

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

PLAY BY THE BEECH



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*Friends of
Beech Road Park*
M21 9FA

**MSA
LIVE 21**

Team

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Xinyi Shen (BA 02)

Partners

Our lovely collaborators - Friends of Beech Road Park Chorlton!

Friends of Beech Road Park is a community-led group of like-minded residents living in Chorlton who are passionate about and recognises the importance of green spaces access for everyone, especially in current times with the COVID lockdown. They play an active role in managing and maintaining the park, as well as plan events such as the recent Beech Road Park Mosaic, a home-based art project which is in partnership with Unity Arts, to foster a strong community spirit, not letting the lockdown hinder their enthusiasm.

Our main contact working alongside us is MSA's own Laura Sanderson, a senior lecturer and a familiar face for those in the Continuity in Architecture atelier. Other Friends look forward to joining us periodically through MSA Live to participate and view our projects.

The Friends have been amazing collaborative partners during this two-week process where we have been sharing our creative ideas for unique play spaces for the kids in Chorlton and elevate the already important Beech Road Park to the next level for this tightly knit community!

Find out more about our Friends at: https://www.facebook.com/BeechRoadPark/?ref=page_internal

Agenda

PLAY BY THE BEECH

Building on the team's personal experiences from play areas with regard to our discussions on nostalgia, inclusivity, sustainability, safety, materiality and technology, we reflected on your own interpretations of play which may additionally refer to the act of engaging, applying, exercising or playing of ideas and use those ideas as a design tool towards creating options for a play area for Beech Road Park's community. This fed into four different schemes, each centered around a different theme; terrain, sensory, community-built pavilion and modularity.

Each group had to design an innovative play area based on their allocated themes; socially motivated and responds to the issues of modern play areas that we see today. Each proposal should be considerate of the user while exploring the spatial potential of the complex issues such as sharing internal and external play spaces, learning and social spaces across different groups of people of different ages, occupations and attitudes.

We encouraged the team members to not create a traditional play area and dive out of your comfort zone. To spark the creative process, we have arranged for four guest lectures to speak with us about their unconventional play areas. Rather than just boring swings and slides, the play areas should allow all ages to experience something new and tell stories

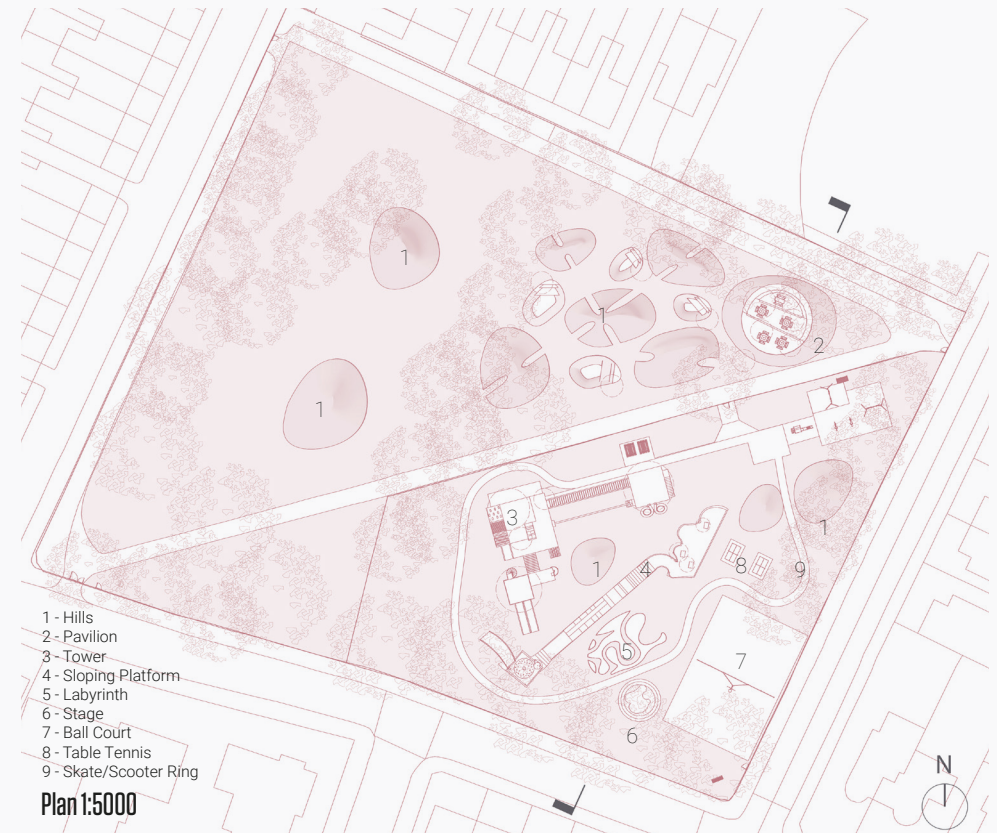
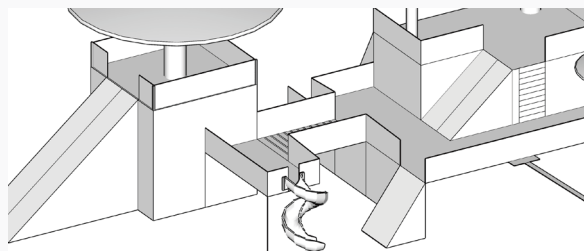
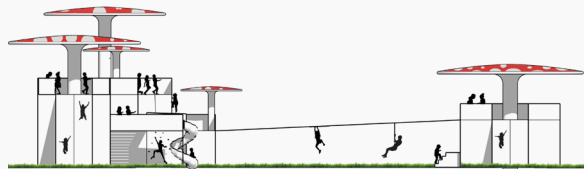
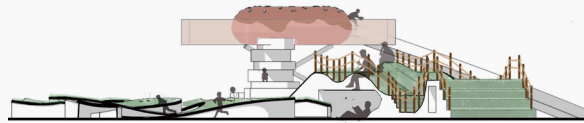
Terrain

Hills & Thrills

In this group, the theme of our play scape is Terrain. Working as a team, we thought about what terrain means for a play scape and how that could drive our design.

The first thing we thought about is the topography. As the existing site is very flat, we thought that manipulating the topography of the park would give opportunities for different types of activities. Changes in levels creates multi-purpose landscape such as hills that children can run up and down or slopes for groups of families and friends to sit together. We also found that designing for different ground surfaces can encourage different types of activities. In our design, we have focused on grass landscaping and engineered timber wood fibre for softer landscaping where we would promote jumping and running. Designing for hard ground surfaces promotes other activities such as ball sports with multi-purpose plastic flooring or skating/scooting with concrete pavements.

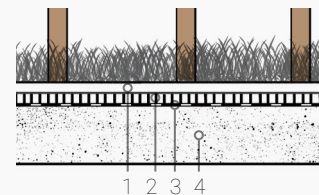
As we play with the topography of the park, we also believe that it is important to create a comfortable environment that promotes the neighbourhood to stop by and sit down. Therefore, spaces where we might find people to stay longer are also sheltered by canopies the emerge from the ground.



- 1 - Hills
- 2 - Pavilion
- 3 - Tower
- 4 - Sloping Platform
- 5 - Labyrinth
- 6 - Stage
- 7 - Ball Court
- 8 - Table Tennis
- 9 - Skate/Scooter Ring

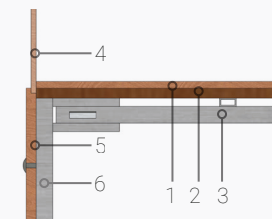
Plan 1:5000

Section



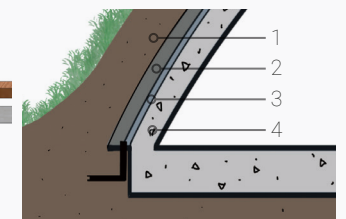
Sloping Platform

1. 30mm - Artificial Grass
2. 50mm - Drainage Cell
3. Waterproof Membrane
4. 200mm - Structural Concrete Slab



Tower

1. 20mm - Engineered Wood Fibre
2. 40mm - Timber Decking
3. 50mm - RHS Stainless Steel Beams
4. 15mm - Oak Timber Railings
5. 40mm - Oak Timber Panels
6. 50mm - RHS Stainless Steel Columns



Hills

1. 50mm - Grass (Similar to existing)
2. 50mm - Drainage Cells
3. Waterproof membrane
4. 200mm - Concrete Structure



Axonometric



New Playscape View

Community Built

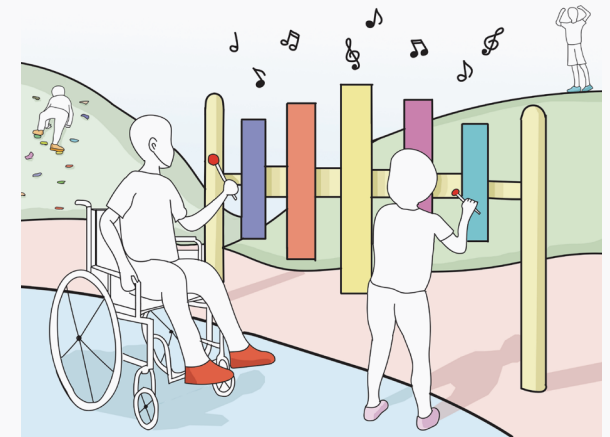
'Bubble' Beech

The community built theme is centred around getting pre-existing community groups independent members involved in the creation of the playground to foster an even stronger community spirit. From our research, Chorlton has Unity Arts that is very active within the area. They have numerous partnerships with local artists and conduct art programmes to get local children involved.

This theme seeks to utilise the community and Unity Arts to create Bubble Beech, which is envisioned as an oasis within the Chorlton community that combines their strong appreciation for nature and arts into a creative play area that not only benefits the children but the entire community.



Urban Farming



Inclusivity



Involving the Arts



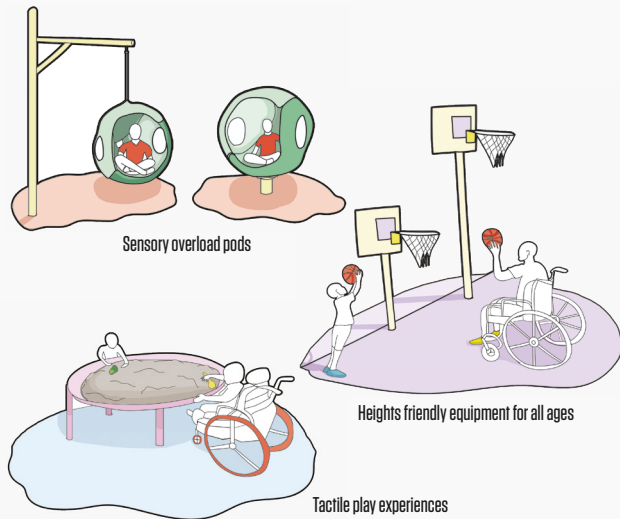
Gardening Basketball Graffiti Art Chess Board Tunnel Crawl Hill Climb Hammocks



1. Tyre Planting
2. Seating Mounds
3. Basketball Court
4. 'Bubble' Art
5. Hammocks
6. Running Mounds
7. Net Climb
8. Rock Climb
9. Tunnel Crawl
10. Table Tennis
11. Slide
12. Chess Board
13. Stepping Stone Path
14. Musical Play Area



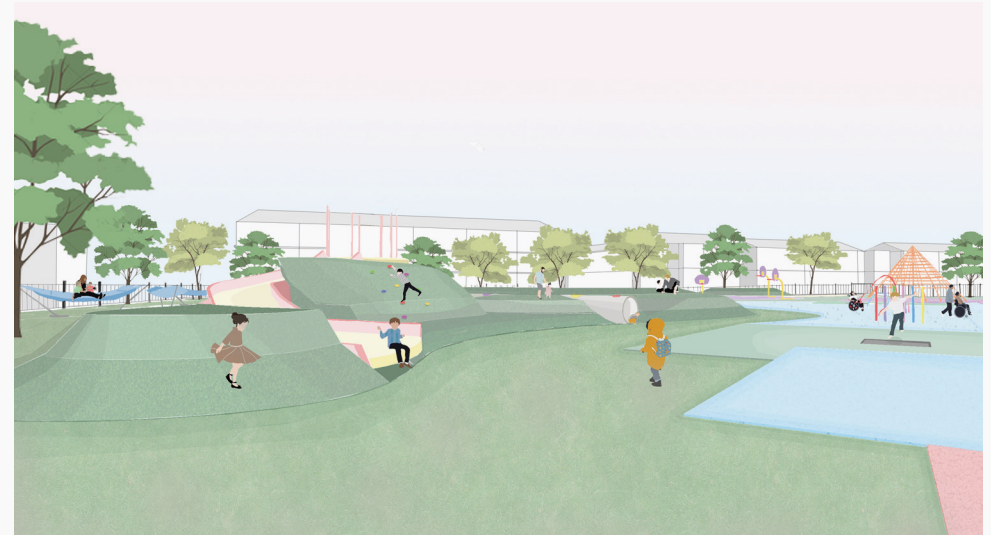
Astroturf Concrete Slide & Ball
Poured Rubber Flooring Pastel Colour Scheme



Sensory overload pods

Heights friendly equipment for all ages

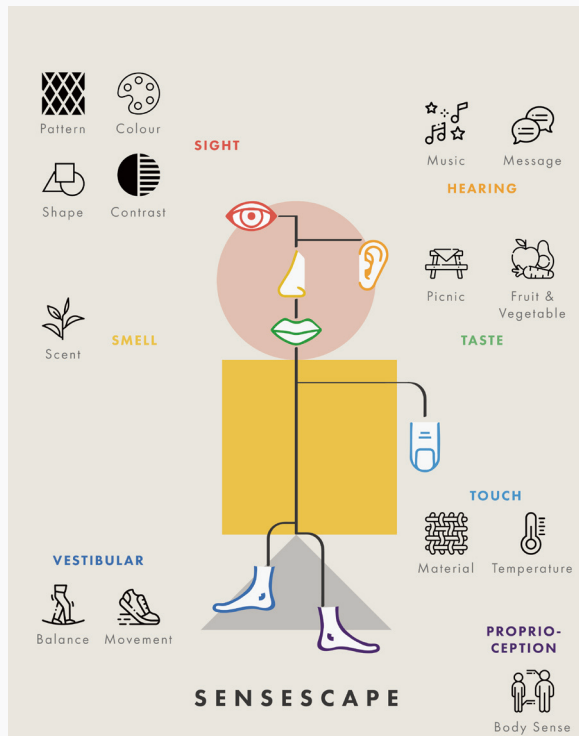
Tactile play experiences



Sensory Sensescape

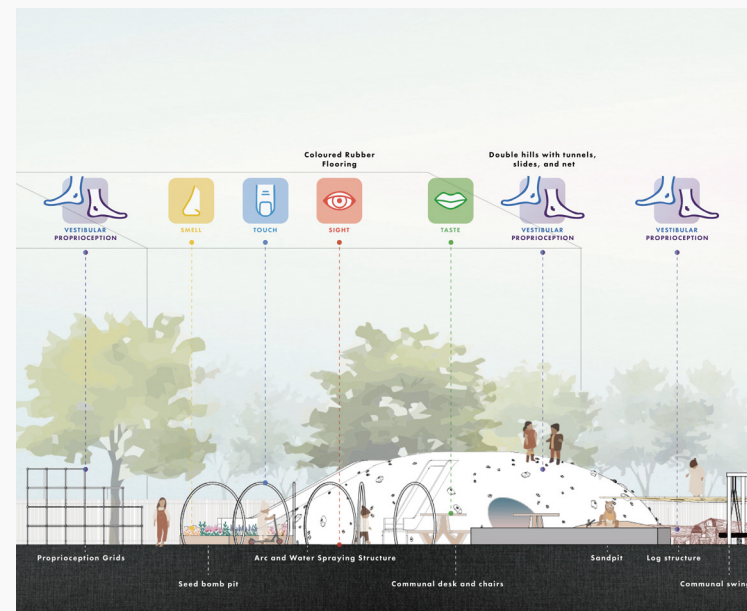
Playgrounds are crucial for children's physical development, mental health, and emotional memories. Increased self-esteem, improved collaboration skills, enhanced critical thinking skills, and a strengthened immune system are just some of the high-level benefits children gain by playing. Therefore, it is our duty as adults to provide all the children inclusive and sensory play areas. A sensory playground is one that contains any element or equipment that stimulates one of the seven senses- touch, smell, taste, sight, hearing, vestibular, and proprioception. Well-designed sensory playscapes encourage children to do more physical activity, enhance social skills, and create a valuable bonding with their parents. Multisensory experiences are vital for motor skills, strength, sensory and cognitive development.

With our proposal of the Sensescape playground on the Beech Road Park, we prioritized providing an exciting multisensory play experience. The initial concept was to divide the play area into overlapping geometrical shapes and assign equipment that stimulates different senses to each area. In terms of colour scheme, we used bright colours derived from a classic kid's rainbow to stimulate sight while giving a happier and more playful atmosphere.

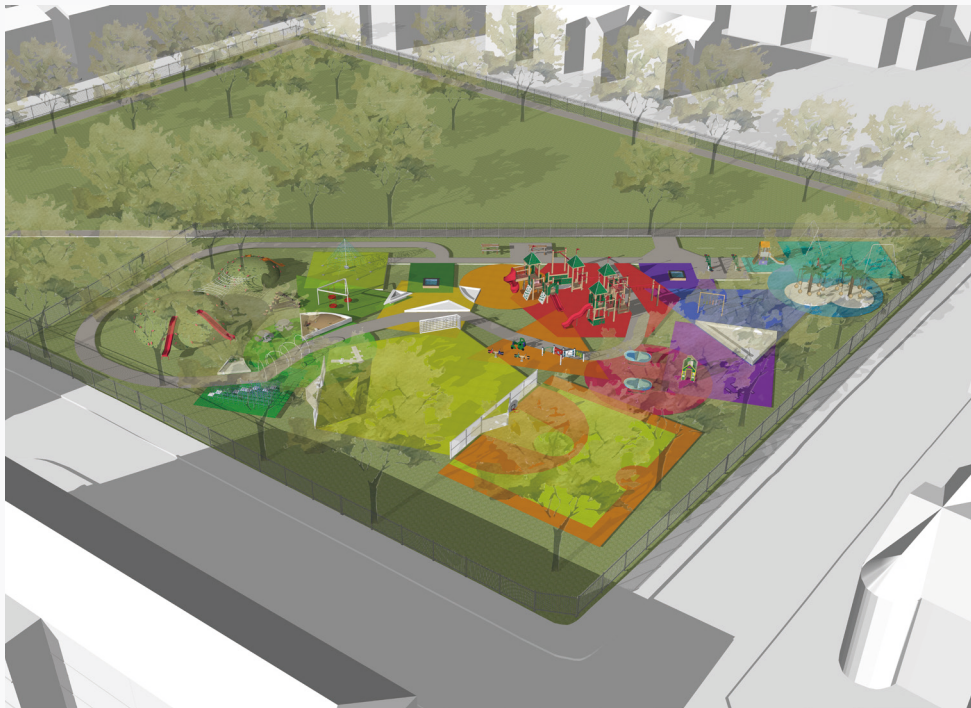


Site Plan
(Scale: 1/1000)

- 1_Individual swings
- 2_Bouncy horses
- 3_Small slide
- 4_Trampoline
- 5_Spinning palm trees
- 6_Seesaws
- 7_Aeolian bell
- 8_Small floral garden
- 9_Seed bomb pit
- 10_Ping pong table
- 11_Climbing net
- 12_Small resting house
- 13_Large slide structure
- 14_Tactile wall
- 15_Basketball court
- 16_Kickabout field
- 17_Sandpit
- 18_Communal swings
- 19_Communal desk and chairs
- 20_Log structure
- 21_Hopscotch area
- 22_Arc and water spraying structure
- 23_Proprioception grids
- 24_Double hills with tunnels, slides, and net



Section
(Scale: 1/200)



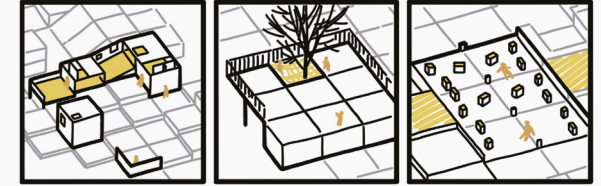
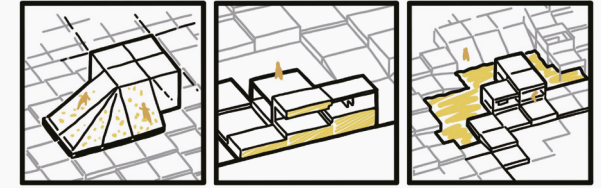
Modularity

Cube Paradise

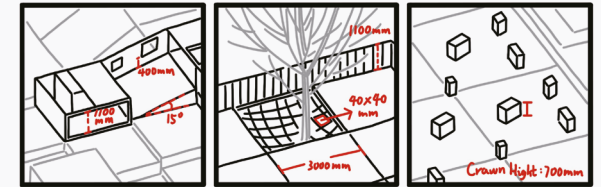
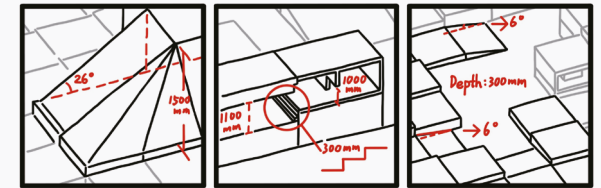
In this group, our manifesto is to let children explore the space themselves, borrowing from the modular design to create pixelated hills and spaces to satisfy their curiosity of a Cube Paradise.

We tried to combine the various functional spaces and design each module in conjunction with the requirements of the regulation. At the same time we have added a variety of lighting to the paradise, trying to avoid dazzling direct light and to use more reflected light for the ambient lighting at night. At the same time the diversity of the space design is demonstrated by the small semi-open spaces that can be used for hide-and-seek and as mini shops, and the shallow pools that change with the seasons.

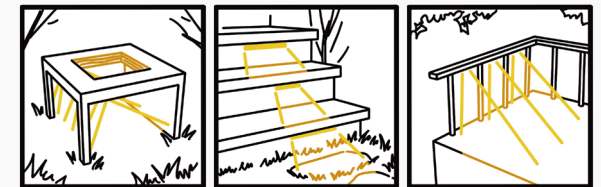
We tried to create an infinite transformation with permanent structure, whether its function changing with the seasons, children of different ages or even adults. The function of the space is then redefined according to the different ways of using and playing with it.



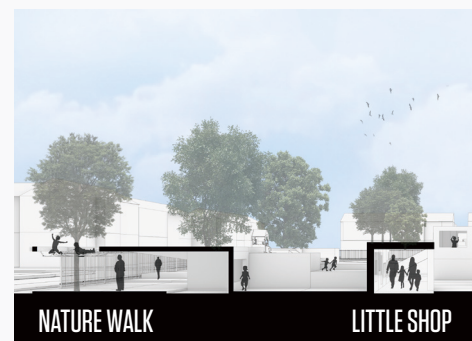
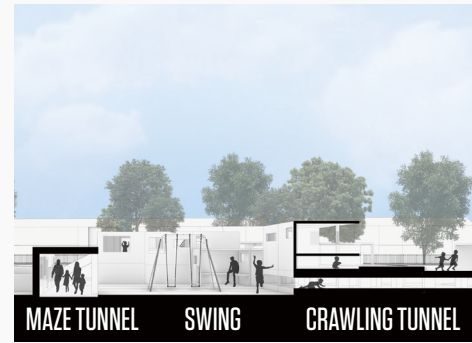
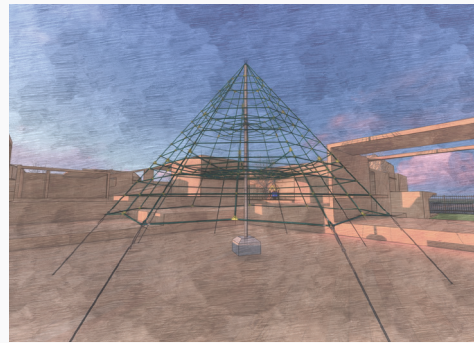
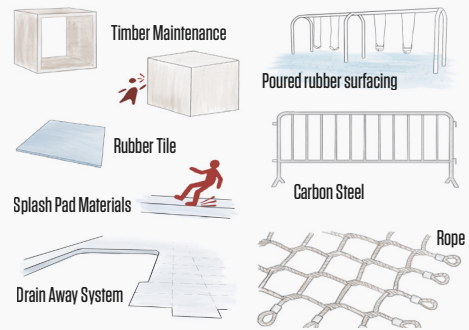
Functional Strategies



Regulation Strategies



Lighting strategies



ABOUT

Each year the MSA Live (formerly Events) programme unites M Arch. year 01 with B Arch. year 01 and 02 and M Land. Arch 01 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA Live projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA Live projects have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts join for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 600 students from 4 cohorts in MSA will work on 42 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA Live 21 contact MSA Live Lead: Becky Sobell:
b.sobell@mmu.ac.uk

BLOG

live.msa.ac.uk/2021

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