Playing Out Reclaiming Streets from Car to Child-Friendly

by Gabrielle Abadi

Playing Out: Reclaiming Streets from Car to Child-Friendly

An exploration of the social and political status of the child in the City of London

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I declare that this dissertation is entirely my own work and that ideas, data and images, as well as direct quotations, drawn from elsewhere are identified and referenced.

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Abstract

In an era of globalised inter-urban competition, cities are competing internationally for 'Child Friendly City' status. A Child Friendly City is one supported by a local governance system committed to fulfilling children's rights and entrenching their needs into the urban fabric. The design of public realm that is accessible and inclusive of children is a criteria status that has been almost entirely neglected both in practical planning and design policies, and in academic literature.

In light of this, through the lens of the community-led movement — Playing Out — this research project will examine the evolving social and political relationship between the child and their built environment. Highlighting the significant barriers that urban children and the momentum of the Playing Out movement face from both the traditional planning system and common attitudes held by society.

Through participant observations at a play street event and semi-structured interviews with professionals whom hold expertise knowledge on children in the City, this research aims to critically examine and contribute towards an evidence base that promotes an important social and cultural shift in ensuring the public realm becomes more welcoming and accessible to all urban citizens, in particular to children.

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Abbreviations

Child Friendly City - CFC

Playing Out Street Event – POSE

Physical Education - PE

Stop de Kindermoord – SdK

Supporting Planning Guidance – SPG

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNCRC

West Dulwich - WD

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

In a time of increasing inter-urban competition, cities worldwide are competing with one another for 'Child Friendly City' (CFC) status. The house 'buying guides' and online blogs branding different cities as the 'best places for parents to raise their kids' are infinite (Lonely Planet 2018).

Embodying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), a CFC is one supported by local governance systems committed to fulfilling children's rights as citizens and ensuring that their specific needs are met in the city (González 2014). In 2017, Brent Toderian, Vancouver's chief planner from 2006 to 2012, tweeted that the three overarching criteria for making city centres child friendly are: suitable family housing, supportive education and social services, and the design of public realm (Twitter, 2017).

However, the criteria regarding public realm has been notably neglected both in practical planning and design policies and in academic literature. Tim Gill, an independent scholar and consultant on childhood has long contended that when it comes to public realm, most cities have prioritised the movement of cars over the experience of pedestrians (2014).

A recent report from Arup, *"Cities Alive: Designing for urban childhoods"*, identified inadequate and unequal access to the city as one of main challenges facing urban children (2017). Through the mindless creation of "child-unfriendly" streets, researchers and advocates alike have noted an increasing disappearance of children from many public spaces alongside a rising sentiment "that children no longer belong" in these spaces unless supervised by adults (Ferguson 2018:3; Gill 2017; Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009).

As celebrated components of the democratic city, public space encompasses all elements considered part of the built environment — from parks and squares to streets and sidewalks —these spaces are central to how society has traditionally understood, experienced and

studied the city (Gehl *et al* 2013:2). In facilitating the integration, organisation and representation of diverse populations, from convivial social interactions to political exertions, the cultural and civic significance of public spaces should not be underestimated (Mitchell 1995:116; Pratt 2017:2). Particularly for children, as an "unprogrammed space", streets offer important and irreplaceable opportunities for imaginative play and creative forms of learning (Lynch 1977:13; Hillman 2006).

Children are a fascinating social group to research, as in many ways they have restricted economic and political power, albeit in contrary to other forms of social discrimination because of the provisional nature of their age-based political and social marginalisation (Valentine 2016b). In our fast-changing cityscape Tim Gill has argued that the impacts of political, social and environmental change on children are often overlooked. He contends that this is because our "decision-makers are short-termist politicians" and our planning systems are more concerned with "cars, housebuilding and the economy" (cited in Laker 2018). However, as children have a far greater stake in the future of cities, and if spatial planning occurs over a 25 year period, for whom are we designing our public spaces?

The relation between cars and children have long been problematic. However, awareness of the design of streets is rising rapidly on the political agenda and becoming a central topic in the creation of CFC's (Krishnamurthy et al 2018:11). In urban neighbourhoods worldwide, from community-led projects using planters, paint and holding car-free events to tackle dangerous routes used by children, to national policy reconceptualising housing play space and street layouts for children, the importance of child friendly design is gaining prominence.

The Playing Out movement is an exemplar parent and community-led visionary initiative creatively challenging the contemporary framing of public street-use through the temporary semi-closure of roads to cars for a couple of hours a week. The initiative began in Bristol in 2009, following the frustration of two mothers at the absence of outside freedom and play for their children, and has now spread to more than 500 communities across the UK (Ferguson 2018). With recently published (23rd August 2019) national support from the Department for Transport (DfT), the rising popularity of Playing Out street events simultaneously correlates with a surge in research drawing awareness to the multiple

benefits derived by reframing the power balances of public space to be more inclusive and accessible to children (Playing Out 2019; Arup 2017; Barton 2016:1; Gill 2013; Gill 2017).

Through the lens of the Playing Out movement, this research will critically explore, question and reframe the current planning system which enables the urban built environment to be equitable and accessible for all, particularly concerning the experiences of children.

1.2 Importance of Study

"The built environment we see today – the legacy of previous generations – has not just shaped the way our city looks, but has had a profound impact on how and where we live, work, study and socialise with one another."

Draft London Plan, 2019:xiv

Investigating the evolving social and political relationship between the child and the built environment is vital considering the significant impact research has found the environment has on children's quality and experiences of life (Fotel 2009:1276). This is particularly important in light of the lack of related academic literature and traditional planning policy concerning this relationship. Unless policies are implemented to ease local children's movement and access, the curtailment of their independent activity will only be exacerbated as cities become more urbanised and populated (Ward 1978:116).

Researching this relationship through the lens of the Playing Out movement will enable a critical exploration of the complex social and political barriers leading to children's independent mobility and access to public spaces. By highlighting the significant challenges posed by the traditional planning system and common attitudes held by society, this research seeks to contribute data towards the important awareness needed on how child-friendly urban planning is a vital part of creating inclusive, accessible and equitable cities that derive benefits for all urban citizens (Arup 2017).

1.3 Location of Research

The location of my analysis research is London. Following Bristol, where the movement first began, London has experienced a significant traction in playing out street events (POSE) (see Figure 1). This is significant as London has a precedence as a city suffering from decades of planning prioritising traffic over the human experience (Gehl Architects 2004). Furthermore, under the current Mayor of London's socially inclusive strategy of "Good Growth", we are arguably finally beginning to experience a wider policy recognition of the influence that the built environment and provision of social infrastructures have on children in the City (Mayor of London 2017:xiv; Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:11).

Figure 1: Map illustrating where play streets are up and running in London. (London Play)

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

Through an analysis of experiences from the Playing Out movement alongside a critical exploration of the social and political position of children in public space, this research aims to promote an improved understanding of the benefits derived from child-friendly urban planning and design.

In order to critically examine and contribute towards an evidence base that promotes important social and cultural shifts in ensuring the public sphere becomes more welcoming, accessible and inclusive to children, this research aims to answer the following key questions:

1. How does an examination of the Playing Out movement enable us to understand the evolving political and social relationships between the child in the City?

2. How does playing out benefit children, their caregivers and the wider community?

3. What solutions can enable the movement to have a wider reach and a further impact?

1.5 Structure Overview

After setting out the existing literature (Chapter 2), methodological foundations and ethical considerations (Chapter 3) of the paper, the following structure of the dissertation closely follows the above research questions. Chapter 4 will answer the questions in chronological order by analysing primary research findings derived from interviews and participant observations with existing literatures. Chapter 5 works towards concluding solutions and recommendations going forward.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Traffic and Children in the City: The Residential Street

"We have traded conviviality, for the convenience of those who wish to experience streets as briefly as possible."

Charles Montgomery 2013:173

Academics have long outlined the significance of residential streets as unprogrammed learning spaces to host the spontaneous and imaginative informal street play of children (Jacobs 1961; Lynch 1977; Hillman 2006; Ward 1978). As a "crucial mediator" between the outside world and domestic sphere, the design of residential streets has profound influences over the geographies of everyday life and independent mobility for children at the micro level (Appleyard 1980:9; Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:12). Ferguson identifies an extended tradition of children's informal street play that has flourished because of these sites proximity to their homes (2018) (see Figure 2). Within range of parental sight or shouting distance, it once felt natural, safe and easy for caregivers to allow children to play, explore, socialise and develop in these spaces unsupervised (Cowman 2017).

Figure 2: UK Playstreet 1950s (Left) and 1970s (Right) (Ferguson 2018)

While the use of residential streets for children's play is still found in some towns and cities, worldwide there has overall been a registered decline in the number of children from such forms of public space (Ferguson 2018:2; Gill 2017; Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009; Tranter *et al* 1996). Researchers have further noted a rise in sentiment regarding the unsupervised presence and play of children in non-designated play spaces, being describing as "intrusive" and "harmful" to city order (Ferguson 2018:3; Mean *et al* 2005:9).

The reduced outdoor public presence of children and the loss of streets as a "centre of community life" strongly correlate with the formation of cars as integral components of everyday life and physical streetscapes from 1920's onwards (Engwicht 1999: 5; Ferguson 2018). With our urban environment reflecting dominant societal values, from the 1950s onwards, the reconfiguration of urban space to accommodate automobility, speed and car dependency began to slowly whittle away urban street life (Barton 2016:1). Spatially the "prerequisites for pedestrian" street life were at a direct trade off with the "conquest of cars in the city" (Engwicht 1999:5; Fotel 2009:1267; Gehl 2013:42; Ward 1978). In this respect, the design balance and management of streets for the movement of vehicles becomes a politically vested process that values the empowerment, freedom and liberation of certain spatial mobilities at the expense of other forms (Carmona 2009, Fotel 2009:1276).

This process is deeply unfair to city dwellers for whom streets function as a "soft social space between their destinations" (Montgomery 2013:173). The negative social, safety and health barriers of heavy traffic in residential streets has been clearly documented with a disproportionately greater impact on more vulnerable citizens such as children (Appleyard 1969; Gavron 2019; Hillman 2006; Play England 2016:10; Ward 1979:118).

While for a short transitional period children and cars may have initially found a reasonable balance, today the physical and psychological domination of the car has become a self-reinforcing process resulting in public spaces being less safe and accessible to the urban child (Ferguson 2018:3; Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018). Compared to their previous generation, children today "have been left with far fewer opportunities" to play freely outdoors and safely navigate their built environment (Depeau 2017:345). In analysing the political and social factors contributing towards this situation, and the subsequent implications this has

had on the everyday experience of children, this research will seek to highlight solutions to rebalance this trend.

2.2 An Emergence of the Child in Built Environment Policy?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) denotes a child as someone under the age of 18 (1990). Contemporary debates regarding the urban child often revolve around CFC initiatives — local governance systems committed to fulfilling children's rights and ensuring that their specific needs are met in the city (González 2014). Embodying the UNCRC, the CFC movement itself works to embed the crucial notion of children as citizens into a broad range of policies, laws and programs worldwide (Depeau 2017:345; Voce 2018).

In the UK, having not been a political priority since the demise of the Labour Government's play strategy in 2010, concern has been flagged over the insufficient regard and research surrounding the impact that the design of the built environment plays on children's everyday experiences and quality of life (Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:1). This is in part due to policy that once supported children's ability to play and participate in public space having been "sacrificed" to austerity cuts since 2010, and on the other hand the result of CFC research having mainly focused on other vital indicator policies such as child services, education and housing (Voce 2018).

There are however, indicators of an emerging interest in this topic with the resurgence of more supportive planning policies for children's inclusion and access to wider public spaces (Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:5; Gill 2019). For example internationally, the 2018 relaunch of UNICEF's CFC programme highlighted policy and practice guides directly aimed at built environment professionals. Furthermore, the topic of children encompassed a key theme in the United Nations New Urban Agenda in 2016 (Gill 2017).

Policies in UK planning have also begun to take greater prominence in agendas regarding "building strong and vital neighbourhoods and cities" (Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:5). The

inclusive design of streets has become more paramount in policy under Mayor Khan, compared to the previous Johnson mayoral administration. There is now an increasing recognition of the influence that the built environment and provision of social infrastructures has on children rising on the agenda (Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:11). For example policy S4 'Play and Informal Recreation' now references accessible routes for children and young people, play provision as an integral part of the surrounding neighbourhood and the requirement for children to be able to move around their neighbourhood safely and independently. Amended policy S4 makes further reference to the impact that restrictive street design and threat of traffic can have on children's informal play in public space, running parallel with the Healthy Streets Approach (policy T2) principles of a city for people rather than cars (Mayor of London 2019). However, at present there is a lack of evidence concerning the effectiveness and impact that supporting planning guidance (SPG) will have on the implementation of these policies

The emerging interest in child-friendly urban planning and design demands a focus on the impact that physical design of the built environment has on the everyday experiences of children (Arup 2017:60; Gill 2017:3). This research topic is important as 60% of all urban citizens are predicted to be 18 or younger by 2030 (Wright *et al* 2017:7). Therefore, for children's needs and aspirations in the built form to not form major policy concern in contemporary cities is not only short sighted but unjust.

With growing density and population pressures in urban areas, it is imperative that cities embrace mechanisms that enhance the representation and articulation of children's interests and rights into planning and design equations (Bornat 2017). This research will seek to contribute data emphasising the multi-faceted benefits that child friendly planning can have on the everyday lives of children, their caregivers and wider communities.

2.3 Reclaiming the Streets for Alternative Imaginaries: Playing Out

City spaces and events never occur in an empty container of space, but are rather constituted by "physical presence and social processes" (Leary 2009:195). The cityscape

simultaneously produces certain spatial and social conditions, while offering crucial socio-spatial opportunities to "build upon alternative claims to belonging and existing" within public space (Lefebvre 1991; Uitermark and Nicholls 2014:19). With this understanding, the dimensions of marginalisation and empowerment experienced by certain groups and individuals are never fixed or essential, but stems as representations of space that are continuously produced in the everyday arena of urban space (Fotel 2009:1268; Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith 1991).

Street reclaiming practices are an example of alternative, playful, artistic and humanist initiatives looking to transform urban space from being dominated by an "exchange value" to increasing "its use-value" (Engwicht 1999; Fotel 2009:1271). Gehl labelled street reclaiming practices as important democratic opportunities to transform cultural values and rebalance public realm for the use of those most marginalised and vulnerable (2013). Children are one such vulnerable group identified as adversely affected by the physical and psychological domination of traffic in residential streets (Cowman 2017; Ferguson 2018:2; Play England 2016:10).

As a form of community led activism, car free events have traditionally created the space and acted as an effective communicative platform to disrupt and challenge hegemonic conceptions regarding transport policies on both local and national scales. In challenging the social, economic, and political structures seen as shaping everyday behaviours, through changing one's routine patterns these overarching structures become visible (Pinder, 2000; Lefebvre, 2013). A successful example was the Stop de Kindermoord (SdK), a movement established in response to a "dramatic surge" in pedestrian and cyclist injuries and fatalities along main roads in 1970s Netherlands (de Boer and Caprotti 2017:11). That SdK protests flourished with such pace, demonstrates that when individuals are strongly united over a common purpose and collective identity – in this case campaigning for child safety – protest and advocacy can achieve momentous policy, infrastructure, and culture change for equitable and safe road sharing (van der Zee 2015).

Seeking to reclaim back residential streets from car to child friendly spaces at the "centre of community life", Playing Out is the spearhead movement that situates the human

experience, with a particular focus on children, back at the heart of local planning in the UK (Barton 2016:1; Engwicht 1999:9; Montgomery 2013: 177). Playing Out is a resident led grassroots movement that rose out of two mother's frustration at the absence of outside freedom and play for their children due to traffic, as well as lack of relevant supportive top-down policy and public funding in England (Ferguson 2019). The initiative began in Bristol in 2009 and has now spread to more than 500 communities across the UK to bring children and citizens as a whole back out into public space, through the temporary semi-closure of roads to cars for a couple of hours a week (Ferguson 2019). The rising popularity of Playing Out street events correlate with a surge in reports drawing awareness to the multiple direct and indirect social, environmental and economic benefits derived from rebalancing the power hierarchy of public space to be more inclusive and accessible to children (Arup 2017; Barton 2016:1; Fotel 2009; Gill 2013; Gill 2017). The published acknowledgment and support of this movement by the Department for Transport (DfT) in June 2019 and following amendments to guidance for councils in August 2019, reflects a significant gain in national momentum (Playing Out 2019) (see Figure 3).

Through rebalancing streets from car to child friendly spaces, Playing Out facilitates vital alternative and democratic claims to belonging and existing within public space on a local and now national scale. This research seeks to contribute towards the momentum of cultural change, drawing out the urgency of the greater reach and wider implementation of these initiatives at a larger scale.

Figure 3: DfT supports Play Streets (Playing Out 2019)

3. Methodology

A qualitative mixed-methods approach was selected to uncover the nuanced, individual experiences and opinions of alternative street use and child-friendly city initiatives for this research. Participant observations and semi-structured interviews were the methods chosen as they deal with human experience, meaning and values "as a source of information" (Chokhachian 2017:1; Dey 2007). Qualitative methods were chosen over quantitative, because these measurements embraced the richer "spectrum of cultural and social findings" necessitated for this research (Dey 2007:13).

3.1 Participant Observation

A participant observation method was employed at a playing out street event (POSE) as such an inductive research approach is considered a "primary tool" when examining the authentic, varied and subtle interplay between everyday public life and public space (Gehl *et al* 2013:78; Kitchen and Tate 2013:224; Musante and DeWalt 2010:2). Following risk and ethics approval from the UCL Research Ethics Committee (see appendix A) and receipt of a DBS certificate, I approached the study population through the closed Facebook group - 'Playing Out'. The online group is made up of individuals interested in participating in Playing Out street events. As I was already an approved member, I received an overwhelmingly positive reception from members from a street event in West Dulwich (WD), who introduced me to key event organisers and their committee members - the local "gatekeepers" (Musante and DeWalt 2010:2).

On Saturday 15th June I attended a three hour Playout street event in West Dulwich. I offered to steward on the barrier between 6-7pm as they were short of volunteers and this meant that the street event could stay closed to moving traffic for an extra hour. During this exchange I felt that I was able to reciprocate and build further rapport with the community that kindly permitted me to observe and participate in their event (Kulwich 2005; Patillo 2010).

During this event information was obtained from the observations of, and conversations held with, the 8 adults and 20 children present. Whilst I had prepared a list of topics to be discussed beforehand, once at the event I realised it was more natural to remain open to the spontaneous generation of questions in the flow of interaction with children, adult caregivers and volunteers (England 2006:288; Greg *et al* 2013:94).

Throughout the field research I kept a diary of my observations, notes and thoughts from the event. This allowed me to register essential details that I could then situate within larger societal and temporal contexts for when I thematically categorised and interpreted findings in my analysis (Phillippi and Lauderdale 2018:382). After receiving consent from participants and ensuring that no individual would be identifiable from photographs in the final report, photography was also used to record moments from the event. Collectively, these methods allowed for a naturalistic and interpretive impressions of play in public residential streets (Harding, 2013).

Children experience their cities and neighbourhoods differently to adults, and so their opinions formed a valuable part of this research process (Gill 2017:10). They were offered the opportunity to either verbally articulate or draw what playing out in their street meant to them (see appendix B). In providing creative and non-verbal options to express their thoughts through drawing, I aimed to improve my communication potential with child participants (Hill 2006). As children are a potentially vulnerable group in society, not only was their own consent provided but their participation also had to be approved by guardians or carers present (see appendix B).

Whilst unpredictable and time-consuming, spending such a sustained period of time interacting with participants in this form of field research produced a rich volume of data that would have required "dozens of interviews or focus groups to uncover" (Greg *et al* 2013:79). Moreover, this relational research method helped to produce unaccounted-for findings, that would have not been found using other methods such as surveys. Finally, although my interpretation of field findings will inevitably place an adult perspective on the data, participatory methods recognise the researched as "knowledgeable" and active agents,

which provides an important democratic framework in making children's voices heard (England 2006:288; Morrow and Richards 1996).

3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Three semi-structured interviews with professionals holding varied interest and expertise on the experiences of children formed the spine of this research. Interviews were conducted with Adrian Voce, the President of the European Network for Child-Friendly Cities, Tim Gill, the founder of Rethinking Childhood and Katherine Mautner, a social worker and play therapist at the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face and the interview was recorded using my iPhone's voice recorder. This made it easier to focus on the interview content and generate "verbatim transcripts" to facilitate accurate analysis and thematic coding at a later date (Burnard 1991; Jamshed 2014). This method meant I was able to monitor both verbal and non-verbal cues when addressing both core and open-ended questions. I was therefore able to build on the natural opportunities to "probe and expand on interviewees' responses" to uncover rich and detailed information that would probably not be "accessible using techniques such as questionnaires and observations" (Blaxter *et al* 2006: 172; Kitchin and Tate 2013: 213).

However, Hammersley and Gomm assert that researchers must also acknowledge that responses in interviews will to an extent be shaped by the way "questions are asked" and "by what they think the interviewer wants" to hear (2008:100; England 2006:289). To overcome such concern over validity and reliability of data, measures were taken such as not asking leading questions and by giving the interviewee a chance to summarise and clarify the points they had made (Alshenqeeti 2014:44).

Whilst interviews are a powerful technique to gain subjective and detailed insight, Walford argues that "interviews alone are an insufficient form of data to study social life" (2007: 147). For that reason, this research study engaged with both interviews and participant observations methods in order to obtain richer and varied data, ensuring reliable and valid research conclusions. An analytic approach was used to thematically code both interview and

field work data for re-emerging themes, which were in part based on existing literature on play and child friendly design, and produced from primary fieldnotes, interview transcripts and photographs.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was sought via University College London (UCL) to ensure research complied with UCL's Risks, Ethics and Data Protection requirements (see appendix E). Moreover, informed consent was sought from all involved participants. Children received an adaptation of the parent information sheet and consent form (see appendices B). In addition to being mentioned on the information sheet and consent form, participants were verbally reminded of the research aims and the voluntary nature of their participation (Musante and DeWalt 2010:217; Greg *et al* 2013). To ensure confidentiality and anonymity I did not collect any personal data, such as any specific name, gender and age, through informal interviews and participants were assured that all data collected would remain secure on a computer database accessible by password only (Longhurst 2003: 111). Most importantly, individuals were told and reminded that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and that they had the right to withdraw at any time without explanation.

4. Discussion

4.1 The Child and the City: Planning Policy and Values

Academics and campaigners alike have stipulated that "increasing urbanisation" has left children with "far fewer opportunities" to play freely outdoors and navigate the built environment than previous generations (Depeau 2017:345; Ward 1978). Factors found to contribute towards the reduced freedom and mobility of the urban child relate to planning policies and value systems that prioritise the movement of the car and favour the designation of separate space for children within the built environment. This section will explore the implications that these planning policies and values have had on children's experiences in the City and how the Playing Out model challenges these physical and psychological barriers.

4.1.1   Planning Policies and Values: Separating Children within the Built Environment

"Should planners concentrate on building more play areas specifically for children, or on making existing public space more child friendly?"

Play Rochester, 2018

As cities develop, Hart, among others have identified the tendency to spatially segregate children, in order to keep them safe from traffic and the "unsavoury influences" of streets (2002:135; Gill 2018). In our interview, Adrian stressed that the "*experiences of children are not considered* or *planned into the built environment, anywhere near enough*" (Interview, 2019). Research that supports this statement adds that children are often only planned into certain designated parts of the city, such as parks and playgrounds (Hart 2002:136; Ward 1978:204).

However it has been argued that playgrounds and spaces typically designated for children's play are not neutral in their meanings and values but rather echo wider societal power hierarchies (Lester 2014; Pitsikali 2015). For many the playground represents a push and pull between providing children with autonomy and opportunities to expand their imaginations,

whilst simultaneously controlling and constraining their physical bodies (Hune-Brown 2019).
At the WD play street the event organiser exclaimed one of the most "*lovely*" features of
their POSE was that "*play is totally unstructured – kids are able to freely use their
imagination*" (Field Diary 2019). When asked what their favourite aspect of this event was,
one child replied "*you can do anything here and my friends are always here too!*" (Field Diary
2019). Indeed, I noted that children at the WD event, when given the opportunity to be
autonomous, relished the freedom to exploit their built environment and explore a wider
range of settings than any public playground could offer:

"*Children were rolling down the steeper end of the road on their scooters and bikes, exploring
the street greenery and playing make-believe games with chalk amongst the parked cars*"
(see Figure 4)"

(Field Diary 2019)

Figure 4: Children play make-believe games with chalk

Moreover, at the WD event many adults mentioned that in addition to the social factors (in
section 4.2.1), the greatest benefits of their play street was the "*time*", "*convenience*" and
"*energy*" saved in comparison to having to organize getting their children to a playground
(Field Diary, 2019). In his research Gill found that the playing out model was particularly
helpful in disadvantaged communities where children had no parks, and streets were seen to

be dangerous (2014). These findings support Ferguson's conclusion that "even the best, safest, greenest parks" cannot compensate for "the loss of safe, accessible space literally on their own doorstep" (2018:2). When adults were asked to recall their own play experiences when growing up, many referred to the *"long and endless warm days outside in summer"* and the *"lack of parental supervision"* when *"playing outdoors with friends"* (Field Diary 2019). Moreover when asked about their favourite places to play, adults with whom I spoke never described playgrounds, but rather the spaces often forgotten by planners such as *"junk yards"*, *"bus stops"* and *"streets outside homes"* (Field Diary 2019).

Therefore, planning frameworks that promote the designation of segregated space for children in the city not only curtail children's exposure to mixing in the daily public life of their communities, but also limits their ability to creatively adapt "the environment to suit their needs" as their parent's generation experienced (*Hart 2002:135).* This not only negatively affects children's social and psychological development but also hinders their development as participating citizens (Tranter and Pawson 2001). Therefore rather than planning and designing specific places and activities for children, cities should plan for multi-functional, inclusive and playable public spaces - beyond the designated playground - to enable children's "everyday freedoms" and "autonomy" as participating citizens (Arup 2017:9; Aitken 2001; Hart 2002:137).

4.1.2 Planning Policies and Values: Car is King

 "Traffic danger is the biggest mortal threat to children aged between 10 to 19 year olds"

Tim Gill, Interview 2019

In addition to opportunities to mix with one another close to where they reside, Jane Jacobs argued in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* that streets need to be sufficiently safe for children to be present (1961). When asked how the relationship between children and their built environment has changed over time, Katherine states the most profound change was that *"children's worlds have shrunk"* (Interview 2019). This significant reduction in children's *"independence"* and *"freedom"* to safely explore the environment outside their

home and be able *"to come back and forth in a way they feel free to do"* were issues confirmed by both Tim and Adrian (Interviews 2019).

The "true villain" of street play and the greatest barrier to safety and child-friendliness today is the car (Ward 1978:88). Tim identifies that this is due to the *"straight forward exchange aspect – whereby you can remove children from that risk by simply taking them off the street"* (Interview 2019). At the WD POSE a prominent response preventing adults from granting children independent mobility related to their *"residential street feeling like a car-through instead of a safe community or play space"* (Field Diary 2019). While the number of children killed by cars in the UK when walking or playing outdoors has decreased from a "horrific peak of 396 deaths in 1983", crudely this is because, *"there aren't as many children out and about"* (Tim, Interview 2019; Ferguson 2018:4). Hillman *et al* (1990) and Hillman (2006), amongst others, have also argued the reduction in child casualties as solely a result of children becoming accustomed to their inferior position in relation to the dominance of motorised traffic. Therefore car-centered planning values can be considered a dominant aspect of a "mobility vs welfare nexus" in contemporary "urban space wars" (Fotel 2006:733).

Adrian believes that as a society we are subsequently *"storing up huge, huge problems"*, as not only are *"generations of children growing up without the experiences of organically and incrementally acquiring the independent agency that we've practiced for millennia"*, the development of children as participating citizens is hindered through their reduced access to the political and social arenas of public realm (Interview 2019; Tranter and Pawson 2001).

That the car has king-priority status of the street was also found to underline the majority of resistance and hostility towards the temporary street rebalance that the playing out model facilitates (Field Diary 2019). The common opposition identified from interviews, observations and the online Playing Out Facebook group regards the inconvenience and difficulties posed by *"not being able to drive up and down their street when they wanted"* (Field Diary 2019). However, cars are allowed to come through – they just need to be escorted by a volunteering marshal (see Figure 5). This misconception therefore needs to be better articulated and advertised by the Playing Out movement.

Figure 5: Steward explaining to driver of semi-closure for their POSE (Left) and escorting a vehicle through event space (Right).

Both the "*physical dominance*" of cars and "*the emphasis on car-centered planning*" has facilitated a vicious cycle for children in the City (Tim, Interview 2019). A "*self-fulfilling prophecy*" is fashioned as caregivers view "*allowing children to play outside as dangerous*" and so "*their kids don't spend time outside without them*" which "*perpetuates people's fears*" further (Katherine, Interview 2019). This cycle has contributed to the perception of residential streets "as deserted, lonely and hence dangerous places for children", which reinforces "drivers perceptions that the street is their territory" and that "children no longer belong" in these spaces (Ferguson 2018:4; Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:11).

Perceived fears are a significant factor in parents permitting their children out to play. When it comes to parental anxiety, London outscores any European city (Kuper 2018). At the WD play event, one caregiver described feeling relaxed when allowing her son go out of sight to play when at an organised event, but not at any other time. She mentioned "*traffic*", "*strangers*", and "*getting lost*" as reasons to not permit him to play in public places in London unsupervised, but not having that fear during play streets due to the temporary "*safe environ*ment" (Field Diary 2019). I was intrigued when she referred to permitting her son to play by himself as "*pleasant experience*", signifying that this may be something she wants her son to do more but does not allow due to perception of London streets as unsafe (Field Diary 2019).

These concerns confirm firstly that the City's environment is regarded as unsuitable by caregivers to let children enter the public realm unsupervised. Secondly that the playing out "*challenges the perception and fear of letting children play outdoors and having independence*" and "*empowers children*" as autonomous agents to make their own play decisions and encounter life on their own terms (Adrian, Interview 2019)

4.1.3 Summary

In identifying that the design of neighbourhoods and relation between cars and children significantly effects the "geographies of everyday life for children", POSE's enable the temporary reversal of this trend by returning the function of "soft social space" back to people (Krishnamurthy *et al* 2018:12; Montgomery 2013:173). The Playing Out model therefore "stakes claim for the modest redistribution of space and time" by transforming public realm from "just a medium through which to travel", into an "intrinsic value" and asset for children and the wider community (Lester 2014:202; Van Der Hoek 2011:7).

However, as Adrian notes, "*temporary street closures are a compensation*" (Interview 2019). What would be desired going forward are not more segregated playgrounds , but "*residential streets that are child friendly all year round*" so that caregivers had the "*confidence to allow their children to go and run out at an age that feels right for children*" (Interview 2019; Hart 2002:135).

4.2 The "Joys" of Playing Out: Benefits for Children, Caregivers and Community

"*Powerful imagination has always been at the heart of changing streets and making them places for play and community.*"

Hugh Barton, 2017

Barton draws on the power hierarchies that the street reclaiming process seeks to rebalance by "minimizing the negative side-effects of automobility" and enhancing the "liveability" and

"value of non-motorized" life styles and streets (2017; Fotel 2009:1276). Whether organised by local governments, such as on the 22nd of September in London this year (See Figure 6), or organised by community groups in forms of peaceful protest, car-free events are opportunities to inspire change through enabling people to experience the city from an alternative perspective (Mayor of London, 2019).

One month to go until London's biggest ever Car Free Day celebrations

22 August 2019

- Celebrations across 20 kilometres of closed roads aim to get Londoners to see their city from a new perspective
- Hundreds of free and fun events include classic cycle ride across Tower Bridge and picnic area at Bank Junction
- Free Santander Cycle hire throughout the day, plus wheelchair bikes accessible to all

With one month to go until the capital's biggest ever Car Free Day celebrations, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has announced details of hundreds of free activities to help Londoners 'reclaim' their streets on Sunday 22 September.

Figure 6: Mayor of London announces the "Biggest ever Car Free Day" (Mayor of London 2019)

In the form of community led activism, car-free events promote the renegotiation of social relationships and urban space by disrupting and challenging hegemonic order regarding transport policies at a local level (Fotel 2009). In challenging the social, economic and political structures that shape everyday behaviours and mobility patterns, these overarching structures and value systems are made starkly apparent (Pinder, 2000; Lefebvre, 2013). POSE is a car-free initiative gaining increasing traction worldwide (Arup 2017:47). While these events are less overtly political in their demands, they are, as Lester argues, effectively creating a platform to communicate the benefits derived from an alternative distribution of space and time (2014).

With communities taking *"matters into their own hand to give back space for children's play"*, POSE's temporarily enable a vision of how lives and neighbourhoods can become more sustainable and liveable when streets are less car-dominated (Adrian, Interview 2019). This

section will navigate the variety of multi-scale benefits found to be experienced from hosting POSE for children, their caregivers and wider society.

4.2.1 Benefits for the Child

"The physical activity level crisis is just the surface of the problem. There is a much deeper issue… concerning mental health and societal cohesion… as children are no longer growing up with the level and variety of experiences of being able to make their own choices, express themselves and encounter the world on their own terms."

Adrian Voce, Interview 2019

London is facing an "inactivity crisis" as consequence of our less physical and more sedentary lifestyles (TFL 2017:3). With less than a third of children in England achieving recommended outdoor activity levels, the most "*tangible*" manifestation of this public health crisis in children are issues related to the "*obesity epidemic*" (Adrian, Interview 2019; RSPH 2015). In addition to physical health, research has found rates of mental health problems among children to be on the rise, with contributing factors identified as "stresses of urban life and declining opportunities for play" (Arup 2017:11).

Research has targeted play as potentially dynamic tool in targeting and navigating an array of challenging physical, intellectual, social and emotional domains of childhood and adolescent development (Hart 2002:136). For example, in his *Hackney Play Streets Evaluation Report*, Gill found that in one year the playing out project had supported around 8,140 hours of children's physical outdoor activity, which is "the equivalent to 14" extra physical education (PE) lessons a week (2015:10). Moreover, when drawing from her experiences as a play therapist, Katherine considered play as "*children's first language*" and "*the way they best communicate their experiences, their anxieties, excitement… and learn to regulate empathy for other people's experiences as well as their own*" (Interview 2019). It therefore supports that research has found children's independent mobility and experiences of place at POSE's as fundamental to their "mental health", "sense of well-being" and "levels of sociability" (Arup 2017:23; Carmona 2019:1; Gill 2015).

Moreover, play with peers is extremely important to social, moral and emotional development. Children can practice self-governance when socialising in groups and they can *"learn so much better from sorting things out between them without having adults constantly trying to help them negotiate"* (Katherine, Interview 2019; Hart 2002:136; Hart 2014). At the WD POSE I found children would invite along friends that did not necessarily live on the same street and that the opportunity this created for children to mix with a variety of ages and kids from different schools, had led to a lot of positive interactions and development of new friendships (Field Diary 2019). From research we understand that friendships are "not formed" in the setting of classrooms but during play (Hart 2002:137). With the freedom to 'lead their own play time' at the WD POSE children engaged in 'water fights, chalk drawing and played with bikes, scooters and balls' (Field Diary 2019). When the event ended after three hours and the street had to re-open to traffic, even though it had 'started pouring with rain by the end' (see Figure 7), most of the children were vocally 'upset to leave' (Field Diary 2019). In this case, children's reactions resembled the outcome of other street reclaiming practices when they successfully reverse the power balance; "the result is often broad processes of empowerment", i.e. feelings of freedom and independence (Field Diary 2019; Fotel 2009:1268).

At the POSE children were not only able to expand social ties with other children, but are provided an opportunity to enhance their "adult network" too (Katherine, Interview 2019):

"My son *now knows that if he was out on his own and worried or got hurt, he could approach other adults in the street and know that they were safe adults who knew where you lived and vice versa*"

Twice during the WD street event, I observed that when children fell over or off of their bikes, that it was the resident nearest to that child that would 'pick them up and care for them like they were their own' (Field Diary 2019). This example might seem trivial, yet it illustrates the multiple social ties and networks enabled by the convivial environment at POSE.

Figure 7: Rain towards the end of the POSE did not deter the stewards and children.

4.2.2 Benefits Beyond the Child

One of the strongest unanticipated themes to emerge from analysis of interviews and observations was the opportunity that temporary closures provided for social interactions between adults within the community (Field Diary 2019):

"There are four stewards at a time. Two people marshalling each barrier which is needed to manage cars coming through safely but is also a great way to get to know people!"

(Field Diary 2019)

"[There is] something really lovely about seeing adults outside with a cup of tea chatting to their neighbours, sharing food and sometimes joining in with children's play. This is a social event for parents too."

(Katherine, Interview 2019)

"... even non-parents would often come out to experience the created sense of community spirit...connectiveness and conviviality"

(Tim, Interview 2019).

The safe and social environment facilitated by temporarily closing streets to traffic enabled new convivial encounters as well as "*opportunity to safely sweep and clean the street of litter and leaves*" (Field Diary 2019). Overall, the residents in WD felt that they "got to know other neighbours better" as "*people from connecting streets would come over to say hello and chat*" (Field Diary 2019). In speaking of her personal experiences of ties formed at her POSE, Katherine referred to a "*lovely woman in her 90s..that gets a lot of joy from seeing kids play outside…and now feels like she's part of a community that she wasn't part of before*" (Interview 2019). The tangible sense of social support, familiarity, belonging and community formed can be particularly critical for older and more vulnerable people in combatting the risks of isolation and loneliness (Bornat 2017).

These findings illustrate how the "benefits of a child-friendly city go beyond children to add value" and improve accessibility, liveability and safety for the wider population (Arup 2017:7; Frank 2006; Hart 2002). As inherently 'social creatures' when public realm "feels welcoming, inclusive, accessible and safe", people will naturally feel a "sense of ownership, natural surveillance and neighbourhood upkeep" that in turn supports opportunities for individuals to meet and interact (Arup 2017:35; Jacobs 1961:40).

In addition to the event itself, the process of applying for street closures has also helped build "community connectedness" (Arup 2017:6). This is because a significant part of the application requires you to talk to people you know in your street in order to consult and gauge interest in order to get help and support throughout the process. Moreover regular 'meetings held in people's homes' and 'new social media platforms' (ie; WhatsApp groups and private Facebook groups) created for communicating were also found to have strengthened ties and relationships between existing neighbours (Field Diary 2019). One resident commented that "*it may seem weird to Facebook the people who live on your street but It has become a really great space to air your views and ideas as well as a platform if you want to borrow lawnmowers… report missing bins and criminal activity or discuss new developments in area*" (Field Diary 2019). This example points to unintended positive virtual community ties that POSE's enable.

4.2.3 Summary

"Playing out and street reclaiming are the single most genius, practical catalyst for reclaiming public space and getting people to rethink how neighbourhoods might work for and beyond children's play and freedoms."

Tim Gill, Interview 2019

The findings from this chapter highlight what can flourish when streets are not the exclusive domain of vehicles. What POSE research displays is that streets can become "valued public spaces" with profound and enduring impacts for both children and the wider community (Gill 2015). In spaces where children have the freedom to play, new relationships have been forged between neighbours and community social ties enhanced (Bornat 2017).

Whilst important not to 'over-egg' the relevance of urban planning, equivalently the benefits of built environments that are planned and designed to be inclusive to children have been demonstrated to "go beyond children to add value to all citizens' lives" (Arup 2017:7). Moreover if the "purpose of town and city planning" is "to evolve towns and cities that are good for all people to live in" as academics such as Barton argue, then planners as mediating bodies play a vital role in "emphasizing the spatial dimensions of rights" and facilitate the most equitable and just outcomes for cities and their populations (2016:8; Beebeejuan 2017).

4.3 Playing out: Reach Wider, Impact Further?

This section will draw on the barriers that the inception of the Playing Out model faces at the local event level and in generating wider momentum. Furthermore this section will analyse a potential new overarching role that the Playing Out model could steer at a wider scale in light of the major challenges facing contemporary cities and the new opportunities in recent positive changes to legislation and political will. Finally this section will propose solutions to the movement's wider traction and further momentum.

4.3.1 Positive Steps, Steps to Go

"Addressing responsibility for children's increased inactivity and time indoors must be spearheaded at the macro, with government and big organisations."

Katherine Mautner, Interview 2019

Under Sadiq Kahn's administration, the profound impact that the built environments can have on children's health, wellbeing and development has risen on the public agenda (Mayor of London 2017). In addition to shifting towards more supportive planning policies regarding children's play and informal recreation in the built environment (Policy S4), in June 2019 the Mayor of London announced London's biggest Car Free Day celebration to be held on 22nd of September (Mayor of London 2019).

What is more, the hard work and advocacy of the Playing Out movement has finally resulted in an official letter to all English Highway Authorities from the government as of August 2019 (Playing Out 2019). The updated guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) to councils will make it easier for residents who wish to turn their quiet neighbourhood roads into occasional 'play streets' (Playing Out 2019). New guidance will reduce the paperwork for residents applying for street closures and address the costs residents face to advertise Play Street Traffic Regulation Orders (PSTRO) by encouraging councils to rather make 'special event' orders which do not need advertisement (Gov 2019). The reduction to costs and bureaucracy is important in order to maintain that playstreets remain inclusive and not just for "wealthier up-and-coming urban areas and leafy suburbs" (Gill 2017).

The positive guidance change will hopefully improve the struggle that local groups have identified in recruiting and retaining stewards and volunteers (Gill 2015). This was an issue found at the WD POSE. Organisers mentioned that it was usually the same few people always having to volunteer and is the reason why I was able to help them for an hour as a barrier steward (Field Diary 2019). In Katherines own experience as a key event organiser, she described *''busier lives''* and *"kids growing up and becoming less interested in participating"* in play streets as reasons as to why she eventually became less personally involved in

organising her areas POSE (Interview, 2019). Her point experience draws on another challenge I noted at the WD POSE, in that the event tended to only entice younger children below the ages of 8 or 9 (Field Diary 2019). When I asked the only teenager present, who was bringing her younger brother to the event, she said older children at POSE were not common because *"they'd rather be on phones and it wasn't seen as that cool…They do sometimes come to the Christmas and Easter parties though…"* (Field Diary 2019). I inferred that the larger Christmas, Easter and Summer street parties referred to stemmed from residents using the POSE time allocation and layout twice or three times a year to host parties which drew a much larger turnout (see Figure 8). The findings above are noteworthy as if child-friendly initiatives are to create environments for all, then further research needs to be carried out on how to make POSE attractive to children all ages.

Figure 8: Child participant's drawing of the outdoor movie projector at the Christmas street party.

"Still a problem but awareness that it's a problem is gaining traction"

Katherine Mautner, Interview 2019

There is still a way to go to ensure our streets are safe and welcoming at all times for children of all ages to play freely near home without intervention. However, as Katherine observes above, the updated guidance and support from government is a monumental step towards the long-term goal in achieving friendly and thriving communities (Interview, 2019).

4.3.2 Towards a Collective Social Responsibility?

On a wider scale, an overarching challenge the Playing Out model faces is that reclaiming processes, akin to most "non-automobile groups and more environmentally friendly types of collective transport", run counter to competitive neoliberal rationalities of self-interest, "growth, speed and automobility" (Fotel 2009: 1271; Lukacs 2017).

"Making cities work better are not primarily technical problems, but problems of values and complex systems."

Tim Gill, Interview 2019

"…the economy is the problem. The economy as a vehicle for our political structures"

Adrian Voce, Interview 2019

"Children don't have a vote… they don't have their own money… so they are routinely overlooked in the way that we plan and design our physical space and our social structures"

Adrian Voce, Interview 2019

Tim and Adrian pinpoint how choices regarding the allocation of scarce resources are often negotiated at the expense of the same marginalised groups, which is why urban planning is often branded as *"a wicked issue"* and deeply political process (Tim Interview 2019; Kiernan 1983:74; Rittel and Webber 1973).

With *"most of the big factors shaping children's health and well-being"* lying outside their capacity, focusing on the needs of children can call attention to the potential power that "collective identity" can play in shaping and reordering existing social structures (Tim, Interview 2019; Lester, 2014). Placing people, in particular children, back at the heart of planning *"lifts people out their own individual terms to encourage a more collective social perspective …and a look to the longer term"* (Tim, Interview 2019; Barton 2016:12).

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2017:55; Ferguson 2019; UNICEF 2017). For example, designing spaces for children, with their limited range and pace, means concurrently designing city spaces comfortable for other more vulnerable city dwellers, such as the elderly and the disabled. Measurable indicators could include the "amount of time children spend playing outdoors", the visibility of children of all ages in the public realm, their "ability to get around independently" and their "level of contact with nature" (Arup 2017:65).

"Given that spatial planning happens over 25 years, who are we planning for?"

Adrian Voce, Interview 2019

This question is significant. Children are projected to make up the significant proportion of the world's urban population by 2030 (Arup 2017). Therefore would it not be "embarrassing" and "foolish" for decision makers to ignore the qualitative measurements of such vital experiences in our cities and persist with practices that create unhealthy environments? (Barton 2016:13).

4.3.3 Going Forward: "Join the Dots" Between Children's Rights and Other Progressive Agendas

"The challenges for spatial planning are huge. The need for effective strategies to combat health, social and climate problems is self-evident, and spatial planning has a part to play."

Hugh Barton 2016:12

In our fast-changing cityscape, the impacts of social and environmental changes on children are often overlooked because a majority of decision-makers are "short-termist politicians" (Gill, cited in Laker 2018). However what if children's right to mobility and right to be protected from the dangers of too much mobility were viewed as intersecting with other national policy areas, such as health, environment, transport or general quality of life.

Moreover what if a child-friendly approach to the design and planning of our built environment was seen as a "unifying theme" and effective "catalyst" in addressing a wide variety of pressing urban challenges including: sustainability issues, mental health crises, social isolation, physical health epidemic, entrenched inequality and perhaps most urgently in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change (Arup 2017:7; Wright *et al* 2017:47).

Child-friendly urban planning has been proven an effective catalyst in response to different urban agendas such as "road safety, air pollution, sustainable behaviours" and in supporting a more active population (Arup 2017:47). This movement travels hand in hand with a transition away from modernistic planning styles towards sustainable development, not only in terms of the environment, but also in terms of community development (social justice) and the economy (Van Der Hoek 2011:7). For example, traffic has been found as both the biggest single cause of air pollution in our cities and the biggest barrier to children's freedom to play out and get around independently (Ferguson 2019). The Playing Out model could therefore help to make abstract urban policy debates more concrete, meaningful and engaging for ordinary people through reiterating, for example that a more child-friendly rather than car-friendly city would not only mean a healthier, happier way of life for children and families but would simultaneously assist a greener city.

"There is nowhere you can visit and state 'this is a child friendly city' - not yet anyway" (Adrian, Interview 2019). However there are cities that have begun to "*join the dots"* between child-friendliness and other progressive agendas (Tim, Interview 2019), such as car-free housing developments including Vauban in Frieberg and Florisdorf in Vienna, as well as initiatives transforming parking spots into bike lanes in Oslo and the Netherlands (Gill 2017; Hertwich *et* al 2004; Peters 2019). These cross-cultural examples have all successfully demonstrated the difference made when a city *"rebalances the power relationship or the allocation of public space between cars and people"* (Tim, Interview 2019).

In terms of the UK, the links with sustainability and health agendas are highly relevant, especially given the widespread and prominent challenges of air pollution, traffic growth and congestion activity-related illnesses including diabetes and heart disease in our cities (Gill 2017:29; Hook *et al* 2018). In addressing and challenging all of these urgent issues alongside

children's health and development, Tim found in his Churchill Fellowship (2017) that the cities that are doing the most to make their built form more child friendly *"are the cities and people in the municipality who were well resourced, connected and effective at getting those bureaucracies to do things more effectively"* (Interview 2017).

With the Mayor's 'Good Growth' agenda and supporting alterations to policy S4, alongside new national guidance from the DfT, it could be inferred that we are witnessing an ultimate strategic opportunity for the further momentum of the Playing Out model. This alignment in political will and policy could embolden an argument for the child-friendly design and planning of our built environment could be a catalyst in navigating a wide variety of pressing urban challenges and unifying theme for pressing of ambitious action.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Research

This paper has focused on the experiences of the 'Playing Out' movement in light of evolving social and political relationships between the child and the City's built form. Within the current context of austerity politics and overarching neoliberal frameworks, planning priorities have frequently focused on individualistic and "short-termist economic growth at the expense of wider or more long-term goals" (Gill 2017:10). Researchers and advocates for child-friendly built environments have highlighted the negative repercussions that contemporary public discourse and planning policies have had both on how public space is perceived and on the development of children in the City. The configuration of urban spaces to accommodate automobility speed and car-dependency has come at the expense of children's presence and independent mobility from many public spaces in today's urban landscape (Fotel 2009; Voce 2016; Gill 2019). As our cities become more densely developed, populated and urbanised, unless the experience of children become integrated into the built environment equation, said implications are only to be intensified.

The continuing momentum of Playing Out as a resident-led movement is therefore highly significant. It should be re-iterated that Playing Out did not set about to be an overarching solution for all urban ills. However the direct and indirect multi-level benefits that research has found as a result of these events points to the significant potential that the movement can orchestrate in "joining the dots" between a variety of progressive agendas and navigating key urban challenges (Gill 2017:9).

Core objectives of this paper have been to promote an improved understanding of the benefits derived from child-friendly planning and design in order to contribute towards an evidence base and to propose how decision makers could enable the wider reach and further implementation of POSE's. The insights and findings presented in this paper emphasise opportunities harnessed from creating healthier, more accessible and inclusive public spaces in which people live, work and grow up. In the short term, rebalancing street hierarchies

provide set hours when the value of streets are transformed and children's right to play takes superiority over the movement of cars. Over a longer time period, the Playing Out model raises awareness in making children more visible within the built environment through the promotion of a more "egalitarian sense of shared ownership and use of residential streets" (Ferguson 2018:5).

While the significance of urban planning should not be exaggerated — the "purpose of town and city planning" is "to evolve towns and cities that are good for all people to live in" — planners as mediating bodies do hold responsibility in "emphasising the spatial dimensions of rights" and facilitating the most equitable outcomes for cities and their populations (Barton 2016:8; Beebeejaun 2017).

Change is not always easy in a city where the car is gifted priority status. There is inertia in business, professions and politics. In emphasising children's freedom to roam and play within the built environment, this paper might appear to argue from some "romantic position" that all we need to do in planning for young children is give them a chance to just let them be (Hart 2002:140). However as this paper emphasises, while children have the right to invent and lead their own activities and to carry them out without constant intervention from adults, there is also a need and collective responsibility for adults, policy and decision makers to adopt more supportive roles. Findings from researching the Playing Out movement demonstrate how significant the choices we make and the leadership we show will play in shaping future neighbourhoods and cities spaces for urban citizens for generations to come

5.2 Limitations and Reflexivity

It should be noted in this section that this research only examined one playing out street event. I had planned to attend up to three separate events, but multiple events fell through due to the poor weather conditions in London in July 2019 and the roll-over nature of these pre-planned organised events meant that they were to not rescheduled in time for the completion of this project. In hindsight, with the sheer amount of data derived from attending one play street event, to attend more than one was potentially too ambitious for the remit of this project.

Moreover while impossible to entirely negate asymmetrical power research relations, throughout the research process I made a conscious effort to repeatedly acknowledge and reflect on my own positionality. In addition to this, I valued all of the informants' own understanding of their circumstances and everyday experiences rather than imposing pre-conceived explanations (England 2006: 288; Rose 1997).

5.3 Recommendations

This research identified the mounting awareness of the impact that street design has on children's everyday experiences within UK planning policies, in particular Policy S4. Policy changes now recognises that children do and should play in a variety of different types of outdoor space and not just dedicated play areas. However a further analysis of the S4 supplementary planning guidance (SPG) is required to explore the impact and effective delivery of these policies. There is an urgent need for the gap between planning policy and delivery to be bridged and any contributions to the field will offer vital support and insight.

Moreover, given the project's area of study limited to London, further research into other international contexts has vast potential to offer valuable contributions to the field both academically but also practically, allowing for comparisons to be made between projects.

Finally, this research has primarily focused on the barriers and challenges that children and child-friendly initiatives face in the urban built environment and has paid little attention to the challenges that child-friendly initiatives can inadvertently present. For example, I suspect that further research is needed in ensuring that the delivery and execution of progressive child-friendly planning and design to attract families to neighbourhoods does not lead to issues related to affordability and gentrification (Van Den Berg 2013). This would be an important area for further research as whilst this paper champions the notion for cities to be child-friendly, it is important that relevant policies should not benefit some at the expensive of others (Voce 2018).

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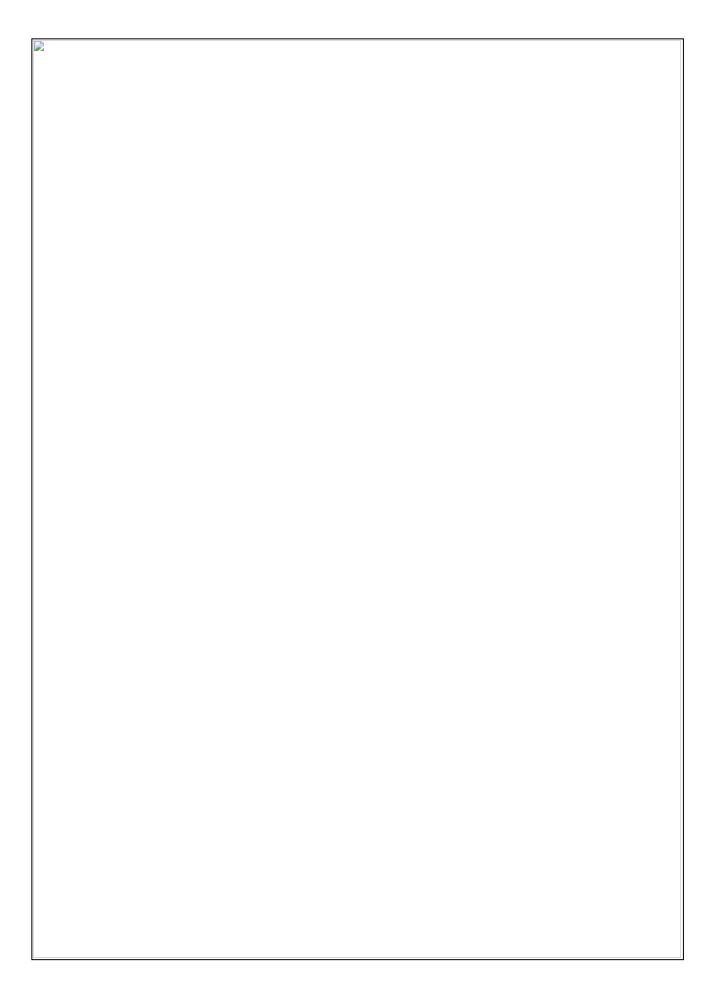https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/draft-new-london-plan/chapter-1-planning-london-s-future-good-growth-policies/policy
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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical Approval From UCL Research Ethics Committee

UCL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
OFFICE FOR THE VICE PROVOST RESEARCH

28th May 2019

Professor Yasminah Beebeejaun
Bartlett School of Planning
UCL

Dear Professor Beebeejaun

Notification of Ethics Approval with Provisos
Project ID/Title: 15739/001: Reclaiming streets for play: from car-friendly to child-friendly public spaces

I am pleased to confirm in my capacity as Joint Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee (REC) that your study has been ethically approved by the UCL REC until **28th May 2020**.

Ethical approval is subject to the following conditions:

Notification of Amendments to the Research
You must seek Chair's approval for proposed amendments (to include extensions to the duration of the project) to the research for which this approval has been given. Each research project is reviewed separately and if there are significant changes to the research protocol you should seek confirmation of continued ethical approval by completing an 'Amendment Approval Request Form'
http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/responsibilities.php

Adverse Event Reporting – Serious and Non-Serious
It is your responsibility to report to the Committee any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to participants or others. The Ethics Committee should be notified of all serious adverse events via the Ethics Committee Administrator (ethics@ucl.ac.uk) immediately the incident occurs. Where the adverse incident is unexpected and serious, the Joint Chairs will decide whether the study should be terminated pending the opinion of an independent expert. For non-serious adverse events the Joint Chairs of the Ethics Committee should again be notified via the Ethics Committee Administrator within ten days of the incident occurring and provide a full written report that should include any amendments to the participant information sheet and study protocol. The Joint Chairs will confirm that the incident is non-serious and report to the Committee at the next meeting. The final view of the Committee will be communicated to you.

Final Report
At the end of the data collection element of your research we ask that you submit a very brief report (1-2 paragraphs will suffice) which includes in particular issues relating to the ethical implications of the research i.e. issues obtaining consent, participants withdrawing from the research, confidentiality, protection of participants from physical and mental harm etc.

With best wishes for the research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Lynn Ang
Joint Chair, UCL Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Information and Consent Form for Participant Observation

<u>Information Sheet for Adult Participants</u>

Title of Study: From Car-friendly to Child-friendly: Reclaiming Streets for Play.

Department: Bartlett School of Planning, UCL.

Name and Contact Details of the Researcher(s): Gabrielle Abadi. Email: ucbqbad@ucl.ac.uk.

Name and Contact Details of the Principal Researcher: Yasminah Beebeejaun
y.beebeejaun@ucl.ac.uk.

1. Invitation Paragraph
You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research us being done and what participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

2. What is the project's purpose?
The purpose of this research is to explore lived experiences and opinions on alterative street use and child-friendly city initiatives through interviews with professionals that hold specific interests and expertise in child-friendly cities, in addition to participant observations at several Playing Out' street events. Through analysing the evolving relationship between children's rights to play and exist within the City, this project seeks to contribute towards an important social and cultural shift in creating public spaces that are more welcoming, accessible and inclusive to children.

3. Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen because you have been identified from the online closed Facebook group as a member, participant or organiser of a Playing Out Street event in your area.

4. Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to. If you decide to withdraw you will be asked what you wish to happen to the data you have provided up that point.

5. What will happen to me if I take part?
During the three hour observation at the Playing Out Street event, Participants will be asked questions regarding the Playing Out street events that last no longer then 5-10 minutes. Individuals will be asked for their consent for photography to take place. No individual will be identifiable in photographs.

6. Will I be recorded and how will the recorded media be used?
Written and photographic recordings of activities made during this research will be used only for analysis and for illustration in academic presentations and lectures. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

7. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable discomfort, disadvantages or risks of taking part in this research process. However, researcher will remain alert to any unexpected verbal or non-verbal discomforts, disadvantages or risks if they arises during the research.

8. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will contribute towards raising greater awareness for the need of a wider reach of playing out street events due to the benefits it brings to children and the wider community.

9. What if something goes wrong?

Whilst there are no foreseeable serious situations occurring from research. If you have any complaints, issues or concern with any aspect of research please contact the Principal Researcher Yasminah Beebeejaun at y.beebeejaun@ucl.ac.uk.

Should you feel that your complaint has not been handled to their you can contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee at ethics@ucl.ac.uk

10. Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any ensuing reports or publications.

11. Limits to confidentiality

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

12. What will happen to the results of the research project?

A copy of all results will be forwarded by email to participants who wish to see them before 2nd September 2019, when the final research will be published. You will not be identified in any report or publication.

13. Local Data Protection Privacy Notice

Notice:
The lawful basis that will be used to process your personal data is 'Public task' for personal data.

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk

This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

No categories of personal data will be used except for the research ethics consent (to participate in research) process. In research participants will be categorised as 'adults' or 'children'.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

14. Who is organising and funding the research?
I am personally funding the research.

15. Contact for further information
For further information you may contact myself, Gabrielle Abadi at ucbqbad@ucl.ac.uk or my supervisor Yasminah Beebeejaun at y.beebeejaun@ucl.ac.uk.

Title of Study: Reclaiming Streets for Play: From Car-friendly to Child-friendly Public Spaces.

Department: Bartlett School of Planning, UCL.

Name and Contact Details of the Researcher(s): Gabrielle Abadi. Email: ucbqbad@ucl.ac.uk.

Name and Contact Details of the Principal Researcher: Yasminah Beebeejaun
y.beebeejaun@ucl.ac.uk.

The purpose of this study is to contribute data towards the importance of alternative visions and tools that challenge the notion of 'who streets are designed for' and to remind us that streets are a public good for all to enjoy equally and inclusively.

Through your child's participation, this research aims to provide evidence of the significant benefits derived from Playing Out street events for children and communities in order to support the wider inception of this model.

After this study, all participants will have access to an electric copy of research data, and all collected data information and photographs recorded will be carefully disposed of. Photographs will ensure no child is identifiable.

****

I agree for my child to take part in the above University College London research project. I have had the project explained to me and I have read and understood the Information Sheet, which I may keep for records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- Allow interviewer to observe street event.
- Allow interviewer to photograph street event. Photographs will ensure participants are not identifiable.
- Allow interviewer to ask questions to adults at street event.
- Allow interviewer to ask children at street event to either verbally articulate or draw what street event means to them.

As a participant, you have the right to withdraw from the research at any point without fear or penalty.

Please Sign Name:_____

Date:_____

If you have any concern please contact Yasminah Beebeejaun y.beebeejaun@ucl.ac.uk

Appendix C: List of Interviews and Play Street Event Attended

15th June   Participant Observation at Play Street Event in West Dulwich

10th July   Interview with Adrian Voce

18th July   Interview with Tim Gill

14th August   Interview with Katherine Mautner

Appendix D: List of Interview Questions

Category/Theme	Question	Intention
Personal	What sparked your interest in the field of play and design friendly to children?	To build rapport and learn more about interviewee and their relationship with my research topic.
	As a researcher/consultant/play therapist – conducts/focuses work that focuses on children's play and free time. How do you view the relationship between the child and the city of London has changed over time?	Learn more about interviewee and their relationship and opinions with my research topic.
Needs of Child	What would you argue are the biggest health problems and hazards facing children living in large cities?	Gain understanding of interviewee's opinions on the child focus element of my research topic.
	What are your opinions on the use of children and their health/ developmental needs in public discourse to drive home this urgency of the climate change and air pollution crisis London faces? (eg; Mayor of London)	Gain understanding of interviewee's opinions on the child focus element of my research topic.
Needs of Parents/Caregivers	In your opinion what prevents parents/ caregivers from permitting children to play unsupervised in public space?	Gain understanding of interviewee's opinions on the guardian aspect of my research topic.
	Between the role of guardians and the role of society where does the responsibility for children's increased inactivity and time spent indoors fall?	Gain understanding of interviewee's opinions on the guardian aspect of my research topic.
Examples of Child friendly initiatives	In your experience, how can making a city more child-friendly improve it for the whole community? Can you provide further examples?	Gain deeper insight into specific research interviewee has conducted.
	Following from your X (eg; Churchill Fellow) research experience what child-friendly place-making lessons can we learn from other cities/countries?	Gain deeper insight into specific research interviewee has conducted.
Playing Out movement	Are you familiar with or do you have experience with the Playing Out initiative?	Learn of personal experience and knowledge interviewee has on the Playing Out movement.
	Do you believe that the Playing Out scheme has been an effective way to expand the horizons of childhood in terms of: A) Impacting societal views on children's presence and participation in public space B) Helping to reconnect children with the individuals and built environment around them	Learn of personal opinion and knowledge interviewee has on the Playing Out movement.
	In your experience working with children and families, what are the benefits to be derived from outdoor experiences and independent mobility?	Learn of personal opinion and knowledge interviewee has on one of the most profound benefits derived from the Playing Out.
	From your experience or knowledge of Playing Out movement – are there prominent social disparities in street event reach? (eg: class, race, gender) If so, how could this movement navigate and target this issues?	Learn of personal opinion and knowledge interviewee has on the Playing Out movement. To generate further research awareness for this paper.
Barriers	In your X research you identified X (eg: funding) as an overwhelming challenge facing child-friendly planning and design in the UK.	Gain understanding of interviewee's opinions and

	What are other key factors that prevent the creation of urban space catering for the children's specific access and need for play?	knowledge on the barriers and challenges that the adoption of child friendly initiatives face.
	What are the challenges in making already established cities more child-friendly?	Gain understanding of interviewee's opinions and knowledge on the barriers and challenges that the adoption of child friendly initiatives face.
Looking to the Future	In your opinion, how can the Planning system or society better incorporate the needs of children and their experiences at the local, regional and national level?	Learn of interviewee's personal opinion for the further momentum of the movement.

Appendix E: Risk Assessment Form

NOTE TO APPLICANTS: IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO INCLUDE ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH IN THIS APPLICATION FORM AS YOUR ETHICAL APPROVAL WILL BE BASED ON THIS FORM. THEREFORE ANYTHING NOT INCLUDED WILL NOT BE PART OF ANY ETHICAL APPROVAL.

YOU SHOULD READ THE ETHICS APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND HAVE THEM AVAILABLE AS YOU COMPLETE THIS FORM.

APPLICATION FORM

SECTION A	APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW: HIGH RISK

A1	**Project Title:** Reclaiming Streets for Play: From Car-friendly to Child-friendly Public Spaces

Date of Submission: 2nd May	Proposed Data Collection Start Date: 5th July
UCL Ethics Project ID Number: 15739/001	Proposed Data Collection End Date: 30th August

Is this application for continuation of a research project that already has ethical approval? *For example, a preliminary/pilot study has been completed and this is an application for a follow-up project? If yes, please provide the information requested below.*
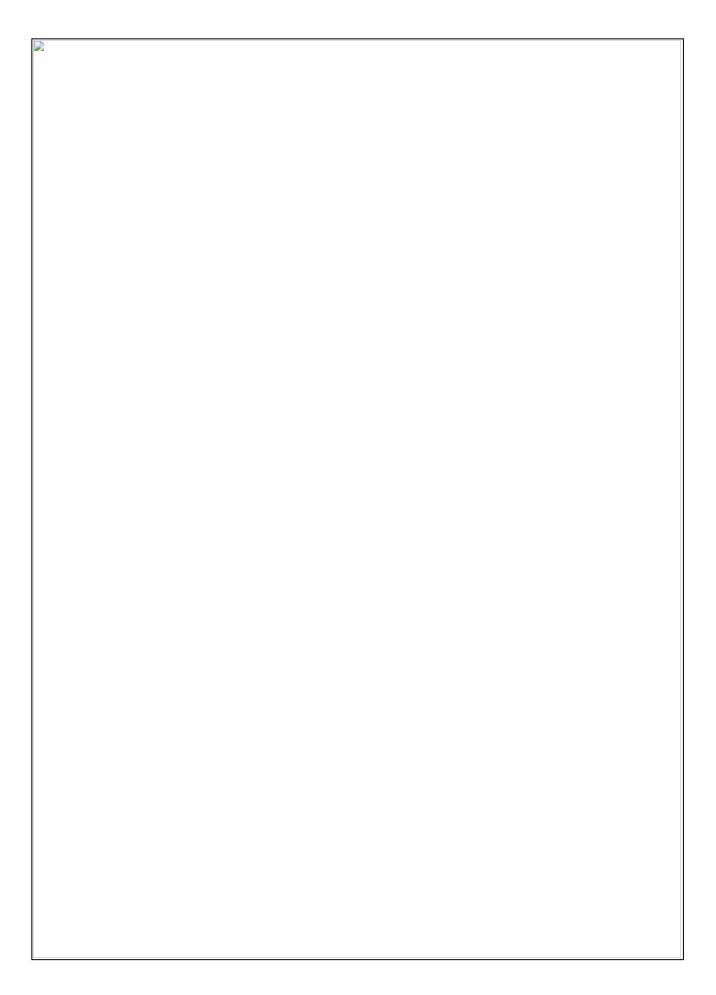
Project ID for the previous study:

A2	**Principal Researcher**

Please note that a student – undergraduate, postgraduate or research postgraduate cannot be the Principal Researcher for Ethics purposes.

Full Name: Yasminah Beebeejaun	Position Held: Associate Professor
Name and Address of Department: University College London Fifth Floor Central House 14 Upper Woburn Place London WC1H 0NN	Email: y.beebeejaun@ucl.ac.uk
	Telephone: +44 (0)20 3108 9947
	Fax:

Declaration To be Signed by the Principal Researcher

- I have met with and advised the student on the ethical aspects of this project design *(applicable only if the Principal Researcher is not also the Applicant).*
- I understand that it is a UCL requirement for both students & staff researchers to undergo Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks when working in controlled or regulated activity with children, young people or vulnerable adults. The required DBS Check Disclosure Number(s) is: APPLICATION PENDING
- I have obtained approval from the UCL Data Protection Officer stating that the research project is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. My Data Protection Registration Number is: APPLICATION PENDING
- I am satisfied that the research complies with current professional, departmental and university guidelines including UCL's Risk Assessment Procedures and insurance arrangements.
- I undertake to complete and submit the 'Continuing Review Approval Form' on an annual basis to the UCL Research Ethics Committee.
- I will ensure that changes in approved research protocols are reported promptly and are not initiated without approval by the UCL Research Ethics Committee, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the participant.
- I will ensure that all adverse or unforeseen problems arising from the research project are reported in a timely fashion to the UCL Research Ethics Committee.

A. I have discussed this project with the principal researcher who is suitably qualified to carry out this research and I approve it.

I am satisfied that *[please highlight as appropriate]*:

(1) Data Protection registration:

- has been satisfactorily completed
- <u>has been initiated</u>
- is not required

(2) a risk assessment:

- has been satisfactorily completed
- <u>has been initiated</u>

(3) appropriate insurance arrangements are in place and appropriate sponsorship [funding] has been approved and is in place to complete the study. ☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) a Disclosure and Barring Service check(s):

- has been satisfactorily completed
- <u>has been initiated</u>
- is not required

Links to details of UCL's policies on the above can be found at: http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/procedures.php

**If any of the above checks are not required please clarify why below.

PRINT NAME:

SIGNATURE: DATE:

SECTION B	DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

**It is essential that Sections B1 and B2 are completed in simple understandable lay language that a non-expert could understand or you risk your project being rejected

B1	Please provide a brief summary of the project in <u>simple lay person's prose</u> outlining the intended value of the project, giving necessary scientific background. *(max 500 words)*.

Planning is about adding value to the ways individuals experience places and working with them to improve those areas. Playing Out began as a simple, direct action by two mothers on their own street in Bristol, UK. Involving over 800 street communities, Playing Out has now grown into a UK-wide movement driven by both parents and residential activists (Ferguson 2018).

Reclaiming urban streets for "play, social activity, and community building" is a creative bottom-up process that challenges "what and whom streets are for", through situating the experience of humans, in particular children, back at the heart of local planning (Barton 2016:1; Engwicht 1999:9; Montgomery 2013: 177). More research is needed to understand the impact of play street initiatives on both children and the wider communities. This research will explore the 'Playing Out' process and outcomes as a tool in reclaiming streets from car to child-friendly spaces. In order to contribute data towards an important cultural shift in thought surrounding children, cities and who streets are for. This research aims to provide evidence of the schemes impact on both children and communities to form an argument for further funding and resources to be placed in making streets a place for human's social and play experiences. The purpose of this study is to highlight the importance in alternative visions and tools that are challenging existing urban and spatial

inequalities, and act to remind us that streets are a public good for all to enjoy equally and inclusively.

B2   **Briefly characterise in <u>simple lay person's prose</u> the research protocol, type of procedure and/or research methodology (e.g. observational, survey research, experimental). Give details of any samples or measurements to be taken** *(max 500 words).*

Qualitative mixed-methods will be used to gather data. A direct participant observation at a Playing Out street event with permission of the selected community organisation members will be conducted. Photographs and a field diary of my observations and thoughts will allow me to register details that I will thematically categorise in my analysis at a later date. Individuals will be asked for their consent for photography to take place and no individual will be identifiable in photographs.

This method will be open to the opportunity for the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of interaction with adults caregivers and volunteers at the event in the form of unstructured interviews on topics related to the Playing Out street event.

Children and their opinions are a valuable part of the research process. They will be offered the opportunity to either verbally articulate or draw what playing out in their street means to them.

Attach any questionnaires, psychological tests, etc. (a standardised questionnaire does not need to be attached, but please provide the name and details of the questionnaire together with a published reference to its prior usage).

B3   **Where will the study take place (please provide name of institution/department)?**

London, Borough of Camden and Borough of Hackney

If the study is to be carried out overseas, what steps have been taken to secure research and ethical permission in the study country?
Is the research compliant with Data Protection legislation in the country concerned or is it compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018?

The study will take place solely in the UK at 'Playing Out' events in the boroughs of Hackney and Camden.

B4   **Have collaborating departments whose resources will be needed been informed and agreed to participate?**
Attach any relevant correspondence.
N/A

B5   **How will the results be disseminated, including communication of results with research participants?**

Results will be in the final Masters dissertation and all participants will be informed of the results on the research via an electric copy of the final report.

B6	**Please outline any ethical issues that might arise from the proposed study and how they are be addressed.** *Please note that all research projects have some ethical considerations so do not leave this section blank.*

Children are a potentially vulnerable group in society. This research will only engage with children with guardians or carers present and after their consent is acknowledged formally. This research will remain aware that Children might not be comfortable engaging in research, so there will be options to verbally articulate or draw what street events mean to them, as well as the clearly stated option to not participate or stop participating at any time.

SECTION C	DETAILS OF PARTICIPANTS

C1	**Participants to be studied**

C1a. Number of volunteers:	20-30
Upper age limit:	80
Lower age limit:	4

C1b. Please justify the age range and sample size:

Public spaces contain populations from a variety of backgrounds. Streets are a public space where everyone should feel welcome to participate in public life. The range in ages represents the changing patterns of caregiving, and the multi-generational perspective this research will take.

C2	**Accessing/Using Pre-Collected Data:** **If you are using data or information held by a third party, please explain how you will obtain this. You should confirm that the information has been obtained in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.**

N/A

C3	**Will the research include children or vulnerable adults such as individuals with a learning disability or cognitive impairment or individuals in a dependent or unequal relationship?** ☒ Yes ☐ No

How will you ensure that participants in these groups are competent to give consent to take part in this study? *If you have relevant correspondence, please attach it.*

I will ask for present guardians and carers consent. Children will then be asked to consent. Research will be conducted in a relaxed setting of their natural environment. If during the research I get the impression that any child feels uncomfortable, whether through verbal or non-verbal indicators, the research and interaction will stop.

C4	**Will payment or any other incentive, such as gift service or free services, be made to any research participant?**

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes, please specify the level of payment to be made and/or the source of the funds/gift/free service to be used.

Please justify the payment/other incentive you intend to offer.

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C7	**CONSENT**

Please describe the process you will use when seeking and obtaining consent.

Through written and verbal processes. Attached is the written consent form for all participants.

A copy of your participant information sheet(s) and consent form(s) must be attached to this application. For your convenience proformas are provided in Appendix I. These should be filled in and modified as necessary.

In cases where it is not proposed to obtain the participants informed consent, please explain why below.

N/A

C8	**Will any form of deception be used that raises ethical issues? If so, please explain.**

N/A

C9	**Will you provide a full debriefing at the end of the data collection phase?** ☒ Yes ☐ No

 If 'No', please explain why below.

C10	**Information Sheets And Consent Forms: Appendix I**

A poorly written Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s) that lack clarity and simplicity frequently delay ethics approval of research projects. The wording and content of the Information Sheet and Consent Form must be appropriate to the age and educational level of the research participants and clearly state in simple non-technical language what the participant is agreeing to. Use the active voice e.g. "we will book" rather than "bookings will be made". Refer to participants as "you" and yourself as "I" or "we". An appropriate translation of the Forms should be provided where the first language of the participants is not English. If you have different participant groups you should provide Information Sheets and Consent Forms as appropriate (e.g. one for children and one for parents/guardians) using the templates provided in Appendix I. Where children are of a reading age, a written Information Sheet should be provided. When participants cannot read or the use of forms would be inappropriate, a description of the verbal information to be provided should be given. Where possible please ensure that you trial the forms on an age-appropriate person before you submit your application.

SECTION D: APPROPRIATE SAFEGUARDS, DATA STORAGE AND SECURITY

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C5	**Recruitment**

(i) Describe how potential participants will be identified:

Participants will be approached by the closed online 'Playing Out' Facebook groups that I am already an approved member of.

(ii) Describe how potential participants will be approached:

Participants will be approached by the closed online 'Playing Out' Facebook groups that I am already an approved member of.

(iii) Describe how participants will be recruited:

Participants will be approached by the closed online 'Playing Out' Facebook groups that I am already an approved member of.

Attach recruitment emails/adverts/webpages. A data protection disclaimer should be included in the text of such literature.

C6	Will the participants participate on a fully voluntary basis?	☒ Yes ☐ No

Will UCL students be involved as participants in the research project?   ☐ Yes ☒ No

*If yes, care must be taken to ensure that they are recruited in such a way that they do not feel any obligation
to a teacher or member of staff to participate.*

Please state how you will bring to the attention of the participants their right to withdraw from the

D1 Will the research involve the collection and/or use of personal data?
☐ Yes　　　☒ No

I am not going to collect any personal data, such as any specific name, gender and age, through informal interviews. I will describe participants as 'children' and 'adult' category without specifying their gender or ethnicity.

Any photography at the event will firstly only be used after consent from each individual and further ensure that no individual is identifiable from photographs collected or used in final dissertation.

Personal data is data which relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data OR from the data and other information that is either currently held, or will be held by the data controller (the researcher).

This includes:
- *any expression of opinion about the individual and any intentions of the data controller or any other person toward the individual.*
- *sensor, location or visual data which may reveal information that enables the identification of a face, address, etc (some postcodes cover only one property).*
- *combinations of data which may reveal identifiable data, such as names, email/postal addresses, date of birth, ethnicity, descriptions of health diagnosis or conditions, computer IP address (if relating to a device with a single user).*

- **data which might be considered sensitive in some countries, cultures or contexts? No.**

If yes, state whether explicit consent will be sought for its use and what data management measures are in place to adequately manage and protect the data.

D2 <u>During the Project</u> (including the write up and dissemination period)

State what types of data will be generated from this project

Field notes and photographs.

How will data be stored, including where and for how long?

Physical hard copy field notes will be stored in locked filling cabinet. Any electronic data will be stored on password protected laptop. Management is anonymised records and write up and encryption of laptop.

Who will have access to the data, including advisory groups and during transcription?

UCL Masters dissertation supervisor Professor Yasminah Beebeejaun.

D3 Will personal data be processed or be sent outside of the European Economic Area (EEA)*?

No

If yes, please confirm that there are adequate levels of protection in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and state what these arrangements are below.

N/A

D4   <u>After the Project</u>

What data will be stored and how will you keep it secure?

Any hard copy field notes will be stored in a locked filling cabinet. Any photographs or electronic data will be kept on password secured laptop. Data will not be used for other research purposes. Management is anonymised records and write up and encryption of laptop.

Where will the data be stored and who will have access?

Data will be stored on password protected laptop and in locked filing cabinet. Only myself and my master dissertation supervisor will have access, if necessary, and I will not transfer any data over non-secure networks.

Will the data be securely deleted?

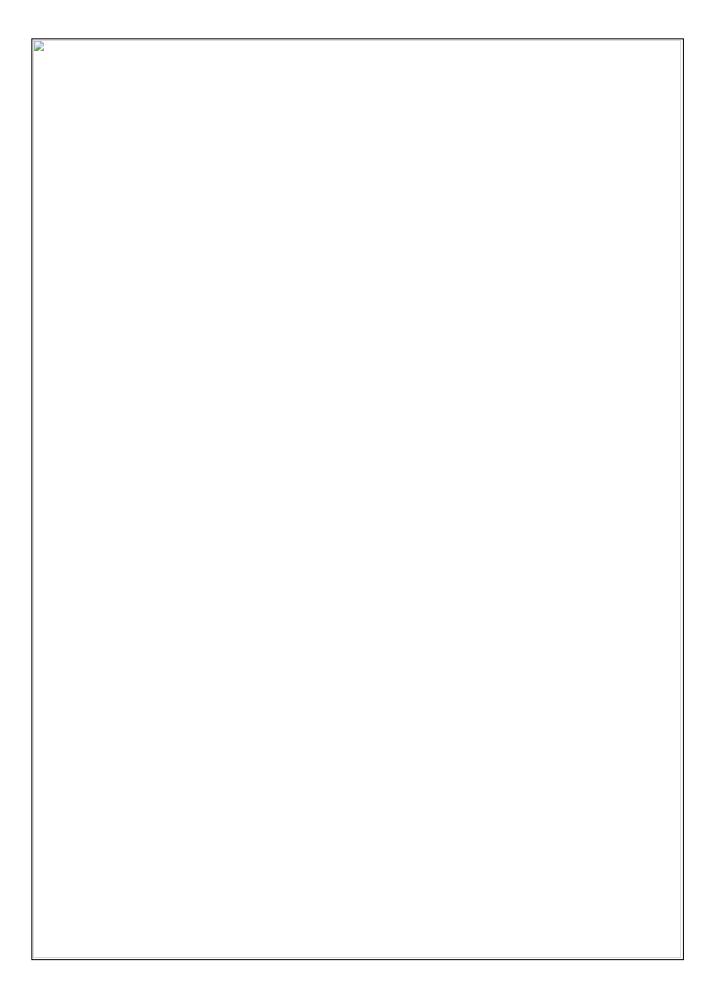**If yes,** please state when will this occur:

Yes, will destroy any copies of identifiable data after graduation in September 2019.

D5   **Will the data be archived for use by other researchers?**   ☐ Yes   ☒ No

If **Yes**, please describe provide further details including whether researchers outside the EEA will be given access.

SECTION E: DETAILS OF RISKS AND BENEFITS TO THE RESEARCHER AND THE RESEARCHED

E1   **Please state briefly any precautions being taken to protect the health and safety of researchers and others associated with the project (as distinct from the research participants).**

When walking to the study area will pay due diligence walking to and from location, utilise the traffic green cross code and be punctual so that I would not be heading to study area in a rush. As research involves lone working, I will make others aware of my whereabouts and time expected home.

Does the project involve the use of genetically modified materials? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If **Yes**, has approval from the Genetic Modification Safety Committee been obtained for work? ☐ Yes
☐ No

If **Yes**, please quote the Genetic Modification Reference Number: ▨

E7	Will any non-ionising radiation be used on the research participant(s)? ☐ Yes ☒ No
	If **Yes**, please complete Appendix III.

E8	Are you using a medical device in the UK that is CE-marked and is being used within its product indication? ☐ Yes ☒ No
	If **Yes**, please complete Appendix IV.

CHECKLIST

Documents to be Attached to Application Form (if applicable)	Tick if attached
Section B: Details of the Project	
• Questionnaire(s) / Psychological Tests	☐
• Relevant correspondence relating to involvement of collaborating department/s and agreed participation in the research i.e. approval letters to gatekeepers seeking permission to do research on their premises/ in their company etc.	☐
Section C: Details of Participants	
• Parental/guardian consent form for research involving participants under 18	☒
• Participant/s information sheet	☒
• Participant/s consent form/s	☒
• Advertisement	☐
Appendix I: Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s)	☒
Appendix II: Research Involving the Use of Drugs	
• Relevant correspondence relating to agreed arrangements for dispensing with the pharmacy	☐
• Written confirmation from the manufacturer that the drug/substance has has been manufactured to GMP	☐
• Proposed volunteer contract	☐
• Full declaration of financial or direct interest	☐
• Copies of certificates: CTA etc...	☐
Appendix III: Use of Non-Ionising Radiation	☐
Appendix IV: Use of Medical Devices	☐