

MATTER SPACE SOUL

Specialist design lab focused on rethinking our cities & spaces to better serve human and social wellbeing

Go beyond the visible, physical aspects of places to focus instead on human nature, needs and experience.

Design x Human sciences
Fellow for Centre for Conscious Design - research







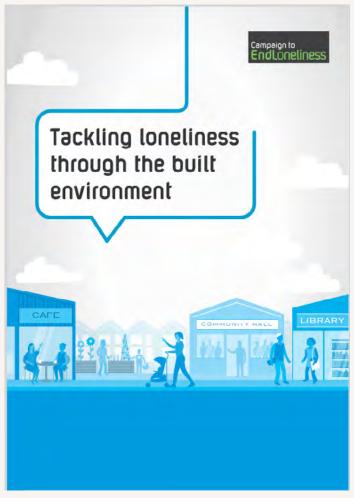
Our surroundings can either enable or disable social connection

Emotional isolation is ranked as high a risk factor for mortality as smoking.

Holt-Lunstad, 2015







Loneliness Lab & Campaign to End Loneliness

A new model to define "Place Quality" & shift what is valued

Method to embed health, social wellbeing and inclusivity into places

By prioritising people's experience and needs, and outcomes created through design

Based on long-term research drawing from human sciences

Implemented in a London local authority planning requirements 2023
Implementing in development schemes 2024



FEATURED BY:













MISSING FOUNDATION OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Health - direct and indirect factors From quantitative to qualitative





social

GOING BEYOND CURRENT STANDARDS: MULTIDIMENSIONAL, STRUCTURED APPROACH

- Mental health
- Biophilic design
- Social connectedness,
- Tackling loneliness, belonging
- Sense of identity, ownership and pride
- Designing for women's safety
- Older people
- Younger people
- Intergenerational spaces
- Inclusivity
- Neurodiversity
- Community co-creation
- Empowerment
- Equity

comfortable



restorative



joyful









young people's needs



intergenerational

Place Quality criteria

INDIVIDUAL



Health and Wellbeing

RELATIONAL



Community & Belonging

SOCIETAL



Vibrant & Inclusive Places



Tool C: Community & Belonging (Abridged)

Baseline

Is this a distinctive place?

- Does it celebrate local assets, characteristics or the identity of the residents?
- Does the design support pride of place and a common sense of identity?

Good Practice

Is this a sociable place?

- Does the design encourage people to spend time in the space?
- Are there any features that encourage dwelling? E.g. a reason to stay and pause?

Leading Practice

Is this a place that builds community?

- Are there factors that support building long term relationships between residents?
- Is a sense of belonging supported in the design?

Leading Practice

• Does the design go beyond sociability to create social value and social capital?

Distinctive, sociable

Places to sit and pause.

Unity Place, Brent

Seating orientated to activity and views.

Granary Square, Camden





WEAK TIES OR "BUMPING SPACES"

Sociable

Places to sit and talk to neighbours.

Marmalade Lane, Cambridge

Corridors with places to pause and features to look at e.g. art

Canada Gardens, Brent





STRONG TIES

Builds community

Social interaction is prioritised with shared common spaces for regular gathering and mixing generations.

La Borda Cooperative Housing, Barcelona



STRONG TIES

Social capital

Community gardening; including foodgrowing, composting and spaces that enable people to interact and work together

Harlesden Town Garden, Brent



SOCIAL CAPITAL

Human benefits as foundation for shaping places

 QUALITY OF LIFE OUTCOMES AS NEW BENCHMARKS & METRICS OF SUCCESS

OUTCOME:

Human benefits are maximised via continual, systematic consideration



SHAPED TO PLACE-BASED NEEDS & INEQUALITIES



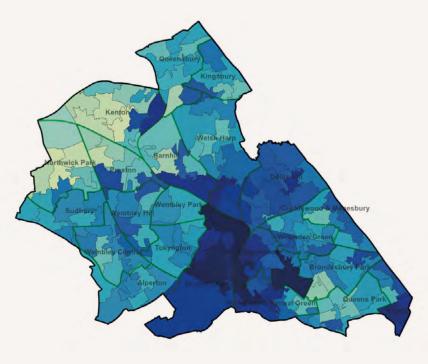








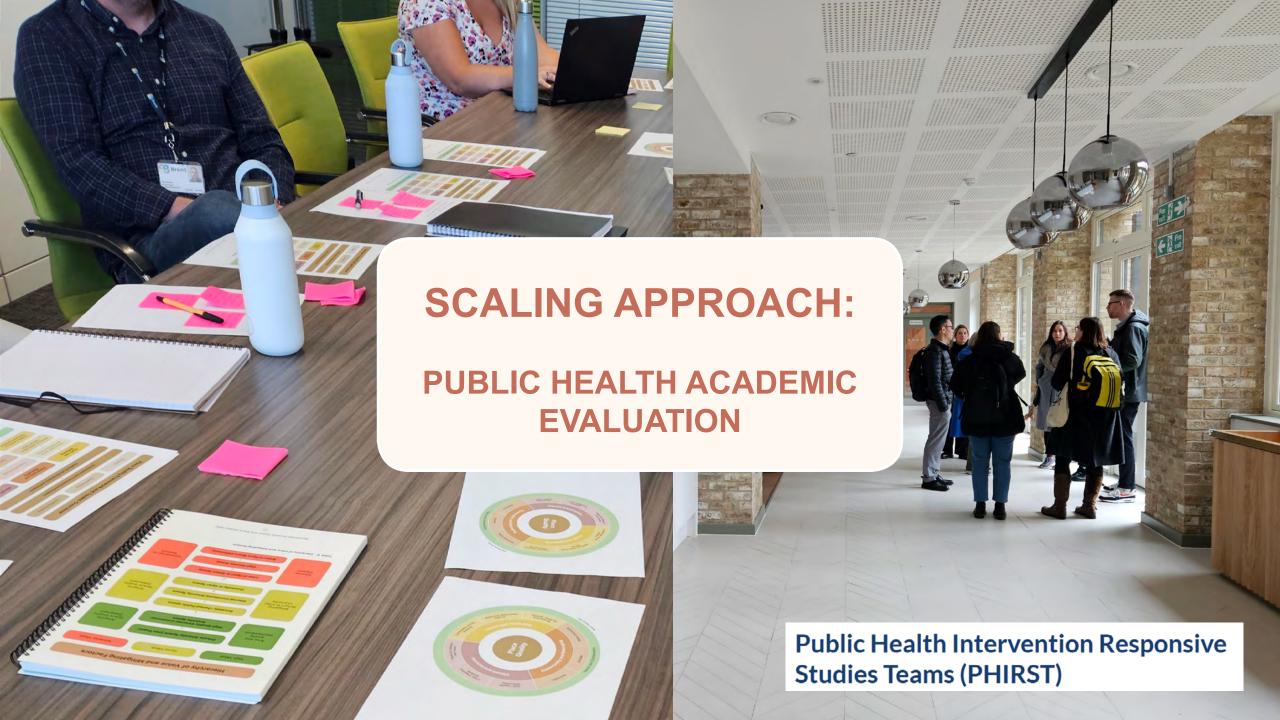




Map 1: Indices of Multiple Deprivation in Brent

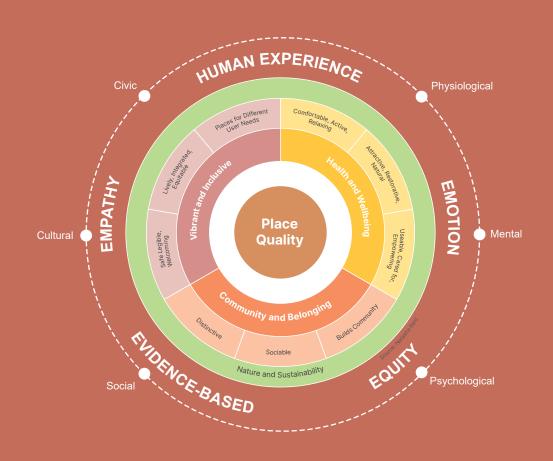
RESPONDS TO LOCAL NEEDS & CAN ENABLE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

HIGHER QUALITY OF LIFE REQUIREMENTS
WHERE GREATEST NEED



COMPASSIONATE PLACES:

SHARED GOALS & MODELS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION



From the "what" to the "how" maximising the full potential of places
to make positive change

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