Towards a New Framework to Sensory Approach for Diversity in Land Engagement
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1. Introduction

My interest in conducting this project stems from my socially engaged artist practice and its ongoing enquiry into the ‘sensory’. I explore both the multi-sensory and walking, as means for challenging traditional dynamics between the artist and spectator – as ‘durational, dialogical art’ (Kester, 2004) –, allowing for dialogue and different ways of knowing the world (Haraway, 1988).

Such as design innovation, socially engaged art is also a boundary discipline; thus, the practice is applicable in placemaking contexts due to its focus on landscape and experience. The vision for a more inclusive and diverse future motivated me to pursue an MDes in Environmental Design and conduct a research project that explores places through the senses. With this project I aim to go beyond the exploration of places, towards the multi-sensory, to understand how can these situated knowledges inform the way our places are designed.

This research is located within the wider Scottish Land Reform and the Vacant and Derelict Land research context. It proposes the method of a Sensory Engagement Framework to accommodate marginalised voices towards enhancing access and diversity in land engagement.

By designing a set of sensory engagements to survey migrant women’s experiences of vacant land, and by conducting the case study in Govanhill - Scotland’s ethnically most diverse neighbourhood -; the project aims to understand how might a sensory approach contribute to diversity in land engagement, to further inform decision-making on the use of vacant and derelict land in Scotland.

I partnered up with two organisations, Ice Cream Architecture and Agile City, who already focus on finding new ways of engagement within the Scottish Land Reform context. I co-design the proposed Framework with them and with the community organisation Milk Cafe, who works with migrant women in Govanhill. Throughout the process, this provided me with reflection and feedback from both innovative land engagement and diverse community perspectives. Their valuable feedback through each phase of the project informed the development of the Framework-design.

It feels inappropriate to consider this research ‘finished’, as it only shows one standpoint of many possible ways of exploring and framing this problem. This ‘search in the research’ (Desai, 2020) has taken me to explore diverse ways of knowing places through the lens of the sensory.

Research Question:
What might be the potential for a sensory approach to facilitate diversity in land engagement?

Research Aims:
Through the research, I aim to understand how a sensory approach can contribute to diversity in land engagement, furthermore develop a framework for land-engagement methods to inform decision-making on the use of vacant and derelict land.
1. Desk Research
A non-linear process of explorations into theory and methods

1.1 Gap in Knowledge
Research Question 1: How might we create access to land engagement so that diverse voices can be heard?
Context: Vacant Land / Greenland / Experiences of migrant women
Policy Context: The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 / Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce (SLC) / Community Right to Buy (Land Reform Act 2003)

1.2 Research into Theories
- Place-based, situated knowledge (Harvey, 1996)
- Notions of ‘Diffusion’ (Barraclough, 2014)
- Feminist epistemologies
- Space, Place and Gender (Massey, 1994)

1.3a Research into and Practical Exploration of land engagement and blended methods (autonomous core unit)
- Autonomous Core Unit
- Sensory Mapping
- Waking as a method

1.3b Exploration of methods
for 'situates ways' of knowing places
- Sensory ethnography
- Participatory mapping
- Spatial Imaginaries (Sudd, 1979, Psychogeography (Blyth))

2. Fieldwork - Engagements
A non-linear process of engagement design informed by Sensory Ethnography methods and Feminist Care Ethics

2.1 Co-Designing the engagement
Recruitment through and Co-designing with gatekeeper.org
- Interviews with mapping experts, community organisations and beneficiaries within diverse community contexts

2.2 Prototyping Blended Engagement
- With migrant women artists of the "Autonomous Core Unit" (3 participants)
- Pre-Mapping the Walks
- Autoethnography Reflection
- Sensory Mapping Engagements
- 2 (physical engagements in Govanhill)

3. Developing Output
Sensory Analyses of Artefacts and Information: Sensory Maps, 'Sensory dynamic' analyses, Spatial Imaginaries (Visualisation)

4. Designing the Framework
Engagement Framework and Guiding Principles for Access Co-designed with gatekeeper organisation and placemakers

5. Wider Applicability
Within the Scottish Migration Policy, Land Reform contexts and Land Assets (D&L) research

Feedback:
- Stakeholder and Expert Feedback (Milk Cafe, Agriculture, Ice Cream Architecture, Michael Kordie)
- Participant and Stakeholder feedback (Milk Cafe, Agriculture, Ice Cream Architecture, Land Assets (D&L) research)
Gap in Knowledge and Research into Theory

Research Background: Biomorphic Urbanism and Plan A
In January 2020 I co-curated a session for the School for Civic Imagination CCA, Biomorphic Urbanism, with fellow artist and cultural geographer, Iryna Zamurueva. We invited artist Michael Smythe from Phytology, and partnered up with Agile City (AC). The 2-day session was focused on a vacant site under recent development by AC, including a sensory mapping walk to imagine ways in which we could reshape the area to prioritise environmental and social justice.

Following the workshop, I retained my involvement in AC’s vacant land development project, such field experience – with the specific combination of sensory and vacant land – built the foundations of the initial proposal for this innovative research design project. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the development of that piece of vacant land has been temporarily paused; nevertheless, I remained inspired to walk and to research further into the vacant land context of Glasgow.

Following are the theoretical and methodological explorations that led me to formulate my research questions.

Feminist epistemology: Tool as Diffraction and Situated Knowledges
With feminist philosophers Karen Barad and Donna Haraway – who calls for exercising a feminist version of objectivity –, I argue against homogeneous and objective knowledge (Barad, 2014), for an epistemology based in “situated knowledges” (Haraway, 1988) and for ‘different kinds of knowledges’. Their critical work inspired me to explore different, embodied and ‘situated’, ways of knowing the world. In search for those untold stories, Le Guin’s ‘Carrier Bag Theory’ (1986) directed my attention onto innovation that draws inspiration from ‘non-hero stories’. While, Barad’s theory on the tool as ‘diffraction’ (Barad, 2014) led me to question the tools of ‘mainstream’ public engagement.

Critique on Public engagement
Recent academic criticism emerged on public engagement and the ‘mainstream’ charrette engagement method, regarding the lack of diversity (Kordas, 2019). Charrettes tend to engage with the same groups, who already hold power, and at times and locations inaccessible to most (Ebrahim, 2019), which as a result affects the generated information and decisions made about land use. Additional interviews conducted with AC, Ice Cream Architecture (ICA) and the Scottish Land Commission (SLC) in March 2020, made it even more apparent that innovation to engagement methods and tools is necessary for a diverse and inclusive engagement process.

“Genuine community engagement must take place when making decisions about land and it must work across all social groups to deliver improvements where they matter most” – Scottish Land Commission

Spatial is social relations ‘stretched out’
Gap in knowledge: Engaging diverse communities
My research rationale is situated in feminist geography prompted by the works of Doreen Massey. Following Massey’s argument on the essential inclusivity of public spaces as ‘stretched out’ models of social relations (Massey, 1994), it becomes urgent to represent diversity in the public engagement processes. Allowing inequalities in the process of public engagement does not only underrepresent diverse communities but further marginalises them by limiting their capacity in decision making over the use of public space. Built on Massey’s theory on the dynamic and emergent nature of places and a progressive sense of place, I argue for the engagement of marginalised and migrant communities in placemaking.

Intersection of ethnicity and gender; Migrant women’s experiences of place
‘Intersectionality’ was originally developed to show how race and gender couldn’t be separately analysed from each other. Indeed, as Rodó-de-Zárate and Baylina explains, such an approach is able to reveal their dynamic relations.

“[…] contributing to a more complex and dynamic understanding of social relations and power structures” (Rodó-de-Zárate, Baylina, 2018)

Migrant women’s experiences speak to a lot of other marginalised experiences. Consequently, through such an intersectional perspective, I chose as the focus of my investigation, migrant women’s experiences of space and vacant land. Vacant land provides a potential for imagining spaces otherwise. ‘Vacancy’ can be seen as an opportunity for giving space to and shaping the space through diverse experiences and views for inclusive future use.

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“It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories.” (Haraway, 2016)
“If you see that people make Glasgow, that means that immigration makes Glasgow. That is really real. What they also should say, is that immigration changes and makes Glasgow to people also care more for each other.”

- Participant quote
“You’ve created a research question and methodology that is not only interesting but very worthwhile. You’re right to highlight ‘consultation fatigue’ and trust at the outset. While it is frequently recognised, not all are willing to engage directly with it to innovate solutions to it. Your intended approach of how to address is interesting too. I’m excited to see how the prototyping is developing the project!”  - Neil Fergusson, Ice Cream Architecture
3. Exploration of Methods

Psychogeography and Walking as a way of thinking and knowing

Historian and environmental writer, Rebecca Solnit’s work on walking and psychogeography highlights the importance of carefully and attentively engaging with the surroundings through the act of walking - as a way of thinking (Solnit, 2000, 2005).

“Walking is a mode of making the world as well as being in it. Thus the walking body can be traced in the places it has made, paths, parks. […] Walking shares with making and working that crucial element of engagement of the body and the mind with the world, of knowing the world through the body and the body through the world.” (Solnit, 2000)

The proposed sensory mapping walks- engagements, are significantly inspired by her work; in weaving together artistic approaches, with cultural and human geographic scholarship, I followed her guide.

Sensory Mapping and Urban Design

Prompted by the works of urbanists and built environment educators who utilise sensory walks in their practice to map experiences of homeless people (e.g., Imaging Homelessness in a City of Care - Participatory Mapping with Homeless People - See photo no.2.) or with children (e.g., Kulturaktiv); I see the capacity for a sensory mapping engagement to allow ‘different kinds of knowledges’ (Haraway, 1988) and experiences to be heard in the process of land-engagement.

Sensory Mapping and Cultural Geography

Cultural geography scholar, climate activist and artist, Iryna Zamurueva’s project Walking – one sense at a time, helped me draw lines between the art practice and geography through revealing that if combined they foster socio-ecological transformations. Her work and our “Autonomous Care Unit” blended engagement experiments conducted during the lockdown (See photo no.3 and Appendix 1.), inspired me to explore how might a similar sensory approach in public engagement could become a tool for allowing ‘different kinds of knowledges’ (Haraway, 1988), encouraging and provoking thinking and reflection; and creating space for diverse experiences in land-engagement.

Hypothesis: Sensory engagement as a tool

Built on my desk research, I hypothesizes that sensory engagement could be a tool that is capable of facilitating access, allow a diversity of voices in spatial imagination while providing valuable insights to inform how places are designed to represent diversity. The following design project builds on sensory ethnography methods, that involve Sarah Pink’s insider approach.

“ […]the researcher self-consciously and reflexively attending to the senses throughout the research process” (Pink, 2009)

It takes the Govanhill vacant land context as a case study and proposes a Sensory Engagement Framework to facilitate the access of marginalised communities - at the intersection of gender and ethnicity.
What might be the potential for a sensory approach to facilitate diversity in land engagement?

Research Aim:
To understand how a sensory approach can contribute to diversity in land engagement, from which subsequently develop a framework for sensory land-engagement methods.
Designing the Engagements

4. Designing the Sensory Walks

Many of the previously explored methods and practices from art, social and cultural geography primarily focus on the experience or capturing information. My research, by focusing on embodiment and sensory ways of experiencing places – with spatial imagination designed into the process –, allows the participants to explore possible future narratives and formulate their visions and preferences for the space.

I was looking for blended methods that could be applicable for engagement with real places, while socially distanced. A sense of togetherness and group reflection was also an essential aspect of the previous blended engagement experiments, which was further designed into the prototype. (See in ‘Autonomous Care Unit’ Appendix 1.)

Expert interview - Iryna Zamuruieva, Cultural Geographer and Artist

The online-blended sensory walk I partook in April 2020 - as one of our ‘Autonomous Care Unit’ sessions, led by cultural geographer Iryna Zamuruieva – significantly inspired the outlined Sensory Walk design. The focus of her walk and work is on experimentation with our relationship with human-nature, to encourage, exercise and legitimise it. As the first phase of my engagement design, I interviewed Iryna about a sensory walk she designed for Auckland City Council, to help me understand how such a method could be adapted to the land engagement context.

Insights embedded into the prototype design

- starting the session with a warm-up sensory exercise
- 1 sense as a focus for each participant
- silent mapping (for attentiveness, and to avoid influence on participants’ experience)
- group reflection every 15 minutes via text messages
- allowing enough time for reflection at the end
- ethnographic method for ‘data capturing’ and evaluation (reflective writing)

“It gives you the permission to do something otherwise not considered ‘normal’. Somehow, we need someone else’s permission to allow us to feel that it is legitimate to climb a tree.”

Iryna Zamuruieva

Fieldwork - Engagements

A non-linear process of engagement design
Informed by Sensory Ethnography methods and Feminist Care Ethics

Phase 1

Co-Designing the engagement
Recruitment through and Co-designing with gatekeeper org.
Interviews with mapping experts, community organisations and facilitators working in diverse community contexts

Phase 2

Prototyping Blended Engagement
With migrant women artists of the ‘Autonomous Care Unit’ (3 participants)

Phase 3

Sensory Mapping Engagements
2 physical engagements in Govanhill (3 participants)

Pre-Mapping the Walks
Autoethnography Reflection

Design Artefacts (zine, photovoice), Sensory Information (sound recording, sensory maps)
Prototyping a Blended Sensory Walk

As outlined earlier in this chapter, I structured the engagements in a way to allow time for warm-up activity, spatial imagination and reflection at the end. I also choose to participate and facilitate at the same time, by minimising my facilitator role to allow space for participants to reflect and imagine. Despite the physical distance, having a somewhat similar embodied experience - e.g., of the weather conditions - also helped in equalising our power relations and in understanding how such engagement feels from the participants perspective.

Govanhill: Scotland’s most ethnically diverse neighbourhood

And Co-designing the Engagements with Milk Cafe

I chose Govanhill - Scotland’s ethnically most diverse neighbourhood - as a case study to develop the engagement framework. With the local gatekeeper organisation, Milk Cafe (MC), we co-designed two engagements. MC is one of the most established local organisations working on the ground with migrant women in the neighbourhood.

The following are the main insights taken into consideration, from interviewing gatekeeper organisations and further co-designing the engagements with MC.

Reflection and Insights taken forward to the engagement design

- imagination needs more time
- guiding text messages need to be more structured
- these kind of creative methods might feel intimidating for some
- safe space where experimentation is encouraged
- feeling safe vs. walking alone as a woman
- documentation and reflection needs to be built into the process
- not adding extra responsibility and burden on participants (e.g., MIRO and Google Drive uploads took weeks after the workshop, and were experienced by participants as "additional responsibilities" in times of already online-heavy interactions.)

“If you have been socialised into a world or family where it’s just not something that you do, then it might create a barrier or obstacle to that effort. Working in the arts, for us it might be comfortable, but for a lot of people it’s actually quite intimidating and something they have never been asked before - to lean against a tree, while they are walking alone.”

Participant
Ethical Insights and Considerations

1. Design of consent form – Non-language-based communication
   ‘There is a history of women of colour being exploited by researchers’ - as one of my gatekeepers explained. Despite the language barriers – the varying level of spoken English, and literacy in these communities – I found ways through non-language-based communication, with the designed tool of a Sensory Walk Zine (See Appendix 2.), to ensure that the process is well understood and participants are aware of their rights and what they are consenting to. The design of the consent and information form became a critical element of the research in this regard. (Insight from Milk Cafe and ‘We are Home’ project)

2. Recruitment through and Co-designing with gatekeeper organisations
   Participants were recruited through the gatekeeper organisation, Milk Cafe, to establish trust, and knowing that the women they work with will be safeguarded and not put in a position where their knowledge was exploited to benefit someone else’s research. (Insight from Dardishi)

3. Referencing participants’ knowledge contribution – yet respecting their anonymity

4. Working with senses, being aware of the inclusivity of the process for those with visual and hearing impairment or mobility issues

5. Technical accessibility - Using the platform of communication most accessible for participants (Insight from Milk Cafe)

6. Providing inclusive engagement for diverse needs

7. ‘Resources’ needed for supporting the participation of vulnerable and marginalised people to avoid their exploitation. These resources for support can include the payment of travel fares and childcare.

Bias: Migrant women and access

Practising reflexivity was also a critical aspect of the ethical research process. It is important to reflect the position from which a project for access and diversity is facilitated. As a white, European, childless migrant woman, I had to reflect upon my own bias, and address those factors – such as domestic labour – that keep many women away from public participation.

As an artist, I had to understand my own privilege to have access to such concepts and methods. I also had to reflect on, and adapt to the ways my participants preferred communicating. It was through working with the gatekeeper organisation (MC) that I had to realise my own bias and privilege.

I work towards removing such barriers to ensure women’s participation in this project, which led me to reconsider the idea of a blended online engagement and organise two small group distanced Walks.

“That’s quite a conceptual thing to do a walk and think about the space and the body. I think it would be a struggle for them to do it, particularly at the moment, just with their phones, on their own. If they were led through the engagement with a bit more physical presence it might hold it together better. Where language or technology could be a barrier, it would allow more space for nonverbal communication.” - Feedback from Milk Cafe

Reflection and Insights taken forward into the engagement design

- removing the language barrier
- visual communication - designing a Zine
- removing technology barrier - for the presence and body language
- providing for child care and travel costs if necessary
4. Engagements - Sensory Mapping Walks

Autoethnography - Walking the route

In designing the engagements, I took into account my findings from prototyping and the feedback from the gatekeeper organisation, MC. Prior to the first Walk, I visited Govanhill to walk the planned route myself. This autoethnographic method helped to further adapt the walks for the specific locational context.

I had to imagine weather conditions, find the spots where we could potentially sit down and reflect; and figure out whether walking, making notes, recording sound and taking photos is possible while holding an umbrella at the same time—It wasn’t. I had to experience the possible obstacles and distractions myself so that I wouldn’t put my participants in demanding situations. This helped me to choose the right engagement tools for the context and imagine what would be the best-suited way to capture information. (Following Pink (2015), I refrain from using the term data to refer to ways of knowing and specifically use ‘information’ instead.)

Tools for capturing information

- Photovoice: disposable cameras for participants to document the walks (See Photo no.6)
- Sensory Walk Zine: non-language based booklet used as research information sheet, notepad and sketchbook (See Photo no.7 and Appendix 2)
- Sound recording: allowed for more presence, used with participants’ permission only
- Reflective writing after the walks

Curiosity and agility during the engagements allowed for adapting as the project progressed. Reflective writing and observational notes enabled the continued development of the method for the following engagement, which then informed the final Engagement Framework design.

A crucial insight from the first workshop was that I had to stay open for participants’ creative language, even if it was not the method I have planned for. My hypothesis for a silent sensory walk with reflections - that worked well with artists for the prototype (See page 20) - did not suit the Govanhill context. For women who previously were strangers to one another felt inappropriate not to chat and share with each other. Allowing people and situations to be what they may become, provided space for expressing their thoughts, feelings, experiences, memories and imaginations by using their own creative language.

Following is the structure of the second engagement.

Structuring the Walks

30 min: Introduction
- Consent Forms
- Warm-up sensing exercise
- 1 sense as a focus

60 min: Sensory Mapping Walk
- 10-15 minutes neighborhood sensing
- Reflection on the sensory experience
- 10-15 minutes neighborhood sensing
- Reflection on the neighborhood through the senses
- 30 minutes sensing the vacant site

30 min: End-Reflection

Engagement Outputs: Sensory Maps

The following analyses – as the latter Framework also suggests – should be done collaboratively with the Walk-engagement participants. Following deep analyses, there are 3 sensory maps (layers) designed for collaborative analysis, curated and reflected upon with the Walk participants in September 2020 as part of a follow-up Spatial Imagination Workshop. All photos were taken by, and all quotes used on the following maps are the work of the Participants.

“I came because I belong to the community. I would like to inform things which is within the community, within the people. To help each other. I really appreciate it whenever people ask me. I like to be part of the community things that are good for everyone.”

- Participant reflecting on the Walk
Sensory Analyses

“Analysis in sensory ethnography [...] is indeed as sensory a process as the research itself: a context where sensory memories and imaginaries are at their full force as the ethnographer draws relationships between the experiential field of the research and the scholarly practices of academia.” (Pink, 2015)

The following sensory analysis was a creative process that aimed at understanding patterns in sensory information that emerged during the Sensory Walk engagements. I structured this information in forms of colour-coded observations and Sensory Maps. (See Appendix 3 and Photos 1-2 on p.26.) In the next phase of the engagement workshops – organised with MC early 2021 –, I will bring these back to the same group of participants; for a collaborative sensory analysis of the mapped information. As the next chapter elaborates, within the Framework (See p.35-42), this will form the bases for a collaborative Spatial Imagination workshop, where the identified areas of interests– needs and areas of opportunities – ‘vacancies’ will be merged in a collaborative envisioning of the future of these vacant spaces.

Following the sensory analyses of information, I have created a few sketches of such spatial possibilities based on my participants’ observations and visions. These demonstrated that such mapping engagements have the potential to inform the use of vacant land. However, it will not be part of this research report, as the aim of the proposed framework would be to inform the use of vacant land.

Principles of Sensory Analyses

1. Following Pink (2015), I refrain from using the term data to refer to ways of knowing and specifically use ‘information’ instead.

2. I do not evaluate and represent the quality of Participants’ experience – as Jenkins, Narayanaswamy, Sweetman (2019) argue, instead I use their quotes to explain their experiences and amplify their voices in the process.

3. I only categorise Participants’ experiences based on their own evaluation (neutral / positive / negative).

4. I practice care for the process and for the ‘information’. I intended the visualisations (See Sensory Maps on p.27-32) to speak a qualitative, sensory language, to show care for the knowledge of the Participants, who dedicated their time and effort to the project.

Designing with care - Sensory visualisation

To understand the importance of non-language based information in the engagement phase, I collaborated with illustrator Waldemar Stepien on designing a Zine that explains the Walk, through visual language (See Appendix 3). It was a powerful tool that played a significant role in communicating complex processes and information between participants and facilitator - with varying levels of English. Participants also expressed how much they valued this gesture of care.

While analysing sensory information, I have sketched out graphs and maps in MIRO (See Appendix 4 for this process), all of which seemed quantitative ‘data-like’ and too rigid in their style and structure for explaining sensory processes that deal with memories and imaginaries; qualities that are more flexible and fluid than what pie charts allow. Consulting over my initial graphs with Waldemar S., we decided that he would add this sensory aspect of information to my graphs and maps. His illustrations brought sensory perceptions, memories and imagination to life on the following maps (p.27-32).

“A design-focused and future-oriented sensory ethnography approach has a key role to play in [...] future-making. [...] It promises to bring to the fore the tacit, normally unspoken about ways of knowing and doing that are part of everyday life. These activities [...] are often mundane and feel so ‘normal’ to our participants that they might not even think they are worth mentioning, but they are also part of the way we feel and sense our futures.” (Pink, 2015)

The Process of Sensory Analyses

While I anticipated that analysis would be a crucial part of the project, I was surprised that the rigour it required allowed creative process; which aspect led to the conceptualisation of the project. Initially, I scheduled 1 week for analyses, which then I extended to 3 weeks. I spent a major part of this time on mapping and visualising sensory dynamics. The photographs below intend to explain this evolution of the process.

Senses, Memory and Imagination - Intangible assets

Having conducted deep visual and sensory analyses, I came to the understanding that mapping through the senses is a tool that is capable of opening up doors to other types of knowledges. It led me to identify the dynamic patterns between sensory perception, memory and imagination – outlined in the graph on pages 33-34 – with their associated placemaking values. Only after I came across Pink’s principles for place-making (Pink, 2015, p.25) which outline the significance of perception, place, knowing, memory and imagination in his sensory ethnographic process. Pink’s place-making principles guided me in further conceptualising the Framework (See p.35-42).
“When I wake up to pray at 4am, that’s when the seagulls and all the birds wake up and sing.”

“I liked the wall, the wall makes the plants grow. The flowers and the hay. All that comes, because it’s hidden behind the wall.”

“Those are bad buildings, they were not made with love, just money. No care, no green. American style but not with love. People just go there and sleep, its not built for future.”

“The fruit shops are colour for the street.”

“When people feel no one cares about me, no one likes me, no one loves me. That makes people do rubbish, Because they feel angry.”

“When rain is coming, the small birds go to a cosy place to sit and hide. The big birds are happy and celebrating, they fly when is a closed sky like this. When we see the seagulls fly we say, rain is coming, we run home.”

“It’s quite a mix of everything. New, old, nature, controversial, my experience is mixed like this too.”

“When cars go slow, you can hear more birds singing.”

“Ting, ting’ - the sound of the rain of my umbrella. it’s called sound roof. Tin roof sound. I kind of like like that sound, because it makes me want to go to sleep.”
“The colours are really nice and I love the smell of this shop. My dad used to have a big shop like this in my country. We used to sell organic things, organic shampoo.”

When it rains we make barbecue and spicy tea. We love this when the rain is coming or it is very cold. We do wintertime tea and stay cosy with family.”

“The smell of the coffee sometimes makes me really happy. I remember the real coffee back home. When I smell that, I feel peace.”

Maybe 15 years ago when the Scottish people saw the Eastern European and other community moving in, they started selling their houses and running away. It was really different here 9-10 years ago.”

“The rain is really nice. Where I grew up in Africa, we have the most rain. We grow mangos, papayas, grapefruit, plantain, especially bananas.”

Back home, when you cook, your whole house and apartment will smell nice from the spices.”

“In my country you see a lot fruit, a lot fruit shops, and a lot shops that make juice. The quality of the fruit and veg is so much better and the price too. In the Middle East the most beautiful fruits come from my country, you know the shape and the colour of the fruits. Apples grapes, oranges, those are the flavour of my home country.”

“When it rains, I have perfume oil my culture made - we put a small with water and candle.”

“The new social housing here reminds me of some places back home, because that is a newly built country. You won’t see a 20 years old building - that is already old - the colours look old.”

“Back home, when you cook, your whole house and apartment will smell nice from the spices.”
"I was thinking a place that can make people feel blessed."

"If people are together and feel equal there is no rubbish."

"My imagination was like here: open area that people can go in and out, with community space for benches, herbs, plants. Something like that would be beautiful."

"I imagine, and I felt like all the countryside. It was so beautiful."

"Feeling safer. Maybe something like that happening sometimes?"

"I would turn it into community areas, places where people could engage. I would ask people and design something with the people. Outdoor sculpture inspired from the area."

"It is important to have safe place for kids to play. Would be nice to have playground or football things. Kids older than 10 don't have a place to play."

"I would go and stay and eat, picnic and sleep all they. If I had permission, I would go and stay till sunset, and lie down."
Placemaking Value:
- represent sensory experience
- positive and negative features and mental insights of place
- which combines with and leads to memories, expectations and visions (Rodaway, 1994)

“The smell of the coffee sometimes makes me really happy. Especially front of Milk Cafe. When I smell that I feel the peace.”

Memory
Placemaking Value:
- access to intangible and cultural assets
- allow for ‘Innovation from Tradition’ (McHattie, 2018)

“I remember the real coffee back home. And on normal days, the old days, front of Cafe Milk Cafe, I love that smell. We live in the same neighbourhood. We invite each other to our houses. We have dinner together, chat and sometimes we finish late at 1 or 2 o clock at night time.”

Sense
Placemaking Value:
- represent place-based knowledge
- communicate community visions and preferences for the space
- inform spatial representation

“I was thinking a place that can make people feel blessed. My imagination was like here, with community space for benches, herbs, plants.”

Imagination

Figure: Types of knowledges accessed through engaging with the senses, their dynamic and potential value to inform placemaking
7. Sensory Engagement Framework

“The outline approach is really interesting, and it could be useful at encouraging organisations to have more holistic approaches to engagement, and developing richer understanding of places and the experience of it by different people.” - Neil Fergusson, Ice Cream Architecture

Informed by iterative phases of prototyping, participant engagement, feedback and expert interviews, I developed the Engagement Framework to provide guidelines for placemakers towards designing accessible and diverse public engagements. I built the design from two main components: The first one focuses on placemaking phases and values (See Graph on p37-38). While the second, the Access Framework (See p42), compliments the other with the necessary actions and approaches needed to be taken for accessibility.

The gatekeeper organisations - the ‘experts’ in engaging diverse communities - is the Frameworks’ cornerstone. I designed the Engagement Framework in a way that it prioritises benefiting participants’ experience over ‘data collection’. Some would regard such an aspect of the approach a ‘weakness’, however I argue in this project’s case, these are overcome by it’s strengths. These types of methods are often considered ‘resource heavy’, due to their slow and prolonged approach to engagement. Such engagements place their emphasis upon understanding local people’s lived experiences and facilitating their access; not only towards public participation, but to often abstract placemaking practices, concepts and methods. Therefore, the Framework’s primary impact lies in its ability to amplify the decision-making roles of its participants; empowering those who participate and members of the wider community.

Time vs Participation

“Right now the framework requires a time commitment of at least a few hours. Is there an access point for those who are unable to commit that amount of time?” - Neil Fergusson, Ice Cream Architecture

The Framework’s ‘resource heavy-ness’ balances out by the multiple-value that the engagements provide all throughout the process. Linking to other essential needs, these can be programmed into the gatekeeper organisation’s existing community engagement framework.

The timeframe of this MDes project only allowed for testing and developing the Mapping Engagement phase. However, in the following months we planned with Milk Cafe, a set of workshops for reflection, collaborative analyses and Spatial Imagination, to allow for developing and refining the final phases of the Framework.

With the scenario of an extended lockdown, there is a potential for further developing the blended engagement version (See p19-20), which has been tested during the prototyping phase.
Sensory Engagement Framework

Pre-Engagement
- Engagement: Co-design with Local Organisation
- Recruitment (Snowball Sampling method)
- Programming
- Defining the shared purpose of the engagement

Warm-up Engagement
Sensory Mapping Walks framed as ‘test workshops’
- To familiarise with
- And make methods and concepts accessible
- Capturing information: photovoice, audio, design artefacts (video), reflective writing
- To empower and facilitate agency

Collaborative Analyses & Spatial Imagination Workshop
- Collaborative reflection
- And sensory analyses of the captured information
- Spatial imagination: community values and preferences for the space
- To inform representations of space and placemaking
- To empower and facilitate agency

Public Exhibition
Closing event with participants of the engagement workshops and Local Organisation
- Collaborative reflection and evaluation
- Celebrating outputs and artefacts of the process
- Engagement framework hand-over

Phases developed through participatory research as part of the MiSe Project
7. Framework For Access

Set of Guiding Principles towards an accessible Engagement Framework

The following are a collection of guiding principles towards an accessible Engagement Framework that I designed based on the reflections and observations of the Govanhill Case Study; and of the field experience of the development process through iterative phases of prototyping and participant engagement.

Participant feedback and expert interviews highlighted multiple critical insights on land engagement. It must be a sustained activity. For it to be truly accessible and participatory, it also needs to become embedded into participants’ ways of being and the natural rhythms of their lives. In case of this project situated in the Govanhill context, the land engagement workshops could be embedded into the gatekeeper organisation’s regular community engagement programming.

The migrant women who participated in the engagement workshops are the ones who have an urgent need for their environment to support their everyday lives. Many of them live in limited space, often in social housing or raising their children without family support. Due to the coronavirus lockdown, some lost their jobs; while the task of their children’s home-schooling fell on them. As many of the participants have limited time and financial resources, the Engagement Framework could only become genuinely accessible if its design allows for multiple layers of value. It doesn’t become an additional burden; instead, it can relieve some of the pressures of the Participants’ lives.

“In challenging embedded power dynamics, community-driven participatory design is truly democratic and well suited for placemaking work.”
(de la Peña et al., 2017)
A Set of Guiding Principles to foster accessibility in different phases of the Engagement Framework

Facilitating access all throughout the process:

- Care-Full Design - designing with care (Choi, 2019)
- Designing multiple-value engagements that link to other essential needs (e.g., the Zine as an activity book for children, See Appendix 2)
- Not adding to the participants’ workload
- Designing engagements that fit into participants’ existing routine
- Being aware of cultural and religious concerns
- Accessible language: Eliminating the use of professional jargon
- Developing an open-ended, agile, flexible process
- Allowing people and situations to be what they may become
- Amplifying the decision-making roles of participants
- Challenging embedded power dynamics
- Responding to and prioritising participant needs
- Technical accessibility: Using participants’ preferred ways of communication

Pre-Engagement Phase:

- Co-designing with the gatekeeper organisation to respond to the context and needs (e.g., childcare, accessible ways of communication)
- Co-designing the information sheet and consent form (e.g., illustrated Zine, See Appendix 2)
- Recruiting through gatekeeper organisation to establish trust
- Clearly communicating the aim of the project and engagement
- Corresponding via the gatekeeper organisation
- Embedding engagement workshops into the organisation’s engagement programming framework

Warm-up Engagement Phase:

- Providing access and familiarising with concepts, context and methods
- Understanding of participant needs to inform further engagements

Engagement Phase:

- Facilitating access through covering travel costs and childcare wherever necessary
- Flexible to participants’ creative language and ways of knowing
- Eliminating unnecessary use of tools to allow for more presence and attentiveness
- Eliminating any extra work and responsibility for participants (e.g., through the use of disposable cameras vs. Google Drive uploads)
- Dialogical process: Facilitator as a participant
- Power dynamics: Equalising the roles
- Collaborative Reflection as part of the process
- Keeping a flexible time frame

Underpinning approaches, values and theory:

- Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire, Paulo (1968):
  - dialogical process
  - participatory pedagogies
  - empowerment education
- Feminist Care ethics, Tronto, Joan C. (2005)
  - “Attentiveness, responsibility, competence, responsiveness, plurality, communication, trust and respect; solidarity — caring with”
- Citizen science
- Community-driven design
- Design Justice:
  - design led by marginalized communities
  - challenge - not reproduce - structural inequalities

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  - challenge - not reproduce - structural inequalities
Through a set of engagement workshops in the vacant and derelict land context of Govanhill, the sensory approach demonstrated that it has the capacity for enhancing gender and socio-cultural diversity in land engagement in Scotland's ethnically most diverse neighbourhood.

The in-depth – sensory and visual – analyses of the mapped information and design artefacts evidenced its placemaking value, which lies in the layers of 'situated knowledges' and intangible assets. Proving that the method can reveal previously unavailable information about places and those who inhabit them.

However, the fieldwork process also made it apparent that the method needs to be agile and responsive to context and participant needs. It only truly becomes accessible if it facilitates the empowerment of those who participate, and works towards access. Not only in the physical sense but by making complex and often abstract placemaking concepts and methods also accessible. For it to truly address systemic inequalities in spatial participation, it further needs to merge with approaches of design justice, co-creation and feminist care ethics.

Such engagement generates multiple impacts: it empowers those who participate, increases the cohesion and agency of communities, supports community organisations to innovate their practices for more equitable engagement and decision-making processes; and supports placemakers in land decision-making.

**Long-term perspectives: Diverse rural communities**

The end-stakeholder engagements and interviews identified that the approach have wider applicability and shows potential within the current Scottish Land Reform context.

As the Scottish Government have highlighted the importance of migration as a means of counteracting the aging demographic of Scotland’s rural communities, a land engagement framework for diversity could further play a significant role there. By collaboratively envisioning the future of these dynamically changing communities and by providing a greater understanding of rural migrants’ diverse lived experiences.

Going back to the beginning of my thesis and peeling back off the layers of place, space and vacant land; the inquiry in my research was inherently about the ‘non-linear, non-hero stories’ that LeGuin and Haraway (2016) write about.

Future placemaking – and future everything – will need such a shift in perspectives and change in narratives for more sustainable and liveable futures. I aimed to hear those ‘different kinds of stories’, learn from them, show their richness and build a way to advocate for them.

Normally I do such things through the tools of an artist. This new role of a – design – researcher felt, at times, a challenging and unfamiliar one. Some of the tools for walking this path, such as writing, required a form of hard work, what I have previously would have thought ‘it wasn’t for me’.

That is where I need to speak about access. To acknowledge the importance of those – people and institutions – who facilitate that. Through trust, care and empowerment I am advocating for similar access with my research. One that creates spaces, where knowing differently, is not just ‘accepted’ but valued and embraced.

A lot could be written as a reflection upon a project that takes as its focus knowledge, access and diversity. I would like to end my thesis by reflecting not only how knowledge is accessed, but how it – academic knowledge – is produced. By those, research participants, who largely contributed towards it, but whose ‘non-academic’ knowledge won’t be referenced in the Bibliography. I want to credit them, who with their diversity of knowledges contributed towards this piece of work: A.V., C.D., F., I.Z., N., P.M.
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Thank you!
11. Bibliography


12. Appendix
Appendix 1 - ‘Autonomous Care Unit’

This text is about the experiences of a group of women who joined the School for Civic Imagination in Edinburgh, Scotland. They decided to explore the concept of non-hierarchical care structures in their work together. The text provides insights into their collaborative efforts, their shared goals, and the challenges they faced during their 5-month residency at the School.

The text highlights the importance of collective decision-making and the freedom that was experienced by the group. They found that this freedom, which was unexpected, led them to explore new ways of working together and thinking critically about the structures and systems they were a part of. They also discovered the joy of making art and the therapeutic effect of preparing food together.

The text ends with a reflection on the importance of non-hierarchical care structures and the need for more research in this area.

I hope this text provides some insight into the work of the School for Civic Imagination and the experiences of the women who participated in it.
How does your City feel, look, smell and sound?

What does your city look like, smell like, sound like and feel like? What do you see when you close your eyes? Do you see colors, shapes, textures and sounds? Are you waking up? Do the trees and flowers smell of orange? What do you see when you close your eyes? Do you see shapes, sizes, colors and textures? What do you smell when you close your eyes? Do you smell plants, trees and flowers? What do you hear when you close your eyes? Do you hear the wind, the birds, the cars and the people? What do you feel when you close your eyes? Do you feel the sun, the wind and the rain? Are you waking up?

Thank you for joining us on this sensory walk!
Appendix 3 - Sensory Analyses

Map no3: Sensories of Place and Experience

Poole, Maggie, Heather

AREA no.1:
1. I love the flowers close to the gate on the garden, there is a huge range of flowers that I love very much, I love many flowers, I love the smell of the flowers and the way they look.
2. I love the flowers close to the gate on the garden, it is a beautiful place to be in.

AREA no.2:
3. I love the flowers close to the gate on the garden. They are very beautiful and they smell nice.
4. I love the flowers close to the gate on the garden. They are very beautiful and they smell nice.

AREA no.3:
5. I love the flowers close to the gate on the garden. They are very beautiful and they smell nice.
6. I love the flowers close to the gate on the garden. They are very beautiful and they smell nice.

Appendix 3 - Sensory Analyses (draft)

47. Corner veg shop: I love the colours and the quality (icon: taste, sight)
45. We are sharing recipes: she loves dill and yoghurt. We exchange recipes for my favourite. (icon: experience, taste)
If you say cook till tomorrow, I am happy. I love fish, from here, and guides me bowls, always busy when it is open. (icon: taste, sight)

15. Bikes: it means good change (icon: sight)
36. The quality of veg and fruit is so much better than in supermarkets. (icon: taste, smell)

3. The sound and smell of rain (icon: sound / smell)

2. I prefer to go to Queens Park, its safer there - there is a small place in Queens Park I

51. Evangelical Church: Before lockdown every Friday we used to do knitting in the

3. We are sharing recipes: she loves dill and yoghurt. We exchange recipes for

52. I do most of my shopping here, but I never see to that corner inside, I never do this

56. I do most of my shopping here, but I never see to that corner inside, I never do this

54. The experience of rubbish is distracting (icon: touch / smell / sight)

81. That's the fence where the big boys play. They want to play football, but when they go

50. From here, and guides me bowls, always busy when it is open. (icon: taste, sight)

55. Rubbish, people don't care about the neighbourhood - it's completely changed. (icon: sight)

75. Rubbish, people don't care about the neighbourhood - it's completely changed. (icon: sight)

91. Sometimes gathering could be cultural or could be something else, but it is quite

86. I like the smell of the place. I smell the flowers in this shop. When I go

109. Rain smell on hot ground when steam is coming - I love that at home. The after-rain smell.

79. There is lot of beautiful furniture on the streets to take. (icon: sight, experience)
111. At home it’s fresh and the fruits smell nicer. We have much healthier food, tasty and smell fresh. (icon: taste, smell)

112. I share that Cabbage is ‘káposzta’ in Hungarian. She says “they have the same word for it: “kabbish” . We exchange recipes for pickles: “olive oil, vinegar, cabbage in jar” She loves dill and yoghurt (icon: taste)

113. Locavore veg shop: When I go and smell, it reminds me of back home. Organic things kind of remind me of my Dad’s shop. We used to have a big shop like this in my country, we used to sell organic things, organic shampoo. (icon: smell)

114. My Dad passed away at 64, and my mum died at age 34. I was 11. It’s very hard to grow up without mum. (icon: smell)

115. When it rains, I have perfume oil my culture made - we put a small with water candle. I love that, I am loving myself. (icon: smell)

116. The rain is really nice, where I grew up we have 3 months rain. In Africa we have the most rain. Our country really warm but rainy. We grow there mangos, papayas, grapefruit, especially bananas. That is nice when its hot, I can do everything. The rain is better for me instead of snow. (icon: taste)

117. Quite sad because we are not going to work. Myself it’s quite sad, I cannot believe I lost my job during the lockdown. People lost their lives, so many lost their lives, I only lost my job. I would say am quite lucky I am still here, healthy. (icon: sound, smell)

Aaron_

Appendix 3 - Sensory Analyses

118. Maybe 15 years ago when they saw the Eastern European and other community moving in, (Scottish people) started selling their houses. It was really different 9-10 years ago. (icon: sight)

Map no3: Imagination
(Imagination is not being given colour coded qualities)

AREA no.3.

119. We need to learn how to respect each other’s culture, respect each other. For example maybe in my country I never see this gathering, but maybe you saw, so for you is not a big deal, but maybe for me its scary. So its just like knowing that places that all come together, how to keep that alive and how to make it safe for everyone.

120. Maybe they are not gathering for bad stuff. I don’t mind gathering, I really don’t mind, I love people you know, I really do. Whenever they feel good whenever they feel happy to stay and gather I really don’t mind I have no problems. One thing I always feel everyone we need space to pass. Could you please excuse without asking and then stay the way you want. But whenever people come and passing by, give space. That’s all you know that taken into account, that respect my boundaries.

AREA no.10.

121. I would go and stay and eat, picnic and sleep all day. If I had permission, I would go and stay all weekend and be there. I never finish a place that can make people feel better.

AREA no.14.

122. Would be nice to have playground or football things. Kids older than 10 don’t have a place to play.

GENERAL GOVANHILL AREAS:

123. I feel unsafe sometimes , but I believe it will be better soon.

Appendix 4 - Evolution of sensory data visualisation

1. SMELL

3. “The colours are really nice and I love the smell of the shop. My dad used to have a big shop like this in my country. We used to sell organic things, organic shampoo.”
Towards a new framework to Sensory Approach for diversity in land engagement

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