

On The Way Play SK

Report for Central Area Committee

January 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1. 'On The Way Play SK' is a pilot project in Edgeley that aims to create child-friendly places, encourage active travel, and build social connections. It is led by Civic and Social and Stockport Climate Action Now team, supporting the council's climate-friendly and sustainable transport goals. The project is funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and will be delivered in Spring 2024 following community engagement to develop the design and routes.
- 1.2. The Area Committee is asked to comment and recommend the Cabinet Member for Parks, Highways and Transport Service and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment approve this pilot project.

2. About On The Way Play SK

- 2.1. 'On The Way Play SK' is a pilot project that combines active travel and place shaping through 'Portable Play Time' and 'A Child's Eye View'. These are creative interventions in Edgeley for the Stockport Town Of Culture events in March 2024.
- 2.2. 'Portable Play Time' will turn a pedestrianised area on Castle Street into a pop-up play and dwell space with natural play structures and informal seating by Timberplay. The space will host community events that celebrate play, active travel and climate action, such as child friendly walking and wheeling tours, lightning talks and workshops.
- 2.3. 'A Child's Eye View' will create playful walking and wheeling routes around Edgeley with custom decals co-designed by children. The decals will feature active travel characters and playful prompts to encourage walking, wheeling, talking and playing together. The routes are based on the perspectives of local children from two schools and the wider community.

About Civic and Social

- 2.4. Civic and Social's mission is "making good things happen with people in our neighbourhoods." This is done through community engagement, activation, place shaping, active travel and progress projects. Pauline Johnston has a background in successful active travel and community activation projects, such as being a founding director of Station South CIC in Levenshulme developing the 'cycle café for everyone', delivering place based climate action initiatives on 'Our Streets Chorlton' and developing an award winning approach for implementing Greater Manchester's first active neighbourhood.

About Civic and Social and CAN partnership

- 2.5. Civic and Social approached the council's CAN team to support a bid to the UKSPF fund. The project fits with the council's climate-friendly borough and sustainable transport aims, is innovative in its approach, centralises engagement and co-design,

draws on a wealth of experience and proven delivery and tests approaches that could be replicable in other areas of the borough and which could spotlight Stockport regionally and nationally.

- 2.6. A Memorandum of Understanding has been drawn up which outlines the project roles and responsibilities.

3. Community Engagement

- 3.1. Community engagement is an essential component of the On The Way Play SK pilot development. Civic and Social has designed a series of community engagement activities that involve key stakeholders in the Edgeley community and demonstrate the potential of play as a tool for enhancing community places and spaces. The project has adopted a creative and child-centred approach to community engagement, enabling children to act as route leaders and place shapers. A crucial aspect of this was collaborating with local primary schools.

Discovery Phase

- 3.2. From October to January, the main goal of the community engagement and project development process was to discover, engage and involve local children as route developers and creative collaborators. The project team worked with Our Lady's and Larkhill Primary schools to explore and refine the inspired ideas of children into five active travel characters and create playful prompts for the routes, as well as to identify locations for the decal distribution based on their local knowledge and feelings about the places they visited.

School Walkshops

- 3.3. The team took two school groups of year 5 pupils on predetermined walks around the vicinity of their schools in Edgeley. Using newly developed Walking Audit worksheets that focused on key destination points for targeted local insights and inclusive documentation methods (writing, drawing, photography and speaking) to help capture the widest understanding of the children's perspectives on their local journeys.
- 3.4. Alongside the walk, the artist created a series of listening scribes; observed and interpreted observations as visual collages, which we later shared back with the children at the creative classroom workshop sessions to inspire the development of 'your ideal journeys' and the active travel characters.
- 3.5. In total Civic and Social collaborated with 60 year five pupils at Our Lady's Primary School and Larkhill Primary School. Overheard observations and documented ideas and prompts including snails telling jokes, bins coming alive, giant footballs, singing bollards and legal graffiti are being incorporated into the prompts.

Creative Classroom Workshops

- 3.6. In the classroom sessions the team used creative prompt questions and hands up surveys to stimulate the children's imaginations and further develop ideas from the walking audits. The output of the workshops, where young people reflected on ideal journeys, characters and prompts, can be seen in Appendix 3 Community Engagement in Photos

Communication

- 3.7. Flyers and posters were distributed to a number of local businesses and community notice boards in November to highlight the project and get feedback. The traders were positive during the drop-ins.
- 3.8. Civic and Social highlighted the ongoing work at the December walking and cycling forum with an invite extended from the active travel team at SMBC to present a fuller case study at the March forum.

Worker Bee Market Pop Up Event - Castle Street

- 3.9. The Civic and Social team launched the project on Castle Street on November 25th with four engagement stations. Feedback was collected from 230 people about their walking journeys in Edgeley and 8 groups were interviewed in depth. They also involved over 60 children in creative activities. The engagement stations covered topics such as joyful journeys, local routes, street furniture, and sharing the portable play time project plans.

Future Engagement And Activation Phase

- 3.10. The project will invite the community to interact with the pilot and share their views on the play interventions and the idea of playful high streets and district centres. The project team will conduct street surveys and journal observations to measure the impact and collect diverse opinions. The year 5 students who collaborated in the project will also be involved in the feedback loop. They will get to see the active travel characters, receive decal stickers as a thank-you gift, and participate in some art-based interventions if possible. The project launch will coincide with the 'Stockport Town of Culture' weekend on 8-10 March, with various playful activities and walks in Edgeley. There will be a family-friendly route walk, a lightning talk day on high street use, climate action, play and active travel, and a play event around the Castle Street intervention. The event details and permissions are being finalised and local groups will be invited to participate in January.

4. Portable Play Time: design, installation and safety, and aftercare

Design

- 4.1. Appendix 1 presents Portable Play Time, a project that aims to transform Castle Street into a playful and inviting space with high-quality play equipment and temporary art installations. The play equipment consists of various sculptural shapes, such as a teddy bear, a snail and noughts and crosses, made from natural materials like wood. The equipment meets the British and European Standard for playground equipment and surfacing (EN1176) and is suitable for unsupervised public settings.
- 4.2. The equipment is produced by Timberplay, a leading company in the play industry, in partnership with Richter Spielgeräte, a German manufacturer of durable and innovative play products. Timberplay has worked on many prestigious play areas across the UK, Middle East and India, and has collaborated with clients such as Chester Zoo, RSPB, National Trust, and local authorities. Timberplay is the technical lead for the project and provides additional support with installation, health and safety, storage and activation events in the pilot location.
- 4.3. Appendix 1 shows the selected Richter Spielgeräte equipment and includes conceptual visualisations of how they could complement the temporary art installations that are being developed as part of the broader 'On The Way Play' project objectives.

- 4.4. A Road Safety Assessment 1-2 for the design phase of the project was completed on the 11th January and reported that there are no concerns from a road safety perspective (appendix 2).

Installation and safety

- 4.5. The equipment from Richter Spielgerate is designed to be removable and restorable, ensuring its portability. The play equipment meets EN1176, the British and European Standard for playground equipment and surfacing, and is suitable for unsupervised public settings. The equipment was chosen for its functionality, durability and lack of safety surfacing requirements. Timberplay and Civic and Social will be responsible for the installation, under the supervision of an SMBC Highways officer. A Road Safety Assessment 3 will be conducted for the delivery phase of the project, involving a site visit with Civic and Social, Timberplay and SMBC Highways team.
- 4.6. For Portable Play Time (illustrated in Appendix 1), the Pairs Game and Tic-Tac-Toe will be affixed to reinforced concrete bases, measuring 0.5m x 0.5m x 0.1m, with bolts through the blocks and into the concrete. The snails will be affixed to reinforced concrete bases, measuring 1m x 1.5m x 0.1m, with angled brackets fixed into the base. The stroking stone bear will be affixed to a reinforced concrete block with a threaded bar from concrete into the stroking stone.
- 4.7. An onsite pre-start inspection was undertaken by Timberplay on January 8th 2024 and following this Timberplay will provide a detailed site specific Risk Assessments and Method Statements.
- 4.8. The installation is scheduled for March 4th and will last about one day. A team of three installers and Pauline Johnston, Civic and Social, will be on site at 8am. A Highways team member will also be present to oversee the installation, as requested by Stockport MBC.
- 4.9. The play equipment will be unloaded outside the pedestrian area of Castle Street, with proper traffic control and Banksmen. This process will take less than an hour. The equipment will then be transported by hand or pallet truck to the designated locations. Each location will be fenced off from the public with Heras Fencing during the installation. The installation of the play equipment will be finished within one day.
- 4.10. The existing paving will be carefully lifted and stored, in order to be reinstalled 'as was' after the pilot/upon removal of the play structures at a later date.

Aftercare

- 4.11. Timberplay will maintain the structures for the duration of the pilot project. From March - August 2024. This includes:
- maintaining the structures to ensure health and safety standards continue to be met
 - cleaning or repairs. This will include responding if there are any reports of antisocial behaviour that causes damage to the structures
 - dependent on the outcome of the pilot, removal and storage of the structures and returning the road surface to as was.
- 4.12. Following discussion with Stockport Council's Play and Infrastructure Officer, the Portable Play Time structures will be included in the regular inspection of play spaces carried out by TLC. Businesses that have been engaged with developing the pilot project will have direct contact numbers so that if any issues arise they can be

efficiently reported to the project team. Stockport Council's District Centre Manager who covers Edgeley is fully briefed on the pilot project.

- 4.13. Following the pilot project, if a decision is taken to remove the installed play structures, the pavement surface will be restored to prior condition. The prior condition will be established and signed off through the RSA and through inspection by SMBC highways.

5. A Child's Eye View Design

- 5.1. 'A Child's Eye View' will promote active travel and play in Edgeley by creating three routes that connect the district centre with the surrounding areas. The routes are designed with floor decals and vinyl wraps that feature colourful and playful elements inspired by the local children and residents. The project team engaged with schools and community groups to co-create the designs which include five original characters, word prompts and artwork. The characters will guide people along the routes and invite them to interact with 'Portable Play Time', a play installation on Castle Street. The design of the artwork is a collaborative process developed with Civic and Social alongside the graphic artist Laurie Pink, word prompts developed with creative facilitator Kirsty Gbasi and the children of Edgeley.
- 5.2. 'A Child's Eye View' will be made up of floor decals and vinyl wraps featuring designs that bring to life existing infrastructure and street furniture. Permissions are currently being finalised along the routes to add temporary decals to floor / street furniture. These include permissions from:
- SMBC (floor, bins, bollards, metal tree railings, street signs on Castle Street/York Street/ Edgeley Road)
 - Transport for Greater Manchester via JCDecaux (2 x bus stops)
 - Urban Traffic Control - silver boxes and traffic light posts
 - OpenReach - Green Boxes
 - Electricity Northwest - Electricity Sub Station - Moseley Street
 - Avanti West Coast/Network Rail/CRP - Station Approach
- 5.3. Three chosen routes have been identified and will be finalised once permissions are granted for artwork placement. The proposed routes can be seen in Appendix 4.
- 5.4. Two of the routes are school-to-shop destination routes and connect the 'portable play time' hub area at Castle Street nearest co-operative as the final destination point.
- 5.5. The third route is a park-to-park destination route that enjoys the discovery of the 'portable playtime' hub at the co-operative on Castle Street as an 'on the way play' intervention during the journey to the final destination. It connects Alexandra Park in Edgeley to the new Podium park (as yet to be named) at the bus interchange via Stockport Train Station walkway. All three routes interlink at Castle Street.
- 5.6. Final locations of decal and art interventions are dependent on external permissions being granted. If permission is not granted by the above stakeholders then the decals and artwork will not be put into place in the identified locations and alternative routes will be mapped.
- 5.7. Installation will not progress without written permission from external stakeholders who own and manage the assets in place.

5.8. Installation

- 5.9. The custom outdoor decals that will be manufactured by Scanstick. The floor decals raise from the floor less than 1mm.
- 5.10. Installation of the decals does not require specialist equipment. This will be carried out by the project team with guidance from Scanstick.
- 5.11. The material used for floor decals are MG-F Floorart and have been tested in accordance with British Standard 7976 to test slip resistance which is vital to safety and wellbeing in this installation. The material has been tested in accordance with: BS 7976-2:2002+A1:2013 Pendulum testers method of operation, under the UKSRG Guidelines-5:2016.
- 5.12. A Road Safety Assessment 3 will be completed for the delivery phase of the project. This includes a site visit with Civic and Social, Timberplay, SMBC Highways team.

After care

- 5.13. All floor decals / vinyl wraps will be removed after the pilot has ended. The decals will be inspected at the 1 month and the 3 month point by Civic and Social doing a manual walkaround of the routes and ensuring any damaged decals are replaced.

6. Health and Safety

- 6.1. The information provided above in items 4 and 5 highlight that the pilot has been designed with health and safety in mind.
- 6.2. Portable Play Time sculptures are manufactured to meet EN1176, the British and European Standard for playground equipment and surfacing and are designed for unsupervised public settings. The sculptures are made of durable and weather-resistant materials, such as wood and stone. They are securely anchored to the ground and have no sharp edges or protruding parts that could cause injury. The route is well-lit and signposted, with clear signposting to the On The Way Play project. The route is also accessible for people with disabilities, with full consideration given to surfaces and spacing around objects. The 'Child's Eye View' custom outdoor decals will be manufactured by Scanstick; the floor decals raise from the floor less than 1mm.
- 6.3. A Road Safety Assessment has been completed for the design phase and a second RSA will be completed for the installation/delivery phase.
- 6.4. Risk assessments will be carried out by both Timberplay and Civic and Social.
- 6.5. Method statements and risk assessments for the installation of Portable Play Time will be written by Timberplay and reviewed by Civic and Social, CAN and SMBC Highways prior to installation.
- 6.6. A street works permit has been applied for for the installation date.
- 6.7. Throughout the pilot the routes will be regularly inspected and maintained by qualified staff, who will ensure that the sculptures and decals are in good condition and pose no risk to the public. Timberplay will maintain the Portable Play Time structures throughout the pilot.
- 6.8. Throughout the pilot, local ward Councillors and community members will be actively engaged with the project development, activation and review.
- 6.9. Towards the end of the 6-month pilot, an options paper will be presented to the Cabinet Members for Parks, Highways & Transport Services and Economy, Regeneration & Climate Change on whether to extend the installation beyond the duration of the pilot.

7. Insurance and liability

- 7.1. Risk assessments, road safety assessments and installation plans are outlined above.
- 7.2. Stockport CAN team have met with Stockport Council's insurance team about the project. Stockport Council is covered by public liability insurance.
- 7.3. Civic and Social has Public Liability insurance up to 5 million.
- 7.4. Timberplay Ltd has public liability insurance in place which will cover the installation and repair purposes.

8. Monitoring

- 8.1. Project monitoring will be carried out by collecting data on the usage and impact of the On The Way Play project. The data sources will include:
 - Counts of people interacting with the play space during a number of observation periods, including at activation events.
 - Surveys to capture responses, reflections and community impact, particularly with young people.
 - Feedback from local businesses and residents on the effects of the project on the high street
 - Observations of the play space to assess its accessibility, safety and attractiveness

Green case studies with 2 families will be created to capture qualitative experiences of the project.

- 8.2. The data and reflection will be reported as part of the UKSPF grant process to evaluate the progress and outcomes of the project against its objectives and indicators. The review will assess outcomes from the pilot in Edgeley and make recommendations for future iterations of the project. The report will be shared with Cabinet Members and ward Councillors.

9. Project legacy and showcasing

- 9.1. The project is expected to have a positive impact on the community and the environment. By creating walking and cycling routes that lead to a pop-up play space on the high street, the project will promote sustainable travel, physical activity, local engagement and playfulness. The project will also enhance the attractiveness and liveliness of the high street, attracting more visitors and businesses. The project will contribute to the health, well-being and happiness of the residents and visitors, as well as to the reduction of carbon emissions and traffic congestion.
- 9.2. At the 3-month review point, assessment will begin as to whether the structures will remain in place for a longer period of time on Castle Street or whether they will be removed. Removal and storage of the structures has been accounted for within the timeline and budget for the project. Please note, costs to install the structures in a new location within Stockport would need to be sought. A decision will be sought from the Cabinet Member for Parks, Highways and Transport and the Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Climate Change. The review will assess outcomes from the pilot in Edgeley, learning from the project that could be applied in other areas, how the project could be iterated in other areas, costs to implement different types of interventions and impact on wider play and place strategy.
- 9.3. During the discovery phase of the project there has been interest from parallel projects both in Stockport and in Greater Manchester. These opportunities are being

explored and developed in a responsive and proactive way across project teams alongside Civic and Social to help connect the routes to the new interchange podium park as part of the work to connect communities via walking and wheeling routes. Further opportunities that have arisen through the discovery phase are: the future creation of an On The Way Play toolkit that would be available to schools or community groups to use via TfGM/ SAL with Pindar Creative hosted by Stockport Council and use of the resources by teams within Stockport Council.

- 9.4. There are opportunities for local, regional and national showcasing of this exemplar project in 2024 and Civic and Social will work with the CAN team to support the dissemination of learning to interested groups as part of the review.
- 9.5. As part of the activation programme during the pilot in Spring 2024, Civic and Social with Timberplay will host a series of site tours aimed at industry professionals and other interested placemaking groups to showcase and provide an 'on the ground' case study of the principles and delivery of On The Way Play SK.
- 9.6. It is proposed that the project will also feature at Stockport's CAN summit in November 2024.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. The Area committee is asked to comment and recommend the Cabinet Member for Parks, Highways and Transport Service and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment approve this pilot project.

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