

THE PROJECT BRIEF



: ‘Speakers’ Corner for the 21st Century’

: To write a paper discussing the relationship between public debate and public space

: To develop and test a prototype Speakers’ Corner in Lichfield in collaboration with the Lichfield College of Arts, the Lichfield Speakers’ Corner Committee and other local stakeholders and in consultation with the public.

: To record the process and exhibit the outcomes in the Wedge gallery, Lichfield College



THE TEAM



Tricia Austin	Course Director MA CPfNE
Carolina Caicedo	Psychology & Engineering
Chih-Ching Chen	Spatial Design
Fernanda De Uriarte	Industrial Design
Stephanie Ip	Illustration and Animation
Victoria Lee	Architecture
Suzanne O'Connell	Landscape Architecture
Mariana Pestana	Architecture
Elli Resvanis	Creative Writing
Shibboleth Shechter	Associate Lecturer MA CPfNE
Camilla Zucchi	Conservation, Curating and Preservation

The course offers an innovative approach to creating spaces that tell stories through multi-disciplinary team work. It pioneers collaborative practice among designers, curators, writers and project managers.

The purpose: to develop meaningful narratives for both the cultural and commercial sectors.

MA Creative Practice for Narrative Environments
www.narrative-environments.com



OUR APPROACH

: ACADEMIC PAPER

Mariana Pestana

Elli Resvanis

Camilla Zucchi

Many thanks to Allan Parsons for his contributions to the research and to Sarah Rabia for her help in editing the copy.

The paper discusses the history of, and current thinking on, the public sphere in relation to public space. It looks at contemporary art and design practices dealing with public debate in the public realm and suggests a design methodology for Speakers' Corner for the 21st Century.

Desk research revealed a history of arguments about the relationship between public space and the public realm. We discovered writers, artists, urban planners and government initiatives all working in this area.



: Through the work on the academic paper, we identified interesting precedents of several innovative artists and design practices that are exploring alternative ways of designing and sustaining spaces that are co-designed with the public, inviting debate and engagement from the very beginning of the project.



: Designed by 6a Architects, the Brompton Stoop is a stepped segment structure made entirely of cardboard, slotted and folded together. Installed as part of the London Festival of Architecture in 2008, it was inspired by the New York Stoop, a domestic front door step that enables people to meet, sit and own the street. The stoops were easily assembled, for use singly or grouped to form larger event spaces during the Festival.



: Many thanks to 6a Architects for providing these images



OUR APPROACH

: THE DESIGN

Chih-Ching Chen

Fernanda De Uriarte

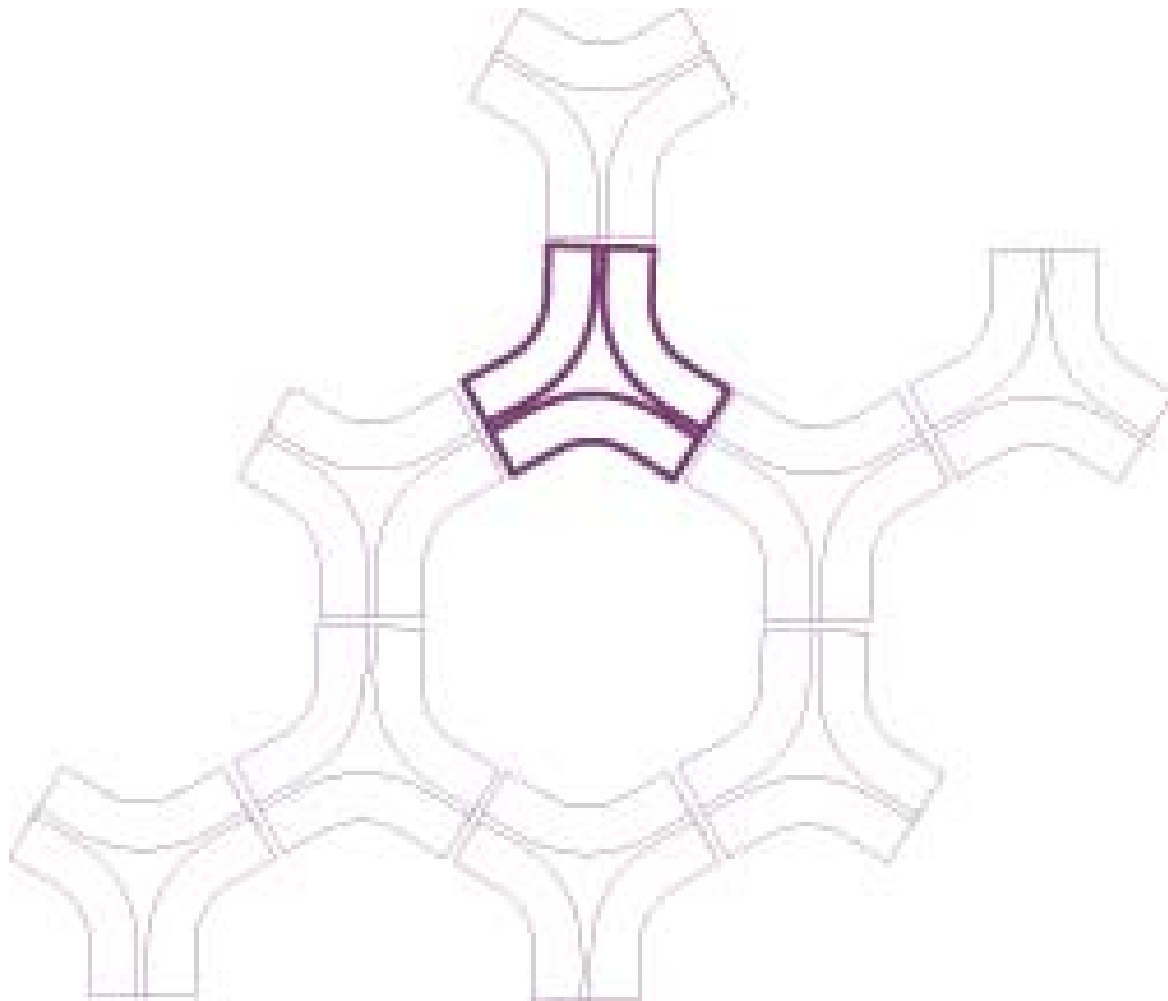
Stephanie Ip

Suzanne O'Connell

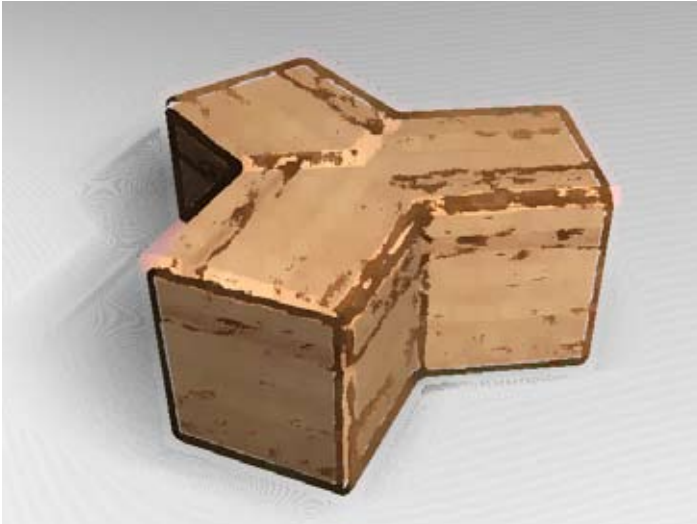
Through our desktop studies of precedents, observations of people in public space, and team brainstorming sessions we identified the key elements of the Speakers' Corner modular kit. We also developed a visual metaphor that embodies the notion of assembly, debate and exchange, an evocative physical form that expresses the design direction.



: Diagram to demonstrate how each module can be configured into the 'Honeycomb' metaphor



: Illustrations to show how different functioning components can be provided using a generic modular structure





: Illustrative view of a possible use and configuration of Lichfield's Speakers' Corner near the chosen site at Minster Pool, Dam Street

Illustrative view of a possible use and configuration of speakers corner



Team brainstorming with initial test models





Schematic model of the proposed idea on site to demonstrate how the space at Dam Street would be used



OUR APPROACH : CO-DESIGN

Carolina Caicedo
Victoria Lee



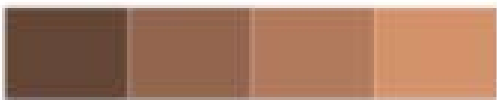
: A chart to show the analysis of colour that is present at the site, along with the suggested colour scheme.

Many thanks to Shanshan Lai for the colour analysis.



Colours present in the immediate environment

The suggested colour scheme



: Co-design workshop site analysis

We facilitated a workshop with Lichfield College art students, where we explored whether Lichfield's Speakers' Corner should be permanent or not, how many modules it should have, where on site it should be located, how it should be configured and what should be its materials and colours.





: Co-design workshop role play

Exploring how different Lichfield audiences might want to use Speakers' Corner



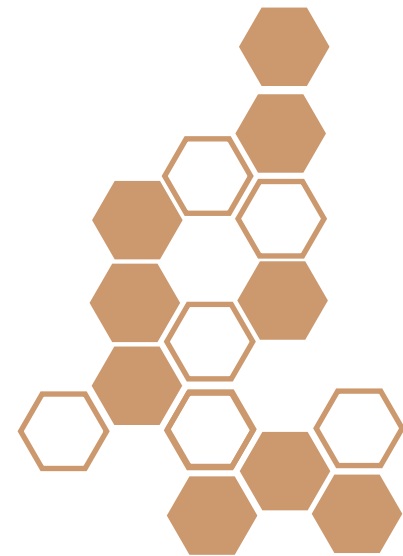
CONSULTATION MEETING with Lichfield Speakers' Corner Trust Founding Committee.



Project administrator Emma Harrison standing on the proposed location for Speakers' Corner following the co-design meeting



PROTOTYPE TESTING with Lichfield District Youth Forum / Young People of Today





NEXT STEPS

: Making and testing a prototype on site with Lichfield College art students and city stakeholders

: An interactive exhibition documenting the co-design process, and offering city stakeholders and the public further opportunities to debate the proposals

: Through site testing and the exhibition, further exploring how the design can encourage the use of the space for debate and how it can accommodate and facilitate both spontaneous and planned events

