

# HEALING ENVIRONMENTS

Using landscape-led, tactical interventions to improve user experience within urban healthcare districts.

## Landscape-Led Design...

seeks to improve a space via the introduction of natural elements.

## Tactical Interventions...

seek to catalyse longer-term change through initial small-scale, cheap, and easy to implement schemes.

## Urban Healthcare Districts...

include the streets, pavements & parks surrounding healthcare facilities.



Literature highlights the benefits that nature provides to human health and wellbeing...

-  Some trees secrete chemicals that lower Cortisol (stress) levels within the body.
-  Biophilia, the innate connection to nature that humans feel owing to evolution, makes us crave a sense of enclosure.
-  Natural materials give the perception of an improved environment.
-  As do elements such as water and birdsong.
-  Sensory environments, including smells and sounds, can evoke happy memories.

100%

of London hospitals are located in areas that exceed World Health Organisation toxic pollution standards.

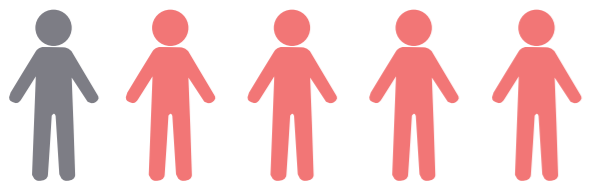
7 million

patients (or 1 in 8 residents) are waiting for NHS surgical procedures within England.



1 in 5

NHS staff report high levels of depression.







These findings form the basis of a framework that will be used to analyse best practice case studies and interview participants. The resulting data will be collated to form the final design toolkit.

## 1 Sensory Experience

-  Sight
-  Smell
-  Touch
-  Feel

## 2 Sense of Place

-  Inclusive
-  Welcoming
-  Human scale
-  Unique character

## 3 Implementation

-  Cost
-  Ownership
-  Scalability
-  Maintenance

Background research suggests that poor healthcare environments can lead to...

-  Longer patient recovery times.
-  Increases in Cortisol levels (the stress hormone).
-  Mood and anxiety disorders.
-  Decrease in staff satisfaction and attendance levels.
-  Prolonged exposure can risk heart and lung disease and low birth weights.

### BACKGROUND

Whilst the mental and physical benefits of nature are well documented, most urban healthcare precincts remain void of any such meaningful, green interventions. Against a backdrop of dangerously high pollution levels, increasing patient waiting times and decreasing staff mental health, it is no wonder that hospitals are becoming a growing source of anxiety for many users.

### RESPONSE

This research seeks to identify how natural landscape interventions can be used to transform the street frontages of urban hospitals in order to improve user experience. Interviews with stakeholders including former NHS staff, healthcare charities and built environment professionals will provide a deep knowledge base from which the best interventions can be chosen to collate a final design toolkit.

### PURPOSE

The intention of this research is to inspire and support the increased implementation of landscape-led interventions during the future design and redesign of urban healthcare precincts, with the adoption of such measures providing much needed support to the mental and physical wellbeing of users.

Please note: This research is part of a larger project that is due to be completed in May 2023.

