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**I feel like everything's tailored for boys, and that you need things really for girls.**

# What's the problem?

- Teenage girls are badly served by public parks
- Facilities 'for teenagers' almost always consist of
  - Skate parks
  - MUGAs or other kinds of fenced pitch
  - BMX track
- They are all dominated by boys
- We need to change the facilities not fix the girls.

# Statistics

- A Swedish study showed that from the age of 8, boys outnumbered girls in parks 80:20.
- Our Parkwatch results show that 90% of the teenage facilities in parks are used 90% by boys and young men;
- Yorkshire Sport research in 2022 found that 68% of girls felt that there was nothing for them to do in parks, and
- 59% of girls didn't feel welcome in parks because the spaces were dominated by boys.



# Girls don't belong

- A 2021 report led by young women into Glasgow Parks revealed that of women and girls who use parks, only 20% felt very comfortable in their chosen park
- Responding to a survey in York in 2021, 90% of 10 -17 year old girls who are into skateboarding said they don't feel comfortable in the skatepark.
- Nature England's CPAN survey 2021 showed that when asked what has stopped them spending more time outside in the past week, girls were almost twice as likely as boys to say "other people make me feel uncomfortable".
- 82% of girls thought they should be more involved in designing parks and open spaces in a survey by Girlguiding.

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Take the skate park out, I hate it. It's scary to walk past, you get shouted at by boys.

# Skate Parks

- 84% of skateboarders are male.
- Boys often drive girls away from the skate parks through exclusion and harassment
- US research showed that a skate park deterred girls from using the area.
- They are expensive provision for a minority - only 8% of teenagers skateboard and just 2% of teenage girls.

**ParkWatch**

**16%**

**On skateparks  
there were 707  
teenagers, of which  
112 were girls**

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**I don't know any group of girls that would go there and kick a ball around.**

# MUGAs

- The most common provision for teenagers.
- 92% used by boys and young men in our survey.
- Fencing and narrow entrances mean they do not feel safe to girls.
- Studies show that girls play more actively in a playground without a hard pitch.

## ParkWatch

**8%**

**On MUGAs there  
were 756 teenagers,  
of which  
60 were girls**



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**Two football pitches doesn't make a space for girls.**

# Pitches

- Women and girls' teams are just 10% of pitch users.
- Girls see pitches as 'manspreading' – creating big areas which are not for them.
- Even girls who play football don't feel they can have an informal kickaround.
- Written into planning and other policies.
- Can result in recreational areas which are almost entirely geared to the needs of men and boys.



# Security

- Just 22% of teenage girls thought their local parks were safe
- 40% of girls and young women feel unsafe when they go outside
- Sexual harassment is a big part of this:
  - Two thirds of girls in the UK have been sexually harassed in public space;
  - 35% of girls have been sexually harassed in public while wearing school uniform
  - 33% of girls who have been harassed felt too embarrassed to tell anyone.
- Security includes feeling you belong in space and not being disapproved of.

# What does better look like?

- Good work has been done in Europe, particularly Scandinavia
- Different approaches but common themes
  - better lighting
  - circular paths
  - subdivided sports areas with more entrances
  - social seating
  - hanging about: swings, gym bars and hammocks
  - performance spaces
  - good quality toilets

# Copenhagen: Carlsbergbyen

- A MUGA as more inclusive space
- Prioritising seating and greenery
- Also acts as flood water run off collection tank in high rain.



# Copenhagen: Israels Plads

- In the centre of the city
- No sense of being trapped
- Multiple spaces within the fence.



# Vienna – changes to the MUGA







**Stockholm:**  
**Bredang**

- not prescriptive
- space of one MUGA
- social seating and shelter



# Contacts



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