

THE RE-BUILD PROJECT

‘A reflection of the refugee community, everything they do and want to share’

Exploratory Question:

Can design be used as a tool for communication and expression of identity without the reliance of language?

“We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are ourselves a part of it,” Kevin Lynch

13 MILLION
Child refugees in the world.

1.8 MILLION
Refugees in Europe

40 THOUSAND
Refugees in the UK each year

121, 837
Refugees currently in the UK

Quotes:

“Wherever they’re from, refugees face the same difficult issues when they arrive in their new home countries. They are most often **strangers in a strange land**, and as such it’s important that society welcomes them and makes sure they get the support they need.” The Children’s Society

“language remains the **largest barrier**” UNHCR report (The Children’s Society)

“Not being able to speak a language properly when trying to settle into your new host country as a refugee can be a **huge obstacle** towards integration, employment and overall happiness.” Steadman, 2017

“Language barriers are a serious challenge faced by many refugees. They often create misunderstandings and can make **refugees feel isolated**.” BRYCS, 2018



Perspective Section of 'The Neighbourhood'
- Section AA

THE BRIEF

The Re-Build Project

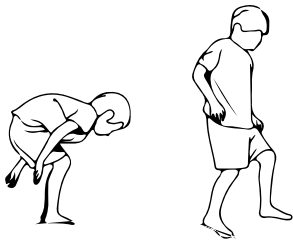
The Re-Build Project populates the Generator Building in Bristol forming a *micro-city*, also known as *the neighbourhood*, within its walls. It is a Centre of connection for refugees to connect both with each other and with the wider community. Its key focus is to create a place for young refugee's in Bristol to **communicate, connect and express themselves** without the reliance of language, bringing communities together from different cultures, worlds and stories.

Here the users will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities to support them acquire a **range of skills** that will enable them to begin to meaningfully re-build their lives. Self-expression of **individual and collective identity** is celebrated and encouraged, creating an atmosphere that fosters a sense of belonging and ownership.

"Moving elements in a city, and in particular the people and their activities, are as important as the stationary physical parts." Kevin Lynch

Visual: Createable Space.





“ON MY FIRST DAY AT THE RE-BUILD PROJECT”

Story Board of what happened on Aaban’s first day...

Each space has been designed to make up a part of the re-build project’s *neighbourhood*. The core concept of this scheme is to enable users to communicate and **connect without language** as a means for refugees to re-build their lives. The centre will allow users to interact with several identified zones of communication that do not require language to communicate with others, that allow them to **express their identities and share their stories**. Not only will this centre be for refugee’s themselves, but at certain times, for the wider community to interact with these zones to build stronger community relationships. The non verbal communication has been split into **‘Do’, ‘See’, and ‘Eat’**.

Do: The concept for **activities that ‘do’** is to allow people to come together to **work on a project or in a space together** learning from each other, and to communicate through this act, as well as through the final product. The product being not only a form of communicating their story but an expression of a part of who they are.

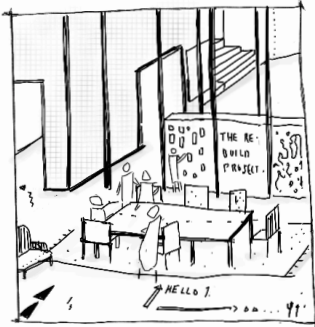
See: One of the most **powerful forms of communication is visual**. This does not need any language to interpret what can be seen.

Eat: Here users will **come together to engage with food**. The Food Library will be a place to explore the whole process of producing a meal that can be shared with the whole community. **Food is a common language**, and communicating through this will allow users to **share an expression of their identities and learn about others**. This communal activity will allow for joy, laughter, fun, creativity and connection for people from around the world.

Food is a wonderful way to start and end each day.



Photography: Gabriel Hill



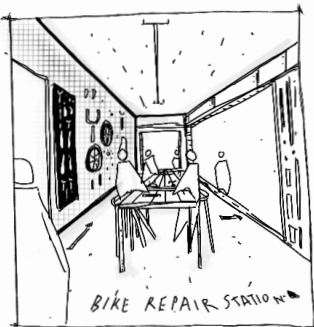
When I arrived I felt nervous because I didn't know many people and didn't know if I could talk to anyone. But as soon as I walked through the door I saw someone smiling at me and waving. I walked to the big table and sat down. Someone showed me a mug and asked me if I wanted something to drink. Huge relief.



I wandered around the corner after my drink and could smell delicious food. Everyone was cooking together and laughing and they called me over and said hello in lots of different languages. I recognised my own I felt so happy. I asked Ayan what they were cooking. He told me it was preparation for lunch.



Asha took me to the pick up station to explain that there were ingredients to collect if I needed to take a pack home to cook myself. Or if it was hard to cook in the kitchen at home they also prepared meals from the food of the day to take away. I asked how much it would cost. Asha said, it is for you, for free.



I could see a workshop from the pick up station, I really loved the workshop in my home country. I looked inside and everyone was busy making things and making bikes. This was really exciting because making a bike would mean I could get around Bristol a lot more easily. I could be more independent.



Asha came to find me and told me that there was going to be a film on and asked if I wanted to join him and a group of others to watch it? It felt so nice that Asha had come to find me. I felt really at home all of a sudden. We got a hot drink from the kitchen and went to sit on some cushions to watch the film.



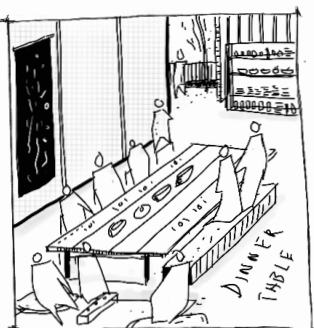
When the film was finished Asha and Ayan took me to a spot where there were lots of wooden planks, and screens that could pull out and open. There were even poles for curtains and ladders for climbing up. We started making a space that felt like a living room from home. We just talked and laughed and it was so warming. It was wonderful.



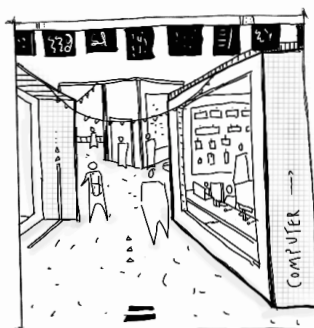
I remembered seeing a shop from the workshop, it felt like a wonderful little city. I told Ayan that I didn't have many things where I was staying and asked how to use the shop. He told me that it was a sharing shop, to take what we needed. I could also see people walking on bridges above, I was curious about what was upstairs and how to get there.



First I went to the shop and found some clothes, bowls, a saucepan and some books. I only came to Bristol with one rucksack which has only a couple of things in. I had to leave most of my things, and I lost the rest on the way. These items will really help me to feel a bit of normality again.



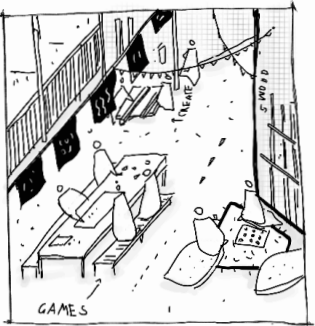
I met Ola earlier, and she bumped into me at the shop. She reminded me that it was a sharing lunch today and that I should come upstairs to join everyone. I felt a little daunted but once I got to the table, I saw some more people I knew. Lunch was delicious, and we sat on the floor and ate with our hands, just like we used to at home. It felt right.



After lunch I explored upstairs. I saw that there were computers that I could use, this would be helpful because I could then write letters to home, to tell everyone how I am and find out how everyone is. Upstairs there were so many flags, they were beautiful and colourful. They made me feel happy.



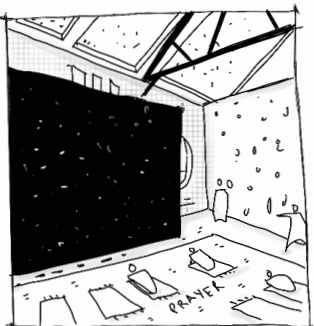
At the start of the day I had booked a session in the support space for after lunch. Marla helped me understand the forms and what information I needed to find out. This was a huge relief, I had been worrying about these forms a lot.



Under the coloured flags Ayan and Asha and some others were playing games from the games cupboard. I went to join in. We laughed a lot, I was really good at the game, Ayan was not.



Ola came to find me to say that if I needed any help with English there was a beginners session running at the skill centre. She said she would come with me because she was learning too.



I climbed right to the top of this city and found the prayer space. The light was shining through little holes, it felt so peaceful, and quiet. The day had been so happy here, I had almost forgotten the bad feelings I had inside. I said my evening prayer, and stayed here for a long time.

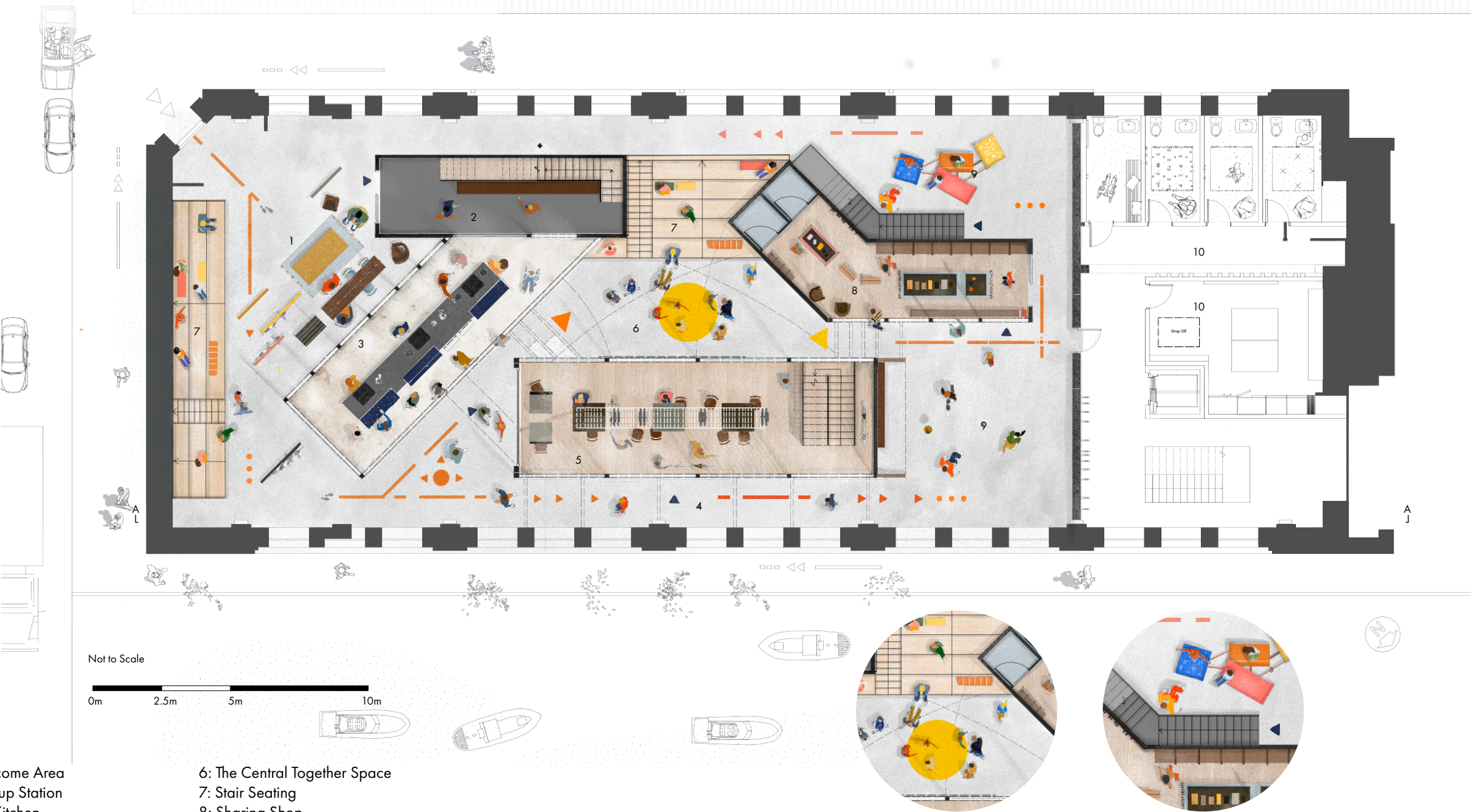


On my way out, as I was leaving I walked down a sort of street. People were painting and throwing paint and making huge marks on the walls. Asha gave me a paintbrush, and I made my mark. I felt like I was now a part of this city. And this city was now a part of me.

FLOOR PLANS

Ground Floor:

‘Immerse yourself in the neighbourhood, explore, cook, build, shop in any way you want’



Key:

- 1: Welcome Area
- 2: Pick-up Station
- 3: The Kitchen
- 4: Colour Corridor
- 5: The Repair Station - Bike
- 6: The Central Together Space
- 7: Stair Seating
- 8: Sharing Shop
- 9: Creatable Spaces
- 10: Storage and Bathrooms

Key:

- 1: Dappled light prayer Space
- 2: Friends Corridor
- 3: Reflection Seating
- 4: Dark Prayer Space
- 5: Yoga or Meditation Space
- 6: Male Wash room
- 7: Female Wash room

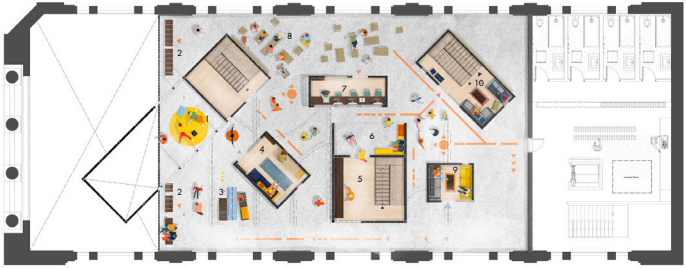
Fourth Floor
Not to Scale



Key:

- 1: Creatable Space
- 2: Bench Seating
- 3: Creatable Table
- 4: Nest Box
- 5: Games Cupboard
- 6: Together Space
- 7: Letter to a friend - Computers
- 8: Skill Centre
- 9: Nest Box
- 10: Together Space

Third Floor
Not to Scale



Key:

- 1: Creatable Rooftops
- 2: Bridges
- 3: Storage
- 4: Clinic Drop-in

Second Floor
Not to Scale



Key:

- 1: The Growing Garden
- 2: The Dinner Table
- 3: Bridges
- 4: The Repair Station - Clothes
- 5: The Shoring Shop
- 6: Storage for repair, shop and creatable spaces

First Floor
Not to Scale



THE REPAIR STATION

and the central 'Together Space'

Do - Communicating through the act of doing

The repair station allows people to make and mend. This means that individuals will gain a sense of ownership, pride and achievement in their belongings. Being able to make a bike, for example, will allow users to become more independent in the city.

"Aaban starts to make his mark on the huge creatable wall and feels like he is really starting to belong to something special. He then wanders over to the Repair Station to start making a bike."

MATERIAL STATEMENT

Architectural approach and Graphic focus

Introducing the idea of a built structure to be used as a frame for individuals to **modify, add to, create and adapt** to match their individual preference, the space will consist of fixed **steel and wooden frames**. Users will be able to inhabit these structures as well as the spaces around in a whole manner of ways. They will be able to **paint directly onto them**, hang and display items, draw on them, and more. Boldly coloured **way-finding graphics** will overlay the entire space ensuring navigation is easy and interesting.

