

# MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



# BAM

BRINNINGTON ACTIVE MOVEMENT

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**MSA  
LIVE 24**

## Team

**Atikatu Yaya Abubakar** (MArch1)

**Siddharth Kallupadam Manoj** (MArch1)

**Patricia Susana Mock Gris** (MA AR)

**Sanah Murtaza** (MArch1)

**Karim Almatari** (Erasmus)

**Li Qingwu** (BA1)

**Rachel Choy Rui Xuan** (BA1)

**Syeda Abid** (BA1)

**Zha Yichen** (BA1)

**Alhanouf Sulaiman A Alsulaiman** (BA2)

**Anais Maria Achilles** (BA2)

**Nadine Dandachli** (BA2)

**Ralia Ben Abbes Taarji** (BA2)

**Tamara Lino** (BA2)

**Xinyue Cui** (BA2)

## Partners

Life Leisure is a Community Interest Company (CIC) which is owned by the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. They strive to ensure that residents have access to affordable provision within their local communities. Their efforts are aimed towards people of all ages, Life Leisure offers a wide variety of opportunities for people to join in and connect with each other.

Their whole purpose is to improve the lives of others, this is a key driver of all the work that they do. Developing a more active and healthier community is their mission. Life Leisure believe that physical activity can help improve well-being and health of the community. They work to have a positive impact on social, mental, and physical health of their local community. Group exercise is a fundamental element that helps to cultivate an environment of support in which both newcomers and regular gym goers can develop not only accountability but motivation too, as they see that this journey is not just their own but a shared one.

The end goal is that exercise shouldn't be seen as a chore but as sustenance in the way food is. Enjoyment can be found through personalisation and adaptation of exercise. Introducing activities such as dance and yoga allows these audiences to see the wider berths that exercise can reach, increasing wellness in body and mind. This targets the loneliness epidemic in the country as work and study can get increasingly monotone. Putting energy into a new activity can be good for mental wellness and physical wellbeing.

# Introduction

## BAM! BRINNINGTON ACTIVE MOVEMENT

We are the Brinnington Active Movement.

The aim for this project is to make Brinnington more active. We are working with our Collaborators Life Leisure who have briefed us on what outcomes they plan to achieve. Life Leisure's main aim was to create an audio walk and encourage outdoor activities. To achieve this goal throughout this project we aimed to create interventions and activities that would encourage members of the local community to engage in outdoor activities. We communicated with our collaborators frequently during this project, which enabled us to refine our action plan. We developed a website for the audio walk project so that as people approach each location of the walk they will be able to scan a QR code which would direct them to the website and allow them to listen to facts about the town. Our collaborators shared with us that Stockport has high deprivation and health disparities and a high number of people who struggle with their mental wellbeing. We found that encouraging outdoor activities would be beneficial for both mental and physical health.

From our own research we found that for individuals experiencing depression, feelings of low energy can often deter them from engaging in physical activity. According to the NHS, regular exercise has been shown to effectively uplift mood, particularly for those with mild to moderate depression. The type of exercise undertaken is less important than finding enjoyment in it, as this fosters consistent participation. According to physical activity guidelines of the NHS, adults aged 19 to 64 should aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week to maintain health. Even brief bouts of exercise, such as a brisk 10-minute walk, can provide mental clarity and relaxation benefits. Therefore, incorporating outdoor walking, especially in natural environments, aligns well with both the physical activity recommendations and the mental health benefits associated with being outdoors. Walking outdoors has been identified as a valuable tool in alleviating symptoms of depression and reducing the risk of associated physical health conditions like obesity and cardiovascular disease. A study from 'Evidence Based Nursing' suggests that exercising in natural settings offers greater enjoyment and satisfaction compared to indoor exercise, leading to significant decreases in negative emotions such as tension, confusion, anger, and depression. Specifically, research indicates that a single 60-minute walk in a large urban park yields greater reductions in negative affect compared to walking along a busy road. These findings highlight the importance of incorporating nature into physical activity interventions for mental well-being. However, challenges persist in making such interventions accessible beyond affluent contexts, as safe natural environments are often a socioeconomic privilege. Despite these obstacles, efforts to promote outdoor physical activity as a complementary treatment for depression should be pursued across diverse cultural and geographical settings.

From this we saw how important this audio walk would be for the community which struck an interest in how we could improve other aspects of the town such as the park entrance as we noticed that the entrance wasn't very welcoming. We also learned that signages throughout the town are prone to being vandalised so we worked on ways to redesign the signs and to discourage this act.

# Brinnington Maps

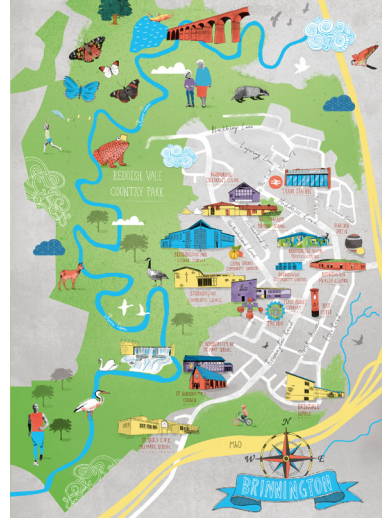
## Exploring the context

Brinnington is located in a north east suburb in Stockport in Greater Manchester. Before the 1950s and 1960s local housing development, Brinnington was an open farm land. Reddish Vale which is a county park is popular with families for exploring and walks, it is located to the west of Brinnington. Brinnington mainly consists of council owned dwellings which include high rise flats. The area has a long term unemployment rate of 20%, it is known for its high crime levels. Brinnington Road and Northumberland Road are two streets which were named by the police as to be the worst roads in north Stockport in 2010. Regeneration has taken place in this area. The top shop site has been demolished and replaced with around 53 shared ownerships houses and a first house community centre.

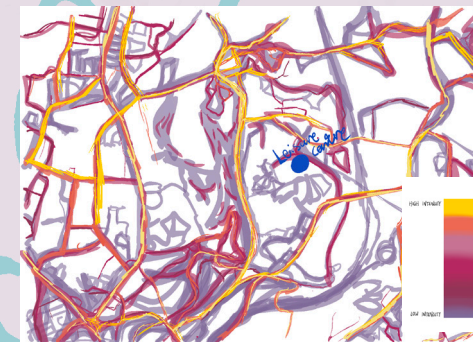
## Brinnington Local Maps

The following maps on the right are a set of maps created by the Local Pilot Scheme. The main idea behind this scheme was to take care of mental and physical health and a good way to do this is by walking through the local area. The maps show the local residents and visitors a guide to local landmarks and what they can do in the local community for example they could visit Reddish Vale which is a great place to unwind. Stockport created the Local Pilot scheme it is part of the Stockport Moving Together physical activity recovery programme. This programme was a response to Covid-19. This scheme is about finding innovative and new ways to encourage and support people to live a healthier lifestyle by becoming more active. The first and second map on this page show local walking routes and options of physical activities available in the area to encourage people to live healthier lives. The third map shows historical landmarks. These three maps help to improve the accessibility in Brinnington. Local residents had a huge part in the creation of these maps, they provided their feedback and input on what these maps needed to capture. This helped to meet the local communities demands.

Throughout this project we used the Brinnington maps as a reference as we know how important they are to the local community.



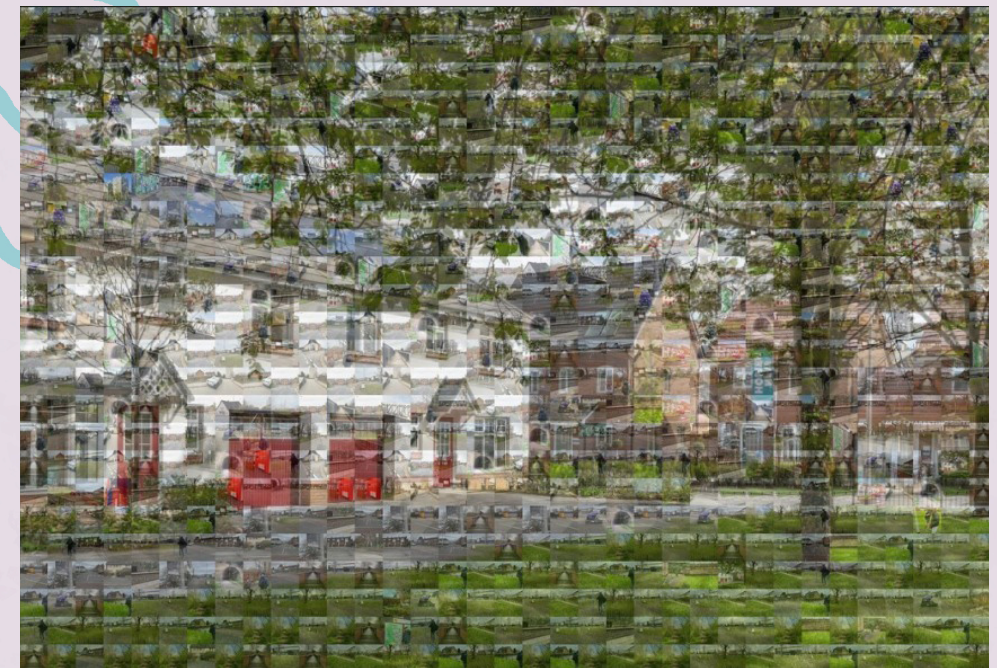
Types of Green Spaces



Heat Map of Walking Routes



Urban Latency Map (500m - 800m)



Site Visit Photo Mosaic

# Wishing Wall

## A community consultation activity

For this project we understand the importance of the local communities feedback and opinions. We decided to create a wishing wall which was an informal and fun way to gather the local communities opinions on what they would like to see change or improve in their area.

We attended a community event at Life Leisure on the 28th April. This event gave us the opportunity to meet and interact with the local community as well as learn more about what they want to see in their community.

When speaking to the community we gave them a small task to write on a post-it note about what improvements they would like to see in the area and about what we could do to encourage people to engage in outdoor activities. Once they had done this they stuck their notes onto the wishing wall.

The most common themes that were mentioned by the members of the community were to include more outdoor activates in the parks and safe spaces to walk. This task was a key driver as it helped us with our decision making process throughout the project.



BIKE RACKS

MORE OUTDOOR STUFF

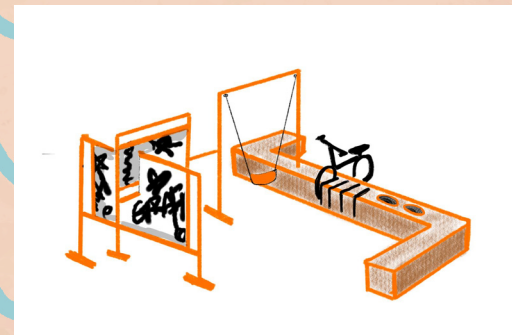
AUDIO WALKS

NICE PLACES TO WALK

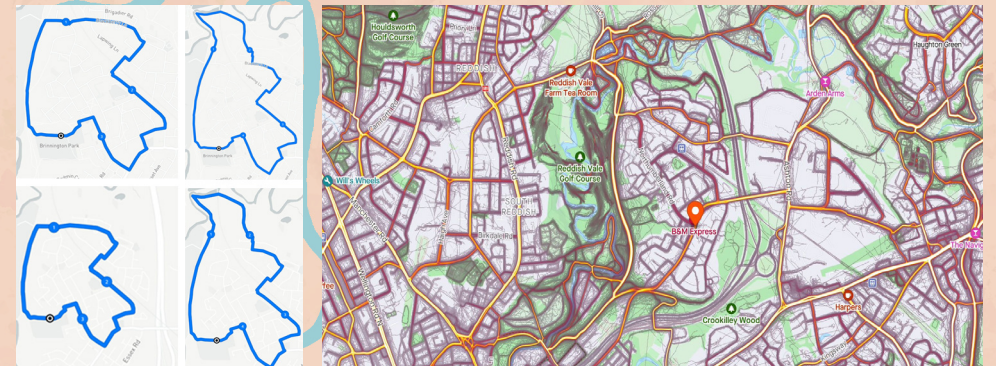
INVITING PARKS



Mood board for outdoor spaces



Early stage concept sketch of park interventions



Here are some early stage mappings we have created for the locations of the audio walk.

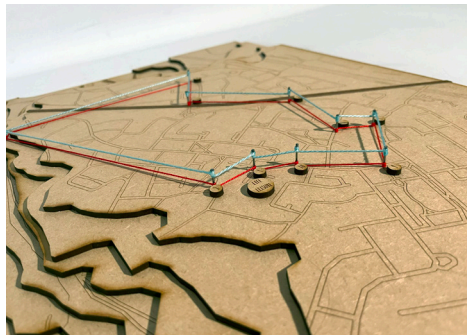
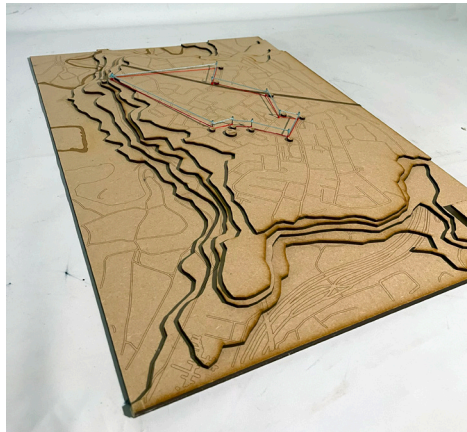
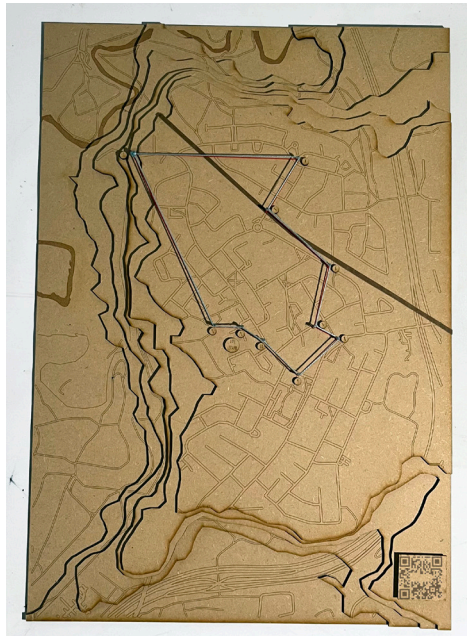
# Audio Walk

## Development and Process

Based on our analysis and the needs of the people of Brinnington, we began to design the new audio walk. Following the design of the original maps, a new version was created to display the new route with an optional extension highlighted allowing for two options (40 minutes and 55 minutes). The route starts and ends at the Life Leisure centre to create a full loop, passing through checkpoint landmarks such as Red Valle Country Park, the train station, the youth centre, the bowling green and the park interventions. The optional extension involves passing by the visitor centre and viaduct which are two areas of superb aesthetic qualities.

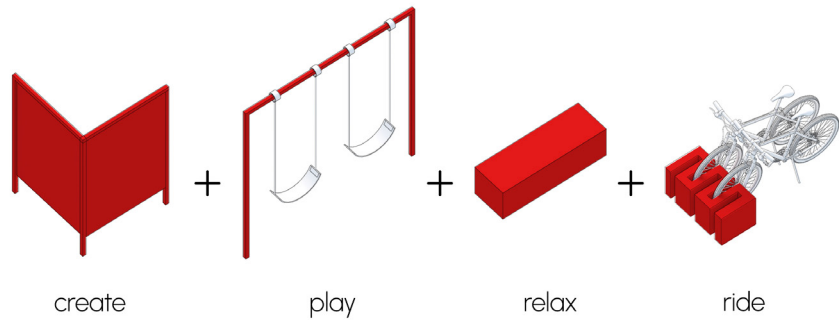
The audio was then recorded and placed onto a website which can be accessed via the QR code or typing the URL. In it, the history, notable features, and facts are stated to accompany the journeygoer.

To present this aspect of the project to the clients a physical model of the town was made highlighting the topography and the route. It is hoped that it will help in aiding and communicating the route for discussion and consultation.

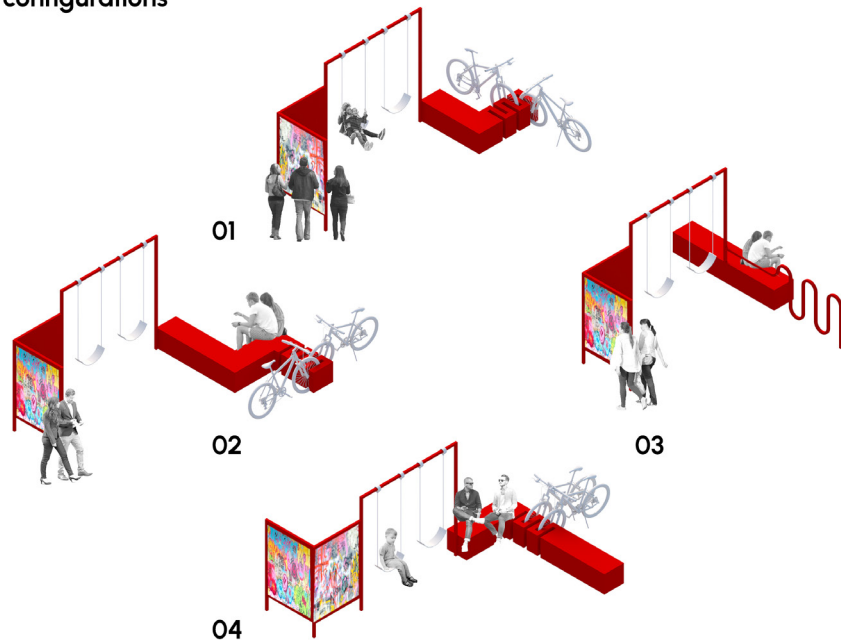


# Intervention #1

## Modular Park Furniture and Audio Walk Checkpoints



### configurations



The first intervention for the Reddish vale country park involves the use of modular park furniture. These modular pieces are intended to motivate the community to get more active by providing inviting spaces for them to pause, create, play, and relax. One of the key features of these modular pieces are the graffiti walls aimed at reclaiming vandalism by giving it a place to be. In this intervention graffiti is seen as a form of expression and a means to communicate through art by the community.

The benefits of these modular pieces of furniture include its flexibility and adaptability. They are intended to have customizable configurations to suit different needs and purposes such as increasing seating capacity and so on. In addition, the modular furniture interventions are more cost effective and sustainable as most materials can be sourced locally and recycled.

The implementation of these modular hotspots are bound to generate more foot traffic into the park, thus encouraging the residents to engage in the Brinnington Active Movement.



Proposed concepts of modular park interventions

To support the proposed modular park furniture we have incorporated the use of maps at every audio walk stop.

The importance of signage and wayfinding interventions can not be stressed enough. When applied strategically, they are effective in helping users navigate complex spaces, reducing confusion and frustration. Clear signage interventions like these help make the environment more inclusive and user friendly by making provisions for people with disabilities such as the use of braille or bright colours for individuals with visual impairments.

In addition they enable us to form a cognitive map of our surroundings by locating landmarks through visual cueing, thus providing psychological comfort to individuals, especially those with impaired memory and cognitive function by creating a sense of place.

# Intervention #2

## Local Identity

The signages locating local amenities and places of historical significance failed to portray the essence of the community and were positioned beyond general height of vision in fear of vandalism. Since the Brinnington Maps conceptualised a visual identity for the community, we took it a step further to expand on that style and revive these landmarks.

The places of significance such as community center, church, old topshops, the hub etc were listed out and their illustrations were made creating bespoke signages for the community building on to the established local identity.

1:1 Model of Signage



Train Station & Children Center



Community Church Signage

# Intervention #3

## Park Gate Design

Among the concerns raised by the community of Brinnington was to revive the rich Reddish Vale Country Park by creating a safe and inviting entrance in contrast to the existing metal barricades. The entrance has 3 components, similar to the park module intervention, with bike stands, bench & signage, and entry.



Existing Park Entrance

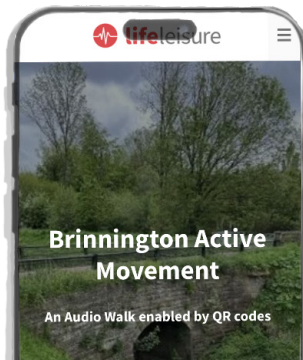
Proposed entrance



Proposed entrance

# www.bamaudiowalk.com

Digital Identity for Brinnington

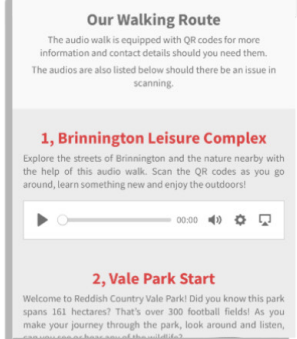


The website was designed to accommodate the digital version of the audio maps and to create a digital identity for Brinnington. The website is accessible through the QR code above or by its URL name.

The home page includes the existing Brinnington maps and introduces the audio walks map. The website includes a gallery page, where all the different designs and renders created by BAM are published. It also includes the About page, explaining our aims, interventions, progress, and the future.



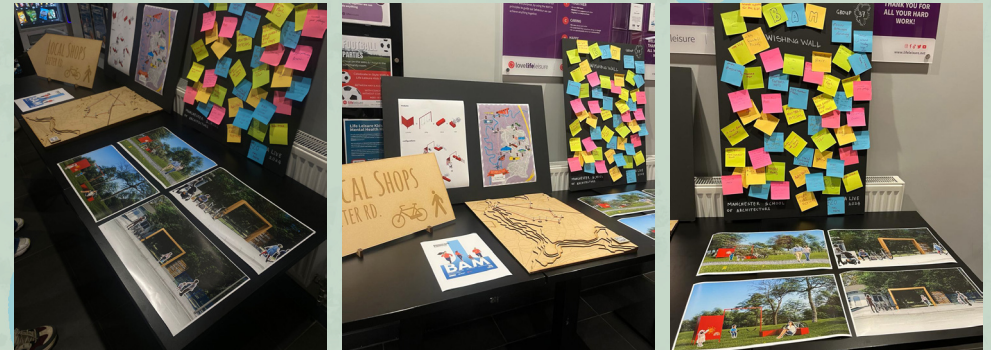
This is the audio maps section, located in the home page. The "See the Stops" button will lead you straight into the audios of each stop.



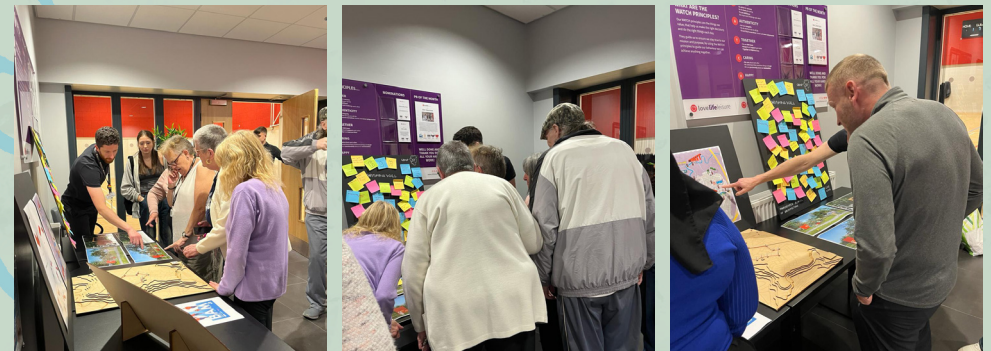
This page can be accessed by clicking the "See the Stops" button or by selecting "Route" on the options tab. It contains the audios and transcribed text of each stop.

# Exhibition at Life Leisure

## Final Presentation



Exhibition at the Life Leisure Complex of the models, diagrams, renders, maps, and wishing wall



Explaining the project to community members

## Reflections

Since the first meeting, the collaborators expressed the importance of listening to Brinnington's community. With visits to the Community Centre and the Wishing Wall we gathered opinions from the community and the effort prove to be successful in the exhibition.

We felt welcomed by the community in the day of the exhibition. People were happy to see their town represented on a physical model, read every wish on the wishing wall, looked at the renders and compared them to what exists today. One person expressed how necessary the park entrances were, since they would encourage people to visit the park. Another person told us how the modular furniture would get vandalised, to which we debated that they were meant to be vandalised, their purpose was creative release. The exhibition started conversations and became an example of the possibilities available for Brinnington.

For the last two weeks the team worked hard to deliver a project that would represent Brinnington's wishes and seeing the feedback from the community made it all worth it.



## ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 and Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students with those in BA foundation, year 1 and year 2 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

## LIVE PROJECTS

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

## SOCIAL IMPACT

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

## EXTERNAL PARTNERS

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

## STUDENT-LED

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

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

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

## LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 600 students from 6 cohorts in MSA have worked on 40 projects with partners.

## QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:

**[msalive@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:msalive@mmu.ac.uk)**

## BLOG

**[live.msa.ac.uk/2024](https://live.msa.ac.uk/2024)**

## SOCIAL

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## WEBSITE

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