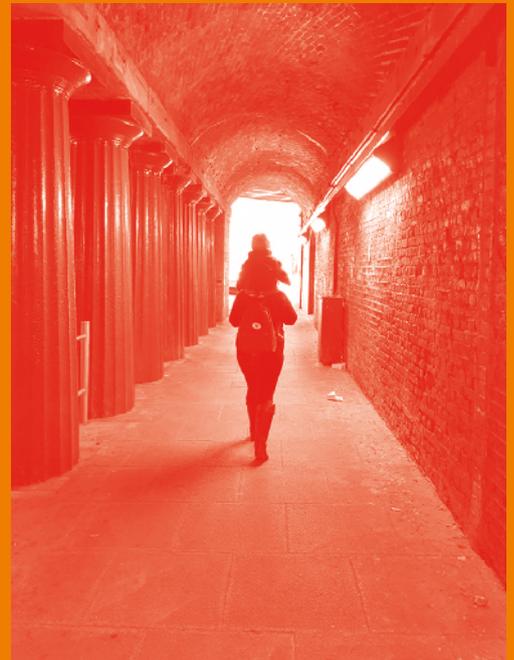


Scoping Study-London's participation in UN Women's Safer Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme

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We know that people flock to cities like London for opportunity; for work, education, culture, nightlife, and social connectedness. We know that these can be a liberation and freedom to those people who are able to access it. However, we also know that public spaces are used and experienced differently by men and women.

Simply presenting as female in public space increases vulnerability to violence and this is exacerbated at certain times of night in certain locations of the city. This is especially relevant in London, where 40 per cent of sexual assaults take place in public spaces, particularly on the transport network.¹ A survey of 8,000 Londoners also found that 74 per cent of female respondents feel worried about their safety some, or even all of the time, and 68 per cent worry about harassment on public transport.²

A Thomson Reuters Foundation report, which studied women on the move in five global cities found that only 65 per cent of women surveyed in London felt confident that they could travel on public transport without sexual harassment or abuse, and just 51 per cent felt confident that a fellow traveller would come to their assistance if they were being harassed.³ An earlier 2014 YouGov poll revealed that 32 per cent of women in London have been verbally harassed on public transport, and that 19 per cent have been groped or physically harassed.⁴

On top of this, the gendered division of labour means that women are more likely to adopt caring responsibilities where they will be pushing a pram, carrying shopping and making multi-stop journeys. Yet the city is predominantly designed to facilitate linear direct routes into the centre, privileging the young, economically productive male. Furthermore, access to basic infrastructure services that ensure dignity—such as toilets—is highly gendered.

Evidence shows that women and girls are less likely than men to use parks and canal towpaths after dark because of perceived danger. Paths that are poorly paved and insufficiently lit at night also increase both perceptions of and actual danger for cyclists. Step-free access in housing developments, as well as transport stations, is essential to ensure women's safe entry and passage inside, outside and around buildings. These are just a few ways that public spaces are gendered, but to divide urban experience only into binary categories of sex is insufficient. We know that gender identity, sexual identity, race, class, and physical ability combine in ways that lead to an unequal experience of safety in the city. For example, the London Sexual Violence Needs Assessment found that a criminal case is more likely to be 'nocrimed'—meaning no further action will be taken—if the accuser is BAME, has mental health problems or has learning disabilities. It also found that there are lower levels of reporting from Asian victims and that illegal or uncertain immigration status can also lead to lower levels of reporting.⁵

UN Women founded The Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces programme in recognition of the discrepancy between how violence in the private domain is largely regarded as a human rights violation, yet violence against women and girls (VAWG) (especially sexual harassment) in public spaces remains neglected and is accepted as normal or inevitable.⁶ Respondents

- 1 MOPAC. *Sexual Violence: The London Sexual Violence Needs Assessment 2016 For MOPAC & NHS England (London)*. London; 2016. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sexual_violence_needs_assessment_report_2016.pdf. Accessed 16 November 2018.
- 2 Greater London Authority. *A Safer City For Women And Girls: The London Tackling Violence Against Women And Girls Strategy 2018—2021*. London: Greater London Authority; 2018. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vawg_strategy_2018-21.pdf. Accessed 12 October 2018.
- 3 Thompson Reuters Foundation. *Women on the Move*; 2018. <http://2018transportpoll.trust.org/>. Accessed 8 April 2019.
- 4 Villa M, Bates L. The right to feel safe: women should be able to use public transport without fear. *New Statesman*. <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2014/10/right-feel-safe-women-should-be-able-use-public-transport-without-fear>. Published 2014. Accessed November 16, 2018.
- 5 MOPAC. *Sexual Violence: The London Sexual Violence Needs Assessment 2016 For MOPAC & NHS England (London)*. London; 2016.
- 6 UN Women. *Safe Cities Global Initiative*. New York: UN Women; 2018. [http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/~media/44F28561B84548FE82E24E38E825ABEA.ashx](http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/~/media/44F28561B84548FE82E24E38E825ABEA.ashx). Accessed 8 November 2018.

to the consultation process for London's VAWG strategy, felt that unwanted attention from strangers was the most accepted form of VAWG (e.g. a two thirds felt 'inappropriate staring', 'wolf-whistling or cat calling' were always or often or sometimes accepted).

While it is indisputable that there is a huge amount of work to be done tackling VAWG in the domestic realm—and that we cannot hope to make London safe for women if we do not address what happens in the home—we must also recognise that public spaces are hostile to women. If we fail to take action in the public sphere, we feed into a narrative that these spaces are not spaces for women, fostering their abandonment and a retreat into the “protected” area of the home, representing greater insecurity for many women. In that sense, the public and private spheres are intricately intertwined.

When it comes to tackling these issues, London is not starting from scratch and has an existing programme of activities across different policy areas to build upon. For example, the Mayor developed a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy which outlines a vision “of a city where every woman and every girl can live in safety—where men and boys don't think violence against women and girls is acceptable and where women and girls don't feel it is inevitable.”

London has also invested in the Women's Night Safety Charter, in which 340 signatories have made commitments based on the pillars of reporting, responding, taking responsibility and redesigning public spaces. There have been successful campaigns like 'Project Guardian' and 'Report It To Stop It', which have increased reporting of sexual offences on the transport network, as well as the Transport for London (TfL) Healthy Streets Approach which bridges the public health, urban planning and transport sectors to make London a healthier, safer, more sustainable and more liveable city.

As a signatory to UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme, London has committed to further this work by ensuring that women and girls are socially, economically and politically empowered in public spaces and that they are free from sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence. In order to support London in achieving these ambitious aims, this independent scoping report:

- 1 Offers a guide to the fundamentals of gender inclusive public space design;
- 2 Highlights tools for investing in gender-informed public spaces;
- 3 Presents examples of existing action in the capital;
- 4 Lays out a set of recommendations for action.

Recommendations

The following recommendations borrow from the insights in this report to create a suite of options for continuing to make London safer for women and girls.

1 RE-INSTATE THE WOMEN'S DESIGN SERVICE (OR A BODY LIKE IT)

The Women's Design Service played a pivotal role in making urban public space more inclusive of women, both in terms of professional practice and actual use of public space. With long term secure funding, groups like these are able to act as a focal point for local organisations, maintain the issue high on all policy agendas and ensure that gender expertise is captured, disseminated and capitalised upon. If the Women's Design Service were reinstated it could:

- a. Lead and collate in-depth participatory research on best practice with respect to making London safer for women and girls
- b. Design and deliver gender mainstreaming training for built environment professionals in London to equip them with practical actions to incorporate a gender lens in design
- c. Create and maintain partnerships with women's organisations, research institutions and the Mayor's Design Advocates to strengthen interest in making London safer for women and girls
- d. Maintain London's priority on women and girls' safety as a core policy agenda as well as lobby for its inclusion in non-government projects and initiatives across the capital (i.e. through developers, Business Improvement Districts, housing associations etc.)

2 IMPLEMENT GENDER MAINSTREAMING PILOT PROJECTS USING GENDER-DISAGGREGATED DATA

There are a wide range of interventions across public transport, cycling, public space, housing and toilet provision that could make London work better for women. But if the impacts of these projects are to

be understood and scaled across London, an evidence base of impact needs to be built up. Therefore, the pilot projects suggested below must collect, analyse and report on gender-disaggregated data from before and after the intervention. Such pilot projects include, but are not limited to:

- 1 Cycling: Identify scheduled cycling infrastructure upgrade plans across London and ensure women's needs are taken into account by including protected cycle lanes, adequate and safe space for storage as well as local imagery around diversity of cyclists
- 2 Lighting: Conduct small scale interventions to explore the impact of innovative and creative lighting schemes on the feeling of safety in less populated parts of the city
- 3 Housing: work with housing associations and residents to review the provision of adequately lit lifts, as well as accessible and secure pram and cycle parking and other needs
- 4 Toilets: Partner with universities and local authorities to create and implement innovative designs for inclusive and affordable public toilets. This could be supported by a campaign to open up more privately owned toilets (e.g. in bars and restaurants) to non-paying customers

3 CAPITALISE ON THE WOMEN'S NIGHT SAFETY CHARTER TO CONDUCT NIGHT SAFETY AUDITS

Women's safety audits can help provide spatial and quantitative data about women's perceptions and experiences of safety in the city. This can guide data-driven approaches to systematically assess and improve female safety in public. By working with the existing 340 signatories of the Women's Night Safety Charter, local MPS teams could work together to:

- 1 Conduct localised women's night safety audits
- 2 Use these audits to collaborate with local Business Innovation Districts, TfL and the Metropolitan Police Service to create Local Women's Safety Action Plans

4 BUILD ON EXISTING PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS AND CREATE POSITIVE IMAGERY IN THE PUBLIC REALM

Campaigns like ‘Project Guardian’ and ‘Report It To Stop It’ have been effective in increasing reporting of unwanted sexual behaviour on public transport. Building on this success, new campaigns could focus on the responsibilities of bystanders and perpetrators and thereby aspire to minimise the impacts and prevalence of these assaults. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to take a lead in providing more progressive images of women in advertising in public space. Recommendations towards achieving this include:

- 1 Partner with organisations like Hollaback! to include bystander awareness tips and tricks into public campaigns on unwanted sexual behaviour
- 2 Crowdfund ideas for campaigns that would target potential perpetrators of unwanted sexual behaviour
- 3 Ensure adverts across the London transport network do not perpetuate harmful female stereotypes
- 4 Showcase feminist murals and public art by women

5 INTEGRATE A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO TFL'S HEALTHY STREETS APPROACH

The Healthy Streets Approach is an excellent way to start reframing street and public space design, and it would benefit from a gender perspective. For instance, the indicators could explicitly mention safety from gender-based harassment and violence as another a key criterion of healthy, liveable streets. The “places to stop and rest” and “shade and shelter” indicators could also reference how adequate street lighting and visibility are necessary for women and girls to feel safe. As such, TfL could:

- 1 Conduct a review of the indicators in the Healthy Streets Approach to integrate an explicit gender perspective



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5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 UN Women: Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme

Cities worldwide are rising to the challenges posed by increasing inequality, political polarisation, climate impacts, crumbling infrastructure, inadequate housing and population growth. In order to tackle these complex and interconnected problems, inclusivity must be at the core. The New Urban Agenda, adopted by world leaders at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in October 2017, declares:

We share a vision of cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all.⁷

This bold vision of “cities for all” invokes “the right to the city,” which is “[t]he freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves.”⁸ That this right is on the international urban policy agenda is a milestone. However, the challenge remains for cities across the world to implement this ambition with an appropriate degree of urgency and ambition. In particular, cities must incorporate an understanding of how they are experienced differently depending on categories of identity such as gender, race, sexuality and physical ability. Given that cities and urban infrastructure are mostly designed by men, how can we ensure that cities are truly inclusive for all? If half the population are absent from design, decision-making and planning processes, how can we safeguard everyone’s right to the city?

Not only are women underrepresented in politics and leadership roles across sectors, but structural inequalities in society and violence against women and girls (VAWG) also constrain women’s right to the city. Gender disparities in the labour market, the gendered division of household labour, and gendered differences in access to resources (i.e. time, money, education, land, capital, technology, etc.) disadvantage women economically and put them at a higher risk of poverty. In the UK nine out of ten lone parents are women and while the median gross weekly pay for male single parents is £346, for female single parents it is £194.40.⁹ In London, women are more likely to be in low paid work than men, with 55% of low paid jobs done by women.¹⁰ This economic precariousness can compound vulnerability to gender-based violence.

While gender-based violence in the home, workplace and educational institutions is largely considered illegal and wrong, gender-based violence in public space is often accepted as normal or inevitable. As part of the consultation process for London’s VAWG strategy, 416 people were interviewed from five London boroughs. It was found that in general, respondents felt that unwanted attention from strangers was the

7 UN Habitat III Secretariat. *The New Urban Agenda*. The United Nations; 2016: 5. <http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>. Accessed 16 November 2018.

8 Harvey D. The right to the city. *New Left Review*. 2008; 52: 23–40.

9 National Education Union. *Women and Poverty*. <https://neu.org.uk/advice/women-and-poverty>. London; 2019 Accessed 17th February 2019

10 Trust for London. *London’s Poverty Profile: Women*. <https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/populations/women/>. London; 2016/ Accessed 17th February 2020

most accepted form of VAWG (e.g. a third felt ‘inappropriate staring’, ‘wolf-whistling or cat calling’ were always or often accepted with almost another third stating it was sometimes accepted) whereas ‘hitting a partner’ or ‘following someone around’ were least accepted.

There are laws against domestic violence but almost no laws against sexual harassment and violence in public space. In the UK the practice of “upskirting” (taking a sexually intrusive photograph up someone’s skirt without their permission, usually in a public space) has historically been difficult to prosecute as there was no law that made it a specific criminal offence. After years of campaigning by activists, spearheaded by Gina Martin, the practice was finally made criminal in April 2019.¹¹ However, despite more research on the prevalence and impact of Intimate Partner Violence in recent years, there is insufficient research on sexual harassment and violence that occurs in the public realm. This is especially relevant in London, where 40 per cent of sexual assaults take place in public spaces, particularly on the transport network. The findings of a YouGov poll reported that two thirds of women in London have experienced sexual harassment on the transport network or in public spaces, and 40% have experienced sexual contact.¹²

UN Women founded The Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces programme in recognition of the discrepancy between how violence in the private domain is largely regarded as a human rights violation, yet violence against women and girls—especially sexual harassment in public spaces—remains neglected.¹³ This is one of UN Women’s flagship initiatives, which builds on its “Safe Cities Free of Violence against Women and Girls” global programme. It launched in November 2010, with leading women’s organisations, UN agencies, and more than 70 global and local partners. The founding cities were Quito, Ecuador; Cairo, Egypt; New Delhi, India; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; and Kigali, Rwanda, and it now spans over 20 cities, including London.

Participating cities commit to identifying evidence-based and context-appropriate initiatives to end violence against women and girls and support women’s political participation and economic empowerment.¹⁴ Specifically, they are expected to deliver on four interrelated outcomes:

- 1 **Gender-responsive locally relevant and owned interventions:** Cities will create partnerships with local stakeholders and provide the evidence-base to drive the design and delivery of solutions.
- 2 **Comprehensive legislation and policies:** Cities will implement appropriate policies, strategies and legislation to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and violence against women and girls in public spaces.
- 3 **Investments in the safety of public spaces:** Cities will build the capacity of local governments to invest in gender mainstreaming in urban planning and public infrastructure investments (i.e. street lighting, social services, sanitation, etc.) that provide safety, and economic empowerment for women and girls.
- 4 **Social and cultural transformation:** Cities will proactively work to change sexist attitudes and behaviours to promote women’s and girls’ rights to access, use and enjoy public spaces, free of sexual violence.

11 Ministry of Justice. ‘Upskirting’ law comes into force. London; 2019. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/upskirting-law-comes-into-force> Accessed 17th February 2020.

12 MOPAC. *Sexual Violence: The London Sexual Violence Needs Assessment 2016 For MOPAC & NHS England (London)*. London; 2016. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sexual_violence_needs_assessment_report_2016.pdf. Accessed 16 November 2018.

13 UN Women. *Safe Cities Global Initiative*. New York: UN Women; 2018. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/~media/44F28561B84548FE82E24E38E825ABEA.ashx>. Accessed 8 November 2018.

14 *Ending violence against women: Creating safe public spaces*. UN Women. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/creating-safe-public-spaces>. Published 2018. Accessed 8 November 2018.

1.2 London context

The Mayor envisions London as “a city of freedoms, opportunities and rights for all” which echoes the declaration in the UN’s New Urban Agenda.¹⁵ This is particularly pertinent in light of the gender based violence issues that Londoners contend with on a daily basis. A survey of 8,000 Londoners found that 74 per cent of female respondents feel worried about their safety some, or even all of the time, and 68 per cent worry about harassment on public transport.¹⁶ Clearly, London cannot be “a city of freedoms, opportunities and rights for all” if half the population is too scared for their safety to take advantage of what the city has to offer. This fact has spurred City Hall into action across a variety of policy areas, including as a signatory to the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces programme.

To begin tackling the pervasive nature of violence against women and girls in the city, the Mayor developed a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. This strategy outlines a vision “of a city where every woman and every girl can live in safety— where men and boys don’t think violence against women and girls is acceptable and where women and girls don’t feel it is inevitable.” The Strategy notes that sexual assault, rape, domestic abuse and “honour”-based violence are more likely to occur within the privacy of the home, while other forms of VAWG, especially sexual harassment, are more prevalent in public spaces.¹⁷ It also finds that sexual harassment in public space is ubiquitous and normalised. This contributes to the systematic under-reporting of and limited data about such incidents.

Many women and girls experience low-level harassment on a daily basis, to the point where they feel it is just a fact of city living. In the UK, 64 per cent of women have experienced some kind of sexual harassment in a public space, with this figure increasing to 85 per cent for those between the ages of 18–24.¹⁸ The problem starts earlier: 66 per cent of girls in the UK have experienced sexual harassment in public and adopt “avoidance” strategies, such as crossing the road, taking longer routes, pretending to be on the phone, avoiding empty train or tube carriages, changing outfits and ceasing to go out at night.¹⁹

If the right to the city is “[t]he freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves,” then women and girls cannot enjoy this until they have safe passage through public space. To truly access, enjoy and engage in public life in London, women and girls must be included in urban design, planning and governance processes.

The Mayor’s Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy addresses some of the issues surrounding the under-reporting of VAWG, including the everyday nature and extreme normalisation of harassment in public spaces. The Mayor’s strategy also references the first summit on women’s safety at night, hosted by Night Czar Amy Lamé, which resulted in the creation of London’s first-ever Women’s Night Safety Charter. The charter acknowledges that the design of the urban built environment has a role to play in addressing gender-based violence.²⁰

15 Greater London Authority. *A Safer City For Women And Girls: The London Tackling Violence Against Women And Girls Strategy 2018–2021*. London: Greater London Authority; 2018. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vawg_strategy_2018-21.pdf. Accessed 12 October 2018.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Plan International UK. *Street Harassment*. London: Plan International; 2018. <https://plan-uk.org/act-for-girls/street-harassment>. Accessed 4 April 2019.

20 Mayor of London. *Pledge To Improve Women’s Safety At Night In London*; 2018. <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/pledge-to-improve-womens-safety-at-night>. Accessed 8 November 2018.



London's participation in UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme is a step towards enacting the Mayor's vision for London to be "a city of freedoms, opportunities and rights for all."²¹

1.3 Purpose

Through desk research, including a review of academic and policy literature; a workshop held as part of the Night Safety Summit hosted by the Greater London Authority (GLA); and a series of interviews with key individuals, including NGOs, the GLA, women's services, campaign groups and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), this report identifies key issues related to women's safety in public spaces in London and outlines eight evidence-based opportunities for action. The opportunities for action will require further investigation and reflection from key stakeholders across the GLA, who should develop further actions, partners and pilot projects in order to carry out a more detailed analysis.

In order to support this process, this report first provides an overview of the key issues associated with gender and urban planning. It then highlights global examples of how cities have integrated a gender perspective in urban planning, before focusing on relevant policies and projects in London. Finally, it concludes with recommended actions to make London safer for women and girls.

²¹ Greater London Authority. *A Safer City For Women And Girls: The London Tackling Violence Against Women And Girls Strategy 2018–2021*. London: Greater London Authority; 2018. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/vawg_strategy_2018-21.pdf. Accessed 12 October 2018.



Imagine how much more confident and comfortable women would be if they did not grow up being told that cities are dangerous places for them, especially after dark. Imagine how much livelier public spaces would be if women and girls felt safe enough to use, linger in and pass through them, regardless of what they were wearing, whether they were alone or not, and the time of day. Imagine how much freer women would be if they were not taught from a young age that they had a responsibility to protect themselves from harassment and violence by avoiding certain neighbourhoods, dressing a certain way, or traveling in groups whenever possible. Imagine how much more time and energy women could devote to friendships and relationships, exploring the city, learning and developing new skills if they did not have to worry so much about their safety.

With more gender expertise and women's leadership in urban design, planning and decision-making processes, cities that are more inclusive and safer for women and girls can become a reality.

Gender expertise is an understanding of the ways in which gender, as a social construct, shapes political, economic, social and spatial relationships. This includes an understanding of how gender creates differential access to and distribution of opportunities, resources and power across society. Increasing women's leadership is important alongside the development of gender expertise. Women are underrepresented across urban sectors in the UK, comprising just 14 per cent of the built environment workforce.²² It is hardly surprising, then, that women's life experiences are omitted from urban design and planning processes.

Developing both gender expertise to understand the complexity of gender-based violence in public space, and increasing women's leadership to create more space for women's subjective experiences of the city to impact policy are integral to tackling gender-based violence in cities. Given the work already carried out at City Hall on increasing equality, diversity and inclusion in the built environment sector (for example through the Supporting Diversity Handbook)²³ as well as extensive studies on increasing access to STEM careers from organisations like ScienceGrrl²⁴ and Girlguiding,²⁵ this chapter will focus on the development of gender expertise within the built environment sector. It will do this firstly by explaining two overarching principles (gendered perceptions of safety and intersectionality) and then by exploring how key aspects of built environment design are gendered, including:

- Public Transport
- Cycling Infrastructure
- Public Toilets
- Public Spaces and Parks
- Housing

22 Clear C. An evening reception for women (and men) within the built environment looking to uncover the secrets of international success. BRE Buzz. Published 2017. Available at: <http://brebuzz.net/2017/10/05/beglobal-insights-from-our-world-leading-women/> Accessed 11 December 2018.

23 Mayor of London. *Good Growth By Design: Supporting Diversity Handbook*. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/supporting_diversity_handbook_web.pdf Accessed 4th March 2020

24 ScienceGrrl (2013) *Through Both Eyes: The Case for a Gender Lens in STEM*. London: ScienceGrrl.

25 Girlguiding (2013) *What girls say about... equality for girls: Girls Attitudes survey*. London: Girlguiding

2.1 Overarching Principles

Gendered perceptions of safety

From an early age, girls are told to avoid being alone in certain neighbourhoods, to dress modestly when they go out and to walk home with their keys in hand and their phones readily accessible. This drills in the message that public space is not safe for women and girls. As such, they are socially conditioned to be more worried about their personal safety and to change their behaviour—including their speech, dress and travel patterns—in order to be safe. Society puts the onus on women and girls to protect themselves. Some protection mechanisms that females adopt early on include crossing the road to avoid someone, taking longer routes to circumvent dangerous areas and spending more money on taxis because it feels safer than taking public transport.

Gendered perceptions of safety are one of many structural factors that impact how, where, when and why people travel in the city. Other structural factors that contribute to gender differences in urban mobility include gender disparities in economic resources (i.e. time, money, education, skills, technology) and the gendered division of household labour. These structural inequalities produce gendered variations in mobility choices (i.e. mode of transport and travel demand), mobility behaviour (i.e. route, timing, distance, duration, purpose) and perceptions and experiences of mobility. As such, urban mobility is gendered. The omission of gendered urban experiences in the way our cities are designed, planned and built disparately impacts women and girls, jeopardises their safety and denies them of their “right to the city.”

An intersectional perspective

An intersectional perspective must foreground efforts to understand the ways in which the public realm could be redesigned to enhance women’s perceptions and experiences of safety. An intersectional perspective is an understanding that the various aspects of one’s identity (i.e. gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, age, physical ability/disability, etc.) interact in complex ways to shape how one experiences and moves around in the world.²⁶ Given the multifaceted nature of identity, it follows that there are also multiple types of discrimination and inequalities that people can experience. Such inequalities are interconnected and cannot be analysed in isolation.

For example, if a woman of colour is harassed while walking down the street, it may not be evident if the abuse stems from her gender or her race. If a woman cycling is shouted at and closely passed by a male driver, she might not know if it is because she is a woman or because she is cycling on car-dominated roads. Similarly, if a woman in a wheelchair gets lewd stares and comments while waiting for the bus, it may not be clear whether it’s because she is a woman or because she has a disability.

The London Sexual Violence Needs Assessment illustrated the need to take an intersectional perspective when addressing VAWG, finding that a criminal case is more likely to be ‘nocrimed’—meaning no further action will be taken—if the accuser is BAME, has mental health problems or has learning disabilities. It also found that there are lower levels of reporting from Asian victims and that illegal or uncertain immigration status can also lead to lower levels of reporting.²⁷

In all these cases, it is clear that gender is linked to other aspects of identity, which impacts how different women experience public space. Urban designers, planners

26 Crenshaw K. Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of colour. *Stanford Law Review*. 1991; 43(6): 1241–1299.

27 MOPAC. *Sexual Violence: The London Sexual Violence Needs Assessment 2016 For MOPAC & NHS England (London)*. London; 2016.

and policymakers must have an understanding of and empathy towards those living at the intersections of different marginalised identities in order to make cities safer and more inclusive for all. An exploration of the issues surrounding a diverse workforce are outside the scope of this report but continues to be explored by many organisations within London (e.g. The Supporting Diversity Handbook,²⁸ ScienceGrrl Through Both Eyes report,²⁹ Black Females in Architecture, Royal Institute of British Architecture’s “Close the Gap” Toolkit³⁰ amongst many others).

2.2 Public Transport

Globally, transport planning tends to optimise the flow of peak-hour work commutes, which is based on the assumption that the default traveller is the traditional male breadwinner, commuting from the suburbs into the city centre for work.³¹ This reflects an implicit male bias because women were historically excluded from the labour market and continue to face various kinds of employment discrimination.

Women also tend to make more complex, varied and encumbered journeys than men do, usually including multiple trips a day using different modes of transport in order to combine formal and informal work, as well as domestic and caregiving responsibilities.³² However, public transport systems tend to privilege radial, long distance journeys, as opposed to orbital, short distance ones that women are likelier to make.³³

Women are more likely to commute sustainably (i.e. walk or take public transport) because it is cheaper.³⁴ The differential nature of women’s urban mobility patterns increases their vulnerability to gender-based violence, as they may end up spending more time walking through or waiting in isolated places to access public transport.³⁵ This underscores the need for safe public transport that caters to women’s journey types.

Despite women’s reliance on public transport systems, too often they are a locus of sexual violence, preventing women’s safe passage through the city and access to economic, political and social opportunities. In 2016, MOPAC and NHS England commissioned an assessment of the level of sexual violence in London, which found that 40 per cent of assaults take place in public spaces, particularly on the transport network. Furthermore, the findings of a YouGov poll reported that two thirds of women in London have experienced sexual harassment on the transport network or in public spaces, and 40% have experienced sexual contact. This is particularly marked during peak times, where there are higher levels of sexual offences.

28 Mayor of London. *Good Growth By Design: Supporting Diversity Handbook*. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/supporting_diversity_handbook_web.pdf Accessed 4th March 2020

29 ScienceGrrl (2013) *Through Both Eyes: The Case for a Gender Lens in STEM*. London: ScienceGrrl. For more information visit: <https://www.blackfemarc.com/>

30 RIBA. *Close the Gap: Improving Gender Equality in Practice* Available at <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/gender-pay-gap-guidance> Accessed 4th March 2020

31 Law R. Beyond ‘Women and Transport’: Towards New Geographies of Gender and Daily Mobility. *Progress in Human Geography*. 1999; 23(4): 567–588.

32 Blomstrom E., Gauthier A. & Jang C. *Access for All: Policies for Inclusive TOD*. New York City; The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP); 2018. <https://www.itdp.org/2018/05/21/access-for-all/>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

33 Levy C. Travel Choice Reframed: ‘Deep Distribution’ and Gender in Urban Transport. *Environment and Urbanisation*. 2013; 25(1): 47–63.

34 *Ibid.*

35 Safe Public Transit for Women and Girls. <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/252-safe-public-transit-for-women-and-girls-.html>. Accessed 16 November 2018.

A Thomson Reuters Foundation report, which studied women on the move in five global cities found that only 65 per cent of women surveyed in London felt confident that they could travel on public transport without sexual harassment or abuse, and just 51 per cent felt confident that a fellow traveller would come to their assistance if they were being harassed. An earlier 2014 YouGov poll revealed that 32 per cent of women in London have been verbally harassed on public transport, and that 19 per cent have been groped or physically harassed.

There are aspects of the built environment and design features that contribute to women's perceptions of safety. For instance, poor lighting at bus stops, tube platforms and train stations can make women feel less safe. Spaces that are enclosed in nature, such as train carriages, alleyways, and multi-storey car parks, can also heighten women's perceptions of danger due to the limited amount or lack of clear exits. Tall hedges, overgrown vegetation or large bins around or at bus stops or train stations can limit visibility and therefore seem threatening. At the same time, spaces that seem too open and deserted, such as parks and canal towpaths can also seem risky. Signs of neglect or abandonment, such as vandalism and litter, can also make places feel more dangerous.³⁶

2.3 Cycling Infrastructure

To realise the Mayor's ambition to make London "a byword for cycling," and to maximise the environmental and public health benefits of cycling, cycling in London must be inclusive. However, there is a gender gap in cycling, as men make 63 per cent of cycling journeys in London.³⁷ Despite unprecedented investments in cycling infrastructure and an overall growth in cycling in London over the past two decades, a gender gap in cycling has persisted. The reasons for this are complex but implicit male bias in cycling infrastructure design and provisioning has certainly contributed to unequal and uneven urban cycling experiences.³⁸

Under Former Mayor Boris Johnson, London delivered two kinds of branded cycle routes: Superhighways, mostly on main roads and offering greater separation from motorised traffic, and Quietways, mostly on low-traffic, residential side streets. Transport for London is now developing an orbital cycle route which helps address concerns around implicit male bias inherent in its focus primarily on routes into and out of the city.³⁹

The branding of London's cycling infrastructure has been criticised for being gendered, as 'Superhighway' connotes speed, athleticism, aggression and riskiness, which are implicitly coded as masculine characteristics. This emphasis on speed can make women feel alienated, and sometimes even costs them their lives. A key finding from the first study of cycling near misses (road incidents that may not result in injuries but nonetheless induce fear and stress) in the UK was that cycling speed is the main factor impacting near miss rates, which are consistent across London, and female cyclists disproportionately experience near misses.⁴⁰ On average, women tend to cycle more slowly than men do, which increases their risk of near misses, traffic injuries and fatalities. While there may be no perceptible physical impact, near

36 Valentine G. *The Geography of Women's Fear*. Area. 1989; 21(4): 385–390.

37 Transport for London. *Cycling Action Plan*. London: Transport for London; 2018. <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/cycling-action-plan.pdf>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

38 Lam T. Hackney: A Cycling Borough for Whom? *Applied Mobilities*. 2018; 3(2): 115–132.

39 Transport for London. *Cycling Action Plan*. London: Transport for London; 2018. <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/cycling-action-plan.pdf>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

40 Aldred R. *Cycling Near Misses: Findings from Year One of the Near Miss Project*. London: University of Westminster; 2015. Available at: <http://www.cyclo.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Near-Miss-Project-Cycling-Near-Misses.pdf>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

misses increase people's perceptions of danger—especially novice cyclists—and may be a significant enough deterrent from ever cycling again.

Transport for London is moving in the right direction by rebranding the Superhighways and Quietways.⁴¹ This positive action could be supported by increasing investment in material infrastructure to create safer environments. As stated in MOPAC's Police and Crime Plan, efforts are already underway to “be more effective in tackling the places, behaviours and vehicles that pose the greatest risk to pedestrians and cyclists.”⁴²

Evidence shows that people of all genders prefer protected cycle lanes, but the demand is greater among women.⁴³ Given the gendered nature of cycling near misses, they must be treated as seriously as traffic injuries and collisions. Furthermore, gendered and raced perceptions of safety must enter into the design and delivery of cycling projects. For a more diverse array of Londoners to feel like cycling is for “people like me,” there must be social and cultural interventions to address the various forms of street harassment that marginalised communities may experience.

For some women, the high costs of and increased vulnerability to sexual harassment or violence on public transport makes cycling their preferred mode of transport. When cycling, one is often not still enough to be approached by a potential harasser, and even if one is, it is quicker to escape on two wheels than on foot. According to one woman in her early thirties living in London:

On public transportation or just walking down the street, men invade my personal space every day: Men come too close, make comments, or just stare at me. These experiences don't just last for a few seconds. Often they take up a lot of emotional and mental space, even days after the encounter. Cycling, on the other hand, I experience as creating space around me that I don't need to defend. Even though this space gets invaded a lot by cars, buses, taxis, or people on the street verbally harassing me, these incidents feel different because they usually only last for a few seconds (until I cycle past). Sitting on my bicycle, I feel more freedom, safety, and agency compared to any other mode of transport.⁴⁴

This anecdote illustrates how cycling can offer women liberation from sexual harassment and violence on city streets or public transport, but increase their vulnerability to road traffic dangers.

At the same time, it is important to note that for other women, increased vulnerability to road traffic danger can compound existing concerns about gender-based harassment and violence, therefore making cycling a less feasible mode of transport. Anecdotally, some women also experience more harassment while cycling, such as being catcalled at with cycling-specific remarks, and even being grabbed by men driving past.

Sometimes the harassment women cyclists experience is subtler but still makes them feel out of place and uncomfortable. Cycling can make some people, especially those underrepresented in cycling, feel more visible and exposed, and therefore more vulnerable. They may be subject to verbal harassment that is inflected by gender, race, class and nationality. In the words of a woman from south London in her thirties:

41 Transport for London. *Cycling Action Plan*. London: Transport for London; 2018.

42 MOPAC, *A Safer City For All Londoners: Police and Crime Plan 2017–2021* MOPAC, London; 2017.

43 C40 Cities. *Gender Inclusive Climate Action in Cities*. London: C40 Cities; 2019. <https://w4c.org/full-study/women4climate-report-gender-inclusive-climate-action-cities>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

44 Meier I in Lam T. *Mind the Cycling Gender Gap, Issue 1*. Portland: Microcosm Publishing; 2018.

Once I was riding a Brompton bike, the epitome of British-ness, and the MAMIL [middle-aged man in lycra] next to me at the traffic light refused to make eye contact with me. Usually cyclists make eye contact with each other and/or smile, but for some reason he didn't even look at me. It was like hateration but silent. He seemed to resent that I was riding a Brompton. I felt it was because I, as a woman of colour, wasn't supposed to be on a bike, especially not a Brompton.⁴⁵

The idea that women of colour are not “supposed” to be cycling reflects how the lack of diversity in cycling in London can make marginalised groups feel like cycling is not for them.⁴⁶ In fact, 49 per cent of Londoners feel that cycling is not for “people like me.”⁴⁷ Research shows that the underrepresentation of Black women cycling in the media and on London streets is a barrier to cycling for Black women, and the widespread perception held by certain Asian communities that cycling is child's play is a barrier to cycling for Asian women.⁴⁸

Perceptions of safety are nuanced, as they are shaped by race, gender, socioeconomic class, etc., and impact how people move around in cities. Perceptions of safety are raced, too—there is evidence that fear of racial profiling is the third biggest barrier to cycling for Black and Hispanic communities in the US, after fears of traffic collisions and robbery or assault.⁴⁹ While addressing systemic racism and racial profiling may seem to fall outside the purview of transportation planning and engineering, it is relevant to built environment practitioners who care about making cities safer and more inclusive for all.

2.4 Public Toilets

The notoriously long queues for women's public toilets compared to men's may seem like a trivial problem, but it is another example of designing women out of public space. The historical relegation of women to the private sphere of the home meant that the public realm in the city remained male-dominated. The adequate provision of public toilets is necessary to make cities more inclusive for women. Public toilets generally are under threat. In the UK, 50 per cent of public toilets have been closed since 1995, while many of those that remain have been privatised.⁵⁰ In London, there has been a one-fifth decline in the provision of public toilets in the past decade, with some boroughs no longer directly providing public facilities.⁵¹

45 Salmon S in Lam T. *Mind the Cycling Gender Gap, Issue 1*. Portland: Microcosm Publishing; 2018.

46 Steinbach R, Green J, Datta J & Edwards P. Cycling and the City: A Case Study of How Gendered, Ethnic and Class Identities Can Shape Healthy Transport Choices. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2011; 72(7): 1123–1130.; Stehlin J. Regulating Inclusion: Spatial Form, Social Process, and the Normalisation of Cycling Practice in the USA. *Mobilities*. 2014; 9(1): Aldred R, Woodcock J & Goodman A. Does More Cycling Mean More Diversity in Cycling? *Transport Reviews*. 2016; 36(1): 28–44.; Lam T. Hackney: A Cycling Borough for Whom? *Applied Mobilities*. 2018; 3(2): 115–132.

47 Transport for London. *Cycling Action Plan*. London: Transport for London; 2018. <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/cycling-action-plan.pdf>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

48 Steinbach R, Green J, Datta J & Edwards P. Cycling and the City: A Case Study of How Gendered, Ethnic and Class Identities Can Shape Healthy Transport Choices. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2011; 72(7): 1123–1130.

49 Brown C. Fear: A Silent Barrier to Bicycling in Black and Hispanic Communities. Washington, DC: Institute of Transport Engineers Journal; 2016. http://njbikeped.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Fear_A-Silent-Barrier-to-Bicycling-in-Black-and-Hispanic-Communities_Sept2016.pdf. Accessed 9 April 2019.

50 Penner B. Toilets, Gender and Urbanism. UCLoo Festival 2013. 2013. <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ucloo-festival-2013/2013/09/17/toilets-gender-and-urbanism/>. Accessed 16 November 2018.

51 London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee. *Public Toilets In London*. London: Greater London Authority; 2011. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/FINAL%20HPS%20public%20toilets%20update%20report.pdf. Accessed 16 November 2018.

The decline in public toilets is gendered because women need more toilets than men. Women urinate more frequently than men do and take longer to do so for various reasons: women's clothing often takes longer to unfasten; women tend to carry more stuff when they are out (i.e. a purse or rucksack, shopping bags, prams, etc.), which means that toilet trips in public can be very cumbersome and stressful; women tend to shoulder greater childcare responsibilities, which means they are more likely to frequent public toilets with children in tow; and when menstruating, women have to place new and dispose of old sanitary products.⁵²

This has implications on the design of public facilities. Typically, equal floor space is given to men's and women's bathrooms. While the spatial area may be the same, a urinal requires less space than a cubicle, resulting in an imbalance of actual provision. This can create gendered health disparities, too. For example, women may drink less water when outside the home to reduce the need to urinate, therefore risking dehydration, or women may get accustomed to postponing using the toilet for too long, which can lead to urinary tract infections.⁵³

While some local authorities have taken action to provide innovative solutions for men's toilets in public spaces through the provision of 'pop up urinals', little has been done to ensure adequate and safe provision for women. These urinals have also come under some scrutiny from campaign groups who highlight how the provision of these urinals in prominent public spaces at night time make women feel unsafe and perpetuates the message that public space at night is not for them.⁵⁴

Thus, not only must there be more gender equitable provision of public toilets, but public toilets must also be designed to ensure that women feel safe and comfortable enough to use them. Public toilets need to provide adjoining public, semi-public and private spaces, which can pose a design challenge. In particular, the semi-public area that contains partitioned cubicles tends to be windowless, but spaces that are too enclosed, without sufficient lines of sight might feel less safe.⁵⁵ Standalone toilet facilities, in which people go directly from a thoroughly public space into a very private space, offer a better alternative. Apart from reducing the risk of unsafe semi-public spaces, they are also gender-neutral and more inclusive of the LGBTQ community.

2.5 Public Spaces and Parks

Public spaces and parks set the stage for people to gather and breathe life into the city, whether that is through play, exercise, relaxation, protest, music or other forms of solitary or social activity. In global cities with widening gaps between the rich and the poor, public space can be an equaliser, a means to a more inclusive society. Public space is where "people meet as equals, stripped bare of their social hierarchies."⁵⁶ However, the increasing privatisation of public spaces is endangering the very public-ness of public spaces.

52 O'Dwyer L. Why queues for women's toilets are longer than men's. *The Conversation*. 2018. <https://theconversation.com/why-queues-for-womens-toilets-are-longer-than-mens-99763>. Accessed 16 November 2018.

53 Phadke, S, Khan, S & Ranade S. *Why Loiter? Women & Risk on Mumbai Streets*. Guragon: Penguin Randomhouse India; 2011.

54 CityMetric. *Toilets are Popping Up on City Streets at Night*. CityMetric, 2014 Available at <https://www.citymetric.com/horizons/toilets-are-popping-city-streets-night-534> Accessed 20th February 2020.

55 McCreary C. *Building Safe Toilet Design Into Shared Urban Space*. Public Hygiene Lets Us Stay Human (PHLUSH) <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/35281903/building-safe-toilet-design-into-shared-urban-space-phlush>. Accessed November 16, 2018.

56 Peñalosa E, *Politics, Power, Cities*. In Burdett R & Sudjic D. *The Endless City*. London: Phaidon; 2007: 307–319.

The right to the city means not just a right to access, use and pass through urban public spaces, but also a right to participate in city life through on-going processes of creation and negotiation.⁵⁷ Privately owned public spaces can sometimes limit the possibilities for people to participate in shaping public space (POPS) and public life because they are essentially private property. This can diminish people's feelings that they belong to the city and that the city belongs to them.

The privatisation of public spaces raises serious issues around inclusivity and the accountability of private owners to their public obligations. The ubiquitous surveillance in privately owned public spaces reflects an exclusionary intent that keeps people out, rather than inviting them in. This inherently limits the accessibility, diversity and vivacity of the space. Furthermore, for communities of colour, increased surveillance may not be desirable and can make people feel less, rather than more, safe.

Moreover, there is a lack of transparency about what the rules and regulations are in privately owned public spaces, how exactly they are governed and the actual incidences of crimes, including gender-based violence. The high levels of secrecy mean that women and girls who experience gender-based violence there may have little recourse, especially without clear information about whom the private security guards are accountable to, or the protocol for addressing and reporting grievances or crimes that occur in those spaces.

In response to this challenge in London, the regeneration team are delivering a Public London Charter as part of the Mayor's commitment in the new London Plan. This charter will set out the rights and responsibilities for the users, owners and managers of public spaces irrespective of land ownership, to maximise public access and minimise rules governing the space, particularly in the increasing number of POPS.⁵⁸ They have also commissioned a researcher to produce design guidance for public spaces such as sky gardens, station concourses and museums that ensure these spaces remain inclusive and accessible to all Londoners, the results of which are forthcoming.

Access to public space relies on the availability of truly public spaces and people feeling that they have permission to be there, that they will be reasonably safe and comfortable. A gender perspective is needed in the design of public spaces and parks so that they are more inclusive of women and girls. For example, anecdotal evidence shows that women and girls are less likely to use parks and canal towpaths after dark because of perceived danger. Paths that are poorly paved and insufficiently lit at night also increase perceptions of and actual danger for cyclists. Adequate street lighting, therefore, "presents a significant opportunity to fundamentally improve the quality of life of urban citizens"⁵⁹ by making public spaces feel safer, more welcoming and cared for, especially after dark.

Media images and representations of women in urban public space also play a key role in making cities feel safer and more gender inclusive. In Barcelona, Collective Point 6, a cooperative of feminist architects, sociologists and urban planners, works towards building gender equality into the city streets. One priority area is tackling sexist advertisements at bus stops, on trains and on billboards.⁶⁰ For women,

57 Phadke, S, Khan, S & Ranade S. *Why Loiter? Women & Risk on Mumbai Streets*. Guragon: Penguin Randomhouse India; 2011.

58 Shenker, J. *London mayor to draw up charter regulating pseudo-public space*. The Guardian. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/nov/23/london-mayor-charter-pseudo-public-space-sadiq-khan> accessed 20 February 2020

59 Lam F. Cities alive—Lighting the urban night-time. *ICE Thinks*. 2017. <https://www.ice.org.uk/news-and-insight/ice-thinks/growing-cities-and-building-resilience/cities-alive-lighting-the-urban-night-time>. Accessed 16 November 2018.

60 Fleming A. What would a city that is safe for women look like? *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/dec/13/what-would-a-city-that-is-safe-for-women-look-like>. Published 2018. Accessed 8 April 2019.

walking alone past a sexist advertisement under a railway arch can make the city feel like an alienating and hostile environment, especially if one has recently experienced street harassment.

As such, providing better representations of women in street advertisements, as well as showcasing more feminist murals or public art by women are positive actions that cities can take. English Heritage’s “plaques for women” campaign to increase the number of women commemorated on blue plaques in London is also a good example of initiatives that increase women’s visibility and inclusion in urban public space.⁶¹

2.6 Housing

Gender-inclusive design in housing is another important built environment element that can increase women’s perceptions and experiences of safety in the city. Interviews with residents of two temporary accommodations in the London Borough of Camden revealed that women—mostly from racial and ethnic minority groups, some of whom had entered the UK as asylum seekers—overwhelmingly expressed greater safety concerns when discussing their current living situation.⁶²

Women were disproportionately more likely to cite safety from crime as a key criterion to their ideal future long-term homes. When asked how they envisioned a safe environment to look like, they mentioned adequate street lighting; some police presence; the presence of other people on the street; some commercial activity (i.e. restaurants, stores, supermarkets, etc.) and easy public transport access (i.e. bus and tube stops).

Step-free access in housing developments, as well as transport stations, is also essential to ensure women’s safe entry and passage inside, outside and around buildings. Female temporary accommodation residents in Camden frequently experienced mobility constraints entering and exiting their buildings because they often had to carry children, prams, laundry and shopping up and down several flights of stairs. Some buildings either had no lifts at all, or the lifts were frequently out of service.⁶³ The Greater London Authority have started to address these issues through both the new ‘Housing Design Guide’, which calls for a more inclusive approach to design and the ‘Making London Child Friendly’ report.⁶⁴

Functional and adequately lit lifts, as well as accessible and secure pram and cycle parking, ideally on the ground floor, should be mandatory in housing developments. After all, as a typical point of departure or return for most people’s journeys, housing must facilitate the encumbered journeys that women disproportionately make.

2.7 Gender expertise in built environment design

Integrating more gender expertise in the design of public transport, cycling infrastructure, public toilets, public spaces, parks and housing is not just about

61 English Heritage. English Heritage Want More Blue Plaques for Women. <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/search-news/more-blue-plaques-for-women/>. Accessed 11 April 2019.

62 In February 2019, LSE London conducted a series of interviews with residents in temporary accommodation in Camden on the “Barriers to acceptance of housing offers by families in temporary accommodation” research project, funded by the London Borough of Camden.

63 Ibid.

64 Good Growth by Design. “Making London Child Friendly: Designing Places and Streets for Children and Young People” Mayor of London Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ggbd_making_london_child-friendly.pdf Accessed 4th March 2020.

adding or altering infrastructural fixtures in the urban built environment. It is about paying attention to women's safety concerns, taking seriously sexual harassment and violence in public space and challenging the patriarchal exclusion of women from the public realm.

More gender-aware built environment interventions could set in motion a cultural paradigm shift by beginning with the tangible: The public spaces we share. Unlike societal attitudes and cultural norms—which also influence gendered perceptions of safety, but are intangible and cannot be transformed overnight—the built environment can be used as a medium for more tangible and immediate change.



Cities across the globe have taken bold action to incorporate gender expertise and increase women's leadership in urban design, planning and governance processes in order to make cities safer and more inclusive. In what follows are examples of five innovative methods (gender-responsive participatory planning, gender mainstreaming, gender-disaggregated data, women's safety audits and public awareness campaigns) that cities have adopted that can serve as inspiration.

3.1 Gender-responsive participatory planning

Gender-responsive participatory planning enables governments to involve a broader range of citizens in local planning and decision-making processes, thereby ensuring that public resources are used more effectively and holistically.⁶⁵ This increases citizen engagement, accountability and transparency in policy and planning processes. An innovative approach to gender-responsive participatory planning in cities is the 'Gender Into Urban Climate Change Initiative' (GUCCI) project.

The GUCCI project was launched in 2015 by GenderCC—Women for Climate Justice, a global network of organisations, experts and activists, with the aim of elevating both gender and climate justice in cities. It engages more women in urban climate policymaking processes, therefore building local capacity, and using their input to develop gender-responsive policy recommendations. There are currently 14 participating pilot cities in South Africa, India, Indonesia and Mexico.

In each pilot city, key issues are systematically identified in partnership with women's organisations, and in consultation with women, poor people and other marginalised groups. Subsequently, local strategies are developed to ensure that urban climate policies are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all, especially the most vulnerable segments of society. Partnering with existing women's organisations that work on issues around climate change helps build local capacity. It also empowers citizens to be informed, active agents in urban planning and governance processes. This is an effective way to build and sustain momentum for long-term goals of gender inclusivity amidst short-term political cycles.

3.2 Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the integration of a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, in order to promote gender equality.⁶⁶ The City of Vienna was an early adopter of gender mainstreaming in urban planning and has conducted over sixty pilot projects since the early 1990s. Under gender mainstreaming, the city has

65 C40 Cities. *Gender Inclusive Climate Action in Cities*. London: C40 Cities; 2019. <https://w4c.org/full-study/women4climate-report-gender-inclusive-climate-action-cities>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

66 European Institute for Gender Equality. *What is Gender Mainstreaming*. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>. Accessed 9 April 2019.

a data-driven urban planning and design process, starting with collecting data at the very beginning of a project to understand how different groups of people use public space. Specifically, the aims are to learn about who is using the space and what for, analyse patterns of public space usage, define the needs and interests of people using the space, then plan accordingly to meet those needs.

One example of the measurable impacts of gender mainstreaming is the redesign of public parks. City planners in Vienna included girls in their original scoping and data collection exercises, and then redesigned two parks to be more inclusive of people across gender, age groups, racial groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. They added footpaths to improve accessibility, particularly beneficial for children, older people, women and people with disabilities; volleyball and badminton courts to provide a wider variety of activities; and landscaping that divided large open areas into semi-enclosed spaces to enable more mixed use.⁶⁷

3.3 Gender-disaggregated data

Gender-disaggregated data is a tool that allows policymakers to capture and assess differences in the social, political, economic, spatial and environmental behaviours and actions among individuals across diverse populations. This gender analysis can then lead to gender-informed public investments and policies, thereby promoting more gender inclusive outcomes. For example, gender-disaggregated data on urban transport could help cities better see and understand gendered differences in how, where, when and why people travel in the city. The City of Barcelona has been a trailblazer in gathering gender-disaggregated data to ensure that the public transport system meets the needs of women and girls.

In 2016 the Department for Feminisms and LGTBI produced the city's Plan for Gender Justice 2016—2020, after data collection and citizen engagement. The Plan identifies four strategic areas:⁶⁸

- 1 **Institutional Change:** Increasing institutional gender expertise, i.e. through gender training or gender budgeting.
- 2 **Economy for Life and Time Management:** Promoting gender equality in employment and entrepreneurial support programmes, in addition to promoting a gender equitable division of domestic labour.
- 3 **City of Rights:** Addressing structural barriers that impede people's human rights.
- 4 **Liveable and Inclusive Neighbourhoods:** Ensuring that urban public space is safe for and inclusive of women and girls. Crucially, this means addressing gender-based violence in public and private space.

Collecting gender-disaggregated data on urban transport is pivotal in order to deliver on the fourth strategic area, Liveable and Inclusive Neighbourhoods.⁶⁹ The city uses this data to ensure that the public transport, walking and cycling networks accommodate female mobility patterns.

67 Foran C. How to Design a City for Women. *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2013/09/how-design-city-women/6739/>. Published 2013. Accessed 15 October 2018.

68 Barcelona Department for Feminisms and LGTBI. *Plan for Gender Justice 2016—2020*. Barcelona: Department for Feminisms and LGTBI; 2016. https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/feminismes-lgtbi/sites/default/files/documentacio/p_4.2_plan-for-gender-justice-2016-2020_ang.pdf. Accessed 8 April 2019.

69 C40 Cities. *Gender Inclusive Climate Action in Cities*. London: C40 Cities; 2019. <https://w4c.org/full-study/women4climate-report-gender-inclusive-climate-action-cities>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

Similarly, for the first time, the City of San Francisco collected gender- and race-disaggregated data on usage of new cycle lanes in the South of Market District to better understand how gender, race and socioeconomic class impact city cycling.⁷⁰ Increasing cycling is essential for the city to achieve its ambitious climate and sustainability targets, but women comprise only 29 per cent of the cyclists in San Francisco, despite being 49 per cent of the population. The gender gap in cycling is nuanced, as women of Asian and Hispanic descent are underrepresented in cycling.

One key takeaway from this study is that a paradigm shift in transport data collection is necessary so that everyone gets counted. Typical cycling studies only report peak-period commuting journeys to and from work, but women, especially women of colour, are more likely to cycle during off-peak hours for purposes other than work. As a result, their cycling journeys do not get counted. Through gathering gender- and race-disaggregated data, cities can help ensure that sustainable transport modes reflect and serve the heterogeneous travel patterns of diverse urban populations.

3.4 Women's safety audits

Under the leadership of Ángela Anzola, the Secretary for Women and Gender Equality in the City of Bogotá, women's safety on streets and on public transport systems has been a key priority. Anzola partnered with Safetipin, an app-based women's safety audit developed by Dr. Kalpana Viswanath in India, to collect data about women's perceptions and experiences of safety in Bogotá during the daytime and at night. The UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme recommends women's safety audits as a tool for cities to address the pandemic of gender-based violence in urban public space and on public transport. The results of women's safety audits empower cities with data and enable the development of robust indicators to assess female safety in cities. This makes women's and girls' safety "count" in urban and transport policy and planning processes.

The Safetipin audit is based on nine parameters: street lighting; openness (the availability of open sight lines in all directions); visibility (based on the "eyes on the street" principle, evaluating the commercial, retail and residential activity nearby); people (the number of people around); security (the presence of police officers and private security guards); walkpath (the quality of the pavement or road space); public transport (measured in terms of distance to the nearest mode of transport); and gender usage.⁷¹ On the Safetipin app, women can drop pins on specific locations in the city, which maps the city according to where women feel safe or unsafe.

Two unique outputs from Bogotá's Safetipin audits were cycle route audits and an index of women's night-time safety. In a first, mobile phones were mounted on cycles to photograph the city's 294 kilometre cycling network, which revealed a greater need for street lighting and visibility along cycle routes and pinpointed where exactly interventions were necessary.⁷² Meanwhile, the creation of an index of women's safety at night was particularly relevant because 30 per cent of women in Bogotá avoid going out at night because they feel unsafe on the city's streets and public transport systems.⁷³ Both the night-time safety index and cycle route audits

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ Safetipin. *Bogotá: A Safety Analysis Report*. Gurgaon: Safetipin; 2018. <https://use.metropolis.org/case-studies/using-safetipin-to-build-safer-cities-for-women>. Accessed 9 April 2019.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Anzola A in Lamble L. Capital offence: tackling harassment on public transport in Bogotá—podcast. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/audio/2018/oct/24/listen-to-women-designing-safe-spaces-in-a-city-where-harassment-is-rife-podcast>. Produced 2018. Accessed 9 April 2019.

are illuminating for policymakers, who do not always understand the extent, impact and spatial nature of gender-based harassment and violence, and will help drive policy and public space interventions to make the city safer for women and girls.

In Bogotá, each borough in the city has a Local Security Council, specifically designated to address gender issues and integrate gender mainstreaming in policymaking.⁷⁴ The Local Security Councils comprise of the local Mayor, police officers and women living in the area, therefore providing women with a platform to input their perspectives and experiences into local policy and planning decisions. The Safetipin audits have been used at Local Security Council meetings to amplify the voices of women to help the city tackle gender-based harassment or violence in public space.⁷⁵

3.5 Public awareness campaigns

Alongside implementing policy and programming to address public sexual harassment and violence, public awareness campaigns can be instrumental in challenging cultural attitudes and norms. Mexico City, a participant in the UN Women Safe City and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls programme since 2015, has been tackling sexual harassment and violence on public transport.⁷⁵ per cent of women who travel daily in Mexico City use public transport,⁷⁶ but the city's public transport system is notoriously dangerous for women.⁷⁷ In a creative attempt to address gender-based violence on public transport, UN Women and the Mexico City government launched a #NoEsDeHombres (It's not manly) campaign in March 2017 to target male public transport commuters between the ages of 20 and 50.

The #NoEsDeHombres campaign puts the onus on men and men's behaviour, which counters typical victim-blaming messages directed at women. The campaign contained filmed social experiments, such as "Experimento Asiento" (experiment with a seat), which went viral online. This video showed people's reactions to subway seats that were changed to look like the bottom half of a naked male body, including the penis, with signs beneath the seats reading, "It is annoying to travel this way, but not compared to the sexual violence women suffer in their daily commutes."⁷⁸

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in Washington, DC, also launched an effective public awareness campaign addressing sexual harassment and violence on public transport in 2012. In partnership with Collective Action for Safe Spaces and Stop Street Harassment, WMATA launched its first-ever anti-sexual harassment campaign, consisting of advertisements in English and Spanish at metro stations to raise awareness about sexual harassment in public and encourage victims to report incidents to the police. This included an online portal for people to report incidents to Metro Transit Police, improved data tracking of incidents and an email address to allow victims to send photos or video files to assist an investigation.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Dekovic A. Bogotá's Fight for Gender Equality and Safe Public Transport. *Impakter*. Published 2019. <https://impakter.com/bogotas-fight-for-gender-equality-and-safe-public-transport/>. Accessed 11 April 2019.

⁷⁶ UN Women. Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces: Global Results Report. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/10/safe-cities-and-safe-public-spaces-global-results-report>. Published 2017. Accessed 8 April 2019.

⁷⁷ Thompson Reuters Foundation. Women on the Move; 2018. <http://2018transportpoll.trust.org/>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

⁷⁸ Debs S & Franco M. 'Penis Seat' Causes Double Take on Mexico City Subway. *The New York Times*. Published 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/31/world/americas/penis-seat-mexico-city-harassment.html>. Accessed 8 April 2019.

⁷⁹ Collective Action for Safe Spaces. WMATA Campaign. <https://www.collectiveactiondc.org/our-work/wmata-anti-sexual-harassment-campaign/>. Accessed 9 April 2019.

The second phase of WMATA’s campaign launched in 2015; key distinguishing features were the use of gender-neutral language and the addition of messages targeting perpetrators of sexual harassment, rather than just victims of harassment.⁸⁰ The advertisements in this second round had more diverse and inclusive imagery, such as ones featuring transgender women of colour and Muslim women.⁸¹ Most recently, WMATA announced the launch of a new public awareness campaign, STOP harassment, geared towards empowering public transport riders to report and intervene if they witness or experience harassment. The key message is, “You can help STOP harassment” with STOP as a mnemonic for four strategies to intervene: Sidetrack, Tell, Observe and Postpone.⁸²

There are notable aspects of both public awareness campaigns that helped maximise their impact. The #NoEsDeHombres campaign crowd-sourced ideas from the public for an effective campaign to target a male audience and to change men’s behaviour. It also involved well-known public figures, like bloggers, wrestlers and actors, as an endorsement that sexual harassment is unacceptable. Perhaps, most importantly, the messages exclusively targeted men, which helps shift away from victim-blaming mentalities and narratives and towards more scrutiny of toxic masculinity.

Meanwhile, the WMATA campaign engaged two local activist organisations with expertise in addressing street harassment. It also monitored and evaluated key campaign messages and images, and updated them as necessary. Critically, it included more inclusive imagery of transgender women of colour, which reflects an intersectional perspective and helps draw attention to the disproportionately high rates of violence against transgender women.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Raven J. Sexual violence isn’t uncommon to Metro. Here’s what WMATA is doing to fix that. *Greater Greater Washington*. Published 2016. <https://ggwash.org/view/43487/sexual-violence-isnt-uncommon-on-metro-heres-what-wmata-is-doing-to-fix-that>. Accessed 9 April 2019.

⁸² Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. News Release: New Metro Campaign Aims to Stop Harassment. Published 2019. https://dcommutetimes.com/news_releases/article/new-metro-campaign-aims-to-stop-harassment. Accessed 9 April 2019.

This section describes existing policies and projects in London that work towards making the city safer and more inclusive for women and girls: the Women's Night Safety Charter, the Women's Design Service, Project Guardian, the Healthy Streets Approach, the Women in Clean-Tech Agenda and various other organisations.

4.1 Women's Night Safety Charter

The London at Night report found that Disabled people, people in low-income households, and women do not feel as safe in London at night as other Londoners.⁸³ The report also found:

- Actions like more visible policing, or better street lighting, are more likely to be favoured by those who might feel more at risk of crime. This includes women, and people over 50. These are also groups who have less interest in going out at night
- These findings are not replicated for ethnic minorities. They are more likely to go out at night as they're more likely to be working then
- Secure transport and well-used streets can help people feel that the streets are safer, as this is more clearly linked to experiences

Night Czar Amy Lamé organised the Night Safety Summit in the summer of 2018, at which she hosted the first-ever workshop on women's safety at night. The women's safety at night workshop convened delegates from women's groups, charities, businesses, councils, transport organisations and the police with the aim of understanding how public spaces in London could be safer for women and girls at night. To that end, delegates were broken up into small groups for a facilitated discussion about the public spaces most in need of action; the key safety issues in those spaces; existing actions in London to address these issues and their strengths; and key opportunities for action.

The workshop led to the creation of the Women's Night Safety Charter, which includes seven commitments based on the pillars of reporting, responding, taking responsibility and redesigning public spaces:

- Nominate a champion in your organisation who actively promotes women's night safety.
- Demonstrate to staff and customers that your organisation takes women's safety at night seriously, i.e. through a communications campaign.
- Tell staff what to do if they experience harassment when working, going out, or travelling.
- Encourage reporting by victims and bystanders as part of your communications campaign.
- Train staff to ensure that all women who report are believed.
- Train staff to ensure that all reports are recorded and responded to.
- Design your public spaces and work places to make them safer for women at night.⁸⁴

⁸³ Greater London Authority, *London at Night: An Evidence Base for a 24-Hour City*, London, 2018.

⁸⁴ Mayor of London. *Pledge to Improve Women's Safety At Night In London*; 2018. <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/pledge-to-improve-womens-safety-at-night>. Accessed 8 November 2018.

To support this implementation of the charter's commitments, the Greater London Authority created the Women's Night Safety Toolkit which outlines key actions and approaches that can be taken to support the aims of the charter.

The workshop highlighted some of the contributing factors and enabling conditions for gender-based harassment and violence in public space in London; how the built environment facilitates and enables such behaviour; temporal patterns to the problem; and recommended actions to improve women's and girls' safety.

Recommended actions to make London safer for women and girls that emerged from the workshop included: tackling the normalisation of sexual harassment; increasing the visibility of women in built environment professions and processes; increasing bystander intervention so people feel supported by others if they experience harassment in public; and collecting and mapping data. For example, one method of data collection could be working with local communities to identify and map the perceived danger spots in their area. Challenging cultural norms is also necessary so that women feel empowered to claim and occupy public space without experiencing harassment.

4.2 Women's Design Service

The Women's Design Service was founded in 1984 to increase women's participation in urban design and planning.⁸⁵ Through a holistic approach that treated design as dynamic, both social and technical, the Women's Design Service advised community groups, performed feasibility studies, assisted with funding applications, conducted research and participated in lobbying. It brought together diverse networks, including architects, planners, government officers, tenants and residents, therefore rapidly establishing itself as a resource for all those interested in women, gender and the built environment.

Initially funded by the former Greater London Council (GLC), the Women's Design Service maintained a precarious existence after the GLC restructured, relying mostly on government funding and grants. Sadly, as of 2012, the Women's Design Service remained dormant whilst the Trustees consider future options, including possibly closing it down.⁸⁶ This would be a shame because of the legacy of the Women's Design Service on the UK's built environment. The Women's Design Service is to thank for introducing the legal requirement for toilets to include baby-changing facilities, and for conducting significant research on women's safety in public space, through surveys and women's safety audits, to name two examples.

The Women's Design Service conducted a three-year pilot project called Making Safer Places, which entailed women's safety audits in Bristol, Wolverhampton, London and Manchester. Working with women in those cities, they did a "fearometer" exercise to explore how and which aspects of the built environment caused women to feel unsafe, and how contextual factors, like time of day, contributed to perceptions of safety. The women's safety audit results informed recommendations to improve the localities, including moving or removing vegetation, rerouting paths or installing fences.⁸⁷ Their research adopted an intersectional perspective, acknowledging the multiplicities of women's experiences

85 Spatial Agency: Women's Design Service. [Spatialagency.net](http://www.spatialagency.net/database/where/knowledge/womens.design.service). <http://www.spatialagency.net/database/where/knowledge/womens.design.service>. Published 2018. Accessed 16 October 2018.

86 WDS—Women's Design Service. [Wds.org.uk](https://www.wds.org.uk). <https://www.wds.org.uk>. Published 2018. Accessed 16 October 2018.

87 WDS Projects. [Wds.org.uk](http://www.wds.org.uk/projects_msp.html). http://www.wds.org.uk/projects_msp.html. Published 2018. Accessed 16 October 2018.

of the urban environment, and underscored the need to treat buildings and spaces not as mere design objects or spatial fixtures, but as actual and possible experiences.⁸⁸

4.3 Project Guardian

In April 2013, Transport for London (TfL), the British Transport Police, the Metropolitan Police Service, and City of London Police joined forces to launch Project Guardian, a campaign to make public transport safer for women and girls, and to encourage reporting of unwanted sexual behaviour on the transport network. Project Guardian formed after a TfL survey reported widespread fear of sexual harassment on public transport among women and girls. The survey found that 15 per cent of women and girls had experienced sexual harassment or violence while on public transport, but 90 per cent had not reported it.⁸⁹

Similar to the WMATA anti-public sexual harassment campaigns in Washington, DC, TfL tapped into the expertise of London-based women's organisations that address gender-based violence. The Everyday Sexism Project, the End Violence Against Women coalition and Hollaback! London trained and advised the police on the project. The Everyday Sexism project collects and shares stories about women's experiences with sexism in everyday life. The End Violence Against Women Coalition comprises of specialist women's support services, researchers, activists, survivors and NGOs working to end violence against women and girls. Hollaback! is a global grassroots movement to end harassment in both digital and virtual public spaces.

Just seven months after the launch of Project Guardian, there was a 20 per cent increase in the reporting of sexual offences on public transport.⁹⁰ The number of annual reports of sexual harassment on London's public transport network has doubled from 1,023 in 2012/13, since Project Guardian launched, to 2,087 in 2015/16.⁹¹ Additionally, TfL reported a 36 per cent increase in arrests for sexual offences on the transport network between 2014/15 and 2015/16.⁹² TfL also launched a "Report It To Stop It"⁹³ campaign, including a short film that went viral on YouTube in 2015 to raise awareness about sexual harassment on public transport and encourage the reporting of such crimes.

4.4 Healthy Streets Approach

The Healthy Streets Approach adopts a public health perspective on the urban street environment and bridges the public health, urban design/planning and transport sectors to create a healthier, safer, more sustainable and more liveable city. It is an integral component of the Mayor's Transport Strategy and sustainable

88 Berglund E. Building a Real Alternative: Women's Design Service. *Field: A Free Journal for Architecture* 2. 2008; 2(1): 44–59. http://field-journal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Building-a-Real-Alternative_Berglund.pdf. Accessed 16 October 2018.

89 Bates L. Project Guardian: making public transport safer for women. *The Guardian*. Published 2013. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/the-womens-blog-with-jane-martinson/2013/oct/01/project-guardian-public-transport-safer-women>. Accessed 10 April 2019.

90 *Ibid.*

91 Transport for London. Press Release: Powerful new campaign highlights the importance of reporting unwanted sexual behaviour. Published 2017. <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2017/march/powerful-new-campaign-highlights-the-importance-of-reporting-unwanted-sexual-behaviour>. Accessed 10 April 2019.

92 *Ibid.*

93 Report it to stop it. Transport for London. <https://tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/safety/report-it-to-stop-it>. Accessed 8 November 2018.

transport goals for 80 per cent of trips in London to be made by foot, cycle or public transport.⁹⁴ It uses 10 evidence-based indicators of what makes streets attractive and healthier:

- **Pedestrians from all walks of life:** Streets should be welcoming for everyone to walk, spend time in and engage in public life.
- **People choose to walk, cycle and use public transport:** A successful transport system encourages and enables walking and cycling to be more viable and preferred ways to travel. To achieve this, London must reduce the volume and dominance of motor traffic and improve people's experience of being on streets.
- **Clean air:** Improving air quality benefits everyone and reduces health inequalities.
- **People feel safe:** Everyone should feel comfortable and safe on London streets at all times, in terms of road danger and personal safety.
- **Not too noisy:** Reducing noise pollution from motor traffic will directly enhance public health, active travel and human interaction.
- **Easy to cross:** Safe, direct and comfortable streets that enable people to cross at their convenience are necessary to encourage more cycling and connect communities.
- **Places to stop and rest:** Ensuring that there are enough places to stop and rest will benefit everyone, including local businesses.
- **Shade and shelter:** Providing shade and shelter from the elements is necessary for people to use, enjoy and feel they can linger in public space.
- **People feel relaxed:** There is an emphasis on reducing motorised traffic and investing in quality pavements and cycle lanes.
- **Things to see and do:** Lively public spaces depend on having interesting, stimulating, attractive streets, buildings and street art.⁹⁵

Typically transport appraisals are premised on economic productivity and congestion reduction. The Healthy Streets Approach turns this on its head by prioritising people over motorised traffic, and health and wellbeing over economic productivity or the monetary value of travel time savings. The “pedestrians from all walks of life,” “people feel safe” and “places to stop and rest” Healthy Streets indicators are also noteworthy.

The explicit acknowledgment that healthy, attractive and liveable streets are ones where people from all walks of life feel welcome and able to spend time in and pass through puts diversity and inclusion at the forefront. This underscores the need for truly public spaces where everyone is welcome, as opposed to privately owned public spaces that are premised on exclusion. The “places to stop and rest” indicator is significant because it reframes city streets as not just spaces for functional movement, but also for rest and stillness. As such, transport planners must think about city streets as public spaces that serve purposes beyond merely funnelling people and goods. Similarly, urban designers and planners must think about the connectivity between various public spaces to ensure safe passage through the city for people from all walks of life.

The fact that people's feelings of safety and comfort on city streets are an indicator of healthy streets is important, especially since typical assessments of road safety do not consider perceptions and feelings of safety. They also typically privilege safety from motorised traffic over personal safety, including safety from harassment. By defining safety as both personal and road safety, the Healthy Streets indicators represent a paradigmatic shift that values people's subjective, lived experiences in transport and public space investments.

94 Greater London Authority. *The Mayor's Transport Strategy*. London: Greater London Authority; 2018. <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>. Accessed 11 April 2019.

95 Transport for London. *Healthy Streets for London*. London: Transport for London; 2017. <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/healthy-streets-for-london.pdf>. Accessed 10 April 2019.

The Healthy Streets Approach is an excellent way to start reframing street and public space design, and it could benefit from a gender perspective. For instance, the indicators could explicitly mention safety from gender-based harassment and violence as another key criterion of healthy, liveable streets. The “places to stop and rest” and “shade and shelter” indicators could also reference how adequate street lighting and visibility are necessary for women and girls to feel safe. Finally, greater consideration of temporal transitions of public spaces and city streets throughout 24-hour cycles could make the Healthy Streets Approach more robust for a healthy, liveable and safe 24-hour city.

4.5 Other Organisations

In addition to the aforementioned London-wide initiatives led by the Mayor’s Office, there is a plethora of organisations that are working towards making the urban built environment more inclusive and safer for women and girls. Examples include:

- **Urbanistas:** A network that amplifies the voices and ideas of women to make cities better for everyone by connecting women working on various urban issues to share knowledge, build support and inspire so that women are empowered to kick-start projects.⁹⁶
- **Part W:** An action group of women working across architecture and design, infrastructure and construction and campaigning for gender parity across the built environment.⁹⁷
- **Women in Science and Engineering (WISE):** A Community Interest Company that provides Business to Business services to employers, educators and training providers seeking to increase the participation, contribution and success of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).⁹⁸
- **Women’s Engineering Society (WES):** A charity and professional network of women engineers, scientists and technologists working to support and inspire women in the field; encourage engineering education; and support companies with gender diversity and inclusion.⁹⁹
- **Hollaback London!** A movement to end harassment in public spaces powered by local activists. They run particular campaigns and training around bystander intervention.¹⁰⁰
- **Good Night Out Campaign:** An organisation that helps nightlife spaces and organisations to better understand, respond to, and prevent sexual harassment and assault, through specialist training, policy support and an accreditation programme.¹⁰¹
- **Secured by Design:** A police organisation seeking to achieve sustainable reductions in crime through design.¹⁰²
- **Black Females in Architecture:** a network and enterprise founded to increase the visibility of black and black mixed heritage females within architectural industry and other built environment fields. In so doing, BFA actively addresses issues of inequality and diversity within the industry.
- **Architects for Change:** the RIBA’s expert advisory group for equality, diversity and inclusion.

96 Women’s Network | Urbanistas. Urbanistas. <https://www.urbanistas.org.uk>. Accessed 16 October 2018.

97 Manifesto. Part W. <https://www.part-w.com/> Accessed 20th February 2020

98 About Us. Women in Science and Engineering. <https://www.wisecampaign.org.uk/about-us/>. Accessed 10 April 2019.

99 About WES—who we are. Women’s Engineering Society. <https://www.wes.org.uk/content/about-wes-who-we-are>. Accessed 10 April 2019.

100 You have the power to end street harassment. Hollaback London! <https://ldn.ihollaback.org/> Accessed 20 February 2020

101 Good Night Out Campaign <https://www.goodnightoutcampaign.org/info/> Accessed 10 April 2019.

102 Secured by Design. Who we are. <https://www.securedbydesign.com/about-us/who-we-are-what-we-do> Accessed 20 February 2020

- **InterEngineering:** a free and inclusive organisation for everyone who believes that LGBT diversity and inclusion within engineering is important.
- **The DisOrdinary Architecture Project:** has been working with architectural and built environment practitioners for over a decade. It aims to open practices to more creative and critical engagement with disability, ability, access and inclusion through collaboration.



Meeting the Mayor's aspiration to make London "a city of freedoms, opportunities and rights for all" is an ongoing endeavour that requires sustained and concerted action across all policy areas in City Hall as well as from the wider London community of businesses, NGOs and citizen groups. By becoming a signatory to the UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme, the Mayor has underlined his commitment to tackling violence against women and girls in London in all of its forms.

This report has provided guidance as to the role of built environment interventions in making public spaces more inclusive, has looked internationally at specific tools adopted, and has outlined the existing work being undertaken by London towards this aim. The following recommendations borrow from the insights in this report to create a suite of options for continuing to make London safer for women and girls.

1 RE-INSTATE THE WOMEN'S DESIGN SERVICE (OR A BODY LIKE IT)

The Women's Design Service played a pivotal role in making urban public space more inclusive of women, both in terms of professional practice and actual use of public space. With long term secure funding, groups like these are able to act as a focal point for local organisations, maintain the issue high on all policy agendas and ensure that gender expertise is captured, disseminated and capitalised upon. If the Women's Design Service were reinstated it could:

- a. Lead and collate in-depth participatory research on best practice with respect to making London safer for women and girls
- b. Design and deliver gender mainstreaming training for built environment professionals in London to equip them with practical actions to incorporate a gender lens in design
- c. Create and maintain partnerships with women's organisations, research institutions and the Mayor's Design Advocates to strengthen interest in making London safer for women and girls
- d. Maintain London's priority on women and girls' safety as a core policy agenda as well as lobby for its inclusion in non-

government projects and initiatives across the capital (i.e. through developers, Business Improvement Districts, housing associations etc.)

2 IMPLEMENT GENDER MAINSTREAMING PILOT PROJECTS USING GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA

There are a wide range of interventions across public transport, cycling, public space, housing and toilet provision that could make London work better for women. But if the impacts of these projects are to be understood and scaled across London, an evidence base of impact needs to be built up. Therefore, the pilot projects suggested below must collect, analyse and report on gender-disaggregated data from before and after the intervention. Such pilot projects include, but are not limited to:

- Cycling: Identify scheduled cycling infrastructure upgrade plans across London and ensure women's needs are taken into account by including protected cycle lanes, adequate and safe space for storage as well as local imagery around diversity of cyclists
- Lighting: Conduct small scale interventions to explore the impact of innovative and creative lighting schemes on the feeling of safety in less populated parts of the city
- Housing: work with housing associations and residents to review the provision of adequately lit lifts, as well as accessible and secure pram and cycle parking and other needs
- Toilets: Partner with universities and local authorities to create and implement innovative designs for inclusive and affordable public toilets. This could be supported by a campaign to open up more privately owned toilets (e.g. in bars and restaurants) to non-paying customers

3 CAPITALISE ON THE WOMEN'S NIGHT SAFETY CHARTER TO CONDUCT NIGHT SAFETY AUDITS

Women's safety audits can help provide spatial and quantitative data about women's perceptions and experiences of safety in the city. This can guide data-driven approaches to systematically assess and improve female



safety in public. By working with the existing 340 signatories of the Women's Night Safety Charter, local teams could work together to:

- Conduct localised women's night safety audits
- Use these audits to collaborate with local Business Innovation Districts, TfL and the Metropolitan Police Service to create Local Women's Safety Action Plans

4 BUILD ON EXISTING PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS AND CREATE POSITIVE IMAGERY IN THE PUBLIC REALM

Campaigns like 'Project Guardian' and 'Report It To Stop It' have been effective in increasing reporting of unwanted sexual behaviour on public transport. Building on this success, new campaigns could focus on the responsibilities of bystanders and perpetrators and thereby aspire to minimise the impacts and prevalence of these assaults. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to take a lead in providing more progressive images of women in advertising in public space. Recommendations towards achieving this include:

- Partner with organisations like Hollaback! to include bystander awareness tips and tricks into public campaigns on unwanted sexual behaviour
- Crowdfund ideas for campaigns that would target potential perpetrators of unwanted sexual behaviour
- Ensure adverts across the London transport network do not perpetuate harmful female stereotypes
- Showcase feminist murals and public art by women

5 INTEGRATE A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO TFL'S HEALTHY STREETS APPROACH

The Healthy Streets Approach is an excellent way to start reframing street and public space design, and it would benefit from a gender perspective. For instance, the indicators could explicitly mention safety from gender-based harassment and violence as another a key criterion of

healthy, liveable streets. The "places to stop and rest" and "shade and shelter" indicators could also reference how adequate street lighting and visibility are necessary for women and girls to feel safe. As such, TfL could:

- Conduct a review of the indicators in the Healthy Streets Approach to integrate an explicit gender perspective

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