



# Youth Friendly Spaces Audit Report

MacFarlane Park Basketball Court

SUNDAY 29th AUGUST



## Team Leader

1. Andre Moneda

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# 1. Executive Summary

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On August 3 and August 7, 2021, the MacFarlane Park Basketball Court was audited by young people on its youth-friendliness. Using the Youth Relevant Design Check Card and Youth Friendly Spaces Audit, young people audited the MacFarlane Park Basketball Court on its safety, appeal, accessibility, resourcing, and youth-friendliness.

The MacFarlane Park Basketball Court performed averagely in the Youth Friendly Spaces Audit, scoring a total of 59.5% and producing a Net Promoter Score of 0.

The youth auditors really like how the space sums up the community vibe of Shirley. The basketball court is centrally connected to other places that local youth access and is surrounded by bus stops that cater for the central bus network. They enjoy using the space to spend time with friends and play sports. It currently caters for their needs but does need some work to have better practicality.

The main area young people thought could be improved and gave feedback on is the current state of the basketball courts which need cosmetic and practical upgrading for youth to enjoy. In addition, the general area around the court would benefit from more lighting, more seating around the area, an improved water fountain, and a bin nearby to accommodate the basic needs of an outdoor youth-friendly space that can be enjoyed by everyone. The space also needs to introduce

**Overall, the recommendations on behalf of the youth auditors are:**

- Revamp the basketball court
- Improve the amenities of the space
- Introduce new activities

## 2. Introduction

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On 3 August 2021 and 7 August 2021, a team of youth auditors, led by team leader Andre Moneda, completed a Youth Friendly Spaces Audit on the MacFarlane Park Basketball Court. This Youth Friendly Spaces Audit report is an appraisal of the MacFarlane Park Basketball Court's youth-friendliness based on data gathered over two audits. This has been completed by two independent youth audit team leaders and covers the five factors of Youth Relevant Design including safety, appeal, accessibility, well-resourced and youth friendly. Robust engagement has taken place with a team of young people, also referred to in this report as youth auditors, who have developed a range of feedback and recommendations for this space.

The audit was completed by 6 diverse auditors ranging in age from 11 to 20. The two audits were completed in the evening on Tuesday 3rd August and in the afternoon on Saturday 7 August to capture the youth-friendliness of the space at different times. This report will tell you how youth-friendly your space is and provides you with a Net Promoter Score. It also includes detailed feedback from young people about what they like about the space, what changes they would like to see, general feedback, and recommendations.

## 3. Methodology

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The Youth Friendly Spaces Audit was conducted by one team leader who led a team of young people through the MacFarlane Park Basketball Court and audited the space against a set of Youth Relevant Design Principles.

### The audits were conducted at:

- Tuesday 3rd August 4.30pm-6pm
- Saturday 7th August, 3pm-4pm

## 3.1 Quantitative Feedback

During both audits, each youth auditor completed a Youth Friendly Spaces Scorecard. As they assessed the space, the young people were asked to think about the facility under the following banners:

- **Transport Options**  
This looks at whether there are bike stands, a bus stop within 100 metres, bus links to other key spaces young people use, and whether the bikes stand, the path to the road and car park are well-lit.
- **Location**  
This is assessing whether the space is close to other places the young person already hangs out, whether the entrance is well-lit and well sign-posted, and if there are accessibility ramps (where required).
- **Atmosphere**  
This looks at things that make an appealing atmosphere such as music playing, soft spaces to relax that aren't 'in the way', colour, art, plant life, safe spaces to leave belongings, charging ports, and friendly staff greeting you on arrival.
- **Cost**  
This refers to whether there is free admission and discounts with student ID, discounted admission on certain days or times, and free WIFI.
- **Bathrooms**  
Spaces are scored on whether there are gender-neutral bathrooms, showers, disability bathrooms and disability showers (if applicable).
- **Support**  
This looks at whether there are bike stands, a bus stop within 100 metres, bus links to other key spaces young people use, and whether the bikes stand, the path to the road and car park are well-lit.

Each of these banners includes questions that require either a yes, no, or not applicable answer. As the auditors walk into the space, they keep an eye out for the things suggested on the scorecard and record whether they are provided (if applicable). The results for each section look at how many 'yes' answers there are for each section out of all of the 'yes' and 'no' answers, thus producing a percentage for how well that area scored.

Alongside a score in each of these areas, the audit will also produce a Net Promoter Score. For this, every young person provides a rating for 'how likely would you be to recommend this space to a friend?'. The scale is from 0, not very likely, to 10, extremely likely. Scores between 0-6 are called 'detractors', while scores of 9-10 are called "promoters". Any rating that is 7 and 8 are neutral and not taken into consideration. The percentage of detractors are detracted from the percentage of promoters providing a number that is your net promoter score. Any number over 0 is a good Net Promoter Score because it means there were more promoters than detractors.

## 3.2 Qualitative Feedback

As well as providing youth-friendly scores, the Youth Friendly Spaces Audit also gathers qualitative feedback in the form of recommendations and anecdotal feedback. At the end of the audit, the audit team leader runs a small focus group with all of the auditors, asking them for feedback about the space against the 5 Factors of Youth Relevant Design which are:

- **Safety**  
Any space that young people frequent should be safe, and when you get it right for them, you've probably got it right for everyone.
- **Appeal**  
A space is going to be more appealing and successful when people want to use it for its intended purpose.
- **Accessible**  
Any space needs to be accessible – all young people should be able to use it, even if their circumstances are different.
- **Well-Resourced**  
A space that is well-resourced with young people in mind is one that will be well-used.
- **Youth-Friendly**  
You can tell a youth-friendly space by the feeling you get when you walk in – young people are wanted here.

This focus group produces a lot of valuable feedback straight from the mouth of young people, which informs our recommendations later in the report. **As well as the focus group, young people also have the option to give their own feedback through the scorecard which asks:**

- What do you like about this space?
- Do you think this space is designed to be used by young people?
- What would you change about this space that is easy to do?
- What would you change about this space if you could do anything?

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 Audit Scorecards

AUDIT #1: Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 4.30pm – 6pm

SECTIONS:

SCORES:

Transport Options	67%
Location	67%
Atmosphere	60%
Cost	50%
Bathroom	50%
Support	67%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>NET PROMOTER SCORE</b>	<b>0</b>

AUDIT#2: Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August, 3pm – 4pm

SECTIONS:

SCORES:

Transport Options	47%
Location	58%
Atmosphere	80%
Cost	50%
Bathroom	67%
Support	50%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>NET PROMOTER SCORE</b>	<b>0</b>

TOTAL:

59.5%

NET PROMOTOR SCORE:

0



## 4.2 Scorecard Feedback

Each youth auditor completes a scorecard twice at two distinctly different times. During the audits, they are asked to write down what they like about the space, if they thought the space was designed to be used by young people, what they would change that is easy to do, and what they would change if they could change anything at all. Below is a summary of their feedback.

### 4.2.1 What do you like about this space?

The most common theme that came through the scorecard regarding what people like about the space is that MacFarlane Park is easily accessible and a great place to hang with friends. One reason for this is that the park is the closest thing nearby for youth, “It’s the only thing around here so it’s this or nothing” and the young people felt you’ve got to “make the most of what you’ve got.”

The youth auditors highlighted that they enjoy the basketball court as a way to pass time without the use of technology. The Park is there for people to use, so they use it as much as they can. They can relax at the playground or stay active and play sports.

### 4.2.2 Do you think this space is designed to be used by young people?

All of the auditors felt that the space is designed to be used by young people. The basketball courts prove to be a hotspot for youth to hang with their friends through sports and relaxation. The auditors also noted that the park is built for people of all ages. The playground and hoops give youth a variety of things to do while the large open space also allows youth to do numerous activities of their own choosing. On this occasion, the youth seemed to be happy with the general design, but one auditor did question, “what’s the point in old people designing it if it’s for young people who are using it?”.

### 4.2.3 What would you change about this space that is easy to do?

A common change young people want to see is improving the ‘life’ of the basketball court. The concrete needs levelling because of constant puddles appearing during wet weather which can

cause slips and other accidents. The hoops need replacing which includes the backboards, double rim hoops, and access to the netball hoops to increase the versatility of the space. The need for a versatile court came from one young person who expressed “I used to come here to practice netball but now I don’t” because of the court only being set up for basketball. Youth also identified a need for benches as there is an insufficient amount of seating, and the bench that is currently there is inaccessible due to the leaking water fountain creating a “bog” that never dries and attracts wasps during the summer months.

Lighting also came up as there is not enough when it becomes dark. The auditors agreed that it is unsafe at late hours and lighting would significantly improve this. Signage needs to be added as well as it can be confusing for people to find the space. This could include signs by the gate to the courts or by the corner of the block.

#### 4.2.4 What would you change about this space if you could change anything?

Better toilets, rubbish bins, and additions of other youth-friendly activities is a recommendation given out by the young people. Young people want toilets that are closer to the basketball courts as there is no clear path to the nearest toilet block, especially when it rains. They all mentioned that the toilets are not well lit, and they feel unsafe with one auditor stating, “I feel like I’m gonna die when I go in there”.

The bins are also something that everyone said needs to be changed. Recently, the bin placed near the playground was removed in favour of a smart bin that is placed by the toilet block. Young people felt that this was the wrong call as it makes no sense for it to be far away from the social hotspot of the park. People using the area have been leaving their rubbish on the ground because of it, and young people want the bins to come back again as it makes more sense to be there. Auditors also suggest adding a half-pipe for skateboarders. They felt that not only would it add another activity for youth to enjoy but would improve the overall vibe of the space to make it even more inviting for all youth of Christchurch and would give Shirley a treasure in the area.

### 4.3 Focus Group Feedback

At the end of the entire audit, the youth auditors came together to for a brief focus group to discuss feedback under the 5 Factors of Youth Relevant Design.

### 4.3.1 Safety

*The crux of this point is that any space that young people frequent should be safe, and when you get it right for them you've probably got it right for everyone.*

Overall, the youth auditors feel safe when they access the MacFarlane Park basketball courts. They mentioned that during the daytime the locals do their own thing with their family and friends and tend to stay with themselves. This gives young people assurance to be themselves and feel accepted by other users as they are not seen as a nuisance. When asked if they feel welcome in the space, it was unanimous from the auditors that they do feel welcome.

However, when it gets dark the general consensus is that young people do not feel safe. They have attributed this due to the lack of lighting in this space. The closest lights are the streetlights which are not in the immediate area of the space, a small sensor light connected to the MacFarlane Park Centre, and parking lights on the other side of the Park Centre. The auditors generally came by foot to the space and adequate lighting would drastically change their future sense of safety.

A suggestion would be to add lighting by the basketball courts to increase both the accessibility and safety of the space at night.

### 4.3.2 Appeal

*A space is more appealing when young people are able to be engaged in the space.*

During the focus group, youth auditors said that the space met their needs and is appealing. One of the auditors mentioned that even though the space is simply a park, if they went without bringing anything they would still be able to enjoy their time. The main use of the space is obviously the basketball court, so they are aware they need to bring a basketball or netball to use the courts.

Despite it being an overall appealing space, the auditors noted a number of improvements that could make the space be more functional and appealing. The first improvement would be to resurface the basketball court. In its current state, young people have mentioned the impracticality that it brings. The dips leave puddles that can cause slips and accidents after a period of rain and

the trees hinder the drying process and can cause these puddles to remain for days, especially during the winter. On top of this, the trees also cause leaves to fall onto the basketball court which affects the safety and appeal of the space. The court could also be redesigned to add lines to be used for other ball sports to make the space more versatile and appealing to a wider range of youth.

Other recommendations that arose were to replace the basketball hoops with interchangeable hoops that can also be used for netball. One auditor mentioned how in the past this was possible, but these hoops were removed and can no longer be changed. Fixing the water fountain and installing benches will also help improve the appeal of the space as the water is currently leaving a puddle that never dries.

### 4.3.3 Accessibility

*Any space needs to be accessible, which includes disability access, physical movement to and around the space, and affordability to engage with the space.*

Young people commented that the space is easily accessible to the general public due to its central location in the neighbourhood and it acts as a hub for the community. The location is close to other spaces that young people go to such as The Palms Mall, Shirley Library, shops, and their homes. The space is surrounded with a number of bus stops that connect to the main lines like the Orbiter. The main comment for improvement is that the space needs more clear signage to help non-locals find their way. The auditors recommend adding signage along Acheson Avenue to help direct people to the space. Another sign could be put up by the gate on Skipton Street that leads to the basketball courts.

The recommendation of resurfacing the concrete arose again due to the concrete by the entrance of the space being prone to puddles that inhibits access. Another solution that young people came up with is to install a drain or something similar to reduce the probability and severity of puddles appearing after periods of rain.

They also raised the issue of a lack of safe spaces to leave their bikes and scooters. One auditor said that they just leave their scooter by the bushes. Even though they currently feel safe doing this, a space should still be installed to leave nothing to chance.

#### 4.3.4 Well-Resourced

*A space that is well-resourced with young people in mind is a space that will be well-used.*

The youth auditors said that the space lacks some basic resources such as bins, benches, and a proper path to the toilets. As discussed above, the auditors mentioned that recently the bin that was located directly beside the playground was removed by the Council in favour of a smart bin located by the toilet blocks. The problem is that this new location is far away from the most used spaces and people think of the walk to the new location as a hassle. At the time of the audit, there was a lot of rubbish left on the ground due to the removal of the bin.

Auditors also mentioned that the toilets are far away and that there is no direct paved way to them. The most direct path is going through the grass, and this is an issue during wet weather with mud building up that can cause slipping. Once at the toilets, there is not enough lighting inside and outside. Even during daylight hours, the toilets are dark, and youth feel unsafe to use them. They are in bad condition due to their uncleanliness and general atmosphere.

Youth feel that the space is close to shops where they can access food and they do not mind the walk to these shops. However, one auditor did comment about the chip shop on Acheson Avenue closing which was frequented a lot.

#### 4.3.5 Youth-Friendly

*You can tell a youth-friendly space by the feeling you get when you walk in – young people feel wanted here.*

The youth auditors talked about how MacFarlane Park and the basketball courts have a real Shirley vibe, “we are a low income kinda area and so it’s not posh”. The young people are satisfied with the atmosphere of the space. Shirley is basic but has a very community-oriented and connected vibe. Youth and other residents will always bump into people they know. The auditors commented that if any changes were to be introduced, it would have to be something that is not too fancy to keep the current vibe and fit into the image that youth love.

Changes that the youth auditors identified were to introduce a skate ramp, like a half-pipe where youth and other residents can use their skateboards and scooters to complement the basketball court and playground. For artists, auditors suggested a mural wall similar to the giant spray cans at

the Youth Space on the corner of Lichfield and Manchester Street where youth can showcase their talents and give them a canvas where they would be allowed to do so. These types of installations would enhance the space and make it more attractive and appealing while allowing youth to continue to weave well into the community and have shared interests with the other residents of Shirley.

### 4.3.6 General Feedback

At the end of the focus group, the youth auditors were asked some final questions about what else they liked about the space, if there is anything they didn't like, or any other final suggestions or recommendations. In general, the youth auditors have identified a number of functional and practical improvements that can be made to help Macfarlane Park be a more youth-friendly space. These changes include resurfacing the basketball court and adding extra lines, adding benches, fixing the water fountain, and returning the bin to its previous location. One youth auditor, with agreement from the others, highlighted that they are more concerned about the practicality of the spaces than how they look. The space doesn't need to look fancy; it just has to work.

## 5. Recommendations

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### 5.1 Revamp the Basketball Court

This was highlighted by all of the auditors. In its current state, the court is prone to puddles and is not being used to its full potential due to the fading lines and inability to swap between the basketball hoops and netball hoops.

Changes could look like:

- Resurfacing the concrete
- Repainting the lines
- Replacing the hoops and backboard
- Adding drainage to reduce the puddles

## 5.2 Add Lighting to the Space

Safety is paramount to the auditors. The space drastically needs lighting to improve its overall safety and accessibility to all hours of the day, not just for youth, but all users of the space.

Changes could look like:

- Adding lights around the basketball courts
- Lighting inside and outside the bathrooms
- Lighting around the entrances of the space

## 5.3 Increase Signage

The space may be familiar to Shirley youth, but youth from other areas will struggle to find the space. Auditors have identified the need for signage to make the space unambiguous and easier to find.

Changes could look like:

- Signs leading to the park (Yellow arrows around posts)
- A sign located in the entrance to the basketball courts

## 5.4 Improve the Amenities of the Space

The auditors have mentioned the need to improve the practical resources of the space. These changes will lead to a cleaner and safer space and ensure that every aspect of the space is being used

Changes could look like:

- Adding more benches
- Fixing the water fountain
- Improving the bathroom (e.g., cleaning, lightning, dedicated pathway)
- Adding a bin closer to the space
- Adding bike and scooter stands

## 5.5 Introduce New Activities

The auditors would like to see new elements in the park that are youth friendly. This will increase the appeal of the space, giving youth more to do, and highlighting the unique identity of Shirley

Changes could look like:

- Adding a skate park
- Adding a half-pipe
- Adding an art wall and area for graffiti art

## 6. Conclusion

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Thank you for taking the time to read this Youth Friendly Spaces report and considering the above recommendations to make McFarlane Park more youth friendly.

We appreciate you allowing us into your space and showing us around and answering any questions we had. From here, we are happy to meet with you to discuss any of the feedback or recommendations in this report and how you might like to act on any of the above.

Following best practice youth engagement, it is important for us to feedback to the young people who participated in the audit how their voices have been used and taken on board by the audited space. We will follow up with you three months from the date this report is sent to you to ask about how this report has been received and if there is any action to report back to the youth auditors.



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