

# Redefining the Idea of a Park

**LEAF India and MSA Collaboration**

*Parktopia- Group 22*



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## 0.0 Intent and Aims

### *Agenda*

The goal of this project is to critically redefine the idea of a park being an open void where human activity occurs, being stamped in areas of densely packed buildings. Parks in the current situation, are defined to mean a piece of land on which there are no buildings; plants and flower beds decorate them for aesthetic purposes. The existing fabric of parks follows a single template that if followed worldwide within which slight variations occur. The response to this notion of a park is to be critically analysed and de-constructed in relation to the public inhabiting the urban area.

What is the role of a park in its response to urbanity and more importantly toward the discourse of identity for the park itself and its users specific to geography, culture and context. A case study analysis will be undertaken involving existing parks and tested according to these categories. The outcome of the exercise and project will be highlighting the constituents of a park which responds to a typology with its focus on the socio-cultural, ecological, and economic roles the space invigorates.

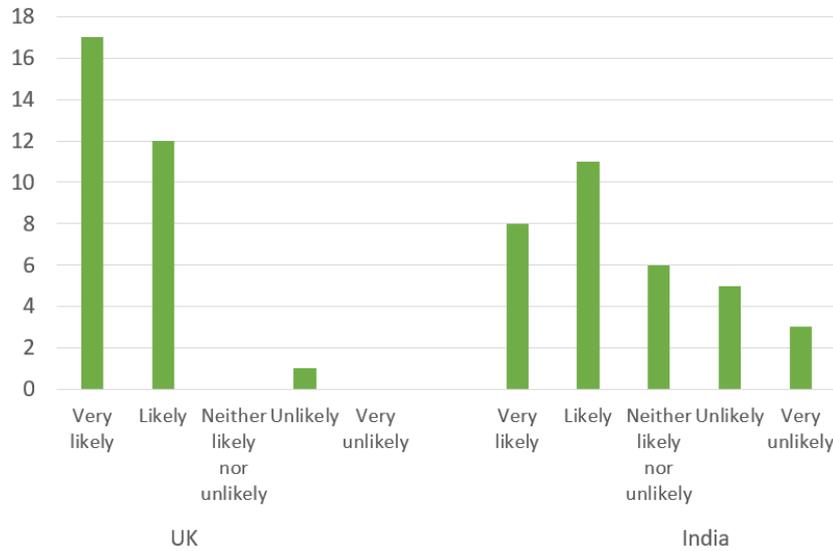
To inform park design and translate the typology to user relation – enabled through memory. It can invoke memories of the historical, social, cultural representation of a place brought into park design. For example, Mumbai is a maritime city – how does a park situated in Mumbai relate to its historical, and cultural reference?

Study on the existing literature between the concepts of spatiality and memory will be explored and commented on. However, existing literature is limited to scientific methods and processes. As each individual might be invoked by different memories through different spatial experiences and symbols, we use abstraction as a method with different sources such as songs, films to study the idea of parks and their representation in different cultures. Achieved by a number of students and interviews, we aim to see if there are similarities or differences between spatial memories of a park in various cultures through these findings.

Results are then diagrammed in an abstract manner using the same base for songs and films. To help with visualisation and representation we involve guest speakers such as Ray Lucas and Pandora Layton to capture this aspect of background study. The evident goal of this exercise is to highlight the uniqueness of the problem and cannot be approached by a one size fits all mentality. However, we aim to encapsulate the similarities and differences from interviews, abstractions and can act as one of the drivers for park design, in addition to existing literature of memory in architecture.

## 2.1 Interviews

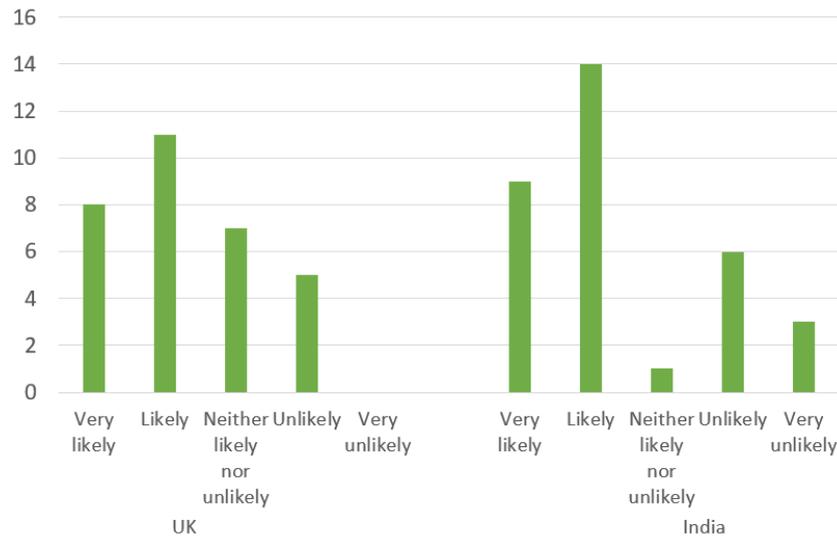
How likely are you to go to a green public space to meet friends?



*97% of people in UK are likely to meet friends in a green public space whereas only 70% of people in India, or hotter countries, are likely to meet up in groups.*

*More people in UK are likely to use parks as recreational areas.*

How likely are you to spend time in a public green space alone?

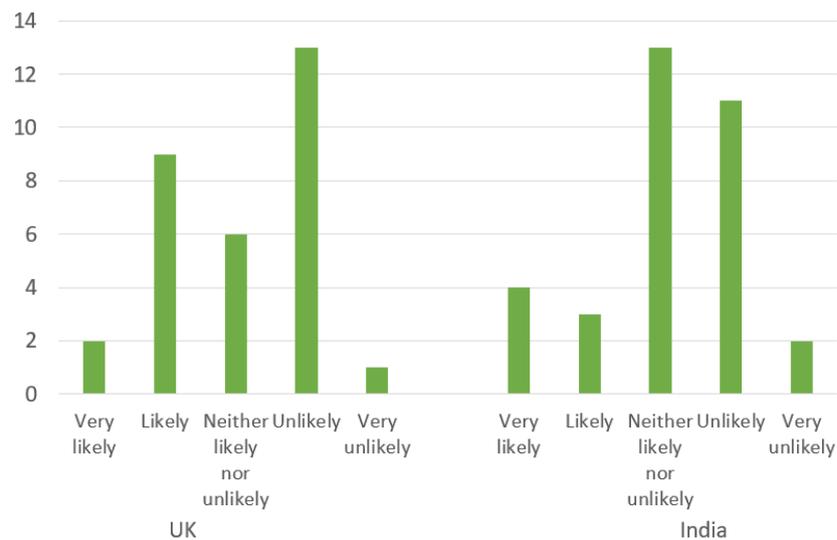


*24% of all participants are very likely to go to a park alone.*

*23% of younger participants are very likely to go to a park alone.*

*43% of older participants are very likely to go to a park alone.*

How likely are you to experience anti-social behavior in your local park?

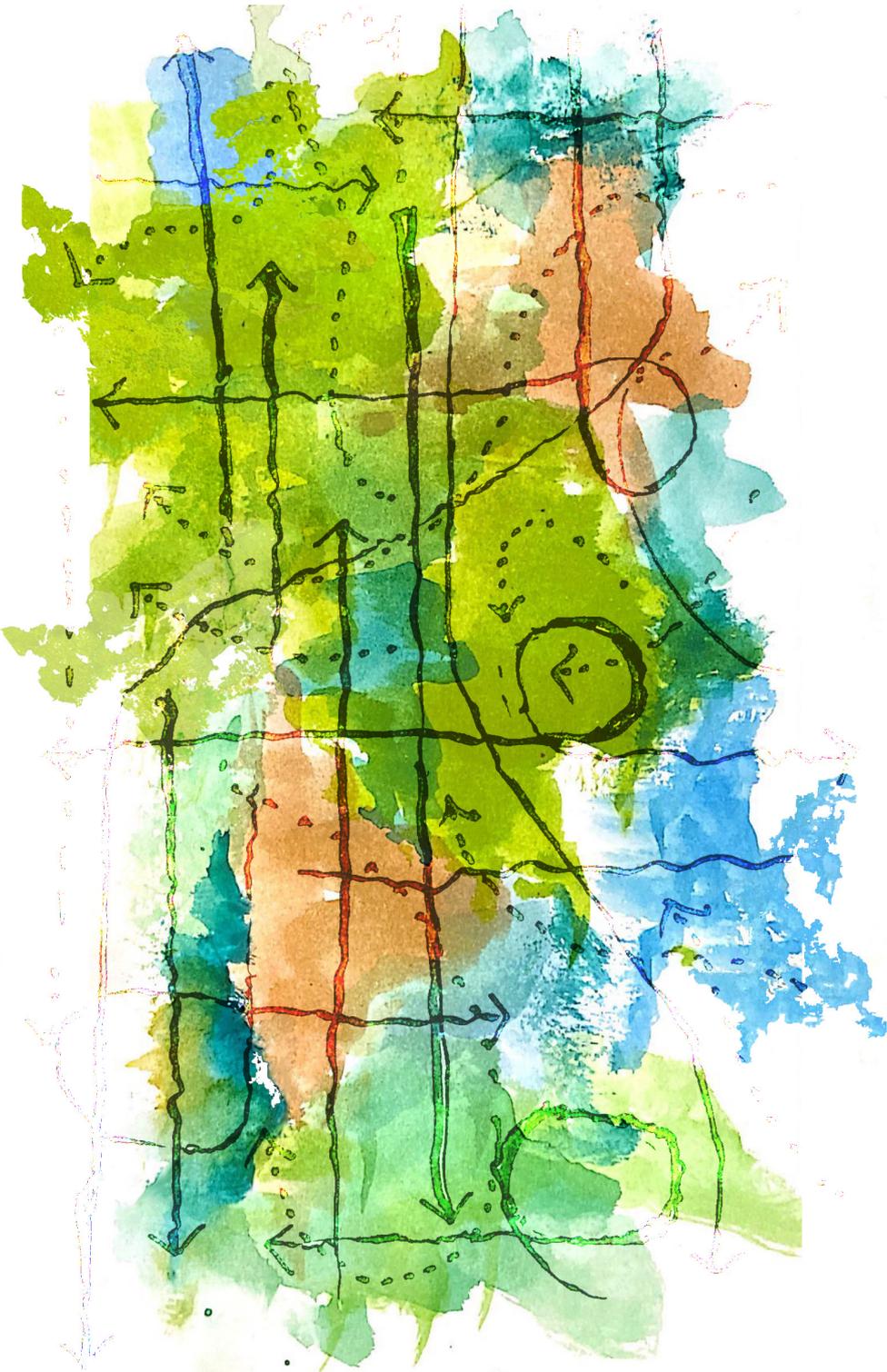


*42% unlikely to experience anti-social behaviour in parks in the UK.*

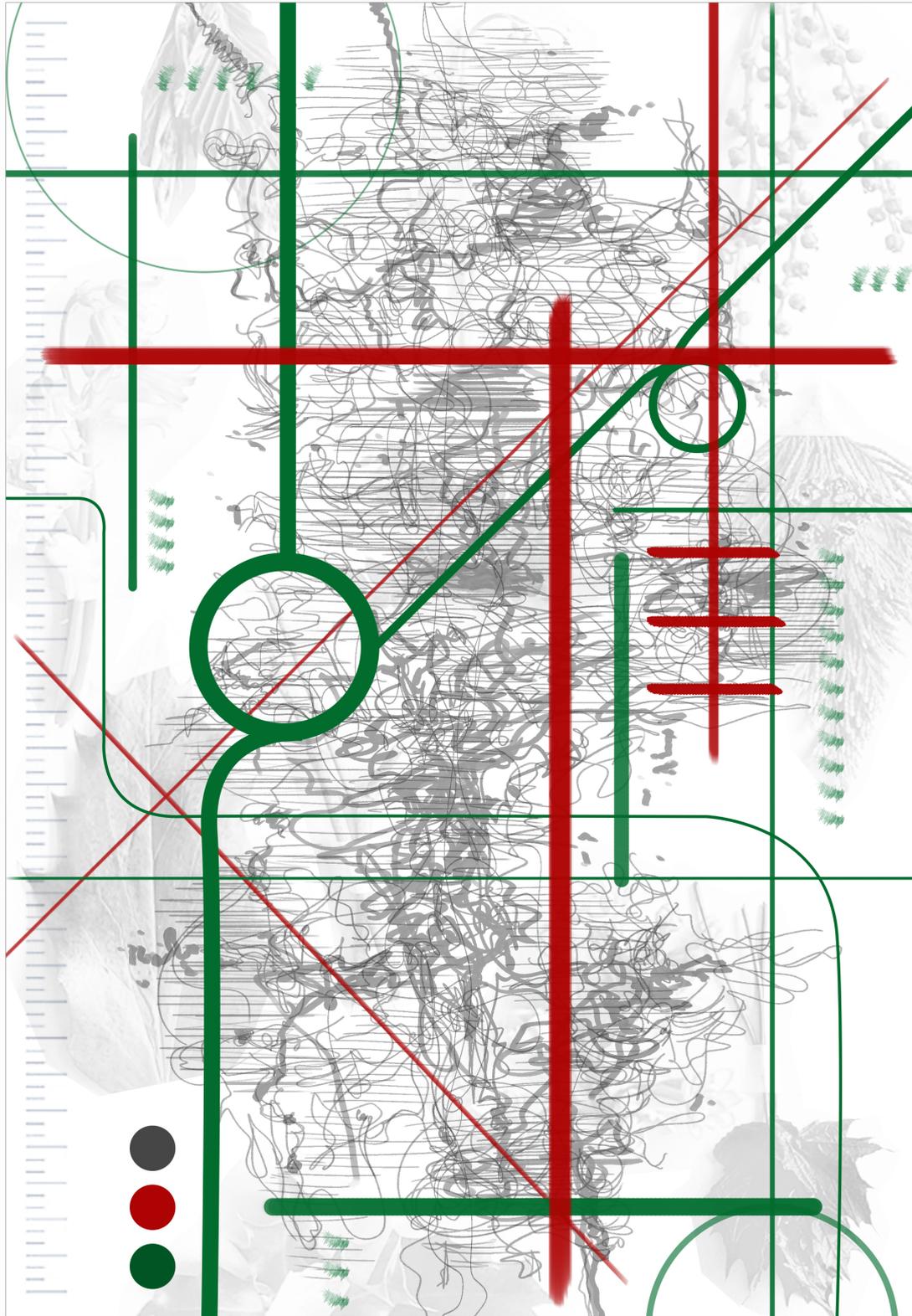
*35% unlikely to experience anti-social behaviour in parks in India.*



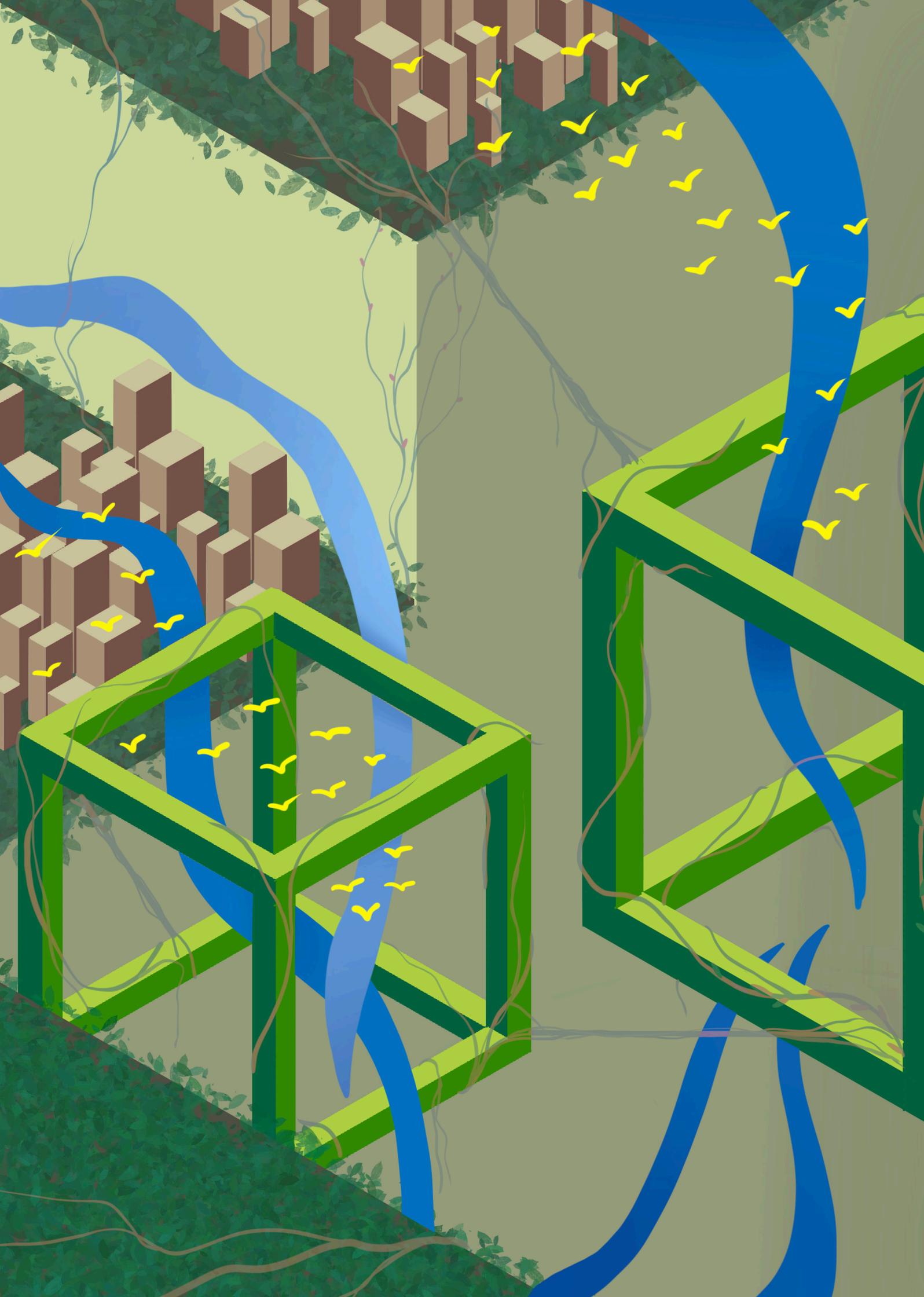
*Olga: This image is titled lungs of the city. It was inspired by interviewing family members from Poland. They drew my attention to another extremely important role of parks - providing clean air for cities with air pollution problems. Rather than designing solely based on activities or aesthetic preferences, we should focus on maximising greenery that helps to clean the air.*



*Manika: Different pieces make up the entire jigsaw that the park is, from trees to grassland or water-bodies to pathways. There are various functions of or within a park. In reference to the case study of Whitworth Park in Manchester, it can be stated that individuals consume a same space distinctly. For instance, a child might enjoy tip toeing on the edge of a pathway. On the other hand, an adult might walk right in the middle of the same path. Therefore, various visual and spatial settings of the nature evoke different responses in humans.*



*Cin: This abstract piece represents the different journeys people experience in parks. Based on case studies of All Saints Park and Whitworth Park, some people consider parks as a reconnection to nature, some only think about parks as a shortcut. The green colour represents the journey which is designed by landscape architects and the experience they want park users to perceive. Using strong brush strokes and red colour, I tried to demonstrate anti-social behaviours. Last but not least, black doodle lines represent freedom and confusion in which people get to design their journeys when they visit parks.*



*All abstractions*

