any other city park,' said a young man at Canal Park (4U-CAN, 2015). 'We've had two

of our kids' birthday parties here – it's like a free pool party' (5U-YAR, 2015). Still others said they would return with family members and friends so they could enjoy the water: a mother at Eastside City Park, 1U-EAS, wanted to return with her daughter (2015).

What emerged from these interviews was the immense popularity of the interactive water features. However, they were rarely spoken of in terms of relaxation and comfort. Instead, the interactive water features seemed to generate presence and interaction, more than comfort. Based on user interviews, the features seemed to draw families to the park and, perhaps more surprisingly, they seemed to attract people from far away. As one of the designers of Washington's Canal Park explained:

> The most important thing to keep in mind is that people are lazy. A good rule of thumb is that the majority of people come from within a 5-minute radius of the park. And almost nobody has travelled more than 10-minutes to get there (3E-CAN, 2016).

At Canal Park – a neighbourhood park – this rule of thumb held true for many users. It was true for the dog walker, 2U-CAN (2016), as well as for the people on their lunch break, 5U-CAN (2016) and 6U-CAN (2016). Even interviewees who seemed to be at the park without any time constraints came from just a block or two away, including a family, 3U-CAN (2016), and a couple going to brunch, 8U-CAN (2016). However, when it came to people who were there using the water features, they came from much farther away. One family said they had come from 20 minutes away, 10U-CAN (2016), and another estimated it had taken them 30 minutes on the train, 7U-CAN (2016). A park employee, 1E-CAN, who worked at the Park Tavern on site, noticed this happened in the winter when the spigot area is converted to an ice skating rink:

> In the winter, it really becomes a destination because we are one of only three ice skating rinks that are Metro [train] accessible. So, we get people from all over. Tourists. Northwest people [an area of Washington, DC known for its relative affluence] (2016).

While interactive water features may belong in the presence or interaction tier rather than the comfort tier, several users did indicate that they liked the non-interactive water

features. On the stationary maps, these did not draw the same clustering of users. However, in interviews, they were more regularly associated with comfort and relaxation. In Birmingham's Eastside City Park, one user – 5U-EAS – who was sitting by the canal said he liked the jets of water: 'The water is kind of relaxing, the sound of it' (2016). Similarly, a user of London's Mile End Park, 4U-MEP, said he sometimes takes a nap during his lunch break, lying in the grass on the banks of the river, 'I like waking up to the water.... [I]t's nice seeing the canal boats' (2016).

This analysis indicates nature and water can be used to create a sense of relaxation. However, user interviews suggest not all nature – and not all water features – are experienced in the same way. Users tend to prefer being in planned and manicured green spaces, rather than fully natural spaces. Further, if park designers are hoping to create activity and presence, then these data suggest that interactive water features are an effective strategy. However, if they are seeking a sense of calm and comfort, interviews indicate a placid river or canal may work. It seems that the sound of water and its visual appeal were valued most.

7.5.3 Symbolic Statements Offer Comfort

The PCI Framework claims that symbolic statements can offer park users a sense of inclusion and unity. However, the case study of London's GMV park showed that symbolic statements – such as the park's symbolic and physical emphasis on environmentalism – could also risk alienating potential local users. This section explores how approaches to symbolism in the other case study parks resonated with park users.

Several parks have emphasised local history. In London's Mile End Park, a sign along the path commemorates the history of the park. It recalls the park's popularity in the 1840s and 1850s, depicting a scene where 'visitors drink merrily at tables under a pair of giant trees, and take tea in fanciful trelliswork and chalet-style supper boxes'.[52] For other parks, the

[52] The quotation comes from research notes gathered in the spring of 2015.

history is less jubilant. Eastside City Park was once home to an impoverished community in Birmingham. The woman at the Information Desk, 1E-EAS, explained that the area once had a large Italian population.

> It was known as Little Italy. But Churchill viewed them as the enemy and sent many of them to Canada, but their boat was torpedoed. Something like 700 people died (2015).

1E-EAS said the park was planning to put up a plaque acknowledging the history, but had yet to do so (ibid.). Across the eight case studies, some planners and park employees mentioned park history, but none of the park users referenced it. Thus, from the data gathered, it is hard to conclude whether historical statements were able to create a sense of unity among park users.

Two parks seemed to try a different strategy. Through symbols and not words, they emphasise a broad, uncontroversial identity trait. In Millennium Park, the park emphasises 'Chicago' as an overarching and unifying theme. The Cloud Gate sculpture reflects Chicago's most iconic image: its skyline. The sculpture's mirror-like surface condenses the gleaming buildings and trees to fit in the frame of a camera. At Crown Fountain, adjacent to Cloud Gate, LCD screens inside the huge pillars show the portraits of 1,000 Chicago residents. The loop of images captures the diversity of the city. Just beside the Crown Fountain are faces made of resin and marble dust that stand 39 feet tall. The sign next to the art reads: 'The sculpture's surreal and majestic presence bridges the frenetic energy and distractions of city life with the tranquillity of the Park.'

Image 7.9 captures these different symbolic statements of tranquillity and pride in the city. These statements were not lost on the park users.

> Every Chicagoan seems proud of this park, and I get it. It's got the lake, the trees, all these handsome buildings, world-renowned architects…. It presents the best of Chicago ... it's the opposite of the grime and violence you can hear about (8U-MIL, 2015).

Another user said, ‘it feels like in just a few years, this has become the heart of the city and also a spot of green in the midst of it all’ (10U-MIL, 2015). One user saw irony in the symbolism: ‘It’s like this must-see of Chicago. But then you look around and nobody is from Chicago [they are tourists]’ (5U-MIL, 2015).



Image 7.9: Symbolic art in Chicago's Millennium Park. Clockwise from top left: Cloud Gate, 1004 Portraits, and Crown Fountain.

London’s Thames Barrier Park picked water and waves as its symbolic theme. In addition to highlighting the great steel barriers that cross the Thames, there is a sunken garden at the centre of the park – called the Green Dock – where the hedges are groomed into wave-like forms. The groundskeeper and gardener, 1E-THA, explained his view of the Green Dock: ‘I think it’s pretty simple. We’re an island nation. Our heritage is on the high seas, and I think that still defines us’ (2015). Another user recognised the symbolic significance, although his daughter was less keen on it:

> She’s rather frightened by the bridge [over the Green Dock]. Won’t even go on it [because you can see through the metal grate that you walk on]. But I think down there among the waves [it’s] more unsettling – in the theoretical sort of way. You can’t really see over them. And if you do, you see more green waves.... You get a feeling for how sailors might have felt out there in the ocean (7U-THA, 2015).

The Green Dock intrigued several other users (see Image 7.10). However, they did not connect it with sailors or the country's history. One user, 4U-THA, said the hedges looked 'like something from a sci-fi movie' (2015). Another, 5U-THA, compared them to a kaleidoscope: 'each step it looks a little different' (2015). The stationary mapping found that, in comparison to other areas of the park, such as the café or the ledge overlooking the Thames Barrier, the Green Dock was less popular.



Image 7.10: Two images of the Green Dock at Thames Barrier Park in London. Some users understand this sunken garden of wave-like hedges to be a symbolic statement about the island nation.

Across the parks, symbolic statements seemed to register with some users more than others. However, none of the users interviewed said the symbols generated strong emotions or a particular sense of comfort and shared identity. Chicago's Millennium Park is perhaps the best example of effective symbolism; however, as 5U-MIL (2015) pointed out, it is ironic that the symbolism of the city as a unifying force is appreciated largely by tourists visiting the park. While there may be value in symbolic statements, the evidence from these parks does not provide support for the importance of symbolism in the PCI Framework.

7.5.4 Physical Comfort Creating Social Comfort

Over three decades ago, Whyte emphasised the importance of social comfort and its link to physical comfort (1980). Architects, urban designers, and planners still echo this idea,

arguing that when a person is physically comfortable, they are more likely to be amenable to positive interactions with other users. This social comfort, in turn, helps prevent social exclusion.

In the parks considered in this thesis, there was significant variation in how physically and socially comfortable users felt – not only between parks but also within individual parks. For example, Washington's Yards Park has moveable chairs by the wading pool, and users expressed that they liked being able to place them wherever they wanted. They can sit right next to the pool, or under the bridge in the shade. This is one of the PCI Framework's recommended design features. Yet, at the same time, Yards Park failed to provide public toilet facilities for users. Instead, as mentioned in Chapter 6, the park acquired portable toilets and secured access to a public toilet in a nearby building. A woman who works at the local ice cream store noted the odd juxtaposition: 'They've done so many things well.... It's almost incredible they forgot to include bathrooms' (2E-YAR, 2016).

The analysis found that users experienced inconsistencies in other parks as well. In London's Thames Barrier Park, one parent remarked: 'It's really nice to find a park with a nice café in it that also has a play area, but I wish they were closer' (6U-THA, 2015). She said her ideal would be to sit in the café and still keep an eye on her children in the play area. 'It makes sense: adults want tea, children want swings' (ibid.). In Washington's Canal Park, there are streets segmenting the park. One runs directly next to an area designated for children's play. While the cars have speed humps to indicate the park, there is nothing preventing the children from running into the street. This was a concern for 11U-CAN: 'Look, my three-year-old does not realise that's a road. He'll run right into it' (2016).

In London's Mile End Park, one user felt frustrated by the football field – near the basketball courts: 'it looks perfect [for football] but then you see it [the field] is sloped' (3U-MEP, 2015). Another user at Mile End Park found the seating to be a case of thoughtful planning and nonsensical design: 'they are nice enough to provide shade but then the seats look like fancy scaffolding – like they don't want us to actually sit here' (5U-MEP, 2015). Instead of a flat or curved seat surface, the seat is made up of two or three cylindrical pipes (see Image 7.11).



Image 7.11: The seating at London's Mile End Park provides users with shade but not with a comfortable seat, according to one user (5U-MEP, 2015).

This analysis suggests that users are carefully attuned to physical and social comfort – and that park designers are inconsistent in their awareness of what users desire or their ability to cater to users' needs. Given users' ability to identify potential improvements to the park, it might be useful to incorporate into the PCI Framework a process for user feedback to generate a comprehensive tick list for designers and architectures to incorporate as park updates.

The stationary maps generated for each park also provided valuable insights into where people choose to spend time in a space. Interestingly, the areas where people congregated often are not what the planners depict in their renderings. Indeed, if the renderings are taken as a planner or architectural team's vision of how a space will be used, then stationary maps of where users actually chose to be in a space often prove them wrong. Although planners have tried to influence how individuals use the space through their

placement of benches and ledges, trees and paths, these stationary maps suggest that users find their own ways to use the space.

This is perhaps best demonstrated by examining Washington's Canal Park, where the architectural firm released an aerial rendering of their park. The top illustration in Image 7.12 shows a small portion of the park across the street from the café and popular water feature. The illustration depicts people scattered around the central green space; a few individuals walking on the path; and some people sitting on the perimeter benches. The dots on the bottom image indicates where people actually were based on the stationary maps collected of users in Canal Park.

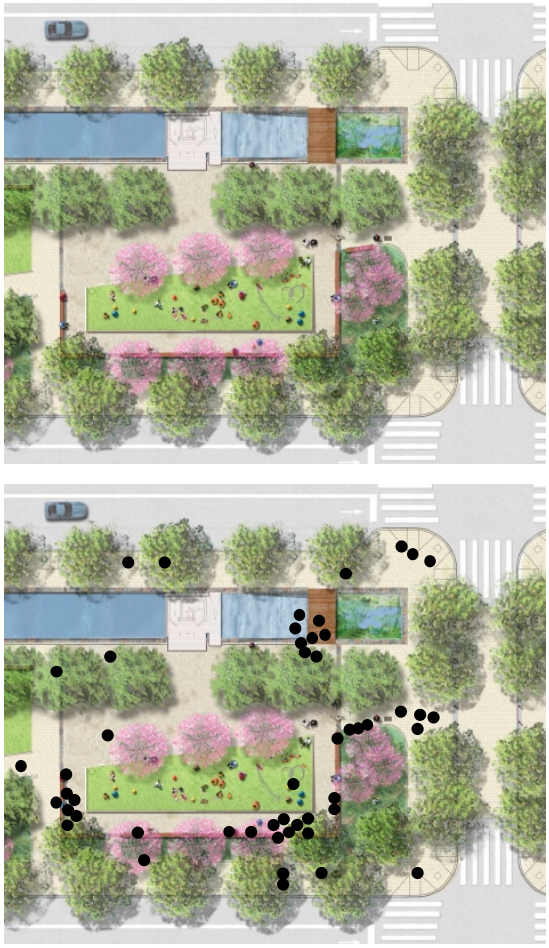


Image 7.12: The top image is a rendering of a portion of Washington's Canal Park (OLIN, 2015). The bottom image shows where users actually were in the space – including on the benches surrounding the green and wading into the canal.

Although this is a relatively quiet part of Canal Park, the comparison between renderings and actual use reveals several findings. First, whereas the rendering suggests the green area would be full of park-goers, user observations indicate that users have not flocked to these areas. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the real users are scattered in areas that the renderings predicted would be mostly empty. Yet, there are still consistent patterns of user behaviour across parks, as Hutchison identified decades ago (1993).

In considering stationary maps from various parks, three main patterns emerge. First and foremost, when the sun is out, people – particularly adults – prefer sitting in the shade. They position themselves where there is some significant object, but where their visual field is not limited. In Washington's Yards Park, the moveable chairs were almost always clustered under the bridge – in its shadow – and by the railing overlooking the river. As the researcher notes explain: 'As the sun moves, the bridge's shadow moves. And as that moves, all the people scoot their chairs and tables so as to stay in the shade. It's reminiscent of a living, communal sundial' (2016). In London's Mile End Park and Thames Barrier Park, users clustered under the shade of large trees. Stationary maps gathered in fieldwork show that people in London's Thames Barrier Park gathered around the café, huddling under the overhang or a nearby tree. Similar patterns emerged at each of the other case study parks.



Image 7.13: The top photo is of the field in Seward Park in Chicago and the bottom photo is of a field in Thames Barrier Park in London. Both fields were rarely used.

Second, users did not frequently congregate in large open green spaces. Formal activities, such as football games, Frisbee matches, concerts, or public movie nights, could lure people to use these spaces. However, without such an impetus, park users tended to avoid open fields, large lawns, or the middle of exposed park plazas. Instead, users often

found a place near a tree, table, or other object. This was observed in each case, from the smallest neighbourhood parks to the largest city park. Image 7.13 shows two of the open fields observed during fieldwork. The exception to this pattern is that when the park becomes extremely busy, users start to spread out onto the lawn. Given how much space a field requires, this might seem like a missed opportunity to utilise the whole park. However, it is encouraging for the PCI Framework that users cluster together. As will be seen in the final tier of the Framework – interaction – various interactions occur as people share space.

Third, people consistently gathered around the same amenities: the perimeter of interactive water features, cafés, and children's play areas. The wading pools and water spigots discussed earlier in this chapter were consistently among the busiest parts of a park. Food outlets rivalled the popularity of the water features, as evidenced by the queue that formed around an ice cream stand in Washington's Yards Park and the popular tables near the mobile café in Birmingham's Eastside City Park. Children's areas – particularly jungle gyms and play equipment – were also consistently popular destinations. These patterns suggest that users may not perceive the park as a whole as their destination. Instead, they may come to the park intending to use a very specific feature – whether it is the café or the wading pool. Several users who were interviewed acknowledged this. A father at Yards Park said his family had come just to play in the water (7U-YAR, 2016). A parent in London's Thames Barrier Park said she had come to the park to use the children's play area. She had one goal: that her children 'run about and get so tired that they fall asleep immediately' (6U-THA, 2015). A college administrator visited Birmingham's Eastside City Park to use the café 'because I wanted hot chocolate' (11U-EAS, 2015).

This analysis of park users suggests the second tier of creating comfort is important and achievable, but not particularly well understood by the PCI Framework. The findings indicate that design recommendations ought to be more specific, and perhaps evolve as

designers collect feedback from the park's initial users. Further, user behaviour seems to follow patterns that persist across parks in the UK and the US. Consistencies in user behaviour provide a useful opportunity to understand and cater to user needs to assure people are comfortable in each park.

7.6 Testing the Third Tier – Interaction – with User Data

The final tier of the PCI Framework – interaction – is the most directly connected to preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion. It describes how social contact between diverse groups requires park users to go beyond sharing a common space. They must interact within that common space. Ideally, these interactions grow out of a common goal or interest, and they inspire a sense of cooperation and not competition. Systematic observations in UK and US parks documented a wide range of interactions. Some interactions were fleeting – the request for a cigarette lighter or a question about directions – but others were longer: parents commiserating while their children play or dog walkers discussing local policy. Some observed interactions were tense, while others were relaxed.

This section compares the vision for interaction laid out by architects, planners, and policymakers with the interactions observed in the selected parks. There are multiple sources of data. In addition to interviews with park users and research notes, both seen in the previous sections, this analysis also relies on 'case trackings' where the researcher observes one user's entire visit to the park. The park user's actions and interactions are recorded with notes on how the interactions transpire, their duration, and their tone. The case trackings provide information that has not been filtered through a user.

7.6.1 Pre-Analysis Plan for Interaction

From a theoretical perspective, one would expect to find that users in UK parks, which were designed in a context focused on preventing social exclusion and promoting

cohesion partly by encouraging interaction, are more likely to interact with one another than the users in US parks. Both fleeting and longer, more substantive interactions are likely to be more common in UK parks. From a design perspective, the expectation is that parks implementing more of the PCI design recommendations are more likely to facilitate interactions among park users. Interaction is likely to concentrate around those design features.

The PCI Framework recommends several design strategies for stimulating interaction, which include both unorganised encounters, which are informal and unplanned, and organised encounters, which are prearranged. One strategy is triangulation: a process in which an external stimulus – such as an interesting art sculpture – provides a common focus for users such that an interaction feels normal and appropriate. A second design strategy for generating interaction is creating spaces that encourage comfortable conversations. For example, designers recommend semi-circular benches where users can face one another. A final strategy for encouraging interaction is developing play areas and child-friendly spaces. Children playing – designers argue – encourages interaction among the children, between their parents, and between other observers.

7.6.2 Triangulation

There are several different ways designers aim to create the right environment for triangulation. Public art – particularly interactive public art – is one. Perhaps the best example is Cloud Gate in Chicago's Millennium Park (see Image 7.14). Its polished surface functions as a distorted mirror, enticing park users to touch the sculpture. As users reach out, their



Image 7.14: The underside of Cloud Gate is an 'omphalus' or Greek for 'naval.'

reflection grows and shrinks dramatically based on the angle. As mentioned in Chapter 5, CABE argues that interactive art can appeal to both children and adults (CABE, 2003). Research notes from Millennium Park affirm this:

> [Cloud Gate] is like a magnet. Everyone flocks to it, wanting to touch it – with their hands, faces, everything. They lie on the ground underneath – not just the children, but adults too. People you would never expect to find lying on their back, ogling upward in public. And they all seem to have cameras out, hoping to capture every hallucinogenic reflection they generate (2015).

Stationary mapping confirms that Cloud Gate is a focal point of the park. While the platform is large and the sculpture multiple storeys tall, the area where a user can approach the metal surface and touch it was often crowded. One of the case trackings found that the sculpture design generated interaction.

A male, who appeared to be in his early 20s, entered the Cloud Gate plaza with a woman about the same age. Attaching their phone to a 'selfie stick', they took a few pictures of themselves with the sculpture in the background. Then, wandering up to the sculpture, they took more pictures before ducking inside. After lingering inside, notes indicate, they ask someone else to take a picture for them: 'It is unclear exactly why he is not using the selfie stick' (4CT-MIL, 2015). While this interaction was fleeting, the user chose to interact even when he could have used the 'selfie stick'. While there was no user interview to elucidate the reason for interaction, one explanation is that the user density contributed to the decision to interact. The space was crowded such that using a 'selfie stick' may have been challenging. Another explanation is that because all the users were doing the same thing – looking at their reflection and taking pictures – it felt like a shared experience. It was natural to ask for a favour. It could have also been a combination of the two – density and shared experience – that helped create the voluntary interaction.

Although Cloud Gate appears to have stimulated interaction by triangulation, it falls short in terms of facilitating interactions that prevent social exclusion and promotes cohesion

in two ways. First, CABE suggests that the process of creating public art is important. For Chicago's Cloud Gate, local input was not the focus. Instead, an international architect – Anish Kapoor – designed the public art, and a committee of architects, art collectors, and curators selected it. Kapoor is not part of the local 'public'. Second, the interactions that Cloud Gate facilitated were not necessarily between the socially included and those at risk of social exclusion. Indeed, user interviews suggest that many of the people present in the park were tourists and, thus, also not part of the local society (for example, see earlier quote from 5U-MIL, 2015). Both shortcomings make sense considering that the park's objectives were largely about attracting business and attention to the city and not about combatting social exclusion. This suggests that the motives behind a park's design features matter and have the potential to influence how successful a feature is at achieving a social goal.

London's Thames Barrier Park provides an example of the second type of triangulation: where a park design frames a particular vista, attracting the attention of multiple users and facilitating conversation. At the far end of Thames Barrier Park, there is a clear view of the silver and yellow barrier. In fact, the prospect of this view helped convince some users to visit the park (for example, see earlier quote from 1U-THA, 2015). Case trackings suggest that the 'diagonal form' successfully directed users to the Thames Barrier focal point (see Image 7.15). Users followed The Green Dock and its parallel paths to the River Thames. The stationary maps indicate that people congregated in the viewing area, sitting on the few



Image 7.15: London's Thames Barrier Park. The diagonal Green Dock directs users to the southern part of the park where they are able to see the Thames Barrier. The entire southern side is bounded by the River Thames (Patel Taylor Architects).

benches that line the path and leaning on the railing overlooking the Thames. The space near the river was the third most popular area after the café and the children's play area.

Both theory and design experts suggest that this space is suitable for interaction between groups. Yet, the data reveal minimal interaction. Research notes and case trackings show no evidence that the users who observed the Thames Barrier interacted with one another (2015). Instead, they spread out over the southern side of the park. One researcher observed that, in general, 'people do not distribute themselves evenly across an entire public space. There are preferred locations where people tend to cluster' (Shaftoe, 2008: 53). The view of the Thames Barrier was a preferred location. However, within this preferred location, people distributed themselves evenly. Given that the viewing area is large, there was significant space between users and not much interaction among them.

These case studies suggest that – in the absence of density – interaction might not occur. The examples challenge assumptions about the preconditions for interaction, particularly interaction between members of included groups and those at risk of exclusion. Users must not only share the same experience or occupy the same general area; they must share the same specific space. This yields the counterintuitive suggestion that the area where users can view the Thames Barrier should perhaps be smaller. Or part of the area should be particularly appealing, drawing users to a single vantage point.

In the third type of triangulation, interaction is the result of a shared activity. The design of a space can encourage activities that accommodate multiple people, such as sport facilities or playgrounds. All of the parks considered in this research, with the exception of GMV's park, had such a space. The spaces were most commonly oriented toward children; however, sporting facilities were also common.

London's Mile End Park has many athletic facilities. Separate from the indoor gym located in the park, this park has baseball courts and a field suitable for football or Frisbee,

which – according to 3U-MEP – is sloped (2015). There are also creative structures, including a large spider-web net, seesaw, and climbing structure (see Image 7.16).





Image 7.16: At Mile End Park, there are a series of structures designed for users to climb and swing on them.

Case trackings and user interviews indicate that where there are activity spaces, there is also a high incidence of interactions. Many of the interactions centred on the question of who would use the structure or space and in what order. Users also shared tips about how to climb on the net. These interactions often involved children and young adults. The researcher notes read:

> Two boys are eager to swing down the zipline. Their mothers, who entered the park together, instruct them to wait their turn more patiently. And then, turning to the family currently using the equipment, one mother tells them to take their time (2015).

This pattern of exchange was seen repeatedly as parents helped their children behave appropriately in a shared space.

According to the research notes, however, the most common type of interaction involved individuals on a sports field. During one of the observations in Mile End Park, a Frisbee and a football game were happening simultaneously.

> It seems like every minute of so, the players lose control of the Frisbee or the ball. Then, more times than not, another park user sends it back. One time, it's an elderly man who is walking on the path. The next time, it's a schoolgirl who sends it back. Then, it's a guy who'd just left the gym. Each time, there is a little exchange with the players offering thanks. So far, all of the interactions have been positive. And the individuals who toss the ball or Frisbee back do not seem perturbed (2015).

There were two altercations observed on the field, but both occurred between football players who were prior acquaintances.

Both 2U-MEP and 3U-MEP, who were using the field for recreational games, acknowledged that interactions are a regular part of sport in a public park. 'I don't think I've ever stopped to think about it, but it is nice not to have to run after the ball' (3U-MEP, 2015). 2U-MEP said he's noticed playing in public parks can change his game. First, he said that he gets 'a type of energy' from knowing others are watching. This comment echoes the research done by Wesselmann et al. on eye contact between strangers (2012). They found that eye contact could enhance someone's sense of connectedness. While this is described as a subconscious impact, 2U-MEP was aware of the difference between playing sport in public and in private. Given that 2U-MEP was playing football – a team sport – he is always playing in front of other people. But he specifically thought the presence of strangers and non-players changed the experience. Second, he said that the relationships that had come from playing the sport were especially meaningful. 'I've made some good friends right here on this field…. [S]ometimes we'll be short a player or two and we'll go around asking people to play' (2U-MEP, 2015).

These interviews suggest that open fields in public parks can yield two types of interactions. First, they can lead to fleeting interactions between players and those watching or returning a run-away ball. These interactions seem to be positive – although not substantive – and between a particularly diverse cross-section of park users. Second, these spaces can lead to lasting relationships between players who have met in the park through the game. These interactions seem less frequent, but more substantive. Both interaction types suggest that a certain degree of density is necessary. All the users – whether the player, the potential player, or the person returning the ball – must be sharing a small geographical area

to come into contact. For athletic fields to function as a means of triangulation, they cannot be isolated in one part of the park.

When considering all three methods of triangulation, several themes emerge. First, the importance of density – users being concentrated in a limited geographic area – repeatedly surfaced. Such proximity appeared to make interaction more likely and natural. Second, it was significant whether or not the triangulation method was interactive. When the users were touching Chicago's Cloud Gate sculpture, they were more prone to interact than when they were simply observing London's Thames Barrier from a distance. Even though Cloud Gate is a stationary object, the changing reflection seemed sufficient to maintain users' attention. Third, if positive interactions are to be effective at preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion, it is important for a representative group of users to be present in the park. Although there was plenty of interaction in Millennium Park around Cloud Gate, for example, the interaction did not appear to bring together the included members of the community and those at risk of exclusion. Evidence like this supports the claim in the PCI Framework that the right presence is necessary, but not sufficient, for positive interactions to take place.

7.6.3 Conversational Space

Fleeting interactions often happen when park users are in motion – playing a game or walking around a sculpture – but longer interactions often happen when users are still – standing or sitting. The PCI Framework suggests that benches are a key element in cultivating conversations that go beyond fleeting interactions. Lamenting the straight benches that make it hard for users to face one another, the design recommendation was clear: benches that curve or face one another.

Chapter 6 noted a clear distinction between the seating in UK parks and US parks. In the UK parks, particularly London's Mile End Park and Birmingham's Eastside City Park, the

parks have incorporated semi-circular benches, facing benches, and benches with backrests such that they encourage users to face one another. In the US parks, particularly Yards Park and Canal Park, moveable chairs were popular. User data indicate that there are differences in how park-goers interact around different types of seating. However, it is not in the way the PCI Framework predicted.

The semi-circular benches in Eastside proved more popular for skateboarding than for conversation, according to stationary mapping and the marks in the far-left picture in Image 7.17. The benches with facing seats and sloped backs confused users (see middle picture in Image 7.17). As 5U-EAS said, the seats feel awkward: 'It's weird how these backs are facing opposite directions' (2015). Finally, the parallel benches were almost never used. When they were, they seemed to be the choice of last resort when the benches with backrests were already occupied (see far-right picture in Image 7.17). It is possible that they were too far apart from one another for a conversation to feel natural. The two most popular seating options in Eastside City Park were the picnic benches and the low ledges by the fountain. Fieldwork suggests both spots also generated the most conversation.



Image 7.17: Birmingham's Eastside City Park has different types of seating. The ones designed to stimulate interaction and conversation were not necessarily the most popular among users.

The picnic benches are not a sleek new design, but they accomplish something similar to the semi-circular benches: the users face one another. Research notes capture their popularity: 'groups are doubling up at the picnic benches. This often leads to an interaction as the new arrivals ask to join the table' (2015). Sitting at one of the tables for half an hour on a weekend afternoon, the researcher found that – in at least three instances – this proximity led to longer conversations. One started by discussing the fact that it was their first visit to the

park; another started by discussing the refreshments from the mobile café; and another started by asking about Wi-Fi availability in the park. ‘These unplanned exchanges seem pleasant in nature, and each one involved several back-and-forths’ (ibid.) When asking a user about his picnic table conversation, he said: ‘I don’t know what it is, but it feels good to have a little chat ... even if it’s nothing more than a greeting’ (10U-EAS, 2015).

It is unclear why Eastside’s picnic benches were so much more popular than the semi-circular benches just across the park. Evidence from interviews offers three possible explanations. First, users appreciated having the table. U8-EAS, who visited the park with her children and her parents, found the table improved their experience: ‘It can get messy eating off your lap’ (2015). Second, she liked that a few of the picnic tables had chairs attached to each side, instead of benches. ‘It’s taller and more comfortable for dad to sit,’ she said of her older father (ibid.). While the semi-circular benches seemed designed for conversations, they did not seem designed for comfort. One older user said that, without backrests or armrests, they can be challenging for individuals who have limited mobility (9U-EAS, 2015). Third, the location may have been important. While the semi-circular benches were near a bus stop, the picnic benches were near the children’s area and the café. 2E-EAS, a café employee, said she thought the parents valued being able to sit down for coffee or hot chocolate while also watching their children in the enclosed play area (2015).

The low ledges by Eastside’s fountain seemed an unlikely spot for users to congregate, yet they were popular. They offer no back support, and the user is exposed without a wall or any foliage nearby. These are two things Shaftoe and others postulate have a significant impact on user preferences (2008). The primary explanation from interviewees is that users sit on the ledges because they can watch the activity in the park, whether it be skateboarders zipping around the plaza or children in the fountain. ‘It’s like I can’t look away when they’re playing tag,’ said 3U-EAS, who was sitting on the ledge (2015). Another nearby

user said, ‘It’s fun watching them have fun [in the water]’ (1U-EAS, 2015). A couple of the people sitting along a ledge spoke to one another, and one parent offered another parent a towel for her son to use. Indeed, many of the conversations seem to occur between people linked to the action – particularly parents whose children were both playing in the water. Although the interactions were not limited to parents – for example, one male user sitting on the ledge asked another user for the time, and another user asked for a lighter – the parent interactions lasted longer. These observations suggest that creating conversation spaces requires either having people face one another or having them face action of some sort. In this case, users were even willing to put up with relatively uncomfortable seating to be near the action. This suggests the location of the seating is a critical factor in the design process.

In two of the US parks – Washington’s Yards Park and Washington’s Canal Park – movable chairs and tables played a prominent role in the park design. These items were constantly being rearranged and reconfigured. One group dragged over additional chairs. Another user carried a chair into the shade. The research notes from Washington’s Yards Park found that users took full advantage of their ability to tailor the park furniture to their needs. ‘Almost every time a user sat in a movable chair, they moved it first, even if it was only by a few centimetres or pivoting to one side ever-so-slightly. They seemed to enjoy the ability to customise the park’ (2016).

The movable chairs also inspired interactions. Initially, these interactions looked similar to the interactions in Birmingham’s Eastside City Park around the picnic benches. In both Yards Park and Canal Park, users regularly asked other nearby users for permission to take an empty chair and move it elsewhere. However, differences followed. In Birmingham, at the fixed picnic tables, the new individual or group would join the table and pleasantries would often follow. In the Washington parks, after requesting permission, there were no additional interactions. Instead, the chairs were quickly distributed into little clusters or pods

based on the size of the family or friend group. The one exception was a male user who warned another user about soggy grass, where it would be hard to balance a chair. This suggests that while moveable chairs were recommended in the PCI Framework, their flexibility may enable social divisions and self-segregation as different groups put space between themselves and others. Once again, the counterintuitive option seems to have benefits for preventing social exclusion. When there are fewer seating options and users are unable to customise them – as with picnic benches – users are more like to share space and subsequently converse.

7.6.4 Children as a Conduit to Conversation

In the PCI Framework, there are two reasons why children are critical for preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion. First, children are at a developmental stage where implicit bias and stereotypes are less rigid, and interacting with both the included and the excluded may help reduce social exclusion in the future. Research suggests childhood experiences can have a significant impact on adult behaviour and adult attitudes, affecting everything from the regularity of park visits to the propensity to racially stereotype (for example, see Ward Thompson et al., 2004; Towles-Schwen and Fazio, 2001). Second, the Framework suggests that parents may interact with other parents who are from a different background, and these interactions can lead to repeated, positive encounters. Indeed, user interviews and user observations found that in both the UK and the US, children were the single best way to stimulate interaction between park users.

Interactions among children and between children and adults seem to happen with far more ease than between two adult park users. Research notes from London's Mile End Park read: 'The children seem oblivious of social norms. Their volume is loud, and they are absolutely not concerned. Moving in a group, they run up to talk to an adult without any visible hesitation and seem to end a conversation with equal effortlessness' (2015). A passage

from the research notes of Washington's Canal Park look similar. 'The children are completely in the moment. They do exactly what they want, when they want, without thought to the future – they race into the fountain without worrying that they'll be shivering in a few minutes. One youngster ran up to a woman, who appeared to be a stranger, and asked to use her mobile phone' (2016). At London's Thames Barrier Park, there was a 3-year-old boy carrying a Buzz Lightyear toy. Research notes read: 'He goes up to one adult to show off his toy and explain its broken arm. And then he wanders over to the next adult – and the next one – with the same message' (2015).

While it is hard to know whether these interactions had a lasting impact on the children's social perceptions, several parents said their children had made friends at the park that they would not have otherwise met. This was particularly true for parents at two London parks: Thames Barrier Park and Mile End Park. One mother said that after coming to the park for several months a few parents developed a routine together. 'It was gradual, but we started coordinating when we'd arrive, so the children could play together' (6U-THA, 2015). Another parent at Thames Barrier Park, who has slightly older children, said they now have a group of children that play basketball together. The original group met at the park, although a few friends have since joined (7U-THA, 2015). Two parents at Mile End Park, who were accompanying their sons to the park, said they had met a few years earlier at an organised play session in the park's Children's Centre. 'The boys were fast friends…. They're both quite physical, so it works' (1U-MEP, 2015). This suggests that lasting friendships can originate on the playground. The play areas in both parks are fenced-off and designated only for children (see Image 7.18).



Image 7.18: The Children's Play Area at Thames Barrier Park is surrounded by a fence.

Research notes from Birmingham's Eastside City Park suggest children's behaviour has an impact on adults. Children enter and exit conversations with fewer barriers, and it seems adults follow their lead (2015). Eastside City Park's research notes read: 'Children – especially babies – appear to have a magical effect. Adults approach them with remarkable ease. Cooing at the babies and asking children questions about their age and grade' (2015). While an older woman mentioned that she does not dare take pictures because of national concerns about paedophilia, nobody else expressed concern. One grandmother, 7U-EAS, came to Eastside explicitly so others could coo at her grandson: 'We came to show Harry [the toddler] around. Show him the world. Show the world him. He's pretty cute' (2015). And some users – such as 3U-EAS (2015) – acknowledge that seeing children and interacting with them is part of the motivation for being in the park.

There are two other types of child-centred interactions that emerged in the park observations. As the PCI Framework predicts, parents interacted with other parents. However, parents also interact with other park users, which the PCI Framework does not address directly. On both sides of the Atlantic, parental interactions with other park users begin similarly. Research notes from Washington's Yards Park illustrate an example: 'Just like at other parks, conversations with parents seem to primarily start with a question about the child's age and a compliment.... A man, standing on the side of the wading pool, looked over at a mother, who was sitting in a movable chair near the edge, and complimented her son saying, "The goggles look great. How old is he?" ' (2016). This combination of a generic compliment with an easy-to-answer question was seen across the parks and across users. However, the conversations then diverged. When parents spoke to a user who was not accompanied by a child, the interaction seemed to taper off quickly. However, parent-to-parent interactions lasted longer. This was perhaps most evident in a case tracking at Birmingham's Eastside City Park.

A young family – two parents and three children – arrived at the park and made their way to a sunny patch of grass in front of the Millennium Point building. They sat there for slightly over ten minutes. During that time, the father got refreshments and interacted with one person in the queue. The mother and children interacted with a group of three young adults who were sitting nearby. Both interactions were short. Then, seemingly at the children's urging, the family moved into the children's play area, where they spent slightly less than fourteen minutes before going into Millennium Point. In the children's play area, both parents had conversations with other parents. The mother was the focus of the case tracking, 2CT-EAS. 'She's standing just to the right of the entryway, sipping her beverage. Another parent comes up, and they start talking ... they seem to talk, then stand together quietly or tend to a child, talk, repeat' (2015). The father was sitting on the ledge encircling the play area and chatted with another father while also looking at his phone. The interactions inside the play area between parents or children's guardians lasted significantly longer than the interactions at the park before entering the children's area.

This trend appears to be consistent across the other parks in the UK and the US. Parents at the park with children interacted with one another longer than they interacted with other park users. One parent at Washington's Yards Park explained why this might be the case.

> I say, "Let's go to the park," and you think it's for the kids. But it's for me – my sanity. I get to talk to other parents ... and comparing notes about schools is useful... It's like we're all going through this [experience of having kids] together (3U-YAR, 2016).

A few interviewees – most notably 1U-MEP and 6U-THA – said that park interactions with fellow parents had turned into lasting friendships. This corroborates other research. Place's observational research at various parks in Indiana found that playgrounds were a key site for adult socialising. 'The social contact among adults may be as important to parents as the physical activity and play is to the child' (2000: 40).

Three design features seem to make an area particularly suitable to having a conversation between parents. First, it was helpful to have an activity that occupied the children. This could be a water feature or a play structure. One parent, 6U-THA, said that she was ready to watch her children, but she wanted there to be something for them to play with and explore (2015). Second, parents wanted the area to be clean, such that they did not have to worry about children finding broken glass or rubbish (for example, see earlier quote from 6U-EAS, 2015). Third, parents wanted a place to sit near the children's area. In particular, they wanted a seat that would serve as a barrier, blocking the children from a busy path or a heavily trafficked street. A parent at Chicago's Millennium Park's fountain, where there is a low ledge surrounding the area, commented on this: 'I always sit on this side [between the street and the children]. That way, I can focus on them and not worry about cars' (6U-MIL, 2015). And in Washington's Canal Park, where there was not a similar barrier, it worried parents like 11U-CAN, who felt like her toddler might run into the road (2016).

Across parks in the UK and the US, children and parents surface as the groups most likely to interact. While many of the interactions were fleeting, some were full conversations. With the exception of parents at Mile End Park's Children's Centre in London, parents often interacted in unscheduled encounters. Sometimes they turned those meetings into scheduled encounters, coordinating a time and place to meet. The implication for park design is that features attracting children and parents, implicitly encouraging them to spend extended time in the park near other families, can translate into positive substantive interactions.

7.6.5 Miscellaneous Interactions

In addition to the interactions that the PCI Framework predicted, fieldwork revealed several other catalysts for interaction. Asking for a cigarette lighter, for example, was a common way to start a fleeting interaction. This type of interaction was particularly common

in London's Mile End Park among young adults. Regardless of whether the person had a lighter, the interactions appeared pleasant.

Two primary catalysts of longer interactions centred on pets and park employees. The number of pets varied greatly between the parks. Surprisingly, very few dogs were observed in the one park – Mile End Park – with a designated dog area. And dogs were particularly common in Chicago's Seward Park. Similar to interactions surrounding children, the interactions surrounding pets often started with a compliment and a simple question, often about the dog's breed or gender. This was seen in a case tracking in London's Thames Barrier Park, where two dog walkers paused to talk as their dogs met one another (2CT-THA, 2015). In Washington's Yards Park, a dog owner sat on the grass, while several others approached her, petting the dog and talking to the owner (4CT-YAR, 2016). These users seem to have a shared interest in the pet, which served as a means of triangulation. However, there were also park users who were afraid of dogs. One user in Washington's Canal Park recounted a traumatic childhood experience with a dog, and said, 'I don't like them, still' (6U-CAN, 2016).

Research has suggested that pet ownership has health benefits. However, scholars have only recently explored the social impacts of pet ownership.

> While companion animals have been previously identified as a direct source of companionship and support to their owners, their role as a catalyst for friendship formation or social support networks among humans has received little attention... (Wood et al., 2015: 1).

Wood et al. found dog ownership was a good way to generate both incidental interactions and friendships.

> Pet owners were significantly more likely to get to know people in their neighborhood than non-pet owners.... Among pet owners, dog owners ... were significantly more likely than owners of other types of pets to regard people whom they met through their pet as a friend (ibid.).

Wood et al. also found that dog owners use parks more frequently than other park patrons. A user in Chicago's Seward Park offered anecdotal evidence to support this finding. 7U-SEW said she met two people who also walk their dogs regularly. 'After seeing them a few times a week, I found out that one of them lives in my building. I never would've known' (2015).

However, studies of pet ownership paint a cautionary picture. Dog ownership is not distributed evenly across populations. An old, but often-cited study found uneven ownership to be the case in the US.

> Significant differences between owners and non-owners were found to relate to age groups, number of people and number of children in the household, race, marital status, income, rural/urban residence, and occupational prestige level. No association was detected between pet ownership and education, resident region of the country, or gender (Marx et al., 1988: 33).

Similar differences were found in other countries, too (see Downes et al., 2009; Staats et al., 2008). Thus, while dogs may be an effective way to stimulate interactions and longer-term relationships, those contacts may not be between members of society who are included and those at risk of exclusion.

Park employees surface as another key component to understanding park interactions. While the Intergroup Contact Theory postulates that there should be no hierarchy between the individuals who are interacting, park staff members often have more authority and knowledge than the typical park user. Yet, park users appeared more willing to interact with staff members than their fellow users. Research notes at both Washington's Canal Park and London's Thames Barrier Park indicate that users were likely to ask staff members for directions, instead of asking a fellow park user (2016; 2015).

However, park employees in the UK and the US seemed to view their roles in different ways. In the UK, two employees spoke about their role in terms of facilitating comfort and interaction. At London's Mile End Park, a park employee said, 'I like to believe me being here makes them feel welcome. I'm a familiar face. They know they can ask me

anything.... And I know them [park users] from the neighbourhood' (1E-MEP, 2015). In Birmingham's Eastside City Park, the woman at the Information Desk was not paid by the park, but still felt committed to improving the user experience. 'I think of myself as the mother of the park. I want everyone to have a good time and get along' (1E-EAS, 2015). The focus was on having positive experiences and interactions. In the US, the focus was primarily on safety. In Chicago's Millennium Park, those in uniforms were security guards and not park rangers, gardeners, or café employees. Two of the guards, 2E-MIL and 3E-MIL, said that security was their foremost concern (2015, 2015). This is also how park users in US parks seemed to think about park employees. For example, a user in Chicago's Seward Park, 2U-SEW, expressed concerns about safety and said that having more park staff might alleviate her concerns (2015).

This analysis of the third tier shows that interactions between strangers are a common occurrence in public parks. The fieldwork and analysis began to shed light on what might make some interactions more positive and longer lasting than others. Triangulation, or sharing a common experience in the park, often catalysed interaction. Sharing a common interest or hobby – such as having children, owning a dog, smoking, or playing the same sport – was particularly good at sustaining interaction. Interaction that centred on children was observed as having the most potential to prevent social exclusion and promote cohesion. The analysis also identifies specific features that are particularly good at stimulating interaction, including play areas, interactive water features, and picnic benches. These could be valuable when refining the PCI Framework and improving park design.

7.7 Conclusion

Fieldwork exposed a lot of variability in the usage of UK and US case study parks. Some parks attracted few users, while others became a centre of their community. This was

true on both sides of the Atlantic. In general, the parks that implemented more of the design features associated with the PCI Framework consistently attracted users who reported positive experiences. When comparing these parks – Birmingham's Eastside City Park and London's Mile End Park in the UK and Washington's Yards Park and Chicago's Millennium Park in the US – the UK parks attracted more individuals from local minority communities. However, the data presented in this chapter reveals several other findings that add complexity to the PCI Framework's theory of change. As Jane Jacobs notes, 'parks are volatile places ... their behavior is far from simple' (1961, 89).

First, the presence analysis demonstrated that presence and comfort are deeply linked. A user's comfort level can determine whether they return to the park and are present in the future. Thus, presence and comfort are jointly necessary, rather than presence being a precondition for comfort. Moreover, presence requires context. It is important to understand who is present, what they are doing, and with whom they are doing it. For example, knowing a user is alone or in a group is most informative when it is also clear whether the user is male or female, mobile or stationary, exercising or not. The diversity in the parks considered here underscores that presence is necessary, but not sufficient, for a park to serve as a vehicle to grapple with social exclusion. As Jacobs explains, 'people do confer use on parks and make them successes – or else withhold use and doom parks to rejection and failure' (ibid.).

Analysing users' comfort revealed several important design lessons. While it was hard to predict whether a symbolic statement would resonate with users or not, there were clear patterns. Users were partial to well-maintained and tidy vegetation over untended nature. Water was a powerful tool to engage users. And, based on observations during summer and spring months, users in the UK preferred shade and avoid open fields just as much as users in the US did. Understanding these norms of behaviour could allow user preferences for comfort to be included in a park design from the very beginning of the park design process.

The PCI Framework does not provide a comprehensive understanding of these preferences, but this analysis suggests it would be possible – and beneficial – to generate and incorporate user desires for comfort.

The final tier of the PCI Framework – interaction – shows that both casual and substantive interactions emerge from shared interests and concerns. For example, parents at the park with their children spoke to both other parents and non-parents, but fieldwork suggests they spoke with fellow parents longer. In lieu of a shared interest, triangulation – a shared experience in the park – emerged as an effective way to stimulate interaction. This underscores the importance of finding shared interests or experiences that are relevant to both the included and those at risk of exclusion.

Further, this analysis suggests a general lesson about the policy process behind urban design. As Chapter 6 indicated, architects often design parks without revisiting the finished product to ensure that it has incorporated the right design features. And often, the parks are constructed to incorporate competing economic, environmental, and social interests. Feedback from users reported in this chapter suggests that the policy process would benefit from ongoing designer engagement and additional flexibility that allows park manager and park planners to add new features and amend existing features to respond to user preferences.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

On the first day of May in 1997, the Labour Party came to power in the UK after a remarkable electoral win. Party leader Tony Blair gave a speech the following day in which he pledged, 'a Britain renewed … where we build a nation united, with common purpose, shared values, with no-one shut out or excluded' (Blair quoted in Levitas, 2005: 1). The first part of Blair's vision focused on building cohesion within British society: 'The government continues to frame community cohesion in terms of common norms, shared values and trusting different groups' (Beider, 2011: 5). The second part of the New Labour vision sought to integrate the 'excluded'. By the end of 1997, the Blair Government had established the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU). Building 'cohesion' and combating 'exclusion' came to occupy a central place in UK social policy, although there was ongoing debate over what exactly these concepts entailed.

In 1998, less than a year later, New Labour introduced another policy priority: urban design. The 'Deputy Prime Minister established the Urban Task Force' (UTF) which 'gave a massive boost to the urban design dimension of planning and development' (Punter, 2011: 1). Then, in 1999, the government established the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). These efforts were described as a 'smaller scale experiment … [but] one with potentially longer lasting impacts as enshrined in the fabric of England's towns and cities' (Carmona et al., 2017: 1).

> This was the attempt to address questions of design in the built environment through systematic government action. [It] sought to understand, campaign for and prescribe solutions to the delivery of better architectural, urban and public space design to the nation at large (ibid.)

Government involvement in shaping the built environment was a significant shift after a period focused on deregulation. Simultaneously, in academic circles, significantly more research on design and green space usage was under way.

This thesis investigated – with nearly two decades of hindsight – how these two policy priorities interacted in the re-design of public parks. It found that urban designers adopted the priorities of policymakers focused on social exclusion, but those focused on social exclusion generally did not prioritise urban design. Considering this finding, the research explored the extent to which urban design in UK public parks could effectively contribute to the prevention of social exclusion and the promotion of cohesion by comparing UK parks – where exclusion and cohesion were prominent policy priorities – to parks in the US, where other motivations influenced park design.

Multiple different methodologies were used in this research. First, national policy documents, design recommendations, and academic studies were used to evaluate different policy perspectives and policy discourses and how they influenced one another. The literature assessment and textual review were conducted by examining government archives and library resources.

Second, both elite interviews and user interviews were conducted. Elite interview subjects were experts on social exclusion and urban design who were identified through government reports, academic research, and word of mouth. Experts on specific parks were found through park directories and site visits. Park users were also interviewed. They were selected through a method detailed in Section 3.4.2, where the researcher positioned themselves at a designated location and asked every third person for an interview. The goal was to systematically select arbitrary users so as to capture a wide cross-section of perspectives.

Third, detailed design descriptions and extensive user data were collected on the eight public parks that were selected as case studies. As explained in Section 3.3.4, case studies included four parks in the US and four parks in the UK. The parks were located in cities with comparable populations and with similar architectural movements. The pool of possible case

study parks was severely limited by the criteria that they be designed or redesigned during the late 1990s and early 2000s, when social exclusion was a major policy priority in the UK, and there were parallel architectural movements in the UK and the US. The parks were matched in pairs such that their surrounding areas and overall park designs had similar characteristics. Further, the parks were designated as either a city park or a neighbourhood park based on the population the park planners and designers intended to attract. This designation was determined through planning documents and elite interviews with the park planners, designers, and managers.

This chapter revisits the four research questions outlined in the Introduction, each capturing a stage of the policy process for designing public parks: policy doctrine, design recommendations, design implementation, and user experience. The findings generate unexpected lessons for methodological approaches to similar research, practical choices for park design, and social policy theory. After considering all three types of lessons, this chapter enumerates some of the limitations of this study, as well as opportunities for future research.

8.1 Principles Underlying the Urban Doctrine

The first set of research questions considered the extent to which social exclusion and social cohesion as political concepts in the UK influenced the principles undergirding urban design policy. Chapter 4 compared UK urban design principles with US principles using textual evidence and elite interviews, concluding that the UK urban design principles had been influenced by the national focus on social exclusion and cohesion. There was evidence in the US that then-President Bill Clinton's emphasis on the middle class influenced how the US urban design movement framed its philosophy. The implication is that when a major politician champions an issue, it can influence underlying principles in seemingly distant policy areas, such as urban design.

UK policymakers and planners focused on urban design – particularly the urban design of public parks – incorporated concerns about social exclusion and cohesion into their work. However, Blair's SEU did not reciprocate. Even though the SEU emphasised the importance of cross-departmental collaboration and 'joined-up solutions to joined-up problems' (SEU, 2001a: 57; Clark, 2002), it did not appear to consider urban design to be a key tool at its disposal. Three possible explanations emerged: (1) a lack of data on urban design and urban parks, (2) a lack of a central authority advocating for urban parks, and (3) a lack of public esteem for urban design and parks. These explanations are relevant beyond the study of urban design in the UK. In many contexts, policy priorities compete for resources. Findings from Chapter 4 suggest that emerging policy areas can benefit from concrete metrics, a clear advocate inside government, and public advocacy outside of government in trying to attract a base of political support.

It is worth noting that at the time the case study parks were being designed, the body of research on green spaces was somewhat limited. However, in subsequent decades, more relevant work has been published. There is now a large – and growing – community of scholars investigating the role of open space and public space on individuals and societies. Their research includes investigating the role of green environments in improving psychological wellbeing and community cohesion in deprived neighbourhoods (for example, see Silveirinha de Oliveira et al., 2013 and Sullivan et al., 2004). Researchers have also begun exploring innovative ways to investigate landscape design and public space management in a comprehensive way (for example, see Ward Thompson et al., 2010 and Carmona et al., 2008).

8.2 Design Recommendations

The second set of research questions explored the differences in design recommendations for public parks in the UK and the US. Chapter 5 generated from policy documents and interviews a framework for understanding the UK design recommendations aimed at addressing social exclusion and cohesion.

Design recommendations and initiatives are notoriously messy. 'Even ministers acknowledged that what was once a "patchwork quilt" of urban policy had become a "bowl of spaghetti" ' (Lord Rooker quoted in Cullingworth and Nadin, 2006: 379). Atkinson and Helms agree:

> New Labour's urban agenda has generated a newfound dynamism in the debate about the future of British cities. However, this enthusiasm has also delivered a bewildering array of initiatives, programmes, pathfinders, and policies (2007: 3).

Chapter 5 aggregated various design recommendations from both sides of the Atlantic, identifying ideas that were distinct to the UK and linked to preventing social exclusion or cultivating cohesion. These recommendations were then organised into a schema that captured both the 'theory of change' and the design recommendations: the Presence-Comfort-Interaction (PCI) Framework.

The PCI Framework proposed that public parks can contribute to preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion if the right mix of users are present, they are physically and socially comfortable, and interact positively across social groups. The 'theory of change' behind the PCI Framework largely cohered with academic research on promoting social cohesion, including Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (1954; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). The coherence of this theory was surprising given the lack of a single policy authority. Its level of nuance suggests a thorough understanding of academic research. For example, the policy recommendations draw a distinction between actual crime and fear of crime (Innes, 2004; Bottoms, 2007).

Despite a logical theory of change captured in the PCI Framework, it was unclear how the recommended design features would work in practice. Scholars have indicated that 'few empirical studies have examined the design of public space for social interactions' (Francis et al., 2012: 402; also see Frumkin, 2003; Dines et al., 2006). This gap in the literature speaks to the need for research to investigate the relationship between design recommendations and their implementation.

8.3 The Implementation

The third set of questions considered how design recommendations associated with the PCI Framework have been implemented in public parks. Fieldwork in eight parks determined that the implementation of the recommendations was varied. Chapter 6 aimed to explain the similarities and differences.

One of CABE's core beliefs was that 'the built environment can contribute to a more equal, inclusive and cohesive society', yet the design features that could, theoretically, help accomplish this vision have not had the force of law behind them (CABE, 2008: 2). 'While CABE was a publicly funded arm of government, the nature of its work was largely informal and non-statutory' (Carmona et al., 2017: 1-2). Some UK case study parks – such as Birmingham's Eastside City Park and London's Mile End Park – incorporated many of the design features in the PCI Framework, whereas others did not. US parks such as Chicago's Millennium Park and Washington's Yards Park also seemed to incorporate some of the PCI Framework design recommendations. Two puzzles emerge that are important for social policy theory: first, what explains the variation among UK parks? And second, why did US parks incorporate the features that were recommended in the UK?

Elite interviews and park documents suggest that there are three primary explanations for the variation in implementation found within the UK case studies: (1) pervasive

ambiguity, (2) a high degree of discretion for front-line agents, and (3) limited accountability. These explanations are consistent with – and add empirical support for – the literature on policy conversion and 'street-level bureaucracy' (Hacker, 2005; Thelen, 2003; Lipsky, 1980). For governmental efforts where there is a large degree of discretion on the ground level, these findings underscore the crucial role of those on the front line who are tasked with making decisions. These front-line agents or street-level bureaucrats are traditionally seen as social workers and teachers, police officers and judges. However, this research suggests that the category could be expanded to include architects, landscape architects, and planners whose work is relevant to public policy, but not often accountable to policymakers. Even though these individuals do not necessarily have regular contact with citizens, they shape the environments where contact occurs. There is a significant body of literature suggesting the design of a space can influence behaviour and interactions (Gesler et al., 2004; Bechtel and Churchman, 2002; Jetsonen et al., 2011).

Despite many social and economic similarities in the UK and the US, the two countries adopted different urban doctrines, as captured in the UR and NU. It was somewhat surprising to find that – given doctrinal differences – US parks also included features that aligned with the UK's urban doctrine of preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion. It might initially appear that similarities between parks in the UK and the US would render the comparison void. However, the analysis suggested that elements of park design – such as interactive art and water features – appeared in parks in the UK and the US as a result of different motivations. Whereas preventing social exclusion and promoting cohesion were principal motivators in the UK, design features in the US were more focused on fulfilling economic goals.

The various motivations for urban design underscore the role of politics in the design of public spaces. The case study parks highlight how environmental, economic, personal, and

social interests have competed to influence the design of and user experience in public parks. The interests shaping park design raise other important policy questions, such as: do the divergent motivations matter if the design outcomes resemble one another?

Data from Chapter 7 offer suggestive evidence on whether the motivations for park design affect how users experience the design itself. Consider two parks that incorporated design recommendations from the PCI Framework, but with different motivations: London's Mile End Park and Chicago's Millennium Park. Mile End Park prioritised addressing social challenges. As the park director – Mike Rowan – wrote, primary objectives of the park are 'to reduce inequalities [and] foster strong community cohesion' (2010: 59). Millennium Park had a very different, economic goal. As referenced in Chapter 6, one consultant involved in shaping Millennium Park explained, 'we really had an economic motivation from the get-go' (DeVaries quoted in Hangley, 2006: 24).

The findings from Chapter 7 suggest that, with comparable features and divergent underlying motivations, the parks attracted different types of users, but generated similar user experiences. For example, Mile End Park attracted a mix of neighbourhood residents, drawing particularly from minority communities that might have been at risk of exclusion. In contrast, the fieldwork found that tourists had a strong presence in Millennium Park. Local residents who visited Millennium Park said in user interviews that they did not feel like they were amongst their neighbours. Although both parks had features that helped generate positive user interactions, the composition of local users in Mile End Park positioned it to be more effective at addressing exclusion and generating cohesion according to the PCI Framework. Millennium Park's economic motivations may have led to design features that were not accounted for in the PCI Framework, including its world-renowned architecture and its central location. These findings suggest that in addition to examining the physical features

present in a park, researchers should also study how planners' motivations influence the social impact of the public spaces they create.

8.4 The User Experience

The data in Chapter 7 also helped address a fourth set of questions, exploring the extent to which the design features of public parks realised the PCI Framework's theory of change. While it was not possible for this thesis to draw a direct causal link between design features and social outcomes, it did evaluate how users responded to the PCI Framework's design recommendations. Systematic observations and user interviews suggested that the UK parks – consistent with urban doctrine in the UK – attracted a user population that was representative of the surrounding area, including ample representation of women as well as ethnic and racial minorities. Many of the design features in the PCI Framework – such as incorporating good lighting and children's play areas – had the expected impact of creating presence, comfort, and interaction that could help prevent social exclusion and create cohesion.

The PCI Framework as presented in Chapter 5 was based on reports and policy documents, but findings in Chapter 7 indicate that the recommendations could have been more specific. For example, the PCI Framework emphasises the importance of seating, but field research indicates that some seating was more conducive to positive interactions than other seating. Fixed seating at picnic benches was more successful at generating sustained interactions than moveable chairs. Similarly, as the PCI Framework predicted, nature appeared to create a sense of comfort, and it was most effective when the natural elements were well-tended, even manicured. Water features were well-liked, and interactive water features were particularly effective at drawing users and stimulating interactions. These patterns of user behaviours and preferences emerged across the different case studies. Other

researchers have also uncovered such patterns. For example, a series of case studies commissioned by the Forestry Commission in Scotland found that users of several different woodlands had the same favourite activity – walking – and similar dislikes – including rubbish, vandalism, and dog fouling (Ward Thompson et al., 2004). Such predictable preferences suggest that future design recommendations can be more precise than they have been in the urban design literature.

In addition to implementing specific design recommendations and responding to the unique qualities of the place, findings suggest that those creating a park should engage in an iterative design process that adapts to user preferences. As mentioned in Chapter 6, a landscape architect acknowledged, 'there are always surprises' in how a space is used (3E-CAN, 2016). Fieldwork in Chapter 7 revealed that users' feedback based on their nuanced understanding of a park's shortfalls can inform park updates. These findings suggest that an evaluation of the design should be incorporated into the policy process. Together, these conclusions describe a policy implementation process that is at once more precise and more flexible.

8.5 Lessons, Limitations, and Future Research

Lessons from this research are relevant for everything from who should contribute to policy decisions to how public parks should be designed. The primary takeaways are divided into three categories: methodological lessons, practical lessons, and theoretical lessons.

8.5.1 Methodological Lessons

There are two types of methodological lessons. First, this research has implications for how to measure social exclusion and social cohesion. As mentioned in Chapter 2, exactly how to operationalise social exclusion and social cohesion has been hotly debated. The social exclusion literature has been faulted for not adequately considering the social dimension of

social exclusion, partly because it is particularly intangible (Levitas, 2006; Robinson and Oppenheim, 1998). Indeed, while the Labour government emphasised 'cumulative disadvantage', there was still an emphasis on the monetary measures of exclusion. Similarly, social cohesion research has been criticised for studying *where* people live instead of *how* they interact (SIC, 2014a). Research into conflict theory and contact theory demonstrate that proximity is not sufficient for cohesion and, thus, where people live is not a good proxy for who they interact with and what their social networks look like (Hewstone, 2007). This thesis began to address both concerns by endeavouring to measure the social dimension of social exclusion and quantifying how people interact. The combination of systematic social observations (SSO) in public spaces and user interviews helps illuminate how people engage with one another both objectively and subjectively. While these methodologies need to be further refined, this research can be instructive for understanding what tools are best when measuring experiential and dynamic concepts such as social exclusion and social cohesion.

Second, this research offers specific insights into which variables are most useful when evaluating public parks. Many of these lessons surfaced in Chapter 7 upon considering user data. For example, when looking at the sex breakdown of park users it was most informative when considered alongside data on whether the user was in the park alone or accompanied by others. User interviews suggest that a lower number of solo female users may be indicative of how safe a park feels. It was also valuable to consider the female users' activity in the park. In Washington DC's Yards Park, many of the female users were participating in the free exercise classes and felt safe and comfortable. This research also considered the proportion of mobile and stationary users. The theory was that more stationary users indicated a park's success. However, this turned out not to be a useful metric. In some parks, including Birmingham's Eastside City Park, a high proportion of mobile users was a product of an abutting building that was popular and brought in new park users. In other

parks, including Chicago's Seward Park, a high proportion of mobile users seemed to be indicative of users feeling unsafe. By collecting an assortment of variables and analysing the results in light of user interviews, this research offered insights into which data points are most helpful when researching public parks and social interactions.

8.5.2 Practical Lessons

User data also offered important practical lessons for park design. This research identified various features that were highly successful at drawing people into parks, helping them become comfortable, and encouraging interaction. For instance, interactive water features were very successful as were children's play areas and park cafés. The case studies also demonstrated the importance of considering how the surrounding area interacts with the park. In London's Greenwich Millennium Village, the local stores faced a small square, and the park was accessible only through a narrow walkway. That the park was not visible from the commercial district seemed to contribute to its low numbers of users. In contrast, in Birmingham's Eastside City Park, the multi-use Millennium Point building's main entrance opened onto the park and appeared to help boost the park's user base. Further, the research found that too many parks in a given neighbourhood might have a detrimental impact on preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. In places where there was an abundance of open green spaces, including parks and courtyards in residential buildings, each neighbourhood park seemed to draw a less diverse user base. When considered alongside the finding that users tended to come to parks from a very small geographic area – usually living within a 10-minute walk of the park – this suggests that parks should be strategically placed such that everyone is served but parks are not too concentrated. This finding also demonstrates the importance of evaluating the characteristics of the population in the immediate vicinity of the park. It suggests there may be significant interplay between residential patterns and the users of a given park.

Careful analysis of the case studies also offered an answer to an inconsistency found in the UK's urban design literature. The UR literature seemed to display a careful awareness in discussing *who* should be present in public parks, endeavouring to identify the types of people who were most likely to form positive connections and relay those connections to the rest of their networks (CABE, 2010a). Yet, later design recommendations supported creating spaces exclusively for specific groups that may feel uncomfortable being in a shared space with the rest of society. For instance, there was the suggestion that creating female-only spaces in urban parks could help Muslim woman feel at ease (ibid.). However, there was not an explanation about how an exclusive space could lead to interaction between included and potentially excluded groups. User interviews suggest an answer: having spaces designed for a specific user population could help prevent social exclusion if the spaces for different groups are in close proximity to one another and there is a shared open space for the entire population. Thus, there would be a space where users feel comfortable, but there would also be a space where users from different backgrounds could interact. For example, at London's Thames Barrier Park the children's play area is far away from the café. Users, even ones without children, wanted these areas to be proximate to one another such that a user could observe – and maybe interact – with someone using another nearby space.

8.5.3 Theoretical Lessons

This research also had important theoretical implications for the field of social policy. In particular, three lessons are salient. First, there are implications for where and how people form networks. Chapter 2 explored the literature on social networks and social capital, including bonding, bridging, and linking capital. Theoretically, city parks would draw people from across the region and, thus, facilitate bridging capital or relationships between people from different social groups. Similarly, neighbourhood parks would attract local residents, encouraging bonding capital or relationships within a social group. However, this research

found that this logic was not consistent with the data. Instead, city parks – such as Chicago's Millennium Park – attracted a high number of tourists, who were not well suited to create lasting relationships regardless of whether they were bonding or bridging relationships. Instead, neighbourhood parks surfaced as a better alternative to building bridging capital. User interviews suggested it was particularly helpful when users had two or more shared characteristics. For example, if users lived nearby and both had children, they chatted for longer than if they simply lived in the same area. This suggests that in conceptualising social capital, it may be useful to consider the combination of an individual's primary traits and not just their social group. Further, this research found that there are also opportunities to build linking capital in public parks. This may be the case in places such as Mile End Park, where local citizens were highly engaged in the design process, working with local organisations and the local government.

Second, this research found that three different factors seemed to influence how successful a park was at preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion. First, inherent features. There are a variety of factors outside the control of an architect or policymaker that influence a park's ability to help prevent social exclusion. Two key examples are location and weather. A park's proximity to other parks seemed to be a factor in its success. Similarly, the user population appeared to be greatly influenced by the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the surrounding residential area. And, during cold and rainy days, park usage decreased substantially. To a large extent, architects or policymakers cannot alter these characteristics, even though they might contribute to a park's success.

Second, park features. Design is as an important factor in how often a park is used and how it is used. For preventing social exclusion and promoting social cohesion, certain design elements detailed in the PCI Framework and tested by user data appear to be

particularly successful. These include features such as interactive art and children's areas that are integrated with the rest of the park.

Third, a park's political environment – who makes design decisions and the interests that they are trying to pursue – can influence how it is used. Fieldwork demonstrated that a variety of actors can play important roles. In Chicago's Millennium Park, Mayor Daley's vision of an internationally renowned park shaped decisions. In London's Greenwich Millennium Village and in Washington DC's Yards Park, the developers' economic interests were paramount. In London's Mile End Park, the borough's emphasis on addressing social exclusion and the public's active role influenced the park's creation and look. Finally, in Washington DC's Canal Park, the landscape architects' decision to emphasis 'social sustainability' impacted the park design. In each park, a slightly different combination of stakeholders were at the table. However, in the vast majority of cases architects, landscape architects and designers made critical decisions that impacted the final park's success. Yet, these actors were not necessarily recognised as important stakeholders that influenced the success of policies. They also were not necessarily involved over the long term.

Findings from this research suggest architects and designers should have a seat at that proverbial table because their decisions could influence how well certain policy goals are achieved. Traditionally, these individuals are often viewed as creative geniuses who can draw up an artistic, original, imaginative design. However, given the degree of variability that was found in the case studies, architects and designers should be well-versed in the policy objectives and be involved in the park development process in a more systematic way.

Finally, this research had implications for social policy theory. In particular, the findings are relevant for the study of policy conversion and street-level bureaucracy. Policy conversion is where a policy is implemented very differently in different contexts. The variation in park design among the case study parks in the UK – despite a national policy

focused on combatting social exclusion – is consistent with existing explanations for why policy conversion might happen. Research suggests that policies that are ambiguous, offer a high degree of discretion, and require minimal accountability allow for a high degree of variation in the ways the policies are implemented. However, this research identified a dilemma of policy conversion: how can a policy create a sufficient level of variation – such that parks can cater to their local context and not all public spaces look identical – while also fulfilling broader policy goals?

This research suggests answering this question might require approaching architects, landscape architects, and designers as bureaucrats implementing policy. The literature on street-level bureaucrats underscores the ability of individuals on the front line – who are interacting with citizens – to make a significant difference in how a policy is implemented. This suggests that the people who make the spaces where those interactions occur also can have substantial influence on how a policy is realized. If architects, landscape architects, and designers are considered bureaucrats this would recognize the need for some structure accountability. Accountability for architects and designers would not only mean evaluating whether they achieved policy goals. It could also mean ensuring that these actors are embedded in the community and involved in the park over the long term to ensure that the park is used as planned.

8.5.4 Limitations and Future Research

This thesis contributes data and analysis on how urban parks can prevent social exclusion and promote social cohesion. It adds to a body of research on how the environment, including subtle design features, can affect behaviour (Wessel, 2009). However, there are several important limitations to this research.

There were limitations due to resource constraints, including the relatively small number of case studies, the narrow focus on urban parks, and the fact that parks were not

evaluated during the winter months. Given that this research found that users had different responses to different types of landscape design, it seems important to investigate how patterns observed in urban parks compare to usage patterns in other types of public, green spaces. Similarly, rain had a substantial impact on park usage. Thus, it would be worth exploring how seasonality influences when, whether, and how a park is used.

This research was also limited in terms of the extent to which it considered important context variables. For example, the population residing in the immediate vicinity of the park had a big influence over who used the park. This research considered the surrounding population on the scale of an entire zip code or a whole borough, whereas the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the residents on the streets abutting the park may have been a more valuable metric. The research was also limited in that it did not thoroughly investigate the different stages of neighbourhood development in the areas surrounding each park. For example, much of Greenwich Millennium Village was under construction and its population under-capacity at the time of the fieldwork. This factor deserved more attention than it received here.

Further limitations include a failure to examine the entire design process. The research did not investigate the design brief associated with each project, nor did it look at the degree and extent of community engagement. Further, this research did not look at how parks were managed and maintained over the long term. There were also measurement challenges. Most notably, the mechanisms used in the systematic social observation did not directly measure social exclusion or social cohesion. Instead, it looked at other factors that are associated with these phenomena. This is by no means an exhaustive list of limitations, but it does serve as a reminder that the findings should be interpreted with a full understanding of the research's shortcomings. These limitations may also help motivate future research.

The hope is that this research inspires further investigation into the role of green space as a tool for social policy initiatives. Future research could expand on the current research design, including examining park usage in all seasons or considering parks at a later stage of neighbourhood development. Future research could also apply different lenses in considering how social exclusion and social cohesion intersect with urban public parks. For example, the findings from this research suggest it would be worth exploring how different ethnic groups and age groups engage with open space and other users of open space. It may also be valuable to look at residential patterns and how they impact park usage and the social dynamics in parks. Similarly, future research could explore how proximate parks influence one another. This research found that in areas with an abundance of public parks, the parks seemed to draw smaller, less diverse groups of users. However, it is unclear what happens in areas with minimal access to open green spaces. How does the absence of parks impact broader social dynamics?

The next logical step in this field may be for researchers to study public parks before, during, and after their creation. It would be particularly interesting to pair parks and implement certain features in one park but not the paired park. With such a quasi-experimental design, researchers could examine the entire process, interview the various actors on an ongoing basis and work with local residents to develop a detailed understanding of the social dynamics in the area and around the park.

The hope is that insights from this research and future research can contribute to distinct but related fields, such as the study of how space and design can inform education and health policy (for example, see Jetsonen et al., 2011; Gesler et al., 2004; Sadler et al., 2011; Ward Thompson et al., 2016). Additionally, this research strives to consider a potentially powerful tool for social policy, as carefully designed urban spaces may offer a way of achieving specific policy objectives.

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Appendix A: Maps of Case Study Parks

This appendix includes the maps and information about the eight case study parks. There are three types of maps included here. First, there is a map of the city or part of the city that indicates where the park is located in the urban environment. A star icon marks the park's location. These maps are courtesy of GoogleMaps.

Second, there is a map of each park. This offers a sense of the layout of the space and size of the park. On each map there is an area outlined by a black line. This is the space that was observed during the mobile and stationary mapping part of the research. These maps are drawn from various sources as indicated in each section.

Third, there is a user behaviour map for the observed portions of the park. This provides a sense of where people choose to spend time relative to different park features. Greenwich Millennium Village park is the one case study park not included because it had such few users. On the behavioural maps, North is indicated by an arrow, the scale is provided, and important buildings and features are labelled. It is important to note that the data for each user behaviour map was collected on a weekend at midday. It is likely that such mapping would yield very different results at different times of day and different times of the year. Thus, it is important that these be interpreted only in the context of various other data points and user interviews.

Legend

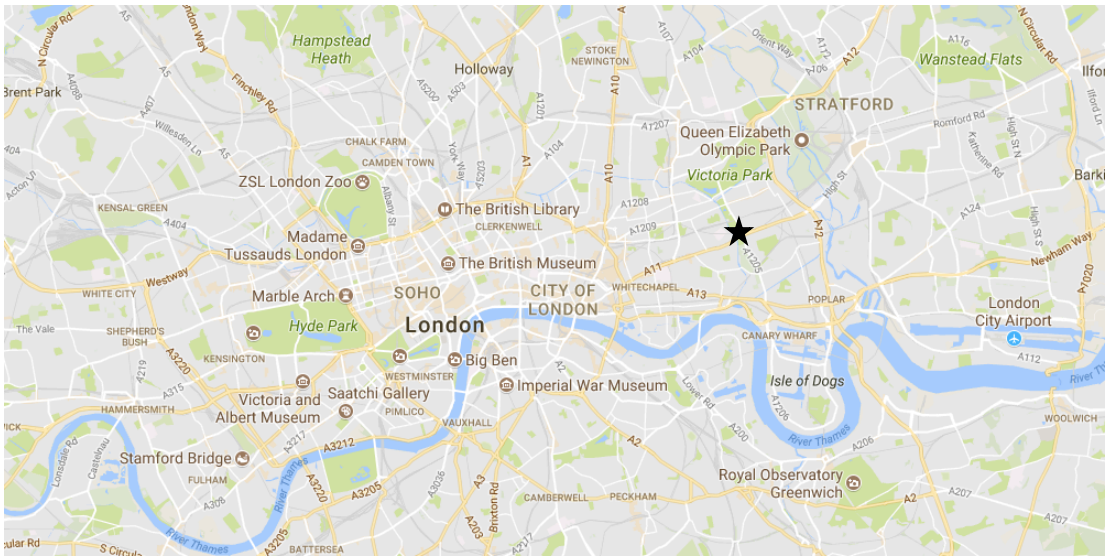
★ Where the park is located within the larger city

● A park user observed during the behavioural mapping

___ Boundary of observed area within the given case study park

⌂ Indicates which direction is North

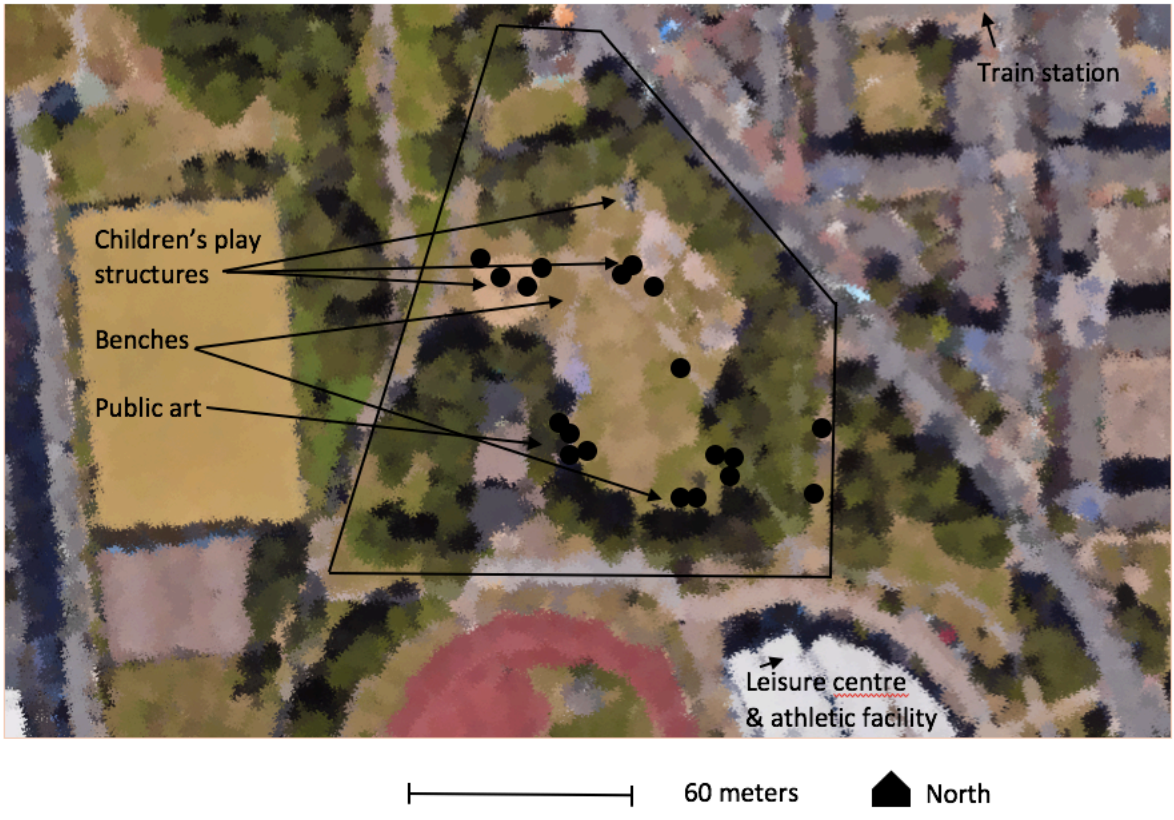
London's Mile End Park



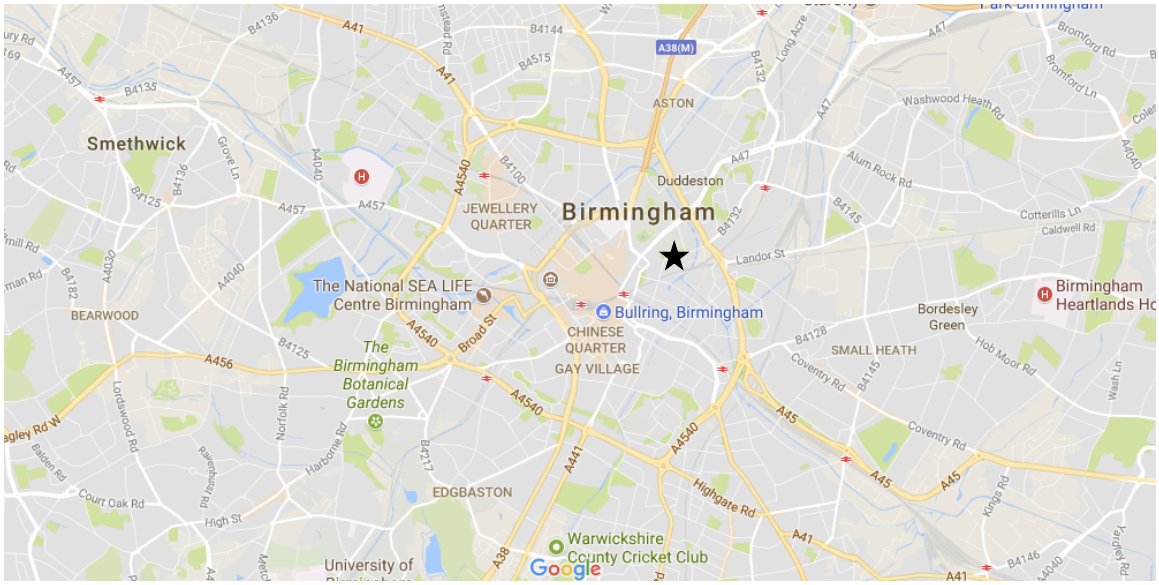
Mile End Park is 32 hectares.

Master plan is courtesy of Gardner Stewart Architects.




Train station
Children's play structures
Benches
Public art
Leisure centre & athletic facility
60 meters
North

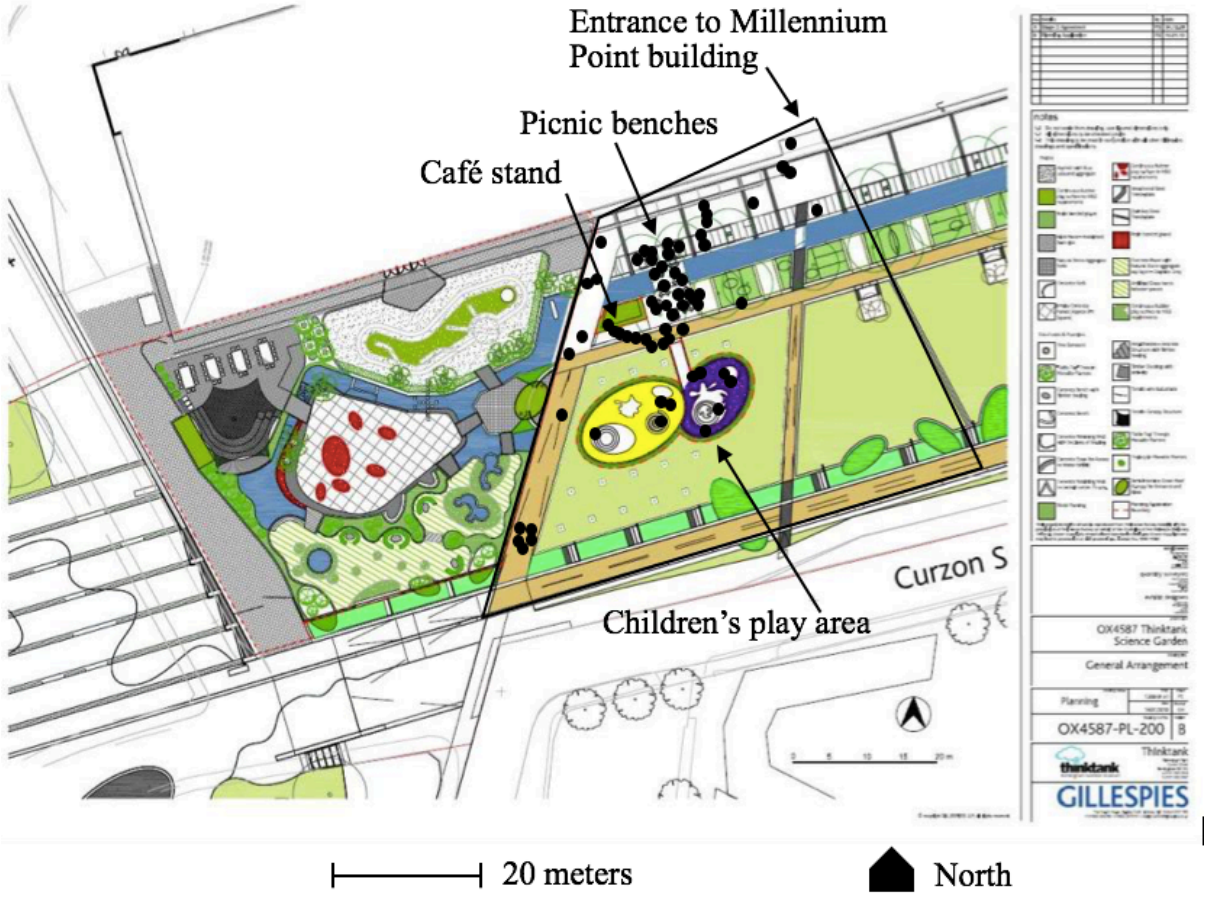
Birmingham's Eastside City Park



Eastside City Park is 3.4 hectares.

Master plan is courtesy of Patel Taylor Architectural Firm.




Entrance to Millennium Point building
Picnic benches
Café stand
Children's play area
Curzon S
OX4587 Thinktank Science Garden
General Arrangement
Planning
OX4587-PL-200
B
thinktank
GILLESPIES
20 meters
North

London's Greenwich Millennium Village (GMV) Park





The park at the centre of Greenwich Millennium Village is 5.6 hectares.

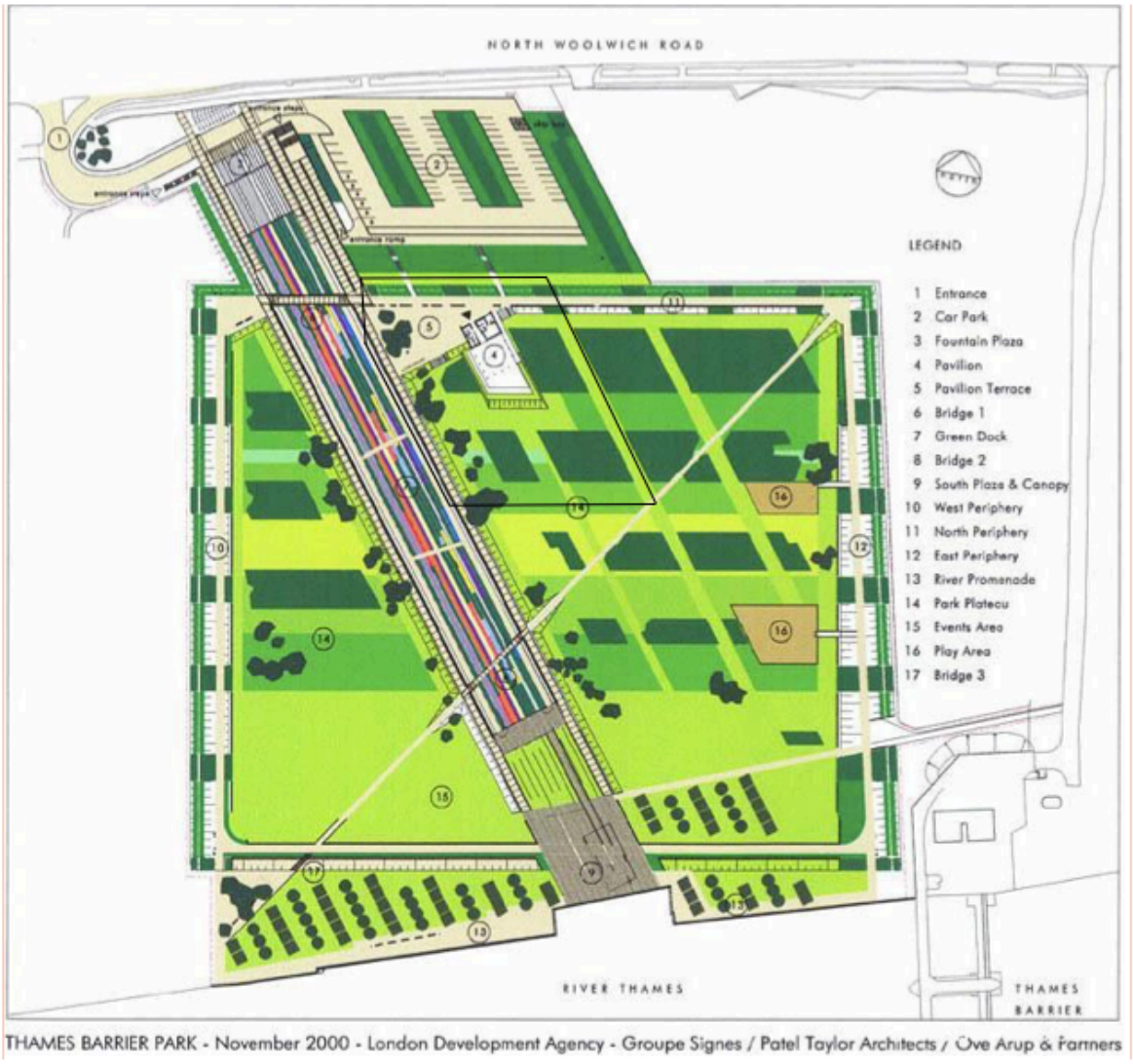
Site map is courtesy of Greenwich Millennium Village.

London's Thames Barrier Park

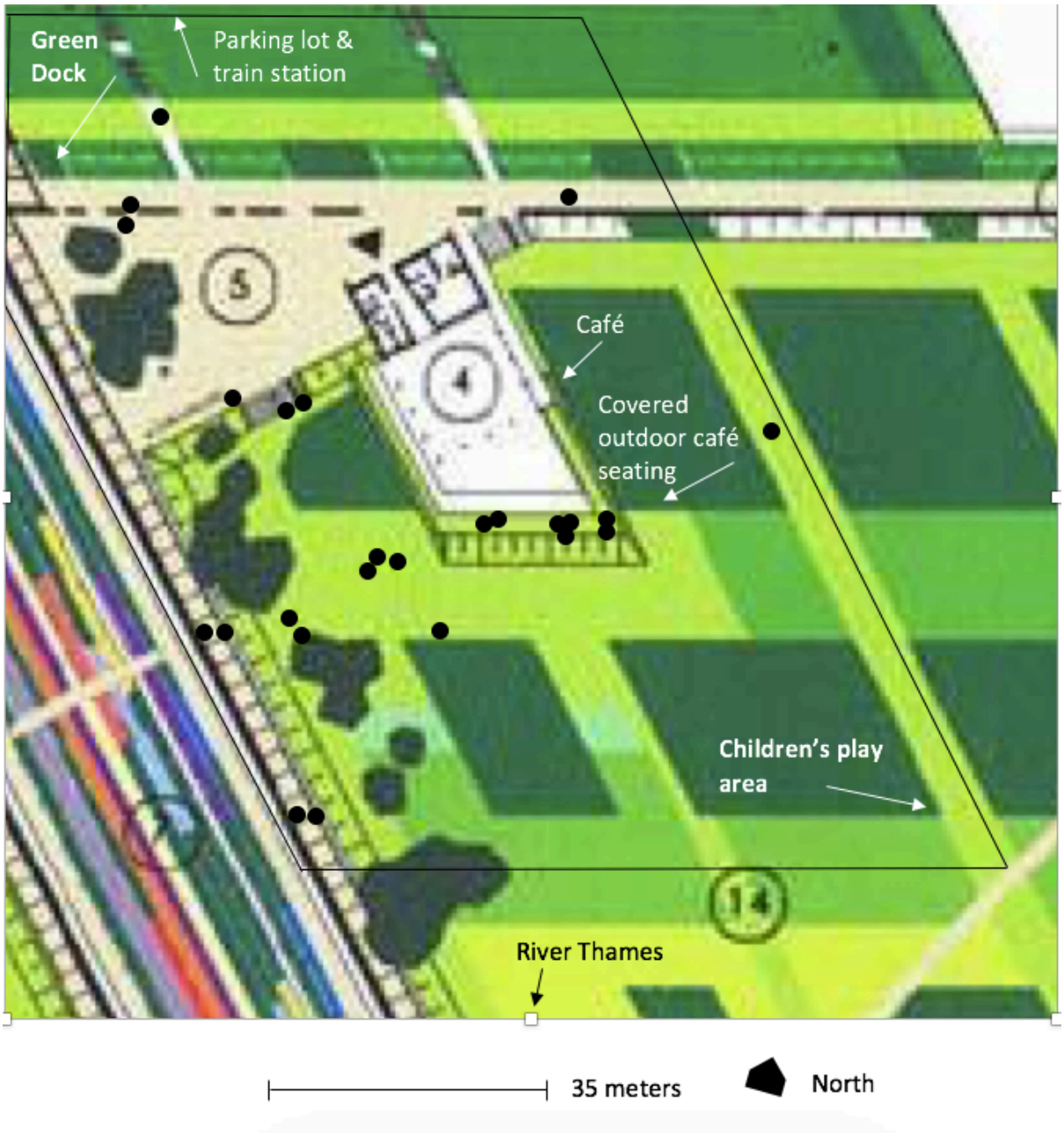


Thames Barrier Park is 14 hectares.

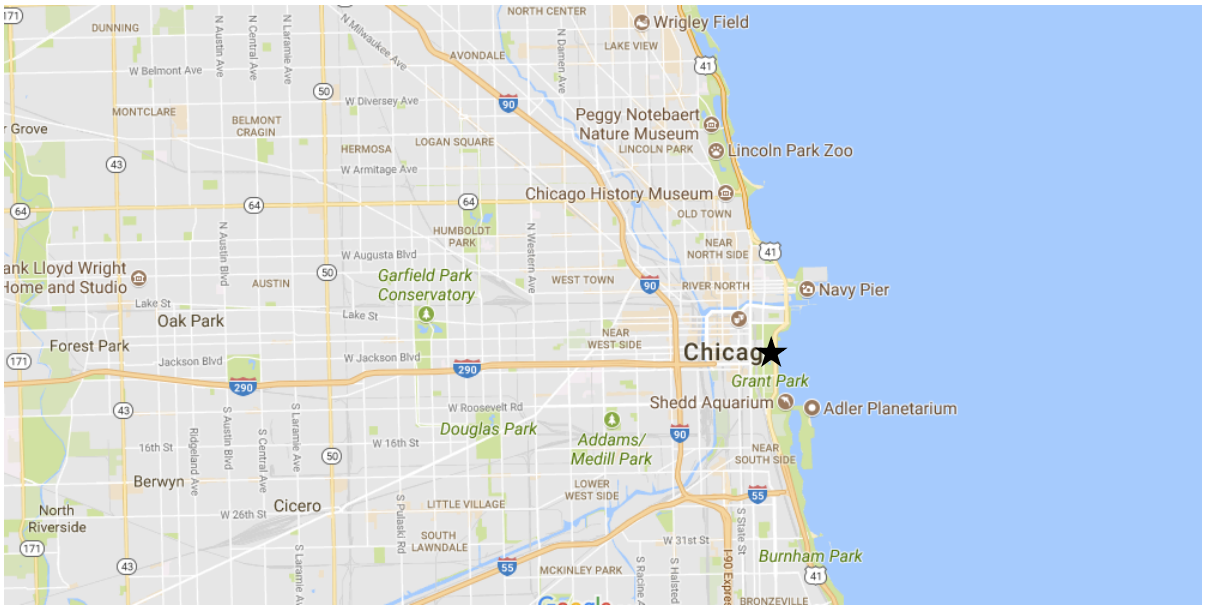
Site plan is courtesy of Patel Taylor Architectural Firm.



THAMES BARRIER PARK - November 2000 - London Development Agency - Groupe Signes / Patel Taylor Architects / Ove Arup & Partners


Green Dock
Parking lot & train station
Café
Covered outdoor café seating
Children's play area
River Thames
35 meters
North

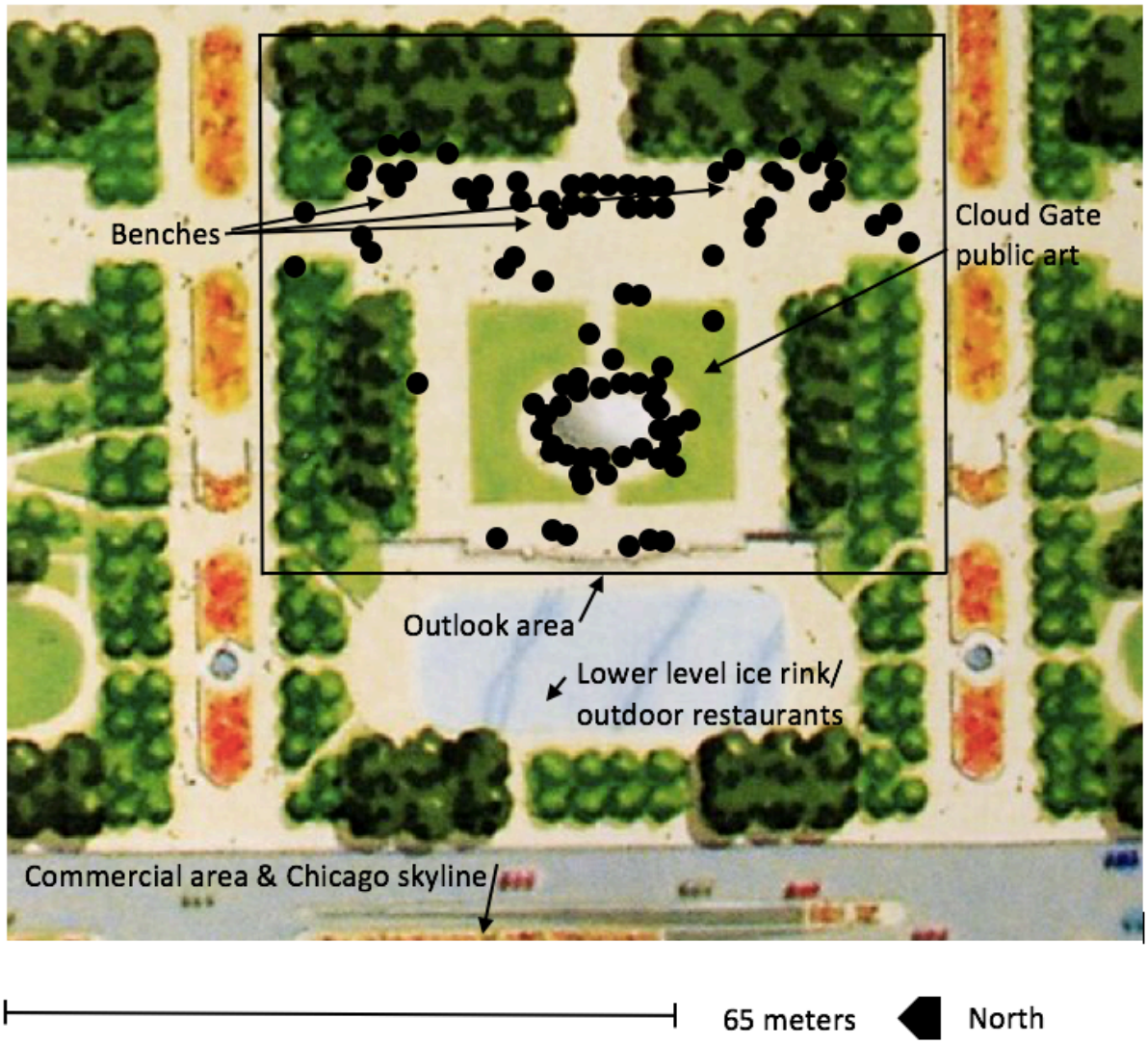
Chicago's Millennium Park



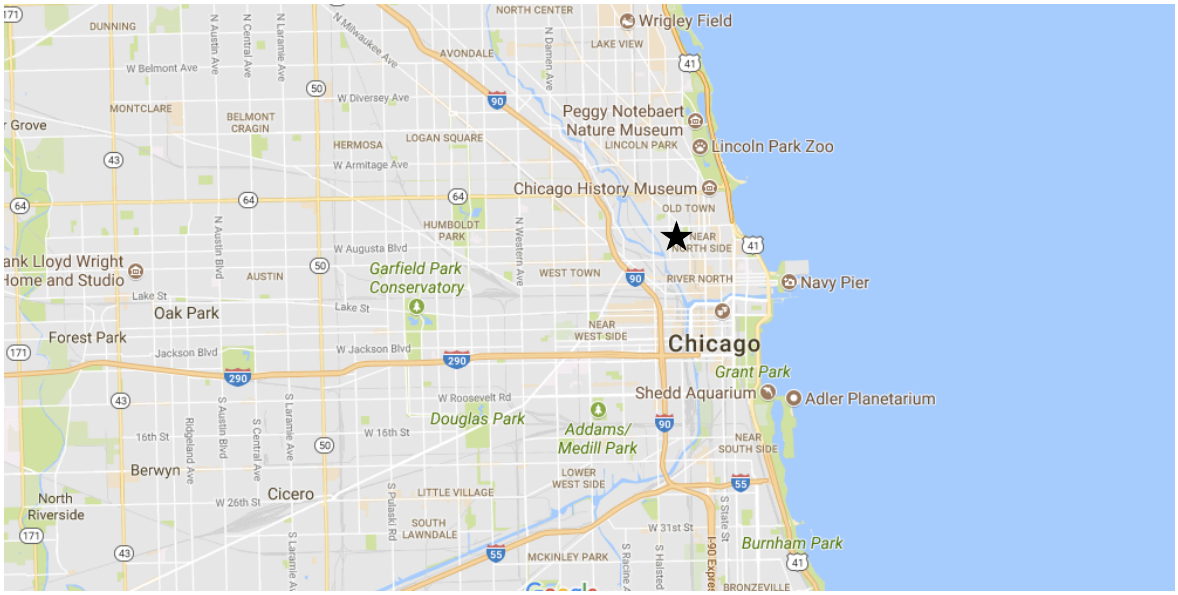
Millennium Park is 10 hectares.

Park map is courtesy of City of Chicago.




Benches
Cloud Gate
public art
Outlook area
Lower level ice rink/
outdoor restaurants
Commercial area & Chicago skyline
65 meters
North

Chicago's Seward Park



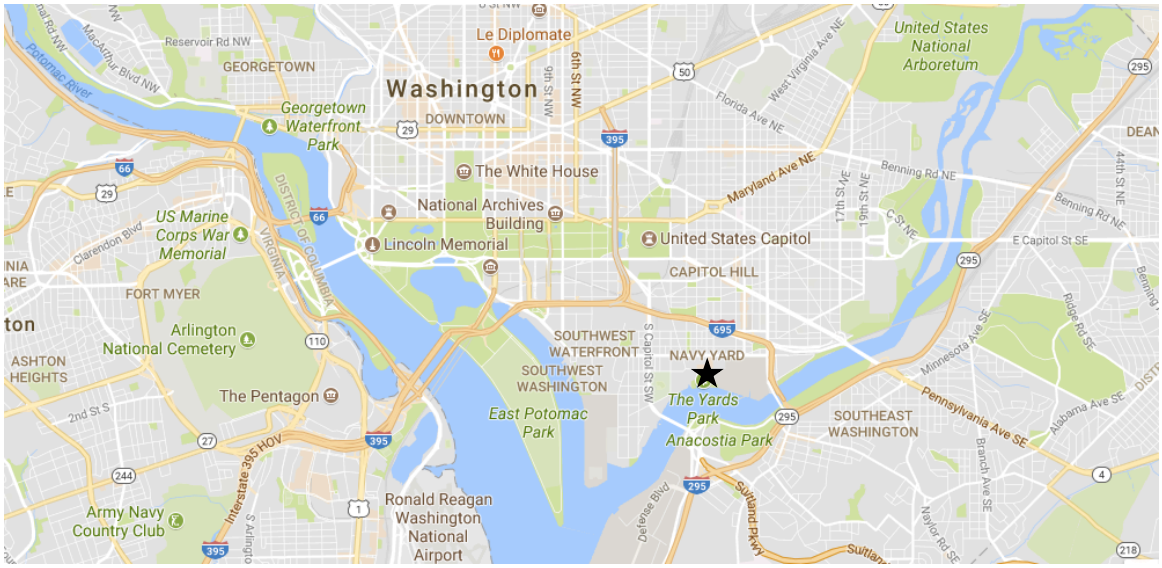
Seward Park is 3 hectares.

Aerial view courtesy of GoogleMaps.


W Division St
Division St
N Cleveland Ave
N Hudson Ave
W Elm St
Seward Park
N Orleans St
W Elm St
Jenner Elementary
Academy of the Arts
W Hill St
W Hill St
W Hobbie St


Children's
play area
Benches line the green
Athletic
facilities
Community clubhouse
Bike share station
40 meters
North

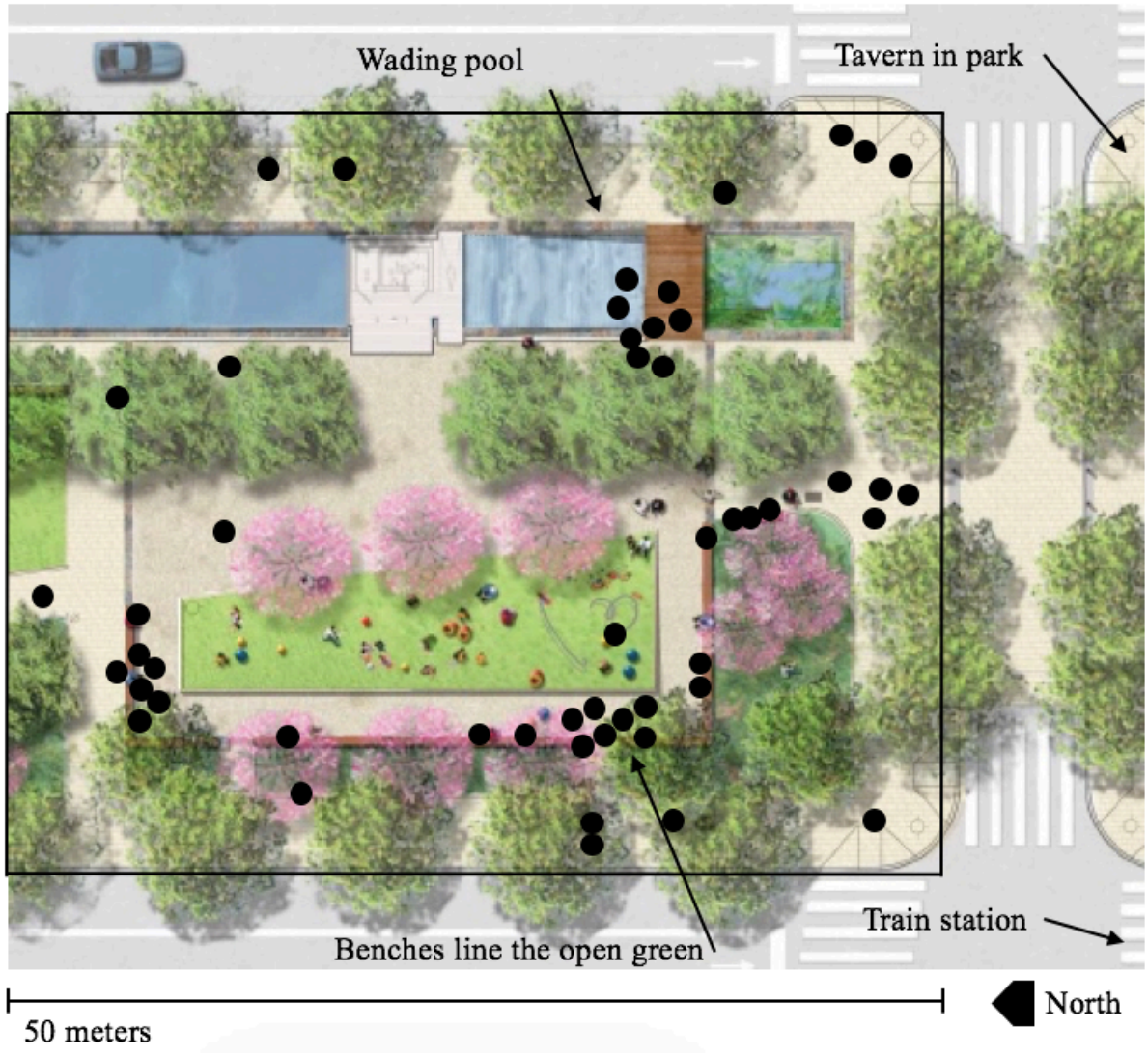
Washington's Canal Park



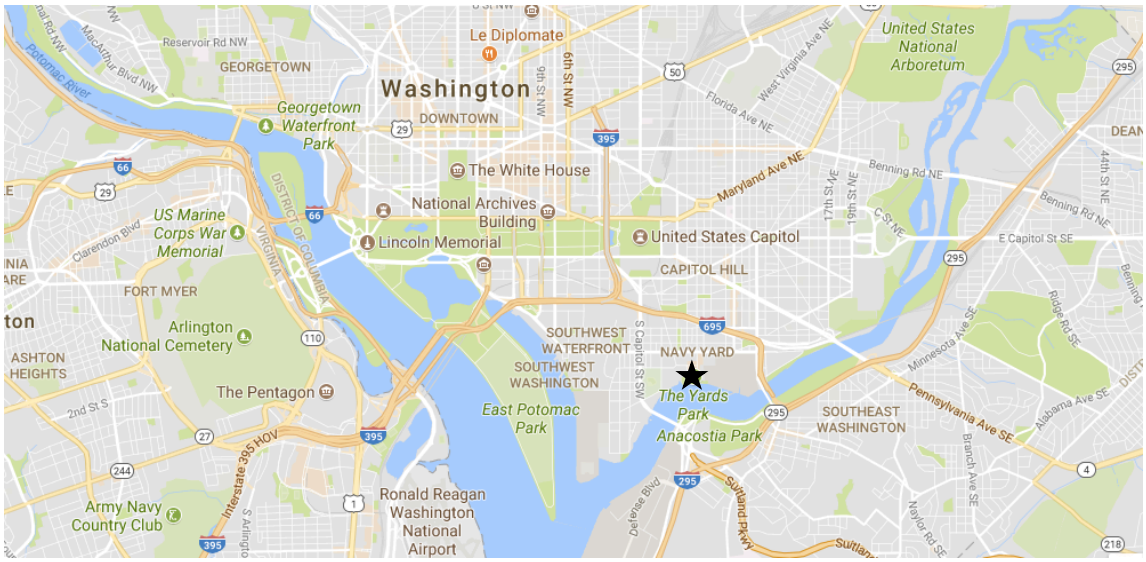
Canal Park is 1.2 hectares.

Site map courtesy of OLIN.




Wading pool
Tavern in park
Train station
Benches line the open green
50 meters
North

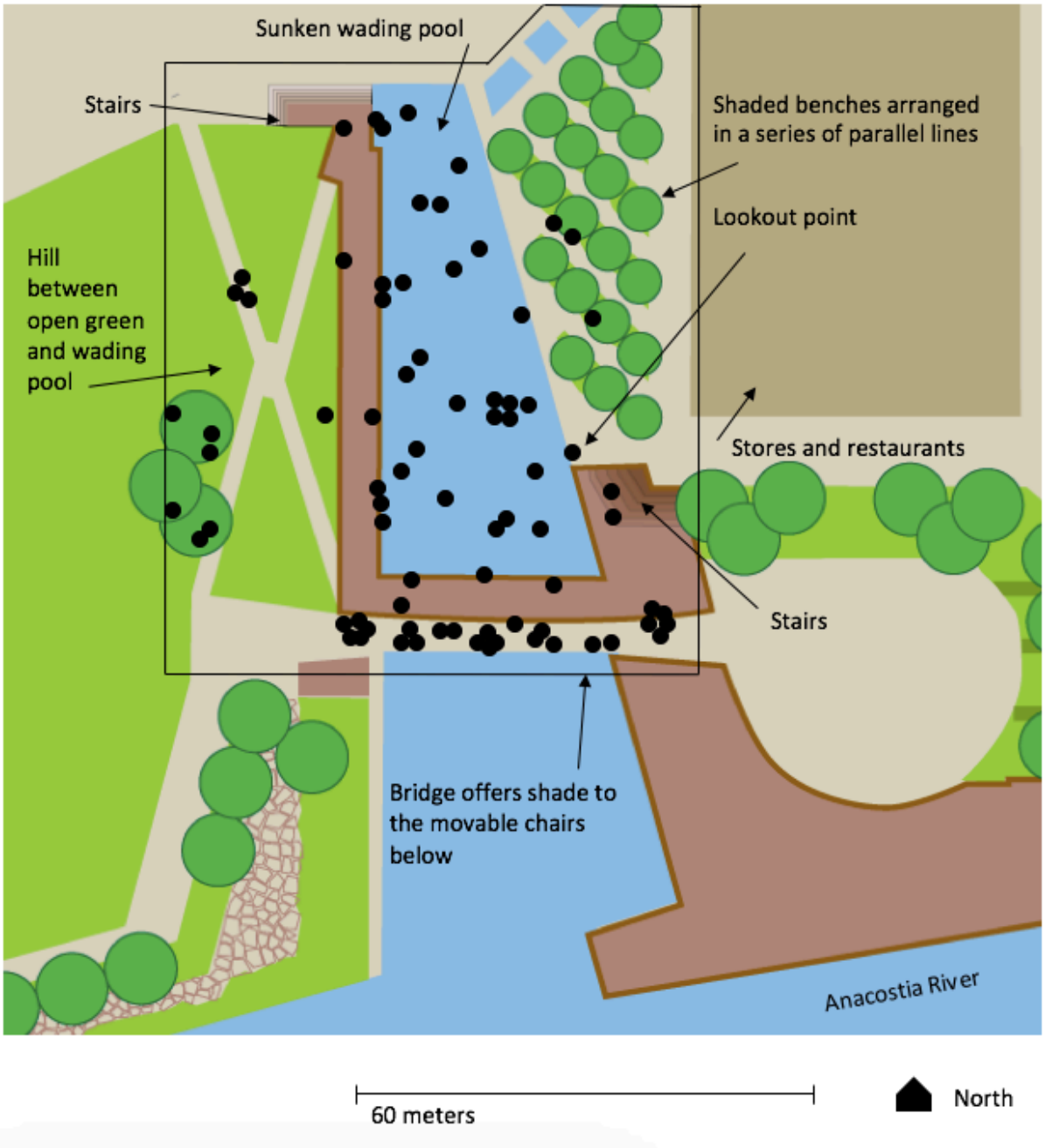
Washington's The Yards Park



The Yards Park is 17 hectares.

Renderings courtesy of Shalom Baranes Associates Architects and Capitol Riverfront Business Improvement District.




Sunken wading pool
Stairs
Shaded benches arranged in a series of parallel lines
Lookout point
Hill between open green and wading pool
Stores and restaurants
Stairs
Bridge offers shade to the movable chairs below
Anacostia River
60 meters
North

Appendix B: Data and Coding

The research undertaken in this thesis employed various methodologies. This appendix offers additional information regarding how the data was gathered, coded, and analysed. It proceeds in three sections based on the methodology. First, there is additional information about the Systematic Social Observations (SSO). Second, details regarding the elite and user interviews are discussed. Finally, a summary of the case trackings is provided.

1. Systematic Social Observations

The fieldwork undertaken for this thesis entailed gathering data through SSO in eight case study parks. The raw data is available via the following link:
https://www.dropbox.com/s/9fcrcjn5atyspjm/Phil_data_MEP_new.csv?dl=0

This section on SSO offers additional information, aimed at aiding fellow researchers in understanding the analysis and possibly expanding on the research.

First, the environment during each SSO session is detailed. There is a table for each case study, capturing the time of day, the time of the week, the time of year, and the weather when the data was gathered. These tables do not include the exact time, day, date, and weather because the data collection method used in the research did not incorporate such specific inputs. Instead, the data collection method included discrete categories that capture the general environment – such as weekday or weekend and hot, warm, or cool. All data was gathered in 2015 and 2016. All the relevant and available information is included in the tables below.

Second, all the bargraphs in the text are reproduced here along with all the bargraphs for the same variables but at each of the case study sites. for all the other case study sites.

Third, all images used in the text, which were gathered during Detailed Descriptive Mapping and Systematic Social Observation, are reproduced here in a larger format such that details are readily visible.

Finally, the R code used to generate the bargraphs and analysis is available upon request. R is an open-source statistical software.

1.1 Environment During Each SSO Session

Mile End Park (UK)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 2 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 3 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 4 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 5 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 6 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 8 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 9 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 10 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 11 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 12 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 13 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 14 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 15 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 16 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 1 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 2 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 3 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 4 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 7 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy

Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 2 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 3 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 4 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 8 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 9 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 10 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 11 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 12 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 13 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 14 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 15 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 16 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 1 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 2 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 3 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 4 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekend	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Late spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 7 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 8 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy

Eastside City Park (UK)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 2 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 3 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 4 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 5 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 6 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 8 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 9 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 10 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 11 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 12 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 13 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 14 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 15 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 16 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 1 - stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 2 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 3 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 4 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 8 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Cool and cloudy

GMV (UK)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 2 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 3 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 4 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 5 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 6 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 1 - stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 2 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Late spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 3 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 4 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekend	Late spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 5 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early summer	Warm and sunny

Millennium Park (US)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 2 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and cloudy
Observation 3 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 4 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 5 – mobile	5pm-8pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 7 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 8 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 9 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 10 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 11 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 12 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 13 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 14 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 15 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 16 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 1 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 2 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Cool and cloudy
Observation 3 - stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 4 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 5 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 6 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 7 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 8 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy

Seward Park (US)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 2 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 3 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 4 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 8 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 9 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 10 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 11 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 12 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 13 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and cloudy
Observation 14 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and cloudy
Observation 15 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and rainy
Observation 16 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and rainy
Observation 17 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 18 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 1 - stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 2 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 3 - stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 4 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 5 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and cloudy
Observation 6 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and cloudy
Observation 7 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and rainy
Observation 8 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and rainy
Observation 9 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and sunny
Observation 10 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and sunny

Canal Park (US)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 2 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 3 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 4 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 5 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 6 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 7 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 8 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 9 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 10 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 11 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 12 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 13 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and sunny
Observation 14 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and sunny
Observation 15 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 16 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 17 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and sunny
Observation 1 - stationary	8am-11am	Weekend	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 2 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and sunny
Observation 3 - stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 4 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 5 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and cloudy
Observation 6 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 8 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 9 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and sunny
Observation 10 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and sunny

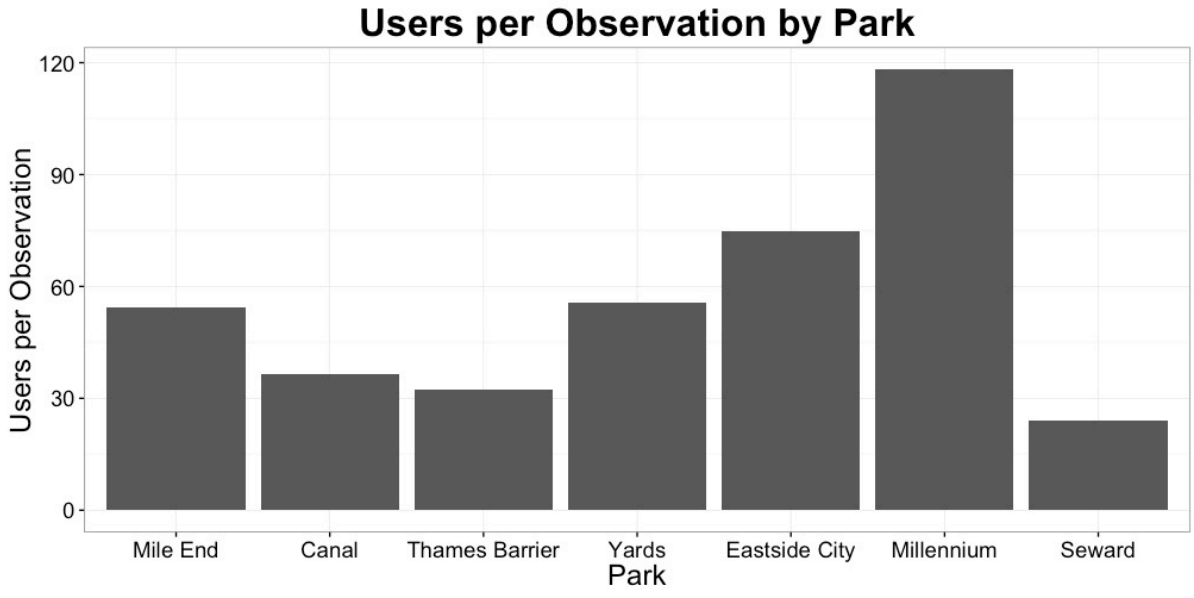
Yards Park (US)	Time	Day	Season	Weather
Observation 1 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and sunny
Observation 2 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and sunny
Observation 3 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 4 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 6 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 7 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 8 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 9 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 10 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 11 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 12 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 13 – mobile	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and cloudy
Observation 14 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and sunny
Observation 15 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and sunny
Observation 16 – mobile	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and sunny
Observation 17 – mobile	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and sunny
Observation 1 - stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and sunny
Observation 2 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Mid summer	Hot and sunny
Observation 3 - stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 4 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekday	Mid summer	Warm and sunny
Observation 5 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 6 – stationary	8am-11am	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and rainy
Observation 7 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Warm and cloudy
Observation 8 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekday	Early spring	Cool and sunny
Observation 9 – stationary	11am-2pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and sunny
Observation 10 – stationary	2pm-5pm	Weekend	Early spring	Hot and sunny

1.2 Bargraphs for all Case Study Sites

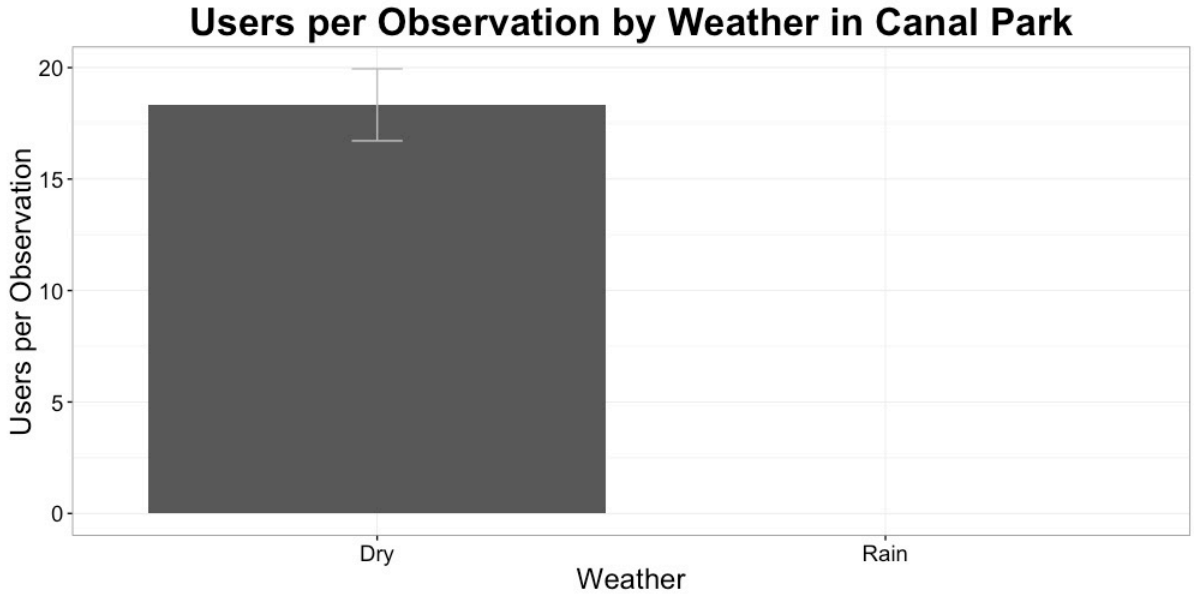
The following bargraphs reproduce the figures in the text, as well as additional bargraphs that provide additional context for the figures included in the text. The figure numbers included here are a reference to the labelling of figures in the text. For convenience, below is a list of the pages where the figures can be found.

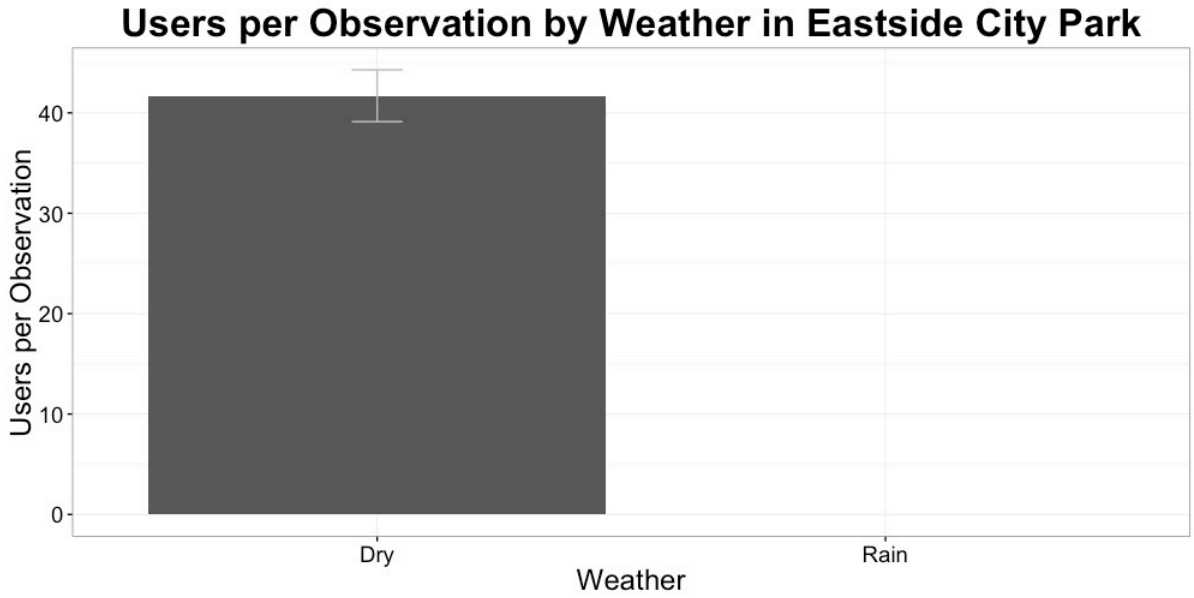
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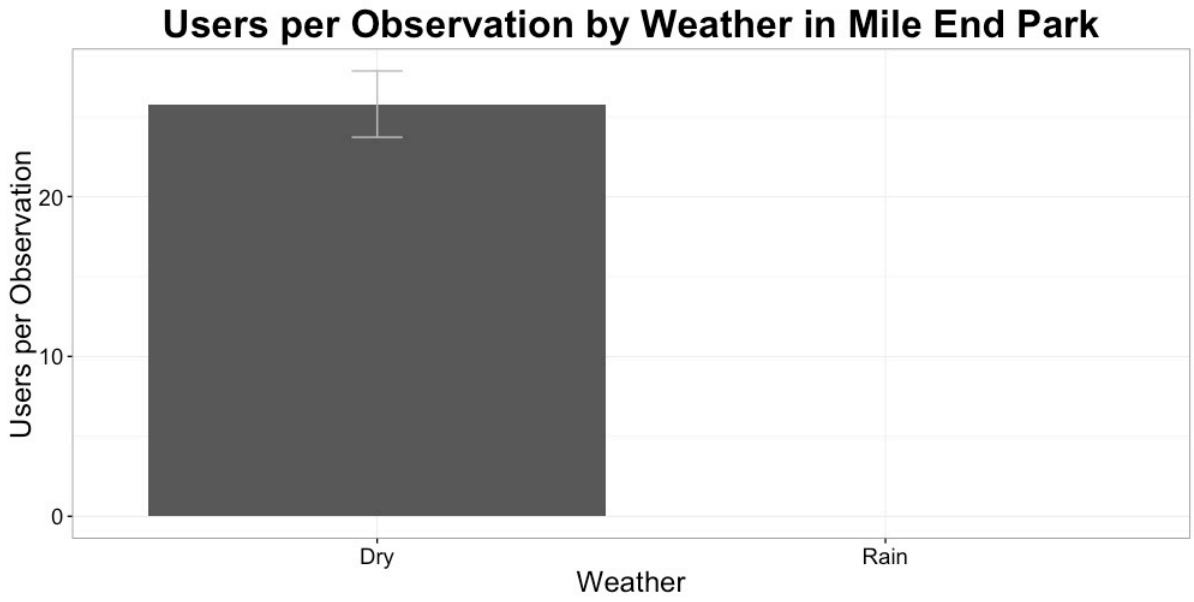
Figure 7.1 – Number of users per observation

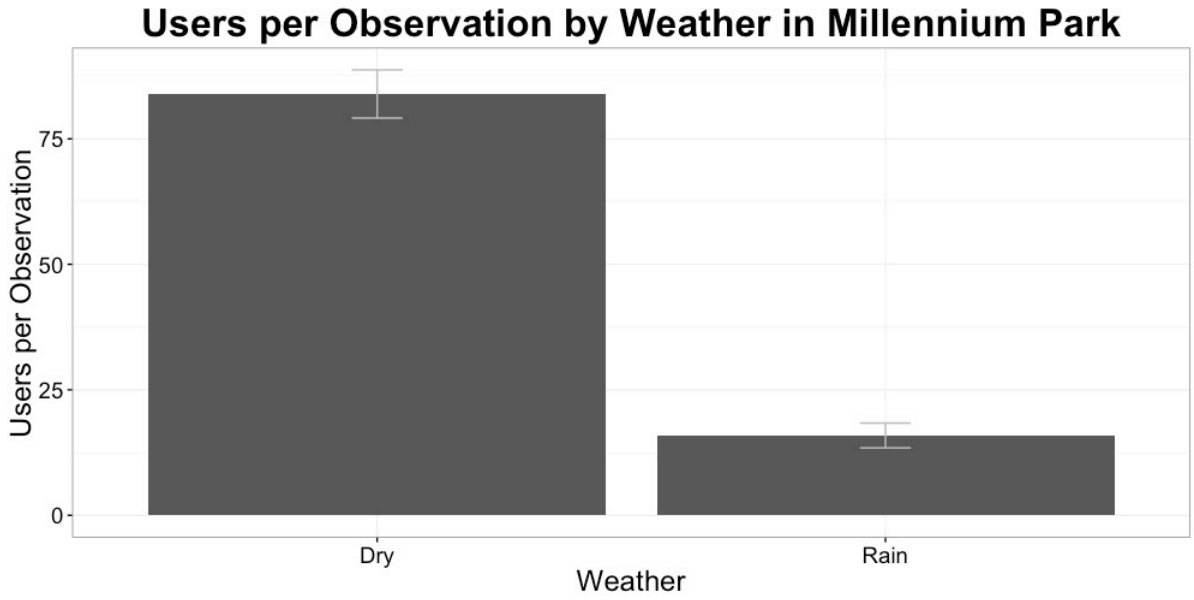


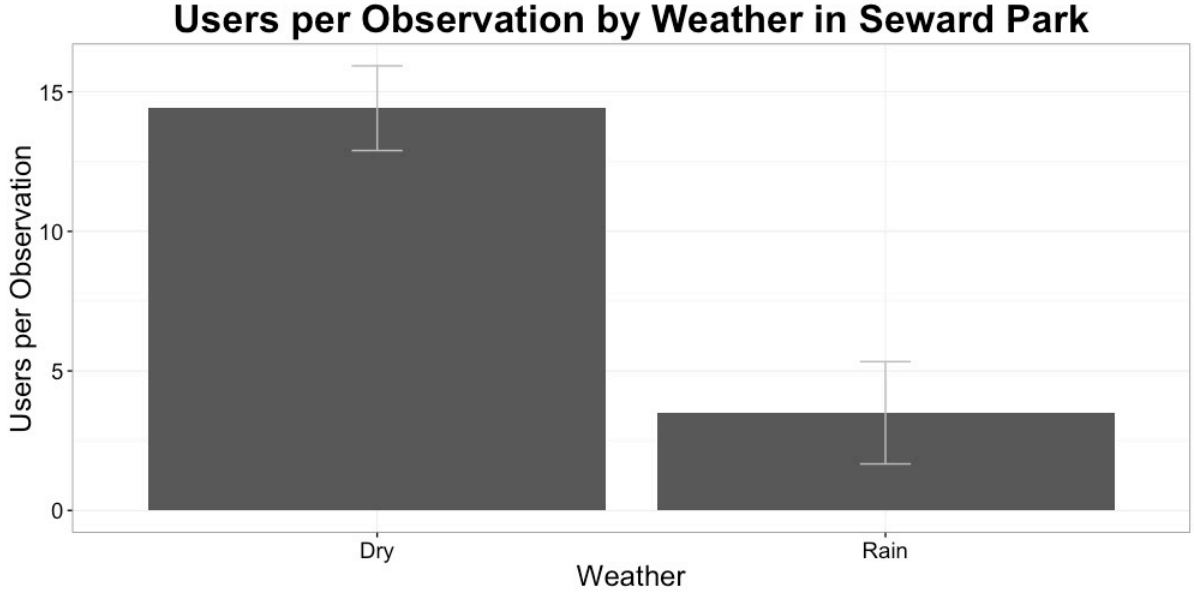
Figures 7.2 – Users per observation by weather for each of the case study parks

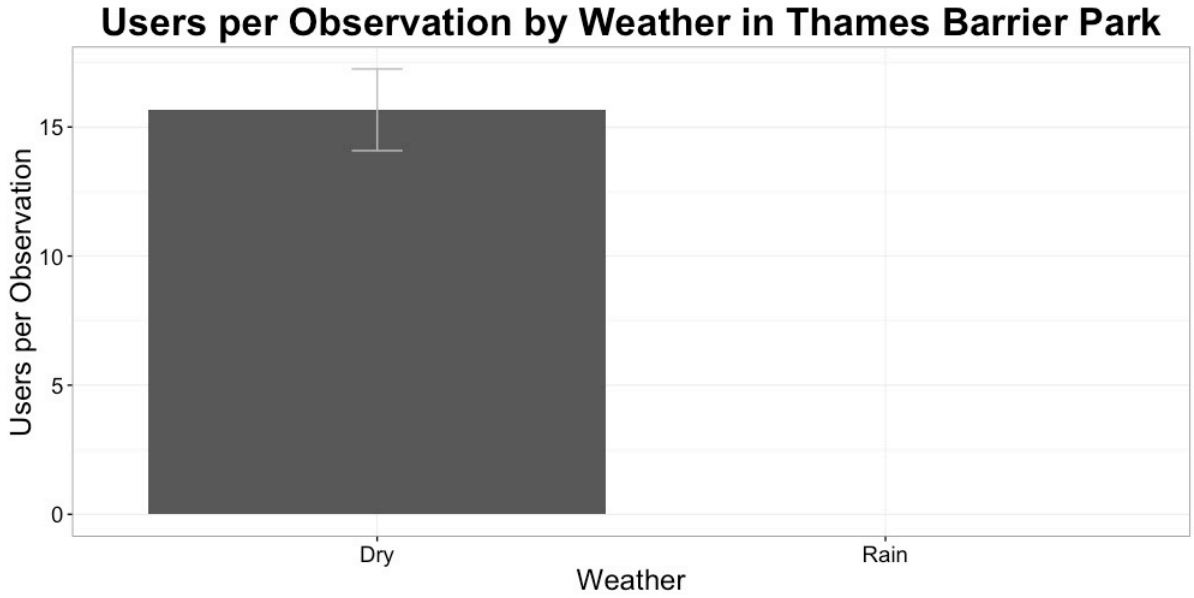


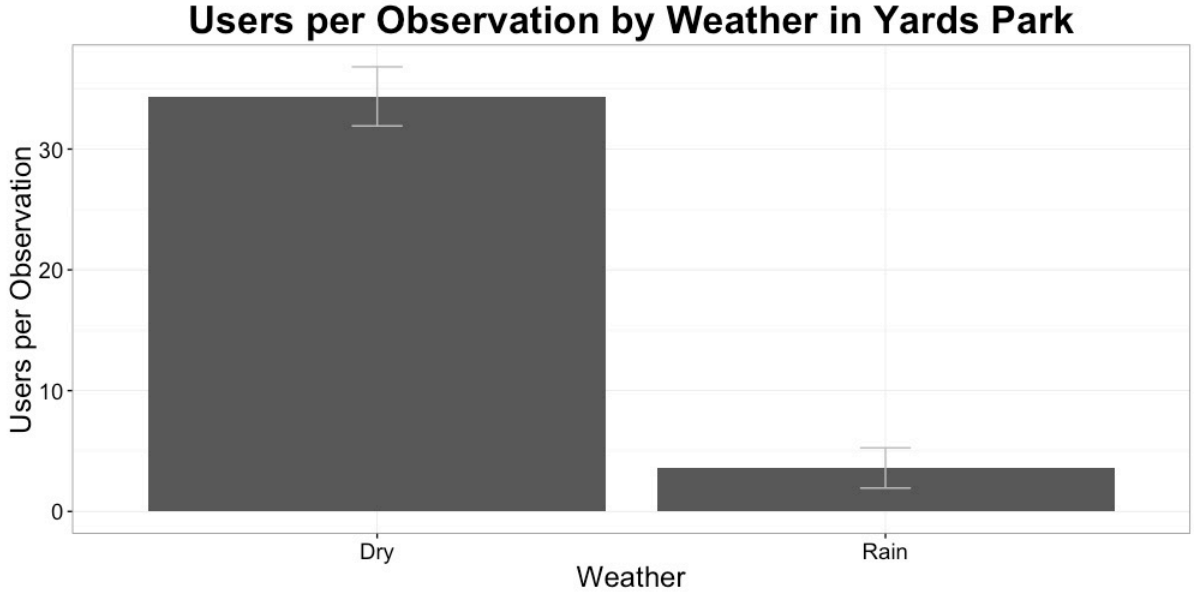



Users per Observation by Weather in Mile End Park
Users per Observation
20
10
0
Dry
Rain
Weather

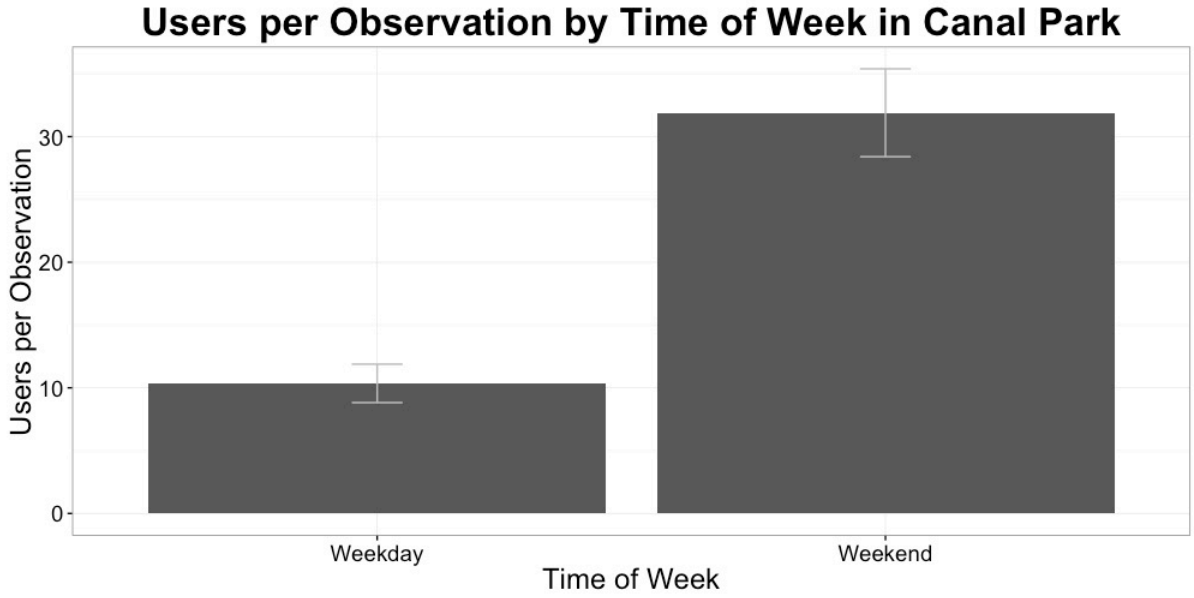

Users per Observation by Weather in Millennium Park
Users per Observation
75
50
25
0
Dry
Rain
Weather

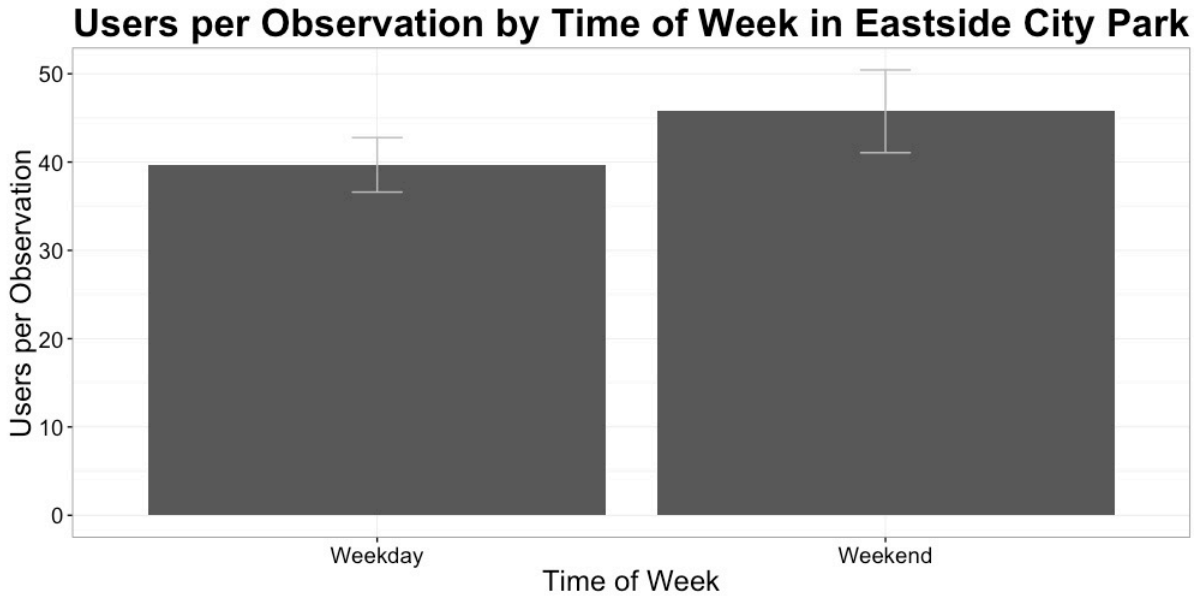

Users per Observation by Weather in Seward Park
Users per Observation
15
10
5
0
Dry
Rain
Weather

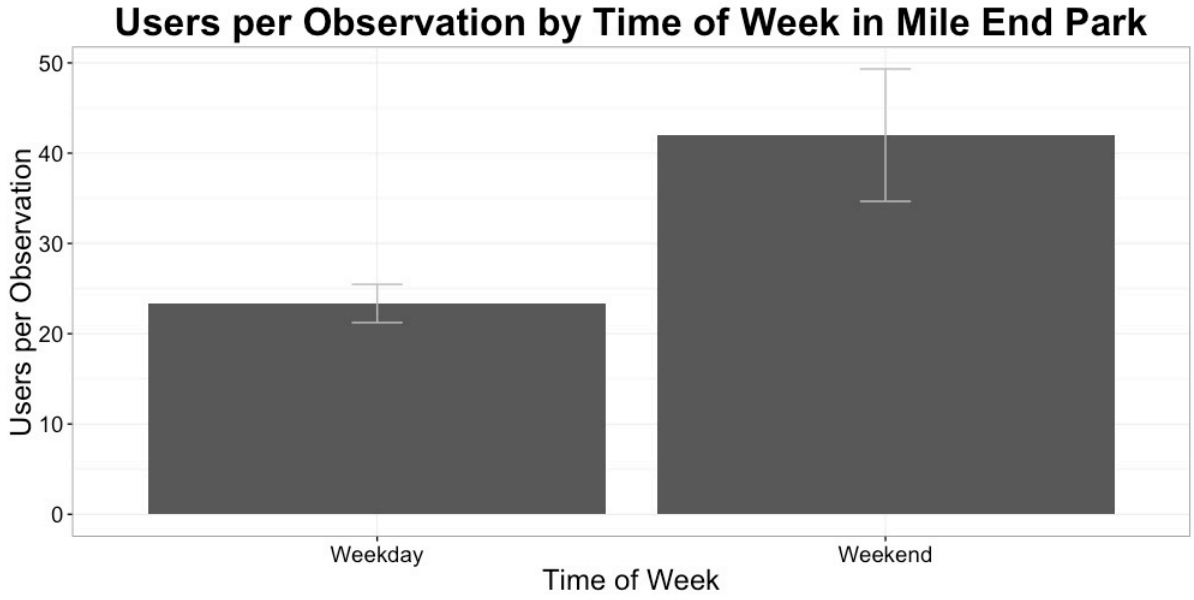

Users per Observation by Weather in Thames Barrier Park
Users per Observation
15
10
5
0
Dry
Rain
Weather

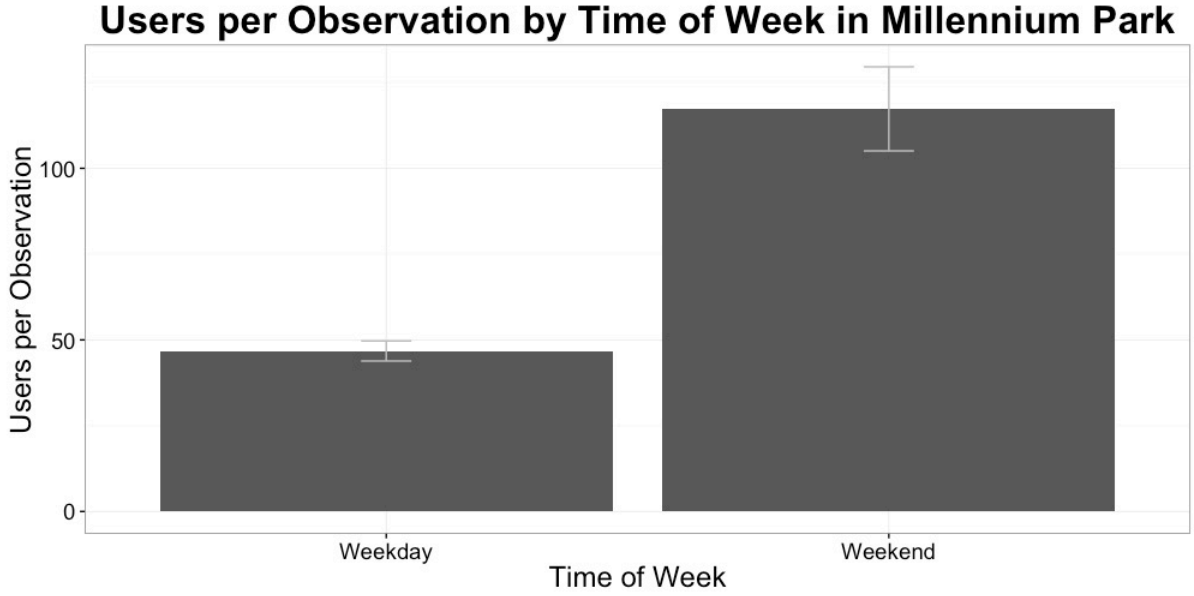

Users per Observation by Weather in Yards Park
Users per Observation
30
20
10
0
Dry
Rain
Weather

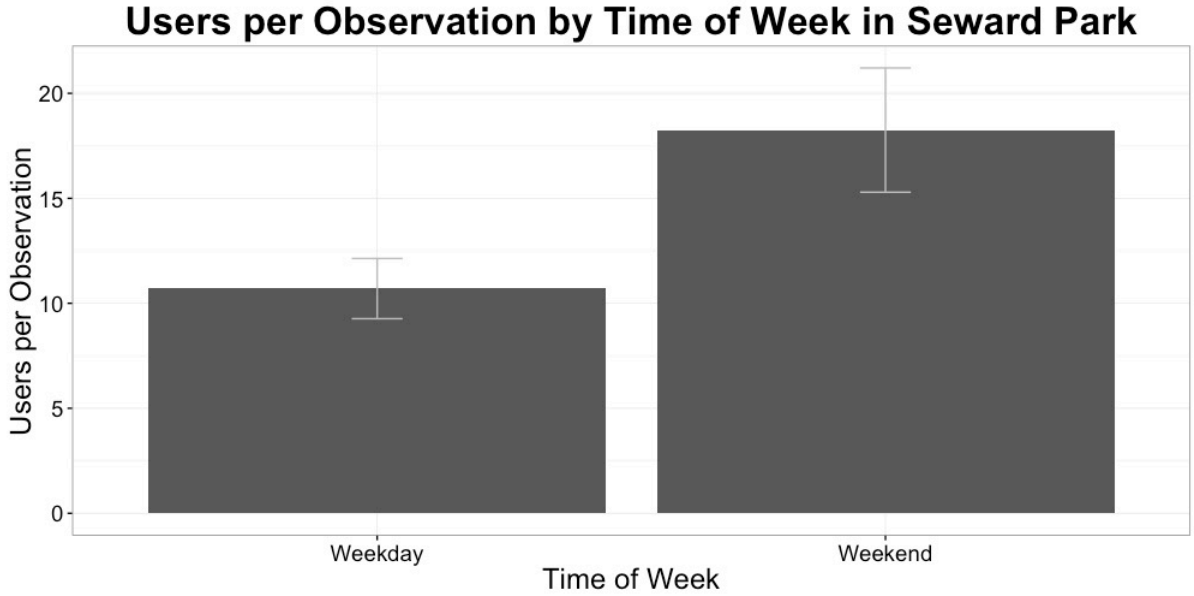
Figures 7.3 – Users per observation by time of the week for each of the case study parks

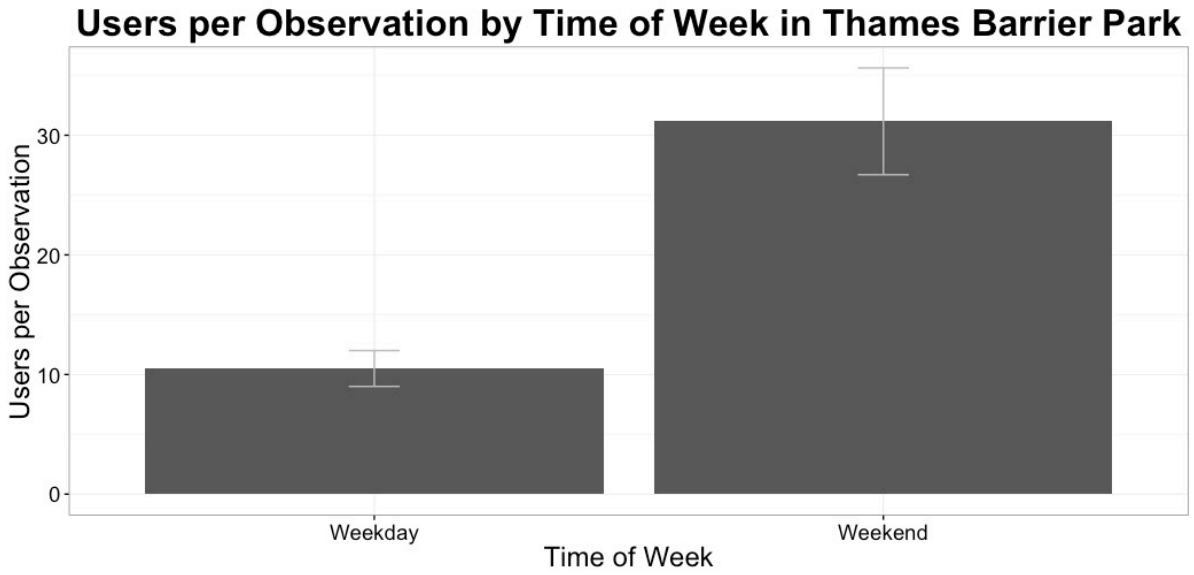





Users per Observation by Time of Week in Mile End Park
Users per Observation
50
40
30
20
10
0
Weekday
Weekend
Time of Week


Users per Observation by Time of Week in Millennium Park
Users per Observation
100
50
0
Weekday
Weekend
Time of Week


Users per Observation by Time of Week in Seward Park
Users per Observation
20
15
10
5
0
Weekday
Weekend
Time of Week


Users per Observation by Time of Week in Thames Barrier Park
Users per Observation
0
10
20
30
Weekday
Weekend
Time of Week

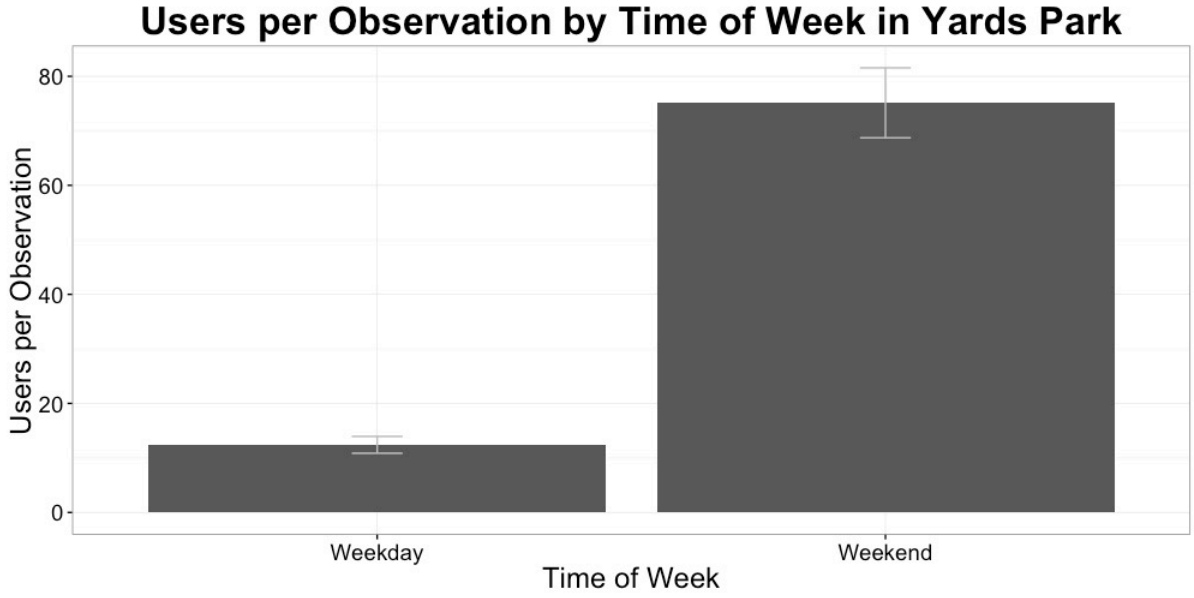

Users per Observation by Time of Week in Yards Park
Users per Observation
0
20
40
60
80
Weekday
Weekend
Time of Week

Figure 7.4 – Racial composition of park users compared to the surrounding community

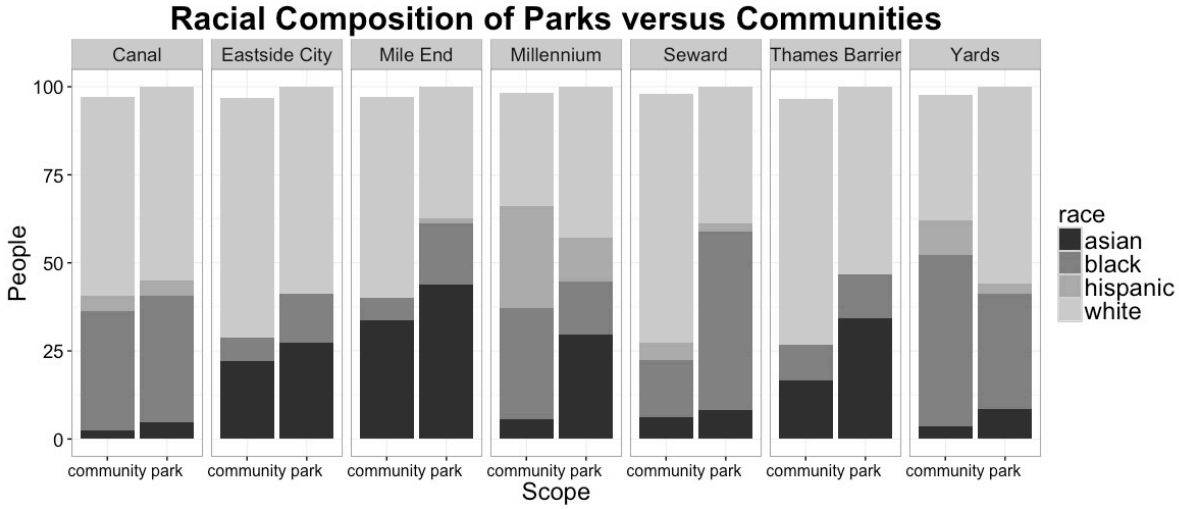


Figure 7.5 – Percentage of park users who are female

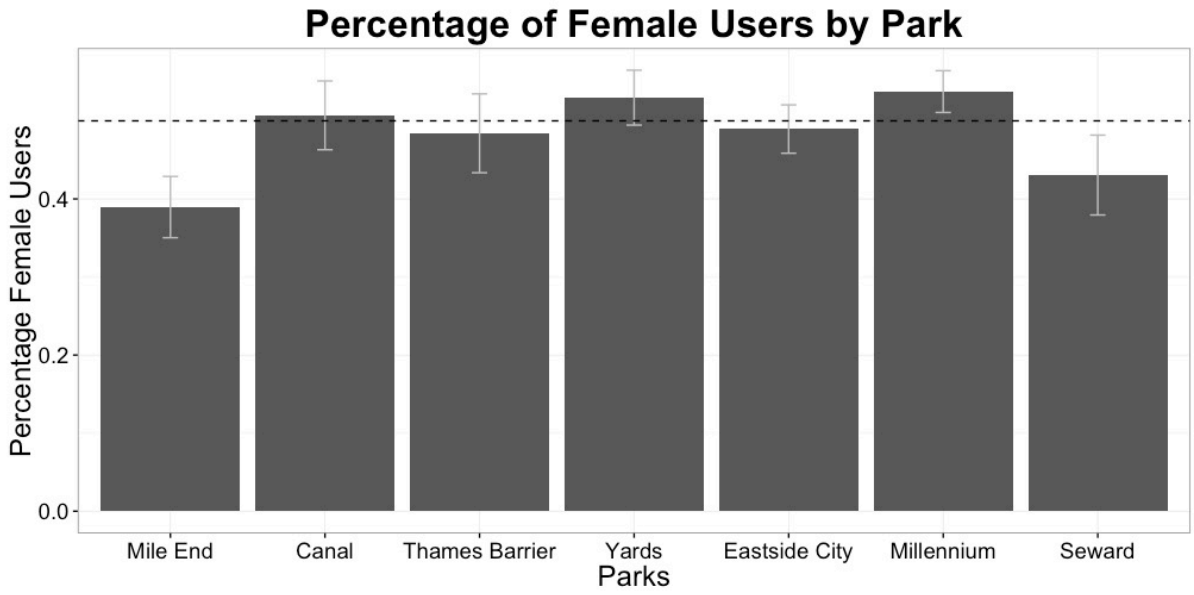


Figure 7.6 – Percentage of adult park user who are females

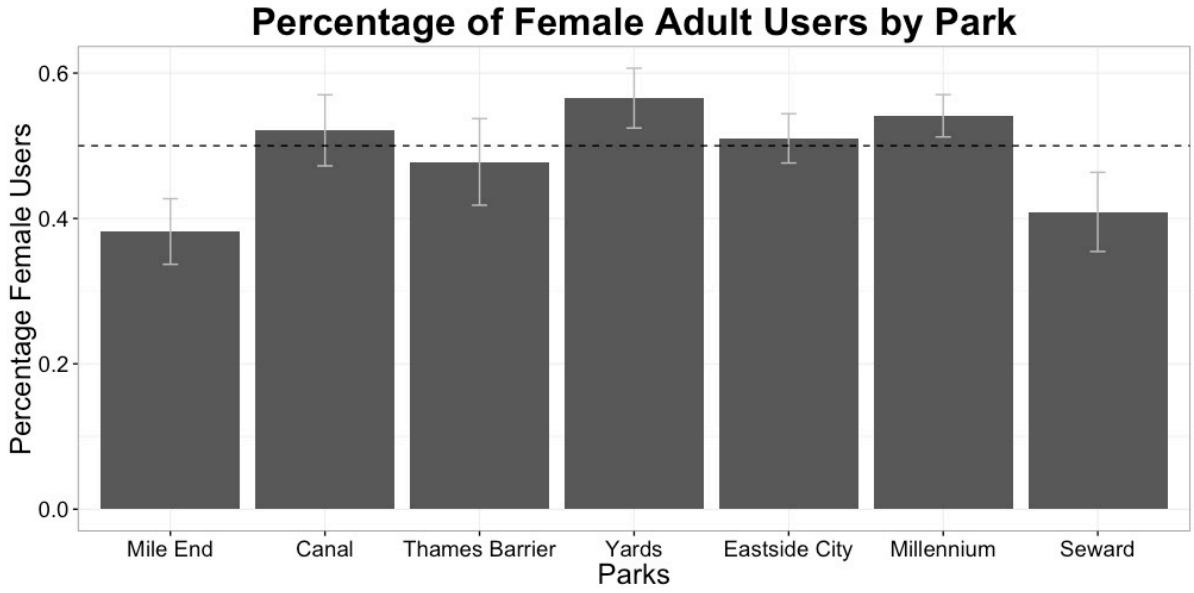
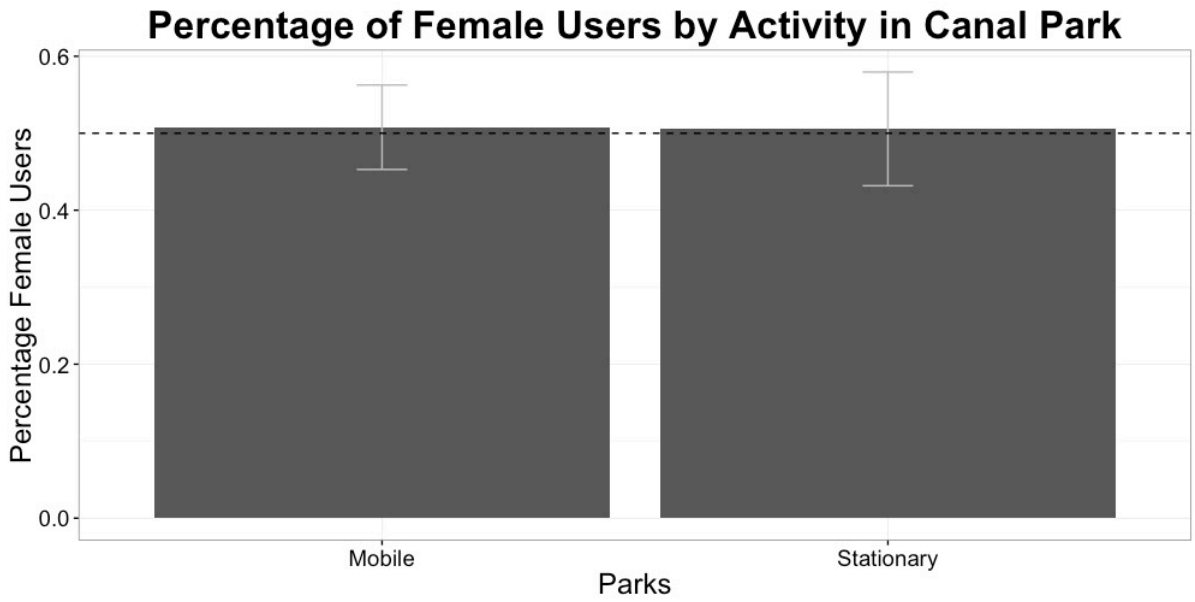
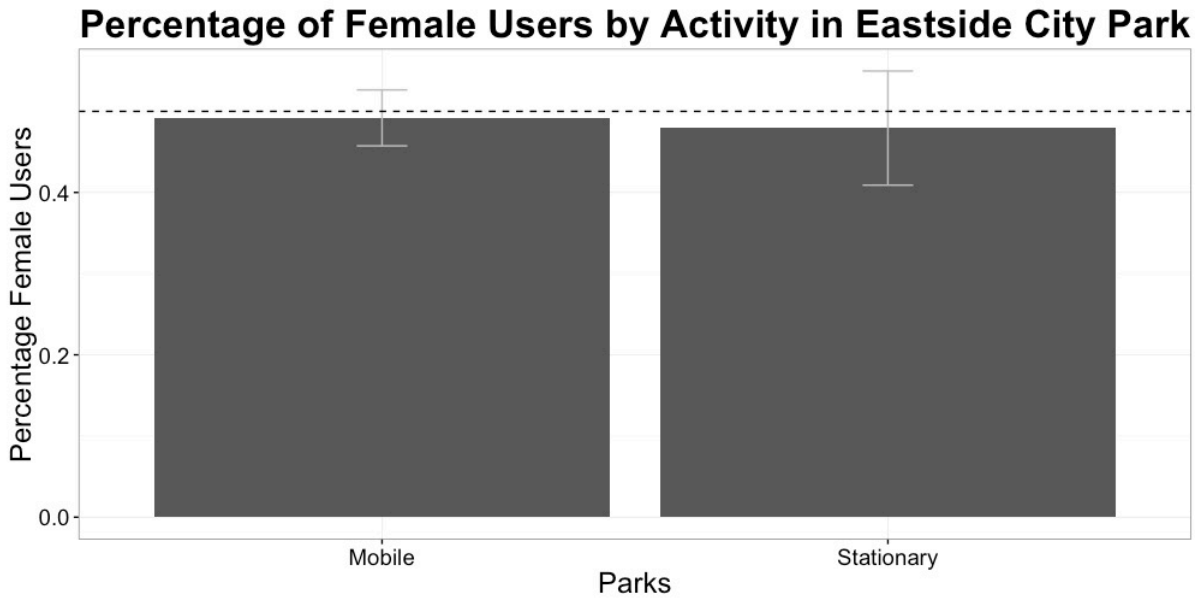
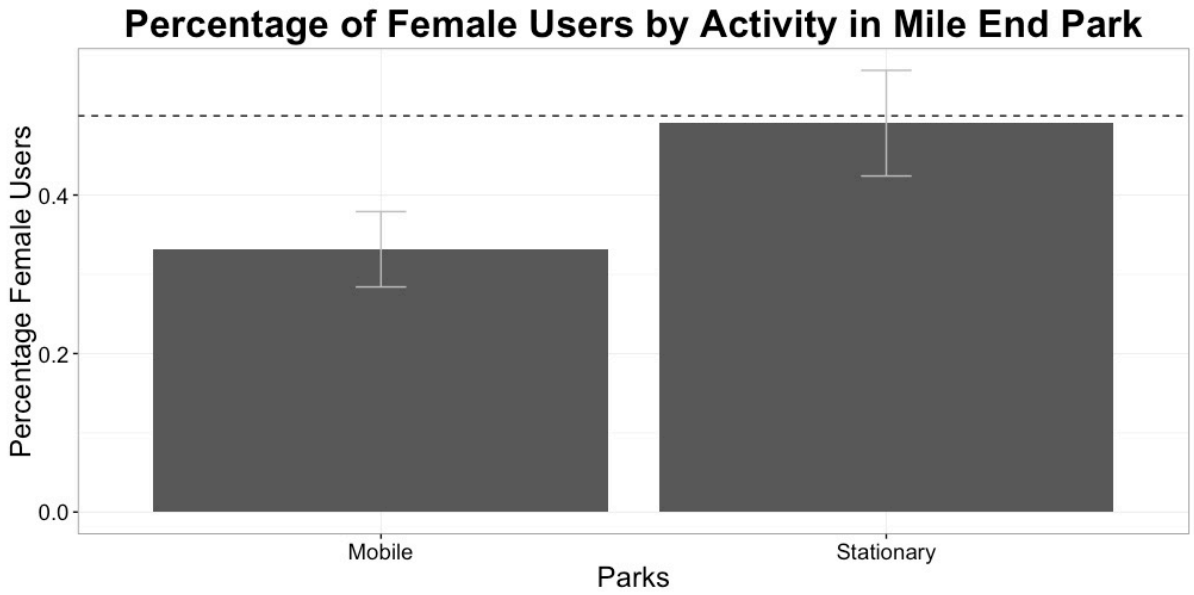
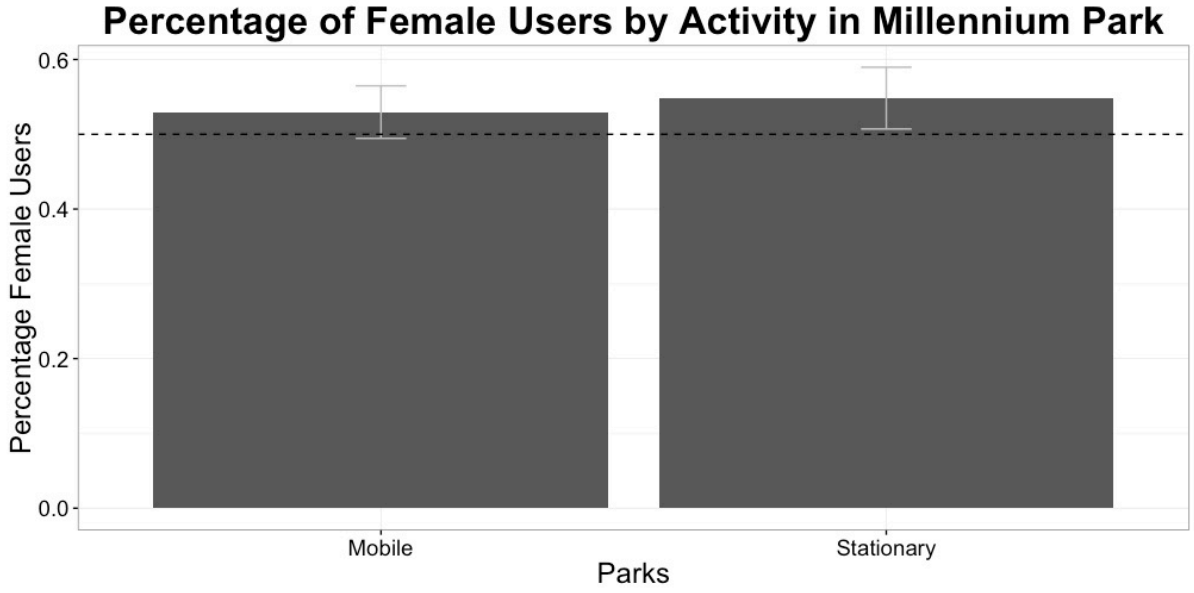


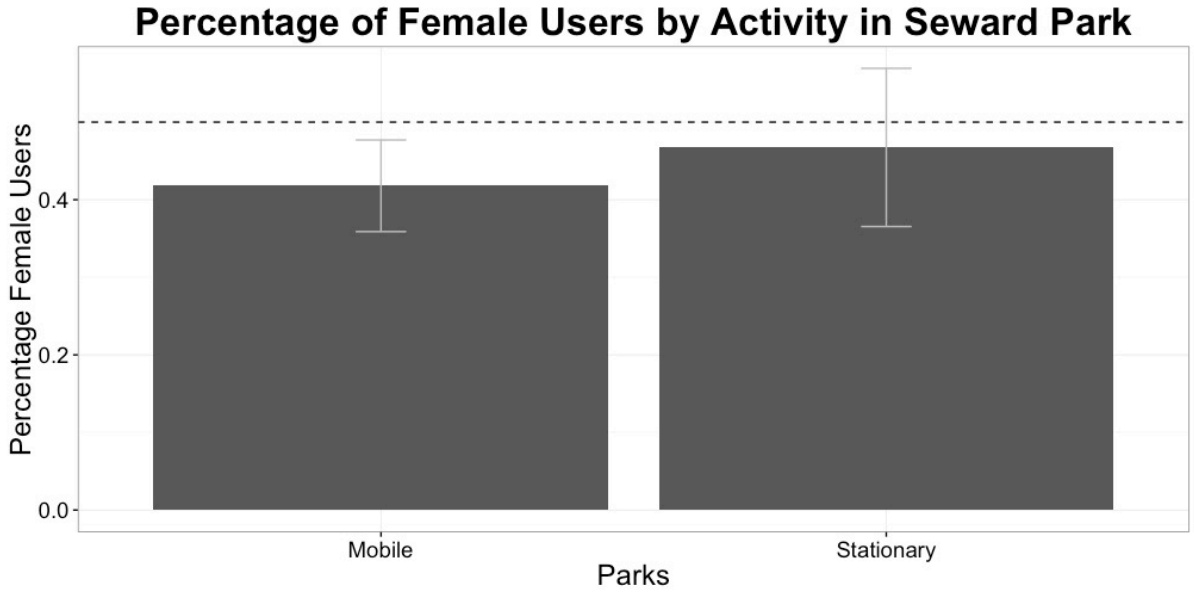
Figure 7.7 and Figure 7.11– Comparing the percentage of users who were mobile and female with those who were stationary and females for each of the case study parks

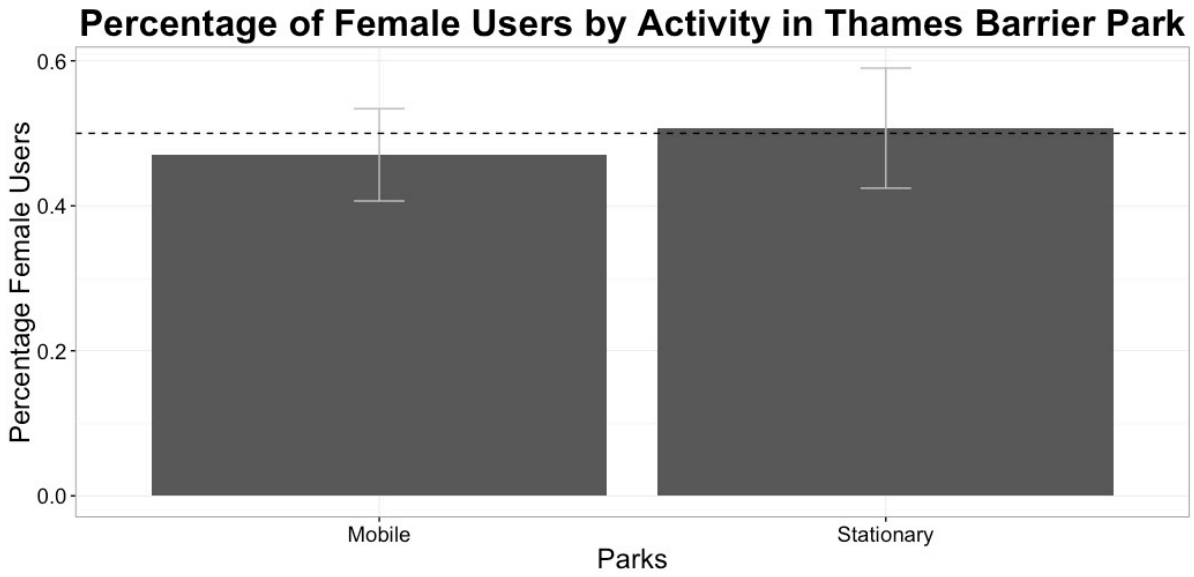





Percentage of Female Users by Activity in Mile End Park
Percentage Female Users
0.0
0.2
0.4
Mobile
Stationary
Parks


Percentage of Female Users by Activity in Millennium Park
Percentage Female Users
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
Mobile
Stationary
Parks


Percentage of Female Users by Activity in Seward Park
Percentage Female Users
0.0
0.2
0.4
Mobile
Stationary
Parks


Percentage of Female Users by Activity in Thames Barrier Park
Percentage Female Users
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
Mobile
Stationary
Parks

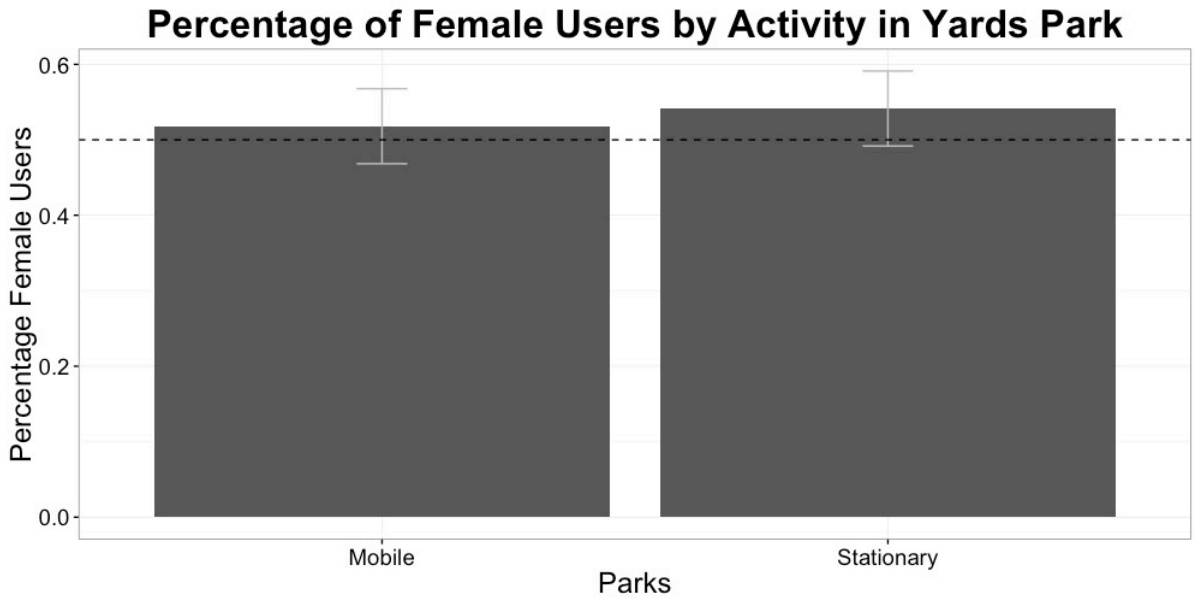
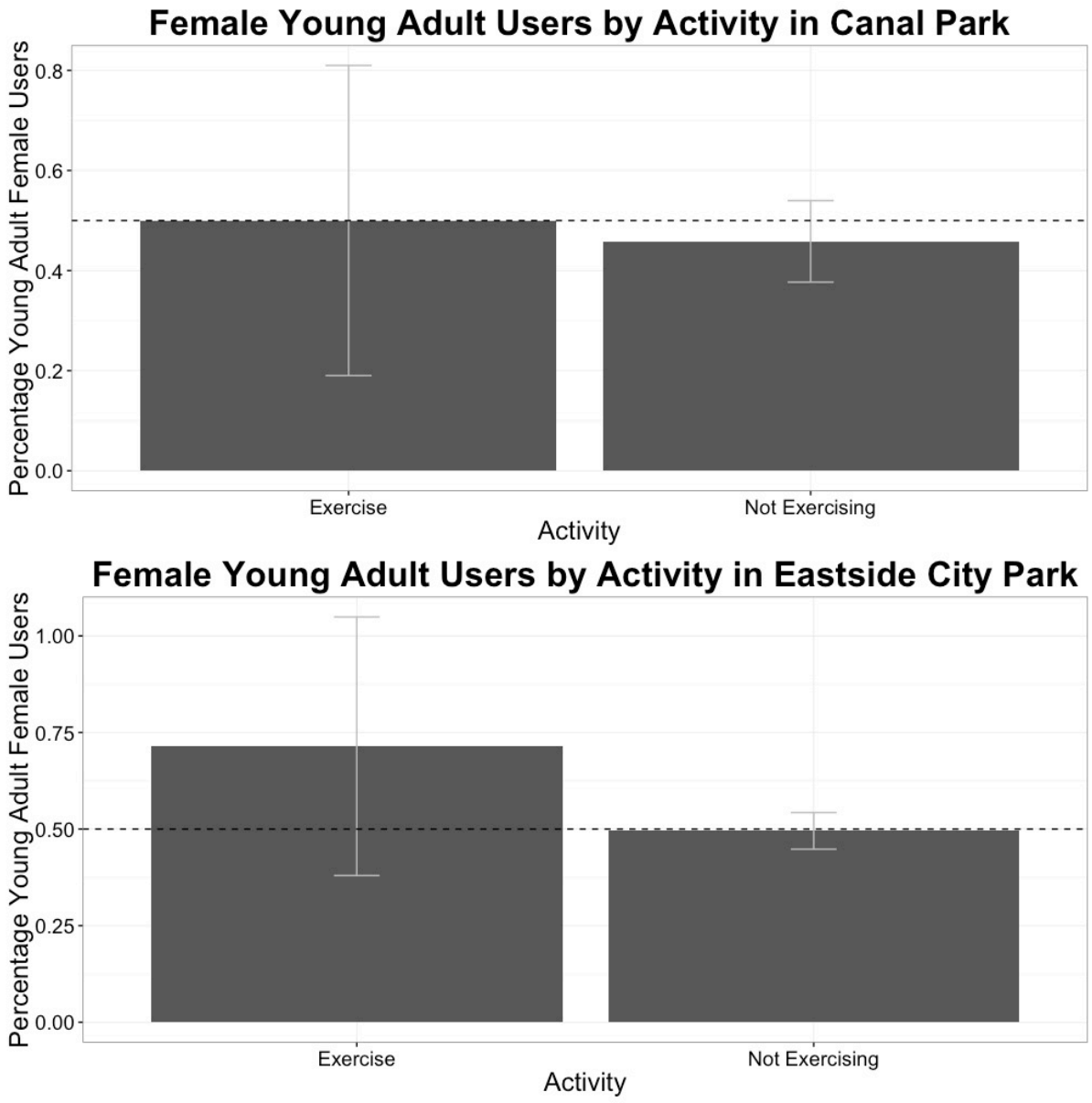
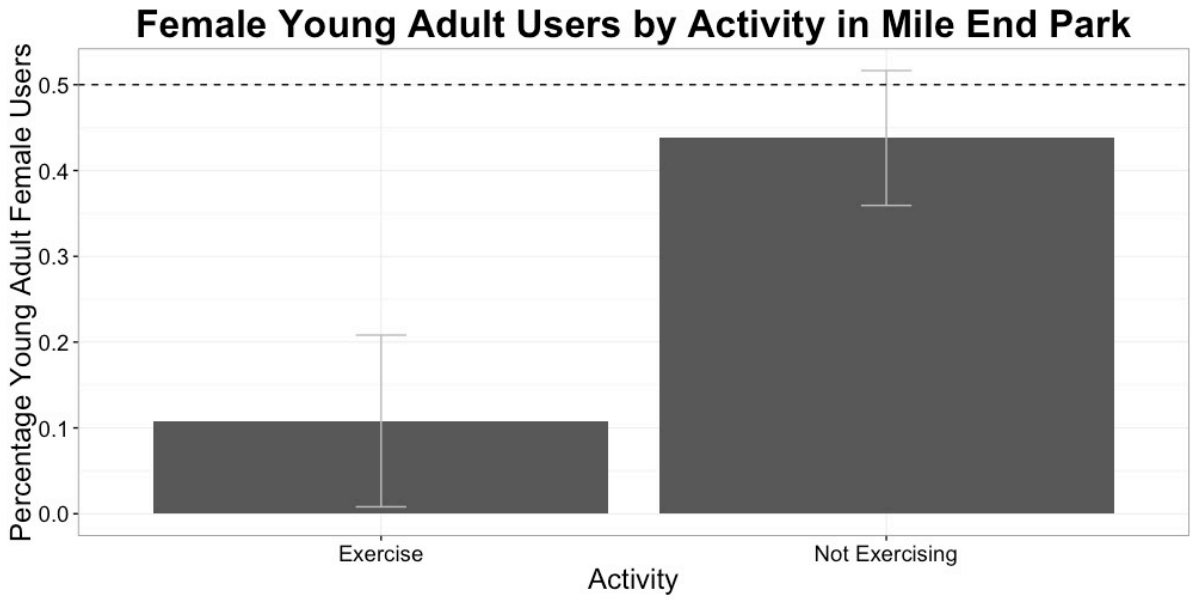
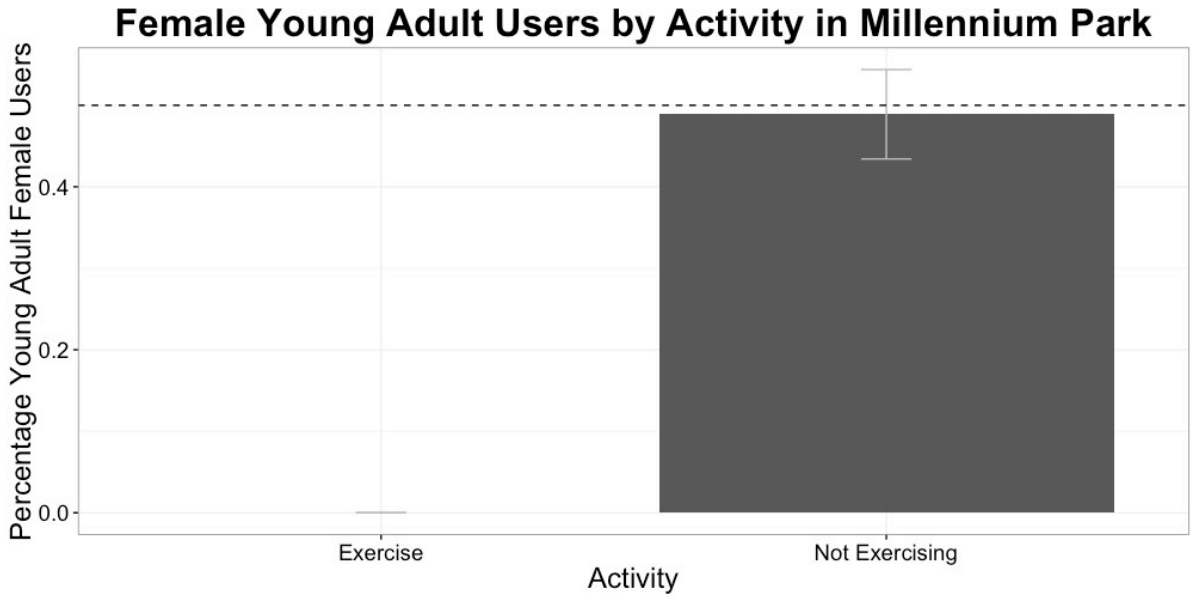
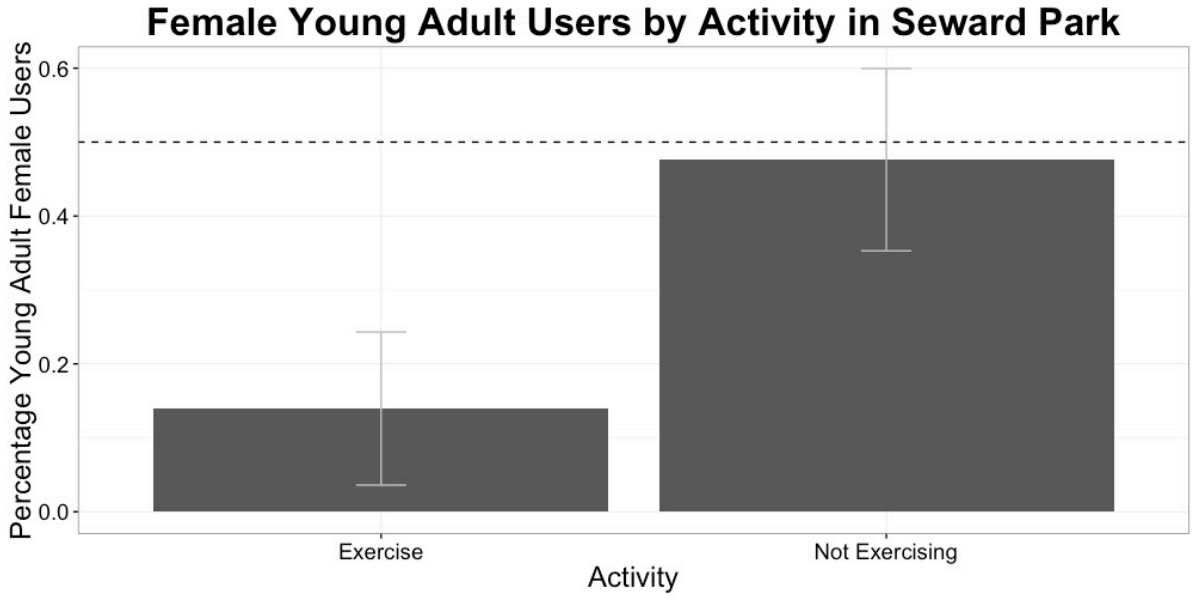

Percentage of Female Users by Activity in Yards Park
Percentage Female Users
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
Mobile
Stationary
Parks

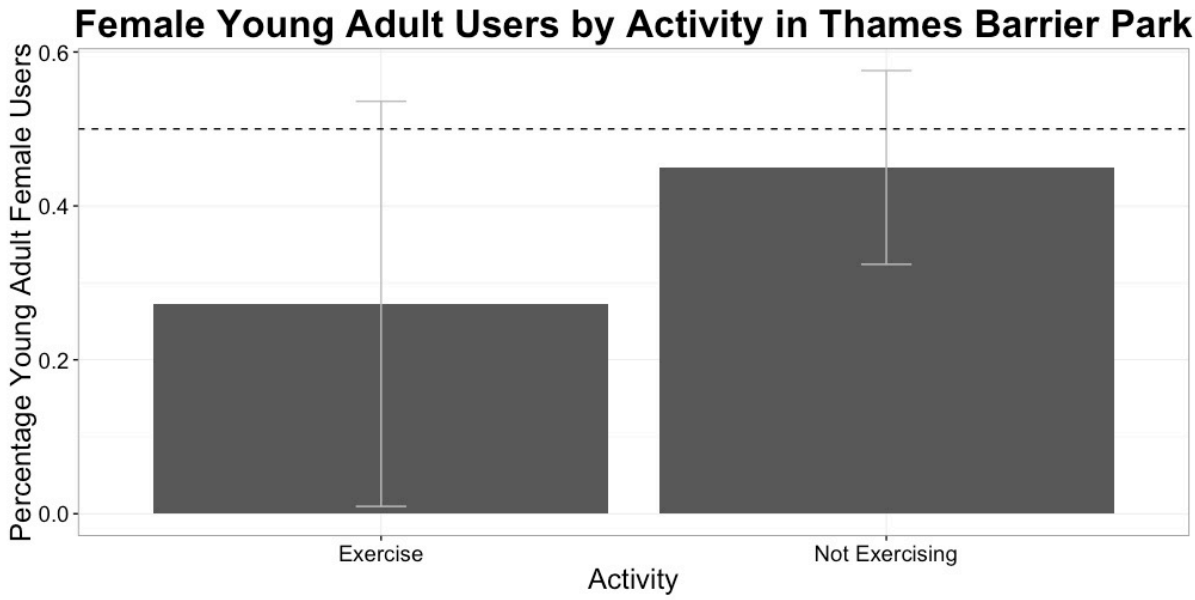
Figure 7.8 - Percentage of young adult users who were exercising who were female and who were not exercising who were female at each case study park




Female Young Adult Users by Activity in Mile End Park
Percentage Young Adult Female Users
0.5
0.4
0.3
0.2
0.1
0.0
Exercise
Not Exercising
Activity


Female Young Adult Users by Activity in Millennium Park
Percentage Young Adult Female Users
0.4
0.2
0.0
Exercise
Not Exercising
Activity


Female Young Adult Users by Activity in Seward Park
Percentage Young Adult Female Users
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
Exercise
Not Exercising
Activity


Female Young Adult Users by Activity in Thames Barrier Park
Percentage Young Adult Female Users
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
Exercise
Not Exercising
Activity

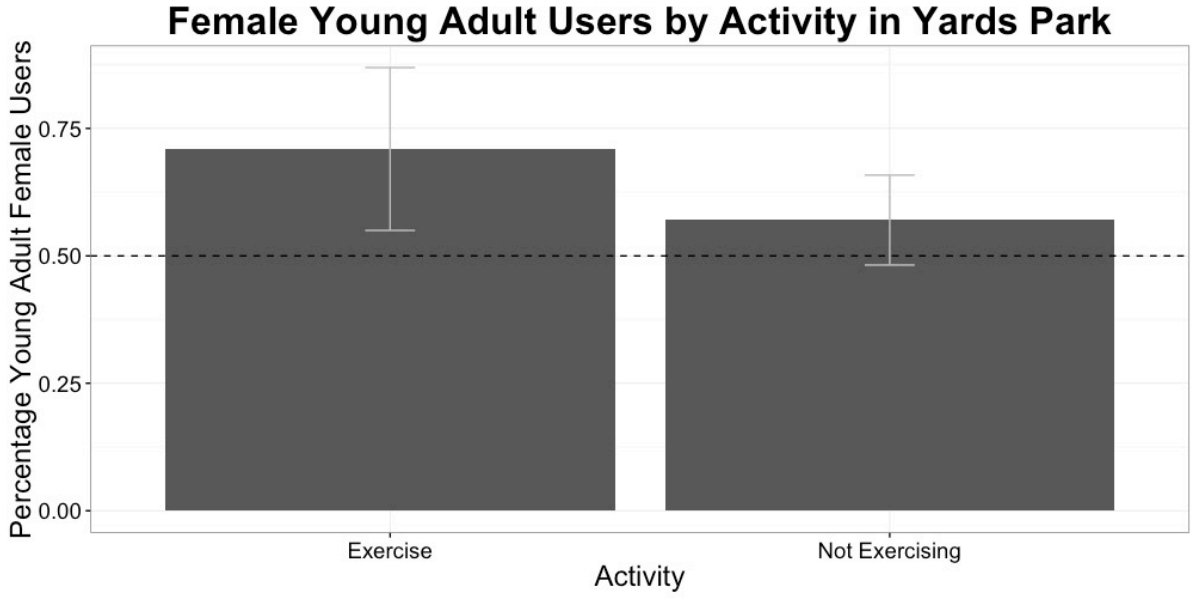
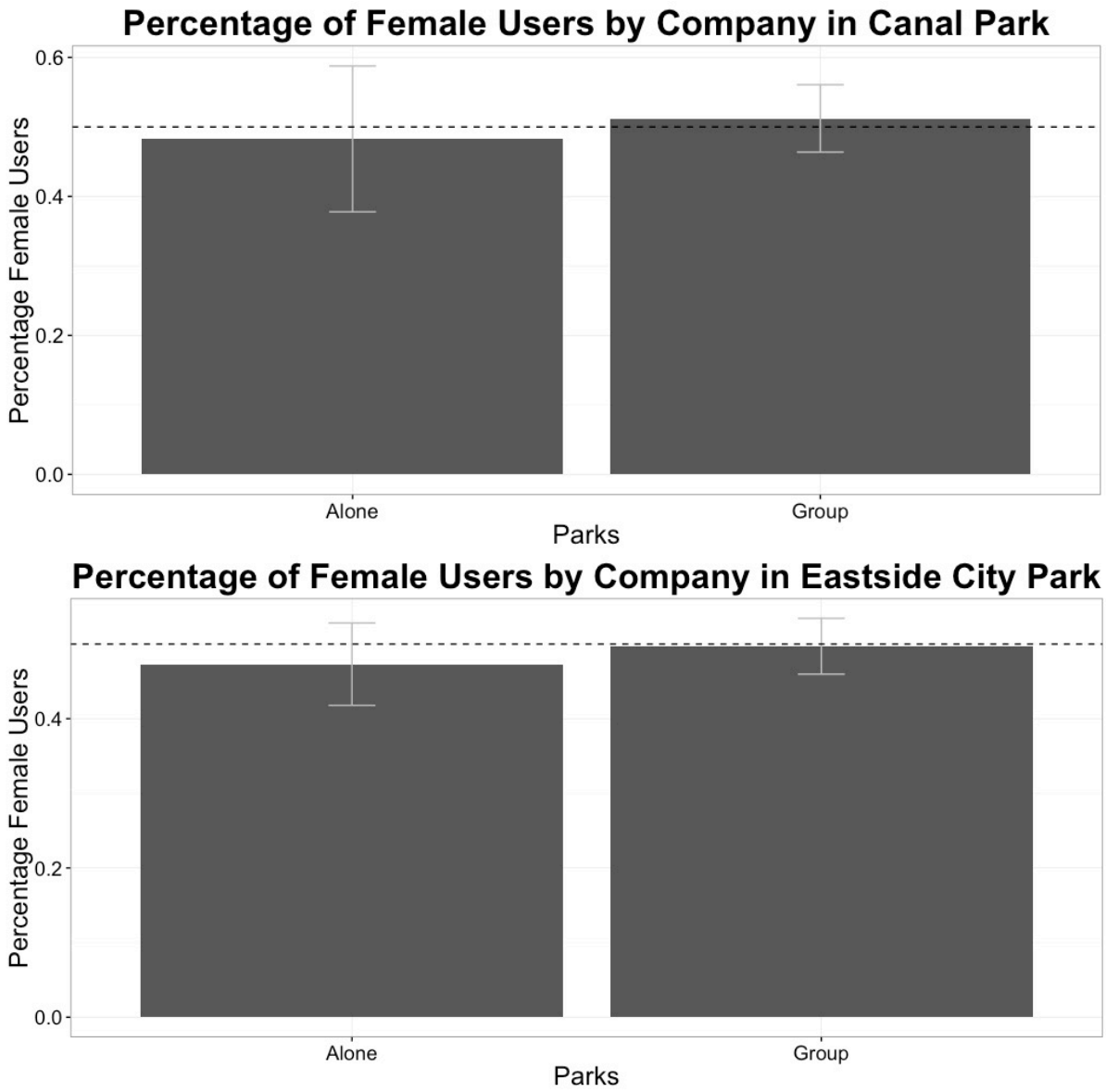
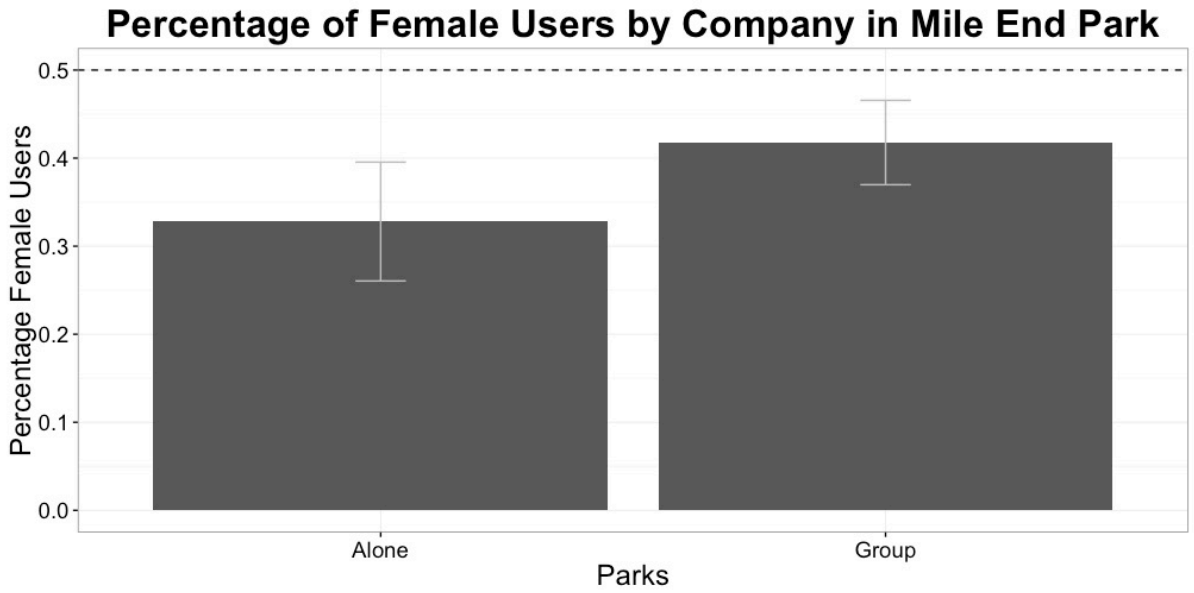
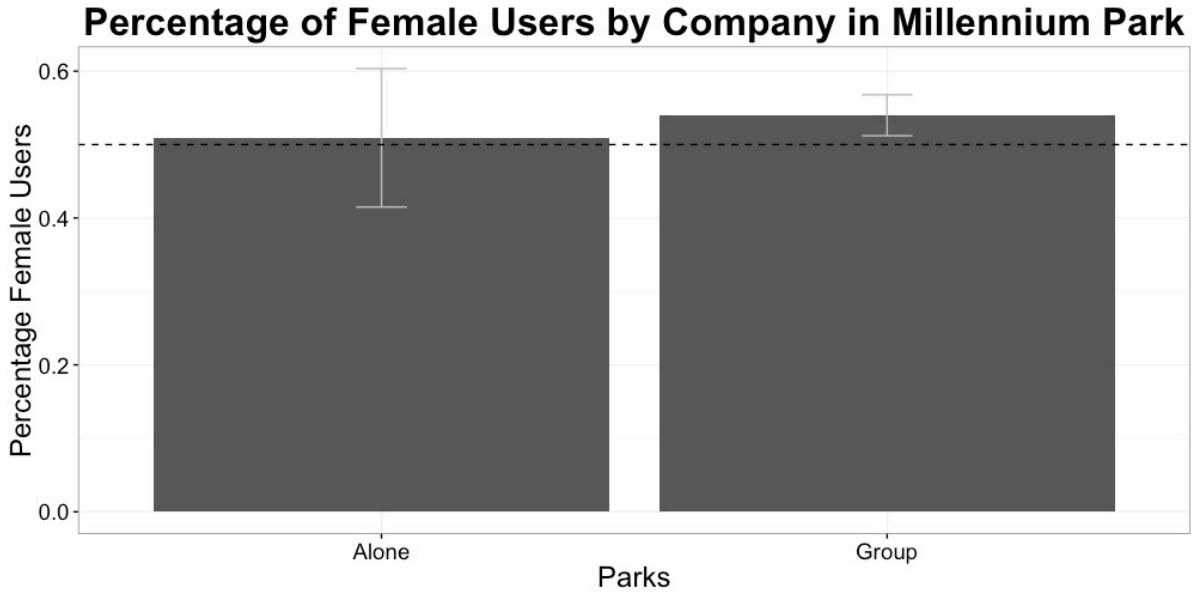
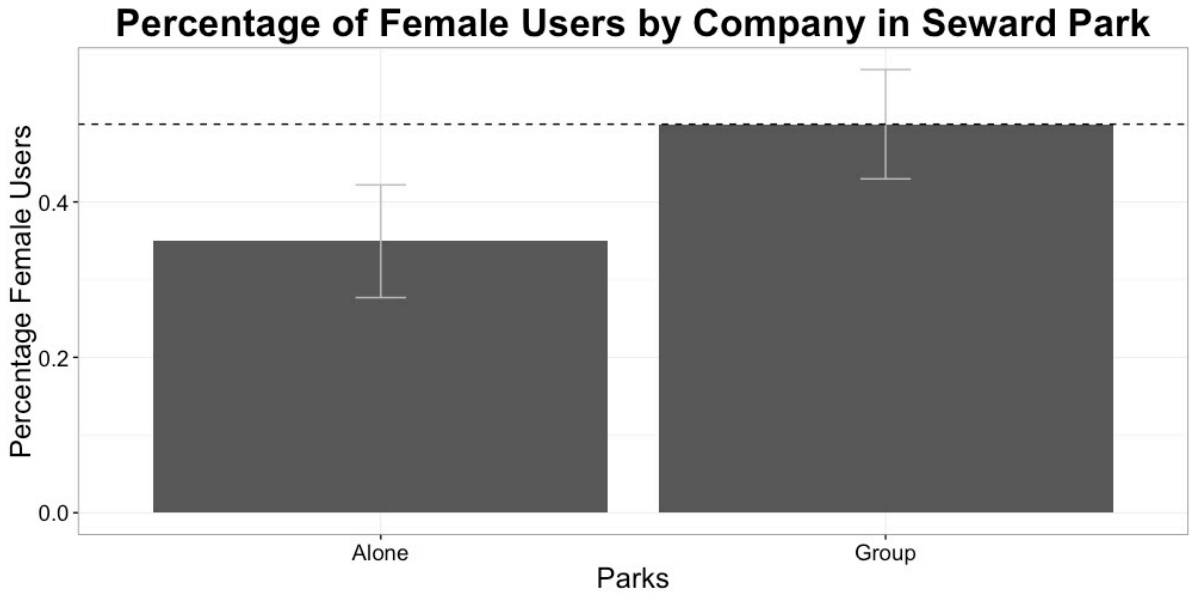

Female Young Adult Users by Activity in Yards Park
Percentage Young Adult Female Users
0.75
0.50
0.25
0.00
Exercise
Not Exercising
Activity

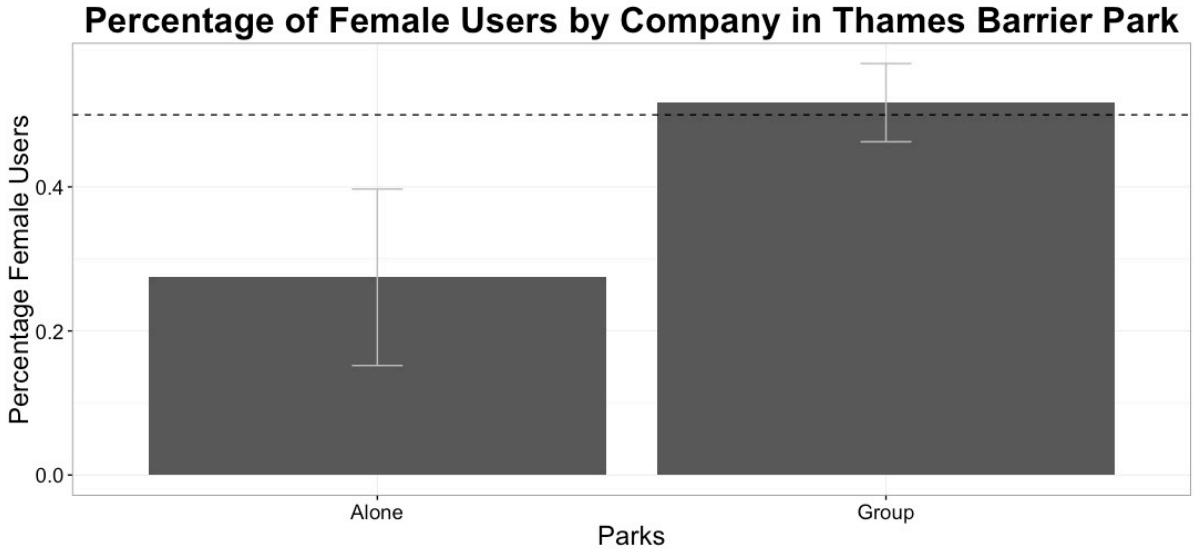
Figure 7.9 and Figure 7.10 – Percentage of lone users who were female and percent of users in a group who were female for each of the case study parks




Percentage of Female Users by Company in Mile End Park
Percentage Female Users
0.5
0.4
0.3
0.2
0.1
0.0
Alone
Group
Parks


Percentage of Female Users by Company in Millennium Park
Percentage Female Users
0.6
0.4
0.2
0.0
Alone
Group
Parks


Percentage of Female Users by Company in Seward Park
Percentage Female Users
0.4
0.2
0.0
Alone
Group
Parks


Percentage of Female Users by Company in Thames Barrier Park
Percentage Female Users
0.0
0.2
0.4
Alone
Group
Parks

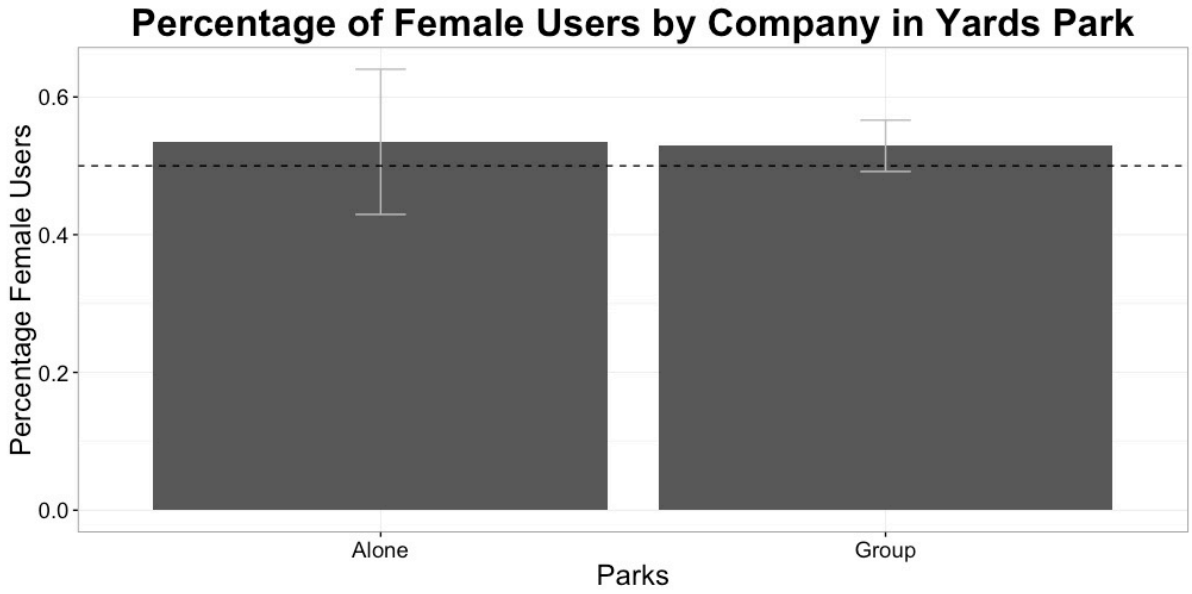
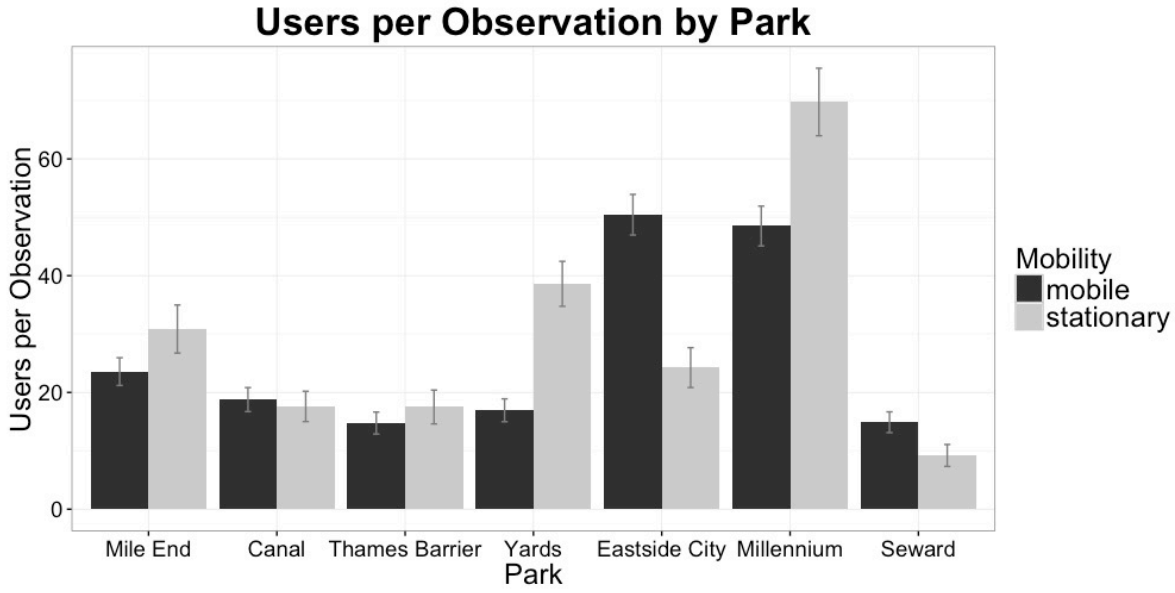

Percentage of Female Users by Company in Yards Park
Percentage Female Users
0.0
0.2
0.4
0.6
Alone
Group
Parks

Figure 7.12 – Users per observation by park divided by stationary and mobile observations



1.3 Images of Case Study Sites

The following images are larger reproductions of what is found in the text. All photography credit goes to the researcher unless noted otherwise in the text. For convenience, below is a list of the pages where the images can be found.

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Image 4.1 – Gustave Doré's 1872 depiction of regeneration efforts in London's Devil's Acre,



Image 6.1 – At most entrances to Mile End Park, green structures welcome and orient users.



Image 6.2 – The tunnels in Mile End Park are well-lit and well-maintained.



Image 6.3 – Art and features of Mile End Park that may be targeted to attract certain groups of users.









Image 6.4 – Eastside City Park curves through city blocks, combining several different plots of land (map courtesy of Patel Taylor, an architectural practice).



Image 6.5 – The main piece of public art in Eastside City Park is made up of four illuminated pillars with a leaf pattern cut into the metal, depicted in the top photo (photo courtesy of Patel Taylor). In several locations in the park, there are bushes and trees pruned into geometric shapes (photo courtesy of Timothy Soar) and there are traditional benches that face each other, allowing for conversations.







Image 6.6 - Three benches, located at the star on the map, have their backs to the path and look out at an open field.



Image 6.7 – The park entrance from the Docklands Light Railway stop.



Image 6.8 – On many of the paths in Millennium Park there are ledges along the side that double as benches and dividers.



Image 6.9 – The fence around Seward Park is a simple chain-link fence in the back of the park but by the main streets it is a more formal fence, as seen in this picture.



Image 6.10 – Art in Seward Park. Top: The park benches have armrests that prevent users from lying down. Middle: Colourful mosaics offer largely generic imagery. Bottom: The fountain is located at a busy intersection and is not designed in such a way that children can play in the water.







Image 6.11 – Canal Park’s the 'ribbon' bench which is a large semi-circle and one of Hess's sculptures (courtesy of Capitol Riverfront).





Image 6.12 – From the west, the Yards Park is accessible by a pedestrian bridge. Unique benches mark the beginning of the park.



Image 6.13 – The entrance viewed from 3rd Street SE. The iconic pedestrian bridge is visible in the background and the stone pattern in the pavement is visible in the foreground (courtesy of Honeyman).



Image 6.14 – Users who approach the park from the east side can either take the wide path along the water or, slightly inland, the winding path with small sitting areas and plenty of landscape design (courtesy of Honeyman).





Image 6.15 – The Yards Park had a large number of unconventional seating options.







Image 6.16 – The outlook has canvas awnings reminiscent of boat sails.



Image 6.17 – A cartoon from the Chicago Reader published on the 18th of February 2005. It depicts Cloud Gate and suggests that park users – visitors and tourists – must pay $325 to be let into the plaza.



Image 7.1 – Renderings of Eastside City Park in Birmingham (Taylor, 2011), Yards Park in Washington, DC (MPFP, 2010), and Greenwich Millennium Village in London (GMV, 2003).







Image 7.2 – Wooded paths in Greenwich Millennium Village's park. Some see the paths as natural and 'thriving' whereas others see them as overgrown and, potentially, 'scary.'



Image 7.3 – The official siteplan for Greenwich Millennium Village. In additional to the 'central park,' there are courtyards within each residential block (GMV).



Image 7.4 – The open field in Greenwich Millennium Village, as viewed from West Parkview street, does not offer anything particularly unique or visually intriguing to potential users standing on the park's edge.



Image 7.5 – At Greenwich Millennium Village, the residential buildings that abut the central park do not have direct access into the park because of a manmade lake.



Image 7.6 – A map of Birmingham's city centre. The green space near the centre left is the cathedral. The green space at the top right is part of Aston University's campus. And the green space to the far right is the new Eastside City Park (VisitBirmingham, 2016).



Image 7.7 – Eastside City Park. The building at left, with green-tinted glass, is the Millennium Point. The retaining wall - which has water jets on one side and is planted on the other – protects park users from feeling like they are in the path of people entering the building.





Image 7.8 – The Thames Barrier Park attracts users from all over because it has ‘a great view' of the Thames Barrier, which helps prevent London from being flooded.



Image 7.9 – Art in Chicago's Millennium Park. Clockwise from top left: Cloud Gate, 1004 Portraits, and Crown Fountain.







Image 7.10 – Two images of the Green Dock at Thames Barrier Park in London. Some users understand this sunken garden of wave-like hedges to be a symbolic statement about the island nation.





Image 7.11 – The seating at London's Mile End Park provides users with shade but not with a comfortable seat, according to one user (5U-MEP, 2015).



Image 7.12 – See Appendix A, behavioural maps.

Image 7.13 – The top photo is of the field in Seward Park in Chicago and the bottom photo is of a field in Thames Barrier Park in London. Both fields were rarely used.





Image 7.14 – The underside of Cloud Gate in Millennium Park in Chicago is an 'omphalus' or Greek for 'naval.'



Image 7.15 – See Appendix A, sitemaps.

Image 7.16 – At Mile End Park in London, there are a series of structures designed for users to climb and swing on them.





Image 7.17 – Birmingham's Eastside City Park has different types of seating. The ones designed to stimulate interaction and conversation were not necessarily the most popular among users.







Image 7.18 – The Children's Play Area at Thames Barrier Park is surrounded by a fence.



2. Elite and User Interviews

This research involved conducting 42 elite interviews and 64 user interviews. This section includes three specific types of information about the interviews. First, the coding used to identify each interviewee is explained. Second, general biographical information about each elite interviewee is included as well as the basis for selecting them. Third, the topic guides used when conducting both elite and user interviews are included.

2.1 Code to Identify Interviewees

Based on the ethics approval received to conduct this research (see Appendix C), the interviewees were granted anonymity to encourage them to speak freely. While non-identifying biographical information could be included, the individuals' names were not used in the thesis. Instead, each interview was assigned a code such that it could be referenced easily and consistently throughout the thesis.

If the interviewee was associated with the Urban Renaissance in the UK, the interview was labelled '#UR-UK.' If the interviewee was associated with the study of social exclusion or cohesion – or relevant policy – the interview was labelled '#SE-UK.' If the interviewee was associated with the New Urbanism movement in the US, the interview was labelled '#NU-US.' The numbers associated with the interview were determined chronologically based on when the interview was conducted. Thus, the first interview with an architect from the UK about the Urban Renaissance was labelled: 1UR-UK.

When labelling interviews where the individual was associated with a specific park, the following abbreviations were used. These were used for both elite and user interviews.

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
Abbreviation	MEP	CAN	THA	YAR	EAS	MIL	GRE	SEW

The elite interviews were labelled '#E' followed by the park abbreviation. These included interviews with landscape architects, park planners, park managers, park employees, and others closely associated with a specific park. For example, the third elite interview about Canal Park in Washington, DC was with a landscape architect; it was labelled '3E-CAN.'

For the user interviews, the same abbreviations and numbering system was used. The only difference is that they were labelled with a 'U.' For example, the fourth user interview conducted in Mile End Park in London was labelled '4U-MEP.'

In total, nine individuals associated with the Urban Renaissance and four individuals associated with New Urbanism were interviewed for this thesis. Five individuals associated with studying or making policy about social exclusion or cohesion were also interviewed. The following table summarises the number of individuals associated with a specific park that were interviewed.

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
Abbreviation	MEP	CAN	THA	YAR	EAS	MIL	GRE	SEW
Employee Interviews	3	3	2	3	2	4	6	1
User Interviews	7	11	7	8	11	10	3	7
Total # of Interviews	10	14	9	11	13	14	9	8

The following table indicates the year in which each interview was conducted.

Interview Code	Year Conducted	Interview Code	Year Conducted	Interview Code	Year Conducted
1UR-UK	2013	3U-MEP	2015	10U-MIL	2015
2UR-UK	2013	4U-MEP	2015	1E-SEW	2015
3UR-UK	2013	5U-MEP	2015	1U-SEW	2015
4UR-UK	2013	6U-MEP	2015	2U-SEW	2015
5UR-UK	2013	7U-MEP	2015	3U-SEW	2015
6UR-UK	2013	1E-THA	2015	4U-SEW	2015
7UR-UK	2013	2E-THA	2015	5U-SEW	2015
8UR-UK	2014	1U-THA	2015	6U-SEW	2015
9UR-UK	2014	2U-THA	2015	7U-SEW	2015
1NU-US	2013	3U-THA	2015	1E-CAN	2015
2NU-US	2013	4U-THA	2015	2E-CAN	2016
3NU-US	2013	5U-THA	2015	3E-CAN	2016
4NU-US	2014	6U-THA	2015	1U-CAN	2016
1SE-UK	2013	7U-THA	2015	2U-CAN	2016
2SE-UK	2013	1E-GRE	2015	3U-CAN	2016
3SE-UK	2013	2E-GRE	2015	4U-CAN	2016
4SE-UK	2013	3E-GRE	2015	5U-CAN	2016
5SE-UK	2013	4E-GRE	2015	6U-CAN	2016
1E-EAS	2015	5E-GRE	2015	7U-CAN	2016
2E-EAS	2015	6E-GRE	2015	8U-CAN	2016
1U-EAS	2015	1U-GRE	2015	9U-CAN	2016
2U-EAS	2015	2U-GRE	2015	10U-CAN	2016
3U-EAS	2015	3U-GRE	2015	11U-CAN	2016
4U-EAS	2015	1E-MIL	2013	1E-YAR	2016
5U-EAS	2015	2E-MIL	2015	2E-YAR	2016
6U-EAS	2015	3E-MIL	2015	3E-YAR	2016
7U-EAS	2015	4E-MIL	2017	1U-YAR	2016
8U-EAS	2015	1U-MIL	2015	2U-YAR	2016
9U-EAS	2015	2U-MIL	2015	3U-YAR	2016
10U-EAS	2015	3U-MIL	2015	4U-YAR	2016
11U-EAS	2015	4U-MIL	2015	5U-YAR	2016
1E-MEP	2015	5U-MIL	2015	6U-YAR	2016
2E-MEP	2015	6U-MIL	2015	7U-YAR	2016
3E-MEP	2015	7U-MIL	2015	8U-YAR	2016
1U-MEP	2015	8U-MIL	2015		
2U-MEP	2015	9U-MIL	2015		

2.2 Non-Identifying Biographical Information of Elite Interviews

As discussed in Section 3.4.2, a goal of the elite interviews was to collect an array of perspectives that offer a comprehensive understanding of the research topics. Unlike the user interviewees who were selected in a systematically arbitrary way, the elite interviewees were selected through identifying experts in the literature, authors of government reports, individuals in relevant department directories, or involvement in a case study park. Additionally, interviewees were identified through reference and word of mouth. While elite interviewees were offered anonymity to encourage a candid exploration of topics, the following descriptions offer a basic explanation of the elite interviewees' backgrounds and the basis for their selection.

2.2a - Area of Expertise: Urban Renaissance

1UR-UK – This individual is trained as an architect and is employed as a design consultant working across the UK. He was identified through a book he wrote about urban design, including a significant discussion of public parks.

2UR-UK – A professor of urban design and public space design, this individual has also worked expensively with CABE. He was identified through academic articles he wrote.

3UR-UK – An architect at a UK firm, this individual served on the CABE National Design Review Panel and worked as a guest lecturer at several schools of architecture in the UK. He was identified after being a speaker at a national conference.

4UR-UK – An architect is at the London office of an international firm. He has worked in the UK, Europe, and the Middle East, including working on several urban regeneration projects in the UK. He was suggested as an elite interviewee by a colleague.

5UR-UK – This professor studies the geographies of modern living with a focus on common areas. He was selected based on the relevance of his academic writing.

6UR-UK – A professor of landscape architecture, she has published on design, theory, and landscape guidelines. She was identified based on her academic work.

7UR-UK – An architect and a professor of geography and planning, this individual served on their region's Design Review Panel. He was approached for an interview based on his involvement with his city's Urban Design Forum.

8UR-UK – An architect in the UK, her work is associated with the urban renaissance and she specialised designing public spaces. She was recommended by another elite interviewee.

9UR-UK – This landscape architect works for a large firm in the UK and has designed several significant public spaces. The individual was identified by their firm as a person who could speak to design decisions in the public realm.

2.2b - Area of Expertise: New Urbanism

1NU-US – This US architect is an active participant in the Congress of the New Urbanism. He was identified through their online directory.

2NU-US – A professor of urbanism, this individual has written an important book and several important articles about New Urbanism. She was approached based upon her work and her city expertise.

3NU-US – An architect as well as a professor, this individual has specialized in urban anthropology and environmental psychology. She has done extensive work on public parks. She was selected for an elite interview based on the relevance of her academic work.

4NU-US – This landscape architect is part of a medium-sized firm that has worked on projects across the country. The design firm was recommended by a different interviewee because of their focus on New Urbanism and the company selected this individual to be their representative.

2.2c - Area of Expertise: Social Exclusion and Policy

1SE-UK – This individual has experience in both academia and Government. A professor of social policy, he has worked in two different capacities in the government, focusing on policy implementation. His combination of academic work on social exclusion and government experience was the basis for selecting him for an elite interview.

2SE-UK – A social policy professor who has studied poverty and social exclusion extensively. She has served on several related governmental commissions. She was identified for an interview based on the relevance of her academic writing.

3SE-UK – A consultant who was hired by the Social Exclusion Unit in 2003. This individual's work was focused on jobs and enterprise in deprived areas. Their relationship with the SEU's core team formally lasted several months and informally lasted much longer. This long-term connection was an important factor in selecting this person to be an elite interview.

4SE-UK – This individual worked as part of the Social Exclusion Unit and also has experience working in city government on inner city regeneration. She was identified as an elite interview because she'd worked at multiple different levels of government and had experience in both urban regeneration and social exclusion.

5SE-UK – In the early 2000s, this individual was a civil servant working in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of the Social Exclusion Unit. Their work primarily examined the impacts and trends associated with social exclusion. She was selected for an interview after one of her colleagues recommended her.

2.2d - Elite Interviews Associated with a Particular Case Study Park

1E-EAS – This woman works at the Information Desk just inside the entrance to Millennium Point when entering from Eastside City Park. She had worked in the building for several years and was identified as a regular presence in the park and approached about an interview while doing fieldwork.

2E-EAS – The woman works at a small mobile café in Eastside City Park. She was seen by the researcher during several fieldwork visits and approached about being an elite

interviewee. While she had worked for the café company for several years, she had only been assigned to Eastside City Park for a few months.

1E-MEP – This man works at Mile End Park and focuses on 'community engagement.' He is part of a team that works in the park, and he also lives in the surrounding area. He was identified through the park's website and approached during fieldwork.

2E-MEP - This man is a groundskeeper at Mile End Park. He has worked there for several years and lives locally. He was identified and approached during fieldwork.

3E-MEP – This individual works at the athletic facility located in Mile End Park but operated independently. His job includes recruiting new gym members and, in that capacity, he has studied the local area and local population. The athletic facility was contacted about the research and identified him as the best representative.

1E-THA - This man is a groundskeeper at Thames Barrier Park. At the time of the interview, he had worked at the park for less than a year, and he does not live locally. He was identified and approached during fieldwork.

2E-THA – This woman works at the café in Thames Barrier Park. At the time of the interview, she had worked there part-time for two years and relocated to live locally. She was identified and approached during fieldwork.

1E-GRE – This woman works as a sales representative on site at Greenwich Millennium Village. Her primary task is selling and renting apartments in the development. At the time of the interview, she'd worked at this office only a few months. She was identified and approached during fieldwork.

2E-GRE – This woman is an employee at the Ecology Park, an area inside Greenwich Millennium Village's park. She was identified through the organisation's website and through The Land Trust.

3E-GRE – This individual is an employee at the Ecology Park, an area inside Greenwich Millennium Village's park. He was recommended by another interviewee, 2E-GRE.

4E-GRE – This individual is a volunteer at the Ecology Park, an area inside Greenwich Millennium Village's park. She was identified and approached during fieldwork.

5E-GRE - This individual is a volunteer at the Ecology Park, an area inside Greenwich Millennium Village's park. She works on organising community events. She was identified and approached during fieldwork.

6E-GRE – This man is an employee at one of the stores in Greenwich Millennium Village development. He was identified and approached during fieldwork.

1E-MIL – This architect played a pivotal role in designing Millennium Park. Previously he had worked for a quarter century at the Chicago Park District. He was identified through articles on Millennium Park.

2E-MIL – This man is a security guard at Millennium Park. He was identified during fieldwork as the officer tasked with ensuring the safety of those using Crown Fountain, an interactive water feature.

3E-MIL – This woman is a security guard at Millennium Park. She was identified during fieldwork as the officer tasked with overseeing users on the Cloud Gate platform.

4E-MIL – This man works for the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events (DCASE) and helps plan and execute the programming at Millennium Park. He was identified by contacting DCASE and asking who they recommended as a representative.

1E-SEW – This individual works in the Fieldhouse at Seward Park. At the time of the interview, she has worked in this capacity for many years, running events for the community. She also lives locally. After attempts to contact the park management team failed, this woman was identified and approached during fieldwork.

1E-CAN – This individual works at the Park Tavern, a sit-down restaurant in Canal Park. At the time of the interview, she had been working there for a little over a year. She was identified and approached for an interview during fieldwork.

2E-CAN – This landscape architect was a member of the team tasked with designing Canal Park. She was identified through contacting the architecture firm that won the contract; they selected her based on her involvement in the park.

3E-CAN – This woman works for the neighbourhood redevelopment organisation that oversaw the creation of Canal Park. She was part of the park's creation and, at the time of the interview, was tasked with overseeing the park's changing role as the neighbourhood evolves. She was identified through contacting the redevelopment organisation.

1E-YAR – This man works for the neighbourhood redevelopment organisation, Capitol Riverfront, that oversaw the creation of the Yards Park. His work focuses on community engagement. He was identified through the park's website.

2E-YAR – This woman works at the ice cream store that abuts Yards Park. The store was recruited by the redevelopment organisation specifically to this location, and this woman had been there since the store opened. She was contacted regarding an interview following the mention of the ice cream store in another elite interview.

3E-YAR – This interviewee works at a restaurant that abuts the park. At the time of the interview, she had been employed there for just under a year. She was identified and approached during fieldwork.

2.3 Topic Guides for Elite and User Interviews

The interviews conducted in this research were semi-structured. Following the approach laid out by Dexter, the interviews included open-ended questions that allowed the interviewee to explain the topic to the interviewer (1970). This meant that each interview covered slightly different topics and followed the natural progression of the conversation, rather than a prescribed set of questions. The topic guide offers a general overview of the structure of the interviews and the subject areas that were covered. The following topic guide is an updated and amended version of what was submitted to the Ethics Committee and received approval.

Topic Guide for Semi-Structured Interviews

Introduction/Welcome

- Introduction of researcher
- Brief explanation of research
- Explain confidentiality, recording, duration, and information usage
- Consent of individual to participate – signed or verbal

Background

- How did you come to work on [insert specialty area of interviewee]?
- How long have you been in this field?
- What does a typical day at work look like?

Architects, Landscape Architects and Urban Studies Experts

Where do social dynamics fit into your work?

- When you study a place or design a place, what are the primary factors in your mind?
- Why those particular factors? How do you prioritise among them?
- What is the ultimate goal when you work on a site?
- How do you think about the space influencing human behaviour?
- Where do social dynamic factor into your work? Are you thinking about the existing social dynamics or how to change social dynamics?

What tools and design features are used?

- What specific tools or techniques are used to impact social dynamics?
- How did you find those tools? How do you test whether they work?
- In an ideal world, how would you design a space with an eye to improving social dynamics?

What role does social exclusion play?

- In your work, are the terms social exclusion and social cohesion used? If so, how?
- How do concerns about social exclusion stack up against all the other demands and requirements of a given project?
- How do you think design can impact social exclusion? Can it?
- Who determines whether there is attention paid to concerns about social exclusion?
- How has the focus on social exclusion changed over the course of your career?

Social Exclusion Experts

A spatial dimension to social exclusion?

- What are the biggest factors contributing to social exclusion and what are the factors that can prevent social exclusion?
- Is there a spatial component to social exclusion?
- When thinking about how to prevent social exclusion, do you consider the role of the physical environment? How does it stack up against all the other factors? How does it manifest in the policies?

Who is at the table determining the strategy?

- Given the notion of 'joined-up solutions for joined-up problems,' who are the primary players at the table?
- What role do architects, landscape architects, planners, designers play in the conversation about combatting social exclusion? What role could they play? If there's a gap between their potential role and their actual role, why is that the case?

Park Experts

Establishing the vision for the park

- Who were the big players in creating this park?
- What do you think were the primary motivations in creating this park?
- How involved was the community in designing the space?

Who is in the space?

- Who does the park cater to? Who actually uses the park?
- Are there segments of the population that are specifically targeted?
- Are there segments of the population that don't use the park?
- Do different types of users gravitate to different types of spaces within the park?
- What are the most popular parts of the park? What makes them popular?
- Where in the park are there the most conflicts?

Interactions in the park

- How often do you see strangers interacting in the park? Are they positive or negative interactions? What tends to prompt these interactions?
- Are there specific design features that tend to bring users together?
- Is there park programming to bring different users together?

Using the term social exclusion

- In park design or park management, is the term social exclusion ever used?
- Does park management think about the social dynamics in the park? Is this at the creation phase or is it ongoing?
- How do concerns about social exclusion compare to other park concerns?

Park Users

Presence in the park

- What brought you to the park today?
- Have you been to this park before? Do you plan to return?
- How did you initially find the park? Would you come back with others?
- How long do you plan to spend in the park during this visit?
- How far away do you live from the park?
- What mode of transportation did you use to get to the park?

Park features
- What do you like and dislike about the space?
- What parts of the park have you used most often? Least often? Why?
- What would you want to change?

Interactions in the park
- Did you interact with anyone during your time in the park today? Who did you interact with? What prompted the interaction? Was the interaction positive or negative?
- Do you like interacting with other park users? Would you prefer not to interact with others?
- Where do you come into contact with a similar range of people?

Conclusion
- Summarise what has been discussed
- Ask about any additional thoughts or questions
- Offer contact information in case they want to get in touch later

3. Case Trackings

This research also conducted ‘case trackings.’ In each case tracking, an individual user was followed for the duration of their park visit. Their movements, activities, and interactions were noted. The same coding systems was used, including the numbering and park abbreviations. Thus, the fifth case tracking conducted in Thames Barrier Park in London was labelled ‘5CT-THA.’

The following table captures the number of case trackings conducted in each park.

	Mile End Park (UK)	Canal Park (US)	Thames Barrier Park (UK)	Yards Park (US)	Eastside City Park (UK)	Millennium Park (US)	Greenwich Millennium Village Park (UK)	Seward Park (US)
Case Trackings	6	5	6	6	5	5	1	7

Appendix C: Research Ethics Approval

This research received research ethics approval from the Department of Social Policy and Intervention's Department Research Ethics Committee (DREC). Approval was granted twice: once when the research began as a Masters student and, again, at the beginning of becoming a doctoral student. The applications for ethics approval are available upon request. The formal approval letters received from DREC are on the next two pages. The consent forms and information sheets approved by the Ethics Committee and used during the research are on the following pages.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY AND INTERVENTION

Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square,
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom
www.spi.ox.ac.uk



26th November 2012

Gabrielle Emanuel
St. Edmund Hall
Oxford

Dear Gabrielle,

Ref: 2012-13_07

Re: Social Exclusion and Public Spaces

Your application for research ethics approval in connection with your thesis has been considered by the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards and DREC approval has been granted.

If any revisions to your research methodology are made subsequent to this approval, these must be detailed in writing and submitted to DREC immediately.

Please can you ensure that you submit a copy of this letter with your thesis in August.

Yours sincerely

Lucie Cluver

Dr Lucie Cluver
Chair of DREC

cc. Robert Walker

Direct line: Tel: +44 (0)1865 280734 Email: gemma.roche@spi.ox.ac.uk
General enquiries: Tel. +44(0)1865 270325 Fax: +44(0)1865 270324

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY AND INTERVENTION

Barnett House, 32 Wellington Square,
Oxford, OX1 2ER, United Kingdom
www.spi.ox.ac.uk

Gabrielle Emanuel
Department of Social Policy and Intervention
Oxford

Ref: DSPI 14-09

02 March 2015

Dear Gabrielle,

Social Exclusion and Public Places

Your application for research ethics approval in connection with your thesis has been considered by the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for Ethical Approval.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards and DREC approval has been granted.

If any revisions to your research methodology are made subsequent to this approval, these must be detailed in writing and submitted to DREC immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Lucie Cluver

Dr Lucie Cluver
Chair of DREC

Point of contact: gemma.roche@spi.ox.ac.uk | +44 (0) 1865 280734
General enquiries: tel. +44 (0) 1865 270325 / fax +44 (0) 1865 270324

Participant Information and Interview Request

University of Oxford
Department of Social Policy and Intervention
Barnett House
32 Wellington Square
Oxford OX1 2ER, UK

Dear (Potential Research Participant),

My name is Gabrielle Emanuel and I am a doctoral student at the University of Oxford in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention. My research focuses on efforts to reduce social exclusion through altering the design of public spaces in the United Kingdom and the United States. This includes studying explicit efforts to reduce social exclusion through public space design as well as a broader look at intergroup social dynamics and social interactions in public spaces. My research will utilize information from interviews with academics, architects, urban planners, key actors in policy-making as well as residents and users in order to understand the situation and the approaches and strategies of relevant actors.

I am writing to you to request a 30- to 45-minute interview. As someone who is knowledgeable about social exclusion, social interactions and public spaces [or insert relevant topic], I believe that your perspective would be invaluable to my work. I will be in [the US or UK] in [insert timeframe], and, if possible, would like to schedule a time to meet with you.

If you agree to participate, any record of the interview will be stored according to the requirements set out in the Data Protection Act, and used in my doctoral thesis and related publications. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be placed, both in print and online, in the University archives, to facilitate its use in future research. If desired, interview participants *will* have the opportunity to comment on summarized interview notes as well as relevant drafts in order to ensure the accurate use of information gathered through the interview.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor (robert.walker@spi.ox.ac.uk). Alternatively, I will call your office in the coming days to confirm your receipt of this letter.

Thank you for your consideration,
Gabrielle Emanuel
DPhil candidate
gabrielle.emanuel@seh.ox.ac.uk

Participant Information and Observation Request

University of Oxford
Department of Social Policy and Intervention
Barnett House
32 Wellington Square
Oxford OX1 2ER, UK

Dear (Potential Research Participant),

My name is Gabrielle Emanuel and I am a doctoral student at the University of Oxford in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention. My research focuses on efforts to reduce social exclusion through altering the design of public spaces in the United Kingdom and the United States. This includes studying explicit efforts to reduce social exclusion through public space design as well as a broader look at intergroup social dynamics and social interactions in public spaces. My research will utilize information from elite interviews as well as systematic social observation in public spaces.

Systematic social observation is a non-obtrusive research method in which the routine activities in public spaces are documented and analysed. There is both a camera (video, no audio) and a human observer stationed to the side of the site. There is no attempt to contact passers-by and their identities will not be revealed. This research complies with both the British Psychological Association and the American Psychological Association Ethics Codes. I am writing to you to request permission to observe public spaces within your precinct [insert specific site]. The intention is for observation to happen over the course of several days for about an hour each day. I would give you advance notice of the days and times.

If you agree to let your site be observed, the data will, of course, be stored securely in accordance with the requirements set out in the Data Protection Act, and used in my doctoral thesis and related publications. On successful submission of the thesis, it will be placed, both in print and online, in the University archives, to facilitate its use in future research. If desired, interview participants *will* have the opportunity to comment on relevant drafts in order to ensure the accurate use of information gathered.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor (robert.walker@spi.ox.ac.uk). Alternatively, I will call your office in the coming days to confirm your receipt of this letter.

Thank you for your consideration,
Gabrielle Emanuel
DPhil candidate
gabrielle.emanuel@seh.ox.ac.uk

Interview Informed Consent Form

Gabrielle Emanuel
gabrielle.emanuel@seh.ox.ac.uk

Robert Walker
robert.walker@spi.ox.ac.uk

For the interviewee

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Gabrielle Emanuel, a doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford. I understand that the project is designed to gather information on the dynamic between public spaces and social exclusion.

1. I agree to be interviewed for the purposes described above.
2. The purpose and nature of the interview has been explained to me.
3. I agree that the interview may be recorded in order to ensure accuracy in subsequent uses of information.
4. I understand that the researcher will protect all files and transcripts and store them securely.
5. All questions that I asked about the purpose and nature of the interview and assignment have been answered to my satisfaction.
6. I have been informed that I can withdraw at any time and for whatever reason.

I consent to participate in this interview and for information from this and other conversations to be recorded and used in the researcher's doctoral thesis and any related publications.

Name of interviewee_____
Signature of interviewee_____
Date _____

For the interviewer

I have explained the project and the implications of being interviewed to the interviewee and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of interviewer_____
Signature of interviewer_____
Date_____

Site Observation Consent Form

Gabrielle Emanuel
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For the site manager

I understand the research project conducted by Gabrielle Emanuel, a doctoral candidate at the University of Oxford. I agree to let her do video and human systematic observation in public areas in my precinct. I understand the project is designed to gather information on the dynamic between public spaces and social exclusion.

1. I agree to let the researcher observe for the purposes described above.
2. The purpose and nature of this observation has been explained to me.
3. I agree that the observation may be recorded in order to ensure accuracy in subsequent uses of information.
4. I understand that the researcher will protect all files and store them securely.
5. All questions that I asked about the purpose and nature of the observation have been answered to my satisfaction.
6. I have been informed that I can withdraw my support at any time and for whatever reason.

I consent to allow the researcher to observer and video record public areas in my precinct and used the information in the researcher's doctoral thesis and any related publications.

Name of manager_____
Signature of manager_____
Date _____

For the interviewer

I have explained the project and the implications of observing a site and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of interviewer_____
Signature of interviewer_____
Date_____