

# analysis local scale · spaces



## WHERE DO PEOPLE STAY?

### Indications on the quality of the spaces

#### Introduction

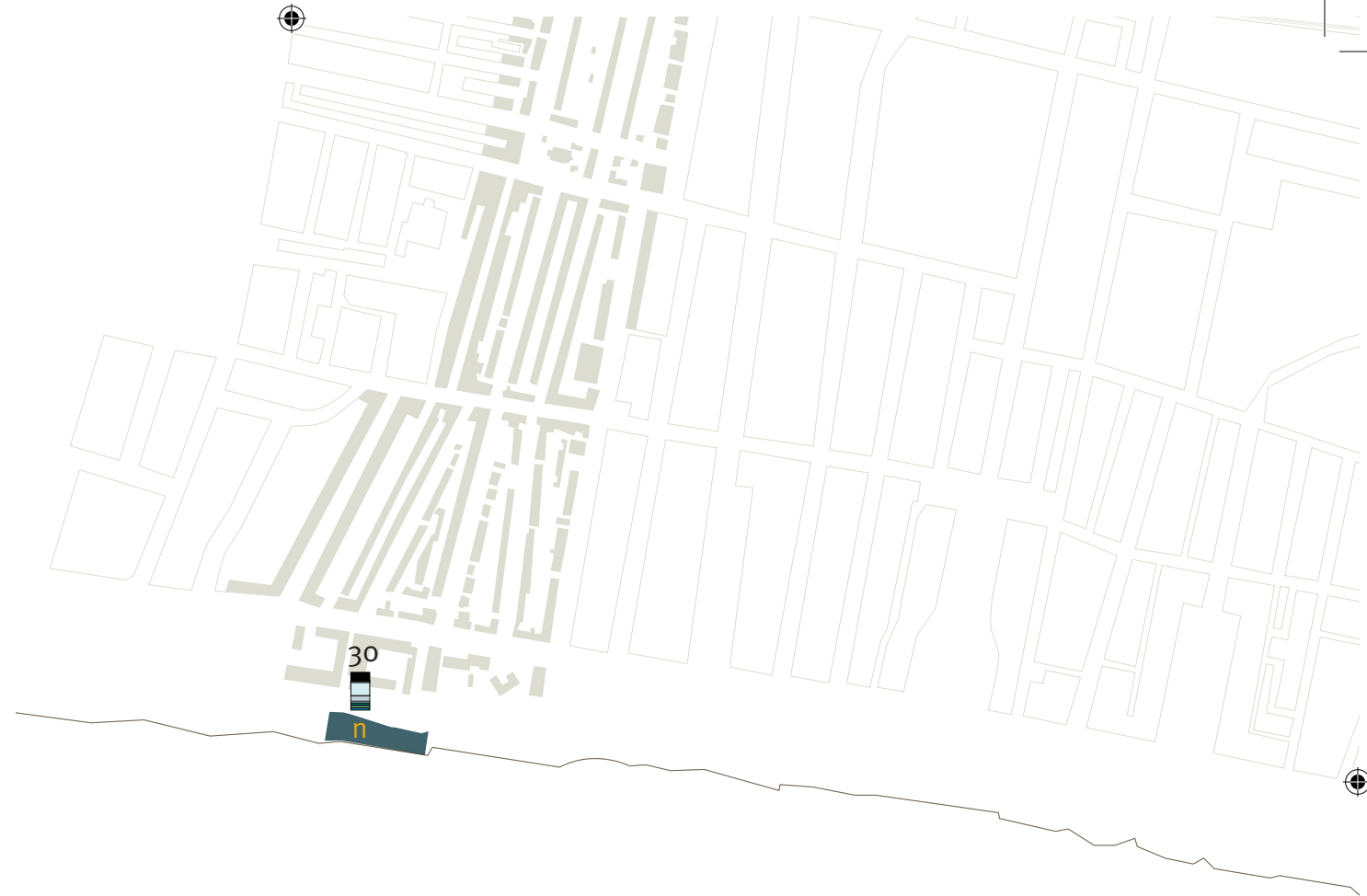
This section of the Public Space Public Life study provides information on how many - and where - people sit, stand, or carry out various stationary activities in the city.












As mentioned in the introduction, optional and social activities are a good indication of the quality of city spaces. Optional and social activities are about spending time in the city because it is enjoyable. "Stationary activities" fall into both categories.

#### Stationary activities

The diagram on these pages indicates destinations - 'people magnets' - in the city today. When viewed in conjunction with the information regarding pedestrian movement, a public space network begins to take form. As pedestrian volume indicates a hierarchy of streets, stationary activity registration indicates a hierarchy of public space.

Today, Pavilion Gardens, Brighton Beach, and Churchill Square are the most widely used public spaces. The reduction in numbers between people using these and the next tier of public space hierarchy is drastic. Local destinations such as Norfolk Square appear to be especially under used. This analysis of activity indicates a lack of quality in the areas that should be more heavily used by locals.



- |   |                       |   |                          |
|---|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|
|  | physical activities   |  | seated in folding chairs |
|  | cultural activities   |  | secondary seating        |
|  | commercial activities |  | seated on outdoor cafe   |
|  | children playing      |  | seated on benches        |
|  | lying down            |  | waiting for transport    |
|   |                       |  | standing                 |

# HIERARCHY OF SPACES

## Local, District and City Destinations

### Little life - little diversity

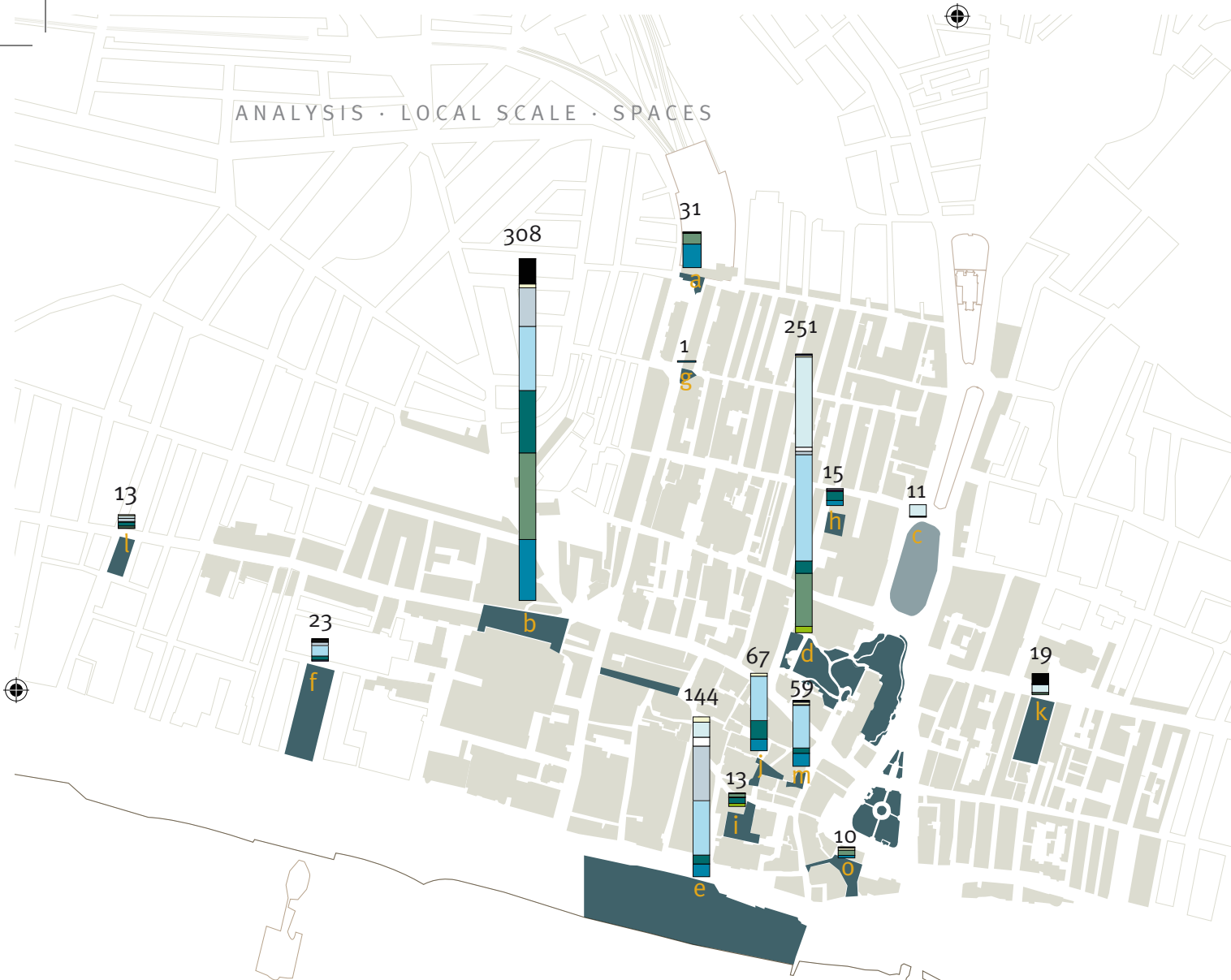
Few places in the study area attract locals and the ones that do fail to provide sufficient opportunities. Additionally, the types of activities taking place in locally oriented public spaces are also limited to the most basic, and are in general quite uniform from place to place. This suggests that the supposedly diverse population is not given an equally diverse range of opportunities to enjoy the public realm.

### The beach

Brighton & Hove's main public space is the beach. This is especially apparent during the weekend. The popularity of the beach is partly due to the variety of activities made possible on the beach. The entire beach offers areas for recreation, places for children to play, cafés with outdoor seating and places to people-watch or enjoy time together with a chosen group. The beach may be the only space to truly attract a wide range of residents and visitors. Is it possible to transfer some of these qualities to other public spaces in the city?

### More visitors than locals

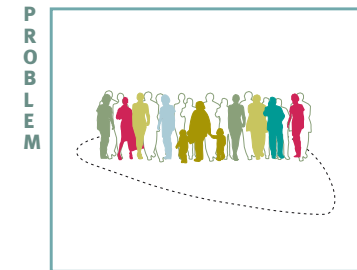
The analysis indicates that the study areas lack family-oriented places where children can play. In fact, with the exception of Pavilion Gardens and Brighton Beach, virtually no children were recorded playing in the areas surveyed.



City and Regional destination
  District destination
  Local destination

- a. Brighton Station
- b. Churchill Square
- c. Victoria Gardens South
- d. Pavilion Gardens
- e. the beach in Brighton
- f. Regency Square
- g. Upper Gloucester Road
- h. Jubilee Square
- i. Bartholomew Square
- j. Brighton Place
- k. Dorset gardens
- l. Norfolk Square
- m. East Street
- n. the beach in Hove
- o. Pool Valley

**Stationary activities:**  
 Figures signify the average sum of people active in the areas indicated between 10 am and 4 pm on a average summer weekday, July 12th, 2006



A lot of people - in few spaces.

## PUBLIC SPACE TYPOLOGY

### A lack of diversity

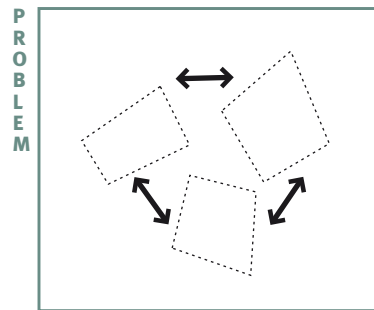
#### Space is not enough

Public Space Public Life Survey results suggest that public spaces in the study area fail to attract a diverse group of users partaking in a wide variety of activities. At first glance the diagram to the right appears to indicate an abundance of public space. But sheer quantity of space is not enough. Space must be of high quality and welcoming before people will want to spend time there.

#### Which spaces are needed

As the previous page illustrates, there are a lack of places for local families to enjoy. Whilst several parks exist they fail to attract a wide range of activities. Away from the beach there are few places for passive and active recreation.

There is a lack of urban hard scape places for people watching and urban recreation. This diagram also indicates that Hove is generally lacking places for people to stay that aren't related to the waterfront.



There is a lack of usable urban spaces in the city







## PUBLIC SPACE TYPOLOGY

### Poor differentiation

In Brighton & Hove it is difficult to categorise spaces beyond the general distinctions of park, square or street. The finer layer that sets areas apart from each other is missing. The result is a public realm lacking identity and character and subsequently legibility and navigability.

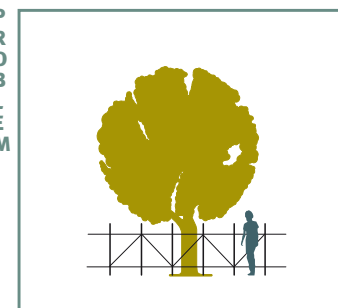
### Urban Squares

Spaces currently lack quality and are disconnected from the wider pedestrian network either by impenetrable barriers of traffic-based design or by poor connections to adjacent areas.

### Parks and Green Space

With the exception of Pavilion Gardens, green spaces lack discernible features that distinguish one area as a place for recreation and another for family-oriented activities or quiet reflection. In fact fencing and signs are implemented discouraging use and activity.

PROBLEM



Uninviting green spaces - lack of accessibility and quality.

## WHY ARE SOME SPACES MORE POPULAR?

### Quality comparison with Pavilion Gardens

#### A variety of users & activities

Pavilion Gardens is one of the most popular public spaces in Brighton & Hove and one of the few used for a variety of recreational purposes. At any given time, one can observe a variety of activities taking place there.

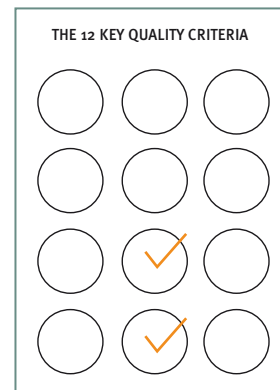
#### A 100% place

When assessed against the '12 quality criteria' described in the Introduction, it is clear why the gardens are so popular. They provide an intimate retreat protected from the noise of the city and vehicular traffic. Opportunities to people watch or relax and talk with companions are abundant. The Pavilion provides a lovely backdrop adding visual delight to the experience. The enclosed gardens offer spots in the sun or shade, in deck-chairs, café stools or on the grass, attracting residents and visitors of varying ages.

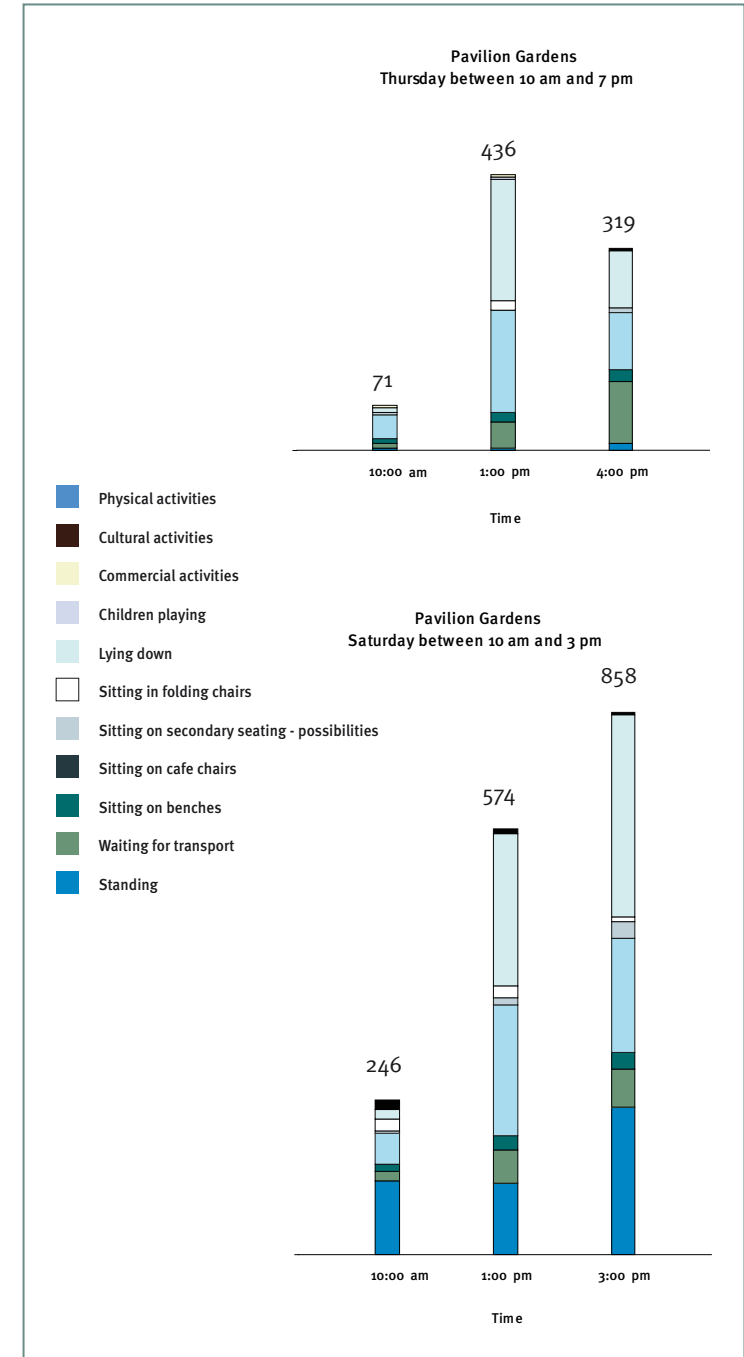
The influx of weekend users provides further evidence that the Pavilion Gardens is a place that people CHOOSE to spend time in.

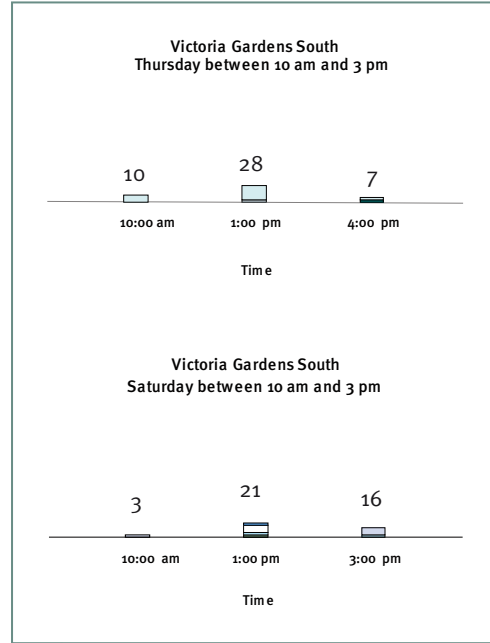


Pavilion Gardens



Valley Gardens





Pavilion Garden



Valley Gardens

## THE GRASS IS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE

### Comparison with Valley Gardens

#### No life

The story is very different in the Valley Gardens. At any given time of day virtually no one is using Victoria Gardens South, while the Pavilion Gardens are alive with hundreds of people. The crowds of people in Pavilion Gardens indicate that the lack of use in Victoria Gardens is not due to a lack of interest in utilising pleasant outdoor spaces. The lack of activity is due to the quality of the space provided.

#### Few qualities

When considering the quality criteria, 10 out of the 12 categories are not fulfilled, and two categories are only marginally met. (Valley Gardens does provide limited opportunities for play and recreation, as well as the chance to enjoy some positive aspects of the climate).

The fact that fewer people use Valley Gardens at the weekend is further indication that the area is not a place where people choose to be. When given the choice of places to spend the weekend hours, visitors and locals alike avoid the Valley Gardens.



Lack of places to enjoy the city



## SITTING IN THE CITY

### Seating analysis

#### The city as a meeting place

City spaces should be meeting places which invite city users to enjoy the social dynamics of the urban environment. By encouraging and supplementing seating in general, people are invited to stay longer and use the city for recreational purposes. Seating is vital in enabling this. Without a sufficient number of seats, the city becomes a transit zone. People just move from one point to another rather than stopping to enjoy their surroundings.

Good, comfortable seating placed in the right locations provides visitors with an opportunity to rest and stay longer, contributing to a livelier city.

This also brings economic benefits - people spend more money in places where they enjoy being.

This page illustrates three different seating options which the city has to offer.



#### Public seating

The type of seating provided in the city influences the amount of recreational activities that take place. Older generations only enjoy sitting when comfortable bench seating is available and will generally avoid secondary seating.



#### Secondary seating

Secondary seating can include stairs, ledges, niches, monuments, fountains or the pavement itself. These secondary seating opportunities are mainly utilised in good weather and almost exclusively by young people who do not care as much about comfort.



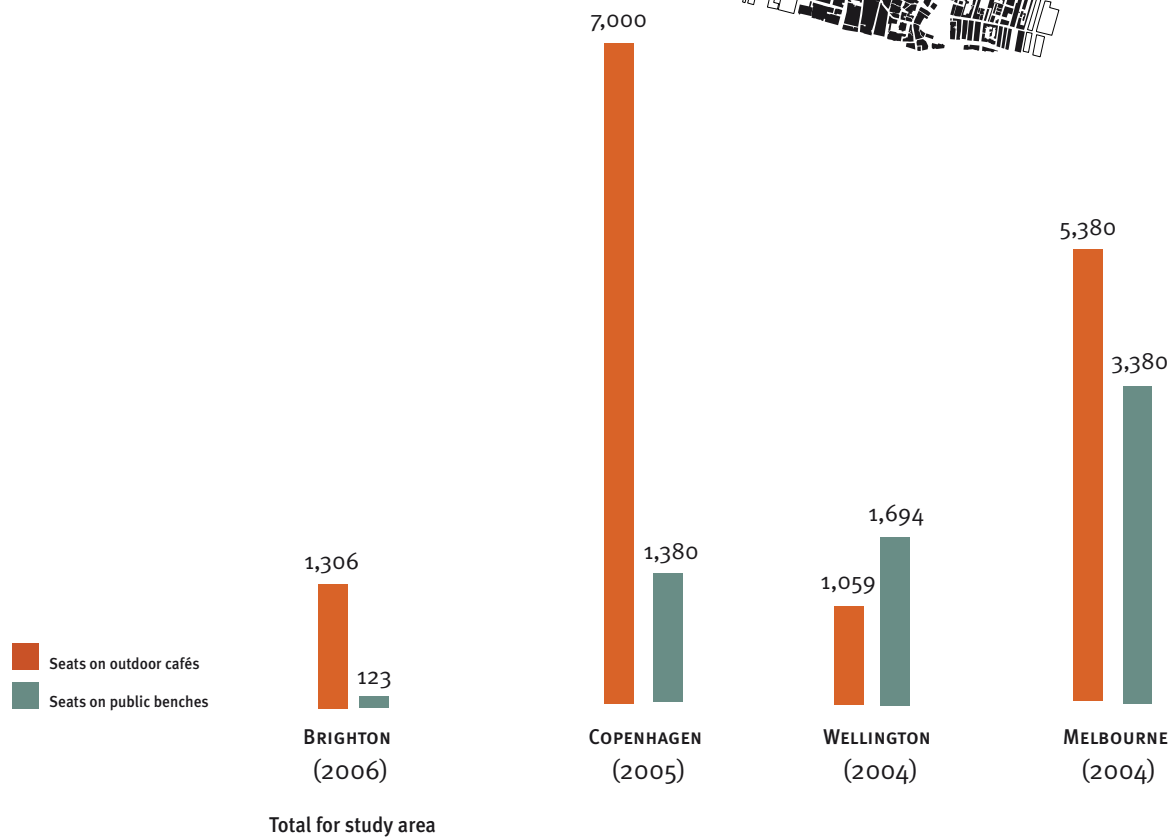
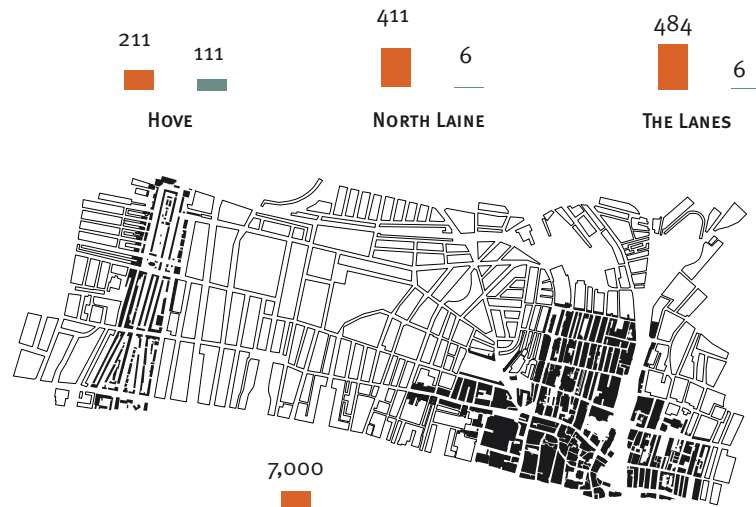
#### Flexible public seating

Flexible seating is a special feature in Brighton & Hove. It gives people the possibility to 'reorganise' the public space. Flexible seating makes it possible to choose between, for example sun or shade, or quiet reflection or socialising in a group.



#### Commercial seating

In recent years outdoor café culture has provided European cities with a large number of extra seats where a meal or a drink can be combined with an interesting view of life in the city.



## SITTING IN THE CITY

### Public versus commercial seats

#### The city without seats

In the Brighton & Hove study area public seating is currently only provided in parks or along the seafront. If elderly people or people with special needs are to take part in public life, the city has to offer better seating opportunities.

By improving its public realm, Melbourne has seen the number of outdoor café seats in the city centre increase over a period of 10 years. However the local authority also provides a reasonable amount of public seating in the city centre, inviting everyone to take a rest during their walk.

#### You have to pay to get a seat

In Copenhagen, one in four seats in the city centre are public. The city is currently considering ways to limit the number of cafés in the city centre, to allow a better balance between “free” and commercially based city activities.

The opportunity to linger and enjoy the quality of the city and one’s fellow-man is the beauty of public life, but in Brighton & Hove you have to pay for that opportunity.

## AGE & GENDER

### Diversity

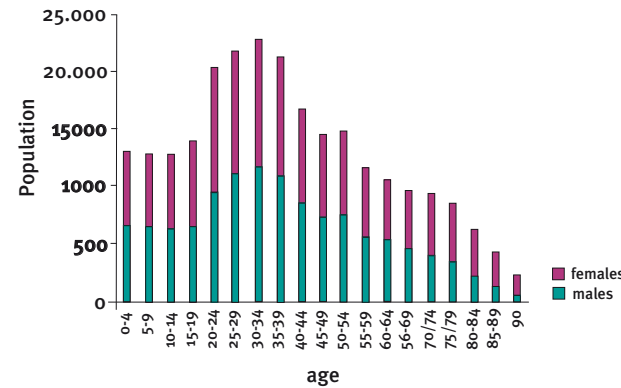
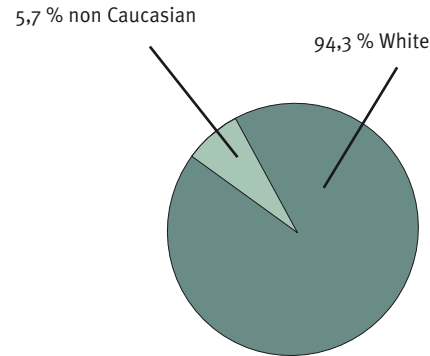
#### Is Brighton & Hove diverse?

The figure shows the age and gender profile of the city's population. Compared with the population make up in England and Wales, Brighton & Hove has more people in their twenties and thirties, and fewer people in most of the other age groups. The numbers of people in the 20-24 age group are notably higher than those in the younger age groups, which is likely to be a reflection of the significant student population resident in the city.

#### Diversity in age & gender?

The population living in an "inclusive city" should be equally represented in the public realm. GEHL Architects have performed age and gender surveys to determine how the public realm is used by males and females and different age groups. In this section, these on-site survey figures are compared with the 2001 census information for Brighton & Hove.

One would expect that if people aged 0-14 represent 15% of the population, then roughly 10-15% of the people visible in the city would be in this age group. For the streets highlighted on the next page, however, this is not the case. While the results should not be considered conclusive, they do suggest that certain vital areas of the city do not equally cater for the age groups found in the city.



\* Population profile of Brighton & Hove, 2001 census

#### Breakdown of census information

In the categories used by GEHL Architects to categorise people in the public realm, the 2001 census yields the following comparative percentages:  
 0-14 = 15.2% 15-30 male = 10.6%, 15-30 female = 11.5%,  
 31-64 male = 23%, 31-64 female = 23.3%, >65 = 16.5%





# AGE & GENDER

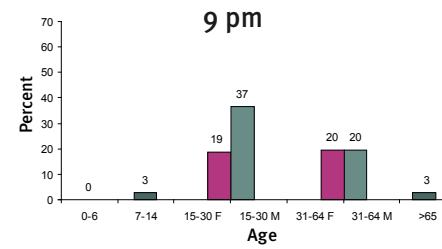
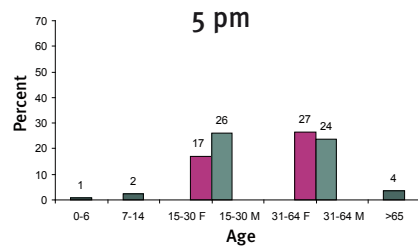
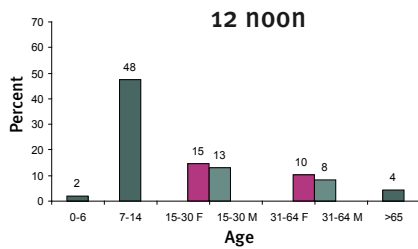
## Under represented in the public realm

### No children -few families

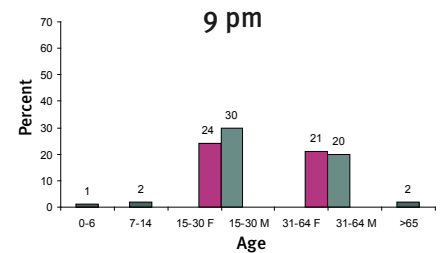
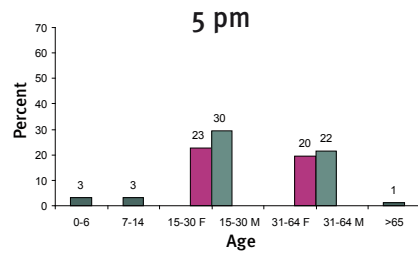
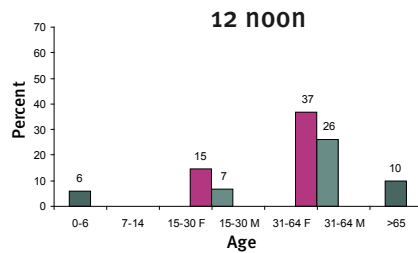
While the 2001 census indicates a substantial number of adolescents living in Brighton & Hove, virtually no children were observed along several popular routes in the city. Along North Street for example, a key artery in the city, both the youngest and oldest generations are poorly represented. This suggests that the environment along North Street is not attractive to this range of users. Less than 1% of pedestrians on North Street are children aged 0-14 despite the group representing 15% of the city's population.

Other streets, like Queens Road, accommodate a substantial percentage of adolescents during day-time hours. After dark the number of young persons on the street drastically decreases. The figures suggest that this group may avoid Queens Road at night due to security perceptions. In Hove, people under 15 are seldom seen in the study area, regardless of the time of day. Pensioners are well represented during the middle of the day, but they too disappear from the public realm in the evening.

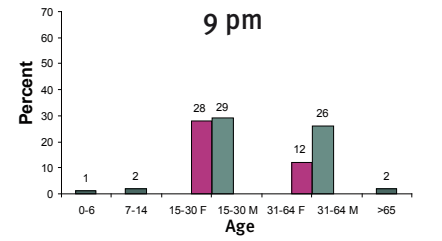
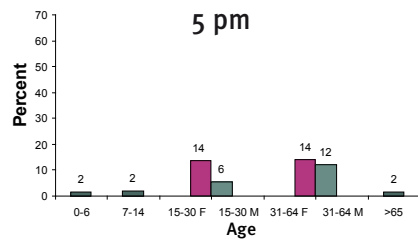
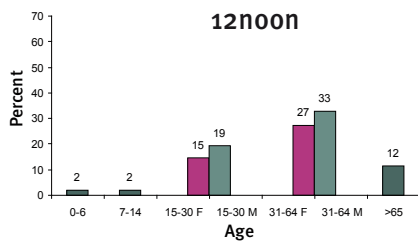
QUEENS ROAD



NORTH STREET



GOLDSTONE VILLAS



All data collected on July 13 2006



The diversity of the locals is not reflected in the city's public spaces

## A SEASONAL CITY?

### Pedestrian traffic, summer and winter

#### An exceptional summer activity

It comes as no surprise that Brighton & Hove experiences an influx of people during the summer months. But this overwhelming increase (in relation to other cities) comes with significant consequences that should be addressed. Brighton & Hove experiences a 100% increase in pedestrian traffic between the summer and winter. This is compared to a v15% increase in London (2004) and a 50% increase in Copenhagen (1995)

Dyke Road (68%), Grand Junction Road (77%), Kings Road (53%) and Jubilee Street (53%) experience the greatest increases in use between summer and winter. Certain streets however are more widely used during the winter. This pattern could be attributed to both increased public transport usage (and subsequent increased pedestrian traffic on main transport routes) and a preference to walk within the sheltered areas of the city rather than along the cold and windy promenade in winter.



PROBLEM

Several areas of the city are used only in the Summer



aprox.  
**100%**  
more pedestrians in the summer

■ winter  
■ summer

## NECESSARY VERSUS OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Stationary activities on weekdays & weekends

#### Lack of weekend activities

As stated earlier, the weekend is a good time to judge the quality of public space, as Saturdays and Sundays are a time for optional activities. Jubilee Square, Victoria Gardens, Dorset Gardens, Regency Square and Norfolk Square experience a decrease in activity at the weekend.

Note that whilst several places on the list are supposedly green recreation spots, they are actually used more on weekdays!

#### Indications that locals do not use the city spaces

Several areas that have decreased weekend activity are considered to be local destinations (less prominent and more likely to be known by locals only). This could be due to a variety of factors, but one possible reason could be that locals don't view the study area as a place for recreation. The beach seems to be the lone exception, where both residents and visitors can meet. This project aspires to change the culture of the city and begin to invite people to occupy more of the city's outdoor spaces.

Most other spots experience increased staying activity at the weekend. Bartholomew Square, Pavilion Gardens, Brighton Beach, Brighton Place, Hove Beach, Pool Valley and East Street have the largest increases.



## ATTRACTIVE GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES

### The quality of the facades

#### Good frontages

The quality of building frontages has a significant influence on the quality of an urban area. Good ground floor facades are rich in detail and exciting to walk by, interesting to look at, to touch and to stand beside.

Activities inside the buildings and those occurring on the street enrich each other. In the evening, friendly light shining out through shop windows contributes to a feeling of security as well as genuine safety.

Interesting ground floor facades also provide good reasons for walking around in the city in the evenings and on Sundays, engaging in the age-old pastime: window shopping. Blank walls, on the contrary, underline the futility of visiting the city outside working hours.

#### Poor frontages

Unfortunately some of the positive aspects of the city by day are negated at night. Despite the opulence of attractive building frontages, metal shutters, dark building frontages and empty display windows convey a sense of insecurity during non-opening hours and throughout the evening. As a result the city takes on a very different personality after dark.

The large number of *attractive* and *pleasant* facades are significant in Brighton and Hove!



**A - ATTRACTIVE**  
Small units, many doors  
(15-20 units per 100 m)  
Diversity of functions  
No closed or passive units  
Interesting relief in facades  
Good quality materials and refined details



**B - PLEASANT**  
Relatively small units  
(10-14 units per 100 m)  
Some diversity of functions  
Only a few closed or passive units  
Some relief in the facades  
Relatively good detailing



**C - SOMEWHERE-IN-BETWEEN**  
Mixture of small and larger units  
(6-10 units per 100 m)  
Some diversity of functions  
Only a few closed or passive units  
Uninteresting facade design  
Somewhat poor detailing



**D - DULL**  
Larger units with few doors  
(2-5 units per 100 m)  
Little diversity of functions  
Many closed units  
Predominantly unattractive facades  
Few or no details

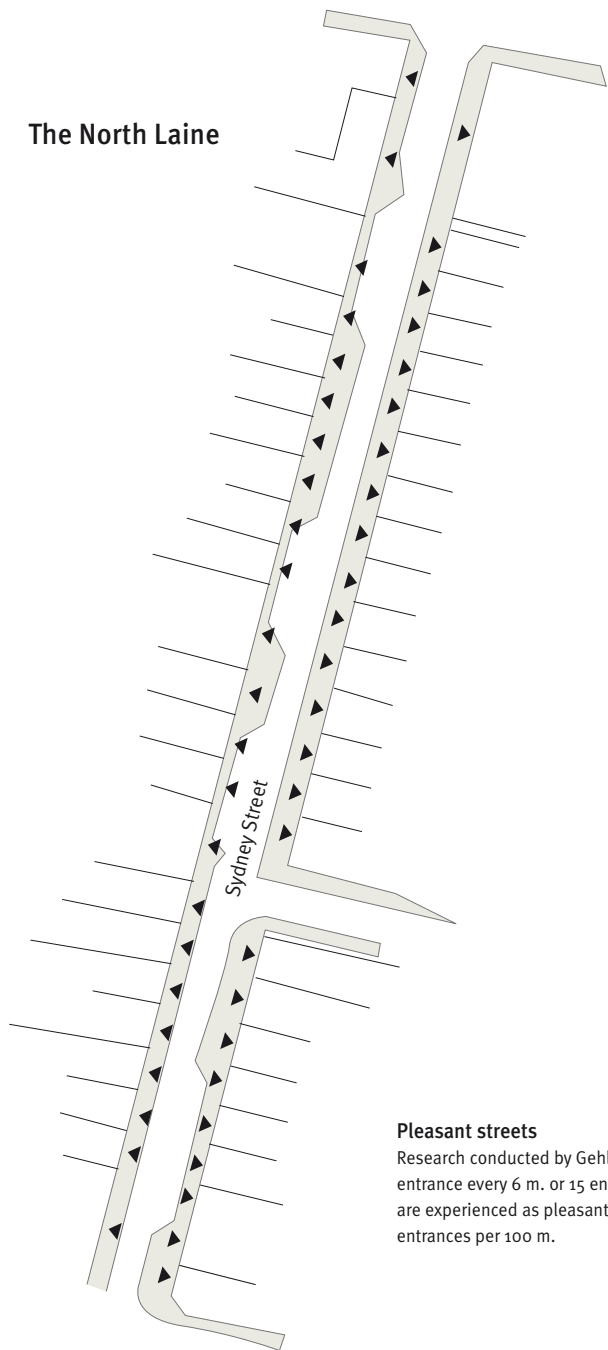


**E - UNATTRACTIVE**  
Large units with few or no doors  
No visible variation of function  
Closed and passive facades  
Monotonous facades  
No details, nothing interesting to look at



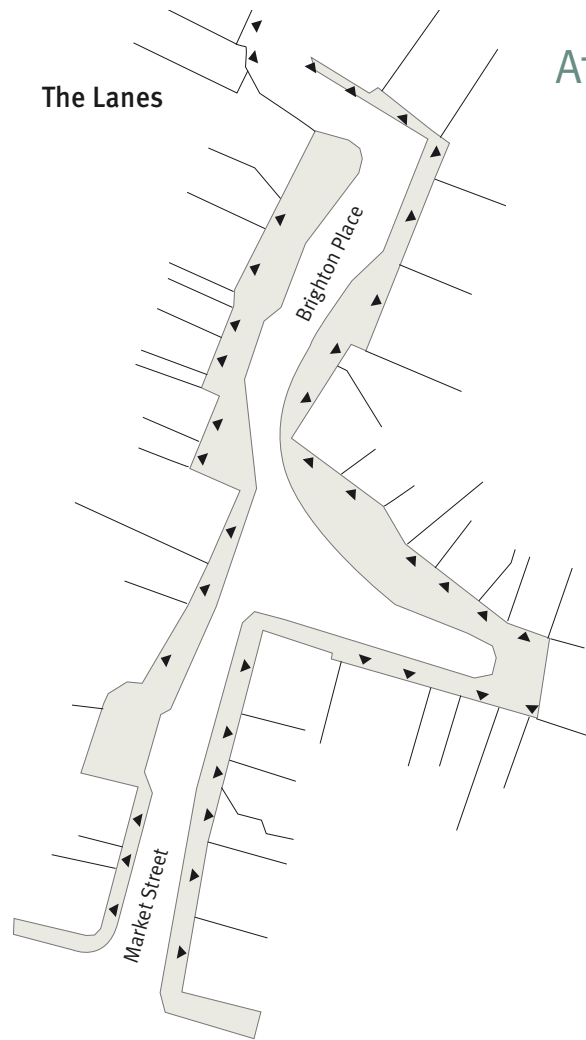
**METAL SHUTTERS**  
Unfortunately some of the positive aspects by day are negated at night





**Pleasant streets**

Research conducted by Gehl Architects show, that a good city highstreet has 1 entrance every 6 m. or 15 entrances per 100 m. The North Laines and the Lanes are experienced as pleasant walking environments since they have aprox. 15/16 entrances per 100 m.



**ATTRACTIVE GROUND FLOOR FRONTAGES**

**1 entrance every 6 meter**

Two elements are important when looking into the quality of the ground floor frontages. The aesthetic quality of the facade (previous page) and the number of units and entrances.

The number of building units and entrances influence the activity level in the street. Many entrances create more active street life as more people walk in and out of building doors.

**Many active frontages in Brighton & Hove**

Compared with cities around the world, Brighton & Hove is well endowed when it comes to attractive ground floor frontages. The city has a significant building tradition with small units and many entrances. The diagrams on this page illustrate the quality of the streets in the North Laine and the Lanes.

The amazingly high number of small units and entrances is part of the reason why the North Laine and the Lanes are considered pleasant strolling areas and experience high pedestrian volume.

**Celebrate the building culture**

It is very important that Brighton & Hove make strong efforts to protect and celebrate this building culture in the future. It is recommended to make exact guidelines to preserve this attractive tradition - both when renovating existing buildings and when planning new streets.

As seen in other cities (and in Brighton as well) new buildings seldom have this fine well-detailed structure - they are often mono-functional and have few entrances. International chain stores also have a tendency towards planning only few entrances to their shops.





# SAFETY

## 'Eyes on the street'

### Safety perceived on busy streets

Studies indicate that passive surveillance, or "eyes on the street" is one of the most effective deterrents of crime. It is therefore not surprising that the streets that experience the highest volume of pedestrians between 6pm and 10pm are also perceived as some of the safest in the city.

The North Laine is a mixture of residential and commercial streets. This variation makes it a thrilling experience to wander through the area. But many other streets in the city are still mono-functional. Potential exists for restructuring and reorganising vehicular traffic and overlapping building functions to incorporate dwellings on pedestrianised streets (i.e. in The Lanes).

The City Centre of Copenhagen is considered to be safe at day time as well as night. One of the reasons is that people are living within the city centre as well.

In the case of Brighton, a mixture of dwellings and shops along popular streets is a rare occurrence.

### PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC COMPARISON TO OTHER CITIES

There will of course be a drop-off in traffic after closing time on main shopping streets. But specific studies in Brighton city centre indicate an especially significant decrease.

Comparison of pedestrian traffic along busy shopping streets during the weekday between 8am and 6pm compared to pedestrian traffic along these streets between 6pm to 10pm. Figures shown indicate night traffic (6pm-10pm) as a percentage of total pedestrian traffic from 8am to 10pm

Brighton - Bond St.	19%	<div style="width: 19%;"></div>
Copenhagen - Strøget	30%	<div style="width: 30%;"></div>
Melbourne - Burke St.	38%	<div style="width: 38%;"></div>
Wellington - Lambton Quay	34%	<div style="width: 34%;"></div>

