

The places in which we live can affect our health.

In the UK, most people (85% of us) live in cities, so making sure cities are healthy places to live is important. Clean air, good quality housing, access to parks & green spaces, public transport, access to shops, arts and cultural opportunities, schools and health services all make a difference to our physical and mental health. Unfortunately, some areas have more unhealthy environments which means people living in these areas can experience poorer health.

By improving urban places, we have an opportunity to improve the health of communities in most need. But what we improve needs more consideration—for example, should we improve parks, provide more sporting facilities, build more homes, reduce traffic, regenerate high streets, reduce the number of fast-food outlets, or open more libraries?

We understand some of the ways these changes may influence our health, but we know less about how they may improve health. We want to understand which combinations of changes may impact health for those that need it the most.

www.phiuk.org/healthy-urban-places

Research in Community Collaboratives

Healthy Urban Places brings together researchers, residents and communities with local government, public services, voluntary and community sector organisations and businesses to co-produce research in two “Community Collaboratives”, one in Bradford and one in Liverpool. The community collaboratives will identify four defined places for focused research in each city.

By involving those impacted by and responsible for decisions about local places, we aim to co-produce relevant and impactful research. The Community Collaboratives will identify what aspects are important to their health and where possible collect any missing data.

We will seek to enhance the historical, current and future local place data, to aid in our understanding of the long-term effects of local place on our health. Through the Community Collaboratives and connected data we will jointly answer our questions of what makes a healthy place.

What are we trying to find out?

1. How can we work with our communities to identify what makes their places healthy?
2. How can we measure what makes a healthy place and what is the mechanism behind the impact on health?
3. What are the challenges in implementing changes to improve health? What are the short-term impacts on health and wellbeing? Are we improving health for those who need it the most?
4. What are the long-term health and economic benefits of changes to local urban places?



Our Urban Places

The research is taking place in two areas: Bradford District, in West Yorkshire and the Liverpool City Region. Both areas have rich histories, varied geographies and shared challenges.

Liverpool is the third most deprived local authority area (out of 317 areas) in England, and Bradford is the 13th most deprived. Many health and wellbeing measures in Liverpool and Bradford are also worse than the national and regional averages. Both areas experience high rates of child poverty, in Liverpool, 22% of children are living in poverty and in Bradford 1/3 of children are living in poverty.

We have chosen these places as they both have large research studies and connected data for over 3 million people which will help us understand how local places influence our health.

Bradford developed from a small rural market town at the turn of the 19th Century to become the wool capital of the world by the 1850s and continued to be industrial before subsequent deindustrialisation. Today, Bradford District has a young and diverse population of over 550k people. It will host the UK City of Culture in 2025.

Liverpool has a rich maritime history, being the world's busiest and wealthiest port in the 19th Century. It is home to some of the oldest ethnic communities in Europe and today the Liverpool City Region has a population of over 2.7 million people. It is a region rich in culture and sport and Liverpool was the 2008 European Capital of Culture.

Healthy Urban Places is a partnership between the Bradford Institute for Health Research (BIHR) at Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, University of Liverpool, Barcelona Institute for Global Health, Bradford Council Health Determinants Research Collaboration, Imperial College London, University of Basque Country, University of Bradford, University College London, University of Leeds and University of York.

For further information or to get involved, email:
HealthyUrbanPlaces@bthft.nhs.uk



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