

Her Ground

Creating Safe Spaces in Lyngford Park

An exciting new project about Lyngford Park
with Somerset Art Works and artist Lucy Oates.



SOW
somer
set
art works



**TAUNTON
TOWN
COUNCIL**


Avon and Somerset
Police Community Trust
(Registered Charity No: 1070770)



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

A little bit about the project:

Her Ground -

A project about Lyngford Park with Somerset Art Works and Artist Lucy Oates

Through the summer of 2024, artist Lucy Oates had lots of conversations in North Taunton - with girls, women and anyone who identifies as female - to hear their thoughts and to learn more about what they want from their local park.

Through a series of creative workshops across North Taunton, we have been gathering thoughts and designing community ideas into models and artwork, which you will see later in this presentation.

Somerset Art Works is hoping to build on this project, to further fundraise and work with Lucy to develop community ideas into reality - making the park a more welcoming and inclusive space.

Her Ground project video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7AMALShOI4>

Workshop 1 Function and Form Workshop at Lyngford Park Primary

Lucy ran a Function and Form workshop at Lyngford Park Primary School for around thirty Year 6 (age 11) students. Using laser cut wooden shapes and prompts, the students were free to explore their own ideas of how to make the park a more inclusive.

Several ideas and suggestions came up, including:

- ***New play equipment*** for young people age 10+
- ***Refurbishing the skate park*** (none of them used it as they were told it was unsafe).
- ***Improving the youth shelter*** by either adding colour to it, adding more equipment to it, or perhaps making the roof a living one e.g. adding wildlife to it.
- ***Allocating specific walls in the park for graffiti and murals*** where people can practice/ make their mark. There could be 'paint jam' days set up for this.
- ***More seating in the park with planters built in*** to introduce more wildlife.

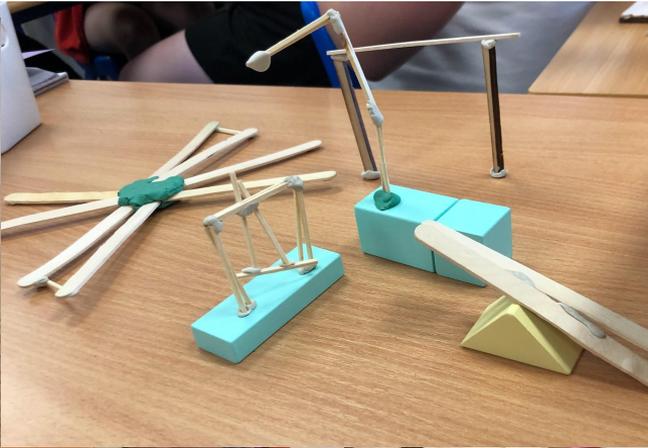
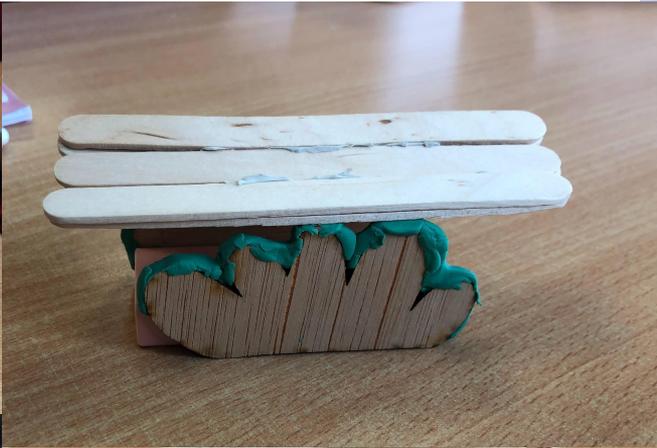
What could be installed in the park?

"Gymnastic bars"

"Communal seating areas."

Quotes from online survey

Function and Form Workshop at Lyngford Park Primary



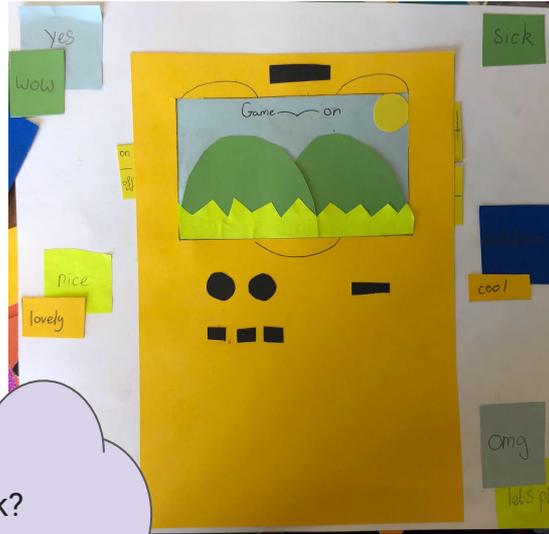
Workshop 2 Colour and Play Workshop at Lyngford Park Primary

Lucy ran a Colour and Play workshop with around thirty Year 6 pupils, bringing forward some ideas that were developed in the previous workshop, including having murals and graffiti walls in the park.

Through collage, the individual students either designed a game, a positive message or an image, using the cards and papers provided. Several ideas and suggestions came up, including:

- *Designing **games to welcome more families** to the park, making it feel safer.*
- ***Painting the games on the ground and pathways** of the park, leading people through it and getting people to be more active.*
- ***Having positive messages** painted around the park would encourage good behaviour and make park goers feel like they were in a more welcoming environment.*
- *Others produced **images of animals and wildlife** as something they would like to see painted in the park.*

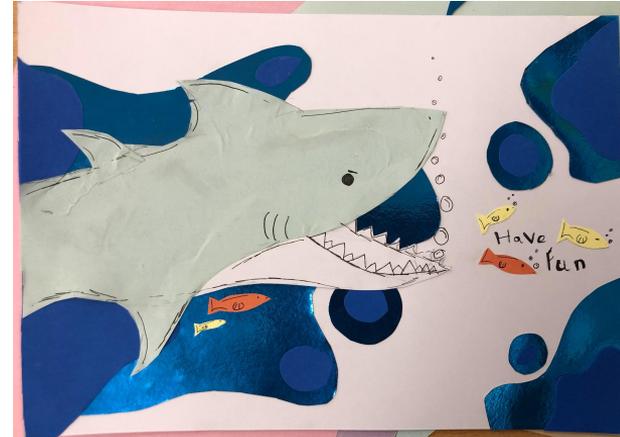
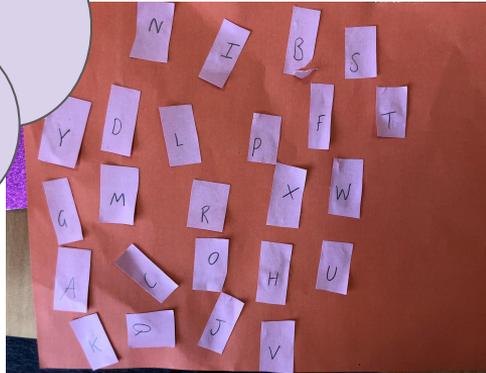
Colour and Play Workshop at Lyngford Park Primary



What could be installed in the park?

"Positive messages"
"Flowers, colours."

Quotes from school workshops

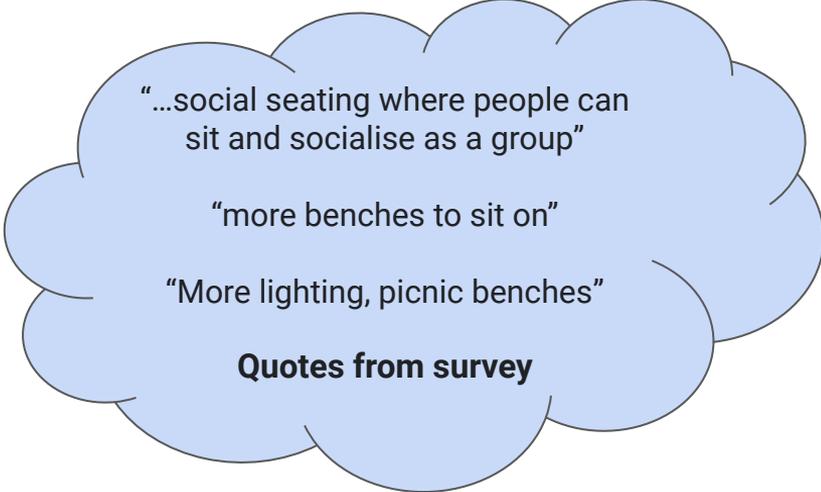


Pride in Priorswood Day 1 - Build Your Own Park

Alongside the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme team, Lucy ran a 'Build or Draw Your Park' workshop at a Family Fun day in Lyngford Park with around 35 people taking part. She provided similar materials to the workshop at Lyngford Park Primary, but also provided plasticine. While the young people took part in the activity, Lucy and Hannah asked the parents/carers to fill out surveys for the project.

Several suggestions and ideas came up:

- *More seating*
- *More nature*
- *The skatepark to be different with colours and art*
- *More play equipment*
- *Paths to go around the whole park*
- *Games to be painted in the paths to encourage movement*
- *Toilets for women to use*

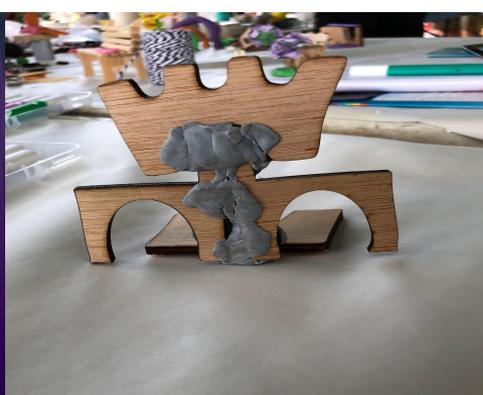


"...social seating where people can sit and socialise as a group"

"more benches to sit on"

"More lighting, picnic benches"

Quotes from survey



Pride in Priorswood Family Fun Day 1

Pride in Priorswood Day 2 - Positive Bunting

Together with the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme team, Lucy ran painting workshop for families to create a collaborative bunting that portrayed positive messages and patterns. Around 40 people took part.

The idea stemmed from previous comments of having positive messages and artwork in the park.

The bunting was then installed in the community garden as a temporary art work.

Again, while the activity was taking place Lucy and Hannah spoke with the public and here are some of the suggestions:

- *More seating*
- *Artwork / murals / 'rules of the park'*
- *More nature and wildlife*
- *More lighting*





Pride in Priorswood Day 2



Creative Conversations at Priorswood Library

“Not any / enough accessible play equipment for disabled children”

Quote from Holly- works at TOG (Taunton Opportunity Group) and is also mother of a child who attends TOG

Lucy ran two creative conversation workshops at Priorswood Library and created a board for people to add to. Some of the ideas and comments are below.

“I wish there was lighting down the side of the library path in the winter, it always feel quite dark”

Quote from women who attended the workshop

“There needs to be more seating and plants, like the wild flowers that were planted, it would be really nice if we had more”

Quote from women who attended the workshop

Her Ground

Creating Safe Spaces in Lyngford Park

An exciting new project about Lyngford Park with Somerset Art Works and artist Lucy Oates.

We want to chat to girls, women and anyone who identifies as female, to hear your thoughts and to learn more about what you want from your local park.

Lucy will be running artist workshops across North Taunton, gathering thoughts and designing your ideas into artwork. If we're successful with fundraising we hope to create and produce some of your ideas, but we need your help!

If you would like to share your thoughts but are unable to attend a workshop, you can fill in the short survey overleaf or online by scanning the QR code.



This is a really great chance to take ownership of your space and make a difference for yourself and your community.

Contact: lucyoatesdesign@gmail.com

Lucy Oates: www.lucyoates.com

Somerset Art Works: somersetartworks.org.uk



Short Survey

Return to the workshop leader or to Priorswood Library

What do you like about Lyngford park?

What don't you like about Lyngford park?

What do you do when you go to the park?

Do you feel safe in the park? If no, why not?

What could be installed in the park that might make it more welcoming to women and girls particularly?

We ask for your contact details as we would like to keep in touch as the project progresses. This is not compulsory.

Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

Survey responses from the community

A total of 51 participants responded to our survey - on paper, in-person with our team and online.

- Suggestions to make the park more welcoming included **adding more colour through the addition of flowers, a mural, and a welcome sign**. Others also asked for more incentives for the community to gather in Lyngford Park via events and activities.
- The main responses and suggestions on how to improve Lyngford Park were to make it more welcoming place for women and girls, focusing largely on **safety and updated park equipment/facilities**.
- The introduction of **CCTV cameras** for security alongside increased police presence, were the most popular suggestions for making the park feel safer and more welcoming. Another key suggestion was the introduction of **more lighting in the park during winter and at night**.
- People also wanted to see **updated, and more, play equipment**. Suggestions included accessible play equipment, gymnastic bars, a new slide, swings, a climbing frame, hopscotch and a zip line. Someone also mentioned more padding on the playground for safety.
- In terms of facilities, people wanted to see **more benches and communal seating** in Lyngford Park. Respondents also wanted toilets, baby changing facilities and a small café or coffee shop. Some others mentioned a bridge across the river, gates on the playground and a path entirely around the park.

Question 1 – What do you Like about Lyngford Park?

- Most participants responded that they liked utilising Lyngford Park's playground equipment; in particular, the obstacle course, skate park, football goals and workout equipment.
- Several respondents also appreciated the large green open space in the park; mentioning the nature, trees, river and stream as beneficial qualities in its urban surroundings.
- Many respondents identified the park as a great place to be with friends.
- Additionally, people mentioned liking the location and its proximity to the library, schools and shops. Some also enjoyed the summer events and activities held in the park.

Question 2 – What don't you like about Lyngford Park?

- Above all, most people did not like the level of antisocial behaviour in Lyngford Park and many perceived it as a dangerous place.
- Often described as having 'dangerous' and 'dodgy' people, teenagers and youths hanging around, many respondents felt that these groups negatively impacted their experience of Lyngford Park.
- Several reported experiencing rude, threatening and abusive behaviour in the park including swearing and shouting. Others also expressed the knowledge of people possessing 'knives' and 'weapons' in the park.
- Generally, respondents felt the park was unsafe when walking in the dark and at night, including during winter.
- Broken and damaged equipment was another highly reported negative in Lyngford Park. Others said there wasn't enough children's play equipment and two participants highlighted the lack of accessible equipment and areas designed for disabled people or those with accessibility needs such as wheelchair users.
- Litter was also mentioned as an issue in Lyngford Park, including reports of broken glass, graffiti and waste in the river. One participant mentioned there aren't enough bins in the park to prevent this.

Question 3 – What do you do when you go to the park?

- The vast majority of participants said they used Lyngford Park for going on the playground and gym equipment, playing football and using the skate park. These reported activities often included playing, chatting and meeting with friends in the park.
- Some participants said they walk or bike in the park (sometimes with dogs). Others responded that they like relaxing in the park, sitting on benches, under trees and in the field, sometimes having picnics.
- A few participants also said they use the library when they go to Lyngford Park.

Question 4 – Do you feel safe in the park?

If no, why not?

- There was a notable split between participants who did and did not feel safe in Lyngford Park. Many who responded 'yes' either didn't go into detail or, mentioned the presence of their parents as the main reason the park felt safe.
- Some participants responded that they 'sometimes' or 'sort of', felt safe in Lyngford Park, preferring the park when it was empty or quiet and only liking to visit at 'safe times'.
- Participants who responded 'no' largely identified Lyngford Park as a dangerous and unsafe place due to 'dodgy', 'bad' or 'threatening' people. Several respondents identified these as groups of teenagers, youths or other children, reporting negative behaviours such as swearing, shouting, and the presence of knives, weapons, alcohol and cigarettes.
- Some respondents reported personal experiences of bullying and abuse in Lyngford Park, whilst others felt that they knew of past incidents and crimes happening in the park which added to their feelings of being unsafe.
- Responses also identified that the park felt particularly unsafe in the dark, whether at night or during the winter.

Q5 – What could be installed in the park that might make it more welcoming to women and girls?

- The main responses and suggestions on how to improve Lyngford Park to make it more welcoming to women and girls focused largely on safety and updated park equipment/facilities.
- The introduction of CCTV cameras for security alongside increased police presence were the most popular suggestions for making the park feel safer and more welcoming. Another key suggestion was the introduction of more lighting in the park for winter and night time.
- People also wanted to see updated and more play equipment, suggestions included accessible play equipment, gymnastic bars, a new slide, swings, a climbing frame, hopscotch and a zip line. Someone also mentioned more padding on the playground for safety.
- In terms of facilities, people wanted to see more benches and communal seating in Lyngford Park. Respondents also wanted toilets, baby changing facilities and a small café or coffee shop. Some others mentioned a bridge across the river, gates on the playground and a path entirely around the park.
- Suggestions to make the park more welcoming also included adding more colour through the addition of flowers, a mural and a welcome sign. Others also asked for more incentives for the community to gather in Lyngford Park via events and activities.

Further quotes from online survey:

What could be installed in the park to make it more welcoming to women?

“The park lacks flowers, so some art work on the perimeter walls, paths or 3D structures that takes inspiration from colourful flowers. Beautiful artwork on the sides of the ramps. Curved, beautiful structures that incorporate skateboard ramps or seating but are also interesting to look at”

Quote from survey

“Perhaps more lighting when it's dark. A mural advocating code of conduct i.e. be respectful don't be a creep.”

Quote from survey

“More colour”

Quote from survey

Examples of seating that we could adapt:

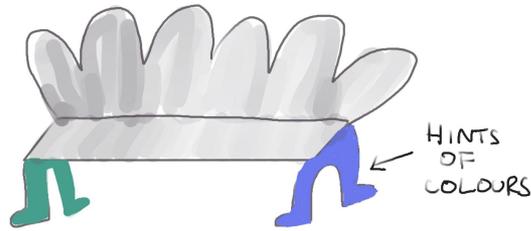


At the workshops Lucy showed images of examples, here are some that were shown. This was a very popular choice.

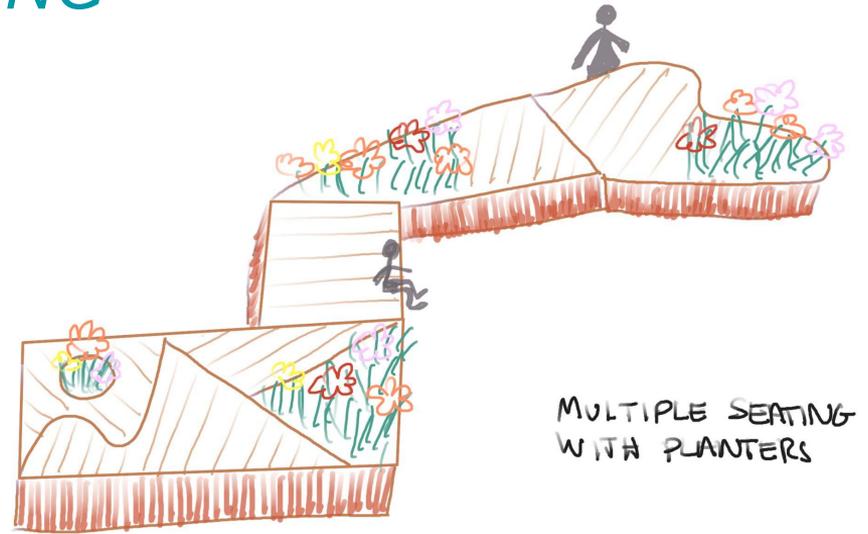
To move forward with this idea we would need to:

- Lucy design and make a model prototype to show to fabricator
- Connect with a fabricator/maker to discuss best materials to use for longevity/vandalism. Then build the benches with the fabricator.
- Connect with the community to have the final say on designs
- Install in the park.

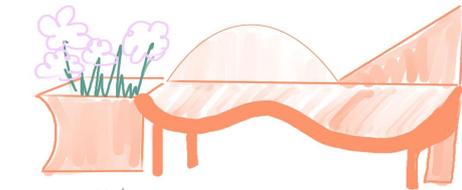
Lucy's initial sketches: SEATING



METAL CHAIRS



MULTIPLE SEATING WITH PLANTERS



WOODEN/ CONCRETE SEATING WITH PLANTERS

Following on from the workshops and suggestions, Lucy has designed some rough initial sketches tying in the ideas from the models made in the workshops. There were also suggestions of the seats being more colourful and not your 'typical' bench. Materials would be something to consider in this to limit vandalism and ensure longevity.

Examples of murals with positive messages that we could adapt

At the workshops Lucy showed images and examples, here are some that were shown. This was a very popular choice.

To move forward with this idea we would need to:

- Lucy create a final mural design using the workshop feedback
- Connect with the community on the final say of the designs
- Decide where the mural should be located in the park
- Install in park.



Lucy's rough sketches: *Murals with positive messages*



Following on from the workshops, Lucy designed some rough sketches of the type of mural these could be.

If this was to be the what we changed in the park, then the next step would be to create a final design for a location in the park.

This could be done as a series of 'rules' around the park either permanently on walls or on boards that are attached to trees etc.

Examples of floor games that we could adapt



At the workshops Lucy showed images of examples, here are some that were shown. This was a very popular choice.

To move forward with this idea we would need to:

- Have Lucy design a final floor game mural using feedback from the workshops
- Connect with the community on the final say of the design
- Decide where the games could go in the park
- Install in park

Lucy's initial sketch: *Pathway games*



“Hop scotch and
zip line.”
Quote from survey

A popular suggestion was to create floor murals for the pathways that were games. It was felt that if there were games painted in the pathways it would increase exercise and movement, draw more families to the park, and add bright colours which would make the environment feel safer.

Here is a rough sketch of the type of ‘floor game’ murals these could be. If this was to be what we changed in the park, then the next step would be to create a final design using some of the games the children designed in workshop for a location in the park.

Examples of skateparks elsewhere

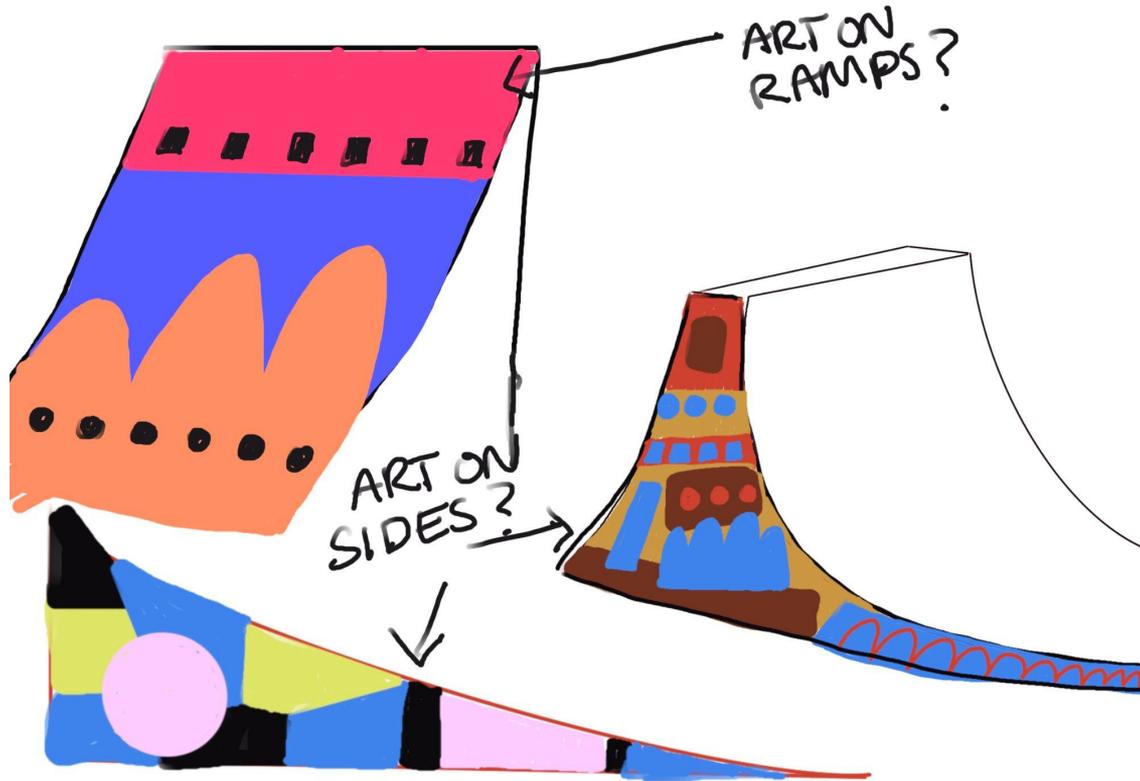


At the workshops Lucy showed images of examples, here are some that were shown. This was a very popular choice. To move forward with this idea we would need to:

- Lucy design and make a model prototype
- Connect with a company/ fabricator that specialises in skateparks to discuss how to do this
- Connect with the community to have the final say on the design
- Install in park.

An alternative option could be to simply paint the skatepark once rebuilt.

Lucy's rough initial sketches: *Skate park*



Here are some rough sketches of how art and colour could be included in the skatepark.

We could either paint on the existing skate ramps using specialist paint, creating designs based of the feedback from the workshops and surveys.

However community users have told us that the skatepark is unsafe to use. Structurally, it would be best to connect with a company who can build skateparks and then add in our own touch through colour and artwork, as many females have stated they would use it if this was the case.

What's next?

Over the summer of 2024 our project has identified key factors in the park that we could change to make it a safer and more inclusive space for everyone, in particular women and girls.

To summarise:

- Seating with planters
- Murals with positive messaging/rules
- Floor murals with games
- Skatepark to change

We now need to share these ideas with as many interested partners as possible. We really want to make a difference and enable young people to take part in creating a better place at the heart of the community. Please get in touch if you can help with raising funds to make this happen and help make the park a safer and more inclusive space.

All work developed will include a sustainability audit to ensure environmentally friendly materials are selected and environmental impact is considered at all stages.

www.somersetartworks.org.uk

Her Ground

Creating Safe Spaces in Lyngford Park

An exciting project about Lyngford Park
with Somerset Art Works and artist Lucy Oates

Over the summer months 2024, artist Lucy Oates had lots of conversations in North Taunton, with girls, women and anyone who identifies as female, to hear their thoughts and to learn more about what they want from their local park.

What we did

10 x creative workshops

Artist **Lucy Oates** ran a series of fun, creative workshops, gathering thoughts and designing community ideas into models and artwork.

Beaker survey: Participants at Pride in Priorswood were asked to place a counter in the beaker that reflected how much they enjoyed the activity. There were 75 participants in these workshops at the park and 55% said they really enjoyed it, 45% said they enjoyed it.

👍 = 55% 😊 = 45% 😐 = 0% 😞 = 0% 😡 = 0%

151 x participants

We engaged with 151 participants across three settings:

Priorswood Library | Lyngford Park Primary School | Pride in Priorswood Family Days

The majority of participants were 11 - 16 and most of these were year 6 pupils from Lyngford Park Primary School. 15% of participants were over 17.

Under 10: 17% 11-16: 58% 17-25: 6% 25-40: 8% 40-60: 7% 60+ : 4%

Somerset Art Works
somersetartworks.org.uk

51 x surveys



Surveys were made available to participants to either fill in at the workshop, at home or online. The surveys were designed to gather an overview of how people felt about their local park. These are some of the responses to the 5 questions:

What do you like about Lyngford Park?

Most participants responded that they liked the opportunities for outdoor physical activity at the park, including the outdoor gym, obstacle course, skate park and football goals.

What don't you like about Lyngford Park?

Above all, most people did not like the level of antisocial behaviour in Lyngford Park and many perceived it as a dangerous place, particularly after dark.

What do you do when you go to the park?

The vast majority of participants said they used Lyngford Park for outdoor physical activity. Participants also reported using the park as somewhere nice to chat and meet with friends.

Do you feel safe in the park? If no, why not?

There was a notable split between participants who did and did not feel safe in Lyngford Park.

37% of people said they did not feel safe

28% of people said they did feel safe

35% said they sometimes felt safe

Many people who said they sometimes feel safe reported only feeling safe in the daytime, with friends/family or when there is no one else in the park. There were lots of reports that large groups in the park can be threatening and that there is a lot of anti-social behaviour and some violence.

What could be installed in the park that might make it more welcoming to women and girls particularly?

The responses included updating current park facilities so that they are safer and more aesthetically pleasing, as well as adding more nature areas and flowers. Suggestions to improve the park's safety in general included more lighting and CCTV.

Film

Watch the project film here



Filmmaker Hannah Earl worked with Lucy Oates to create a short film documenting the project. Scan the QR code or [click here](#).

Developing Phase 2

From the workshops and creative conversations there were definitely consistent ideas that arose. We are hoping make these ideas a reality during phase 2 of the project.

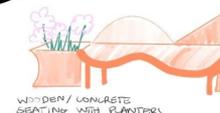
More seating around the park, with planters built in to them to encourage nature.

Murals/ colours with positive messages painted around the park on blank walls or games areas.

Make the skatepark structurally safer and more visually appealing.

More flowers/nature to be planted around the park.

Games painted in the paths particularly around the nursery, these could be done in an artistic way.





A Somerset Art Works Project

With thanks to funding from:



**TAUNTON
TOWN
COUNCIL**



Avon and Somerset
Police Community Trust
(Registered Charity No: 1076770)



LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Supported by North Taunton One Team and
Persephone Books

With thanks to Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme