




**LIVING
STREETS**


PARKLETS

**YOUR GUIDE TO CREATING A
POP-UP PARK ON YOUR STREET**

PUT THE PARK INTO PARKING

WE THINK STREETS SHOULD BE DESIGNED AROUND PEOPLE, NOT CARS. YOU CAN HELP TURN SPACE IN YOUR STREET INTO A PLACE FOR EVERYONE TO ENJOY AND BRING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY TOGETHER.



Anyone can set up a parklet or a pop-up park to transform streets into a vibrant community hot spot. You'll need permission from your local council, but after that, it can be easier than you might think. Why not work together with your neighbours to improve your local area for everyone who lives there?

THIS GUIDE WILL GIVE YOU SOME HINTS AND TIPS ON HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN PARKLET.

What is a parklet?

If you haven't heard of a parklet, you might be wondering what one is. A parklet can transform a parking spot or some road space into a place the whole community can use. These temporary small green spaces provide somewhere for people to sit, chat and relax – and because they make streets more pleasant for walking and cycling, they can help encourage people to get out and about. Parklets really don't have to be expensive and the only limit is your imagination!

Parklets have been popular in the US since the 1990s. In the UK, one of the first of its kind appeared in Hackney, London in 2015, with others now popping up in Leeds and Manchester. We'd love to see them across the UK, from Cardiff to Carlisle.

WHY DO WE NEED PARKLETS?



- » Parklets open up our streets and transform them into free community spaces where people of all ages can sit or play, chat, read or eat their lunch.
- » Parklets provide places to stop and rest, meaning that people who might normally struggle to get around have the confidence to walk further than usual.
- » It's a great way for people without gardens to spend time outside. Meeting new people can reduce the risk of social isolation and mental health problems.
- » You never know who you might talk to. People from all walks of life come together at parklets, from those who live nearby, to builders who are working in the area.



GET TOGETHER AND TRANSFORM YOUR STREETS

A BIT OF TEAM EFFORT GOES A LONG WAY. FIND OUT HOW THESE COMMUNITIES CREATED THEIR OWN PARKLETS AND BE INSPIRED TO MAKE YOUR OWN.



HACKNEY

For a long time, Brenda Puech from Hackney Living Streets Group knew that she wanted to make her street a more attractive place, and decided that turning an unused parking space into a parklet would transform her local area. But when Brenda applied for a parking permit to create a parklet, her application was rejected by the council. So in May 2017, she decided to take matters into her own hands and launched the People Parking Bay, which included a patch of artificial grass the size of a car, with plantpots to park bikes, flowerpots, a bench and table, a bright red umbrella and a large sign that read: "You're welcome to park yourself on the bench".

Neighbours loved Brenda's parklet as it brought people together, provided a safe place for

children to play, read and draw, and even acted as a community library where many people left books and magazines for others to read. As Brenda says, "it's truly transformational for communities".

Brenda won the Living Streets Charles Maher Award in 2019, which celebrates the people who go the extra mile to improve their community.

While the parklet did not last long and was soon evicted by the council, Brenda's innovative use of street space was so popular with the local community that Hackney Council decided to launch a programme allowing residents to apply to build community parklets on their streets. There are now six community parklets in different streets in Hackney built by the local

residents who designed and manage their own parklets. The London Fields ward now also has two School Street closure schemes, which help to reduce traffic and air pollution outside local primary schools.

"IN HACKNEY, WHERE I LIVE, THERE ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS MANY HOUSEHOLDS THAT DON'T OWN A CAR AS ONES THAT DO. YET NEARLY ALL OUR KERBSIDE SPACE IS DEVOTED TO CAR PARKING. I COULDN'T SHAKE OFF THE FEELING OF WHAT A WASTE OF PRECIOUS SPACE IT WAS!"

- BRENDA PUECH

LIVING STREETS

COLVESTONE CRESCENT

Colvestone Crescent parklet sits right in the middle of Dalston, which is 'absolutely buzzing'. These are the words of Julika Niehaus who set up a community parklet on Colvestone Crescent in 2019. The crescent backs onto Ridley Road market and there's a primary school at the end of the street. Air quality has long been an issue in the area; idling and parked cars were also a problem.

Following the success of the Hackney parklet, Hackney Council introduced a pilot project and residents of Colverston Crescent decided to apply for a parklet permit. Knowing there was a strong community on the street, Julika reached out to her neighbours, who joined forces and shared their skills, from gardening to building and design.

The parklet is now enjoyed by the whole community and everyone shares their ideas about how it should be used. It hosts everything from knitting sessions to yoga and meditation classes. Teachers and pupils from the local primary school are regular visitors and hope to create their own School Street to reduce traffic congestion around the area.

"WALKING DOWN THE STREET, YOU'LL ALWAYS SEE PEOPLE AT THE PARKLET AND IT'S A REMINDER THAT THE STREET IS FOR PEOPLE. IT'S UNITED EVERYONE ON THE STREET MORE THAN EVER AND WE'VE ALL FORMED FRIENDSHIPS WITH PEOPLE WE MIGHT NOT HAVE MET OTHERWISE. A PARKLET IS SUCH A TINY THING, BUT IT HAS SO MANY BENEFITS FOR PEOPLE, AND IT ALL ADDS UP." - JULIKA NIEHAUS



BRIDGEFIELD STREET

Shoppers, diners and businesses in Stockport town centre in Greater Manchester have seen a real difference since the creation of an on-street parklet with seating, greenery and cycle parking. Bridgefield Street was once a no-go area but has been brought back to life with a parklet featuring planting, an art wall, a concrete table tennis table and chimes for children to play with. The parklet is the first of its kind in Greater Manchester and is part of a wider programme that has been introduced by Cycling and Walking Commissioner, Chris Boardman, to turn streets into people-friendly places.

"FOR THE LAST 60 YEARS, OUR TOWNS AND CITIES HAVE BEEN DESIGNED AROUND CARS, NOT PEOPLE. THIS PARKLET AND POCKET PARK – AND MANY OTHERS THAT WE HOPE TO ROLL OUT ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER – WILL HELP PEOPLE TO RECLAIM THE STREETS, SPENDING MORE TIME ENJOYING THEM AND MAKING JOURNEYS ON FOOT AND BY BIKE MORE PLEASANT AND ATTRACTIVE." - CHRIS BOARDMAN MBE, CYCLING AND WALKING COMMISSIONER, GREATER MANCHESTER



WANT TO GIVE IT A GO?

BRENDA AND JULIKA HAVE HELPED US DEVELOP THIS SHORT GUIDE TO HELP YOU CREATE A PARKLET.



1. DO YOUR RESEARCH AND TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOURS

There are so many great things happening in our communities, so find out about successful projects to get ideas about what works, and see if you can collaborate in some way. It's likely that your neighbours will welcome the idea of a parklet, so get them on board. You'll need to show the council that there's local buy-in for the parklet, so knock on doors, hold informal meetings and talk about your plans on social media. Ask for people's ideas and try to find an angle that will appeal to local politicians and councillors.

2. GET PERMISSION

Talk to your local council to see if you can start a pilot project, even if it's just for a day or two, as you'll need permission if you want to create a parklet on your street.

It's likely that your council will ask you to put together a proposal with an outline of your plan and evidence of community support. The council will review your proposal to make sure that your design is safe and accessible, and if it's approved, you can apply for written consent – or if you live in Hackney, a parklet permit. Once you've got permission, you can build your parklet. There might be a site inspection before and after construction, so be sure to have an ongoing maintenance plan.

In the medium to long-term, consider asking your council to set up a specific programme for people who wish to get permission for a parklet in their street.





3. BE PERSISTENT!

Depending on where you live, you may have to wait some time to get permission for your parklet. It took Hackney Council over a year to develop its programme and procedures. At the moment, parklets do not exist as a legal concept in the UK, but with a lot of perseverance, you might be able to persuade your local council to see the benefit of creating one in your community.

4. WORK OUT THE LOGISTICS

Find out what funding is available and how much money you'll need to build your parklet. Rally around your community to raise funds or crowdfund. Ask your neighbours to share their time and skills, so find out who's handy with a hammer or good at event management. See if local businesses can donate materials, and reuse and recycle what you have; for example, the Colvestone Crescent parklet used old pallets from the nearby market. Come up with a design for your parklet and be as creative as you like. Successful parklets will be in place for between one and six months, and the most effective and well-used ones will have the opportunity to become permanent.

5. TELL PEOPLE IT'S HAPPENING

Invite your local councillor, MP or local celebrity to officially open the parklet and ask the press to come along. Get on social media to tell everyone about your new parklet! Contact local schools and community centres and tell them to visit. If the parklet is popular, it's more likely that the council will grant you permission to make it permanent.

6. KEEP IT GOING

If you become a parklet keeper, you will be responsible for the design, installation and maintenance of your parklet. It's a great chance to be part of how your neighbourhood develops.



LIVING STREETS

IN THE UK, WE ARE AROUND 20% LESS ACTIVE NOW THAN WE WERE IN THE 1960S WITH PROJECTIONS SHOWING THIS COULD INCREASE TO 35% BY 2030. WE NEED TO MAKE SURE OUR STREETS ARE SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE PLACES SO PEOPLE ARE ENCOURAGED TO SPEND TIME THERE – WALKING, CYCLING AND SOCIALISING.

BY TURNING KERBSIDE SPACE INTO A PARKLET WE CAN CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT'S BETTER FOR WALKING. THE WHOLE COMMUNITY CAN BENEFIT FROM A PLACE THAT ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR SOME FRESH AIR AND A CHAT WITH A NEIGHBOUR.



TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW LIVING STREETS CAN SUPPORT YOU, PLEASE VISIT

WWW.LIVINGSTREETS.ORG.UK/GETINVOLVED

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